

The history of Awazem tribe in Arab world



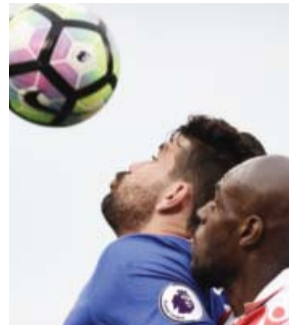
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ATTACKER SHOT DEAD AT PARIS ORLY AIRPORT

MAN TRIES TO GRAB SOLDIER'S WEAPON, TRIGGERING A MAJOR SECURITY ALERT



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PARIS: Travelers walk on the highway to the Orly airport, south of Paris yesterday. (inset) A picture taken of a television screen shows a man lying on the ground of a terminal building at Paris' Orly airport after he was shot by French security forces for taking a weapon from a soldier. — AP

PARIS: Troops at Paris' Orly airport yesterday shot dead a man who tried to grab a female soldier's weapon, triggering a major security alert that shut down the airport, leaving thousands stranded. The incident comes as France remains on high alert following a series of jihadist attacks that have claimed over 230 lives since January 2015. Prosecutors said they had opened an anti-terror investigation. France goes to the polls on April 23 in the first round of a two-stage presidential election in which security is one of the main issues on voters' minds.

The shooting took place on the second day of an official visit to Paris by Britain's Prince William and his wife Kate. Interior Minister Bruno Le Roux said the man who was killed was "known to the police and intelligence services". He said the suspect was also linked to an attack on police just north of Paris earlier yesterday in which an officer was slightly wounded. At the airport, the man knocked the soldier to the ground and grabbed at her rifle, a senior military source said.

The two other soldiers with her then opened fire, killing him, the source said. No-one else was injured in the incident. According to an eyewitness who spoke to AFP, the man had at one point held the female soldier hostage. "The man took a soldier hostage, he was holding her by the neck and he was threatening two other soldiers with the woman's rifle," said a man travelling to the Dominican Republic who gave his name only as Dominique. "I heard cries and I saw the soldiers who were holding a person at gunpoint."

Another witness told BFM TV he saw the man holding the soldier's rifle and threatening her. "The soldiers were trying to reason with him," he said, adding that he heard two shots. The incident took place at around 8:30 am in the Orly-Sud terminal. Located just south of Paris, Orly is the city's second international airport.

Addressing reporters at the airport, Le Roux said the man had tried "but not succeeded" in his bid to grab the rifle of the female soldier who was on patrol with two male colleagues.

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WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump and Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel shake hands after a press conference in the East Room of the White House in Washington, DC. — AFP

GERMANY OWING NATO 'VAST SUMS'

TRUMP UNLEASHES A DIATRIBE

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump unleashed a diatribe against Germany yesterday, saying Berlin owes NATO "vast sums of money" and must pay the United States more for security. His latest tweetstorm comes a day after he met German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Washington, where the two leaders showed little common ground over a host of thorny issues, including NATO and defense spending.

"Germany owes vast sums of money to NATO & the United States must be paid more for the powerful, and very expensive, defense it provides to Germany!" Trump tweeted yesterday morning. He prefaced his statement by lashing out at the news media. "Despite what you have heard from the FAKE NEWS," he tweeted, "I had a

GREAT meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel!"

That appeared to be far from the case on Friday, when the veteran German leader arrived hoping to reverse a chill in relations after Trump criticized her during his campaign last year, saying her decision to allow refugees into Germany was a "catastrophic mistake" and suggesting she was "ruining Germany." During a joint news conference, Trump accused Germany of unfair trade practices and ripped into Washington's NATO allies, demanding they pay back "vast sums of money from past years." Merkel said Germany had committed to increasing its military spending to two percent of GDP, a target NATO member states formally agreed in 2014 to reach within 10 years. — AFP (See Page 7)

News

in brief

Pope Francis to visit Egypt on April 28-29

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis will visit Cairo on April 28-29 at the invitation of the Egyptian president and the grand imam of the capital's famed Al-Azhar mosque, the Vatican said yesterday. The pontiff had hosted the grand imam, Ahmed Al-Tayeb, at the Vatican last May, in a landmark meeting with one of Islam's top clerics. That encounter was the culmination of a steady improvement in a relationship that had broken down because of a series of spats under Francis's predecessor Benedict XVI.

Web-based counseling lowers blood pressure

WASHINGTON: People who received regular lifestyle counseling online were able to lower their blood pressure as much as a medication would, researchers said yesterday. Their study involved 264 people with high blood pressure and an average age of 58. The subjects' average blood pressure began at around 140/90 mmHg, meaning they had what is clinically known as stage 1 hypertension. Most were already taking at least one drug to cut their blood pressure. Patients enrolled through the website of the Heart and Stroke Association of Canada and were randomly assigned to either an e-counseling group or a control group.

Israel plane hits Gaza after a rocket attack

JERUSALEM: A rocket fired by Palestinians in the Gaza Strip slammed into southern Israel yesterday, prompting retaliatory Israeli air and tank strikes, sources on both sides said. The Israeli army said the rocket hit an open area. "No casualties have been reported," it said. "In response, a tank and aircraft targeted two Hamas positions in the northern Gaza Strip." Palestinian security officials said an Israeli aircraft attacked a military training facility of Gaza's Hamas rulers, north of Gaza City and the tank fire targeted a Hamas observation post adjacent to Beit Lahiya in the north of the territory, close to the border with Israel.



KFAR HATTA: Young supporters of Lebanon's militant Shiite Hezbollah movement carry portraits of the founder of Iran's Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (left) and Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei as they march in the southern Lebanese town of Kfar Hatta yesterday during the funeral of a Hezbollah fighter who died in combat in Syria. — AFP

HEZBOLLAH BLASTS 'WEAK' UN

BEIRUT: The leader of the Lebanese Hezbollah movement denounced the United Nations yesterday as weak after the withdrawal of a report accusing Israel of imposing an "apartheid regime" on Palestinians. A senior UN official resigned on Friday after the secretary general asked her to remove the report, published by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), from the internet.

UN Under-Secretary General and ESCWA Executive Secretary Rima Khalaf said she was leaving after "powerful member states" had pressured the world body and its chief with "vicious attacks and threats". Hezbollah leader Sayyed

Hassan Nasrallah said in a televised speech yesterday that the incident served as a reminder of the "truth of this organization, that it's weak ... and it succumbs to the will of the United States and Israel!"

The UN is "incapable of taking a stand" and the debacle over the report proved it cannot be counted on "to defend human rights in our region," he said. ESCWA, which comprises 18 Arab states, published the report on Wednesday and said it was the first time a UN body had clearly charged that Israel "has established an apartheid regime that dominates the Palestinian people as a whole".

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In Brief

RELIEF AID IN MOSUL

IRBIL: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has delivered food and medical aid to internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have fled violence in Mosul and are now staying at Irbil's southwestern Jamkur refugee camp. KRCS aid workers distributed yesterday 3,000 food and medical parcels and 15,000 loaves of bread to over 11,000 IDPs at Jamkur refugee camp in Irbil, KRCS Emergency Chief Fahad Al-Meraj said. —KUNA



OIL PRICE DOWN

KUWAIT: The price of Kuwaiti oil went down by 40 cents to \$48.40 per barrel Friday after being at \$48.80 the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said yesterday. Globally, the price of oil was stable amid anticipation over efficiency of the OPEC and other major world producers' decision to reduce oil production. The increase of both US shale oil production and American oil reserves also had an impact on the prices. —KUNA



MOVIE SCREENING

KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently invited its youth @Tijari account holders to an exclusive screening of the newly released 'Power Rangers' movie. The screening takes place at 6:00 pm on Thursday, March 23, 2017 at Al-Hamra Tower's Grand Cinema. Each account holder is eligible to get two free tickets to watch the movie, CBK explained in a press statement.



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: This picture shows the main fountain at the artificial lake inside the Boulevard Park in Salmiya. —Photo by Talal Al-Sharaa



KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Dr Hind Al-Sabeeh watches a performance held during the spring carnival. —KUNA

GULF BANK SPONSORS EDUCATION UK EXHIBITION IN KUWAIT



KUWAIT: Grant Butler, Country Director of the British Council in Kuwait and Dr Fawzan Al-Fares, Head of the Cultural Office at the Kuwaiti Embassy in London with Salma Al-Hajjaj, General Manager of Human Resources at Gulf Bank pose with Gulf Bank's team.

KUWAIT TO INSTALL INTEGRATED SYSTEM FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor plans to launch a more sophisticated and broader electronic system to improve social aid services ahead of the year-end. The ministry has already set up electronic linkage with four departments concerned with providing social assistance, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs

Dr Hind Al-Sabeeh said yesterday. The new system is fully integrated and will ensure non-recurrence of past problems, some of which made some citizens suffer from emerging debts due to alterations to data, said the minister in a statement to journalists on sidelines of the first spring carnival. The project will be fully operational by the last quarter of 2017, she added. —KUNA

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank was pleased to sponsor the British Council's annual Education UK Exhibition (EDUKEX) in Kuwait as part of its ongoing support of youth education. This high-profile event was attended by Grant Butler, Country Director of the British Council in Kuwait and Dr Fawzan Al-Fares, Head of the Cultural Office at the Kuwaiti Embassy in London. EDUKEX took place on 15 and 16 March 2017, at the Regency Hotel in Kuwait.

With over 4,500 young Kuwaitis studying in the UK, Gulf Bank seeks to play an active role in facilitating the promotion of education in Kuwait and beyond. Its sponsorship of EDUKEX supports the showcase of the unique offering of UK education that merges between tradition and innovation, in addition to it being a platform for students to search for the best educational opportunities.

Salma Al-Hajjaj, General Manager of Human Resources at Gulf Bank said in a statement to the press: "EDUKEX is a distinctive event in Kuwait and Gulf Bank is very proud to sponsor it again this year. The Bank considers education a top priority as it constitutes the basis of a prosperous society. Our role is to encourage young Kuwaitis to enhance their educational experience and nurture their talents for a bright future. Eventually, we aim to have them back in Kuwait where they can invest their knowledge and build prosperous careers. Fresh graduates have considered Gulf Bank as an employer of choice, and we are happy to always attract the best talent."



Salma Al-Hajjaj, General Manager of Human Resources at Gulf Bank and Dr Fawzan Al-Fares, Head of the Cultural Office at the Kuwaiti Embassy in London.

EDUKEX allows students to get detailed information about educational programs, while highlighting relevant information on studying and living in the UK and types of undergraduate and graduate degrees, as well as information regarding scholarships and

financial aid, for the benefit of students and parents keen to pursue higher education in the UK. Gulf Bank is strongly committed to organizing, sponsoring, and participating in events that benefit Kuwait and empower the next generation of Kuwaitis.

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History of AWAZEM IN ARABIA

Since its inception, the ancient Awazem tribe has taken part in building Kuwait in various political, social and economic fields side-by-side with other tribes and families. The Awazem tribe descends from the famous Arab Hawazen tribe of Bani Qais Eilan bin Modhar bin Nizar bin Ma'd bin Adnan.

It is currently known that the Hawazen were divided into three main parts throughout Arabia:

1- Hijaz Hawazen including Bano Jasham, who are currently represented by the Otaiba tribe.

2- Yamamah Hawazen including Bano Amer ibn Ouf, who are currently represented by the Subaei tribe.

3- Ahsa Hawazen including Bano Kelab, who are currently represented by the Awazem tribe.

In his book 'Kuwait History', Kuwait's prime historian Abdul Aziz Al-Rasheed said the Maliki doctrine was dominant in Kuwait and was followed by some of Kuwait's rulers and some known urban and desert-dwelling families.

Both ancient and modern Arabic history is full of mentioning scores of genuine Arab tribes and clans that had had a great impact and played a great role in pre- and post-Islamic history. One of these tribes is the Awazem, geographically living in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, while others, less in number, live in other countries.

A Genuine Arab Tribe

The Awazem are a purely Arab tribe mentioned in many history books by writers, who all agree on tracing its lineage to the Hawazen; a major pre- and post-Islamic tribe.

According to Abdul Rahman Abdul Kareem Al-Obaid's book 'The Awazem Tribe', their original home is the northeastern parts of Arabia. They also have family connections with the Awazem in Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Yemen and Bahrain.

In a paper published in Al-Kuwait Magazine in 1928, Abdul Aziz Al-Rasheed spoke about the Awazem's Arabism, genuineness and Bedouin nature. He also confirmed their lineage with the Hawazen.

Dr Jamal Zakariya Qassim believes that the Awazem originally came from Ahsa, Najd, Kuwait and Qatar, while the Awazem outside these regions have roots in Arabia.

Non-Azmi and Azmi historians believe that the Awazem are the descendants of Aal Atta of Hozan and that Azem and Atta are both the descendants of Kelab ibn Rabe'a ibn Amer ibn Hozan.

This was confirmed by Hamad Al-Jassir in Al-Arabi magazine in 1416 AH, Jamal Zakariya Qassim in his book 'The Arabian Gulf', Dr Hamad Rasheed Al-Feel in his book 'Kuwait Population', Abdullah Nasser Al-Sane in a preface for poet Salem Al-Dawi's poetry book, Dr Ahmed Al-Muzaini in his book 'Kuwaiti Tribes And Family Lineage', Fayed bin Moussa Al-Badrani Al-Harbi in his book 'Najd Tribes News', Mohammed Suleiman Al-Tayyeb in the 'Arab Tribes Encyclopedia', Ibrahim Jarallah Al-Shareef in his book 'Golden Masterpiece In Arabia Lineage', Orientalist Georg Wallin in his book 'An Image Of Northern Arabia' and the Royal British Navy's book about Arab countries.

Homeland

Ever since the early days of Islam, the Awazem inhabited the area between Ahsa in the south and Kathema (Kuwait) to the north. When the Qarmatians ruled this region, the Awazem exerted their power to Bani Amer. In the second and fifth centuries after the hegira, the Qarmatians' power faded and Bani Amer ruled the region until the Ottomans invaded it in the mid-10th Hijri century. Mention of the great-grandfather Hozan kept being repeated by regional historians and it was proved that Awazem clans used to dwell and move to Hijaz and Najd between the 11th and 12th Hijri centuries. They were mentioned in innumerable poems.

Awazem's Bedouin Nature

The Awazem were nomads travelling in search of food and water for their sheep.

The majority roamed the entire area of Kuwait, while in Saudi Arabia, they travelled around the area surrounding the eastern and northern water valley and some of them went further into Qateef and Ahsa.

They are widespread in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to the west of Madinah, in Sader and near Hael. Some of them live in Qatar, Jordan, Yemen and Egypt.

Migration and Forays

As nomads, the Awazem were known for moving throughout Arabia and surrounding areas, making the tribe's history. Tribal poets, namely Lafi Al-Jeeha Al-Azmi, also contributed to documenting this history in detail, including travels and heroism. Various poems were written about the Awazem's might, multitude, dominance, ability to alter incidents and defeat their enemies or occupants of their lands.

According to Lafi's poems, the Awazem managed to control the area between Kuwait to the north and Qateef to the south after several battles with tribes dwelling there such as the Dasma battle in 1854, Al-Sabeeha battle in 1878, Al-Tareefa battle in 1895, Meraikh battle in 1915, Al-Noqaira battle in 1924 and the Redha and Noqair battles in 1929, which were the most famous and most mentioned in poetry.

According to men who actually witnessed the last two battles in 1929, they were the most important in protecting the tribe's existence when strangers decided to occupy Ahsa and its surrounding areas. On the way, they came to a well known as Redha Spring, where they wanted to defeat the Azmis living there and take over the well, which they failed to do and were routed. Two months later, the invaders remobilized troops to retaliate, but the Awazem waited for them by a well known as Noqaira, where they again defeated them.

According to historical resources, those two battles were behind mentioning the Awazem in history books, and had the enemy defeated them, they would not have been mentioned by historians afterwards.

Awazem, People and Knights of Heritage

In addition to the details of the Awazem and other tribes' Bedouin way of life in both peace and war, social life and socializing with others is also significant in terms of preserving Arabic heritage. Arabic readers can clearly realize that poetic phrases they used speak for themselves using lexicon of the time such as swords, horses, coffee, camels and other desert Bedouin life details. Horses and camels were highly thought of by the Awazem because they needed them in daily life, wars and transport.

The Awazem were famous for breeding Arabian horses. They are also known as knights, using horses in sport and battles. The most famous equine names are Khehailah, Abbiya, Hamdaniya, Kroush, Swaitiyya and Sabha.

These genuine Arabian horse names are still used nowadays. Breeds of these Arabian horses are found in the Arabian Gulf, Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Bahrain, and have been mentioned in many poems.

Camels also had the same significance and were mentioned in poetry. A number of historians dealing with Awazem history mentioned this. In an article published in Al-Arabi magazine in 1961 (issue # 37), Al-Alousi said that the Awazem had fortunes of camels.

In Loghat Al-Arab Magazine published in 1911, it was mentioned that "the Awazem dwelled in the vicinity of Kuwait (the Land of ibn Sabah) and had lots of camels". "The Awazem are a Kuwaiti clan of the oldest who ever lived in Kuwait. They worked in trade, especially that of camels and sheep," says the Kuwait Encyclopedia. "Awazem have many kinds of camels they call as Wadhha, Mejaheem, Sha'al, Moghatheir and Wasem Al-Awazem," it adds.

Awazem's Contemporary Whereabouts

Nowadays, Awazem are found in the Levant, Egypt, Yemen and Bahrain, and

have genealogical ties with those living in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. They share the same history, values, traditions and interests. They have family ties with other tribes in those countries.

Awazem in Lorimer's Gazetteer of the Arabian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia

In the English version of his book "Gazetteer of the Arabian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia" published in 1915, J G Lorimer mentioned the Awazem tribe when writing about the history of the region until the fall of the first Saudi state in 1818, when Mohamed Ali Pasha's troops invaded Dereyya. Lorimer lined the Awazem with one of Kuwait's sheikhs without mentioning further details because of the political aspects of the topic that were only cleared after the reign of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, when Britain was in the quest of a powerful ally capable of facing the Ottoman Empire.

Historian Abdullah Al-Hatem said that the Awazem were a deep-rooted Arabian tribe originating from Hawazen.

Awazem Sub-Factions and Clans

The Awazem tribe comprises of two main sub-factions:

* Al-Qou'a, who include clans of Hadaleen, Braikat and Al-Shagfa.

* Ghayyadh, who include the clans of:

01. Al-Mesahmah
02. Al-Mala'bah
03. Al-Musa'dah
04. Al-Jawaser
05. Al-Ghorbah (Al-Ghareeb)
06. Al-Qorashah
07. Al-Mahalbah
08. Al-Sawaber
09. Al-Atarmah
10. Al-Toumah
11. Al-Mowayega
12. Al-Ababeed
13. Al-Sowayegh
14. Al-Bataheen
15. Al-Howwasheen
16. Al-Khrafshah
17. Al-Jowariya
18. Al-Shalween
19. Al-Thebat
20. Al-Qa'amrah
21. Al-Fogou'
22. Al-Qa'eeb
23. Al-Mahalbah
24. Al-Belaihya
25. Al-Nawa'mah
26. Al-Farshah
27. Al-Tabaqeen
28. Al-Bahari

The tribe made alliances with regional tribes like Ibn Al-Rasheed, Shommar, Al-Montafiq and others. Shiekh Mubarak did well when he alienated the British from the Awazem living in Kuwait, which foiled making any alliances with them since Kuwait and Britain were heading into signing a protectorate treaty in 1899. The sheikh meant no harm to the Awazem - he wanted to protect them.

The Awazem have a long history in the region and have taken part in many wars to protect the country. It is also noteworthy to mention that most of those who wrote about the Arabian Gulf and Arabian history were Western travelers who mainly relied on stories that lacked verification because of the competition amongst different missionaries.

Second: Homeland

The Awazem settled in Arabia's northeastern corner known today as Kuwait and in the eastern region of Saudi Arabia. The tribe lives in the area from Ahsa in the south to Kazema in the north - that is precisely from the west of Jubail city to Sanam Mountain that runs parallel to Kuwait's northern borders. They have been living in the area for hundreds of years and their ancestors, Bani Amer ibn Sa'sa'ah, were dated back by historians to the early days of Islam.

The Awazem are surrounded by Bani Khaled to the southeast, Al-Ajmi tribe to the southwest, Al-Mutair tribe to the west, Al-Thafeir tribe to the northwest, Al-Zubair

and Um Qasr cities to the northeast and the Arabian Gulf to the east.

The Awazem also lived on Boubyan and Failaka islands. They also lived in east Hijaz and Najd. They lived in Madinah, Sabha Mountain, Meran, Al-Ad, Al-Hadhab Al-Ahmar, Khashem Mebhel, Al-Nair and many other areas.

Third: Warriors

Historically, the Awazem tribe is a warrior one that took part in many battles and incidents in the regions and countries they dwelt in. The tribe is famous for keeping its promises and respecting allegiances with allies. This was clear when they helped King Abdul Aziz Al Saud to contain the Ikhwan rebellion and unite Saudi Arabia after annexing Hael, Ahsa, Hijaz and the south.

They also had a great role in supporting Kuwaiti rulers and protect Kuwait's marine borders with Iraq by owning lands and fishing sites on Warba and Boubyan islands.

Fourth: Traditions

The Awazem tribe has good traditions and values such as piety and respecting Islamic values. They helped build charity mosques. They never begged even during the worst of times. They are known not to assault or harm others or neighbors. In return, they never allow others to assault them.

According to Awazem marriage traditions, a girl will never be wedded except to one of her cousins, a tradition shared by all tribe sub-factions, giving priority to grooms from the same family, then the clan, then the sub-faction, and then the tribe. Awazem men and women rarely get married outside the tribe, which is a genuine Arab norm, like when a Bedouin never weds urbanites or townspeople and vice versa. In view of the current developments, most of these traditions have changed.

Fifth: Wealth and Possessions

The Awazem are rich in the finest camels, sheep and the most purebred Arabian horses in Arabia.

The urban side of the tribe owns many dhows and fisheries along Kuwaiti coastlines from the north to south. They also own some commercial stores in ancient Kuwait City. Bin Rashdan Al-Azmi owned Al-Qaiariya market, which was one of the largest then. They are also known to be benevolent and helpful to the poor and the needy.

Sixth: Religion

Awazem are good Muslims following the Maliki doctrine. They had many religious scientists in previous centuries. The scribe of Imam Malik's manuscript in 1074 was Sheikh Mosa'eed bin Ahmed bin MUSAED bin Salem Al-Azmi. In addition, medical Sheikh MUSAED bin Abdullah Al-Boraiki Al-Azmi graduated from Al-Azhar University in 1882 in Egypt, and specialized in smallpox vaccinations. He owned a library and apprenticed with many scholars. He contributed in spreading true Islam in Kuwait, Bahrain and other countries he visited.

They built many mosques like those of Azran Al-Dammak, Bin Fares and Bin Hanwah named after their imams. They own many endowments inside and outside Kuwait.

Seventh: Contributions to Communal Development

The Awazem tribe contributed to developing societies through trade and education. Nomadic Awazem brought their camels, sheep, ghee and wool to sell in Kuwaiti markets and use the money to purchase supplies such as rice, coffee, dates, weapons and ammunition.

The tribe's sailors owned 40 dhows and were very active in importing goods from international markets like India, Ceylon, East Africa, Aden, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar and Bahrain, which provided enough job opportunities for Kuwaitis then.

The Awazem also worked in fishing and made fortunes from selling their catch in local markets. They also played a great role in defending Kuwait at all times.

Most Important Events

#	Year	Event
1.	1109	Awazem's participation in conflicts between Sultan Al-Hattab and Sultan Suleiman in Yemen
2.	1454	Awazem's conflict with Ahsa ruler Zamel bin Jaber Al-Aqeeli
3.	1474	Seizing a large convoy heading from Basra to Najd
4.	1494	Awazem's battle with Ahsa ruler Ajwad ibn Zamel
5.	1548	Awazem and Za'ab battle with Enezah Ali Thaj
6.	1658	Mulhem battle between the Awazem and Thafeer
7.	1663	Manakh battle between the Awazem and Al-Shareef and Thafeer
8.	1668	Awazem battle with Za'ab
9.	1668	Awazem battle with Shareef Humoud bin Abdullah Ali Abu Rbedh in Najd
10.	1669	Awazem battle with Shareef Humoud bin Abdullah Ali in Najd
11.	1702	Awazem affected by severe drought, and many of them died
12.	1704	Awazem prince and a prominent oriental pilgrim arrive to Enaizah town after hajj, where they spend a lot
13.	1728	Al-Saqi battle between the Awazem, Thafeer and Bani Hussein against Shareef Mohsen bin Abdullah and tribal coalition including Enezah and Adwan tribes
14.	1763	Some Azmis get a free tax-less franchise from Sheikh Abdullah bin Sabah to fish off Boubyan island
15.	1783	Awazem take part in Riqqa battle between Kuwait and Ahwaz rulers, Bani Kaab
16.	1793	Awazem take part in the Bassam Palace battle in Najd
17.	1789	Awazem take part in fighting the French campaign on Egypt
18.	1819	Awazem sheikh mediates between Mohammed Ali's troops and Harb tribe in Madinah
19.	1829	Awazem battle with Subaei after Awazem killed Sheikh Melfi Al-Subaei
20.	1839	Three Azmi young men kill the Ottoman ruler of Ahsa Mohammed Refat
21.	1854	Dasma battle between Awazem and Al-Semran of Ajmi and Mutair tribes near Ahmadi
22.	1861	Battle between Awazem and Colonel Abdul Rahman Abu Zahra and his Enezah fellow tribesmen
23.	1871	Kuwait militarily supports Turkey in campaign on Ahsa. Awazem take part
24.	1876	Battle between Awazem and Thafeer led by Idris Al-Sowait in Um Al-Remam
25.	1878	Prince Mohammed bin Rasheed raids Mala'bah sub-faction of Awazem
26.	1878	Sabeeha battle with knight Hussein Al-Shemmari, who was killed
27.	1893	Majid Al-Doweesh raid on Awazem at Melh
28.	1893	Battle led by MUSAED Al-Hammad against Mutair
29.	1885	Tareefa battle with Ajman tribe
30.	1894	Several battles with Ajmi tribe
31.	1897	Maragha battle against Ajman
32.	1899	Awazem support Ajmi tribe in war against Mutair
33.	1901	Awazem take part in Al-Sareef battle between allies Mubarak Al-Sabah and Abdul Aziz bin Soud and Bin Rasheed
34.	1904	Shaikh Mubarak bin Durai' leads Awazem in Rokhaima battle between Jaber Al-Mubarak and Mutair
35.	1908	Kuwait's ownership of Warba, Boubyan islands documented thanks to Awazem fisheries' ownership
36.	1910	Awazem fight with Sheikh Mubarak against Sa'doun Al-Sa'doun in Hadiya battle
37.	1910	Awazem raid Thafeer tribe in Zubair outskirts
38.	1912	Hama battle between Awazem and Morra tribes
39.	1913	Al-Taf battle (Aleemiya) between Awazem and Ajman tribes
40.	1914	Offensives between Awazem and Iraqi troops because of raiding northern tribes
41.	1915	Meraikh battle between Awazem and Bani Khaled against Ajman
42.	1915	Awazem fight with King Abdul Aziz and Ibn Sabah armies against Ajman in Ahsa battle
43.	1916	Al-Mebarnis battle between Awazem, Bani Khaled, Mutair and Bani Hajir against Ajman and Morra
44.	1916	Rowaish Al-Ghanam battle with Ajman
45.	1917	Awazem kill Sheikh Nayef Al-Sour of Mutair in Dolai'at Al-Sour to the south of Kuwait
46.	1919	Soud and Jafran Al-Faghm seek refuge with Awazem
47.	1919	Serar battle with Ajman tribe
48.	1920	Awazem take part in Al-Jahra battle against Ikhwan
49.	1922	Awazem battle with Thafeer in Thera' Abo Kharjain to the south
50.	1924	Nogaira battle between Awazem and some Mutair sub-factions
51.	1924	Shiekh Hayef Al-Faghm raids Awazem in Habjoub
52.	1924	Awazem raid Oraib Dar to the north
53.	1926	Awazem sub-faction battle with Al Suleiman of Ajmi tribe
54.	1929	Awazem take part in general assembly attended by King Abdul Aziz Al-Saud
55.	1929	Awazem fight with King Abdul Aziz against rebels led by Faisal Al-Doweesh
56.	1929	Redha battle between Awazem and Al-Doweesh troops
57.	1929	Awazem fight with Prince Abdul Aziz ibn MUSAED against rebels led by Faisal Al-Doweesh
58.	1929	Nogair battle between Awazem and rebels led by Al-Doweesh
59.	1929	Al-Khor (creek) incident after Nogair peace agreement where Ajmis attacked some Azmis returning from Ahsa
60.	1929	Al-Durai' foray against Ajman
61.	1930	Awazem take part in a meeting of troops fighting with King Abdul Aziz
62.	1932	Awazem take part in the Yemen war between King Abdul Aziz and Imam Yahya

MINISTER ACTS AGAINST PLANS TO INCREASE MEAT PRICES

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri condemned a number of livestock importing companies which announced intentions to increase the prices of meat before Ramadan. The companies have reportedly signed an agreement with each other calling for a collective increase of prices; something that the minister described as 'tampering with food security' in Kuwait. Accordingly, Jabri announced taking very strict measures against all companies that had signed the agreement, and that in order to prevent them from going ahead with their plans. "Manipulating food security is a crime that will not go unaccounted for," he underlined, noting that a special committee had been formed to follow up and verify the authenticity of leaked news about the agreement. He also noted that any company to be discovered to have signed the alleged agreement would be subject to sever penal measures.

Projects

The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) is supervising the construction of various projects including a new maternity hos-

pital and the Jahra ministries' complex with a total cost of KD 569 million, MPW Undersecretary Engineer Awatif Al-Ghuanim said yesterday. The new maternity hospital would be located over an area of 55,000 square meters, Ghunaim said, adding that it would include 780 beds, 27 operating theaters, 60 labor rooms, a basement and 18 floors. She added that the project's total cost would be KD 220 million. Further, Ghunaim explained that the new ministries' complex in Jahra would be located west of the Oyoun area, and would comprise of nine floors and four basements used for parking. She added that the building would also include a stage with 500 seats, a training center, bank branches, cafes and some commercial stores. The project's total cost will be KD 348 million. Projects to develop Yarmouk, Qotoba, Surra and Jleeb Al-Shuyukh's infrastructure were still being studied, Ghunaim added.

Privatization

Minister of Electricity and Water and Minister of Oil Essam Al-Marzouq stressed Kuwait's keenness on protecting its natural resources and making the best use of them through regulating privatization programs and operations. He also noted that oil exploration, production and refinement had been exempted from



Minister Mohammad Al-Jabri

activities that might be privatized. Upon its foundation, each oil company has a main activity for which it was established and upon which each company's vision is set. "However, there are some side and secondary activities," he underlined. Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) has a number of proposals on activities the private sector can take part in, he said, noting that this would help KPC focus more on its main role, and contribute in improving the private sector and activating its role in developing the oil sector. Marzouq also noted that 80 gas stations had been already privatized, including 40

that are currently operate by Oula Company and 40 operated by Al-Sour company.

Panel meetings

The parliament's legislative committee is scheduled to look into a request made to lift the immunity of three lawmakers this morning, said parliamentary sources. The three MPs are Jamaan Al-Harbash, Nayef Al-Merdas and Ahmad Al-Fadhli, who are being prosecuted in law cases. Meanwhile, the committee will discuss two proposals on amending law number 2/2016 pertaining with establishing the Public Anti-Corruption Authority, and the financial statement disclosure regulations.

The sources also noted that the parliament's financial affairs committee will discuss proposed amendments of the Amiri decree law number 61/1976 pertaining with the social security law, though it has exceeded the time allotted for discussion because the government had not responded to MPs' views and insisted on refusing any compromises on the matter. The government refused reducing the retirement age, imposing any financial increments on salaries or cancelling the interests on loans because that would jeopardize the budget of the Public Institution For Social Security, the sources explained.

Local spotlight

MEDICINE BAN



By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

I have been following for some time the suggestions of MP Safaa Al-Hashem regarding expatriates and medical treatment. Clearly, the MP sees that expats constitute a burden on the state budget, which must be addressed and resolved. Theoretically, what the MP thinks is correct and logical, because it is not reasonable to have a population comprising 70 percent of expatriates and 30 percent citizens. These percentages are officially registered on the website of the Public Authority for Civil Information.

Those who argue about the validity and credibility of Hashem's statements do not want to mention the whole truth and admit that there is a real imbalance in the population structure and the consequent health, educational, security and social problems. This requires a quick and fair solution by all MPs and the government for the benefit of all expats - or not.

To clarify the matter, Hashem did not demand the prevention of treatment of expatriates, but suggested dealing with the imbalance and waste in the disbursement of medicines from hospitals and government clinics, and to apply health insurance on all expats in a practical and real way as in any civilized country to achieve justice for all - citizens and expatriates.

This is a fact that the Kuwaiti citizen suffers from the deterioration in public services starting with chaos, overcrowding, delays at government hospitals, traffic jams, high prices and education. Now, the fear of illness and medical errors in diagnosis and possibly death by a non-specialist doctor worries everyone, from street cleaners to ordinary people, whether they are citizens or expatriates. These are just examples, but health and treatment remain a top priority for the public, and not only for the rich or holders of luxury health insurance. Since receiving medical treatment is a human right, it must be rational. This daily suffering has created grievances and anxiety, especially in the absence of radical solutions to these problems and others.

Unfortunately, we need to resolve the basic problem, which is the imbalance in population. In fact, there is a real need for a filter to determine the numbers of expatriates and the jobs we need them for, such as the judiciary, for example. Also, the issue of health insurance should be considered, and I hope that it will be applied as in the UAE, where every employee has health insurance, expat or citizen. This insurance is a must under specific conditions to get treatment and medicines, while the sponsor is obliged by law to pay the required fees. Therefore, no one can manipulate the law or fear his health and treatment are at risk.

But can the law force the sponsor to pay for the health insurance requirements for employees? There is no country in the world that does what Kuwait does for citizens and expats with regards to free medical treatment. None! The proposal by Hashem would have been better received if it was presented as a complete proposal to reform the health situation in Kuwait and amend health insurance laws to stop the current wastage in the pharmaceutical sector or other medical sectors. The problem needs to be addressed at its roots, instead of punishing those who have no hand in creating the problem.

The continuation of similar proposals in a punitive rather than a therapeutic way will divert media and official attention from the real problem that is facing Kuwait, which is the imbalance in the population structure.

KUWAIT OBSERVES WORLD WATER DAY

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Water and Electricity will hold a ceremony on March 22 to mark the World Water Day. Humoud Al-Roudhan, the ministry's assistant undersecretary, said in a statement yesterday that the activity would include lectures by renowned experts and an exhibition. "Wasted water" will be the ceremony's logo.

Roudhan says this theme has been chosen to shed light on irrational consumption of water and applying methods and techniques for re-using the water. The international day had been designated according to a UN General Assembly's resolution on December 22, 1992.



Kuwait, situated at the north of the Gulf, largely depends on desalinated water pumped from the sea. There are advanced networks securing drinking water for the houses, factories and other facilities as well as for irrigating plants and trees. — KUNA

KUWAIT CONTINUES TO DELIVER HUMANITARIAN AID WORLDWIDE

KUWAIT: Kuwait continued to deliver humanitarian aid to people in need and fund developmental projects in Asia and Africa this past week. In Yemen, a Kuwaiti campaign launched a project offering shelter aid to displaced Yemenis from governorates of Al-Hudaydah and Ta'iz in Al-Buraiqah Directorate, west of Aden. The campaign aims to secure food, water, education and housing Aid was delivered to 150 people, out of 1,200 targeted by the campaign, the Yemeni-Kuwaiti Relief Agency said in a statement.

Meanwhile in Iraq, Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) distributed a total of 60,000 liters of fuel to cover the needs of 3,000 displaced Iraqi families, who recently arrived to Mosul's refugee camps. KRCS also financed the surgical procedures and treatments for Iraqis who sustained wounds during the ongoing military operations against the so-called Islamic State (IS) in parts of Mosul.

Moreover, Kuwait's Al-Najat Charity has financed the digging of ten wells in Irbil to provide water for displaced Iraqis. Kuwait also continued to provide financial aid as part of its campaign to sponsor and support 4,000 orphans in Iraq's Kurdistan.

As for Lebanon, KRCS delivered 500 food parcels to 400 Syrian refugee families in the northernmost region of Akkar.

In Turkey, Kuwait's International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Turkey's Red Crescent on building joint strategic partnership to aid the poor and needy in war-torn countries.

Meanwhile, during the Syria's Developmental Vistas Conference held in Istanbul, Kuwait's Al-Rahma International and Turkey's "Ataa charity for relief and development" agreed on establishing a \$3 million fund to support small Syrian enterprises. In Somalia, the International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO) distributed 18,000 food parcels to 3,050 families suffering from food shortage resulting from drought. IICO President Abdullah Al-Matoug said the campaign comes in response to an appeal for helping the victims of famine in the northern, eastern and southern parts of the East African country.

In Egypt, the Egyptian Government and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed the second loan accord, worth KD 18.5 million (\$55 million). The agreement is designed to contribute to financing construction of a sea water desalination plant in East Port Said. The two sides also inked a grant worth KD 100,000 to fund a project for organic and biodynamic agriculture in North Sinai. — KUNA



Kuwait delivers humanitarian aid to refugees in Lebanon.



Kuwait delivers humanitarian aid to the Yemeni people.

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- Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK + free Camera Bag.
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TURKEY EYES GREATER ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH KUWAIT: OFFICIAL

ANKARA: Turkey is looking forward towards beefing up economic, trade, and investment cooperation with Kuwait, said Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek. In an interview, Simsek underlined the need for a free trade agreement to better benefit from the great potential of both countries. The Turkish official made a long list of sectors that could be the focus of fruitful cooperation and joint investments.

Agriculture, water, energy, Islamic finance, textile and garment industry, engineering consultancy, petroleum, petrochemical and furniture industry, food production, contracting services, building materials production, construction, tourism and banking sectors all could be areas for cooperation between the two countries, Simsek said. He noted that the Turkish-Kuwaiti relations have seen remarkable development over the last decade thanks to the reciprocal visits of senior officials from both countries, at the levels of leaders or ministers, senior officials and business people. The distinguished relations between Turkey and Kuwait have been translated into 41 agreements, numerous protocols and memoranda of understanding for cooperation in a wide array of domains, he boasted.

Simsek stressed that the relations between Turkey and Kuwait are not confined to the economic aspect, but they are multi-faceted. The culture relations between the two nations are deeply rooted and currently flourishing, he said. On trade relations, he estimated that the volume of trade exchange between the two country have risen three times from \$165.6 million in 2002 to nearly \$700 million in 2016.

The deputy primer identified mineral products, machinery, equipment, food, beverages, clothing, textiles, and

petroleum products as the main Turkish exports to Kuwait and chemical products and furniture as most important Kuwaiti exports to Turkey. Furthermore, the number of Kuwaiti tourists visiting Turkey have been steadily growing over the recent years from 8,000 in 2002 to 180,000 in 2016, despite the terror incidents that took place in Turkey in 2016, he clarified. He said that this remarkable development portends a brighter and more fruitful future for cooperation in this sector.

In the same vein, Simsek said that the number of Kuwaitis who possess houses, apartments and several properties have been climbing in recent years. Up to 1,744 Kuwaitis bought properties in Turkey last year making them the biggest third foreign nationals who own property in Turkey after both the Iraqis and the Saudis, he disclosed.

He pointed out that there are 271 Kuwaiti companies and firms operating in Turkey since 2004 mainly in the financial, real estate, commercial and industrial sectors with total investments estimated at \$2 billion.

Simsek described Kuwait as one of the most important economic partners of Turkey in the Gulf region. Since 2005, Kuwait has set a list of investment objectives of both countries, he said, adding that Turkey is greatly interested in investment opportunities and privatization plans in Kuwait.

Turkish companies are currently executing 30 projects in Kuwait, including the \$6.3 billion-worth project of developing Kuwait international airport, he said. He viewed the joint investments as the engine of cooperation relations between Turkey and Kuwait. Simsek concluded that the current level of cooperation between the two countries is admirable, hoping relation would evolve more to reach the new height. — KUNA



Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Simsek

GCC CITIZENS SPEND NEARLY \$100 BILLION ON TOURISM ABROAD

MINISTER HIGHLIGHTS NEED TO ENCOURAGE KUWAITI YOUTH INTO TOURISM

KUWAIT: Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) citizens spend nearly \$100 billion annually on tourism abroad, including around \$12 billion spent by Kuwaitis alone, a Kuwaiti minister said yesterday. This situation is draining regional resources, and also calls for changes to make the region more attractive for domestic tourism, said Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information.

Encouraging Kuwaiti youth to take part in developmental proj-

ects in tourism and various related sectors helps achieve that goal, the minister said. He made his statements in a press release made available to the press yesterday on the occasion of the first Youth and Tourism Forum. The event is due to be organized by the Information Ministry's tourism sector in collaboration with leaders Group Company for Consultancy and Development on the 27th and 28th of March 2017. "In view of many changes in regional and international tourism maps, this calls for a stand to pre-

pare Kuwait to join the list of regional and international tourism destinations," he said.

Abdullah stressed that tourism would provide various job opportunities for Kuwaiti youth and help them start small and medium projects and initiatives in tourism and hospitality. "The forum also coincides with celebrating the Arab League's declaration of Kuwait as The Capital of the Youth in 2017; an accolade earned due to the great care Kuwait shows to youth," he added, noting that this goes in line with the UN's new strategy to empower youth in sustainable development for 2030.



Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah

KUWAITI-TURKISH ECONOMIC RELATION BOOMING: ECONOMIST

KUWAIT: With two Turkish companies on the helm of multibillion dollars projects in Kuwait, it seems that the economic relation between the two countries is booming. The Kolin group will be building the infrastructure of the future South Al-Mutlaa residential city, while Limak Company will be building Terminal II of Kuwait International Airport.

While trade exchange between Turkey and Kuwait did not exceed \$100 million over a decade ago, the new development in commercial and economic ties will usher a new age of mutual benefit and prosperity.

Economic relations and cooperation between Kuwait and Turkey cover investment, real estate, trade and industry, said Khaled Al-Khaled, board member of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) and member of Kuwait-Turkey Joint Committee. Khaled said Kuwait-Turkish economic relations were 'very limited' 15 years ago but developed rapidly in recent years due to the two leaderships' desire to push forward relations and cooperation to new levels. He said KCCI played an important role towards the development of relations, particularly in real estate sector. The development of trade exchange between Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) increased by more than 20 folds over the past 10 years, he said.

Khaled said joint investments between Kuwait and Turkey ranged between \$200-300 million 15 years ago, but exceeded \$200 billion now. A large number of Kuwaitis, he added, were investing in real estate in Turkey and were among the first five real estate foreign investors

in the country. Khaled said there were more than 80 Kuwaiti companies investing in different sectors in Turkey, like banks, Islamic banking, retail and shopping malls. Banking sectors in the two countries join hands and Kuvayt-Turk Bank was established in 1989. The bank, an affiliate of Kuwait Finance House (KFH), has 387 branches. Kuwait's Burgan Bank launched its operations in

Turkey in 2013 through acquisition of Eurobank Tekfenbank. Turkey is the 14th largest exporter to Kuwait, sending KD 37.7 million (\$120 million) worth of goods in the fourth quarter of 2016, according to Kuwait statistics department. Kuwait is Turkey's 15th largest exporter with around KD six million (\$19 million) in the same period. —KUNA



An artist's rendition of Terminal II of Kuwait International Airport, a project carried out by Turkey's Limak Company.

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Crime

Report

2.5 KG HEROIN SMUGGLING BID FOILED

KUWAIT: Correctional facilities' security forces recently managed to foil an attempt to smuggle a large quantity of heroin into Kuwait's central prison. The smuggling attempt happened when an inmate doing time over drug-related charges managed to swap shoes with someone while being transferred to a court. The new pair of shoes contained 2.5 kilograms of the drug that were hidden in it, according to police.

Domestic violence

A woman living in Nugra recently pressed physical assault charges against her own husband, saying that he beat her because she was late in preparing his breakfast, according to him. A case was filed for investigations, and the husband is being summoned for questioning.

Car theft

A citizen recently reported that a vehicle was stolen from outside of his house in Al-Qusour, said security sources. Patrol officers that he came out in the morning to discover that his luxury vehicle that he had parked outside his house the night before was missing. Investigations are ongoing.

Fugitive caught

An Arab man was recently arrested on arrival at Kuwait International Airport where passport officers discovered that he is wanted for several cases filed against him. The man was taken to the proper authorities for further action.

Liquor possession

Two Asian nationals, including one with an expired residency visa, were recently arrested in Ahmadi with possession of 62 homebrewed liquor bottles, said security sources. Patrol officers had suspected a vehicle in Mahboula, so they ordered the driver to pull over then searched his vehicle where the liquor was found. The suspects were taken to the proper authorities to face charges.

Officer insulted

A citizen faces charges of insulting a public officer on duty after a policeman accused him of verbal assault. The policeman had issued a ticket for a violating driver; who insulted him then drove away, according to the policeman's statements to police. A case was filed and the suspect is being summoned for questioning.

Maid charged with theft

A female citizen recently filed a complaint against her housemaid, accusing her of stealing jewelry worth KD 3,200 from her bedroom then disappearing. A case was filed and detectives were assigned to look for the run-away maid.

Drunks attack police

Two citizens were recently arrested for barging into Um Al-Haiman police station while being heavily drunk, and then assaulting a police officer there, said security sources. "We want to get our Bangladeshi worker out," the suspects reportedly told policemen. When asked about which person they meant, they answered by saying "we don't know." The two then assaulted a policeman before they were placed under arrest. — *Translated from the Arabic press*



PRICE OF EXPATS' MEDICINE

By Hassan Al-Essa

Instead of suggesting fees on expats' remittances and making them pay the price of medicine, let us demand deporting them all without any exceptions, and let us then see how this country of inactivity would live without their services. Let us see how high garbage piles will rise outside villas and buildings and how teaching will become in public and private school that mainly relying on dictation and memorizing. Let us just imagine how hospitals and polyclinics would keep functioning without foreign doctors and nurses.

Let us also imagine who will ever replace deported expat construction workers and various technicians; how various state administrations will work when we do away with them; how our houses would look like without seeing a Filipina or Sri Lankan housemaid following a housewife, holding hands of obese children in various malls and co-ops, and how our houses would look like without cooks, maids and private drivers!

Just imagine evicting two thirds of Kuwait's residents - the population of expats. What will happen to this state and its institutions? Let us just discuss the term 'marginal laborers' everybody is calling to deport nowadays. What is the definition of marginal laborer? Is it those people who add nothing to the process of production? If so, and out of justice, we ought to use the term to describe marginal citizens who add nothing to production, who are nothing but a burden created by our revenue policies. Who will be marginal then - those providing the service or the served ones?!

There is already a dreadful fact about disgraceful visa trafficking done by some 'untouchable' people beyond accountability simply because they are citizens who know all the ins and outs of corruption throughout state monitoring apparatuses and know how to avoid and manipulate some forgotten laws. However, the game of visa trafficking is but one example of endless corruption in various state institutions, and ending it will not resolve the issue of expat labor or end our state of reliance.

The consequences of most political and economic crises usually affect the weakest joints of any society, and thus burdens are shifted from those politically stronger to the weaker - those who have nobody to defend them except for some human rights activists, which, in our case, is an effort lost amidst an endless state of egoism and narcissism in Kuwait. Expats are being blamed for all economic problems after the fall in oil prices, which is very important in terms of making popular gains by people keen on winning the blessings, support and approval of a large segment of citizens by misleading them.

The majority of expats are not here as tourists enjoying Kuwait's charming nature or historical landmarks. They are here to do certain jobs, which in most cases, citizens refuse or are even incapable of doing themselves. According to local daily Al-Qabas, 83 percent of expat laborers do not hold any university degrees. So, what do those who wrote the report expect? Do they want NASA scientists and experts to serve in their houses and clean their streets?!

Resolving the demographic problem after oil resources are starting to dry up will not be through political showing off, by shameful, disgraceful proposals and statements made by some lawmakers or by practices the government encourages and then fails to control. The solution is unachievable without exposing this fakery and deception dominating the entire state, without changing the concepts of work and school curricula and radically democratizing everything so that we can make a new reliable generation capable of building. There are no other solutions and this is a huge challenge we believe we are currently incapable of facing. — *Translated by Kuwait Times*

Al-Jarida

FINGERS READY, I AM IN BED!

By Mudaffar Abdullah

News flash: The resignation of a corrupt official without holding him accountable is corruption in itself. According to the new fiscal year budget, state employees' wages reached KD 10.7 billion, that is 55 percent of total public expenditure and 70 percent if we add subsidies citizens receive.

I am mentioning these figures to discuss an administrative concern that has been dominating the minds of most ministers - using fingerprint machines to time employees checking in and out. Such handling of the issue of being present at offices reflects severe shortsightedness and a misleading concept that fingerprints force employees to show up to work. It is one big deceptive trick ministers have been using to cover up their incapability to face fake employment and the weakness of monitoring and accountability in state apparatuses, which made total wages reach the astronomical figure mentioned above.

If only employment was done according to work needs instead of being socio-politically motivated, the state administrative body would not have become so flabby that the Amiri Diwan now has to do constructions and contracting instead of ministries! Ministers' failure to stop illusionary employment and stacking unnecessary employees is the real problem that ought to be resolved before using fingerprints, and not vice versa. This reminds us of the endless number of employees former information minister Mohammed Al-Sanoussi discovered on coming to office, which made him lay off 800 employees receiving monthly payments while already employed in other ministries!

The funny thing here, and as a former government

Ministers' failure to stop illusionary employment and stacking unnecessary employees is the real problem

employee myself, I found out that some employees manage to circumvent the fingerprint device by touching it in the morning and going out on the streets or going back to bed, then return to touch it again, which exposes what senior officials wish to hide. Thousands of Kuwaiti employees have no real jobs to do. Meanwhile, claims that the fingerprint devices, which are worth millions of dinars, can control production rates, are nothing but a bluff! — *Translated by Kuwait times*

KIB SPONSORS 22ND ECONOMY MAKERS AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES EXHIBITION

KUWAIT: As part of its social responsibility strategy focused on supporting and encouraging young local talents, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently sponsored the 22nd Economy Makers and Career Opportunities Exhibition, which was organized by the College of Business Administration at Kuwait University. The exhibition aimed to provide young professionals with suitable job opportunities within the local job market in line with their specialties, allowing them to form a comprehensive outlook into work in various sectors.

KIB's silver sponsorship reflected its continued commitment to provide support to young professionals by taking part in various student-focused initiatives and activities. The bank continuously seeks to empower young local talents, whether newly

graduated or soon-to-graduate students, by fostering their creative energies and encouraging them on their career path. KIB is also keen on providing them with career opportunities to contribute to the development of the nation across all sectors.

Nigel Holmes, General Manager of Human Resources Department, stated: "We are proud of the role we play in nurturing and empowering the exceptional potential of this country's aspiring local talents and young professionals, as well as motivating them to work in the local banking sector, given that it is one of the key economic sectors in Kuwait. The Bank actively invests in



Nigel Holmes

and supports the nation's future workforce, stemming from our belief that this workforce represents the true wealth of a great nation."

KIB participates in various youth-focused initiatives throughout the year, focusing particularly on career and student fairs in an effort to attract young local talents into the banking sector.

KIB will continue to encourage the youth segment in Kuwait through participating in various activities that help improve and advance capabilities of local youth, to ensure that they are provided with the best opportunities available.



ZAIN GOLD SPONSOR OF KUWAIT'S FIRST CALL CENTERS FORUM



KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its participation and gold sponsorship of Kuwait's First Call Centers Forum in partnership with the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Public Authority for Civil Information. The event witnessed the attendance of Chairman of the Public Authority for Communications and Information Technology Salem Al-Othaina.

During the forum, Zain's Contact Center Department showcased the company's leading experience in the customer care sector through its Contact Center (107), which is considered one of the leading contact centers in the region, and serves the largest customer base in Kuwait.

Zain discussed the training programs that it provides its new Contact Center agents with, including how to serve customers' needs efficiently, as well as providing them with the core quality standards to ensure customer service excellence. The company follows the highest international quality standards to help strengthen the workflow mechanism within its workforces to ultimately result in the excellent service quality Zain customers enjoy today.

Kuwait's First Call Centers Forum aimed at showcasing and discussing the latest challenges faced by the call centers sector around the world. Participating experts jointly explored the possible solutions and innovations that can further develop this vital sector locally as well as globally.

It is worth noting that Zain was awarded with the Call Center Excellence award as part of Kuwait's Public Relations and Customer Service Prize during 2015. The prize, hosted by the Kuwait Public Relations Association, came under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

ZAIN AWARDED WITH HSE PERFORMANCE AWARD

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, was awarded with the tenth Health, Safety and Environment Performance Award for the third time. The annual award, hosted by Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), aims at shedding light on sustainable projects, initiatives, and achievements undertaken by Kuwait's public and private organizations.

KNPC's yearly award aims at raising health, safety and environment standards in Kuwait, while recognizing the distinguished contributions of Kuwait's key players in the fields of sustainable business, whether from the private or the public sectors.

Zain was awarded with this year's tenth Performance Award for a number of HSE initiatives and programs the company launched and supported during 2016. As part of the health sector, Zain was recognized for its annual Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign, internal blood donation drives in partnership with the

Central Blood Bank, humanitarian visit to Lebanon in partnership with the Kuwait Red Crescent Society to provide health supplies to Syrian refugees, Zain's Mobile Diabetes Clinic in partnership with Dasman Diabetes Institute, sponsoring the "Friends of Hearts" marathon in partnership with the Chest Diseases Hospital, hosting the National Campaign for Vaccination Against Infectious Respiratory Diseases in partnership with the Ministry of Health, and more.

As part of the environment sector, Zain was recognized for its internal recycling initiative in partnership with Omnia, sponsoring Kayak 4 Kuwait awareness expedition to raise awareness about the importance of preserving marine life in the Arabian Gulf, supporting the Kuwait Dive Team, and sponsoring an environmental campaign in partnership with the Environment Public Authority (EPA), and more.

Zain, being one of the region's

top leaders in Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability, expressed its utmost pride in this latest achievement, which it attained for the third time, adding to the long list of achievements it obtained by being a socially responsible company with a clear and firm CSSR strategy.

During January 2017, Zain was proudly awarded with the Golden Medal for Excellence in Corporate Sustainability on the Arab Region level. The accolade came as part of the Arab Organization for Social Responsibility's 11th awards held in Dubai. The award, attained by Zain for the third time, recognized the company's series of social contributions and programs during the year 2016. The company's long list of initiatives and campaigns, which came in line with its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy, had a deep positive impact on the many sectors of the community.



**Blasphemy charges:
 Climate of fear for
 Pakistani media**

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US AND CHINA TO COOPERATE ON 'DANGEROUS' N KOREA SITUATION

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WASHINGTON DC: US President Donald Trump and German Chancellor Angela Merkel hold a joint press conference in the East Room of the White House in Washington, DC. —AFP

TRUMP AND MERKEL SHOW LITTLE RAPPORT

FROM FAKE NEWS TO HANDSHAKES, LEADERS REMAIN CAUTIOUS

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump and German Chancellor Angela Merkel tried to sidestep their differences, but some awkward moments punctuated their first public appearance. During a photo op in the Oval Office on Friday, the two did not shake hands before reporters. Later, during a joint news conference, Trump pushed back against the notion in Europe that his "America First" agenda means he's an isolationist, calling such a suggestion "another example of, as you say, fake news." And he referred to the United States as "a very powerful company," before quickly correcting that to "country."

When a German reporter asked Trump if he regrets any of his commentary on Twitter, Trump said, "Very seldom." Merkel maintained her composure even when Trump repeated his contention that former President Barack Obama may have tapped his phones in Trump Tower. He sought to turn the explosive charge into a light joke when asked about concerns raised by the British government that the White House is now citing a debunked claim that UK spies spied on Trump.

"At least we have something in common, perhaps," Trump said casually, referring to 2013 reports that the US was monitoring Merkel's cellphone conversations. As for the most recent

report, Trump said he shouldn't be blamed for quoting a Fox News analyst who had accused British intelligence of helping Obama spy on him.

Economic issues

When the subject turned to economic issues, Merkel attempted to project a conciliatory approach. She said the "success of Germans has always been one where the German success is one side of the coin and the other side of the coin has been European unity and European integration. That's something of which I'm deeply convinced."

Those comments appeared aimed at making a case to Trump on the benefits of the European Union. Trump backed Britain's departure from the EU and has expressed skepticism of multilateral trade agreements. The two leaders tried to express their common bonds but showed minimal rapport in their first encounter, a departure from Merkel's warm relations with Obama during his eight years as president. At the start of the news conference, Merkel sought to break the ice, saying that it was "much better to talk to one another than about one another."

Merkel said delicately that while she represents German interests, Trump "stands up for, as is right, American interests. That is our task

respectively." She said they were "trying to address also those areas where we disagree but tried to bring people together." "We need to be fair with each other," Merkel said, saying both countries were expecting "that something good comes out of it for their own people."

The meetings at the White House included discussions on strengthening NATO, fighting the Islamic State group, the conflict in Afghanistan and resolving Ukraine's conflict, all matters that require close cooperation between the US and Germany. The talks, postponed from Tuesday because of a snowstorm, aimed to represent a restart of a relationship complicated by Trump's rhetoric on the campaign trail. As a candidate, Trump frequently accused the chancellor of "ruining" Germany for allowing an influx of refugees and other migrants from Syria and accused his campaign rival, Hillary Clinton, of wanting to be "America's Angela Merkel."

Fair share from NATO

During the news conference, Trump predicted that a new health care law would be passed by a substantial margin and "pretty quickly," expressing optimism for his top legislative priority. The new president reaffirmed the United States' "strong

support" for NATO but reiterated his stance that NATO allies need to "pay their fair share" for the cost of defense. Trump said many countries owe "vast sums of money" but he declined to identify Germany as one of the nations.

Prior to his inauguration, Trump declared NATO "obsolete" but has since modified his stance, telling European leaders the alliance remains of strategic importance. Only the US and four other members currently reach the benchmark of spending 2 percent of

GDP on defense. Germany currently spends 1.23 percent of its GDP on defense, but it is being increased. Both leaders pointed to their work on the conflict in Afghanistan and efforts to combat terrorism. When the topic moved to trade, Trump said the US would do "fantastically well" in its trade relations with Germany. The president has been deeply critical of foreign trade and national security agreements but suggested he was only trying to revise trade deals to better serve US interests, rather than pull

back from the world entirely. Trump said trade agreements have led to greater trade deficits. The US trade deficit with Germany was \$64.9 billion last year, the lowest since 2009, according to the Commerce Department. "The negotiators for Germany have done a far better job than the negotiators for the United States, but hopefully we can even it out. We don't want victory, we want fairness," Trump said. Merkel emphasized the need for trade deals that fairly benefit both countries. —AP

HILLARY CLINTON 'READY TO COME OUT OF THE WOODS'

SCRANTON: Hillary Clinton said Friday she's "ready to come out of the woods" and help Americans find common ground. Clinton's gradual return to the public spotlight following her presidential election loss continued with a St Patrick's Day speech in her late father's Pennsylvania hometown of Scranton. "I'm like a lot of my friends right now, I have a hard time watching the news," Clinton told an Irish women's group.

But she urged a divided country to work together to

solve problems, recalling how, as first lady, she met with female leaders working to bring peace to Northern Ireland. "What can we do to try to bring people together and to try to find that common ground, even higher ground, sister, so that we listen to each other again and we know that we can make a difference? I'm not sure it will come out of Washington yet, but I think it can come out of Scranton. Let's find ways to do that," she told the Society of Irish Women. "I am ready to come out of the woods and to help

shine a light on what is already happening around kitchen tables, at dinners like this, to help draw strength that will enable everybody to keep going," said Clinton, who was spotted taking a walk in the woods around her hometown of Chappaqua, New York, two days after losing the election to Donald Trump. Friday night's speech is one of several she is to deliver in the coming months, including a May 26 commencement address at her alma mater, Wellesley College in Massachusetts. The Democrat also is working on a book of personal essays that will include some reflections on her loss to Donald Trump.

Clinton was received warmly in Scranton, where her grandfather worked in a lace mill. Her father left Scranton for Chicago in search of work during the Great Depression, but returned often. — AP

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IRAN MP CRITICIZES GUARDS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ARRESTS

TEHRAN: Iranian MPs have criticized the arrests of journalists and social media organizers ahead of the presidential election in May, with one directly accusing the elite Revolutionary Guards in a letter published yesterday. The arrests in recent days are alleged to have targeted unnamed people who run channels on the popular messaging site Telegram supporting reformists and the moderate government of President Hassan Rouhani.

Two prominent journalists-Ehsan Mazandarani and Morad Saghafi-have also been detained. Mahmoud Sadeghi, a reformist MP, wrote an open letter to Revolutionary Guards commander

Mohammad-Ali Jafari, calling on the organization to stay out of politics. "Some incidents in recent days, including the simultaneous arrests of managers of Telegram channels with close associations to reformists and supporters of the government, which has apparently been done by the intelligence arm of the Sepah (Revolutionary Guards), has raised a wave of concern in society," Sadeghi wrote in the letter published by the ILNA news agency.

Several other MPs have also criticized the arrests in open letters this week. Outspoken moderate-conservative MP Ali Motehary threatened to seek the impeachment of the intelligence minister if he did

not provide details of the arrests. The Revolutionary Guards operate their own intelligence wing independently of the government and answerable only to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Rouhani, who will seek re-election on May 19, has united moderates and reformists with his efforts to improve relations with the West, despite largely failing to win the release of jailed opposition leaders or improve civil rights as he promised during the 2013 campaign. Telegram, which has an estimated 20 million users in Iran, has become the leading site for political and cultural discussions in a country where Facebook and Twitter are banned.

The authorities have tried to control the site, demanding that channels with more than 5,000 followers register with the government. A reformist newspaper also reported yesterday that Faezeh Hashemi, daughter of revolutionary founder Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, had again been sentenced to six months for "spreading falsehoods" after she accused the judiciary of corruption. Hashemi, a vocal supporter of opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi during the mass protests that followed the disputed 2009 election, previously served six months in jail for "disrupting public opinion" in 2012-13. — AFP



HOMS: Families of opposition fighters sits in a bus, following their evacuation from the rebel-held Waer neighborhood in the central city of Homs yesterday, during the first phase of the Russian-supervised deal to complete the evacuation of fighters and civilians. — AFP

HUNDREDS QUIT LAST REBEL DISTRICT OF SYRIA'S HOMS

'NOT A SINGLE WEAPON OR FIGHTER WILL BE LEFT IN WAER'

HOMS: Nearly 1,500 people, mostly civilians, left the last opposition-held district of Homs yesterday under a controversial Russian-supervised deal to bring Syria's third city under full government control. The evacuation of Waer, a northwestern district of the city that has been under siege by the army for years, is the latest in a series of "reconciliation" deals struck by the government that the rebels say amount to starving them out.

It comes ahead of a new round of UN-brokered talks that open in Geneva on Thursday in an attempt to end the conflict that has killed more than 320,000 people and driven millions from their homes. Thousands are expected to leave Waer in the coming weeks in the final phase of the evacuation agreement, which had stalled in recent months. An AFP correspondent saw a first wave of three green buses carrying civilians including children as well as dozens of fighters, their rifles slung over their shoulders.

Throughout the day, women and children munching on pieces of bread lined up to load their luggage onto the buses, while men appeared to go through extra screening in separate lines. Stern-looking Russian forces looked on, wearing green fatigues with black bullet-proof vests emblazoned with the word "Police" on the front.

"Syrian police, Russian military police and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent will protect the

convoys and accompany them from Homs into Aleppo province," Homs governor Talal Barazi told AFP. Barazi said evacuations were over for Saturday and that a total of 1,479 people-including 423 rebels-had left. "Not a single weapon or fighter will be left in Waer," he said, adding that about 40,000 residents were expected to stay in the district.

12,000 expected to leave

Three waves of rebels and their families had already left Waer under an agreement first reached in December 2015, but subsequent evacuations stalled. In a new deal reached last week, government and rebel representatives agreed that up to 100 Russian troops would deploy inside Waer to oversee the final phase of evacuations.

"Russia is a guarantor of the Waer agreement's implementation and will monitor its execution," said the Russian colonel overseeing the operation. "Russian forces came to Syria for this to help their friends and allow people to live safely in this country again." Moscow is a decades-old ally of the Damascus regime, and in September 2015 launched an air campaign in support of President Bashar al-Assad's forces.

That backing has helped government forces recapture swathes of territory, including the whole of second city Aleppo as well as the famed

desert city of Palmyra. Under the agreement, evacuees will be bussed to opposition-held parts of Homs province, the rebel-held town of Jarabulus on the Syrian-Turkish border or the northwestern province of Idlib.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights estimates that a total of 12,000 people, 2,500 of them rebels, will leave under the deal. Over the past month, government forces have stepped up their bombardment of the district, killing dozens of people, the Britain-based monitoring group said. No aid has reached Waer in at least four months. A UN convoy tried to gain access to the district in February but it was seized by gunmen who diverted the assistance to a government-held area. The government has agreed "reconciliation" deals for several rebel-held areas, and touts such agreements that grant safe passage to surrendering fighters as key to ending six years of war. But rebels say they are forced into such deals by siege and bombardment, and the UN has sharply criticized them.

The most notorious of the agreements was the December evacuation of the rebel-held east Aleppo after months of government siege. The UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria earlier this month said the deal "amounts to the war crime of forced displacement of the civilian population" because it had left civilians with "no option to remain". — AFP

IRAQI FORCES NEAR MOSUL MOSQUE WHERE IS DECLARED ITS 'CALIPHATE'

MOSUL: Elite Iraqi forces said they were battling house by house in the Old City of Mosul yesterday, inching towards the mosque where the Islamic State group proclaimed its "caliphate" in 2014. Iraq began an operation on February 19 to retake west Mosul, which is the last major Islamic State group urban bastion in the country and includes the Old City. Commanders said that progress in the densely populated warren of alleyways was slow, but that government forces had made new gains from IS in the ancient central district.

"Our forces are 800 meters (yards) from the mosque," said Captain Firas Al-Zuwaidi, spokesman for the interior ministry's elite Rapid Response Force. He was referring to the Al-Nuri Mosque, where IS leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi declared the cross-border "caliphate" spanning jihadist-controlled territory in Iraq and Syria in his sole public appearance in July 2014. "We are encountering difficulties-bad weather and streets too narrow for our military vehicles which cannot enter," Zuwaidi said. "The fighting is street by street, house by house," he said, as the sound of mortar fire rang out from the heart of Iraq's second city.

The battle for the Old City was always expected to be the toughest of the campaign to retake Mosul from IS, further complicated by the presence of hundreds of thousands of civilians believed to have stayed on under jihadist rule.

'Hump of western operations'

Iraqi forces in January retook the east of the city, which is divided by the Tigris River, before setting their sights on its smaller but more densely populated west bank. The Old City lies at the heart of west Mosul. Emily Anagnostos, an analyst from the Institute for the Study of War think tank, said the current phase of the operation was a delicate one.

"This stage is the hump of western operations that the ISF (Iraqi security forces) needs to get over without incurring significant ISF or civilian casualties," she said. "ISIS resistance is tough in this

area, the streets are too narrow for large vehicles, and the weather is poor. ISIS is exploiting these factors as part of their defence," Anagnostos said, using an alternative acronym for IS. The Rapid Response Force is being backed up by the federal police who have made steady gains in recent days.

They have now taken the Al-Arbaa market and a grain silo overlooking the Old City, federal police commander Lieutenant General Raed Shakir Jawdat said yesterday. That came after Jawdat announced the capture of the Al-Basha Mosque and the Bab Al-Saray market on Friday. "The federal police and the Rapid Response Force led a surprise attack and besieged Daesh cells in the Old City, killing 13 of them with grenades," Jawdat said, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

Civilians evacuated

Iraqi forces had already taken a string of key targets in west Mosul, including the airport, the train station, Mosul Museum and the provincial government headquarters. The fall of Mosul, Iraq's second city, would be a major setback for IS following months of losses in Iraq and neighboring Syria. Iraqi authorities launched the fight to retake Mosul from the jihadists on October 17 last year, with the support of the US-led coalition that launched strikes against IS in Iraq and neighboring Syria in 2014.

Jawdat said yesterday the federal police had evacuated civilians in the vicinity of the Old City. More than 150,000 people have fled their homes in west Mosul, the Iraqi authorities say, of which two-thirds have found shelter in camps near the city where they receive food, blankets and foam mattresses. The United Nations has warned that the exodus of tens of thousands of west Mosul residents could overwhelm aid groups trying to help them. Lise Grande, the UN's humanitarian coordinator in Iraq, has said that any increase in the pace of the exodus could stretch aid groups "to the breaking point". — AFP



MOSUL: Iraqi forces, consisting of the Iraqi federal police and the elite Rapid Response Division, advance in a house in the Old City in western Mosul on March 17, 2017, during the offensive to retake the city from Islamic State (IS) group fighters. — AFP

LEBANON RESCUES 3 SIBERIAN TIGER CUBS EN ROUTE TO SYRIA

BEIRUT: An animal rights group in Lebanon is caring for three dehydrated, maggot-infested Siberian tiger cubs that were rescued on their way to a zoo in neighboring war-ravaged Syria. Animals Lebanon said yesterday that its members rescued the cubs earlier this week after they had spent more than a week cooped up inside a cramped crate in "unacceptable" conditions at the Beirut airport.

The cubs flew into Lebanon from Ukraine on March 7 and were supposed to travel on to a zoo in neighboring Syria. Instead, due to apparent confusion about their travel arrangements, they spent a week inside the wooden crate at the Beirut airport, said Animals Lebanon's Vice President Maggie Shaarawi. "Everything was wrong. There was no tray in the crate for when they urinate. They were swimming in their faeces

and urine. There was no bowl for water," Shaarawi told AFP.

Images published by Animals Lebanon show the weak cubs, covered in maggots and feces, squirming in the small crate as volunteers from the group work to crack open the box. The crate is screwed together, with just small holes for ventilation. Its volume is barely a third of a cubic meter, according to the NGO.

When the group heard about the shipment, they began petitioning the Ministry of Agriculture to investigate the conditions and apply relevant international and Lebanese conventions. In July, Lebanon's Agriculture Ministry issued a decree to stop the trafficking of big cats-like lions, tigers, and pumas-and force zoos to register formally.

Lebanon has also been a member of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), which regulates the trade of exotic animals, since 2013. After a week at the airport, Judge Hasan Hamdan ordered the cubs to be released to Animals Lebanon "because of significant concerns for their health and welfare," the group said.

"It took the combined efforts of the ministry of agriculture, customs, and a judge to stop this shipment," said Animals Lebanon president Lana el-Khalil. "It is completely unacceptable that these animals have been trapped for seven days in a cage which is soaked in faeces and urine, too small for them to stand, and infested with maggots." AFP obtained a copy of the CITES permit licensing a "private entrepreneur" in Ukraine with the export of the cubs to the "Samer Alehsenawi Zoo" outside Damascus. — AFP



BEIRUT: A handout picture made available yesterday by the NGO "Animals Lebanon" shows Siberian tiger cubs inside a crate at Beirut's airport after they were rescued, as they were on their way to a zoo in neighboring war-ravaged Syria. — AFP

CANADIAN GOVT APOLOGIZES TO CITIZENS TORTURED IN SYRIA

OTTAWA: The Canadian government on Friday formally apologized in a statement to three of its citizens who were tortured in Syria, which Canadian officials allegedly played an indirect role in. The government said it had settled civil suits with three Canadian nationals-Abdullah Al Malki, Ahmad Abou Elmaati and Muayyed Nureddin-who were arrested and tortured in Syrian custody just after the 9/11 attacks and detained until 2004.

"On behalf of the Government of Canada, we wish to apologize to Mr Al Malki, Mr Abou-Elmaati and Mr Nureddin, and their families, for any role Canadian officials may have played in relation to their detention and mistreatment abroad and any resulting harm," read a statement from the country's public safety minister Ralph Goodale and the foreign minister Chrystia Freeland.

The statement did not divulge the nature of the agreement reached. Amnesty International welcomed the

news and said the settlement included financial compensation. Released in 2004 without charges against them, the trio sued the Canadian government for damages. This past September Canada's CBC news network obtained exclusive documents showing that Canadian officials had fed Syrian officials questions they asked the men who were detained and tortured. "We hope the steps taken today will support them and their families in their efforts to begin a new and hopeful chapter in their lives," the Canadian ministers' statement read.

In a similar case, Canadian computer engineer Maher Arar was tortured in a Damascus prison in 2002, after he was transferred there by US officials based on a Canadian tip-off. But Arar was later cleared of any suspicion by the Canadian authorities, and in January 2007 won an apology from Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Can\$10 million in compensation from the Canadian government. — AFP

HOW A SCHOOL BOMB-SCARE CASE SPARKED A MEDIA-VS.-FBI FIGHT

WASHINGTON: The young hacker was told in no uncertain terms: You are safe with me. "I am not trying to find out your true identity," AP journalist Norm Weatherill assured the teenager in an online chat. "As a member of the Press, I would rather not know who you are as writers are not allowed to reveal their sources."

But Norm Weatherill was no reporter. He was FBI agent Norman B. Sanders Jr., and the whole conversation was a trap. Within hours, police descended on the 15-year-old hacker's home and led him away in handcuffs for making a week and a half of emailed bomb threats at his high school in Washington state. He eventually confessed and was sentenced to 90 days in a juvenile detention center.

The 2007 bust would put an end to the bomb scares and save graduation at the school but would also raise a troubling question that is unanswered to this day: How often do FBI agents impersonate members of the news media? The answer is important, says one expert who played a key role in revealing the bureau's subterfuge, because sources need to know journalists won't turn them in.

"Journalists play a very similar role to doctors in our society in that we trust them," Christopher Soghoian, former chief technologist at the American Civil Liberties Union, said earlier this year. "And without trust they cannot operate."

Two weeks ago, a federal judge rejected a lawsuit from The Associated Press and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press demanding more detail from the FBI about the practice of posing as journalists. The two media organizations are appealing.

'Enjoy your life ending'

Meanwhile, the AP has drawn on hundreds of pages of records and interviews with a dozen people to piece together the story of how the computer-savvy sophomore's end-of-year prank escalated into a confrontation between the Justice Department and the media. Using hijacked servers in Europe, the teenager, who was assigned the pseudonym Charles Jenkins by the FBI, emailed grandiose, profane bomb threats almost daily to teachers and administrators at Timberline High, forcing repeated evacuations at the 1,500-student school in Lacey, a middle-class suburb of Olympia.

In one message, he told his principal: "ENJOY YOUR LIFE ENDING." Other messages instructed high school staff to say, "Have a nice explosive day." Students quickly became annoyed at the threats. "There was just no learning because everybody was waiting for another bomb threat to happen," said Meggan Dowd, who was a Timberline sophomore at the time. Parents were getting panicky, and police were at wits' end. They

had a multitude of suspects and lots of possible leads generated by the high school rumor mill, but nothing solid. And because of the hoaxer's use of proxy servers, investigators were unable to zero in on his location.

"It's more difficult to track email than you might think, if you have computer savvy on the internet" Lacey Police Chief Dusty Pierpoint told parents at a meeting. It was about then that "AP Staff Publisher Norm Weatherill" emailed Jenkins for comment on the threats. Weatherill - that is to say, Sanders - promised anonymity. Jenkins agreed to chat, and the FBI agent sent him a couple of links related to an AP article he was supposedly putting together. The links were booby-trapped. When Jenkins clicked, malicious code ran on his computer, broadcasting his internet protocol address back to law enforcement.

Six hours later, Lacey police were at his door. Jenkins later pleaded guilty to harassment, making bomb threats and identity theft. In an interview with the AP a decade later, he said he had no particular motive beyond "feeling powerful." A decade later, the AP is still seeking information about the FBI's practice of masquerading as journalists. The AP and the Reporters Committee have obtained documents from the bureau, but no solid answers about how often it happens. "AP is calling for the release of all FBI

documents related to the impersonation of any and all journalists in order to make the public aware of this deceptive practice and its breadth," Executive Editor Sally Buzbee said in a statement. The FBI declined to comment on the case or its fallout and refused to make its agent available for an interview. Back in Lacey, even some of those who were pleased with the

FBI's work allowed that the bureau's methods raised eyebrows. Dave Lehnis, Timberline's principal back then, said the bureau caught Jenkins in the nick of time - less than two days before graduation ceremonies. "We were glad it ended when it did," he said. "But using the press? Certainly if I were a journalist that would piss me off some." —AP



LACEY: This image provided by the Lacey Police Department shows a June 14, 2007, photo of a computer taken from the bedroom of the Timberline High School bomb hoaxer. —AP



HONOLULU: In this Friday, March 10, 2017 photo, Hawaii Attorney General Douglas Chin sits in his office. —AP

TRAVEL BAN FIGHT PERSONAL FOR HAWAII'S 'SCHOLARLY GENTLEMAN'

HONOLULU: Growing up in Washington state, Douglas Chin says he was the stereotypical "smart Chinese kid that got straight As." His parents taught him not to stick out too much and used to say "don't poke the lion." So when Chin, now the Hawaii attorney general, was deciding on whether to challenge the Trump administration's latest travel ban, he understood those who said that it wasn't the state's fight. But the Stanford University-educated lawyer stepped into the spotlight, making Hawaii the first state to challenge President Trump's revised travel ban - and convince a federal judge to temporarily block it before it took effect.

His motivation was personal, he said. Chin said he felt as if he was invisible during his time in an overwhelmingly white suburban Seattle high school, and wanted to fight for an invisible minority in Hawaii: Muslims. "It really hits home with me," he said. "It worries me about this society and what's happening."

Before his appointment as attorney general, Chin, 50, was Honolulu's managing director (who would serve as acting mayor when the mayor was out of town) and a prosecutor. People who know and worked with him say he is nice, smart and a fast walker. Some, however, criticized him for challenging the travel ban. "Let's allow the big states with more resources to fight this issue," Republican state Rep Gene Ward said in a statement. "My sense is that the people of Hawaii would rather see potholes fixed rather than trying to lead the nation against an executive order."

People perspective

Those who have worked with Chin say the reason he is fighting the ban is simple: He's kind. Jean Ireton was a fellow Honolulu prosecutor with Chin, who started out in traffic court. He had "some of the toughest, most god-awful trials that we had there," she said. Those kinds of cases showed her the worst in humanity, she said, but Chin didn't see them that way. "He's just a kinder person than I am. I don't have as much faith in people as he does."

Ireton and Chin have differing views on the travel ban. "I do have a problem with the amount of vetting they're able to do in those countries," she said. "Doug sees it from a people perspective. He sees it from people who are suffering." US District Judge Derrick Watson on Wednesday blocked the federal government from enforcing its ban on travel from six mostly Muslim countries and its suspension of the nation's refugee program.

The judge agreed with Hawaii that the travel ban amounts to discrimination based on nationality and religion. Trump called the ruling an example of "unprecedented judicial overreach" and called his new travel ban a watered-down version of the first one. He said the order was a necessary measure to prevent terrorists from entering the country.

For Chin, the issue of immigration is a personal one. He is named after the Christian missionary doctor who sponsored his Chinese parents' immigration to Washington state, where Chin was born. His middle name Shih-Ging means "scholarly gentleman, which is weird," Chin said. "I think that's where you probably can catch a spark of a personal sense of duty about this whole travel ban," he said, describing his parents emigrating in 1957 at a time when US immigration policy still imposed nation-based quotas.

Chin eventually moved to Honolulu in 1989 as part of a job transfer with IBM, and was exposed to Hawaii's diversity. "All of a sudden I wasn't in this place where I felt invisible anymore so that was really empowering," he said. Chin's career after IBM took him to the University of Hawaii law school and then various stints in the Honolulu prosecutor's office and private practice.

'It's a no-brainer'

On a bookshelf in Chin's office is a newspaper front page from a murder conviction he won in 2010. A 15-year-old boy who was tried as an adult and convicted of murdering his 51-year-old neighbor is one of Chin's most memorable cases. Near the shelf are portraits of Chin's children and wife, who is white and from New York. He describes his daughter, 18, and son, 16, as "hapa," a Hawaiian term that locals use for mixed-race people.

Former Honolulu prosecutor and former mayor Peter Carlisle recalled first meeting him at Chin's church while Carlisle was campaigning. Carlisle said he was so impressed with Chin's public speaking, he told him to look him up if he ever needed a job. Chin attends Oahu Church of Christ, a non-denominational Christian church that meets in rented spaces at the university or an elementary school. At church, Chin arranges music and sings acapella - he has perfect pitch, he notes sheepishly.

He found the time to go to Sunday services the week of the Honolulu hearing. After the hearing, Chin stopped at his office and then to Waikiki where he was hosting a meeting of the Conference of Western Attorneys General because he's the group's chairman. Chin has also spent a lot of time giving interviews to news organizations nationwide about his lawsuit. Part of the reason he does that is to educate - even those who live in Hawaii.

"It's a no-brainer why we have to object to this. I totally know how there's another segment of the population that to them it just doesn't connect," he said. "What does the Middle East have to do with Hawaii?" The answer, he said, is Hawaii's some 5,000 Muslims are the invisible minority and Chin knows first-hand what that feels like. "People in Hawaii don't know how to process a Muslim other than what they see on TV," he said. —AP

WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE: TRUMP STILL STRUGGLING TO WIN GOP

REPUBLICANS HAVE EMERGED AS THE BIGGEST OBSTACLES

WASHINGTON: Congressional Republicans have a lot to say about their new president. Donald Trump's proposed budget is "draconian, careless and counterproductive." The health care plan is a bailout that won't pass. And his administration's suggestion that former President Barack Obama used London's spy agency for surveillance is simply "inexplicable." With friends like these, who needs Democrats?

Less than two months in, Republicans have emerged as one of the biggest obstacles to Trump's young administration, imperiling his early efforts to pass his agenda and make good on some of his biggest campaign promises.

Trump's embrace of a House GOP plan to overhaul the country's health system faces deep opposition from across the party, as does his push to get US taxpayers to pay for a wall on the US-Mexico border. Republicans largely rejected his thin, 53-page first budget, joking that there's a "fat chance for skinny budget" on Capitol Hill. And his tax reform and infrastructure plans have yet to gain any real traction in Congress.

Trump insisted on Friday that he is leading a party that is coalescing behind him. "I think we have a very unified party. I think actually more unified than even the election," he said at a White House news conference with German leader Angela Merkel. "You see when they talk about me, I seem to be very popular, at least this week within the party." Long a divisive political figure, Trump entered office with historically low approval ratings and a popular vote loss of nearly 3 million. Still, he claimed a sweeping mandate when he arrived in Washington, fiercely pushing back on any suggestion that he won with less than a historic margin and moving quickly on a series of controversial executive orders.

Reaching the limits

Now, his administration has reached the limits of what it can achieve without Congress, leaving Trump struggling to lead his party on Capitol Hill - starting with the health care bill. After years of campaign prom-

ises to repeal and replace "Obamacare," the bill presents the first major test of whether Trump and Republican leaders can marshal a fractious GOP caucus behind a major legislative initiative. GOP leaders fear that failure could chip away at Trump's already thin political capital, dooming future efforts on tax reform and infrastructure.

Trump's early missteps have overshadowed one of the administration's smoothest-sailing moves - the nomination of Neil Gorsuch for the Supreme Court. Confirmation hearings begin Monday. "A president only has so much political capital to expend and so much moral authority as well, and so any time your credibility takes a hit I think in many ways it weakens the officeholder," said Rep. Charlie Dent, R-Pa., who had described the surveillance claims as "inexplicable." The furor over Trump's

unproven claim that Obama wiretapped his New York skyscraper prompted Republican Rep. Tom Cole of Oklahoma to suggest Trump owes his predecessor an apology. Republicans almost immediately balked at Trump's budget, with Kentucky Rep. Hal Rogers uttering the "draconian" complaint and others questioning why Trump's core supporters took a hit.

"Rural America stepped up to the plate behind the president in his last election, and we're wholeheartedly behind him. We need to make sure that rural America at least gets its fair share," said Rep. Robert Aderholt, R-Ala. Trump is hardly the first president to clash with members of his own party. Few congressional Democrats felt a personal connection to Obama, who came under criticism for his hands-off approach to Congress, and his lack of interest in

schmoozing with lawmakers or using the trappings of his office to woo them.

Political coalition

While Trump has hosted Republicans for bowling, pizza and other White House events, he's been hampered by his inexperience with governing and his distance from establishment GOP politics. A businessman, Trump has never lined up lawmakers behind a bill, crafted a political coalition or passed a budget - nor have many of his closest aides.

During his campaign, he embraced a populist platform, rejecting traditional conservative positions on issues like trade and cutting costly mandatory programs like Social Security. Many congressional Republicans, from House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., on down, were slow to embrace Trump's candidacy, and some of those concerns linger. —AP



WASHINGTON: In this March 9, 2017 file photo, House Speaker Paul Ryan of Wis. uses charts and graphs to make his case for the GOP's long-awaited plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act during a news conference on Capitol Hill. —AP

ARE US SELF-DEFENSE LAWS TRIGGERING MORE CRIMES?

WASHINGTON: When Curtis Reeves shot to death a fellow movie spectator who threw popcorn at him, the police veteran reignited a heated debate in the United States over when self-protection is a legitimate defense. The January 2014 altercation took place in Florida, where lawmakers this week debated whether to further extend immunity granted under the state's "Stand Your Ground" law to people who committed involuntary manslaughter when they felt threatened.

Reeves has invoked the controversial law which helped neighborhood watcher George Zimmerman get acquitted over the shooting death of teenager Trayvon Martin in a move that triggered nationwide outrage. Florida, under Republican rule, is said to have the most gun permits of any US state. It is also the third most populous.

The Sunshine State was the first to adopt a "Stand Your Ground" law, in 2005, with the blessing of the arms lobby. Under the measure, defendants can use force without retreating if they feel they are in immediate or imminent threat of bodily harm or death. More than 20 states followed Florida in adopting similar legislation, triggering many more self-defense claims in homicide cases. The laws have proven citizens innocent after they were brutally and inadvertently plunged into violence. But they have also been exploited by drug traffickers and murderers to escape well-founded charges.

'Anecdotal' benefits

"Although there may be anecdotal evidence of this incident defused or that tragedy avoided by 'Stand Your Ground' approaches, overall, 'Stand Your Ground' laws do not deter burglaries, robberies, or aggravated assaults," said Chuck MacLean, associate professor of law at Indiana Tech Law School. The laws, on the contrary, "increase overall homicides, firearm homicides and firearm accidents," he told AFP.

Since it passed the law in 2005, Florida has seen a 24 percent increase in homicides, according to a study published in January in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Another report by the National Bureau of Economic Research in 2012 found that "Stand Your Ground" laws were strongly associated with homicides among white males.

"Given that the overwhelming majority of concealed guns are owned and carried by white males in the United States, it is plausible to expect the SYG impact to be more pronounced for this group," the study said. "Furthermore, it has been argued that the SYG laws may embolden individuals to stand their ground rather than simply walk away and may lead to individuals resorting to the use of deadly weapons even in incidents with no real threat to people's lives."

Popcorn against gun

Reeves failed to convince a Tampa judge that his act fell under the measure. In her ruling last week, Circuit Judge Susan Barthel said she had "considerable doubts about his credibility," and the septuagenarian is now sure to face trial. The ex-police officer's testimony was "significantly at odds" with that of other witnesses and with the physical evidence, according to the judge.

A surveillance camera recorded part of the incident inside the darkened movie theater. As commercials are shown on the silver screen, Reeves can be seen leaning toward his neighbor seated in the row in front of him, upset that the man is tapping away on his smartphone. The neighbor, 43-year-old Chad Oulson, is seated next to his wife and texting instructions to the babysitter watching their 22-month-old daughter.

The argument between the two men becomes heated, and Oulson throws his popcorn bag toward Reeves, who then draws his gun and fatally shoots Oulson in the chest.

Defendants in Florida must be able to prove that they reasonably believed they were in imminent danger of grave bodily harm or death before pulling the trigger. Republican lawmakers have proposed a bill where that burden would fall to the prosecutor, who would need to prove "beyond a reasonable doubt" that the defendant's claim to self-defense is baseless. —AFP

SCOT LEADER SET TO RALLY TROOPS FOR REFERENDUM

ABERDEEN: Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon will ramp up pressure on the British government to grant a new secession referendum as she rallies her independence-hungry foot soldiers yesterday.

Sturgeon was to address a conference of her Scottish National Party (SNP) in the northeastern oil city of Aberdeen, with members fired up by her push for a second vote on pulling Scotland out of the

United Kingdom. Sturgeon caught the British government off-guard on Monday when she demanded a new referendum by early 2019 at the latest, just before the UK is expected to leave the European Union. In response, British Prime Minister Theresa May said "now is not the time" for another referendum, arguing all energies should be devoted to getting a good Brexit deal for the UK as a whole.

"The people of Scotland have a right to take their future into their own hands," 70-year-old SNP member Tony Martin told AFP outside the Aberdeen conference, wearing a sandwich board with the names of all the political parties and groups supporting independence. "We don't want to go down on the Good Ship Brexit," said Martin, who lives in Gullane near Edinburgh but is originally from Leeds in northern England.

The Scottish parliament is widely expected to back Sturgeon's call in a vote next week. "The will of our parliament must and will prevail," Sturgeon was expected to tell the party faithful later on Saturday, according to extracts from her speech. "To stand in defiance... would be for the prime minister to shatter beyond repair any notion of the UK as a respectful partnership of equals."

But she is also letting it be known that she would be "up for continued discus-

sion" with May regarding the timing of a referendum. In Scotland's 2014 plebiscite, 55 percent backed staying in the UK. But the SNP says the political landscape has dramatically changed since then. It argues the vote was based on expectations that the UK would remain in the EU, retaining its unhampered access to the European market and the right of job mobility.

These rights could be swept away if May, following last year's Brexit referendum, brutally severs ties with the EU, the SNP says. Scotland voted by 62 percent to stay in the EU in last year's referendum but the result in Britain as a whole was 52 percent in favor of leaving.

'Break with the past'

In a speech to her centre-right Conservative Party on Friday, May accused the SNP of "tunnel vision" and "obsessive nationalism." "It is now clear that using Brexit as the pretext to engineer a second independence referendum has been the SNP's sole objective," she said. As the debate heats up, former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown on Saturday waded in with a compromise solution-giving Scotland sweeping new autonomy, such as the power to set sales tax and to sign international treaties.

Control over agriculture, fisheries and

environmental regulation-currently areas under EU control-would be handed to Scotland as Britain leaves the European Union, he said. Brown, who is from the main opposition Labour Party, said this would be "a patriotic Scottish way" to avoid both "die-hard conservatism" and "hardline nationalism." "Post-Brexit realities make the status quo redundant and require us to break with the past," he said.

Record support

Scotland's relationship with the EU is at the forefront of the SNP's renewed call for independence, although EU officials have indicated it would have to reapply to join the bloc rather than inherit Britain's membership. But the SNP is also banking on a growing desire for independence.

According to the latest annual ScotCen Scottish Social Attitudes survey released on Wednesday, 46 percent of Scottish voters now back breaking away from the UK-a record high. "I support independence because I support democracy," said Paul Wright, 58, an SNP member originally from London, who wore a trilby festooned with badges from a range of independence movements. "Theresa May needs to wake up. Last time a lot of people voted for the status quo and against the unknown, but this time there is no status quo." —AFP



ABERDEEN: Scottish National Party (SNP) leader, and Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon tours the conference hall of the Scottish National Party (SNP) Spring Conference. —AFP

IN LABOUR HEARTLANDS, BREXIT GIVES MAY A FIGHTING CHANCE

LOYALTIES AND BITTERNESS AGAINST CONSERVATIVES RUN DEEP

HARTLEPOOL: In the former ship-building hub of Hartlepool, traditionally a bastion of the centre-left Labour Party, lifelong supporter Stan grumbles that the party leaders have "lost their way totally". Like seven out of 10 voters in this post-industrial town in northeastern England, Stan, a silver-haired pensioner, voted to leave the EU, ignoring the pleas of the pro-European Labour leadership.

Theresa May's Conservatives are increasingly hoping to appeal to vot-

'Disillusioned'
Kevin Mason, who works in the redeveloped marina in Hartlepool, where restaurants and pubs have replaced the hulking machinery and timber yards of the old docks, said he used to vote Labour but "doesn't believe any more in their politics." "A lot of people around here feel the same, they're all just as disillusioned as me," Mason, 59, told AFP.

If May succeeds in her attempts to secure a clean break with the

Conservative 'threat?'
Labour has held Hartlepool since the early 1960s, with "New Labour" architect Peter Mandelson securing 60 percent of the vote in 1997. Current incumbent Iain Wright retained the seat in 2015, but support was sharply down from Mandelson's day, with a majority of around 3,000 ahead of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP).

Successful negotiations in Brussels could boost the Conservative Party in

the people," wrote University of Kent politics professor Matthew Goodwin. "If Prime Minister Theresa May and her party can steal Copeland, then they will almost certainly run riot across marginal Labour-held seats where Labour MPs are sitting on thin majorities," he said.

'Rather have Trump'

Despite this, although aligned over Brexit, many are in no hurry to cross the divide and back the Conservatives, who are still blamed for hastening the demise of local industry during the 1980s. "The Conservatives aren't very kind to this area, they never have been, so I think that sticks in the craw," said Labour voter Stan, despite describing himself as having "conservative overtones".

Getting disaffected Labour supporters to vote Conservative "is a big leap," admitted Martin-Wells. Long-term disillusionment with both major parties has so far boosted the anti-establishment UKIP, which now has six members on the council out of 33 and beat the Tories into second place in the 2015 general election. "I'd rather have (US President Donald) Trump here, honestly I would," middle-aged local Angela Lynch told AFP in the town's shopping centre, its empty units testament to the area's economic struggles.

Hartlepool has a population of 116,000 and unemployment is roughly double the national average. The largest employer is now the nuclear power station, whose chimneys and imposing buildings dominate the skyline on the beach south of town. Hartlepool's anti-establishment streak was demonstrated when it elected as mayor the local football team's monkey mascot-himself inspired by a famous tale of the townsfolk hanging a shipwrecked monkey during the Napoleonic Wars, believing it to be a French sailor.

"I wouldn't consider voting Tory, UKIP maybe, they care more about the working man," said Lynch. But with UKIP's charismatic long-time leader Nigel Farage now out of the picture and a grassroots operation lacking the depth of the major parties, Martin-Wells believes the door is ajar. "Copeland proved that anything is possible," he said. —AFP



HARTLEPOOL: People walk along the beach at The Headland area of Hartlepool, northern England. —AFP

ers like Stan as she puts Britain on the path to Brexit, giving the party previously unimaginable hopes of winning in eurosceptic areas of the country once seen as Labour strongholds. "And don't mention immigration! I totally disagree with the Labour view on immigration. We're a small island, so I'm against it!" fumes Stan. Labour voters have also been put off by party in-fighting and the hugely unpopular Jeremy Corbyn-resulting in a stunning by-election win for the Conservatives in Copeland, a north-western area that has been a Labour seat since 1924.

European Union in order to cut down on immigration from other parts of Europe, experts say, her party could lure wavering Labour supporters. Tribal loyalties and historical bitterness against the Conservatives run deep in communities like Hartlepool but the staggering Copeland by-election victory last month showed all that could change. "Theresa May has been quite forceful in the way she is dealing with Brexit and I think she is probably one of the main ingredients to the success of the by-election," said Ray Martin-Wells, chairman of Hartlepool Conservatives.

England, which voted overwhelmingly to leave the European Union. "The Conservatives are going to be more of a threat," Labour Leader of Hartlepool Borough Council Christopher Akers-Belcher told AFP. Labour politicians were overwhelmingly in favour of the European Union, driving a wedge with voters in their heartlands, who were solidly pro-Brexit.

"At every parliamentary by-election since the people voted for Brexit, Labour's share of the vote has fallen, pointing to a far more widespread disconnect between the party and



SEVASTOPOL: People wave Russian national flag as they celebrate the third anniversary of the annexation of the Crimea by the Russian Federation. —AFP

RUSSIA MARKS 3 YEARS SINCE CRIMEA TAKEOVER

MOSCOW: Russia yesterday marked a low-key third anniversary of the seizure of Crimea from Ukraine, as Kiev blasted the annexation of the strategic Black Sea peninsula as a "crime". State-run television showed footage of sparsely attended concerts and parades in cities across the vast country and there was much less fanfare over the event than in previous years.

President Vladimir Putin-who last year spent the anniversary visiting Crimea-was not expected to take part in any of the official celebrations that include a concert and firework display in Moscow. Russia seized Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 following the ouster of its Kremlin-backed leader by mass protests in Kiev. Putin ordered out thousands of special forces troops to take control of strategic infrastructure before a hastily organized referendum was held that was rejected by the international community.

The Kremlin argued it was reacting to an illegal coup in Kiev. The move unleashed a wave of nationalist sentiment that saw Putin's popularity soar, with many Russians seeing the region that once belonged to Moscow as their country's rightful property. The annexation plunged ties between Russia and the West to their lowest level since the Cold War, as the US and EU responded with sanctions against Moscow. "Three years ago Russia committed a crime many thought unimaginable for 21st century - occupied Crimea," Ukraine's foreign ministry wrote on Twitter.

The takeover of Crimea was followed by a separatist conflict in eastern Ukraine that has claimed some 10,000 lives in nearly three years of fighting that Russia is accused of stage-managing. Ukraine said yesterday that four of its soldiers were killed along the volatile frontline in fighting over the past 24 hours. —AFP

BERLIN ACCUSES ERDOGAN OF PLAYING POLITICS WITH ANTI-EUROPE ATTACKS

BERLIN: Germany's foreign minister yesterday openly accused Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdogan of ramping up anti-European rhetoric in a bid to score political points back home ahead of a key referendum. Sigmar Gabriel described Erdogan's comments, including likening Germany's current leaders to Nazis, as "ludicrous" but said Europe should stop responding in a war of words which only plays into the Turkish leader's hands.

"He needs an enemy for his election campaign: Turkey humiliated and the West arrogant," Gabriel said in an interview with the German daily Der Spiegel. "What has been said these last few weeks is so ludicrous and absurd that it is difficult to continue to listen to them," Gabriel said. Erdogan has repeatedly accused Germany and the Netherlands of behaving like "Nazis"; comments that have left The Hague and Berlin aghast and prompted warnings from Brussels for the Turkish strongman to show moderation.

EU chiefs blasted his comments as "detached from reality" and incompatible with Turkey's ambitions to join the bloc. But Gabriel said responding to the comments would only serve Erdogan's interests. "I am of the mind that we do not need to respond to all provocation with a counter-provocation," he said. The Turkey-EU row has escalated notably after the Netherlands

and Germany blocked Turkish ministers from holding rallies in their countries, ahead of the April 16 referendum which opponents fear will create a one-man rule in Turkey.

The German minister defended Saturday the banning of rallies, aimed at winning votes from a Turkish diaspora that numbers as many as 1.4 million in Germany alone. "He who exceeds the limits should not think that he can spread his political views in our country," said Gabriel. "Germany, as well as Turkey, deserves respect," he added. "We can criticize Germany and German politics, even harshly, but there are limits set by our laws."

On Friday a Turkish pro-government newspaper depicted Chancellor Angela Merkel in a Nazi uniform with a Hitler-style moustache, labeling the German leader "She Hitler". "We are not taking part in a game of provocation," German deputy government spokesman Georg Streiter said in response to the newspaper splash. In a seeming hint of what's to come, Erdogan on Saturday said he expected parliament to approve restoring capital punishment for the referendum, a move that could end Ankara's bid to join the EU. Turkey completely abolished the death penalty in 2004 as part of its efforts to join the European Union, which makes its removal a non-negotiable pre-condition for membership. —AFP

MUGABE'S ZIMBABWE: MARRIAGE IS BOTH POLITICAL AND PERSONAL

MATOPO HILLS: Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe plucked her from the secretarial pool decades ago to become his wife. Now Grace Mugabe is stirring speculation that she wants to succeed her 93-year-old husband as leader. The power couple's extraordinary arc is deeply felt in this southern African nation. Many are pondering how their dynamic will affect the country, which is in economic decline and political limbo amid uncertainty how a leadership transition will unfold. Many in Zimbabwe have had no other president. The 51-year-old Grace Mugabe is now her elderly husband's No. 1 protector, helping him when he struggled with a shovel at a recent tree-planting ceremony and declaring that he should run "as a corpse" in next year's election if he dies before the vote.

She has said their relationship is like any other (fights included, both have said). From their statements and body language in public, they seem to have each other's back amid the questions over who will be next in Zimbabwe to hold power. "I live with him, cook for him, share the table with him and discuss many issues as a family," Grace Mugabe said ador-

ingly to thousands of well-wishers at a birthday celebration for the president last month. "In other words, we share so many intimate discussions together, as many ordinary married couples could do."

African nationalist

A former teacher who studied law and economics in prison during the country's white minority rule, Robert Mugabe has been shrewd, soft-spoken and, to his opponents, ruthless. He is an African nationalist who likes finely tailored suits. Despite his fading vigor, he flies regularly to other countries, including Singapore for medical treatment.

His wife, previously lampooned for shopping expeditions and a doctorate obtained under questionable circumstances, has built a serious if polarizing political profile with charity work and frequent rallies. She has endured harsh criticism - a "prostitute" or a scheming Lady Macbeth, some have said - but has dished her own barbs. The constitution says the senior of two vice presidents would take office if the president dies, resigns or is removed from power, but Grace Mugabe's feuds with some ruling ZANU-PF par-

ty factions have many people doubting that a leadership change would go by the book. "She's in the mix," said Tom McDonald, a Washington-based lawyer who was U.S. ambassador to Zimbabwe from 1997 to 2001. Meanwhile, he said, the relationship serves the political interests of both partners. The frail Robert Mugabe feeds off his wife's vibrancy, while she sponges up stature from his presidential aura. Mugabe was a leader of the fight against white minority rule in Rhodesia, which became Zimbabwe after independence in 1980, and sparred with the West following its criticism of his land grabs from white farmers and its sanctions against the president, his wife and associates.

'Fighting tooth and nail'

At his Feb 25 birthday celebration, it was Grace Mugabe who blasted Europe and the United States, while her mostly subdued husband mused at times about mortality. "Our erstwhile colonizers are fighting tooth and nail" to try to sabotage black empowerment programs in Zimbabwe, said Grace Mugabe, head of the women's league of the ruling party. —AFP

INDIAN FLIGHT ATTENDANT HURT IN BRUSSELS BLASTS EAGER TO FLY



MUMBAI: In this Friday, March 17, 2017 photo, Nidhi Chaphekar, Jet Airways flight attendant and a victim of the Brussels airport terror attack, pens down her thoughts at her residence. — AP

NEW DELHI: An Indian flight attendant who was injured in the Brussels airport blasts last year said she has recovered 70 percent of her previous fitness level and would like to resume her passion, flying. Nidhi Chaphekar suffered burns and a broken foot in the explosions. She said she is looking forward to visiting Brussels next week to take part in the anniversary commemoration and meet the doctors and others who helped her.

The March 22 bombing in the Brussels airport and subway killed 32 people and wounded 270. A photograph of Chaphekar, a flight attendant with India's Jet Airways, became an iconic image of the attacks. It showed the 40-year-old mother of two sitting dazed and bloodied, with her bright yellow uniform ripped.

In an interview in Mumbai on Friday, Chaphekar said the picture gave her family in India hope that she was alive. "I appeared to be in a state of shock. It was a compelling picture

as it depicted everything - shock and trauma," she said. In the past year, Chaphekar's life has changed. "From a very independent female, I became dependent on others as I recovered from injuries. I used to run a lot. I can't run now," she said.

"I am 70 percent fine now. A bone has to be put in my injured right foot. Physically, there are challenges," Chaphekar said. "I have not yet started flying. My dream is to fly back," she said, adding that she would be flying to Brussels on Sunday for a 10-day visit. Chaphekar said she is writing a book and has been asked to give motivational speeches. She wants to inspire people and tell them that everything is possible in life. "I used to be a very difficult person, but the love and affection of people after the Brussels experience has changed me," she said. This story has been corrected to show that 32 people were killed in the Brussels airport bombing, not 31. — AP

C AFRICA'S TRANSITION TO PEACE STILL ELUSIVE

BANGUI: With a spike in militia killings, a deepening humanitarian crisis and the army still in shambles, the Central African Republic's bid for peace and stability remains elusive. A three-year civil war that erupted in 2013 between Muslim and Christian militias left thousands of people dead and displaced hundreds of thousands of others, disrupting farming, transport and public services in one of the world's poorest nations.

The nation breathed a sigh of relief in March 2016 when President Faustin-Archange Touadera took office, with a mandate to lead the country through its transition to peace. But Central Africa's war wounds have proved hard to heal, with swathes of the country still facing unrest. Since November, violence has raged in the central Ouaka region, leaving hundreds dead and many more injured.

Last week, 11 people were gunned down in their village in Ouaka near the provincial capital Bambari, according to local authorities and the UN peacekeeping mission in Central Africa, MINUSCA. A local official, speaking on condition of anonymity, blamed the Union for Peace in Central Africa (UPC), saying that armed attackers from the group "invaded the village, shooting at residents". MINUSCA spokesman Herve Verhoosel said, however, that it was unclear whether the UPC or a rival faction—the Popular Front for the Renaissance of the Central African Republic (FPRC) — was to blame.

Both the UPC and the FPRC are factions of the ex-Seleka, the mainly Muslim rebel coalition that seized power from ex-president Francois Bozize in March 2013, sparking civil war. Anti-balaka ("anti-machete") militias, drawn largely from the deeply poor nation's Christian minority, fought back, in a war that killed mostly civilians

and prompted an international intervention. The Seleka rebellion was disbanded six months after the coup, but some of its factions have rejected the disarmament process and remain active to this day.

Mass displacement

An independent expert of the United Nations, Marie-Therese Keita-Bocoum, in February said that "armed groups reign as masters over more than 60 percent of the territory, benefitting from total impunity." "They have taken the place of the judicial apparatus and terrify the population." Due to the rise of violence, coupled with a shortfall in aid funding, the humanitarian situation in the country has taken a turn for the worse. The UN says some 2.2 million people—more than half the population—remain in dire need of assistance.

"One in every five Central Africans is either displaced internally or is a refugee in neighboring countries," the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said Thursday, adding that 100,000 new internally displaced people had been registered since September. Funding for aid agencies, which are major contributors to basic social services in Central Africa, remains critically short, OCHA said in a statement.

President without an army

While parts of the country remain wracked by violence, military intervention in 2013 by France and MINUSCA restored relative calm to the capital Bangui. But since France withdrew in October, and with the Central African army still under an international arms embargo, the UN peacekeeping force is now the sole functioning force on the ground. With international support, efforts are under way to bring the national army back into action—though it is unclear how long that process will take. — AFP



LAHORE: In this file photo taken on Thursday, Jan. 12, 2017, civil society activists rally to demand recovery of missing Pakistani bloggers. — AP

BLASPHEMY CHARGES: CLIMATE OF FEAR FOR PAKISTANI MEDIA

A POWERFUL TOOL TO SILENCE CRITICS

ISLAMABAD: Ahmad Waqas Goraya couldn't see anything through the black hood, but he could hear the screams. A Pakistani blogger with a penchant for criticizing Pakistan's powerful military and taking the government to task, Goraya was kidnapped in January along with four other bloggers. "I could hear the screams of torture," he said, struggling for words as the memories flooded back. "I don't even want to think about what they did."

But that wasn't the worst of it, he said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press. More terrifying was the accusation of blasphemy punishable by death in Pakistan hurled at him and his fellow bloggers. They were held in what Goraya called a "black site" on the edge of Lahore that some say is run by Pakistan's powerful intelligence agency.

Analysts and social media monitors say the blasphemy law is a powerful tool to silence critics. Some say it is being used by extremists to silence moderates at a time when Pakistanis are increasingly speaking out against violence and extremism, and voicing support for a government crackdown on Islamic militants.

Offensive material

In Pakistan, even the suggestion of blasphemy can be tantamount to a death sentence. It has incited extremists to take the law into their own hands and kill alleged perpetrators, often forcing people to flee the country, as Goraya and the other bloggers have. Pakistan's government heightened concerns earlier this week when it said it had asked Facebook and Twitter to ferret out Pakistanis posting religiously offensive material, promising to seek their extradition if they are out of the country and prosecute them on blasphemy charges if they are in Pakistan.

In one high-profile case six years ago, Punjab Gov. Salman Taseer was gunned down by one of his guards, who accused him of blasphemy because he criticized the law and defended a Christian woman sentenced to death for allegedly insulting Islam's Prophet Muhammad. "Right now they have made sure I cannot come back to Pakistan by introducing blasphemy charges," Goraya said.

The lawyer who is arguing the case against the bloggers, Tariq Asad, has openly called for their deaths, while praising outlawed Sunni militant groups who want the country's minority Shiites declared non-Muslims. "They should have been killed," Asad told the AP in an interview this week. "If I had the opportunity I would have killed them." Asad smiled at the suggestion that invoking the blasphemy law subdues the media and frightens social media activists. "They should be scared," he said.

The blasphemy charges against the bloggers being heard in Islamabad's High Court were filed by Salman Shahid, who has ties to Pakistan's Red Mosque, a hotbed of Islamic militancy where hundreds were killed in 2007 after security forces ended a months-long standoff with militants holed up inside. Asad is Shahid's lawyer. Zahid Hussain, a defense analyst and author of several books on militancy in the region, said invoking the blasphemy law is a form of "pushback" against the proliferation of news outlets and social media that amplify moderate voices.

Ideological battle

Extremists "are trying to reassert themselves

with this ideological battle and the easiest thing for them to use is the blasphemy law," he said. Hamid Mir, a popular Pakistani news anchor, says both media owners and journalists operate under a cloud of fear. Threats come from a variety of quarters in Pakistan, including the powerful spy agencies, but the most frightening are from those who would use the blasphemy law, he said.

Mir was shot six times in a drive-by shooting in Karachi three years ago. The culprits were later said to have been killed, but Mir pointedly accused Pakistan's intelligence agency at the time. "I am not afraid of bullets or bombs," he said in an interview this week in his office in Islamabad. Even with three of the six bullets still in his body, he has refused to leave Pakistan. But now he is having second thoughts. Last year, he was charged with blasphemy after writing a column condemning those who would kill in the name of honor following the burning death of a young girl.

"It broke me," he said. "Here I had done nothing wrong and for four months I faced this blasphemy charge. Then I thought I should leave my country." Asad, the attorney prosecuting the bloggers, also argued the case against Mir. A group of senior lawyers in Pakistan told Mir there was only one lawyer who could defend him, Rizwan Abbasi, who was defending the seven militants accused in the deadly 2008 multi-pronged assault in Mumbai, India, which killed 127 people. Abbasi had also defended Hafiz Saeed, the founder of the outlawed Lashkar-e-Taiba group and one of India's most wanted men.

"I thought if the judge saw him by my side he would think 'if he is with him then I won't get into trouble if I free him,'" said Mir, explaining that judges and lawyers fear retaliation from militants if they exonerate someone of blasphemy. But even Abbasi needed help. He had Mir send his column to five of the country's top clerics to ask if it contained anything blasphemous. They all rejected the charge and it was dropped, but Mir says his approach to journalism has changed.

"I don't talk about human rights any more. . . You become selective in your criticism," he said. The Committee to Protect Journalists and Amnesty International have spoken out against the abduction of the bloggers and expressed concerns about growing fears within Pakistan's journalist community brought about by the use of the blasphemy law. "It's not the elected government that is putting pressure on the media, but journalists express fear of offending religious and militant groups, and the military and intelligence organizations," said Steven Butler, the CPJ's Asia program director. "The latest fear is of being labeled as 'blasphemer' and that this could lead to attacks."

Psychological torture

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif did nothing to allay fears earlier this week when he demanded a review of social

media to seek out offensive content, and when his interior minister said the government had reached out to Facebook and Twitter. Facebook said it reviews all government requests carefully, "with the goal of protecting the privacy and rights of our users." Twitter declined to comment. In the past, Pakistan has banned YouTube after the circulation of videos deemed offensive to Islam.

"Our argument has never been about the law, but what is most dangerous is how it is used in Pakistan," to stifle critics and muffle moderate voices, said Haroon Baloch with the Islamabad-based internet advocacy group Bytesforall. He said radical religious groups use social media to attack moderate views, but there have been no restrictions imposed on them.

In an open letter to Pakistan's interior minister, Amnesty International earlier this month asked that the government "protect journalists, bloggers, civil society and other human rights activists who are facing constant harassment, intimidation, threats and violent attacks in the country." Goraya, the blogger, is still haunted by his three weeks of captivity at the black site, where he said several cells were overcrowded with men both young and old, many of them in chains. One of his eardrums is damaged and he no longer has feeling in one hand. "I was tortured beyond limits, beatings, different equipment used, psychological torture," he said. — AFP



LIMA: Residents of the Huachipa populous district, east of Lima, are helped on March 17, 2017, by police and firemen rescue teams to cross over flash floods hitting their neighborhood and isolating its residents. — AFP

FLASH FLOODS TAKE DRAMATIC TOLL IN LIMA, NORTHERN PERU

LIMA: El Nino-fueled flash floods and landslides hit parts of Lima, leaving some communities cut off from roads yesterday, as others fled rising rivers and millions fretted that they won't have drinking water. Peru's geographic extremes help fuel the often deadly force of the mudslides, known locally as huaycos, the indigenous Quechua word for flash flood-landslide.

The South American nation of over 30 million has plenty of extremes: its Pacific coastal deserts in the west are interrupted by the steep, soaring Andes, famed for the Inca people and Machu Picchu in the south. Further east, Peru has hot Amazon basin lowlands. The tremendous steepness of the mountains combined with many areas that are rocky and sandy but lack the level of topsoil found in more temperate places, mean fewer trees are there to stop mudslides.

After weeks of heavy rain came sweeping toward the coast, it filled many riverbeds in coastal areas that went from empty to overflowing in no time. Some residents on the outskirts of the capital of 10 million people awoke Friday to the realization their bedrooms were filling with water. Others found themselves cut off by mudslides that blocked portions of the main highway linking Lima to the center of the country.

In one dramatic scene, rescuers used zip lines to help residents of Lima's Huachipa neighborhood escape over the torrent of brown water that was once their street, as it swallowed up cars and trucks. The floods have been triggered by El Nino, a warming

of surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean that wreaks havoc on weather patterns every few years.

65 dead this year

But this year it has hit Peru particularly hard. "It's a difficult situation, there's no doubt about it. But we have the resources" to deal with it, said President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski. The government announced it would release 2.5 billion soles (\$760 million) in emergency funds to rebuild affected areas. Over half a million people were getting assistance.

While Peruvians have been dealing with huaycos for centuries, many poor residents of cities and towns build makeshift homes in areas that they may not realize could be a flash-flood zone. At times, authorities do tell different groups to move, but they voice frustration that they have nowhere to go. And authorities' presence in the poorest peripheral districts, many perched on mountainsides, can be inconsistent.

The inundation came as the National Emergency Operations Center said at least 65 people have been killed in Peru this year in natural disasters, the latest being three deaths in a flood in the La Libertad region of northern Peru. Two people were missing, and 72,115 had lost their homes. Some opposition politicians have called for the president to declare a national state of emergency, instead of local ones. Among them were a few lawmakers urging Kuczynski to drop a bid for Lima to host the 2019 Pan-American Games so that more funds could be used for recovery efforts. — AFP

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UN URGES AFGHANISTAN TO TACKLE 'ALARMING' EXTREMIST THREATS

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Security Council called on Afghanistan's government Friday to tackle the "alarming threats" posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, Islamic State affiliates and other extremist groups which threaten the security and stability of the country. A resolution adopted unanimously by the Security Council extending the UN political mission in the country until March 17, 2018 expresses serious concern at the presence and potential growth of IS affiliates which pose "serious threats to the secu-

ity of Afghanistan and the countries of the region."

The Security Council reiterated its support for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces "in securing their country and in their fight against terrorism and violent extremism." It called on the Afghan government, with international assistance, to continue tackling threats from "terrorist groups." Council members called for strengthened international and regional security cooperation to deal with violence in the region

and attacks by the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, Al-Qaeda, IS, other extremist and armed groups, criminals and "foreign terrorist fighters."

The Taliban, who have been waging an insurgency against the US-backed government in Kabul for more than 15 years, advanced on a number of fronts in 2016. Afghan forces have struggled to combat the militants since the US and NATO formally concluded their combat mission at the end of 2014. The government is also facing an Islamic State affil-

ate, which is seeking to expand its footprint in the country beyond the eastern Nangarhar province, as well as attacks by Al-Qaeda and other groups.

The UN's most powerful body expressed "deep concern" at the record number of civilian casualties reported in February and condemned suicide attacks, often in populated areas, and the deliberate killing of women and girls, including those promoting women's rights, and journalists. According to the UN report, 3,498 people were killed in 2016, including 923 chil-

dren, and another 7,920 people were wounded, the highest total of civilian casualties recorded since 2009 when the UN mission known as UNAMA began systematically documenting civilian casualties. The resolution adopted by the council authorizes UNAMA to continue supporting the Afghan government including it coordinating international civilian efforts, organizing future Afghan elections including the upcoming parliamentary elections, and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid. — AP

US AND CHINA TO COOPERATE ON 'DANGEROUS' N KOREA SITUATION

MILITARY ACTION AGAINST THE NORTH IS AN OPTION

BEIJING: The US and China pledged yesterday to work together in addressing the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear program, as US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson warned regional tensions had reached a "dangerous level." The language from Tillerson and his Chinese counterpart after talks in Beijing was notably conciliatory after a run-up in which US President Donald Trump accused China of doing nothing to control its rogue neighbor while Beijing blamed Washington for fuelling hostilities.

"I think we share a common view and a sense that tensions in the peninsula are quite high right now and that things have reached a rather dangerous level," Tillerson said after talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. "We will work together to see if we cannot bring the government in Pyongyang to a place where they want to make a different course, make a course correction, and move away from the development of nuclear weapons."

Tillerson arrived in Beijing earlier yesterday after visits to US allies Japan and South Korea where he said the US would no longer observe the "failed" approach of patient diplomacy, warning that American military action against

the North was an option "on the table." But Tillerson refrained from further tough talk in his joint appearance with Wang, who appeared to chide the US diplomat over his rhetoric this week. "We hope all parties including our friends from the United States could size up the situation in a cool-headed and comprehensive fashion and arrive at a wise decision," Wang said. Neither side indicated any concrete next steps, and Tillerson did not explicitly back Beijing's calls for negotiations with North Korea, which Washington has rejected.

Twitter blast

In a Friday Twitter blast, Trump had accused Beijing of failing to use its leverage as North Korea's key diplomatic and trade partner. "North Korea is behaving very badly. They have been 'playing' the United States for years. China has done little to help!" Trump said. The hardened US stance followed two North Korean nuclear tests last year and recent missile launches that Pyongyang described as practice for an attack on US bases in Japan. Beijing is reluctant to squeeze the unpredictable North, now led by

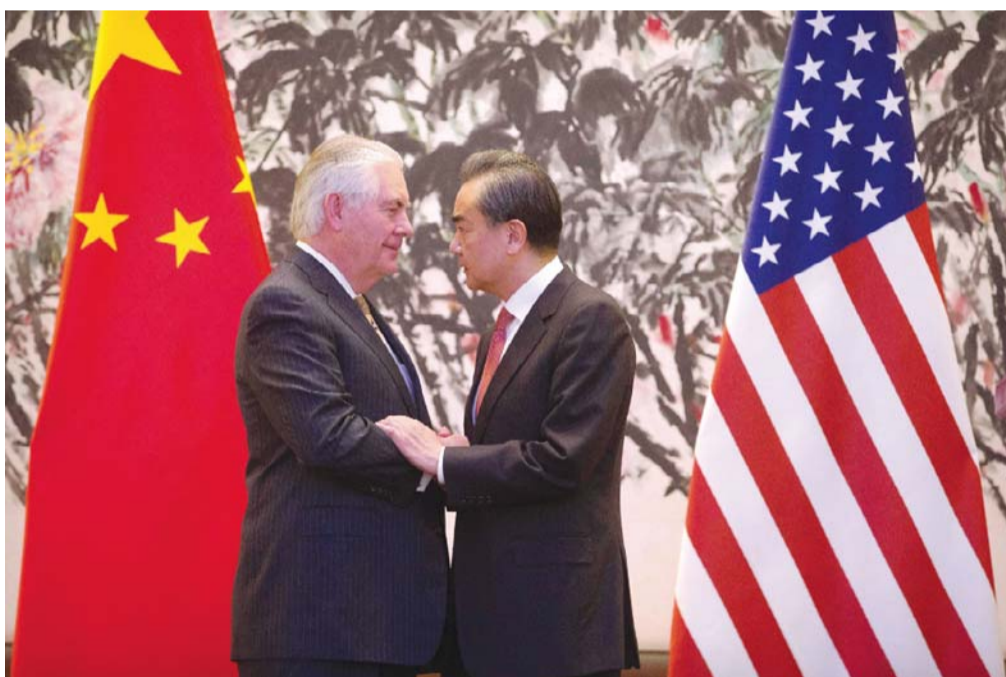
Kim Jong-Un, too hard lest it trigger a confrontation or messy regime collapse. China, however, has accused Washington of escalating tensions by holding military exercises with its ally Seoul and deploying an anti-missile system in South Korea. Beijing wants to resume multi-lateral diplomatic negotiations with North Korea on dismantling its nukes-which UN resolutions bar it from having. Various rounds of such talks in years past failed to deter Pyongyang.

"We both hope to find ways to restart talks and do not give up hope for peace," Wang said. China has criticized the US get-tough approach, saying diplomacy was the "only feasible option" and challenging the Trump administration to propose a clear alternative.

Summit looms

One reason for the amicable tone yesterday may be that delicate negotiations are under way for President Xi Jinping's first summit with Trump next month in the United States. Trump has been a frequent China critic, and the encounter could be crucial to setting the tone in the big-power relationship. Tillerson was expected to meet Xi today morning. Beijing shares US concerns over Pyongyang but has been accused of not fully enforcing UN sanctions. But it took one of its toughest steps yet in February, halting all imports of North Korean coal—a key source of income for the impoverished state—for the rest of this year. Wang Dong, a North Korea expert at Peking University, said it was wrong to think Beijing can control the unpredictable and headstrong Pyongyang. "It is unreasonable for the United States to accuse China of doing nothing on the DPRK (North Korea)," Wang said. "This is an extremely complex and sensitive issue. There is no one magic formula."

The Obama administration had ruled out diplomatic engagement until Pyongyang fully committed to denuclearisation. North Korea insists it needs nuclear weapons for defense. It conducted its first underground atomic test in 2006, triggering global condemnation. Four more followed. There was no immediate reaction from North Korea but the country's top newspaper Rodong Sinmun carried a commentary yesterday threatening to launch a devastating nuclear attack if the US takes military action. "Should the US government continue putting pressure on us, efforts to seek a new exit (in the nuclear impasse) would be lost forever," it said. — AFP



BEIJING: US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson (L) and China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi shake hands at the end of a joint press conference at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse. — AFP

PARK SUPPORTERS MARCH AGAINST IMPEACHMENT

SEOUL: Protesters marched through the streets of Seoul yesterday demanding the repeal of ex-President Park Geun-Hye's impeachment. Prosecutors have ordered the ousted president to appear before them on Tuesday next week for questioning over the corruption scandal that triggered her dramatic downfall.

A criminal suspect in the scandal, Park had repeatedly refused to make herself available for questioning by the prosecutors before the country's highest court confirmed a parliamentary impeachment motion against her. Yesterday's protest against the impeachment saw 2,000 of her supporters walking slowly, waving banners and national flags, including a huge one carried by some 100 people.

They followed a black funeral limousine decorated with national flags. Friday's final ruling stripped her of power and executive privileges, including protection from criminal indictment, and she left the presidential palace at the weekend. The corruption and influence-peddling scandal is centred on Park's close confidante Choi Soon-Sil, who is on trial for abuse of power and coercion. Choi is accused of using her presidential ties to force local firms including Samsung to "donate" nearly \$70 million to non-profit foundations she allegedly used for personal gain. Park-the 65-year-old daughter of the late former strongman Park Chung-Hee-has been named as Choi's accomplice who helped her extract money from the firms. The scandal that rocked the nation has also seen the heir to electronics giant Samsung, Lee Jae-Yong, arrested and charged with bribery for offering millions of dollars to Choi in return for policy favors from Park. Park has voiced defiance over the court ruling, saying "the truth will eventually be revealed."

Presidential candidate would review THAAD

Meanwhile, the liberal South Korean politician most likely to become the country's next president would, if elected, review how the government would deploy an advanced US missile defence system and would consult China, two of his top advisers said on Friday. If Moon Jae-in, front-runner for the May 9 presidential election, reverses policy on the deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system, it will place him at odds with the United States, South Korea's biggest ally.

The conservative government of impeached president Park Geun-hye agreed to deploy the THAAD to guard against attack by North Korea, but the decision sparked outrage in China, which responded with restrictions on some companies doing business with and in South Korea. China says the system's radar can be used to spy into its territory. Moon would likely "do a review of the validity of the decision", Choi Jong Kun, an adviser to Moon on foreign policy told Reuters. "While doing it, he will consult with the United States, as well as China."

"At the end of the day, if the reality unfolds in a way that South Korea's national security and the economy were damaged because of the THAAD, not because of the North Korea issue, then it's not really a rational situation, is it?" The comments are at variance with a tough stand taken by the new US administration on North Korea. US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, visiting Seoul for the first time since taking office, said on Friday a US policy of "strategic patience" with North Korea has ended and military action would be "on the table" if North Korea if Pyongyang took action to threaten South Korean and US forces. — Agencies

NEW ZEALAND SAYS US INVOKES IMMUNITY FOR EMBASSY STAFFER

WELLINGTON: New Zealand authorities say they're unable to investigate an incident involving a US Embassy staffer based in Wellington after the US government elected to shield him by invoking diplomatic immunity. Police said yesterday they responded to an incident in Lower Hutt near Wellington early on March 12. They said the American had left the scene before police arrived, and nobody was taken into custody. In their statement, police declined to release further details of the incident but said they're keeping the investigation open.

The day after the incident, police asked New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to seek a waiver of immunity from the US so police could investigate the incident, according to the ministry. But the ministry said the US declined that request on Friday. The ministry said in a statement that it has now asked the US Embassy to remove the man from New Zealand. The US Embassy declined requests for interviews yesterday and would not say if the

man had left the country. "As a matter of policy, we do not comment on the specifics of matters under investigation," the embassy said in a statement. "We take seriously any suggestion that our staff have fallen short of the high standards of conduct expected of US government personnel. We are communicating with New Zealand authorities."

New Zealand's foreign ministry said that it makes it "clear with all diplomatic missions in New Zealand that it expects foreign diplomats to abide by New Zealand law, and to waive immunity should MFAT request it if there are allegations of serious crimes." The ministry said that for the purposes of its policy, it defines a serious crime as one that carries a prison term of a year or more. The US Embassy in Wellington is without a permanent ambassador after Mark Gilbert, who was appointed by former President Barack Obama, was recalled in January. Embassy Charge d'Affaires Candy Green has been the acting ambassador. — AP



MANESAR: In this photograph taken on July 19, 2012, Indian private security guards look at the burnt reception office at the main gate of the Maruti Suzuki Production Facility. — AFP

INDIA COURT JAILS 13 FOR LIFE OVER MURDER AT CAR PLANT

NEW DELHI: An Indian court yesterday sentenced 13 workers to life in jail for the murder of a senior manager in an outburst of deadly violence at a car plant in 2012, one of the country's worst episodes of labor unrest. The court last week convicted a total of 31 workers, including 13 for murder, after hundreds of employees clashed with managers over wages and appointments at the Maruti Suzuki factory in Manesar.

The hearing in Gurgaon, on the outskirts of New Delhi, jailed 13 workers for murdering Awanish Kumar Dev, whose charred body was found in the remains of a building following the riots in July 2012. Dev, who was a human resources manager, died after he failed to escape a blaze which was started by workers who went on the rampage in Manesar, which is around two hours' drive southwest of the capital.

"Thirteen people who were convicted of murder have been given the life sentence," Rebecca John, a senior lawyer representing the workers, told AFP. The court sentenced four of the remaining 18 — all of whom

were found guilty of rioting, arson and damaging property—to five years in jail "which means they have another one or two months to serve", John said.

The rest were expected to walk free later yesterday with the court stating they had already served more than four years behind bars while awaiting the outcome of the case. John's team plans to appeal the verdict. "If 13 people have been convicted for murder wrongly there will be a challenge to it," John said. Prosecutors told the court that the attack was the result of a conspiracy by workers, who had been at loggerheads with the management over wages and plans to set up a union at the workplace.

But union leaders claim it was triggered by an argument between a supervisor and a casual employee, who was abused over his low caste. The plant, which manufactures nearly 700,000 cars annually, was shut for 60 days prior to the deadly violence. Maruti Suzuki, a subsidiary of Japanese automobile major Suzuki, has a market share of 51 percent in India. — AFP



DHAKA: Bangladesh Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) personnel and bomb experts stand near the body of a man beside a RAB checkpoint in Khilgaon. — AP

BANGLADESH FORCES KILL ALLEGED MILITANT CARRYING EXPLOSIVES

DHAKA: Bangladesh police shot dead a suspected militant in the capital Dhaka yesterday, a day after a suicide bomber blew himself up at a security forces camp. The man was killed as he tried to cross a security roadblock on a motorbike carrying a bag with improvised explosive devices, according to Mufti Mahmud Khan, spokesman for the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB).

"As he was carrying explosives we primarily suspect him of being a militant," Khan told AFP, adding further investigation was needed to ascertain his identity. A bomb disposal unit was rushed to the spot where it recovered the biker's bag containing multiple small improvised bombs, which were later diffused, Khan said. According to local RAB commander Tuhin Mohammad Masud, the suspected attacker was in his early twenties.

The latest incident comes a day after a man blew himself up at a RAB camp near Dhaka's international airport, wounding two policemen, in an

apparent botched suicide attack. Dhaka beefed up security at all airports after Friday's attack, one of the first in recent years against the elite RAB force which is tasked with tackling militancy. Bangladesh has seen a spate of deadly attacks recently on foreigners, writers and activists.

The country's security forces launched a nationwide crackdown on Islamist extremists following a siege at a cafe in Dhaka last year, arresting scores of suspects. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for that attack, in which 22 people including 18 foreign hostages were killed. The government has denied the presence of IS in the country and blames local extremists.

IS claims attack

The Islamic State group claimed yesterday a suicide bomb attack a day earlier on a camp for Bangladesh's elite security forces. "A caliphate soldier in Bangladesh carried out a mar-

tyrdom operation with an explosive belt in a camp for special forces in Dhaka," the group announced in its daily Al-Bayan radio bulletin.

Two people were wounded in the apparently botched attack, one of the first in recent years against the elite Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) force which is tasked with tackling militancy. The incident came a day after a series of raids on suspected militant hideouts in the troubled country. Bangladesh has seen a spate of deadly attacks recently on foreigners, writers and activists.

The country's security forces launched a nationwide crackdown on Islamist extremists following a siege at a cafe in Dhaka last year, arresting scores of suspects. The Islamic State group also claimed responsibility for that attack, in which 22 people, including 18 foreign hostages, were killed. The government has denied the presence of IS in the country and blames local extremists. — AFP



MOSUL: A member of the Iraqi security forces plays with a ball in a neighborhood in west Mosul yesterday. Iraq began an operation on February 19 to retake west Mosul, which is the last major Islamic State group urban bastion in the country and includes the Old City. — AFP (See Page 8)

ATTACKER SHOT DEAD AT PARIS ORLY AIRPORT

Continued from Page 1

Le Roux said the man was also suspected opening fire on police during a routine traffic inspection in the northern suburb of Garges-les-Gonesses at around 7:00 am. One officer suffered minor head injuries. He was thought to have stolen a car and driven to Orly, Le Roux said. Police sources said he was 39. Franck Lecam, a traveler bound for Tel Aviv said he heard "three or four shots" nearby as he was queuing to check in. Air traffic to Orly was held on the runway as the security operation unfolded. Passengers in the Orly-Quest terminal were confined in the building. That terminal re-opened at around 1200 GMT. The southern terminal, where the incident occurred, was

re-opening in stages. Elite police teams secured the airport and searched it for explosives but none were found. France remains in a state of emergency after a series of terror attacks, including the November 2015 massacre in Paris and a truck attack in Nice, in July last year. In mid-February, a machete-wielding Egyptian man attacked a soldier outside Paris's Louvre museum before being shot and wounded. The soldier from whom the man tried to take the weapon was part of Operation Sentinelle, a force of 7,000 troops deployed in the capital and other cities after the January 2015 Paris attacks. A notice was posted on the Paris airports authority website urging passengers not to travel to Orly. Budget airline easyJet said it expected interruptions and flight delays, adding that 46 of its flights were due to fly in and out of the airport yesterday. On Thursday, a letter bomb exploded at the Paris offices of the International Monetary Fund, injuring a secretary who suffered burns to her hands and face. — AFP

HEZBOLLAH BLASTS 'WEAK' UN

Continued from Page 1

Israel fiercely rejects the allegation, often directed at it by its critics, and likened the report to Der Sturmer - a Nazi propaganda publication that was strongly anti-Semitic. The United States, an ally of Israel, had said it was outraged and demanded the report be withdrawn. US Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, said on Friday that Khalaf's resignation was appropriate and Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon said it was "long overdue". "It is only normal for criminals to pressure and attack those who advocate the cause of their victims," Khalaf wrote in her resignation letter and stood by the ESCWA report. UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the report was published without consultation with the UN

secretariat. "This is not about content, this is about process," Dujarric told reporters in New York on Friday. "The secretary-general cannot accept that an under-secretary general or any other senior UN official that reports to him would authorize the publication under the UN name, under the UN logo, without consulting the competent departments and even himself," he said. Last month, Nasrallah warned that Hezbollah would put up fierce resistance in any future confrontation with Israel should the United States give it the green light to attack it inside Lebanon, but played down the prospects of such a battle. Israel fought a destructive month-long war with its Lebanese foe Hezbollah in 2006, and has targeted the group including military leaders in several deadly strikes in Syria in recent years but there has been no major direct confrontation. — Reuters

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Focus

DUTCH PM WILDERS REMAINS FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH

By Jan Hennop

Geert Wilders may have been beaten into second place in the Dutch elections but the far-right MP will enjoy a magnified role in parliament and remain a force to be reckoned with, analysts said. While he failed in his aim of starting a "patriotic revolution," Wilders has already succeeded in shifting the debate and the tone in Dutch politics on immigration and integration, observers said. Campaigning on an anti-Islam ticket, the peroxide-haired politician saw his hopes wilt from an all-time high in January when opinion polls had said he could win as many as 37 seats in the 150-seat Dutch lower chamber. Instead, he captured a more sobering 20 seats in Wednesday's general elections, behind the 33 won by the Liberal party of Prime Minister Mark Rutte, but enough to place his Freedom Party (PVV) second.

"It would have been great if we were the largest, but we're willing to talk and help govern. That's my hope," Wilders told journalists Thursday. But he warned his party would "show our hard opposition side" if he were excluded. The long process to form the next government has begun with the VVD sounding out other parties to try to cobble together a coalition. Most parties leaders, including Rutte, have already vowed not to work with Wilders, alienated by his fiery anti-immigrant, anti-EU rhetoric, and his go-it-alone attitude.

Long shadow

But analysts say Wilders, who quit the VVD in 2006 to set up his party, will continue to cast a long shadow across the Dutch political landscape and has already succeeded in pulling the lowlands country to the right. "What's telling is that many parties, including Rutte's VVD, have already taken on some of the PVV's viewpoints and content... particularly when it comes to immigration policies," said Matthijs Rooduijn, a political sociologist at Utrecht University. "That doesn't mean that parties like the VVD... suddenly moved to the far-right, but there certainly is a shift in that direction," he said. "Most parties have become more nationalist and that's because of the PVV's influence," he said.

With Wilders likely to end up the largest party in opposition, more clashes are also forecast, such as with rising young green-left star Jesse Klaver, whose GroenLinks party upped their seats from four to 14. Wilders will also likely lock horns with the progressive leader of Democracy party D66, Alexander Pechtold, which the PVV beat into third place with 19 seats. Should D66 or GroenLinks enter government with Rutte "the clash is going to continue when it comes to social and cultural topics. And the sparks are going to fly," Rooduijn said.

'Bland political elites'

Wilders, who already triggered the collapse of one Rutte government in 2012, could also seek to exploit the fragmented nature of the next coalition which will be made up of at least four and maybe five parties, Rooduijn said. "He could argue the new cabinet is making too many compromises and back-room deals-it will give him extra ammunition for his populist message that there's a bland political elite who still won't listen to voters' concerns," he said.

"The outcome of this election does not at all mean the end of Geert Wilders and the issues that he is advocating," said Claes de Vreese, politics professor at the University of Amsterdam. "He remains an important force in Dutch and European politics. He had more votes and increased his number of seats, even though it was not this 'people's revolution' that he was claiming." Wilders was hailed by European far-right leaders too, ahead of other key elections in France and Germany this year, who said his polls performance was far from a defeat.

His success "proves that the ideas we share are advancing in the various European countries," said Marine Le Pen, leader of France's National Front, who is hoping to upset the French presidential elections. "Ignore the froth: whilst the establishment did cling on, they took a beating at this election," wrote the new anti-establishment British blog Westminster. Wilders's notoriety has already spread across the Atlantic. Trevor Noah, who hosts the popular US late night program "The Daily Show," gave Wilders and his "hateful" message a roasting Thursday, comparing his blond mesh to Donald Trump, and likening him to a blond villain played by the actor Christopher Walken's in "Batman Returns." — AFP

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NO 'GREAT DEAL' ON THE HORIZON

Dr James J Zogby

It looks like the Trump Administration has come to agree with the conclusion reached by every US President and Central Command Chief since the Gulf War of 1991—that resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is necessary to promote regional security and US strategic interests in the Middle East. When viewed this way, the struggle for justice for Palestinians becomes not an end in itself, rather it is the price to be paid so that the US can successfully consolidate its regional allies in order to confront threats to stability, whether from Saddam's Iraq, revolutionary Iran, or non-state terrorist entities.

This new appreciation for the functional role of Israeli-Palestinian peace has caused President Trump to appear to "backtrack" on some of candidate Trump's more provocative positions on the issue. He's stalling on moving the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem; he's expressed reservations about Israel's settlement expansion program; and while he refused to publicly pressure Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the need for a "two-state solution", leading Cabinet members have been emphatic the Administration is committed to that goal.

All of these "signals", coupled with Special Envoy Jason Greenblatt's recent visit to Israel/Palestine have raised expectations that the Trump Administration may be serious about achieving a "great deal"—involving an Israeli-Palestinian peace and a regional peace arrangement

between Israel and US allies in the Arab World. Expectations were further fueled by reports that Greenblatt's visit left Netanyahu unsettled and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas reassured. I can't share this upbeat assessment because, for several reasons, I remain pessimistic about the prospects of this entire undertaking.

In the first place, Israel's leadership has no interest in any reasonable solution that meets minimum Palestinian requirements. When he was in Washington, Netanyahu, who often states that he wants "negotiations without preconditions", made it clear that this demand applies only to the Palestinian, since he follows this statement by presenting his own non-negotiable terms: Palestinian recognition of Israel as a "Jewish State" and full Israeli security control over the land west of the Jordan River. These preconditions ask Palestinians to accept second class citizenship for their brethren in Israel, while leaving the West Bank under permanent Israeli military control.

Then, there is the issue of settlements. It has been reported that Netanyahu is seeking to secure from the Trump Administration a better agreement than the one then Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon obtained from President George W. Bush. The Israelis want US permission to continue settlement growth even beyond what they term "settlement blocs" that house the majority of settlers in the West Bank.

Netanyahu will not accept limits in what

the Israelis have unilaterally termed "East Jerusalem"—but which is, in fact, an extensive swatch of land encompassing about 10% of the West Bank and 22 Palestinian villages. Nor will he accept any restrictions in the Jordan Valley—where the Israelis have seized and are exploiting that region's most fertile land. Given these preconditions, what is left for Palestinians are a series of disconnected cantons that can never form a viable entity.

Netanyahu believes in retaining control over Eretz Israel and has expanded settlements toward achieving that end. He has, however, learned to feint in the direction of supporting two states in order to ease international pressure, all the while continuing to build more settlements and consolidating control over more Palestinian land.

Another tactic Netanyahu has used is to argue that he can't make too many concessions on the issue of settlements for fear of losing his governing coalition. This argument is, at best, disingenuous since on a number of occasions it has been clear that if Netanyahu truly wanted peace, he could have shed some of his current partners in favor of forming a more centrist coalition—something he has always been loath to do.

Even beyond settlement expansion, another reason to be pessimistic are the 600,000 settlers who currently populate the West Bank and "East Jerusalem". The very position of the settlements and the disposition of the settlers who reside in them has created a near irreversible situa-

tion in the occupied lands. Any reasonable resolution guaranteeing Palestinian sovereignty and viability will require the removal of a large number of these occupiers. Given the state of Israeli politics today, it is impossible to imagine a scenario where any Israeli government will or even can make such a move.

Finally, the demand made by Israel and accepted by the White House that any peace arrangement must come from direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations without external intervention means that the process is doomed from the start. The asymmetry of power between the two parties and the fact that Israel is the occupier with total control, while the Palestinian Authority is a dependency with no leverage means that instead of negotiations we will have Israel dictating terms which Palestinians can only accept or reject. As has been the case in the past, this is a recipe for disaster.

Arab States may be willing to give President Trump a chance to convene an international conference since, given the current unsettling state of affairs in the region, they may not want to alienate the US Administration. But unless the White House is willing to get tough and get smart and present a bold new challenge to Israel laying down the law on settlements and the just requirements for peace, it doesn't stand "a snowball chance in hell" of succeeding. Since I don't expect bold, just, or smart, I'm not expecting any "great deal" or the formation of any overt regional alliance—any time soon.

DEATH CARTS CARRY FAMILY RIPPED APART IN MOSUL

By Tony Gamal-Gabriel

As a convoy of wooden carts descends a hill outside Iraq's war-torn second city of Mosul, a child's foot, greyed with dust, pokes out from under brightly coloured blankets. Ziad Khalaf says an air strike on Friday targeting Islamic State group fighters in west Mosul killed 21 members of his family. "They were pulled from the rubble. Twenty-one bodies, women and children. Even a baby of just six months," he says. "I hadn't seen them in 20 days." The rickety carts crawl along the muddy road under a leaden sky. More feet protrude from under red, green, blue and pink blankets. Some are bare and dusty, others wear socks. A deep wound splits a little girl's face from cheek to ear.

Iraqi forces backed by a US-led coalition are pressing a vast offensive to seize Iraq's second city from IS, whose members have used civilians as human shields to slow approaching forces. When Iraqi fighters entered Khalaf's Wadi Hajar neighborhood in the city's southwest, he was able to hide as IS withdrew. His relatives were not so lucky. They were forced to join the jihadists as they retreated towards a nearby railway station which Iraqi forces captured Tuesday.

"They were human shields for the jihadists," says Khalaf, a man in his thirties with greying hair. "A plane came. There was a strike." "I've lost my two brothers, my nephew, my cousins... a whole family - 21 people," he says. "When we went to retrieve the bodies, the jihadists fired mortars at us. We couldn't get them out until the Iraqi security forces arrived," Khalaf says. It could not be independently confirmed that the raid had taken place or whether it was carried out by Iraqi or coalition aircraft.

'Dead inside'

The six old carts draw to a halt and line up side by side in a muddy field. Some men burst into tears, others scream in despair. "It was a very violent strike. Two houses were reduced to dust," says Shehab Ahmad. He cries as he kisses a little girl with light brown hair who was lying on one of the carts. He sits head in hands, his face lowered to the ground. His wife and their son Ahmad, three and a half years old, were killed in the raid. He and his three young daughters survived. A man with thick black hair and wrinkles around his eyes, he was in a third building that was spared. "I feel dead inside," he says, tapping a hand on his chest. Among the carts, Rayan Khalaf huddles in the arms

of a relative. He cannot hold back his tears as he blurts out incoherent remarks.

He rises and kisses the bodies one by one. "Where's Younes? Here's Younes. A kiss from your mother, a kiss from your grandmother," he says. An imposing flat-backed military truck arrives. Black and beige body bags are retrieved from an ambulance and one by one, the bodies are

wrapped. "This is my brother," Rayan Khalaf says, struggling to carry a body in his arms. He refuses to be helped. "This is Younes," Ziad Khalaf tells his father. The old man stands by his side, a grey coat over his black gown and a traditional kuffiyeh scarf on his head, holding a thick pile of green ID cards. He leafs through each one carefully before placing it on a body.— AFP



MOSUL: Relatives transport on carts the bodies of Iraqi residents of west Mosul who were killed in an airstrike targeting Islamic State (IS) group jihadists in west Mosul yesterday. — AFP

PLANES CARRY PRO, ANTI-WENGER BANNERS

WEST BROMWICH: Rival groups of Arsenal fans paid for planes trailing both critical and supportive Arsene Wenger banners to fly over The Hawthorns during yesterday's game against West Bromwich Albion. A banner that read "NO CONTRACT #WENGER OUT" was seen flying above the stadium shortly before the Premier League game kicked off. But in the 16th minute, with the score 1-1, another plane was spotted overhead with a banner that read: "IN ARSENE WE TRUST #RESPECTAW". Wenger, Arsenal's manager since 1996, has come under pressure from fans after Arsenal were humiliated 10-2 on aggregate by Bayern Munich in the Champions League and dropped out of the Premier League top four. The 67-year-old Frenchman is believed to have been offered a new two-year contract by the club. He refused to be drawn on his future prior to yesterday's game. "I have nothing to say about that anymore," Wenger told reporters at Thursday's pre-match press conference. "Every press conference is about that and we have talked enough about that. —AFP

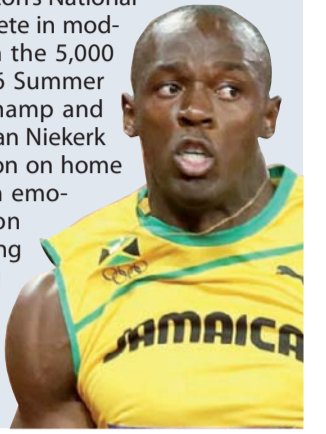


INDIAN RACE-CAR DRIVER, WIFE KILLED IN CAR CRASH

CHENNAI: An Indian race-car driver and his wife were killed early yesterday after their BMW crashed into a tree and burst into flames in southern India, police said. Driver Ashwin Sundar and his wife Niveditha were on their way home when their car swerved out of control and rammed into the tree in Tamil Nadu state's capital Chennai. "The vehicle got stuck between the tree and the compound wall on the road side... (and then) the car caught fire," S. Yuvraj, a local investigative police officer, told AFP. Yuvraj said the couple were trapped in the blazing vehicle after it auto-locked from the impact. Traffic police recovered their charred bodies after managing to get the car open. Sundar was a rising star in the car racing industry, winning the National F4 championships in 2012 and 2013. He signed a deal with German racing team Ma-Con Motorsport and drove for the German Formula Volkswagen ADAC Championship in 2008. —AFP

TRACK STARS TO SAY SO LONG TO BOLT

KINGSTON: Britain's Mo Farah and Kenya's David Rudisha are among the athletes who will compete in the Racers Track Club Grand Prix on June 10, the final Jamaican competition for superstar Usain Bolt, organizers said Friday. The two are part of a star-studded international athletics field who will join the retiring Bolt for the meeting at Kingston's National Stadium. Farah is the most successful British athlete in modern Olympic Games history having won gold in the 5,000 metres and 10,000m at both the 2012 and 2016 Summer Games. Rudisha, the reigning 800m Olympic champ and South Africa's 400m world record holder Wayne van Niekerk are also in the field. "It will be my last competition on home soil. I might shed a tear even though I'm not an emotional person as I close out where it started on Jamaican soil," said Bolt of the event which is being dubbed "Salute to a Legend." The reigning Olympic 100m and 200m champion announced earlier that he was unlikely to compete in the upcoming IAAF World Relays in the Bahamas set for April 22-23. —AFP



MASAHIRO TANAKA, YANKEES TEAM UP TO NO-HIT TIGERS

FLORIDA: No runs once again off Japanese pitcher Masahiro Tanaka. No hits off him or the New York Yankees' bullpen, either. Tanaka and two relievers combined on a spring training no-hitter against the Detroit Tigers in a 3-0 win Friday in Lakeland, Florida. New York manager Joe Girardi didn't keep the lineup card as a souvenir, but still appreciated the effort. "I'm happy for our guys," Girardi said. "It's fun. Obviously, it means more if it's the regular season, but still it's a no-hitter."

Tanaka, scheduled to start on opening day, struck out six and walked two in 4 1/3 innings. The Japanese ace has thrown 13 1/3 scoreless innings in exhibition play. "I felt that I wasn't at my best, but considering that I still was able to put up some zeroes, so that part satisfied me," Tanaka said through a translator. "The slider and the cut fastball, the location of it, I felt like I was all over the place. The command of those can be better." After Chasen Shreve got the final two outs in the fifth, Jordan Montgomery finished up with four perfect innings. Around the Grapefruit and Cactus Leagues:

ASTROS (ss) 5, BRAVES 4

Houston starter Dallas Keuchel threw four scoreless innings, scattering three hits. He has yet to give up an earned run this spring. Derek Fisher doubled and drove in three runs.

ORIOLES 8, PIRATES 6

Gabriel Ynoa went 2 2/3 innings in the start for Baltimore, allowing two earned runs and five hits. Trey Mancini hit his second home run of the spring and Alex Castellanos tripled.

ASTROS (ss) 6, RED SOX 2

Houston's Brad Peacock gave up four hits and a run in a three-inning start. Evan Gattis doubled and singled for the Astros. Eduardo Rodriguez struck out six over four innings, allowing just two hits and walking three. Joe Kelly took the loss in relief, giving up two runs and two hits.

TWINS 4, RAYS 2

Phil Hughes, healthy after two injury-plagued seasons, threw five shutout innings, giving up two hits while fanning four. Jorge Polanco and Brian Dozier both homered. Erasmo Ramirez gave up two earned runs on one hit in his two-inning start for the Rays. Mallex Smith stole two bases and was thrown out trying to steal a third.

BLUE JAYS 7, PHILLIES 5

Toronto starter Marco Estrada went 3 2/3 innings, giving up a three-run homer to Howie Kendrick. Outfield prospect Darrell Ceciliani homered, tripled and drove in five runs for the Blue Jays.

NATIONALS 5, MARLINS 5, 9 INNINGS

Washington pitching prospect Erick Fedde didn't make it out of the second inning, giving up five runs on four hits and three walks in 1 2/3 innings. Miami's Scott Copeland gave up a hit in his three-inning start. Marcell Ozuna hit his third homer of the spring.

METS 16, CARDINALS 2

Mets starter Steven Matz went 3 2/3 innings, allowing two hits and an earned run while walking three and striking out three. Wilmer Flores homered, doubled and drove in

six runs. Curtis Granderson and Lucas Duda both doubled.

CUBS 7, WHITE SOX 2

Kyle Schwarber homered off White Sox newcomer Derek Holland, singled and drove in four runs from the Cubs' leadoff spot. Kris Bryant drove in two runs, Anthony Rizzo doubled. Holland gave up six runs on four hits and three walks in his four-inning start. Cubs reliever Koji Uehara gave up one run and three hits in one inning.

DIAMONDBACKS (ss) 3, A'S 2

Arizona starter Archie Bradley worked five innings, allowing one run on five hits. Brandon Drury tripled, doubled and singled for his third consecutive multihit game. Ryon Healy connected off Bradley for his fourth spring homer.

ROYALS 8, BREWERS 5

Nathan Karns, acquired from the Mariners in a trade for Jarrod Dyson, pitched four innings and gave up three runs on seven hits. Christian Colon homered and Alex Gordon had two hits and two RBIs.

RANGERS (ss) 6 ANGELS 5

James Loney hit his first homer of the spring and drove in two runs for Texas. Elvis Andrus, who had surgery in November to repair a sports hernia, went 0 for 3 - dropping his average to .182 this spring. Alex Meyer gave up one run on four hits and one walk over three innings in the start for the Angels.

MARINERS (ss) 9, DIAMONDBACKS (ss) 5

Yovani Gallardo pitched 4 1/3 innings in the start for the Mariners, allowing two runs on four hits with three walks. Ryan Casteel homered and Kyle Seager hit his third double. Shelby Miller worked 3 1/3 in the start for the Diamondbacks, giving up one run on three hits and striking out eight. Gregor Blanco went 2 for 3 and scored twice.

INDIANS (ss) 3, RANGERS (ss) 2

Cleveland's Danny Salazar continued his strong spring performance, giving up two runs on four hits and two walks while striking out nine over five innings. Lonnie Chisenhall and Abraham Almonte hit back-to-back solo shots in the first inning and Erik Kratz led off the second with a homer. Shawn Armstrong, who is competing for a spot in Cleveland's bullpen, struck out two in one scoreless inning of work. He has allowed four hits and two walks with eight strikeouts in 7 1/3 innings this spring.

REDS 7, INDIANS (ss) 3

Brandon Finnegan was roughed up for his third consecutive start, allowing three runs over four innings and bringing his ERA to 7.94 this spring for Cincinnati. Chad Wallach's two-run double sparked a five-run seventh inning for the Reds, and Desmond Jennings added an RBI triple. Joey Votto has one hit in his last 14 at-bats and is hitting .167 this spring.

ROCKIES 5, GIANTS 1

Matt Cain allowed three runs and nine hits while striking out five over 4 2/3 innings for San Francisco. Cain, a three-time All-Star fighting for the fifth spot in San Francisco's rotation, has allowed at least one run in each of his five appearances and has an 8.40 ERA this spring.—AP

HENRY SPEIGHT MAGIC SEES BRUMBIES HOME OVER WARATAHS

SYDNEY: Wallabies winger Henry Speight scored two second half tries to lead the ACT Brumbies to a 28-12 win over the NSW Waratahs in Sydney on Saturday.

With the Brumbies leading a scrappy but close match 14-7 midway through the second half, Speight put the visitors in command with a superb individual try from 50 metres out. The Waratahs struck back with a try of their own to close the gap, but Speight then powered onto a ball 15 metres out and scored next to the posts to put the game beyond doubt, giving the Brumbies their third consecutive win over their arch-rivals. "We knew coming up here it was always going to be a battle and the conditions weren't the greatest, but it was a really good effort from both teams and I really liked grinding it out," Brumbies captain Sam Carter said. "Henry's unbelievable form at the moment and you see when he gets going he's really hard to stop." The Waratahs started the match well and had all the early ball, earning a series of penalties deep in Brumbies territory.

After kicking for touch three times and attempting the rolling maul on each occasion, the Waratahs were finally rewarded when prop Tom Robertson burrowed over

after a series of pick and drives.

The Brumbies struggled to keep control of the ball in the wet conditions, but when they did they were able to at last put some pressure on the home side. They were rewarded when Wallabies centre Tevita Kuridrani steamed onto a flat pass from scrumhalf Joe Powell and touched down under the posts to level proceedings at 7-7 after 25 minutes.

The score remained 7-7 at halftime and for the first 20 minutes of the second, but the Brumbies broke the deadlock when replacement hooker Robbie Abel crashed over at the back of a rolling maul. Flyhalf Wharenui Hawera converted to make it 14-7, which became 21-7 almost from the kick off when Speight received the ball 50 metres out, kicked ahead and regathered to score next to the posts.

The Waratahs struck back thanks to some smart work from replacement scrumhalf Jake Gordon, who scored his first Super Rugby try to close the gap to 21-12 with 12 minutes remaining. But Speight's second try put the game beyond doubt, the big winger hitting the line at pace and brushing off two attempted tackles to touch down under the posts. — AFP



EDINBURGH: Scotland's Stuart Hogg, right, is tackled by Italy's captain Sergio Parisse, left, during the Six Nations rugby union international match between Scotland and Italy at Murrayfield stadium, in Edinburgh, Scotland, yesterday. —AP

RUGBY

SCOTS CRUSH ITALY, END SIX NATIONS ON HIGH NOTE

EDINBURGH: Vern Cotter ended his three year tenure as Scotland's head coach as his side beat Italy 29-0 for a bonus point victory that completed their most successful Six Nations campaign in 11 years. Tries by fly-half Finn Russell, replacement centre Matt Scott and wingers Tim Visser and Tommy Seymour earned Cotter's side a convincing win against a hapless Italy, who failed to trouble the scoreboard for the first time in two years since a 29-0 defeat against France in Rome in March 2015.

That kept the Scots in with a chance of their first ever second-placed finish, depending on results in Paris and Dublin later on the final day of the championship, but ensured three Scottish victories out of five for only the second time in the Six Nations era, matching the tally achieved under Frank Hadden in 2006.

In watching his side bounce back from last week's 61-21 mauling against England at Twickenham, Cotter finished his tenure with 19 victories from 36 matches. The 55-year-old Kiwi - who moves on to Montpellier in the French Top-14 when Glasgow's Gregor Townsend replaces him in June - is the first Scotland coach in the professional era to record a win ratio of 50% or more. As for Italy, having produced promising first-half performances but dramatic second half fade-outs in their previous four games, they failed to get a point on the board in either half, completing a miserable maiden Six Nations campaign for coach Conor O'Shea, his side finishing bottom of the table without even a solitary bonus point. The Scottish pack got on a powerful drive from the first scrum, forcing a penalty that full back Stuart Hogg converted from long range to give Cotter's men a 3-0 lead after four minutes. Not that the Scots proceeded to build momentum. With rain falling, there were handling errors on both sides and lost lineouts too. The visitors fluffed a gilt edged opportunity to draw level at the mid-point of the opening half, outside half Carlo Canna screwing wide a penalty from a near-central position inside Scotland's 22m line.

GOOD FORTUNE

Not until the start of the second quarter did Scotland show any attacking intent. Centre Huw Jones took a flat pass from Russell and burst through a gap but slipped on the sodden turf 10m from the line and limped out of the action - to be replaced by Scott.

From the penalty that followed, Scotland set up a line-out drive in the right corner and eventually broke the Italian resistance, scrum-half Ali Price feeding Russell for a try in the left corner that the fly-half managed to convert.

That left Italy 10-0 down with 28 minutes on the clock and they continued to spurn opportunities to get their own points on the board, Canna missing another penalty.

The Scots capitalised on their good fortune with a second try two minutes before half-time. Hogg outleapt Italy's left wing Giovanbattista Venditti to flick a Price chip back in the in-goal area for Scott. Russell was unable to add the conversion but, when Canna missed a third

penalty in injury-time, Scotland went into the second half with a 15-0 lead that the Italians struggled to whittle down. They had plenty of possession but met with firm resistance, Hogg holding up Angelo Esposito in the right corner and then thwarting the wing with a superb tackle. Scotland lost captain John Barclay to the sin bin after 49 minutes, the Scarlets flanker having

hauled down a maul while off his feet, but still held the Italians at bay.

After Barclay's return, in the 61st minute Visser touched down a Hogg kick into the left corner and Russell converted. Then, with eight minutes to go, Hogg fed a scoring pass for Seymour to secure the try bonus, Russell adding the conversion. — AFP

BASEBALL

PUERTO RICO DEFEAT US TO REACH WBC S-FINAL

SAN DIEGO: Puerto Rico defeated the USA 6-5 Friday at the World Baseball Classic to punch their ticket to the semi-finals and keep their unbeaten streak intact.

Second baseman Javier Baez singled, stole three bases and scored a run for Puerto Rico, who finished runner-up in the 2013 World Baseball Classic. Baez won a World Series with the Chicago Cubs just four months ago and said this is almost as enjoyable. "It is really close to it. We are having fun and staying together," he said. I love the Cubs and I love this team." Puerto Rico improved to 5-0 in the tournament as they built their early lead Friday on six singles in an explosive four-run first inning in front of a crowd of 32,000 at Petco Park.

A throwing error by American third baseman Nolan Arenado gave them two unearned runs and a 6-3 lead in the sixth. The US and the Dominican Republic, both 1-1, will play Saturday night for the fourth and final berth in the semi-finals. Two-time winner Japan and the Netherlands already have qualified. The final round of the 16-team tournament begins Monday in Los Angeles with the championship game at Dodger Stadium two nights later.

Brandon Crawford hit a two-out, two-run triple off Edwin Diaz in the ninth before Josh Harrison struck out for the final out of the contest. Buster Posey and Adam Jones blasted solo homers for the Americans. Angel Pagan, Francisco Lindor and Carlos Correa began the parade of singles in the first inning off US starter Marcus Stroman. Carlos Beltran singled in Lindor and Yadier Molina followed with a single to drive in Correa. Baez singled to load the bases before Eddie Rosario's sacrifice fly to left field made it 4-0.

Posey's homer in the fifth made it 4-2 and Jones' second homer of the tournament in the sixth made it 4-3. Puerto Rico's bullpen had pitched nine scoreless innings overall in the second round before surrendering two runs to the US in the ninth. "We kind of gave up and you can't do that here. All the teams are really good," said Baez. Puerto Rico has quick turnaround with a game against Venezuela on Saturday. The Americans will meet the Dominicans in Saturday's final game of the second round, with left-handed pitcher Danny Duffy scheduled to face right-hander Ervin Santana. —AFP



SAN DIEGO: US first baseman Eric Hosmer, left, misses the throw from third baseman Nolan Arenado as Puerto Rico's Angel Pagan (16) arrives safely to first base during the sixth inning of a second-round World Baseball Classic baseball game Friday, in San Diego. Pagan reached second base on the throwing error by Arenado, and two runs scored. —AP

KENYA ESCAPES THREAT OF BAN AFTER RESOLVING TO ADOPT NEW CONSTITUTION

NAIROBI: Kenya's national Olympic committee has escaped the threat of suspension after failing to adopt a new constitution but funding will continue to be withheld until further notice, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) said yesterday.

The IOC froze financial support to Kenya nine days ago, after the country's troubled national committee (NOCK) failed to adopt a revised constitution, and said it would discuss the matter at its executive board (EB) meeting in Pyeongchang this week, leading to speculation that it might ban the coun-

try. However, IOC Deputy Director General Pere Miro said a Kenyan undertaking to bring in the new constitution at a meeting later this month meant the IOC had stayed the threat of further action.

"The IOC EB noted, with disappointment, that your NOC failed to adopt its revised constitution at its meeting on 7 March 2017," Miro said in a letter to NOCK President Kipchoge Keino.

"However, the IOC EB welcomed the recent positive developments, as mentioned in your letter dated 14 March 2017, in particular the firm commit-

ment from your NOC to rectify the situation and the resolution signed by the members of your NOC Executive Committee to support the adoption of this revised constitution at its next Extraordinary General Assembly already reconvened by your NOC on 28 March 2017.

"In view of this significant progress, no further action will be taken at this stage by the IOC. Nevertheless, the IOC EB has confirmed that all payments of subsidies to your NOC continue to be on hold until further notice," said the letter. "The IOC will continue to monitor

the completion of the entire process-including the adoption of the revised NOC constitution, as a first step, and the holding of your NOC Elective General Assembly, as a second step - in accordance with the road map established in September 2016," the letter said. The IOC wants the body to adopt a new constitution barring incumbent officials from casting their vote during general assemblies, which some have been accused of using to prolong their own terms in office.

Kenya last month accepted a local high court decision overruling last

year's government order to disband its Olympic committee after accusations that it had poorly handled arrangements for the 2016 Rio Games.

Sports Minister Hassan Wario had ordered that the NOCK be disbanded last August, saying the body had not arranged adequate accommodation and travel for the Olympic team in Rio and had mishandled other issues.

Despite problems in the build up to Rio, the East African nation enjoyed its most successful Olympics, winning six gold medals, six silvers and one bronze, all in track and field. —Reuters

CUMMINS STRIKES PULL INDIA BACK, PUJARA FIRM

RANCHI: Australian fast bowler Pat Cummins claimed four wickets to dent India's response despite Cheteshwar Pujara's dogged century on day three of the third Test in Ranchi yesterday.

India were 360 for six at stumps, still trailing the visitors by 91 runs in their first innings. Pujara (130) and Wriddhiman Saha (18) were batting at close of play. Cummins, making a return after playing his only Test for Australia in 2011, got crucial breaks including the prized scalp of India skipper Virat Kohli. The 23-year-old Cummins was ably supported by fellow paceman Josh Hazlewood and spinner Steve O'Keefe who took a wicket each on pitch that still looked good for batting.

Pujara, who was involved in a 102-run second-wicket stand with overnight partner Murali Vijay (82), was holding the innings together with his 11th Test century.

Pujara hit 17 boundaries, in an otherwise sedate knock, to keep India's hopes alive of surpassing Australia's first innings total of 451. "I think the game is evenly poised. If we can get closer to the target and possibly extend the lead from there, I think it's going to be a good game on hand," Vijay told reporters.

"Pujara was rock solid, hopefully he can put up a great show for us tomorrow. Definitely run scoring was difficult, they too bowled on very good areas," said Vijay.

Pujara built crucial partnerships with Ajinkya Rahane (14) and Karun Nair (23) but the Australian pacemen rattled India's middle order with some inspired bowling.

Cummins, who struck twice in the afternoon session, got Rahane caught behind and Hazlewood bowled Nair with a beautiful reverse swinging delivery in the final session. "I thought last night he (Cummins) bowled particularly well but today he

backed that up. To produce some of the balls that he produced to get wickets was exciting," said Australia's assistant coach David Saker. "Hats off to selectors to go with him. Ball speed in India is a big thing because the wickets don't generate any pace...we know what sort of a talent he has but it was so pleasing to see him do well."

Australia skipper Steve Smith kept up the pressure by rotating his bowling options as runs trickled in for the hosts in the final two hours of play.

India, whose innings run-rate is less than three an over, managed to score only 57 runs in the 31 overs bowled in the final session and lost two wickets.

KOHLI'S PRIZED SCALP

Earlier Kohli, who turned out to bat at his regular number four spot laying to rest any injury concerns, lasted only 23 balls before edging a catch to his opposite number Steve Smith at second slip.

The star batsman had injured his right shoulder after an awkward fall while fielding during Australia's innings on Thursday and stayed off the field for 400 minutes before taking crease. Kohli, who came into the rubber with double centuries in four successive series, has only managed 46 runs in his five innings since the opener in Pune. "Very satisfying seeing Kohli out cheaply...At the moment we have got the better of him but we know such a good player can bounce back at any time," said Saker.

In the morning session, Vijay hit a gutsy 82 before undoing his hard work by being stumped off O'Keefe at the stroke of lunch. The series between the world's top two sides is tantalisingly poised at 1-1 with India needing at least a draw to have any chance of winning back the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. —AFP



WELLINGTON: South Africa's Kagiso Rabada dives in vain to field off his own bowling against New Zealand during the second cricket test at the Basin Reserve in Wellington, New Zealand, yesterday. —AP

CRICKET

MAHARAJ SETS 'IMPOSSIBLE' VICTORY FOR SOUTH AFRICA

WELLINGTON: South African captain Faf du Plessis hailed an "impossible" victory after the Proteas recovered from a desperate situation to win the second Test against New Zealand by eight wickets in Wellington yesterday.

Keshav Maharaj took a career best six wickets as New Zealand crumpled in their second innings and needed just 25 overs to reach the modest 81 to win. Just five sessions after South Africa were on the ropes they found themselves with an unbeatable 1-0 lead in the series with one Test to play. New Zealand captain Kane Williamson branded the change in fortunes and his side's second innings capitulation when they were out for 171, as a "very, very poor" effort.

But du Plessis said the result was testimony to the determination of the South Africans. "It's happened a few times this season where we've been in impossible situations," he said.

"At lunchtime yesterday, 90 for six, it's not too long ago, and here we are. "We've somehow found this ability to have a lot of faith in our batting line up or whatever, for guys in the team to stand up when there's a pressure situation."

From being 94 for six before lunch on Friday, South Africa rallied to be all out for 359 to take a 91-run lead into the second innings. On a flat-tening track and with nearly three days remaining, there was time for New Zealand to mount a strong comeback.

Instead their second innings was done in 63.2 overs with a career best 80 by Jeet Raval and a 65-run partnership between Raval and BJ Watling (29) the only sign of resistance.

Raval's dismissal signalled the beginning of the end as the last five wickets fell for 16 runs.

Faced with the guile of Maharaj's left-arm spin and the seam and bounce of Morne Morkel New Zealand struggled through their second innings. Maharaj finished with six for 40, the best figures and second five-wicket haul in his fledgling six-Test career while Morkel took the top off the New Zealand innings, including the key wicket of Kane Williamson, to have three for 50. Du Plessis admitted to being "surprised" because there was not a lot of spin in the wicket. "I thought both spinners this Test match bowled incredibly well. Their consistency in

SCOREBOARD

WELLINGTON: Completed scoreboard in the second Test between New Zealand and South Africa in Wellington yesterday.

New Zealand first innings 268 (H. Nicholls 118, J. Raval 36; JP Duminy 4-47)	N. Broom c de Kock b Morkel 20
South Africa first innings (overnight 349-9)	H. Nicholls b Maharaj 7
S. Cook c Neesham b Southee 3	J. Neesham c du Plessis b Maharaj 4
D. Elgar c Neesham b de Grandhomme 9	B. Watling c Duminy b Maharaj 29
K. Rabada b Southee 9	C. de Grandhomme b Maharaj 0
H. Amla c Nicholls b de Grandhomme 21	T. Southee c Duminy b Maharaj 4
J. Duminy c Nicholls b Wagner 16	J. Patel c de Kock b Rabada 0
F. du Plessis c Watling b de Grandhomme 22	N. Wagner not out 4
T. Bavuma c Neesham b Wagner 89	Extras (b10, lb1, wd5) 16
Q. de Kock c Watling b Neesham 91	Total (all out: 63.2 overs) 171
V. Philander not out 37	Fall of wickets: 1-16 (Latham), 2-26 (Williamson), 3-64 (Broom), 4-86 (Nicholls), 5-90 (Neesham), 6-155 (Raval), 7-161 (de Grandhomme), 8-167 (Southee), 9-167 (Patel), 10-171 (Watling) Bowling: Morkel 11-0-50-3 (1w), Philander 12-3-28-0, Rabada 17-5-38-1, Maharaj 20-2-7-40-6, Duminy 3-1-4-0
M. Morkel b Patel 1	
K. Maharaj c Williamson b Wagner 20	
Extras: (b4, lb5, w12) 41	
Total (all out: 98 overs) 359	
Fall of wickets: 1-12 (Cook), 2-12 (Elgar), 3-26 (Rabada), 4-59 (Duminy), 5-79 (Amla), 6-94 (du Plessis), 7-254 (de Kock), 8-290 (Bavuma), 9-302 (Maharaj), 10-359 (Morkel)	South Africa 2nd innings
	S. Cook c Neesham b Southee 11
	D. Elgar c Watling b Elgar 17
	H. Amla not out 38
	J. Duminy not out 15
	Extras:(w2) 2
	Total: (two wickets; 25 overs) 171
	Fall of wicket: 1-18 (Cook), 2-48 (Elgar)
	Bowling: Southee 6-2-17-1, de Grandhomme 8-1-20-0, Wagner 8-2-18-1, Neesham 3-0-28-0 (2w)
	Result: South Africa won by eight wickets.
New Zealand 2nd innings	
T. Latham c Duminy b Morkel 6	
J. Raval st de Kock b Maharaj 80	
K. Williamson c de Kock b Morkel 1	

SCOREBOARD

RANCHI, India: Scoreboard at stumps on day three of the third Test between India and Australia in Ranchi yesterday:

Australia 1st innings 451 (S. Smith 178 not out, G. Maxwell 104; R. Jadeja 5-124, U. Yadav 3-106)	R. Ashwin c Wade b Cummins 3
India 1st innings (overnight 120-1; Vijay 42 not out, Pujara 10 not out)	W. Saha not out 18
L. Rahul c Wade b Cummins 67	Extras (b14, lb3) 17
M. Vijay st Wade b O'Keefe 82	Total (6 wickets; 130 overs) 360
C. Pujara not out 130	Fall of wickets: 1-91 (Rahul), 2-193 (Vijay), 3-225 (Kohli), 4-276 (Rahane), 5-320 (Nair), 6-328 (Ashwin)
V. Kohli c Smith b Cummins 6	Bowling: Hazlewood 31-9-66-1, Cummins 25-8-59-4, O'Keefe 43-11-117-1, Lyon 29-2-97-0, Maxwell 2-0-4-0.
A. Rahane c Wade b Cummins 14	Still to bat: R. Jadeja, I. Sharma, U. Yadav.
K. Nair b Hazlewood 23	



RANCHI: Indian batsman Wriddhiman Saha (R) plays a shot as Australian wicketkeeper Matthew Wade (L) looks on during the third day of the third Test cricket match between India and Australia at The Jharkhand State Cricket Association (JSCA) Stadium Complex in Ranchi yesterday. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka: Scoreboard Saturday at stumps on the fourth day of the second Test between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh:

Sri Lanka 1st Innings: 338	
Bangladesh 1st Innings: 467	
Sri Lanka 2nd Innings (Overnight 54-0)	
Dimuth Karunaratne c Sarkar b Shakib 126	
Upul Tharanga b Hasan 26	
Kusal Mendis c Rahim b Rahman 36	
Dinesh Chandimal c Rahim b Rahman 5	
Asela Gunaratne lbw b Shakib 7	
Dhananjaya de Silva c Rahim b Rahman 0	
Niroshan Dickwella c Rahim b Shakib 5	
Dilruwan Perera not out 26	
Rangana Herath lbw b Islam 9	
Suranga Lakmal not out 16	
Extras: (4b, 7lb, 1w) 12	
Total: (for 8 wickets) 268	
Overs: 100.	
Fall of wickets: 1-57, 2-143, 3-165, 4-176, 5-177, 6-190, 7-217, 8-238.	
Still to bat: Lakshan Sandakan.	
Bowling: Subashis Roy 16-4-36-0 (1w), Mehedi Hasan 22-0-67-1, Mustafizur Rahman 19-3-52-3, Shakib Al Hasan 30-8-61-3, Mosaddek Hossain 3-0-10-0, Taijul Islam, 10-1-31-1.	
Series: Sri Lanka leads two-match series 1-0.	

BANGLADESH ON TOP, BUT S LANKA HANG ON

COLOMBO: Mustafizur Rahman and Shakib Al Hasan shared six wickets to between them but Sri Lanka fought back through a fighting century of Dimuth Karunaratne in the second Test in Colombo yesterday. Karunaratne held one end for a long period to score 126 before a dogged unbeaten inning of Dilruwan Perera helped Sri Lanka reach 268-7 at stumps on the fourth day to stretch their lead over the visitors to 139 runs. This much lead looked a distant possibility once Mustafizur and Shakib triggered a collapse in Sri Lankan innings in the post lunch session but Karunaratne hang on to score 126 before Perera hit an 26 off 126 balls. Perera received support from tail-enders Rangana Herath (9 off 32 balls) and Suranga Lakmal, 14 not out as the hosts were hoping to expand their lead to give their bowlers something to fight with.

Bangladesh struck in the day's second over through off-spinner Mehedi Hasan, who spun one sharply to bowl out opener Upul Tharanga for 26 after Sri Lanka resumed on 54-0. But Karunaratne and Kusal Mendis shared 86-run for the second wicket to help the hosts wipe out their first innings deficit and put Sri Lanka in good stead to set up decent target for Bangladesh.

"I think the wicket is really good. We lost a few wickets and after that we could not capi-

talise," said Karunaratne. "Three of our main batsmen got out in one phase. At the end of the day we have stay positive. We just wanted to play our normal game," he said. "If we can get 200-plus, it's a good score. We are happy if they can bat till we get 200 or more."

Mustafizur helped Bangladesh bounce back in the contest with quick strikes in his second spell as Mendis edged an angular ball outside the off-stump to wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim for 36.

Five overs later it was the turn of first-innings centurion Dinesh Chandimal, who played a loose drive to be caught behind for five. Asela Gunaratne was adjudged leg-before for seven off Shakib without offering any shot before Mustafizur struck again to hand Dhananjaya de Silva a duck.

Niroshan Dickwella survived a close call for lbw but could not make use of it giving Mushfiqur his fourth catch down the leg off Shakib to depart for five. An edge off Mustafizur flew to third man boundary to earn Karunaratne his fifth Test century but he fell in the final session edging Shakib to Soumya Sarkar at slip. Perera batted with grit but should have been dismissed for four had umpires Aleem Dar not made an error of judgment with Bangladesh already completing their quota of reviews. Taijul Islam

removed Herath, who was equally stubborn but Bangladesh were yet to find an answer for Perera's ultra-defensive batting, much-needed effort for Sri Lanka though. Mustafizur claimed 3-52 for Bangladesh while Shakib finished the day with 3-61. — AFP



COLOMBO: Sri Lankan cricketer Dilruwan Perera (R) plays a shot as Bangladesh captain and wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim (L) looks on during the fourth day of the second and final Test cricket match between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh at The P. Sara Oval Cricket Stadium in Colombo yesterday. — AFP

NHL

PANTHERS RALLY FOR 4-3 SHOOTOUT WIN OVER RANGERS

NEW YORK: Aleksander Barkov scored in the third period and added the winner in the shootout to lift the Florida Panthers to a 4-3 NHL victory over the New York Rangers on Friday night. Jaromir Jagr had two assists and passed Hall of Famer Gordie Howe for the most points after turning 40 with 269. Jonathan Huberdeau had a goal and an assist and Jussi Jokinen also scored for Florida. James Reimer made 29 saves for the Panthers, who are trying to stay in the Eastern Conference playoff race. Reimer made his seventh straight start with Roberto Luongo out because of a lower-body injury. Mats Zuccarello scored two goals and J.T. Miller also tallied for the Rangers, who

were unable to hold an early 2-0 lead. Brendan Smith added two assists. Antti Raanta finished with 34 saves. The Rangers have lost six straight home games (0-4-2).

PENGUINS 6, DEVILS 4

Sidney Crosby scored twice to move into a tie for the NHL lead with 37 and Carter Roney added the first goal of his NHL career as short-handed Pittsburgh beat New Jersey. Crosby added an assist to give him 640 in his career and move him into a tie with Jaromir Jagr for the second-most in franchise history. Nick Bonino, Jake Guentzel and Phil Kessel also scored for Pittsburgh as the Penguins leapfrogged

Columbus to move into second-place behind Washington in the Metropolitan Division. Matt Murray stopped 32 shots for Pittsburgh. Kyle Palmieri matched Crosby with two goals for New Jersey. Stefan Noesen and Beau Bennett also scored for the Devils. Keith Kinkaid finished with 37 saves.

FLAMES 3, STARS 1

Mark Giordano had a goal and two assists and Brian Elliott stopped 24 shots in his 10th straight win as Calgary beat Dallas. Matthew Tkachuk and Michael Frolik also scored to help Calgary bounce back from a loss to Boston two nights earlier - with Elliott home with the flu - that snapped the

Flames' 10-game winning streak. Calgary, 12-1-1 in its last 14, jumped past Edmonton into third place in the Pacific Division. Bidding for his third shutout in four games, Elliott was finally beaten with 6:41 left in the third when TJ Brodie mishandled the puck in front of his net and Brett Ritchie whipped it past the surprised goaltender. Kari Lehtonen finished with 21 saves for Dalls, which finished a 1-3-0 road trip.

SABRES 2, DUCKS 1, SO

Zemgus Girgensons scored in the 10th round of the shootout to lift the Buffalo Sabres to a 2-1 victory over the Anaheim Ducks. Ryan O'Reilly and Rasmus Ristolainen also scored in the

tiebreaker to help the Sabres end a seven-game skid in Southern California. Buffalo had not won in Anaheim or Los Angeles since a 2-0 win over the Ducks on Feb. 29, 2012. O'Reilly also scored a bizarre goal for his 17th of the season and Anders Nilsson stopped 39 shots through overtime. Rickard Rakell scored and Jonathan Bernier made 30 saves for the Ducks, who could not complete their first three-game winning streak since Jan. 10-14. Ryan Getzlaf and Brandon Montour had goals in the shootout. Getzlaf and O'Reilly scored in the second round of the tiebreaker, and the Ristolainen and Montour converted in the ninth round. Nilsson then stopped Nick Ritchie before Girgensons won it. —AP

TENNIS

SOCK GIVES NISHIKORI THE BOOT, BOOKS FEDERER CLASH

INDIAN WELLS: Jack Sock thinks Roger Federer is the best tennis player in history, but that doesn't mean the 18th-ranked American is discounting his chances against the Swiss great in the Indian Wells semi-finals.

"In my opinion he's the best to ever play. It will definitely be a challenge," Sock said after ousting world number five Kei Nishikori 6-3, 2-6, 6-2 on Friday.

Sock notched his first victory over a top-five player, and reached the semi-finals of an elite Masters series event for the first time.

But with two titles to his credit already this season Sock says he's a much improved player from the one who lost to Federer in two prior meetings, both in 2015. Sock called Federer's 18th Grand Slam triumph at the Australian Open in January a "testament" to Federer's ability, after the Swiss missed some six months of 2016 through injury.

But he also noted that Federer was shocked by 116th-ranked Evgeny Donskoy in Dubai this month.

"The trend of tennis now, is a guy who is playing well at any ranking can give any guy trouble," Sock said. "When I played him here last and I played him in Basel a couple years ago I don't think I went on the court giving myself a ton of chances of winning. I think that's changed, for sure."

"Obviously he's playing incredible tennis not only this year but this week," Sock added. "But on the flip side of that, I am

playing confident tennis as well myself. And I think if I go out there and play the right tennis and play the right strategy, I think I can give myself a shot, for sure."

Sock, who withstood four match points against Grigor Dimitrov in the third round and had another close shave against Malek Jaziri in the fourth, used his high kick serve and powerful groundstrokes to overcome Nishikori-who hadn't dropped a set in his three prior matches.

"Kick serve, especially on these courts, is deadly for me," Sock said. "So that was a big part of the game plan for me today going in. "If Kei is hitting the ball in the strike zone he is going to beat pretty much anyone in the world on any given day. "For me, it was all about trying to get him out of that slot and let him not be taking balls at his hip and waist and dictating play. So the kick serve for me today was crucial, first and second serve, and that's why I used it a lot."

Nishikori was left regretting too many loose points, and a slow start that let Sock leap to a 3-0 lead in the opening set, in which one early break proved all he needed. While Nishikori played better in the second to level the match, he dropped the first game of the third set to again concede the advantage.

"I don't think I played good enough to beat Jack today," Nishikori said. "I think there were too many unforced errors and I wasn't playing aggressive enough to get more chances." —AFP



LOS ANGELES: Milwaukee Bucks center John Henson, left, and Los Angeles Lakers forward Larry Nance Jr tangle on the floor during the first half of an NBA basketball game in Los Angeles on Friday. — AP

BASKETBALL

BUCKS HOLD OFF LAKERS 107-103 AFTER 3 EJECTIONS FOR SHOVING

LOS ANGELES: Khris Middleton scored 30 points and Giannis Antetokounmpo contributed 26 points, eight rebounds and five assists, helping Milwaukee defeat the Los Angeles Lakers on Friday night at Staples Center in a game that featured a scuffle between both clubs. Antetokounmpo made 11 of 16 shots from the floor as the Bucks (34-34) won for the eighth time in the last nine games. Jordan Clarkson had 21 points and Ivica Zubac added 18 points and eight rebounds for the Lakers (20-49), who lost their fourth in a row. Nick Young had 16 points and D'Angelo Russell finished with 14 before both were ejected late in the third quarter along with Bucks center Greg Monroe. Tempers flared with 36 seconds remaining in the third quarter with the Bucks leading 83-73. Bucks rookie guard Malcolm Brogdon fouled Young on a drive to the bucket. Young took exception and pushed Brogdon. Monroe, who had 12 points and six boards before being sent to the locker room, shoved Young as players from both teams became involved in the scrum.

WIZARDS 112, BULLS 107

John Wall set a career high with 20 assists and Bradley Beal scored 24 points as Washington rebounded from a rare home loss with a win over Chicago on Friday night. The Wizards (42-26) let most of a 19-point halftime lead slip away thanks to their latest suspect defensive performance but ultimately held on to snap a two-game losing streak.

Otto Porter and Wall each made two free throws inside the final 19 seconds after Jimmy Butler's 3-pointer made the score 108-107 with 39.7 seconds left. The Wizards (42-26) let most of a 19-point halftime lead slip away, but ultimately held on to snap a two-game losing streak. Otto Porter and Wall each sank two free throws inside the final 19 seconds remaining after Jimmy Butler's 3-pointer made the score 108-107 with 39.7 seconds.

HEAT 123, TIMBERWOLVES 105

Miami, which started the season 11-30, continued its amazing turnaround, drawing to within one game of .500 with a victory over Minnesota at AmericanAirlines Arena. Miami, which is 23-5 in its past 28 games, was led by reserve guard Tyler Johnson, who had 23 points, and center Hassan Whiteside, who had 23 points and 14 rebounds. Heat point guard Goran Dragic had 12 of his 19 points in

NBA results/standings

Orlando 109, Phoenix 103; New Orleans 128, Houston 112; Miami 123, Minnesota 105; Boston 98, Brooklyn 95; Toronto 87, Detroit 75; Philadelphia 116, Dallas 74; Washington 112, Chicago 107.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference					
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division					
W	L	PCT	GB						
Boston	44	25	.638	-	Utah	43	26	.623	-
Toronto	40	29	.580	4	Oklahoma City	39	29	.574	3.5
NY Knicks	27	42	.391	17	Denver	33	35	.485	9.5
Philadelphia	25	43	.368	18.5	Portland	30	37	.448	12
Brooklyn	13	55	.191	30.5	Minnesota	28	40	.412	14.5
Central Division				Pacific Division					
Cleveland	45	22	.672	-	Golden State	54	14	.794	-
Indiana	35	33	.515	10.5	LA Clippers	40	29	.580	14.5
Milwaukee	34	34	.500	11.5	Sacramento	27	41	.397	27
Detroit	33	36	.478	13	Phoenix	22	47	.319	32.5
Chicago	32	37	.464	14	LA Lakers	20	49	.290	34.5
Southeast Division				Southwest Division					
Washington	42	26	.618	-	San Antonio	52	15	.776	-
Atlanta	37	31	.544	5	Houston	47	22	.681	6
Miami	34	35	.493	8.5	Memphis	39	30	.565	14
Charlotte	29	39	.426	13	Dallas	29	39	.426	23.5
Orlando	25	45	.357	18	New Orleans	28	41	.406	25

the fourth quarter and finished with 10 assists. Miami shot a season-best 58.8 percent from the floor. The Heat win was marred by an injury to Dion Waiters' left ankle. Waiters, Miami's starting shooting guard, left the game with 3:24 left in the second quarter and did not return, although the Heat said X-rays were negative.

PELICANS 128, ROCKETS 112

Forward Solomon Hill scored a career-high 30 points, including 6 of 9 from 3-point range, and Anthony Davis added 24 points and 14 rebounds to lift New Orleans to a victory over Houston at the Smoothie King Center. Hill entered the game averaging 6.5 points per game, but he exploded for 16 first-quarter points as New Orleans took a 36-23 lead. The Pelicans played without center DeMarcus Cousins, who was rested with a sore left knee and bruised right rib. The Rockets got a game-high 41 points from James Harden, but even though they cut a 23-point deficit to 114-103 with 5:27 left, they got no closer.

CELTICS 98, NETS 95

Jae Crowder collected a season-high 24 points and 12 rebounds and Boston overcame the absence of star point guard Isaiah Thomas and held on for a victory over Brooklyn. The Celtics played without Thomas, who sat out due to a bone bruise in his right knee. With Thomas missing his fifth game of

the season, it was a struggle at times for the Celtics. Avery Bradley added 16 for the Celtics, who shot 40 percent from the field. Al Horford contributed 14 despite shooting 6 of 16 while Marcus Smart added 12 in place of Thomas.

RAPTORS 87, PISTONS 75

Serge Ibaka had 17 points and nine rebounds and Toronto rallied from a nine-point fourth-quarter deficit to down Detroit at The Palace. The Raptors finished the game on a 24-3 run. The Pistons scored just three points in the final 9:20. Toronto shooting guard DeMar DeRozan, who entered the game as the NBA's fifth-leading scorer at 27.1 points per game, supplied all of his 14 points in the second half. DeMarre Carroll contributed 12 points, Norman Powell had 11 and Jonas Valanciunas added 10 for the Raptors.

76ERS 116, MAVERICKS 74

Justin Anderson matched his career high of 19 points against his former team as Philadelphia routed Dallas, the 76ers' most lopsided victory in nine years. It was the third time in 11 games with Philadelphia that Anderson matched his career high. He was acquired in a Feb. 23 trade involving center/forward Nerlens Noel. Noel, who spent two and a half seasons with the Sixers, had nine points and five rebounds off the bench for Dallas. — Reuters



INDIAN WELLS: Svetlana Kuznetsova of Russia plays a forehand against Karolina Pliskova of the Czech Republic in their semi final match during day twelve of the BNP Paribas Open at Indian Wells Tennis Garden on Friday in Indian Wells, California. —AFP

MODESTE SCORES HAT TRICK AS COLOGNE BEATS HERTHA 4-2

BERLIN: Anthony Modeste boosted his appeal among suitors with a hat trick for Cologne to end its six-game winless run in the Bundesliga by beating Hertha Berlin 4-2 yesterday.

The 28-year-old Modeste took his season tally to 22 goals, just one behind league top-scorer Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang of Borussia Dortmund.

Modeste, who joined Cologne from Hoffenheim in 2015, has already been the subject of transfer speculation this season with Cologne receiving reported offers of up to 50 million euros (\$54 million) from China for the French striker.

"For me it was clear that I wouldn't desert my team in the middle of the sea-

son," said Modeste, who held talks with sporting director Joerg Schmadtke.

"Mr. Schmadtke said that we'll talk again in summer," Modeste said. Schmadtke had told Kicker magazine, "We will not jeopardize our sporting goals because of a transfer, even if it is a lot of money." Yuya Osako fired host Cologne into an early lead, though Hertha goalkeeper Rune Jarstein might have done better after letting the Japan forward's strike from distance slip through his fingers.

Timo Horn pulled off a good save to deny Vedad Ibisevic and the visitors were to rue the miss when Modeste scored twice in as many minutes.

Hertha hadn't time to recover after

Osako set up Modeste's first goal in the 35th before Modeste beat the offside trap and stayed cool in front of Jarstein to beat him again. Hertha was given a lifeline after the break when Horn conceded a penalty by bringing down Niklas Stark, and it was converted by Ibisevic.

But any hopes of a comeback were dented when Modeste completed his hat trick in the 63rd on a well-played counter-attack involving Marco Hoeger. American defender John Anthony Brooks restored some Hertha pride with a header from a corner with around 20 minutes left, though it couldn't prevent the side's sixth straight defeat away from home. "I'm happy and satisfied in Cologne, and I want to

keep scoring goals," Modeste said recently. "You can never say never and I don't know what will happen in future. But I know what I want now, for example to play in the Europa League with Cologne."

Cologne was well-placed to do just that, moving sixth and above Eintracht Frankfurt, which plays relegation-threatened Hamburger SV later.

WERDER BREMEN 3, LEIPZIG 0

Bremen produced another upset to move away from the relegation zone with its fourth win in five games.

Zlatko Junuzovic let fly with a curling shot inside the left post to give Bremen a 34th-minute lead.

Junuzovic, captain in the absence of the injured Clemens Fritz, was also involved in Bremen's second before the hour-mark. He caught the Leipzig defense asleep with a free kick for the unmarked Florian Grillitsch to score. Florian Kainz sealed it in injury time with his first Bremen goal. Bremen moved to 13th, three points clear of Hamburg in the relegation playoff place before its late game.

WOLFSBURG 1, DARMSTADT 0

If Wolfsburg had known that Mario Gomez can't stop scoring under Andries Jonker, the club would surely have appointed the Dutch coach much sooner.—AP

DAWSON DOUBLE DARKENS WENGER'S ARSENAL GLOOM

	West Brom	3
	Arsenal	1

WEST BROMWICH: Arsenal fans again rounded on under-fire manager Arsene Wenger as defender Craig Dawson scored twice in a comprehensive 3-1 victory for West Bromwich Albion yesterday.

Dawson headed home from corners either side of half-time to book-end the goalscoring action in West Brom's eighth win in their last 10 Premier League home games. In between Dawson's goals, Alexis Sanchez equalised for Arsenal before substitute Hal Robson-Kanu restored the home side's lead. But it was the renewed criticism of Wenger that grabbed the attention as fans displayed "Wenger Out" banners after two aeroplanes had towed banners above The Hawthorns with rival views on the Frenchman. One banner read "NO CONTRACT #WENGER OUT", while another proclaimed "IN ARSENE WE TRUST #RESPECTAW".

Wenger's decision to replace Sanchez late on prompted more abuse from travelling fans, who had earlier engaged in a muted chorus of "We want Wenger out!" as their side slid to a fourth defeat in five league games.

The result prevented Arsenal from whittling down the five-point gap separating them from the top five, further compromising their hopes of qualifying for next season's Champions League.

Compounding Arsenal's disappointment, the visitors also lost goalkeeper Petr Cech to an apparent muscular injury during the first half, with David Ospina taking his place. West Brom began purposefully, with James McClean heading Nacer Chadli's cross tamely at Cech before bursting forwards and stinging the Arsenal goalkeeper's hands. It was little surprise when West Brom went ahead from the corner that followed. Chadli delivered it from the left and Dawson rose above Laurent Koscielny to head home as Cech flapped. The visitors were level within four minutes as Granit Xhaka floated a pass to Sanchez, who coolly finished off the underside of the crossbar with his right foot.

West Brom responded well to the equaliser, though, and threatened the visitors on the break when Chadli raced down the right flank and threaded a pass to the feet of Salomon Rondon.

CECH INJURED

But the striker dragged his shot across goal and wide of the far post.

West Brom repelled an Arsenal attack when goalkeeper Ben Foster saved from Aaron Ramsey and Theo Walcott was crowded out as he tried to turn in the rebound. Then Cech made a smart save to his right to keep out a dipping half-volley from Darren Fletcher.

Shortly afterwards the Arsenal goalkeeper limped off, having appeared to injure himself when he landed awkwardly while collecting a routine through-ball.

West Brom should have doubled their lead six minutes into the second half when Chris Brunt peeled out wide and delivered

a superb cross to Rondon in the centre.

The striker beat Koscielny to a header, but glanced his effort wide. That was Rondon's last action of the game and replacement Robson-Kanu grabbed the second Albion goal just a minute after stepping off the bench.

He pounced after Chadli's lofted pass from the edge of the area was spilt by substitute goalkeeper Ospina, the Wales striker firing home between the legs of McClean.

The goal was awarded despite Arsenal's appeals that the offside McClean had been interfering with play. Arsenal had been sluggish, but they almost levelled again from a corner on 66 minutes, with Danny Welbeck heading against the crossbar.

The hosts then went close to wrapping up the game when Robson-Kanu raced onto a through-ball and was denied by a low save from Ospina. Nacho Monreal blocking Chadli's follow-up effort.

However, the third Albion goal arrived with 15 minutes remaining as McClean delivered a corner from the right and the unmarked Dawson dispatched another header.—AFP

Live Matches on TV (Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE	
Middlesbrough v Man United	15:00
Tottenham v Southampton	17:15
Manchester City v Liverpool	19:30

SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA	
CD Leganes v Malaga CF	14:00
Atletico de Madrid v Sevilla	18:15
Deportivo v Celta de Vigo	20:30
Sporting Gijon v Granada CF	20:30
FC Barcelona v Valencia	22:45

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE	
Empoli v SSC Napoli	14:30
Atalanta v Pescara	17:00
Bologna v AC Chievo Verona	17:00
UC Sampdoria v Juventus FC	17:00
Cagliari Calcio v SS Lazio	17:00
Crotone v ACF Fiorentina	17:00
Udinese v Citta di Palermo	20:00
AS Roma v Sassuolo Calcio	22:45

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA	
FSV Mainz 05 v Schalke 04	17:30
Monchengladbach v Bayern Munich	19:30

FRENCH LEAGUE	
Caen v AS Monaco FC	17:00
Dijon v Saint Etienne	19:00
Paris Saint-Germain v Lyon	23:00



STOKE-ON-TRENT: Chelsea's Brazilian-born Spanish striker Diego Costa (L) vies with Stoke City's US defender Geoff Cameron during the English Premier League football match between Stoke City and Chelsea at the Bet365 Stadium in Stoke-on-Trent, central England yesterday. — AFP

SOCCER

CAHILL FROM ZERO TO HERO AS CHELSEA DOWN STOKE

	Stoke	1
	Chelsea	2

STOKE-ON-TRENT: Gary Cahill kept Chelsea's title charge on track as the defender's 87th-minute winner gave the Premier League leaders a hard-fought 2-1 victory at Stoke yesterday.

Willian's cheeky free-kick put Chelsea ahead in the 13th minute but Stoke equalised when Jonathan Walters converted a penalty conceded by Cahill seven minutes before half-time.

Chelsea looked the more likely winners after the break, as Marcos Alonso's free kick hit the crossbar and goalkeeper Lee Grant superbly denied Pedro. Stoke were never out of the game but Cahill fired home to punish a mistake by Erik Pieters, who failed to clear David Luiz's header from a corner. Victory for Chelsea made it 12 games unbeaten in all competitions and they are now 13 points clear of second-placed Tottenham, who face Southampton today.

Stoke's defeat ended their eight-match unbeaten home record going back to a 1-0 defeat to Bournemouth on November 19. Chelsea were without Eden Hazard after the Belgium international injured a leg muscle in training and Pedro's recall in his place was the only change to the side that beat Manchester United 1-0 in the FA Cup quarter-finals on Monday. There was no place in the 18 for John Terry, who Stoke boss Mark Hughes admitted enquiring about the last time the clubs met on New Year's Eve, following a minor injury.

BEMUSED

Antonio Conte's side broke the deadlock from the first chance of the game. Marko Arnautovic brought down Pedro for a free kick on Chelsea's left and Willian whipped it in to the near post, the ball seemingly going through a bemused Grant. Grant atoned for his error by making a superb reflex stop to deny Alonso from point-blank range on the half hour.

Three minutes later, Stoke had an effort disallowed for offside when Saïdo Berahino was judged to have pushed Nemanja Matic as Bruno Martins Indi headed home after Geoff Cameron nodded Joe Allen's corner back into the six-yard box. But Stoke fans didn't have long to wait before cheering a legitimate goal when they were awarded a penalty after Cahill shoved Walters at a Pieters free kick.

Walters stepped up to confidently steer home into the roof of the net for his fifth goal of the season. Chelsea looked to regain the lead and in the 51st minute a superb pass from N'Golo Kante split the Stoke defence for Alonso to gallop onto, but the Spanish wing back's shot was deflected behind.

The leaders were centimetres away from regaining the lead in the 66th minute. Alonso's curling free kick from 22 yards bounced off the bar and to safety after Pieters was booked for bringing down Pedro.—AFP

LEICESTER SINK WEST HAM TO PROLONG SHAKESPEARE SURGE

	West Ham	2
	Leicester	3

Ham faces, however, with a perfectly placed free-kick a minute later to make it 2-1. Danny Drinkwater fouled Michail Antonio 25 yards in front of goal, giving the Argentinian the opportunity to curl the ball over the wall and into the top corner, with goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel not even moving.

DIRE DEFENDING

Leicester had to dig deep for a while as West Ham peppered their area with crosses, but then took advantage of some more dire defending by the hosts, this time from a corner.

Albrighton's delivery was allowed to reach Vardy in front of goal and the England striker swivelled to smash the ball high past Darren Randolph. Lanzini came close to pulling one back once again with a low shot that went wide of Schmeichel's right-hand post, but the half ended with Leicester comfortably ahead.

Drinkwater was booked for upending Cheikhou Kouyate early in a second half that began scrappily.

West Ham were fortunate when Mahrez's pass put Vardy in a shooting position on the left of the box, only for the forward to chip over Randolph and the crossbar as well.

West Ham took advantage by pulling a goal back again, with Ayew the scorer in the 63rd minute after Schmeichel tipped Lanzini's long-range free-kick behind for a corner.

Andy Carroll headed the set-piece back to Ayew, whose header had enough power to go through Schmeichel.

West Ham threw men forward in search of an equaliser and Schmeichel did well to keep out a Carroll header before Ayew, set up by Antonio and ruled to be onside, blasted over with all the goal to aim at. Huth was in the right place at the right time to block a goal-bound effort from Kouyate in another frantic passage of play in the Leicester box. Schmeichel kept Leicester's lead intact in stoppage time with a reflex save to deny Carroll after Snodgrass's free-kick had been deflected into the striker's path.—AFP



LONDON: Leicester City's Danish goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel (L) saves a shot by West Ham's Andy Carroll (2R) during the English Premier League football match between West Ham United and Leicester City at The London Stadium, in east London yesterday. — AFP

CALVERT-LEWIN AND LUKAKU LEAD EVERTON ROUT OF HULL

	Everton	4
	Hull	0

LIVERPOOL: Dominic Calvert-Lewin notched his first Premier League goal and unsettled star Romelu Lukaku bagged a brace in Everton's 4-0 thrashing of 10-man Hull yesterday. With Kevin Mirallas in Belgium for the birth of his child, Calvert-Lewin made his second league start this season and the 20-year-old took full advantage with the opening goal in the first half at Goodison Park.

Hull midfielder Tom Huddlestone was controversially sent off for a foul on Idrissa Gueye in the second half and Everton ran riot in the closing stages. Enner Valencia got the second and Lukaku struck twice in stoppage-time to lift the Toffees above Manchester United into sixth place.

Having rejected the most lucrative contract offer in Everton's history, worth a report-

ed £140,000-per-week, Lukaku this week admitted the club's failure to compete for major trophies and attract top players was likely to convince him to leave.

Ronald Koeman had gone public with his frustration at Lukaku's comments, but pragmatism won the day as the manager named his rebellious forward in the starting line-up.

Lukaku reminded potential suitors of his class as his 20th and 21st goals of the season took him above Tottenham's Harry Kane in the race to finish as the Premier League top scorer and made him the first Everton player to score 20 or more league goals since Gary Lineker in 1985-86.

After a sixth successive home league win, Koeman's side are behind fifth placed Arsenal only on goal difference, although United would reclaim sixth with a win at Middlesbrough on Sunday.

Hull remain in the relegation zone and Marco Silva's team are three points from safety with nine games left to beat the drop. Lukaku, who still has two years to run on his contract, retained the backing of Everton's supporters, who loudly cheered his name before kick-off.—AFP

Sports

Maharaj sets 'impossible' victory for South Africa



Kuznetsova and Vesnina set up all-Russian final



SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2016

DAWSON DOUBLE DARKENS WENGER'S ARSENAL GLOOM

Page 18



BILBAO: Real Madrid's goalkeeper Keylor Navas, left, and Sergio Ramos, fail to block the ball as Athletic Bilbao's Aritz Aduriz scores during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Athletic Bilbao, at San Mames stadium, in Bilbao, northern Spain, yesterday. — AP

CASEMIRO SENDS REAL FIVE POINTS CLEAR

MADRID: Casemiro was Real Madrid's unlikely hero as he hit the winner to open up a five-point lead on Barcelona at the top of La Liga with a 2-1 win at Athletic Bilbao yesterday.

Karim Benzema fired the visitors into a half-time lead from Cristiano Ronaldo's cross. Aritz Aduriz briefly levelled for Athletic, but Ronaldo again was involved for the winner on 68 minutes as his flick-on was slotted home by the unmarked Casemiro for just his third goal of the season.

Barcelona can cut the gap back to two points when they face Valencia at the Camp Nou today. Athletic were undefeated in 19

games at home in all competitions stretching back to August and started confidently with Inigo Lekue threatening early down the left.

His dangerous cross was bundled just wide by Inaki Williams inside the first two minutes. However, Madrid settled after the first 10 minutes and had the ball in the net in their first serious attack only to be denied by the offside flag. Dani Carvajal timed his run to meet Benzema's through ball but he squared to Ronaldo when going for goal would have been the better option, and the World Player of the Year's tap-in was ruled out. Six minutes later Ronaldo was denied again, this time by a

stunning save from Kepa Arrizabalaga as the young goalkeeper leapt low to his left to turn the ball to safety.

Sergio Ramos should have continued his remarkable goalscoring streak when he then headed wide when unmarked from a Toni Kroos free-kick. Madrid finally made the breakthrough on 25 minutes as Casemiro's ball over the top for Ronaldo broke Athletic's offside trap and the Portuguese produced an inch-perfect low cross for Benzema to slot home his sixth goal in as many games against Athletic.

Real continued to threaten on the counter-attack as Arrizabalaga was called into action

once more to save Gareth Bale's drive from the edge of the area.

However, the visitors had to withstand an aerial bombardment at the start of the second half. A mix-up between Keylor Navas and Ramos nearly saw the latter turn a loose ball into his own net.

The pace of Williams down the right was a constant threat for Athletic and he finally got his reward 25 minutes from time when his cross was headed back across goal by Raul Garcia and nodded in from close range by Aduriz. The lead lasted just three minutes, though, as for the umpteenth time this sea-

son, Madrid found a winner from a corner.

Kroos's delivery was flicked on by Ronaldo and midfielder Casemiro was completely alone inside the six-yard box to slot home from close range.

Marcelo should have put the game to bed 18 minutes from time when he blasted over from point-blank range after a brilliant team move involving Benzema and Ronaldo.

Ronaldo was surprisingly replaced by Isco 12 minutes from time, but Zinedine Zidane's decision was vindicated as Real held out to take a huge step towards a first La Liga title in five years. — AFP

BOURNEMOUTH ON THE RISE AS SWANSEA SLUMP

	Bournemouth	2
	Swansea	0

BOURNEMOUTH: Bournemouth bolstered their bid for Premier League survival and pushed Swansea deeper into the relegation mire as Benik Afobe inspired a 2-0 home win yesterday.

Eddie Howe's side took the lead at Dean Court thanks to a first-half own goal from Alfie Mawson, who deflected in Afobe's shot.

Afobe struck after the interval to ensure the Cherries enjoyed consecutive Premier League wins for the first time since March 2016.

Bournemouth are now nine points above the relegation zone, while Swansea sit just one place and three points clear of the bottom three following a fourth defeat in their last six games.

Dragged deeper into trouble by a loss at relegation rivals Hull in their previous match, Swansea arrived on the south coast having conceded 61 goals this season.

Bournemouth winger Ryan Fraser posed problems for that leaky Swansea defence early on as he side-footed just wide from the edge of the area, while Swansea appealed in vain for a penalty after Marc Pugh blocked with his arm.

Josh King had scored nine times in his last 10 league games, but the Bournemouth striker nearly found the net at the wrong end when his headed clearance from Gylfi Sigurdsson's free-kick drifted just wide of the far post. Bournemouth's luck was in and they enjoyed more good fortune to break the deadlock in the 31st minute.

Taking possession 20 yards from goal, Afobe advanced before hitting a low shot that appeared to be going wide before it struck Mawson on the shin and deflected past wrong-footed goalkeeper Lukasz Fabianski. Sigurdsson threatened an equaliser when he almost caught out Bournemouth keeper Artur Boruc with a swerving effort.

Dan Gosling drew a good stop from Fabianski early in the second half and Bournemouth's pressure was rewarded with a second goal in the 72nd minute.

King slid the ball through to Afobe, who adjusted his body quickly and steered his shot under Fabianski.

Earlier, Sunderland's hopes of avoiding relegation suffered another blow in a goalless stalemate with Burnley, who picked up only their third away point in the Premier League this season.

A poor game was short on chances for either side although Sunderland will rue missing the best two.

Sebastian Larsson blazed over with the Burnley goal gaping just after halftime and Fabio Borini was then denied in stoppage time by a great save from Tom Heaton. Burnley held on for a point and remain in 12th spot, while bottom club Sunderland are now seven points from the safety zone having not won at home since December. — Agencies



BOURNEMOUTH: Swansea City's Ki Sung-yueng, left, and AFC Bournemouth's Charlie Daniels battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match at the Vitality Stadium, Bournemouth, England, yesterday. — AP

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Kuwait Times 55th Anniversary BUSINESS

SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2017

Job training session with
Merkel shows Ivanka clout

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KIB concludes
Annual General
Meeting

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ABK approves cash
dividend of
11 fils per share

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WORLDWIDE SALES OF TOYOTA HYBRIDS SURPASS 10M UNITS

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BADEN-BADEN: Participants in the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting pose for the Family photo in Baden-Baden, southern Germany, on Friday. —AFP

G20 POWERS STRUGGLE TO DEFINE TRADE STANCE

LEADERS MAY DROP OPPOSITION TO 'ALL FORMS' OF PROTECTIONISM

BADEN-BADEN, Germany: Financial officials from the world's biggest economies are struggling to define a common stance on trade in the face of the Trump administration's insistence that cross-border commerce must be "fair" as well as "free."

Trump, whose tough protectionist talk helped him win the presidency, has withdrawn the US from a trans-Pacific free trade pact and attacked export giants China and Germany.

On Thursday, he also revealed a budget plan that would make good on a campaign pledge to drastically scale back environment-related funding. That stance has grated Washington's partners, who are trying to persuade US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin to renew a long-standing G20 anti-protectionism commitment and uphold an international deal on climate won only after years of painful negotiations.

But talks have so far failed to produce a breakthrough for consensus, and the clock is ticking down to the close of the two-day session when a final statement is due to be published.

Finance ministers from the Group of 20 powers comprising more than 80 percent of the global economy debated the wording of their final joint statement on trade expected at their summit in the southern German resort town of Baden-Baden. Officials were talking about replacing the group's longstanding opposition to "all forms" of protectionism with new wording that would reflect US concerns by adding a reference to "fair" trade as well.

US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin says the US is not seeking trade wars but has underlined President Donald Trump's willing-

ness to review existing trade deals to make them fairer for US workers. Free trade often lowers the costs of business and trade but can make it easier for companies to shift jobs to lower-cost countries.

Trump, who campaigned on an "America First" platform, has already pulled the US out of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement with Japan and other Pacific Rim countries. He also has started the process to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada.

Participants said no agreement was reached at the end of Friday's session of the ministers. Whether one would be reached before the close of the conference yesterday was not clear, they said. European countries and China were said to be pushing for a stronger stance in favor of free trade and cooperative, multi-country frameworks for trade such as the World Trade Organization.

Chinese Finance Minister Xiao Jie said his country would "unswervingly oppose trade protectionism." Canada, like China a major trade partner of the US, took a nuanced approach, with Finance Minister Bill Morneau said to support a general statement on the importance of trade for growth while not insisting on particular language.

Participants said some free-trade advocates were ready to give the US some space without pushing too hard on trade language, given that the administration is new and in some areas still defining its policies. The officials briefed reporters only on condition of anonymity because the talks were ongoing. They said

there was less discussion of the previous commitment that countries would refrain from pushing their currencies' exchange rates lower. Weakening a currency gives a country's exporters an advantage, but often at the expense of trading partners.

The G20 is an informal forum on economic cooperation made up of 19 countries plus the European Union. The finance ministers' meeting will pave the way for a summit of national leaders in Hamburg, Germany, on July 7-8. Its decisions don't have the same force as an international treaty but simply depend on individual countries' promises to follow through on them.

Climate conundrum

A source close to the negotiations said that "there will be nothing on climate in the communiqué—a sign of the discord." "The US says that on this issue, the position hasn't been clearly defined in Washington and they need time," added the source.

On trade, Washington is calling into question the current international trade regulation system under the World Trade Organization—a move which the source said is "unacceptable."

French Finance Minister Michel Sapin said leaders would be asked to step in when they meet in Hamburg if no agreement can be found. "Our heads of states are meeting in a few weeks. On subjects that are so important, it's not up to the finance ministers to block or to walk back on the issue, there will not be any backsliding on such fundamental issues," he said.

Carried to power on the back of a political



BADEN-BADEN: Anti-globalization demonstrators protest with umbrella reading 'STOP TTIP' on the sidelines of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting in Baden-Baden yesterday. —AFP

storm over deindustrialisation in vast areas of the US, Trump vowed in his inauguration speech to "follow two simple rules: buy American and hire American."

Trump himself insisted at a tense Washington press conference Friday following his first meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel that "I'm a free trader but also a

fair trader". He also rejected a description of his policies as "isolationist." But the differences between the two were laid bare as Merkel took the opportunity to push back against Trump's calls for individual trade deals with European countries, suggesting instead that the White House "come back to the table and talk" about a stalled US-European Union pact. —Agencies

US MUST SPEND MORE ON INFRASTRUCTURE: OECD

BADEN-BADEN, Germany: Governments need to do more to create growth that benefits everyone, and the US should spend more on roads, highways, bridges and airports, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said Friday.

The body, which includes the world's better-off countries, said in a report that governments should focus on providing better access to high-quality education and supporting employment for women through measures like affordable child care. It also highlighted the need for more spending on infrastructure. OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría called for an "upskilling of the workforce" to address worker anxiety about the future of their jobs amid technological change: "more focus on the type of education and the type of skills that you need that are being demanded by the productive sector, not merely more diplomas."

Gurría told The Associated Press that the after-effects of the global financial crisis and recession were still being felt, even as unemployment has fallen, and that growth remains substandard.

"Are the benefits of this recovery being shared equally? The answer is no," Gurría said. "There is discontent, and frustration, with modernization, with trade, with digital, with invest-

ment regimes... And basically, you have to address it because this fragmentation on the economic side, on the social side, is moving on to the political side." The result was electoral backlash and, especially in European parliamentary democracies, fragile coalitions that had trouble mustering support for decisive action.

"You still have the legacy of the crisis very much alive in terms of low growth, high unemployment, growing inequalities, and then a very large impact in the destruction of trust," he said.

The organization said US spending on infrastructure "is not keeping pace with the needs of the evolving economy and is contributing to congestion, urban sprawl and environmental degradation." That echoes President Donald Trump's calls during his campaign for more infrastructure spending, though Trump place his emphasis on private investment alongside government as a source of funds. The OECD also said that the US's corporate tax rates are too high and should be reduced and simplified. The Paris-based OECD produces extensive information and analysis on member countries' economies with an aim to improving growth. Its 35 members include many of the most advanced economies as well as several developing ones. —AP

VENEZUELA HAS A 'LET THEM EAT CAKE' MOMENT

CARACAS: After living through shortages of water, electricity, medicine, banknotes and beer, Venezuelans are now struggling to find one of the most basic foodstuffs of all, unleashing what President Nicolas Maduro has dubbed the "Bread War." Bread has become all but impossible to find at many Venezuelan bakeries, which say Maduro's socialist government is not importing enough flour for them to make it. Not so, insists the mustachioed heir to the late Hugo Chavez, who accuses bakeries of hoarding flour to destabilize his government and using it in expensive cakes and pastries rather than cheap, subsidized bread.

Maduro, whose popularity has plummeted amid a crushing three-year recession, has dispatched the army, police and uniformed civilian militias to escort officials from the National Superintendency for the Defense of Socioeconomic Rights in a wave of bakery inspections. "They are hiding the bread from the people," the president said Sunday on his weekly TV program, vowing to crack down on greedy bakers. "They are going to pay for this, I swear. Those responsible for the Bread War will pay. And don't go around calling it 'political persecution.'"

This week the authorities arrested four people in the crackdown and confiscated two bakeries accused of charging more than the official bread

price. A video posted online by the authorities shows chief inspector Williams Contreras leading one bakery sting. "There are going to be some arrests here," he said, after finding a sign outside reading "No bread until further notice." "They had 100 sacks of flour, butter, sugar—all the essential ingredients inside," he said triumphantly as police arrested the bakery's managers.

Cake not the problem

Home to the world's largest oil reserves, Venezuela has skidded to the brink of economic collapse as low crude prices have laid bare its overwhelming dependence on its chief export. Maduro, who was elected to succeed Chavez in 2013 and is fighting efforts to force him from power, blames the crisis on an "economic war" by US-backed business interests. His opponents blame the failure of 18 years of socialist "revolution" under Maduro and Chavez.

The crisis has left the country torn between die-hard "Chavistas" and an increasingly outraged majority no longer willing to forgive the socialist's excesses in return for government handouts.

The government heavily subsidizes imports of basic food products such as flour via an artificially high exchange rate. But plummeting oil revenues mean the dollars needed to keep the scheme

going are in short supply. Bakeries allowed to buy subsidized flour are supposed to use 90 percent of it for bread and only 10 percent in cakes and pastries. On Sunday's presidential TV show, Vice President Tarek El Aissami accused bakeries of flouting that regulation by making too many cakes. It was a moment reminiscent of Marie-Antoinette's apocryphal quote, "Let them eat cake"—which the queen is held to have said of the breadless, starving peasantry on the eve of the French Revolution.

The Venezuelan Federation of Bread Manufacturers says cake is not the problem. According to the industry group, Venezuela's 8,000 bakeries are receiving just 30,000 tons of flour a month, when they need four times that to meet demand. Baking in fear -

"When there's flour, we sell bread. But they deliver it every 15 or 20 days. They give us 20 sacks (of 50 kilograms, or 110 pounds). In normal circumstances, we'd use eight a day," said Fran Suero, 41, an employee at a bakery on the east side of Caracas. Even with subsidized flour, bakers say the official bread price—currently 250 bolivars a loaf (35 US cents, at the highest official exchange rate)—does not cover the cost of production. Black-market bread on the street goes for 900 bolivars. —AFP

HOW TO MAKE SURE THE EMPLOYER SEES YOUR CV

The number of CVs received for any vacancy in Kuwait - or anywhere else in the Middle East - can be quite overwhelming for employers. Hundreds of candidates apply for each vacancy and there is a high chance that the employer does not even view every single application. This is certainly a major concern for many job seekers, since they are obviously not getting hired if their CV is not viewed in the first place.

According to the Bayt.com "Hiring Practices in the Middle East and North Africa" survey, 62 percent of job seekers revealed that they use professional CV writing services to ensure their CVs stand out. While that is one highly effective way to grab the recruiters' attention and to make sure your application is on top of the pile, there are a few other recommended ways to do so. Bayt.com, the Middle East's #1 Job Site, has prepared a list of strategies you can use to make your application stand out in front of the employer.

1. Have a relevant CV

With every job vacancy comes a set of expectations

Bayt.com weekly report

and requirements from the applicants. Not every job seeker fits the position advertised and this is where CV relevancy comes in. When a company posts a job on Bayt.com, they specify what they look for using keywords and categories that fit the position at stake. The more your CV matches those keywords, the more relevant it is for the job posting. What this means is a higher rank for your application among others and your CV becomes more likely to be viewed by the employer.

2. Have an updated CV

An outdated CV never gets you anywhere, and you certainly have no excuse for having an old CV. It doesn't take much time to add a new item to your CV whenever there is progress in your career path. Keeping your CV fresh is also a reflection of how you cope with the ever-changing times. Moreover, employers who use Bayt.com can actual-

ly filter CVs based on how fresh they are - and you want to make sure you are not skipped in the process.

3. Have a specific CV

Not every employer looks for the same thing in their potential employees, even when they offer positions that are similar in nature. This is one reason you should tailor your CV to each job you apply for. Of course, there are numerous other reasons for why you would want to create multiple CVs, but at the end of the day, you need to make sure you are submitting the most relevant CV for the requirements, industry standards, and location specifications. Bayt.com allows you to have up to five different CVs to make sure you don't miss out on any opportunity.

4. Include supplementary material

Even with all the aforementioned, a CV on its own

might not be enough to get you a job. A CV gives a glimpse into your achievements and its only purpose is to secure a job interview, not the dream contract. Hence, consider adding a cover letter to take the relevant experiences from your CV and elaborate on them. This way, your employer would get a more comprehensive idea about you and why you are fitting for the job.

Don't skimp on providing information to the employer, even if it is optional. If the employer asks you to answer a questionnaire, fill out an additional form, or add any supplementary material, then make use of it! This would be another chance for you to demonstrate your suitability for the job.

Bayt.com is the #1 job site in the Middle East with more than 40,000 employers and over 27,000,000 registered job seekers from across the Middle East, North Africa and the globe, representing all industries, nationalities and career levels. Post a job or find jobs on www.bayt.com today and access the leading resource for job seekers and employers in the region.

ASIA REMAINS THE CROWN JEWEL FOR TIFFANY DURING STRONG 4Q

NEW YORK: Profits at Tiffany & Co slipped 3 percent in the fourth quarter due to flagging US sales, but strong demand in China and Japan pushed the luxury jeweler past Wall Street expectations and its shares rose sharply Friday. Tiffany has struggled with weakening sales in its biggest market as Americans and tourists spend less at US locations, including its flagship store on Manhattan's 5th Avenue next to Trump Tower.

CEO Frederic Cumenal, who was brought in to revitalize the brand, resigned last month after less than two years on the job. Tiffany's fourth-quarter sales in the Americas fell 3 percent compared with the same period last year. Sales at the 5th Avenue location tumbled 7 percent. The location, a must-stop for many tourists and New Yorkers looking to spend, has been impeded by the security barricades around President Donald Trump's personal home, according to Tiffany.

On the flip side, sales in the Asia-Pacific region rose 9 percent, thanks to stronger demand in China. And sales in Japan jumped 15 percent.

Overall, the company reported net income of \$157.8 million, or \$1.26 per share, in the three months ending Jan. 31, compared with \$163.2 million, or \$1.28 per share, in the same quarter a year ago. Adjusted for asset impairment costs, per-share earnings were \$1.45, beating the per-share earnings of \$1.37 that industry analysts had expected, according to a survey by Zacks Investment Research.

Revenue rose 1 percent to \$1.23 billion, just edging out industry analyst projections. For the year, the New York company had a profit of \$446.1 million, or \$3.55 per share. Revenue was \$4 billion. For fiscal year 2017, the company expects its earnings and revenue to rise, but did not provide specific numbers. Its stock rose \$2.44, or 2.7 percent, to close Friday at \$92.42.—AP



WASHINGTON: German Chancellor Angela Merkel sits next to Ivanka Trump during a roundtable discussion on vocational training with German and American business leaders on Friday at the White House in Washington. —AP

JOB TRAINING SESSION WITH MERKEL SHOWS IVANKA CLOUT

MERKEL STAFF REACH OUT TO IVANKA TO SET UP MEETING

WASHINGTON: A meeting between US President Donald Trump and German Chancellor Angela Merkel on vocational training Friday offered further evidence of the first daughter's influence in the White House. A White House official said Merkel's staff reached out to Ivanka Trump about setting up the meeting. During the session, Trump and Merkel talked with American and German executives and discussed how companies can better train workers.

In his opening remarks, Trump said that "training our workforce for the 21st century" was a top priority, adding that "we want to make sure we have the workforce development programs we need to ensure these jobs are being filled by American workers." Ivanka Trump, who recruited the American executives in attendance, guided the discussion. She praised her father's "commitment to creating millions of jobs" and stressed

the need for private investment, noting that "ingenuity, creativity often comes from the determination of the private sector."

The conversation was focused on vocational training and workforce development, not on the thornier issues of international trade. At the end of the session, Ivanka Trump said the executives would form a taskforce that will provide a report in three months detailing programs that could be expanded and ways the countries can work together. This was the second international workforce meeting coordinated with Ivanka Trump. During Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's visit last month, she helped organize a meeting on economic development opportunities for women. That came together at the suggestion of Trudeau's office. Participants from the United States included Andrew Liveris, CEO of Dow Chemical; Ginni Rometty, CEO of IBM; and

Marc Benioff, CEO of Salesforce. From Germany were Harald Kruger, CEO of BMW AG; Joe Kaeser, CEO of Siemens AG; and Klaus Rosenfeld, CEO of Schaeffler AG. Several students taking part in vocational programs also spoke about their experiences.

Attending for the administration were Trump adviser - and Ivanka Trump's husband - Jared Kushner, White House economic adviser Gary Cohn, Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, chief of staff Reince Priebus and Dina Powell, who was recently named deputy national security adviser for strategy. Unlike her husband, Ivanka Trump does not, for now, have an official White House role, but is a regular participant in meetings and events. She moved her young family to Washington when her father took office and has emphasized an interest in working on economic policies that impact women and girls. —AP



BOSTON: This Nov 27, 2012 file photo shows Tiffany & Co gift boxes displayed in Boston. —AP

MAYO CLINIC FACES QUESTIONS AFTER CEO COMMENTS ON INSURANCE

MINNEAPOLIS: Mayo Clinic is facing questions from the state of Minnesota after its CEO told employees that if patient conditions are equal, its hospitals should prioritize privately insured patients over those under government-subsidized programs such as Medicaid.

John Noseworthy's comments were made late last

year in a videotaped speech to staff but surfaced only this week after a transcript of his speech was obtained by the Star Tribune newspaper. The Mayo Clinic has verified the transcript is accurate. Noseworthy said in a statement Friday that medical need will always be the top factor in scheduling an appointment.

"In an internal discussion I used the word 'prioritized' and I regret this has caused concerns that Mayo Clinic will not serve patients with government insurance. Nothing could be further from the truth," he said, adding that the hospital is committed to serving patients with government insurance.

"Changing demographics, aging of Americans and budgetary pressures at state and federal government pose challenges to the fiscal sustainability in healthcare today," he said. "While these discussions are uncomfortable, they are critical for us to be able to meet the needs of all of our patients."

Minnesota Department of Human Services Commissioner Emily Piper said she was surprised and concerned by Noseworthy's earlier comments, and has questions about what they really mean and how Noseworthy's directive would be carried out. The department is looking into whether there are possible violations of civil and human rights laws.

Privately insured

The agency also is reviewing its contracts with Mayo Clinic to ensure the hospital is meeting its obligations to serve patients in public programs. Last year, Noseworthy told staff that when Mayo Clinic has expertise that can't be found elsewhere, it will always take patients, regardless of how they are paying for care.

"We're asking... if the patient has commercial insurance, or they're Medicaid or Medicare patients and they're equal, that we prioritize the commercial insured

patients enough so we can be financially strong at the end of the year to continue to advance our mission," Noseworthy said in the transcript.

Mayo Clinic spokeswoman Duska Anastasijevic said Friday the speech stressed the need to increase privately insured patients, but not at the expense of government insured patients.

Mayo Clinic said about half of the services it provides go toward those enrolled in government programs. The clinic said it provided \$629.7 million in care to people in need in 2016, including \$546.4 million that wasn't covered by Medicaid or other programs for the uninsured or underinsured.

The statement said that as Mayo's percentage of publicly funded patients has grown, to now roughly 50 percent, the health system is working to increase commercially insured patients.


"To fund its research and education mission, Mayo needs to support its commercial insurance patient numbers in order to continue to subsidize the care of patients whose insurance does not cover the cost of their care," the statement said. Piper said Noseworthy's statements do not reflect routine hospital practices, and she found them to be troubling.

As Human Services commissioner, Piper is focused on ensuring access to health care for those enrolled in public programs. She said providers have to follow the law and uphold agreements to provide such care. She said that in her view, nothing that is happening with the health care law on the federal level changes those requirements.

"Health insurance coverage for health insurance coverage's sake is not the end goal," she said. "It's access ó that's what's important." Anastasijevic said Minnesota Medicaid patients are and will continue to be scheduled the same as patients with commercial insurance. —AP

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KIB CONCLUDES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

BANK APPROVES DISTRIBUTION OF 10% CASH DIVIDENDS FOR 2016

KUWAIT: The 2016 Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Kuwait International Bank (KIB) was held yesterday and attended by 77.43 percent of shareholders. It approved the recommendation of the Bank's Board of Directors to distribute cash dividends of 10 percent of the share nominal value (ie 10 fils per share) to shareholders.

Chairman of KIB, Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah, spoke about the Bank's stellar performance in 2016, saying: "In spite of the many economic challenges we have witnessed this year, KIB was able to achieve overwhelmingly positive results; strengthening its financial position, enhancing its shareholders' equity, witnessing improvement across all key performance indicators, restructuring many of its activities and improving internal operations."

The Bank's financial statements for the fiscal year ended 31 December 2016 revealed that KIB posted a 14 percent increase in net profits, which reached KD 18.2 million, compared to KD 16 million in the year prior. This robust performance reflected positively on earnings per share (EPS), which reached 19.50 fils, compared to 17.14 fils in 2015. The financial statements also revealed an overall positive performance during 2016, resulting in significant growth in revenue. Financing revenues grew by 12 percent, an increase of KD 7.8 million to reach KD 71 million, compared to KD 63.2 million recorded during 2015.

Bank's assets

Meanwhile, Acting Chief Executive Officer at KIB, Mohammad Said Al-Saka noted that the Bank's assets increased by KD 56 million, a 3 percent increase to reach KD 1.85 billion, compared to KD 1.79 billion at the end of the previous year. This increase was achieved as a result of growth in the financing portfolio, which saw an 8 percent increase of KD 95 million to reach KD 1.27 billion, compared to KD 1.17 billion at the end of 2015. The investment portfolio also grew by 17 percent to reach KD 128 million compared to KD 109 million at the end of last year. Customer deposits increased by 10 percent to reach about KD 1.12 billion compared to KD 1.02 billion at the end of the previous year.

In his statement, Al-Saka also said that not only has the Bank reported impressive growth in assets, KIB's asset quality also continued to improve substantially, with Non-Performing Loans (NPL) ratio maintained at 1.4 percent. Furthermore, the total provision coverage ratio increased to 231 percent compared to the previous year's 199 percent, and total provisions and collaterals coverage ratio increased to 368 percent, compared to 327 percent of the year prior.

Al-Saka also pointed out that KIB continues to maintain high levels of capital adequacy ratio (CAR), well above the regulatory requirements of the Central Bank of Kuwait in accordance with Basel III. CAR stood at 20.5 percent, while the financial leverage ratio was 10.7 percent. Additionally, in line with the improvement of performance indicators, return on equity (ROE) reached 7.2



Chairman of KIB, Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah.



Acting Chief Executive Officer at KIB, Mohammad Said El Saka



Shareholders and attendees are pictured during the 2016 Annual General Meeting (AGM) for Kuwait International Bank (KIB).

percent, compared with 6.5 percent for the previous year.

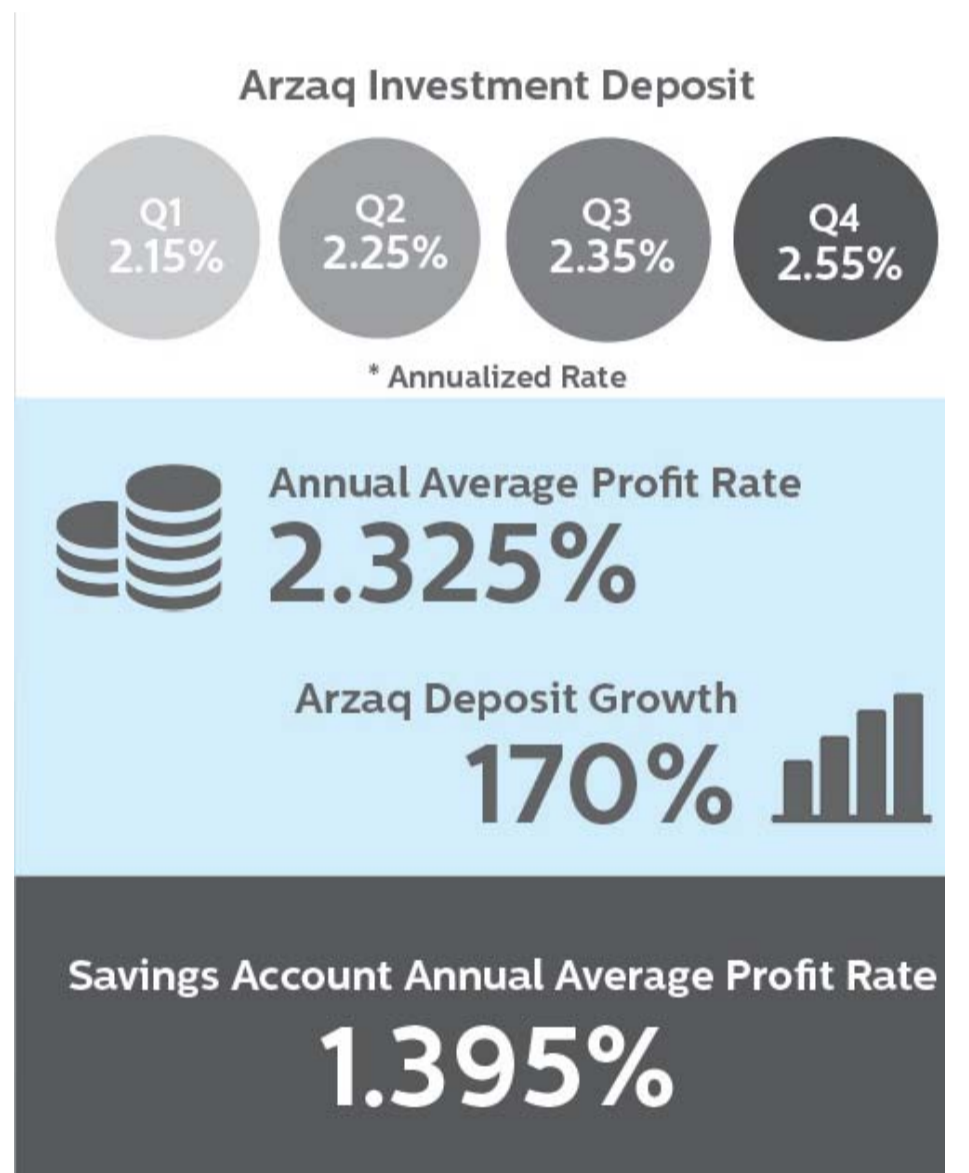
In turn, this resulted in an increase in distributions to depositors' accounts since the beginning of 2016, whereby the annualized return on the Arzaq Deposits in Kuwaiti dinars increased to 2.15 percent in the first quarter, 2.25 percent in the second quarter, 2.35 percent in the third quarter and finally 2.55 percent in the fourth quarter. This resulted in an average of 2.325 percent for the year 2016. On the other hand, Al-Boushra Kuwaiti dinar three-year deposits were offered 3.0625 percent.

'Stable' outlook

Within this context, Al-Jarrah lauded the

efforts made by KIB's Board of Directors, its executive management and its employees, stating that these efforts have been vital towards boosting the Bank's performance. In 2016, Fitch Ratings affirmed KIB's Long Term Issuer Default Rating (IDR) at "A+", with a "Stable" Outlook, while upgrading the Bank's Viability Rating (VR) due to KIB's improved financial indicators, successful implementation of its strategic objectives and the restructuring of its business activities. In its statement regarding the upgrade, Fitch noted that KIB's rating reflects the Bank's new and experienced management team, the successful execution of its strategy, as well as its improved asset quality and the expected increase in its earnings.

In light of these positive results, KIB has



continued to forge ahead with the implementation of its comprehensive strategic plan, which was launched in 2015. The plan has focused on propelling KIB towards becoming the "Islamic Bank of Choice" in Kuwait, and helping it become the leading employer for local talents in the country. This strategy aims to bring about a comprehensive transformation across all sectors of the Bank in terms of better asset quality, healthy capital buffer, improved performance, increase in profitability.

As a key part of its strategy, the Bank has focused on driving internal transformation - rolling out a new governance model, reviewing the structure of Board and Management committees, and introducing new committees, in addition to reviewing the delegation of authority within the organizational structure in order to enhance effectiveness and the Bank's overall governance model. The Bank implemented a number of key changes to its organizational structure in an effort to enhance its operations and its offerings to customers. Within this context, KIB has added a number of experienced and qualified professionals to its team, with the aim of helping the Bank achieve its strategic objectives.

Products and services

On another note, in an effort to develop its service/product offerings to its customers, KIB has worked on enhancing and streamlining many of its products and services. The Bank focused on enhancing its digital offerings and its presence across all digital platforms, with a particular emphasis on simplifying processes and developing distribution channels by expanding its branch and ATM networks. KIB has also developed a new business model to better serve the Bank's corporate customers.

KIB will focus in 2017 to ensure smooth implementation of the next phase of its strategic plan. One of the key touchstones of this phase will be continuing to work on developing the products and services on offer to customers, whilst also ensuring more effective and efficient internal operations.

KIB's achievements during the year were recognized by various international agencies. These include "Best Islamic Bank - GCC" from World Finance, "Best Sharia Compliant Bank - MENA" from Cfi.co and "Best Banking Vision" from CPI Financial. KIB was also honored for excellence in labor nationalization policies in the private sector across the GCC.

Al-Jarrah concluded by expressing his gratitude towards the Central Bank of Kuwait for the guidance and the Board of Directors, Fatwa & Sharia Board, the executive management, employees and customers for their support with which KIB could achieve this remarkable performance.

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) is a bank that operates according to the Islamic Sharia, based in the State of Kuwait. Incorporated in 1973, and originally known as Kuwait Real Estate Bank, KIB made the transition to its current Islamic operating model in 2007.

Today, KIB is a full service Bank operating through a network of 28 branches spread across the State of Kuwait, and offering a broad range of banking products, services and solutions in accordance with the principles of the Islamic Sharia. The Bank's mission and vision also encompasses a leading social responsibility program that aims at supporting every member of Kuwait's society by spearheading a multitude of initiatives and activities.



SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY				
Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %
OIL & GAS	71,468,823	3.66%	3,670,132	2.20%
BASIC MATERIALS	8,562,080	0.44%	3,189,571	1.91%
INDUSTRIALS	127,527,715	6.52%	16,071,946	9.63%
CONSUMER GOODS	29,057,940	1.49%	3,106,397	1.86%
HEALTH CARE	5,144	0.00%	1,290	0.00%
CONSUMER SERVICES	30,869,940	1.58%	2,140,557	1.28%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	78,935,585	4.04%	24,905,237	14.92%
BANKS	267,545,389	13.69%	33,587,952	20.12%
INSURANCE	2,994,347	0.15%	176,526	0.11%
REAL ESTATE	673,489,620	34.46%	34,397,159	20.60%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	653,306,894	33.42%	44,455,101	26.63%
TECHNOLOGY	10,831,136	0.55%	1,259,689	0.75%

SECTORS INDICES PERFORMANCE				
Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
OIL & GAS	988.50	990.17	-0.17%	26.62%
BASIC MATERIALS	1,328.97	1,344.88	-1.18%	32.26%
INDUSTRIALS	1,502.10	1,487.81	0.96%	11.76%
CONSUMER GOODS	1,180.99	1,196.99	-1.34%	4.97%
HEALTH CARE	1,397.62	1,491.26	-6.28%	12.31%
CONSUMER SERVICES	928.14	953.81	-2.69%	0.39%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	627.74	631.54	-0.60%	-1.32%
BANKS	967.75	956.60	1.17%	15.59%
INSURANCE	1,108.66	1,112.28	-0.33%	11.50%
REAL ESTATE	1,097.15	1,068.29	2.70%	26.08%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	779.66	746.41	4.45%	30.59%
TECHNOLOGY	830.09	819.64	1.27%	36.72%

LACKLUSTER PERFORMANCE AT BOURSA KUWAIT

BAYAN WEEKLY MARKET REPORT

KUWAIT: Boursa Kuwait ended last week with mixed performance. The Price Index closed at 6,810.71 points, up by 1.48 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index decreased by 0.11 percent after closing at 422.27 points, whereas the KSX-15 Index closed at 957.12 points down by 0.99 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover increased of 24.42 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 33.39 million, whereas trading volume average was 390.92 million shares, recording an increase by 40.84 percent.

The three market indices closed mixed in light of the different preferences of the traders, where the market witnessed a noticeable purchasing appetite on the small-cap stocks and quick speculative operations concentrated on the stocks of low price values, which positively reflected on the Price Index performance that ended the week's trading with good gains; on the contrary, the selling pressures and the profit collection operations executed on some leading stocks, pushed the Weighted and KSX-15 indices to end the week's trading in the red zone. The market witnessed such performance in light of a continued traders' watch to the listed companies annual financial results, especially that such results will define to a great extent the upcoming investment objectives for many investors in the market. The Boursa also witnessed such performance in light of an increased trading indicators during the week, where the total value grew from KD 134.20 million to KD 166.96 million for the last week, while the traded volume reached 1.95 billion stock, up from 1.39 billion stock in a week earlier.

By the end of the last week, the total market capitalization for the listed companies in the official market reached KD 28.10 billion, up by 0.21 percent when compared to its level in a week earlier, where the market cap reached KD 28.04 billion. On an annual level, the market cap gains increased since the beginning of the year and reached 10.58 percent, compared to its level at end of 2016, where it was KD 25.41 billion (Note: delisting of Gulf Glass Manufacturing Co. during the last week contributed into decreasing the Boursa market cap by around KD 16.64 million, the total market value of the mentioned company).

As per the daily trading activity, the Boursa Kuwait initiated its first sessions of the last week with mixed closing to its three indices, where the Price Index recorded good growth supported by the active speculative operations that targeted some small-cap stocks, while the Weighted and KSX-15 indices declined due to the selling pressures that concentrated on the leading and heavy stocks, especially in the Banks sector. On the next session, the three market indices closed with different losses as a result to the profit collection operations executed on many small-cap stocks after the increases it realized in the previous session, in addition to the continued selling operations witnessed by some leading stocks, especially in the Oil & Gas and the Banks sectors.

The mid-week session witnessed a return of the market indices to fluctuate once again, whereas the Price and Weighted indices were able to end the session in the green zone supported by the return of the purchasing traffic and

the quick speculation on the small-cap stocks, while the KSX-15 Index went against the current and ended the session in the red zone affected by the continued selling operations on some leading and heavy operational stocks. Such performance came in light of a noticeable growth in the trading activity during the session, especially over the value which increased by 135 percent compared to the previous session, as it broke the level of KD 50 million up, for the first time in about a month. However on Wednesday's and Thursday's sessions, the Boursa was able to realize good gains during the two sessions supported by the continued purchasing powers and the speculative operations on the small-cap stocks, in addition to the collection operations that targeted some leading stocks, which positively affected the three market indices, especially the Price Index which enhanced its weekly gains, while the Weighted and KSX-15 indices were able to compensate a part of its losses recorded since the beginning of the week. For the annual performance, the price index ended last week recording 18.49 percent annual gain compared to its closing in 2016, while the weighted index increased by 11.10 percent, and the KSX-15 recorded 8.15 percent growth.

Sectors' Indices

Seven of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the red zone, while the other five recorded increases. The Health care sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 6.28 percent to end the week's activity at 1,397.62 points. The Consumer Services sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 2.69 percent, closing at 928.14 points, followed by the Consumer Goods sector, as its index closed at 1,180.99 points at a loss of 1.34 percent. The Oil & Gas sector was the least declining as its index closed at 988.50 points with a 0.17 percent decrease.

On the other hand, last week's highest gainer was the Financial Services sector, achieving 4.45 percent growth rate as its index closed at 779.66 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Real Estate sector's index closed at 1,097.15 points recording 2.70 percent increase. The Technology sector came in third as its index achieved 1.27 percent growth, ending the week at 830.09 points.

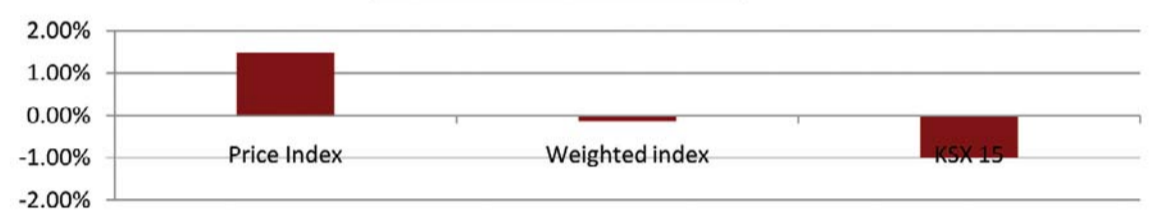
Sectors' Activity

The Real Estate sector dominated a total trade volume of around 673.49 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 34.46 percent of the total market trading volume. The Financial Services sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 33.42 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 653.31 million shares.

On the other hand, the Financial Services sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 44.46 million or 26.63 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Real Estate sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 34.40 million representing 20.60 percent of the total market trading value. — Prepared by the Studies & Research Department, Bayan Investment Co.

BOURSA KUWAIT INDICES				
		Price Index	Weighted index	KSX 15
Weekly	Last week	6,810.71	422.27	957.12
	Previous week	6,711.16	422.75	966.70
	Change (Point)	99.55	-0.48	-9.58
	Change (%)	1.48%	-0.11%	-0.99%
Annual	Last year	5,748.09	380.09	885.02
	Change (Point)	1,062.62	42.18	72.10
	Change (%)	18.49%	11.10%	8.15%

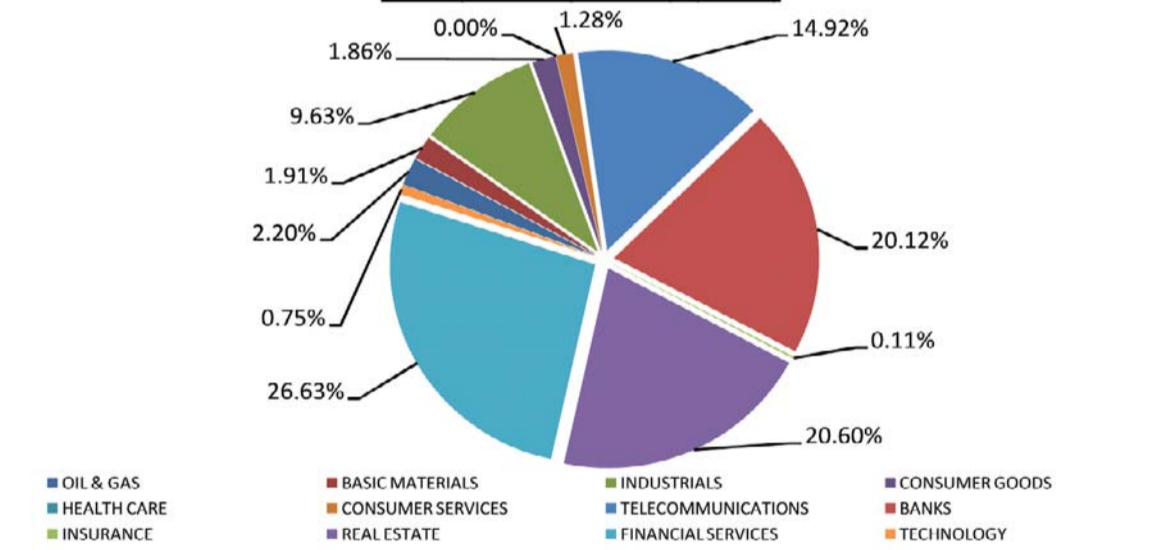
Indices Weekly Performance



Last Five Days Activity



Weekly Trading Activity (Value)



MARKET ACTIVITY			
	Last Week	Previous Week	Ch. %
Volume	1,954,594,613	1,387,827,868	40.84%
Value (K.D.)	166,961,558	134,196,414	24.42%
Deals	37,973	31,935	18.91%

MARKET CAPITALISATION (K.D.)			
Last Week	Previous Week	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
28,095,978,137	28,037,018,214	0.21%	10.58%

TOP GAINERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
AMWAL	104.00	77.00	27.0	35.06%
EQUIPMENT	600.00	475.00	125.0	26.32%
AAYAN	53.00	44.00	9.0	20.45%
AAYANRE	95.00	80.00	15.0	18.75%
TAAMEER	56.00	48.50	7.5	15.46%

S&P 500 LIMPS TO FINISH LINE IN ANOTHER WINNING WEEK

NEW YORK: US stocks limped to the finish line in another winning week, with indexes turning in a mixed performance on Friday. The Standard & Poor's 500 index slipped 3.13 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,378.25 on Friday. Gains a couple days earlier fueled by the Federal Reserve meant the index rose 0.2 percent for the week. It's the seventh weekly gain for the S&P 500 in the last eight, and the index is within 1 percent of its record high.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 19.93 points, or 0.1 percent, to 20,914.62. The Nasdaq composite rose 0.24 points, or 0.004 percent, to 5,901.00. The Russell 2000 index of small-cap stocks rose 5.49, or 0.4 percent, to 1,391.52. Three stocks rose for every two that fell on the New York Stock Exchange.

The midweek rally came after the Federal Reserve gave a more measured forecast for interest-rate increases than some investors expected. While raising rates by a quarter of a percentage point, the central bank said that it's still planning a total of three increases this year. That came as a surprise for some investors, who thought four hikes was possible given the pickup in the economy and inflation. Not only did stocks rise following the announcement, but bond yields fell sharply.

"The big focal point for the week was the Fed," said Brian Jacobsen, chief portfolio strategist at Wells Fargo Funds Management. "Now that we have that behind us, the rest is win-

dow dressing." Investors are turning their attention to the market's next potential flash points, Jacobsen said, including whether Washington will be able to deliver on promises to cut taxes, boost infrastructure spending and otherwise boost the economy. They're also waiting for upcoming elections in Europe, where investors worry that wins by nationalist candidates could lead to weaker resolve for the European Union to stick together.

Treasury yields dipped, resuming their slide that began with the Fed's announcement. The 10-year Treasury yield fell to 2.50 percent from 2.54 percent late Thursday. The two-year yield dipped to 1.31 percent from 1.34 percent, and the 30-year yield sank to 3.11 percent from 3.15 percent.

Financial stocks fell in sync with bond yields. The two have tended to move in the same direction recently, because higher rates would allow banks to charge more for loans and earn bigger profits. Financial stocks fell 1.1 percent, the largest loss among the 11 sectors that make up the S&P 500.

Healthcare stocks were also weak. Amgen had the biggest loss in the S&P 500 after results from a study of its cholesterol drug Repatha disappointed investors. It sank \$11.50, or 6.5 percent, to \$168.61.

On the other end were dividend-paying stocks, which benefited from the fall in yields. When bonds are paying less in interest, it

makes the income provided by dividend-paying stocks more attractive. Utility stocks in the S&P 500, which pay some of the biggest dividends in the index, rose 0.6 percent.

Adobe surged to one of the biggest gains

in the index after reporting stronger revenue and earnings for its latest quarter than analysts expected. It jumped \$4.66, or 3.8 percent, to \$127.01. Jeweler Tiffany sparkled after it also reported better profit than analysts

expected for its latest quarter. Strong demand in China and Japan helped it to offset flagging sales at home. Its stock rose \$2.44, or 2.7 percent, to \$92.42. In markets abroad, France's CAC 40 stock index rose 0.3 percent, and Germany's DAX and the FTSE 100 in London both added 0.1 percent. Japan's Nikkei 225 fell 0.3 percent, South Korea's Kospi rose 0.7 percent and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong added 0.1 percent.

Finance leaders from the G20 industrial and emerging economies were meeting yesterday in the southern German resort town of Baden-Baden. The first G20 finance meeting since tough-talking Donald Trump was elected president is likely to focus on concerns over protectionism and currencies.

The euro edged down to \$1.0743 from \$1.0749 late Thursday, and the British pound rose to \$1.2396 from \$1.2358. The dollar slipped to 112.70 Japanese yen from 113.26 yen. Benchmark US crude rose 3 cents to settle at \$48.78 per barrel. Brent crude, which is used to price international oils, rose 2 cents to \$51.76 per barrel. Natural gas rose 5 cents to \$2.95 per 1,000 cubic feet. Wholesale gasoline inched up less than a cent to \$1.60 per gallon, and heating oil rose a fraction of a penny to \$1.51 per gallon. Gold rose \$3.10 to settle at \$1,230.20 per ounce. Silver added 8 cents to \$17.41 per ounce, and copper rose 1 cent to \$2.69 per pound.—AP



NEW YORK: People walk by the New York Stock Exchange. Stocks were mixed in early trading on Wall Street on Friday. — AP

ABK CONCLUDES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SHAREHOLDERS APPROVE CASH DIVIDEND OF 11 FILS PER SHARE

KUWAIT: Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) concluded its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Banks headquarters, yesterday. With a completed quorum, shareholders approved the Board of Directors recommended cash dividend of 11 fils per share compared to 10 fils in 2015.

The Bank announced an Operating Profit of KD 89.4 million for the financial year 2016 as compared to KD 87.3 million for 2015, a growth of 2.4 percent. This was due to a significant 14.8 percent jump in Operating Income, which reached KD 147.5 million, partly offset by cost increases as the Bank continues to invest in people and technology. Net profit at KD 32.5 million grew by KD 2 million or 7 percent compared to 2015. Earnings per share were 20 fils vs 19 fils during 2015, and return on equity was 5.8 percent.

Commenting on these results, Talal Mohammed Reza Behbehani, Chairman of Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait said, "This year was one of financial consolidation for ABK Group combined with strong and steady business across all our markets, particularly our acquisition in Egypt. This success was achieved through the concerted efforts and close working relationship between the Board and Executive Management teams and continued focus on our core fundamentals and delivery on our business strategy".

He added: "ABK Group delivered a solid performance across all its business segments while maintaining a prudent approach in a volatile global economic climate through aggressive precautionary provisioning on the Kuwait book."

Total assets

The Bank's total assets and loans portfolio remained at KD 4.3 billion and KD 3.0 billion respectively. Total customer deposits rose 16 percent to KD 2.9 billion as the Bank aggressively diversified its deposit base. Shareholder Equity amounted to KD 555 million and the Capital Adequacy Ratio was very healthy at 17.67 percent.

During 2016, the Bank completed the integration and rebranding of its Egypt acquisition.



KUWAIT: (From left to right), Abdullah Al-Sumait, Deputy Chief General Manager, Michel Accad, Group CEO of ABK, Talal Behbehani, ABK's Chairman and Fawzy Al-Thunayan, General Manager, Board Affairs. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



ABK Chairman Talal Behbehani



KUWAIT: Board Members with Michel Accad, Group CEO of ABK, Talal Behbehani, ABK's Chairman, Fawzy Al-Thunayan, General Manager, Board Affairs and Abdullah Al-Sumait, Deputy Chief General Manager.

All 39 branches of 'Piraeus Bank of Egypt' have now been rebranded to Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait - Egypt (ABK-Egypt), and the integration of the Bank's systems and management

structure is being completed on schedule. ABK-Egypt has delivered very healthy profit and growth in its first year of operation post-acquisition, and more importantly, the Bank

enjoys a foreign currency hedge position that substantially protects its capital against any devaluation or fluctuations in the value of the Egyptian pound.

In line with its commitment to a simpler banking experience, ABK has launched several initiatives in the digital space. The Bank was one of the first in Kuwait to launch biometric fingerprint authentication on our mobile banking system, and 'Touch ID' has now replaced mobile banking passwords. The Bank's Website and Internet Banking have been redesigned with a simpler user experience in mind, and customers can now pay their utility bills online directly from their bank accounts. Callers to the Contact Centre are now identified by their phone numbers. The Call Centre platform has been completely replaced, improving efficiencies and reducing call duration by an average of 30 percent, whilst assigning priority queuing to Elite, VIP and International callers. All ABK branches have now been equipped with Cash Deposit machines, further simplifying the customer experience. More exciting initiatives are underway, to be unveiled in 2017.

Technology was not the only service focus, the Bank also introduced a range of new services made available at several of its branches for customers with special needs, in line with its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy, such as adapted ATM's, sign language services and website audio translation, to better serve the whole community.

The Bank received numerous awards during 2016 including the 'Best Bank Transformation in the Middle East' by Euromoney, 'Deal of the Year' by The Banker, 'Best Retail Bank' by Asian Banker 'Retail Bank of the Year' by The European, 'Best Commercial Bank' by Banker ME, 'Employer of the Year' by Naseba, LPI certification; the only Middle East financial institution to be accredited. Michel Accad was named 'Bank CEO of the Year' by CEO Magazine; a further testament to the Bank's outstanding leadership and approach and ABK was also listed as one of the 50 safest banks in the Middle East by Global Finance.

ABK retains a healthy capital position and strong liquidity, in compliance with the Central Bank of Kuwait's strong regulatory system, with its emphasis on building precautionary provisions.

OIL PRICES REMAIN SUBDUED

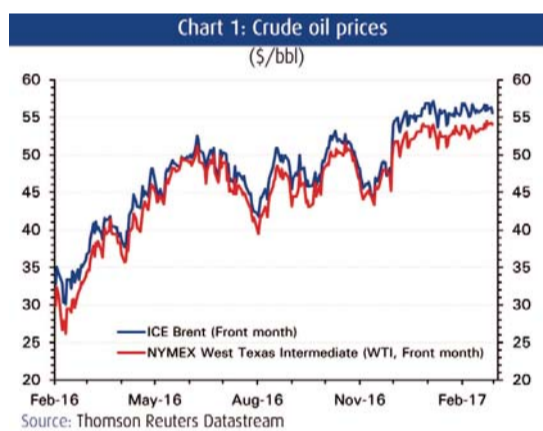
NBK oil market report

KUWAIT: In February, oil prices continued to trade within the narrowest range in more than a decade. Brent crude, the international benchmark and West Texas Intermediate (WTI), the US marker, remained locked within a tight \$2 range around \$55 per barrel (bbl) and \$53/bbl, respectively, in February-much as they did during January. Neither the publication of the first set of OPEC production data in February, which confirmed a historic level of compliance by members with November's production cut agreement, nor the weekly release of data from the US showing a steady resurgence in shale production and crude stockpiles, have provided enough of a catalyst to force oil prices to break out of their comfort zones. Oil has been trading above \$50/bbl ever since OPEC formalized the Algiers agreement to cut production on the 30 November 2016.

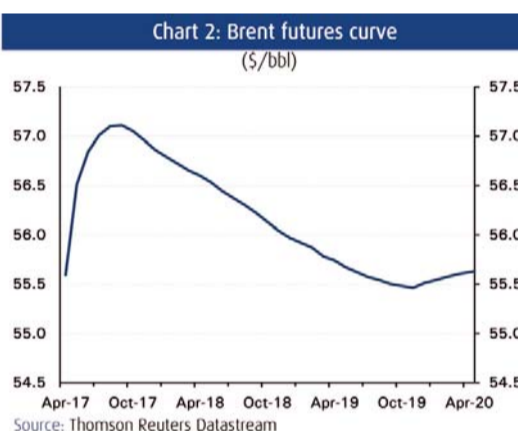
Oil investors, meanwhile, have been busy amassing record bets on the price of oil rising, heartened by the OPEC compliance rate of 91 percent (at the group level) and confident that the Saudi-led group will successfully unwind the 2.5-year global supply glut over the next 6-12 months. Net long positions in both Brent and WTI contracts reached record levels, advancing to 508,000 and 414,000 futures and options contracts last week, respectively. In the case of WTI, longs outnumbered shorts by nearly 9 to 1.

OPEC compliance

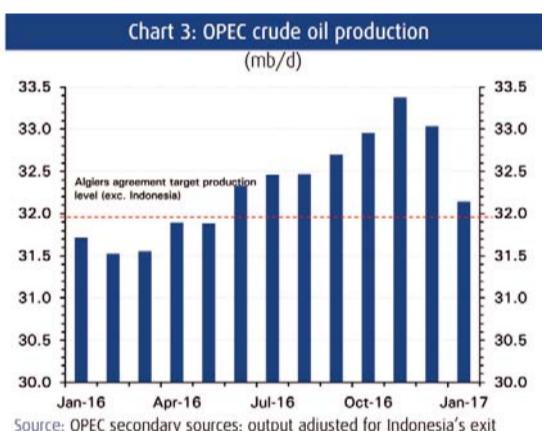
While investors and speculators have been active adding net longs, oil producers on the other hand, are increasing their net short positions and locking in hedges, seemingly worried that the OPEC agreement will not last beyond June. This is evident



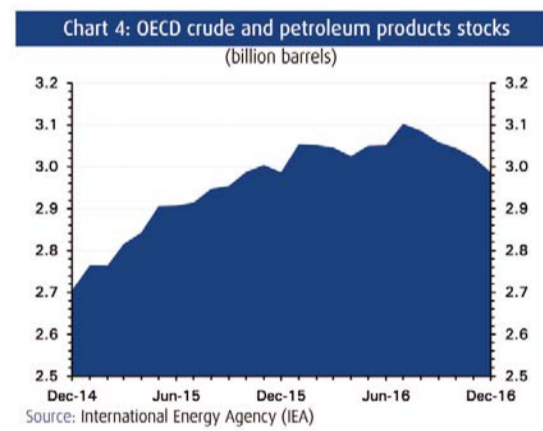
Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream



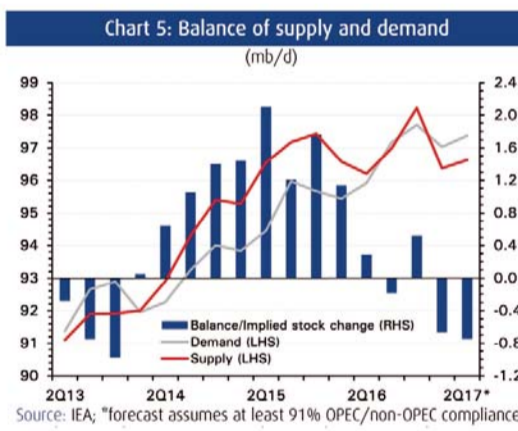
Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream



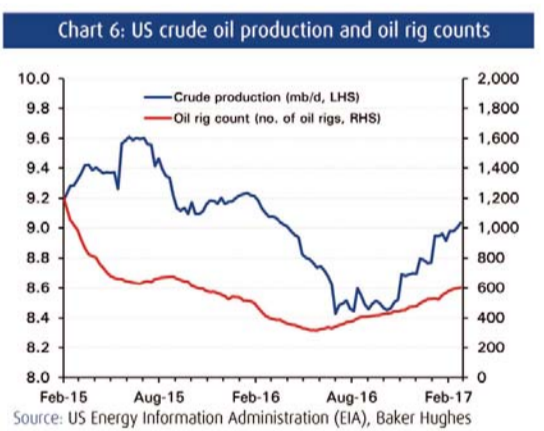
Source: OPEC secondary sources; output adjusted for Indonesia's exit



Source: International Energy Agency (IEA)



Source: IEA; *forecast assumes at least 91% OPEC/non-OPEC compliance



Source: US Energy Information Administration (EIA), Baker Hughes

in the structure of the Brent futures curve, which shows prices reaching a peak of around \$57/bbl by 3Q17 (contango) before falling back towards \$55.5/bbl over the next two years (backwardation).

As of January, the first of the 6 months

in which OPEC agreed to cut crude production, aggregate output fell to 32.14 million barrels per day (mb/d), a decline of 1.15 mb/d from October's reference level according to OPEC secondary source data, the independent yardstick for assessing

compliance. (Chart 3.) This leaves the group just 190,000 b/d short of the target of 31.95 (adjusted to account for Indonesia's exit from OPEC), a commendable compliance rate of 91 percent. Of the 10 OPEC members subject to quotas, how-

ever, only Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Angola have fully adhered to their targets; in fact Saudi Arabia went further, cutting its output by an additional 23 percent to 600,000 b/d. Kuwait attained 91 percent of its pledged output target by bringing its pro-

duction down by 120,000 b/d. Outside OPEC, only Oman complied 100 percent with its target. Russia, the largest contributor to the non-OPEC production cut target of 558,000 b/d, managed only 118,000 b/d, or 40 percent, of its 300,000 b/d production cut commitment.

OECD stocks down

OECD commercial crude and products stocks began to decline during the latter half of 2016. By December, total stocks had dropped to 2.98 billion barrels, falling below 3 billion barrels for the first time in a year.

Moreover, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), the oil market is well on its way to balancing, thanks to the OPEC output cuts. Even if OPEC/non-OPEC production were to continue at January's levels, the agency estimates that the balance of global supply and demand could move to a state of under-supply of around 0.6-0.7 mb/d during this and the next quarter at least. (Chart 5.) Global demand growth is expected to come in at 1.4 mb/d in 2017, a 200,000 b/d deceleration from 2016's 1.6 mb/d.

Having said that, headwinds are on the horizon. US shale, which has been the largest source of non-OPEC crude growth in recent years, adding about 0.6 mb/d on average to global supplies in the five years to 2014, is steadily recovering. US crude output hit 9.032 mb/d by the 24 February, a rise of 604,000 b/d, or 7.2 percent, since US crude production reached its nadir in July 2016, according to the US Energy Information Administration's (EIA) weekly output data.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.715
Indian Rupees	4.672
Pakistani Rupees	2.916
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.011
Nepali Rupees	2.920
Singapore Dollar	219.080
Hongkong Dollar	39.405
Bangladesh Taka	3.814
Philippine Peso	6.099
Thai Baht	8.760

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.641
Qatari Riyal	84.087
Omani Riyal	795.080
Bahraini Dinar	812.940
UAE Dirham	83.354

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.050
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.789
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.229
Tunisian Dinar	135.980
Jordanian Dinar	431.010
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.040
Syrian Lira	2.182
Morocco Dirham	31.029

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	305.950
Euro	331.960
Sterling Pound	381.520

Canadian dollar	230.300
Turkish Lira	84.930
Swiss Franc	308.570
Australian Dollar	238.640
US Dollar Buying	304.750

GOLD

20 Gram	251.710
10 Gram	128.770
5 Gram	65.230

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfr

US Dollar	306.000	Selling Rate
Canadian Dolla	228.325	
Sterling Pound	375.055	
Euro	327.605	
Swiss Frank	309.850	
Bahrain Dinar	811.180	
UAE Dirhams	83.705	
Qatari Riyals	84.925	
Saudi Riyals	82.525	
Jordanian Dinar	432.760	
Egyptian Pound	17.483	
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.021	
Indian Rupees	4.625	
Pakistani Rupees	2.918	
Bangladesh Taka	3.846	
Philippines Peso	6.078	
Cyprus pound	168.040	
Japanese Yen	3.665	
Syrian Pound	2.430	

Nepalese Rupees	3.885
Malaysian Ringgit	69.675
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.665
Thai Bhat	9.660
Turkish Lira	82.215

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY BUY SELL

British Pound	0.372479	0.382479
Czech Korune	0.004190	0.016190
Danish Krone	0.040277	0.045277
Euro	0.323052	0.332052
Norwegian Krone	0.032015	0.037215
Romanian Leu	0.084792	0.084792
Slovakia	0.009171	0.019171
Swedish Krona	0.030743	0.035743
Swiss Franc	0.300322	0.311322
Turkish Lira	0.078523	0.088823
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.227378	0.239378
New Zealand Dollar	0.208072	0.217572
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.223669	0.232669
Georgina Lari	0.138185	0.138185
US Dollars	0.301850	0.306250
US Dollars Mint	0.302350	0.306250
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003499	0.004083
Chinese Yuan	0.042932	0.046432

Hong Kong Dollar	0.037362	0.040112
Indian Rupee	0.002694	0.004791
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002633	0.002813
Kenyan Shilling	0.003057	0.003057
Korean Won	0.000260	0.000275
Malaysian Ringgit	0.065375	0.071375
Nepalese Rupee	0.002962	0.003132
Pakistan Rupee	0.002670	0.002960
Philippine Peso	0.006004	0.006304
Sierra Leone	0.000038	0.000044
Singapore Dollar	0.212647	0.222647
South African Rand	0.018078	0.026578
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001657	0.002327
Taiwan	0.009795	0.009975
Thai Baht	0.008445	0.008995

Bahraini Dinar	0.804967	0.813467
Egyptian Pound	0.011668	0.020921
Iranian Riyal	0.000085	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000197	0.000257
Jordanian Dinar	0.425880	0.434860
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020132	0.044132
Nigerian Naira	0.000397	0.001032
Omani Riyal	0.788254	0.793934
Qatar Riyal	0.083225	0.084675
Saudi Riyal	0.080500	0.081800
Syrian Pound	0.001298	0.001518
Tunisian Dinar	0.130667	0.138667
Turkish Lira	0.078523	0.088823
UAE Dirhams	0.081874	0.083574
Yemeni Riyal	0.000995	0.001075

WORLDWIDE SALES OF TOYOTA HYBRIDS SURPASS 10M UNITS

KUWAIT: Toyota Motor Corporation announced recently that cumulative global sales of its hybrid vehicles reached 10.05 million units as of January 31, surpassing the 10 million-unit mark. More than a numerical milestone, this demonstrates the staying power of a technology that is now emerging as a mainstream solution to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants.

Helping to mitigate the environmental effects of automobiles has long been a priority for Toyota. Based on the stance that environmentally-friendly vehicles can only truly have a significant positive impact if they are widely used, Toyota has encouraged the mass-market adoption of hybrid vehicles across the globe. Toyota launched the Coaster Hybrid EV minibus in August 1997 and the Prius, the world's first mass-produced hybrid passenger vehicle in December of the same year. Since then, Toyota hybrid vehicles have received tremendous support from consumers around the world.

Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative of Middle East & North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, said, "We are grateful to each and every one of our customers who has supported us in our journey towards sustainable mobility and helped us achieve this important milestone. The steady increase in hybrid sales reflects the worldwide appeal of hybrid vehicles backed by Toyota's significant efforts in developing ever better cars. Our hybrid technology delivers not only great fuel efficiency and low CO2 emissions, but it also provides a smooth, comfortable and engaging driving



experience, which leads to the highest satisfaction rates. We remain committed to continue working hand-in-hand with our customers as we look to tackle global environmental issues and create cars that exceed customer expectations."

As reductions in greenhouse gas emissions increasingly became a problem of global magnitude, the first-generation Prius represented Toyota's response to the resource and environment-related issues of the twenty-first century. The Prius development team was convinced that, whatever the results of their efforts, the development of a hybrid vehicle was essential for the future, and that they had to do what was necessary rather than what was simply possible. With this in mind, the team unveiled the world's first

mass-production hybrid passenger vehicle to the world.

The Prius proved so popular with customers that it became a byword for an 'environmentally-friendly vehicle'. The Toyota Hybrid System (THS), which was incorporated in the first-generation Prius, evolved into THS II in 2003, and was thereafter rolled out in a wide range of Toyota vehicles. The fourth-generation Prius, which became the first vehicle to be built on Toyota New Global Architecture (TNGA), was developed not only with environmental performance in mind, but also with outstanding driving performance for customers wanting to purchase a car that was fun to drive.

Since Toyota launched its first hybrid vehicle 20 years ago, the circumstances surrounding environmentally-friendly



vehicles have changed dramatically. The growing popularity of the Prius led to the creation of a new customer standard of choosing cars based on their environmental performance. As the number of companies developing and launching hybrid vehicles increased, so a new segment of 'hybrid vehicles' was established. In addition, now that customers around the world are opting to purchase hybrid vehicles and other fuel-efficient vehicles, the entire automobile industry has been able to contribute to the solution of global environmental problems.

As of January 31, 2017, Toyota estimates that the use of Toyota's HVs in lieu of conventional gasoline-powered vehicles of similar size and driving performance has resulted in approximately 77

million fewer tons of CO2 emissions and has saved approximately 29 million kiloliters of gasoline.

Toyota announced the Toyota Environmental Challenge 2050 in October 2015, setting challenges that it will undertake to help reduce the negative impacts of automobiles on the global environment to as close to zero as possible, and to contribute to the creation of a sustainable society. Toyota has positioned hybrid technologies as core environmental technologies for the 21st century.

Hybrid encompasses all of the component technologies necessary for the development of environmentally-friendly vehicles, from battery electric to fuel cell hydrogen vehicles, which facilitate the use of different fuel combinations.

URC ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF 40% STAKE IN INSHA'A HOLDING

KUWAIT: United Real Estate Company (URC), leading real estate development company in the Middle East and North Africa region, has announced a 39.17 percent acquisition in leading Kuwaiti building materials company, Insha'a Holding.

URC's Chairman Tariq AbdulSalam said that the deal represents the company's first acquisition in the building and construction sector, and comes as a step towards the implementation of URC's new strategy, which focuses on creating a balance in the sources of income and structuring a diversified portfolio of assets and various businesses that achieve a steady and sound rate of return.

Commenting on the news, Ahmad Kasem, URC's Deputy Chief Executive Officer said that the acquisition is aligned with the company's strategic direction to build and support its subsidiaries, in addition to enhancing their respective operating profits and diversifying its sources. The acquisition was made by URC's wholly owned subsidiary, United Building Company (UBC), which represents the company's contracting and building arm. UBC has been taking serious steps towards its planned expansion and growth to become a leading company in its field. Kasem also stated that the acquisition will lead to further operational efficiency for UBC, as Insha'a has outstanding activities in ready mix concrete, building materials, construc-



URC's Chairman Tariq AbdulSalam

tion chemicals and manufacturing, which will add greater value and complement the construction and engineering expertise of the company.

URC's Chief Investment Officer, Augustino Sfeir, added that the deal is in line with URC's and Insha'a's business structures, in addition to being in line with URC's strategy to increase its returns and profit margins. The acquisition was in partnership with Qurain Petrochemical Industries Company (QPIC) a sister company of URC, for a total acquired interest of 97.93 percent and total value of KD 13.75 million, where QPIC's share is 58.76 percent.

Mohammad Al-Wetayan, Chief Executive Officer of United Building Company (UBC) said that Insha'a Holding is a local leader in building and construction materials, which will add significant value to UBC for all of its current and future projects. UBC and Insha'a have a similar strategic vision and a long history in the Kuwait construction sector that will allow both companies to create greater capabilities and growth.

Al-Wetayan said UBC was positioning itself for further expansion in Kuwait's public and private construction sector. Classified as a Grade "A" building and contracting company since 1984, UBC is a pioneer in the construction industry with a long remarkable track record and numerous iconic projects in Kuwait.

VIVA INKS CASH DIVIDENDS TRANSFER WITH KCC IN COOPERATION WITH NBK

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, has recently inked an agreement for Cash Dividends Transfer with Kuwait Clearing Company (KCC) in cooperation with the National Bank of Kuwait (NBK). This agreement will provide an electronic transfer service for the cash dividends to the Investors bank account without the need of receiving the dividends by cheque from Kuwait Clearing Company offices.

This service is available currently for the shareholders of VIVA owning bank account with NBK. Therefore, all shareholders who aim to benefit from this service are kindly requested to fill the form of KCC Electronic Transfer Service Application and then submit it to dedicated branches of NBK.

VIVA's CEO, Eng Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran, commented: "This step comes from VIVA side due to its commitment to provide the best available services for VIVA's Shareholders. This agreement is consistent with VIVA's future vision to reduce paperwork usage and depending on the modern technology to achieve the desired goals in the fastest and easiest way to save the shareholders' additional efforts and time spent to collect their cash resulted from the dividends distribution for the year 2016 and subsequent years". He added: "VIVA's Board of Directors has recommended distributing cash dividends of 10 fils among the shareholders representing 10 percent of the nominal



Viva's CEO Eng Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Badran

share value for the year ended 2016 subject to the approval of the Ordinary General Assembly of the company."

Thereby, VIVA invites shareholders who wish to receive their cash dividends through the online transfer to visit one of VIVA branches assigned to VIVA shareholders who are NBK clients only (Saad Alabullah Branch - Al-Qurain Branch - Al Raya Branch) during the official working hours (from 8.30 am to 3 pm). The Form of KCC Electronic Transfer Service Application can be downloaded also by visiting the investor relations webpage on VIVA official website www.viva.com.kw, fill-in the



same and submit it to NBK for approval.

VIVA is the fastest-growing telecom operator in Kuwait. Launched in December 2008, VIVA makes things Possible for its customers by transforming communication, information and entertainment experiences. The company has rapidly established an unrivalled position in the market through its customer centric approach. VIVA's quest is to be the mobile brand of choice in Kuwait by being transparent,

engaging, energetic and fulfilling. VIVA continues to take a considerable share of the market by offering an innovative range of best value products, services and content propositions; a state of the art, nationwide network and world-class service. VIVA offers internet speeds of more than 100 Mbps, due to the implementation of the most advanced fourth generation (4G LTE) network in Kuwait resulting in superior coverage, performance and reliability.



BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES WINNER OF AL-THURAYA SALARY ACCOUNT DRAW

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday Ahmed Ibrahim Al-Desouqi as the lucky winner of the Al-Thuraya Salary Account monthly draw. The winner expressed his excitement for being presented with a Nissan Patrol car.

The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan Bank a chance to win a Nissan Patrol car every month and with every KD 10 available in the account, the cus-

tomers receive one chance to enter the draw. The Al-Thuraya Account's features range from the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and any other major currencies, access to account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards and much more. Customers wishing to open an Al-Thuraya account can do so by simply visiting the nearest Burgan Bank branch and obtain all the necessary details.

KAMCO, KFH CAPITAL ACT AS JOINT LEAD MANAGERS AND BOOKRUNNERS

WARBA BANK'S \$250 MILLION SUKUK ISSUANCE

KUWAIT: Warba Bank KSCF ("Warba") announces the successful Sukuk issuance of their perpetual, non-callable (before five years), Tier 1 Basel III compliant \$250 million Mudaraba Sukuk Certificates.

In a joint press release, Warba Bank highlighted that the issuance is compliant with the Tier 1 requirements by the Central Bank of Kuwait ("CBK"), and conforms to the Basel III guidelines. The callable \$250 million perpetual sukuk was issued at a coupon rate of 6.50 percent with the first call date set on the 14th of March, 2017. The sukuk issuance was oversubscribed by 5 times, amounting to approximately \$1.3 billion. The sukuk issuance was well received by local and international investors alike, which is displayed through the diversified geographical coverage with investors out of Kuwait subscribing by 27 percent, MENA region by 43 percent, Europe and the United Kingdom by 22 percent, and Asia by 8 percent.

Bank ABC, Emirates NBD Capital, KAMCO Investment Company K.S.C. (Public) ("KAMCO"), KFH Capital Investment Company K.S.C.C ("KFH Capital"), Noor Bank, and Standard Chartered Bank acted as Joint Lead Managers & Bookrunners for this issuance, listed in alphabetical order.

Shaheen Hamad Al-Ghanem, Chief Executive Officer of Warba said, "Warba is pleased with the overall outcome of this Tier 1 Basel III compliant sukuk issuance. We would like to extend our grati-



Shaheen Al-Ghanem

tude and appreciation towards our trusted investors as the issuance was well received and oversubscribed by 5 times. We would also like to give special praise to KAMCO and KFH Capital for their support and local marketing efforts in relation to this successful issuance. The raised funds will play a prominent role in strengthening the Bank's Capital Adequacy Ratio and assist in implementing our strategic corporate objective. This issuance marks a great achievement not only for Warba, but also for the Islamic Banking sector. In addition to that, we would also like to thank the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Capital Markets Authority for their ongoing support and cooperation."

Faisal Sarkhou, Chief Executive Officer of KAMCO, a leading investment company with one of the largest AUMs in the region, said, "We are proud to have played an active role in successfully completing Warba's Tier 1 Mudaraba Capital Certificates. We consider this sukuk issuance to be yet another building block in supporting the Kuwait capital markets. We progressively work towards developing and enhancing the private sector and Kuwaiti economy through diverse investment opportunities. We value our Investment Banking and Wealth Management teams in consistently undertaking roles in key announced transactions, while putting forth their experience and credibility to deliver the best possible outcome for our clients during each



Faisal Sarkhou

transaction process." Chief Executive Officer - Abdulaziz Nasser Al-Marzooq of KFH Capital, the investment banking arm of KFH Group stated, "This issuance is considered as an important step towards strengthening the role of Sukuk as a major financing instrument for governments and corporates alike. He added that Sukuk performance represents an important part of the global financing market.

He further stated that KFH Capital has succeeded in acting as a lead arranger and bookrunner on two out of three Sukuk issuance out of Kuwait. Recently, KFH Capital was successful in arranging & distributing the Sukuks for Boubyan and Warba banks. This affirms the company's unremitting efforts and pioneering role in the Sukuk market at the regional and global levels.

He reiterated that KFH Group is exerting continuous efforts to achieve the goal of establishing a deeper secondary Sukuk market for the tradability of Sukuk. This would make the Sukuk more liquid and easy to trade, thereby, widening its customers' base and attracting more investors. It will also allow Sukuk to penetrate new markets covering different currencies. KFH Group is recognized as a market leader in terms of issuing Sukuk for various governments and corporates across the world, which has provided a boost to the Sukuk industry as a whole witnessed by the remarkable growth due to investors' confidence within the global markets.



Abdulaziz Al-Marzooq

62% IN UAE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT PASSWORD-STEALING MALWARE

DUBAI: Kaspersky Lab presented a new version of its freemium solution Kaspersky Password Manager. It offers users remote access to their passwords via their personal page on the My Kaspersky portal, automatic security verification for entered passwords, voice control and other useful features.

Account security worries Internet users more than any other area of their online lives. According to a survey, 63 percent of respondents in the UAE are aware of and concerned about account hacking - this is the highest ranking of all cyberthreats. The second and third biggest concerns are also account-related issues: password-stealing malware (62 percent) and risks to accounts with financial information (58 percent). When asked about the type of data that could be accessed by cybercriminals, users are also most concerned about their passwords (46 percent). Even private photos and

videos are less important, with only 38 percent of respondents worried about these.

This concern is not unfounded: according to the same survey, 25 percent of users, experienced attempts by cybercriminals to hack their accounts during a 12-month period. Importantly, according to the victims themselves, accounts were most often hacked by simply guessing the password (36 percent of cases). This comes as no surprise, however, if you consider how many users today neglect to create strong passwords and fail to store them securely.

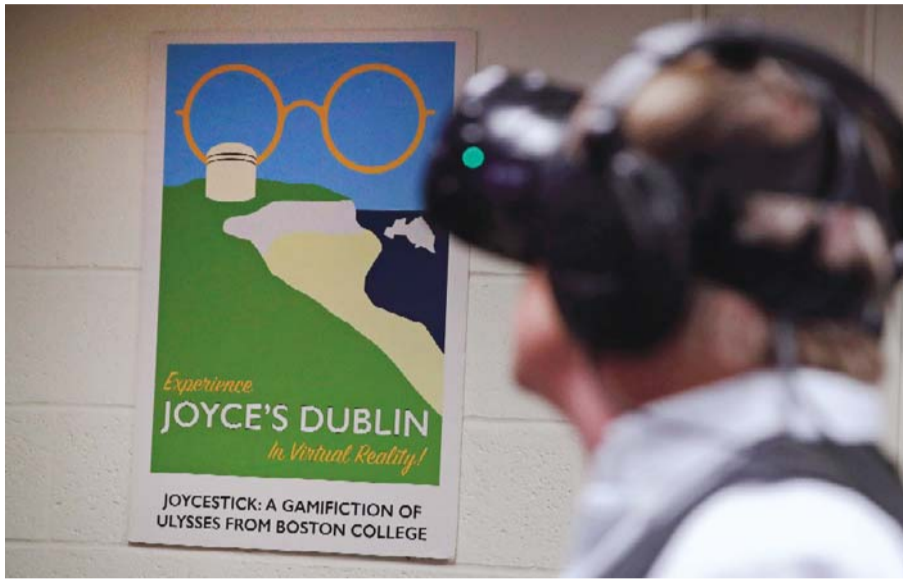
"User behavior is understandable - nowadays most of us have dozens of different accounts: email, social networking, banking, gaming, messaging and much more. It's hard to create and memorize a strong password for each account. However, there are apps designed for such situations: they can generate strong passwords that are

different for different services, store them securely, synchronize them on various devices and automatically enter them in forms on websites. The user needs to remember just one master password instead of dozens of different passwords. These apps secure your accounts and free up memory for other issues," comments Elena Kharchenko, Head of Consumer Product Management, Kaspersky Lab.

Kaspersky Password Manager is one such solution. In addition to standard features, its updated version can import passwords from other similar solutions, generate strong passwords on PCs and Macs and automatically check passwords entered by users to determine whether they are secure. Users of the new Kaspersky Password Manager also get remote access to their passwords via their personal page on the My Kaspersky portal, in case the application cannot be installed or they need to

enter a password on someone else's device. Finding the necessary password is now easier than ever with voice control for Google Chrome. All the new features are now available for PCs and Macs. In addition, users of the new MacBook Pro can now replace the master password with a fingerprint.

Kaspersky Lab is one of the world's fastest-growing cybersecurity companies and the largest that is privately owned. The company is ranked among the world's top four vendors of security solutions for endpoint users (IDC, 2014). Since 1997 Kaspersky Lab has been an innovator in cybersecurity and provides effective digital security solutions and threat intelligence for large enterprises, SMBs and consumers. Kaspersky Lab is an international company, operating in almost 200 countries and territories across the globe, providing protection for over 400 million users worldwide.



BOSTON: In this Jan 26, 2017 photo, Joseph Nugent, a professor of English at Boston College, wears virtual reality goggles at the school's virtual reality lab in Boston. — AP

TURNING JOYCE'S 'ULYSSES' INTO A VIRTUAL REALITY GAME

BOSTON: Students are developing a virtual reality game based on James Joyce's "Ulysses" as part of a class at Boston College. The goal of "Joycestick" is to expose new audiences to the works of one of Ireland's most celebrated authors, as well as to give a glimpse of how virtual reality can be used to enhance literature, said Joseph Nugent, the Boston College English professor who is coordinating the project.

"This is a new way to experience the power of a novel," he said. "We're really at the edge of VR. There's no guidance for this. What we have produced has been purely out of our imagination."

Nugent and his students hope to release a version of the game on June 16 in Dublin during Bloomsday, the city's annual celebration of the author and novel. They've already showcased their progress at an academic conference in Rome last month.

"Joycestick" in many ways, fills in the blanks of the novel, as many of the places key to the story have been lost to time as Dublin has evolved, said Enda Duffy, chairman of the English Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, who has tried a prototype of the game.

"The VR version in this way completes the book," she said. "It makes it real. 'Ulysses' is an ideal book to be turned into a VR experience, since Dublin is, you might say, the book's major character."

There have been a number of efforts to bring works of literature into the gaming world over the years, including a computer game of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby" that became a viral hit in 2011 as it mimicked the look and feel of a classic, 1980s-era Nintendo game.

Unique project

But the Boston College project is unique for trying to incorporate virtual reality technology, says D. Fox Harrell, a digital media professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is impressed that the students are taking on such a complex text. "It requires multiple entry points and modes of interpretation, so it will be fascinating to see how their VR system addresses these

aspects of the work," said Harrell, who hasn't tried the game out yet.

Considered the epitome of the 1920s-era modernist literature, "Ulysses" traces a day in the life of an ordinary Dubliner named Leopold Bloom. The title reflects how the novel draws parallels between Bloom's day and "The Odyssey," the ancient Greek epic.

"Joycestick" isn't meant to be a straight re-telling of "Ulysses," which in some versions runs nearly 650 pages long, acknowledged Evan Otero, a Boston College junior majoring in computer science who is helping to develop the game. Instead, the game lets users explore a handful of key environments described in the book, from a military tower where the novel opens to a cafe in Paris that is significant to the protagonist's past.

It's also not a typical video game in the sense of having tasks to complete, enemies to defeat or points to rack up, said Jan van Merkensteijn, a junior studying philosophy and medical humanities who is also involved in the project. For now, users can simply explore the virtual environments at their leisure. Touching certain objects triggers readings from the novel.

The project represents an extension of what academics call the "digital humanities," a field that merges traditional liberal arts classes with emerging technology. Nugent has had previous classes develop a smartphone application that provides walking tours of Dublin, highlighting important landmarks in Ulysses and Joyce's life. But the native of Mullingar, Ireland, is quick to shift credit for the current project's ambition to his group of 22 students, who are studying a range of disciplines, from English to computer science, philosophy, business and biology, and have also been recruited from nearby Northeastern University and the Berklee College of Music.

"These are ambitious kids," Nugent said. "They want to prove they've done something on the cutting edge. They have the skills. They're doing the work. All I'm trying to do is direct these things." —AP



In this Dec 30, 2016 file photo, cars pass the FSB headquarters in downtown Moscow, Russia. — AP

YAHOO HACKER WORKED AT PROKHOROV BANK?

MOSCOW: A Russian news report says an intelligence agent charged by the United States in the hacking of half a billion Yahoo user accounts worked at an investment bank owned by billionaire Mikhail Prokhorov, who also owns the Brooklyn Nets basketball team.

The report Saturday in the respected business newspaper Kommersant cited a source as saying Igor Sushchin worked for Renaissance Capital as a security director.

The newspaper cited Renaissance Capital as saying Sushchin's employment was ended on Thursday, the day after the US Justice Department announced its case. The report did not say if the company knew he was an intelligence agent.

Renaissance Capital could not be reached for comment by The Associated Press. Sushchin and another of the four indicted were identified as officers in Russia's Federal Security Service. —AP

AUTO INDUSTRY BACKS PROMISE TO FUEL ECONOMY AMID DOUBTS

AUTOMAKERS LOBBY TRUMP TO GET A 'MIDTERM REVIEW'

DEARBORN, Mich: Just because President Trump may weaken US fuel economy requirements, don't expect gas guzzlers like the giant 13 mpg Hummer H1 to make a comeback.

Executives from automakers and suppliers gathered at a conference outside of Detroit Thursday said looser fuel economy standards might allow for sales of more trucks in areas where they're popular. But otherwise, the pursuit of fuel-efficiency technologies will proceed unabated.

Trump came to the Detroit area earlier this week to announce that his Environmental Protection Agency will re-examine gas mileage requirements that were affirmed in the Obama administration's last days.

Those regulations require the fleet of new cars and trucks to average 36 mpg in real-world driving by 2025, about 10 mpg over the current standard. Environmentalists warned Trump's decision could reverse years of reduced tailpipe emissions.

Executives at the Fuel Economy Detroit conference said the billions of dollars already invested in efficient vehicles makes reversing course impractical. And while the US may relax rules, other countries are toughening them, leaving the industry no choice but to keep researching ways to make gas engines more efficient and develop cheaper and longer-range electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

"We're all global companies. We have to design our vehicles to be fuel efficient not only in the US, but in Europe and Asia," said John Juriga, director of powertrain at the Hyundai-Kia technical center near Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Trump lobbying

Automakers lobbied Trump hard to get the government to reopen a "midterm review" of the standards for 2022-2025. They say the EPA under Obama rushed out the review just seven days before Trump took office, reneging on promises to get industry input. The agency also didn't place enough weight on the pronounced consumer shift to SUVs and trucks, the automakers claim.

The EPA decided the standards are flexible enough to account for the market shift, and that automakers have the technology to meet them. The agency calculated that higher standards would raise vehicle costs by \$875, but that would be offset by \$1,620 in savings at the gas pump. Given Trump's promises to auto CEOs about easing regulations, it's likely the requirements will be weakened when the new review is finished by April of next year. Here's what that means for new vehicles:

What will change

Truck and SUV sales likely will keep rising.



GOOGLE HOPES TO BOOST SEARCH QUALITY WITH 'OFFENSIVE' FLAG

NEW YORK: Google is trying to improve the quality of its search results by directing review teams to flag content that might come across as upsetting or offensive.

With the change, content with racial slurs could now get flagged under a new category called "upsetting-offensive." So could content that promotes hate or violence against a specific group of people based on gender, race or other criteria.

While flagging something doesn't directly affect the search results themselves, it's used to tweak the company's software so that better content ranks higher. This approach might, for instance, push down content that is inaccurate or has other questionable attributes, thereby giving prominence to trustworthy sources.

The review teams - comprised of contractors known as "quality raters" - already comb through websites and other content to flag questionable items such as pornography. Google added "upsetting-offensive" in its latest guidelines for quality raters. Google declined to comment on the changes, which were reported in the blog Search Engine Land and elsewhere.

The guidelines, which run 160 pages, are an interesting look into how Google ranks the quality of its search results. For instance, it gives examples of "high-quality" pages, such as the home page of a newspaper that has "won seven Pulitzer Prize awards," and "low-quality" pages, such as an article that includes "many grammar and punctuation errors."

The guidelines cite an example of "Holocaust history" as a search query. A resulting website listing "Top 10 reasons why the Holocaust didn't happen" would get flagged. The new "upsetting-offensive" flag instructs quality raters to "flag to all web results that contain upsetting or offensive content from the perspective of users in your locale, even if the result satisfies the user intent." So even if the results are what the person searched for, such as white supremacist websites, they could still get flagged. But it doesn't mean the results won't show up at all when someone searches for them. —AP



WASHINGTON: In this May 25, 2011 file photo, Derece Smither sits in a car with a new label before a news conference at the Transportation Department in Washington, to announce new fuel economy labels for cars and trucks. — AP

Auto companies don't expect a major cut in the 36 mpg requirement. But they're hoping for standards that are flexible enough for them to sell more trucks and SUVs without penalties. Those high-profit, bigger vehicles made up over 60 percent of new vehicle sales last year, up from less than 50 percent five years ago.

Lower mileage requirements will let the industry sell more trucks and SUVs in areas like the Southwest, where they are popular. Profits from those sales will help pay for low-margin electric and other efficient cars sold on the West Coast, says Sam Abuelsamid, a senior analyst for the market research firm Navigant. If the standards remain the same and gas prices stay low, the industry contends it would lose money trying to sell efficient cars to people who don't want them.

Like other automakers, Hyundai and Kia have the technology to meet the standards, but the cost has to be weighed against consumer demand, Juriga says.

What won't change

The push by automakers and parts companies to make more efficient vehicles. Paul Nabra, director of the Advanced Engine Group for parts maker BorgWarner, says his company sells to automakers worldwide including regions with stricter gas mileage standards. "We need to be pushing the right technology that's going to get broad acceptance," he says. For instance, China,

Europe and Japan will all require fleets to average 47 miles per gallon or higher by 2020.

Work continues on downsizing engines, shedding weight and on new engine technology that makes a gas engine perform like a more efficient diesel. "So far there's no indication there's going to be any backtracking on this stuff," says Abuelsamid.

The fallout

Proponents of the Obama standards aren't happy. Environmental groups and the states of California and New York took legal action after Trump's announcement and warned that higher pollution could harm children and senior citizens. California Gov. Jerry Brown denounced the move as a "gift to polluters." Juriga acknowledged some drawbacks if standards are relaxed. He says it's possible that automakers would delay rolling out new fuel-efficient vehicles in some markets if demand is low.

California and more than a dozen other states have the power to set stricter fuel economy standards than the federal government and likely would if Trump rolls back federal standards. This almost certainly will bring a court fight.

Environmental groups say weakening the standards will dirty the air when multiplied by millions of vehicles. "Carbon dioxide stays in the atmosphere for hundreds of years," said Andrew Linhardt, associate director for federal policy for the Sierra Club. —AP

WAL-MART PURCHASES ONLINE CLOTHING SELLER MODCLOTH

NEW YORK: Wal-Mart has bought trendy clothing seller ModCloth, part of a big push to pick up smaller online brands as it tries to make headway against Amazon.

The company declined to specify the price on the deal that closed Friday, saying only that it was in the same range as its previous two purchases of online businesses. Those were \$51 million and \$70 million.

Wal-Mart is working hard to attract younger and more affluent shoppers, but winning over ModCloth's devoted customers, fans of its vintage-inspired patterned dresses, inclusive sizing and community feel, may be a challenge. Many expressed their disappointment on social media when they heard talk of a deal with Wal-Mart.

Bentonville, Arkansas-based Wal-Mart said ModCloth will continue to operate as a stand-alone and complementary brand to its other e-commerce sites, and will bring

experience and talent to strengthening the company's fashion business aimed at millennials. Independent designers who sell on ModCloth's site, it said, will gain the opportunity to expand their reach.

ModCloth CEO Matthew Kaness, his executive team and the company's 300-plus employees will stay based in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh, and will join Wal-Mart's US e-commerce retail organization. Wal-Mart spent more than \$3 billion for upstart Jet.com last year and since then has purchased other smaller companies, including online footwear retailer ShoeBuy.com and the outdoor gear seller Moosejaw.

Marc Lore, the founder of Jet.com who is now CEO of Walmart.com, said last month that the company was still looking for new startups to buy. ModCloth, founded in 2002, has one physical store in Austin, Texas. —AP



SAN JOSE: This Sept 19, 2013 file photo shows the sign of a Wal-Mart store in San Jose, Calif. Wal-Mart says it bought trendy online clothing seller ModCloth. — AP

AMAZON TRIBE HAS LOWEST HEART RISK EVER SEEN: STUDY

PARIS: Researchers said Friday they had found an indigenous Amazonian tribe with the lowest levels of artery hardening—a portender of heart disease—ever observed. And while they hailed the group's "subsistence lifestyle" as a heart-protecting factor, others cautioned against romanticizing the community's hand-to-mouth existence. Known as the Tsimane, the small forager-farmer community in Bolivia was five times less likely to develop coronary atherosclerosis (artery hardening) than people in the United States—where it is a major killer, scientists wrote in *The Lancet* medical journal.

They pointed to the community's low-fat, high-fiber diet and non-smoking, physically active lifestyle-factors which most scientists agree con-

tribute to good health. The study was an observational one, meaning it merely uncovered a correlation between lifestyle and heart health, and cannot conclude that one causes the other. Yet, "the loss of subsistence diets and lifestyles could be classed as a new risk factor for vascular (blood vessel) ageing," study co-author Hillard Kaplan of the University of New Mexico concluded.

"We believe that components of this way of life could benefit contemporary sedentary populations." The Tsimane diet comprises unprocessed, high-fibre carbohydrates such as rice, corn, nuts and fruit, as well as wild game and fish. The community eats little fat, few smoke, and most are active for between four and seven hours a day — hunting, gathering,

fishing and farming, the study found. Observers pointed out that while the Tsimane had lower levels of artery calcification and heart disease, the most common age of death was 70, compared with about 80 in most developed countries.

And these were just the ones who survive childhood—one in five die in the first year of life. "There may not be many old Tsimane men with heart disease but that's probably because only the fittest and healthiest Tsimane survive to old age," commented Gavin Sandercock, a cardiologist expert from the University of Essex. For Tim Chico, a University of Sheffield cardiologist, it is important "not to romanticise" the Tsimane existence.

"Two-thirds of them suffer intestinal worms and

they have a very hard life without fresh water sewerage or electricity," he said. Rates of diseases other than heart disease were much higher in the Tsimane—especially of the infectious kind. "So, would I live like the Tsimane to reduce my risk of heart disease? No way," Chico said via the Science Media Centre in London.

Researchers took CT scans of the hearts of 705 adults aged 40-94 in 85 villages in 2014 and 2015 for the study. Based on the results, they concluded that almost nine in 10 Tsimane people (85 percent) had no risk of heart disease, 13 percent had a low risk, and only three percent a moderate or high risk. By comparison, about half of Americans aged 45-84 have a moderate or high risk of heart disease. —AFP



LA PAZ: This file photo shows two Aymara indigenous women walk through the green of La Paz Golf Club, as the Illimani's snow summit appears on the background. — AFP

GLACIERS HELP PREDICT FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

PRESERVING THE MEMORY OF GLACIERS

PARIS: Locked up in about 140 meters of ice capping a Bolivian mountain lie 18,000 years of climate history, dating back to an epoch when humans were only just learning to farm. But this precious archive of environmental change since the last Ice Age is melting fast, to the despair of scientists. They have now decided to take matters in hand, in a remarkable initiative that combines glaciology with high-altitude trekking.

An international team will set out in May on a grueling trip up Bolivia's 6,400-metre Illimani peak to drill three ice cores from its crowning glacier. These will be preserved for posterity, along with cores from other glaciers, in the natural freezer that is Antarctica. "Eventually, these ice cores will be all that is left of the glaciers," said Jerome Chappellaz of France's CNRS research institute, a partner in the endeavor dubbed Ice Memory.

Glacier ice contains traces of gas, chemicals and dust. Analyzed in the lab, this is a treasure trove of data on past changes in the climate and environment, including rainfall trends, forest fires, atmospheric temperatures, levels of greenhouse gases and chemical pollutants. They provide a crucial benchmark for understanding how our climate is mutating. "The glaciers... hold the memory of former climates and help to predict future environmental changes," said the Institute of Research for Development (IRD), another mission member.

But time is running out. "If global warming continues at its current rate, glaciers at an altitude below 3,500 meters in the Alps and 5,400 meters in the Andes will have disappeared by the end of the 21st century," said the IRD. "These

are unique pages in the history of our environment which will... be lost forever." A glacier is a slow-moving mass of ice formed when snow accumulates year after year, compacting the layers below into a dense body of ice.

Sanctuary

At the Illimani site, two meters of snow fall every year, translating into a very detailed record that by now lies 140 meters deep. "Studying the glacier therefore means the past of this environment can be reconstructed as far back as the Last Glacial Maximum (LGM)—the peak freeze, about 21,000 years ago, during the last Ice Age, mission coordinators said in a statement.

At the time, vast ice sheets cover much of North America, northern Europe, and Asia, before starting to melt as the climate warmed, allowing modern humans to thrive and spread. The Illimani expedition is the second leg of Ice Memory. The first three ice cores—between 126 and 129 meters long—were taken from the Col du Dome glacier in Mont Blanc in the Alps in August last year.

They have been placed in a deep freeze at a research institute in Grenoble, at the foot of the Alps, to eventually be moved to the French-Italian Antarctic research base Concordia. There a cave is being prepared for their permanent storage at an average of minus 54 degrees Celsius, a temperature that should keep them safe even at top-of-the-scale global warming. The "ice archive sanctuary" should be ready by 2020.

In the end, the team hopes to amass hundreds of ice samples. But drilling an ice core at

these kinds of altitudes is no easy feat. "It requires a lot of equipment," Illimani project head Patrick Ginot of the IRD told AFP ahead of the team's departure. "Twenty guides and carriers will help us to transport the material from an altitude of 4,500 meters to the summit at 6,300 meters.

There is a passable road for up to 4,500 meters, but beyond that not even a helicopter can go. The helpers will carry the material, all 1.5 tons or 30 cubic meters of it, up the last 1,800 meters on their backs—about 30 kilograms per person at a time.

Property of humanity

The kit includes the core drill, 75 specially insulated boxes, and camping gear. It all left from Grenoble on a 10,000-kilometre boat ride for La Paz in February. Upon reaching the summit, two teams of six to eight people will take turns drilling, so as to minimize the physical challenges of high-altitude exertion. The mission will take about a month, after which the team will have an estimated three tons of ice to bring back down.

The precious samples will be placed in the 75 insulated boxes to travel to Grenoble on a five-to-six-week boat journey. "One of the most difficult challenges will be to maintain the cold chain," said Ginot. One core from Col du Dome and one from Illimani will remain in Grenoble for analysis, while the other four are bound for Antarctica. "These samples will be the property of humanity," said the IRD. They will be preserved "in order to enable future generations of scientists to carry out unprecedented analysis." —AFP

LATE US BILLIONAIRE'S RECORD LAND GIFT LAYS CHILE ROW TO REST

SANTIAGO: Douglas Tompkins's widow vividly remembers the suspicions the late billionaire raised when he started buying up land in Patagonia, the natural paradise at the bottom of South America. Some accused him of preparing a storage site for American nuclear waste, she says. Others said he was starting a cult, still others that he wanted to launch a Jewish state—even though he was raised Episcopalian.

Now, just over one year after his death, she hopes her late husband's final wishes for the land will lay the controversy to rest for good. Tompkins, the co-founder of The North Face outdoor label and clothing brand Esprit, has donated a tract of land the size of Rhode Island to the Chilean government as a national park—the largest such donation in history.

This week, Chilean President Michelle Bachelet accepted the 407,000-hectare (one million-acre) donation in a ceremony held in a verdant Patagonian meadow and attended by Tompkins's widow, Kristine McDivitt, a former CEO of the outdoor clothing and gear company Patagonia.

The ceremony came a year and three months after Tompkins's death at age 72 in a kayaking accident in the Patagonia region he adored. "Douglas Tompkins's generosity and love of nature" shine through in his gift, Bachelet said on accepting the land on behalf of the Chilean state. "If there were still any suspicions, with this gigantic donation they have been definitively left in the past," said Chilean journalist Andres Azocar, who has written a biography of Tompkins called "The Green Billionaire."

Powerful enemies

Much has changed in the quarter-century since Tompkins moved to Chile and started buying up huge swathes of land here and in neighboring Argentina. The American magnate stoked controversy with his outsized ambition and ability to use his massive fortune to gobble up privately owned land in the remote southern region. His plans to turn the land into national parks made him some powerful enemies in a Chile just emerging from the bloody 17-year dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet.

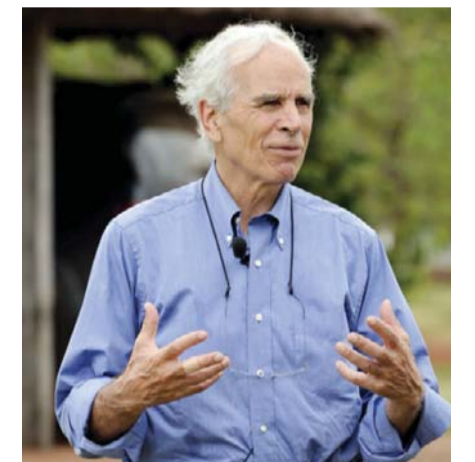
It was a time when the country was deeply suspicious of outsiders, especially from the United States, which had backed Pinochet's coup. Tompkins's opponents included president Eduardo Frei, whose administration stalled him on his first initia-

tive, the creation of Pumalin Park—a private nature reserve of 3,000 square kilometers (1,200 square miles) in southern Chile.

And while the animosity faded over the years—the parks Tompkins created are today broadly hailed as an environmental and tourism boon in both Chile and Argentina—some still harbor lingering bitterness toward the late conservationist. "He pressured landholders to sell their land at despicable prices," Belisario Velasco, the deputy interior minister under Frei, said Friday. "I don't see the benefit of this deal for the state."

Skin of a hog

Tompkins launched North Face as a mountaineering store in San Francisco in 1966. He and his first wife, Susie Tompkins Buell, soon began selling quirky fashions



ARGENTINA: US billionaire and conservationist Douglas Tompkins talks on his property in Ibera, near Carlos Pellegrini, in Corrientes Province, Argentina. —AFP

that, in 1971, became the Esprit brand—today a hugely popular global chain. Tompkins sold his stake in The North Face in the late 1960s and in Esprit in the 1980s. The rugged, white-haired adventurer moved to Chile in 1990.

The controversy around him also extended to Argentina, where some accused him of buying up freshwater supplies for a future business venture. "They're accusing me of all kinds of things," he told Argentine newspaper *La Nacion* in 2013. "I've already developed psychological armor against it. Sometimes it's tragicomic. You have to have a good sense of humor and the skin of a hog: hard and leathery." —AFP

ALASKA SEA LION STUDY GETS HELP FROM CROWDSOURCE VOLUNTEERS

ANCHORAGE, Alaska: A federal wildlife agency studying the Steller sea lion decline in Alaska's Aleutian Islands is looking for help from citizen scientists. Volunteers don't need raincoats or rubber boots to pitch in, just eyeballs and a computer screen. Fisheries researchers at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration want them to sort through 500,000 images captured by 20 cameras at six remote sites. The job is simple: Flag photos that show sea lions.

NOAA Fisheries biologist Katie Sweeney is specifically looking for 256 Steller sea lions captured starting in 2011 that were permanently

marked by branding, allowing them to track movement patterns. The image sorting tells researchers which photos are most important to review. "If we see these animals over time, we can estimate their survival," Sweeney said from her office at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center in Seattle. Steller sea lions are the largest members of the eared seal family. Adult males in the Aleutians can grow to 2,400 pounds and females to 800 pounds, Sweeney said.

They are found in the North Pacific from Japan and Russia to Alaska and as far south as the Channel Islands off the coast of Southern California. The western population, from Prince William Sound to the Aleutians, was listed as endangered in 1997. They fell to their lowest numbers in 2003 and the population since then has increased just 2.7 percent annually. Sea lions in the far western Aleutians were especially hard hit, declining by 94 percent over the last 30 years.

No one knows why. Tracking marked sea lions has indicated they are not simply moving east to other parts of Alaska or west to Russia. Contaminants and poor nutrition are among the possibilities, but answers don't come easy because of the expense and time needed to reach the remote locations where they live. NOAA in 2012 turned to remote cameras to gather more information. The 20 cameras work year-round, snapping a digital photograph every 10 to 30 minutes during daylight. —AP



ALASKA: This photo provided by NOAA Fisheries, shows a harem of Steller sea lions with one large male, several females and their pups on Gillon Point at Agattu Island, Alaska. — AP



HERZLIYA, Israel: A technician works in a laboratory at Israeli-Swiss company SpacePharma's research and development site in Herzliya, Israel. — Reuters

MINIATURE LAB BEGINS SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS IN OUTER SPACE

NEW YORK: Orbiting the earth at more than 500 kilometers, a tiny satellite with a laboratory shrunk to the size of a tissue box is helping scientists carry out experiments that take gravity out of the equation. The technology was launched into space last month by SpacePharma, a Swiss-Israeli company, which on Thursday announced that its first experiments have been completed successfully.

In space, with hardly any interference from earth's gravity, cells and molecules behave differently, helping researchers make discoveries in fields from medicine to agriculture. Nestle turned to zero gravity - or what scientists refer to as microgravity - to perfect the foam in its chocolate mousse and coffee, while drugmakers like Eli Lilly have used it to improve drug designs.

Usually experiments are sent up to the International Space Station and carried out with the help of astronauts, or they

are conducted on parabolic airplane flights that enjoy short bursts of weightlessness. SpacePharma says its miniature lab is a new way for researchers to work in microgravity for extended periods. "Everything can be done remotely while the system is in outer space," said founder Yossi Yamin. "We upload the link with the command files to the lab and the experiment takes place."

Clients then receive data and images directly from the experiments, which are carried out on custom-built glass chips and can be run multiple times to test different reactions. The satellite currently in space holds four experiments, the first being done for a German research institute. A second launch, also with four experiments, is scheduled for August and includes research for a top tier pharmaceutical company, Yamin said. By next year he hopes to begin sending up satellites that each hold some 160 experiments. —Reuters

VIDEO GAMES LINKED TO SEXISM IN TEENAGERS

GRENOBLE, France: The more time a teenage spends on video gaming, the likelier he or she is to display sexist attitudes and gender stereotypes, a study of thousands of French gaming aficionados has found. The study carried out by a team of French and US researchers compared the time spent by 13,520 young people playing video games and their attitudes to women and gender roles.

The results published on Friday in the *Frontiers in Psychology* journal suggest that increased exposure to video games is associated with higher levels of stereotyping and sexism among teenagers. "Sexist representations saturate advertising, television and cinema. Video games are no exception," Laurent

Begue, co-author of the study from Grenoble Alps University, said.

"Content analysis has shown that women are under-represented in popular video games. They have passive roles, they are princesses who need to be saved or secondary, sexualized objects of conquest," he added. Although women are the main victims of stereotyping, men are also affected, being portrayed as "more active, armed and muscular". According to the Entertainment Software Association, in 2014 almost half of video game players were female.

Both boys and girls participated in the study (51 and 49 percent respectively), but results indicated

that sexism was higher among males. Playing time varied from one to 10 hours a day. Researchers from Savoie Mont Blanc University in France and Iowa State University in the United States also collaborated in the project. Previous experiments had shown that playing specific video games for a few minutes can reinforce sexist attitudes, but the new study is the first large-scale examination of the phenomenon among teenagers.

The survey questioned teens aged between 11 to 19, living in the southeastern cities of Lyon and Grenoble. Begue cautioned that despite the "statistically significant" link between sexism and video games, the influence of gaming on teenagers' atti-

tudes remains limited. Religious fervor was a greater determinant of sexism, the researchers noted. Television, on the other hand, had a smaller impact than video games.

Experts also worry that violent video games could negatively affect its users, triggering aggressive behavior. The scientific community remains divided over the controversial link between violent video games and aggression. Begue said it would be "unfair" to tar all video games with the sexist brush, saying the main offenders were the best-sellers. He called on developers to avoid trapping characters into gender stereotypes. "And that is true for men, too!" —AFP



MAGDEBURG: One of four white lion babies plays with his mother Kiara at the zoo of eastern German town of Magdeburg. — AFP

DUBAI WELCOMES REGION'S HEALTHCARE LEADERS ASSEMBLE TO OUTLINE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

DUBAI: Improving turnaround time for laboratory results, testing for imminent heart attacks and detecting cervical cancer are just some of the important topics discussed at the 4th annual Roche Days conference. Roche Days, presented by Roche Diagnostics Middle East, is a platform for key opinion leaders throughout the region. More than 300 of the region's medical experts in the in-vitro diagnostics (IVD) industry in the Middle East were hosted over the weekend.

The conference was inaugurated by Sheikhha Rasha Al Qassimi, PhD, Food Science and Technology (UK) and Assistant Director General of Public Health and Central Laboratories, Sharjah Municipality, assisted by Harald Wolf, General Manager, Roche Diagnostics Middle East. Roche Days was held as part of Roche Diagnostics' commitment to providing continued medical education and highlighting regional expertise to share knowledge and discuss challenges as well as solutions in diagnostics particularly in the areas of cardiovascular diseases, women's health such as cervical cancer, and laboratory automation.

"Through our Roche Days, we were able to cascade the many benefits of laboratory automation in the industry and allow for cross-border collaboration to bring together the brightest minds in the region to discuss challenges and solutions. We live in a fast-paced period when technology continues to bring greater benefits for us. Roche Diagnostics leads the way in in-vitro diagnostics in terms of research and innovation to provide the broadest range of laboratory solutions which dramatically improve turnaround time for tests and results, provide efficiency, quality and safety," said Mr. Wolf.

A particular focus of this year's Roche Days was on laboratory automation and more efficient laboratory procedures to release diagnostic information to physicians faster while also reducing error and sample contamination. With automation, Dr. Amid Abdelnour, Chief Executive Officer - Biolab, Jordan, noted that a remarkable increase in patient safety as well as productivity and capacity are being observed upon implementation in laboratories.

Safe, rapid diagnosis
Innovations in diagnostics also paved the way for testing heart

attacks faster with more precise and reliable results. It is estimated that 23.6 million will die by 2030 from cardiovascular diseases and accurate early detection and intervention is crucial. With high-sensitivity assays, doctors are now able to improve the detection of myocardial injury (detection at earlier time) and can help identify risk of cardiovascular diseases (prediction of adverse outcomes).

Dr. Rabih Azar, Professor of Medicine, St. Joseph University, Chief of Cardiology - Research, Division of Cardiology - Hotel Dieu de France Hospital, Lebanon, noted that with available high-sensitive test, a safe and rapid diagnosis can be done within one hour observation time which is faster than the usual 3-6 hours of observation using the conventional diagnostic approach. This was discussed extensively during the acute coronary syndrome panel session on cardiology including Dr. Laila Abdel-Wareth of Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, among others.

In terms of women's health, cervical cancer remains a challenge across the region due to lack of awareness among women and - until recent years - the lack of a specific diagnostics tests or screening. While cervical cancer is highly preventable, approximately 500,000 new cases worldwide are diagnosed every year. With advanced diagnostic tools available today, doctors can improve the ability to detect cervical cancer early to prevent development and progression of the disease.



Dr. Hisham Shams, Group Medical Director at Alborg Medical Laboratories, Saudi Arabia, brought to light new tools and new thinking in addressing cervical cancer. With limitations in the past on cervical cytology, there is a better way now to detect the presence of Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and its persistent infection to a patient which is the principal cause of cervical cancer in women. Using HPV molecular diagnostics instead of the conventional methods, helps increase sensitivity of detection by 50% and lowers the risk of cancer advancing after testing negative of HPV.

"The conference delved deeper on other healthcare topics as well providing a relevant platform to

change the mindset of diagnostics being just a tool for diagnosis. From prevention to monitoring, diagnostics is an integral part of decision making along the healthcare continuum and to strengthen the potential of diagnostics in the fight against disease," says Mr. Wolf.

Roche Diagnostics Middle East also hosted the MeDia Talks, an educational platform for the in-vitro diagnostics industry for regional media, with an interactive educational session in its efforts to raise the awareness on the importance of diagnostics and its benefits to the healthcare industry as a whole including its cost efficiency. A laboratory tour was conducted to further show the media the efficiency of the automation process.

WEB-BASED COUNSELING LOWERS BLOOD PRESSURE AS MUCH AS MEDS

WASHINGTON: People who received regular lifestyle counseling online were able to lower their blood pressure as much as a medication would, researchers said yesterday. Their study involved 264 people with high blood pressure and an average age of 58. The subjects' average blood pressure began at around 140/90 mmHg, meaning they had what is clinically known as stage 1 hypertension. Most were already taking at least one drug to cut their blood pressure.

Patients enrolled through the website of the Heart and Stroke Association of Canada and were randomly assigned to either an e-counseling group or a control group. Both groups received emails during the year-long trial, first weekly, then

monthly. Those in the e-counseling group were "provided links to online multimedia and interactive tools to increase motivation and skills to begin and sustain a heart-healthy lifestyle," the study said.

"These included video clips featuring characters discussing their own high blood pressure diagnosis and efforts to make lifestyle changes, as well as tools for tracking diet and level of physical activity." The control group saw more generic information about heart-healthy living. By the end of the study period, the more engaging online content seemed to have had an effect, and patients in that group reduced their systolic blood pressure the higher number in a blood-pressure reading-by 10 millimeters of mercury (mmHg). —AFP

TANZANIA OFFERS 500 DOCTORS TO EASE KENYA HEALTH CRISIS

DAR ES SALAAM: Tanzania yesterday agreed to send 500 doctors to Kenya after a 100-day doctors' strike that paralyzed health services in the neighboring country. President John Magufuli announced the decision after meeting a Kenyan delegation in Dar es Salaam headed by health minister Cleopa Mailu. "The difficulties of Kenya are the difficulties of Tanzania. We agree to send you these 500 doctors to provide care to our brothers," Magufuli said in a statement.

Some 5,000 doctors at Kenya's public hospitals stopped working in December to demand better pay and conditions.

The strike only ended on Tuesday. "As you assure me that you will pay the required salaries to my doctors and give them housing, that they will work in good conditions, I have no problem," Magufuli said. There was no information as to when the doctors would be deployed or how long they would stay in Kenya.

But Tanzania's health minister Umy Mwalimu said the doctors would be sent to Kenya "as soon as possible". Some Kenyan doctors are yet to return to work despite an agreement with the government, and medical workers are struggling to deal with the backlog of patients. —AFP

CHOLESTEROL-SLASHING DRUG DOES NOT IMPAIR BRAIN: STUDY

WASHINGTON: A new cholesterol-slashing drug that has shown promise for high-risk patients does not impair brain function, according to a study out yesterday. Previous research had raised the possibility that evolocumab, sold under the brand name Repatha by Amgen, may have a damaging effect on memory and cognitive function. Evolocumab is part of a new class of cholesterol-lowering drugs called PCSK9 inhibitors, which dramatically lower bad cholesterol, or low-density lipoprotein (LDL).

The drug has been shown to significantly reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke and death in patients who have severely clogged arteries or previous cardiac problems. But it comes at a hefty price tag of more than \$14,000 per year, raising concerns about how many patients could benefit.

Aiming to address questions about its cognitive effects, researchers at Brigham and Women's Hospital in collaboration with Brown University and the University of Geneva ran cognitive tests on nearly 2,000 people enrolled in a two-year study of the drug.

Researchers assessed the executive function, working memory, episodic memory and psychomotor speed of patients at six, 12, and 24 months after starting treatment. "After an average of 19 months of treatment, our data show that changes in memory and cognitive function were very small and similar between patients treated with evolocumab and those treated with placebo," said Robert Giugliano, a cardiac doctor at BWH. —AFP

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Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem

د. فهد علي المخيزيم

Consultant Pediatrician إستشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



DASMAN BILINGUAL SCHOOL SHOWCASES STUDENTS 'WORK OF ART IN CAMPUS EXPO'

By Ben Garcia

Dasman Bilingual School has organized an art exhibition at its campus recently to showcase students' skills and talents. Artworks made by students from all stages (kindergarten through senior high school) were displayed. This was the first time that an expo of such magnitude was arranged for both mainstream students and special needs school at all levels. "The expansion of the physical building of the school has reached the curriculum and our academic achievements, so we have this art expo on both mainstream and the special needs students," Rihab Abdel Khalek, Middle School Principal said. "The exhibition we are holding today is the manifestation of our commitment to integrate students of both. We want them to feel involved. The art teachers helped them achieve their dreams. With the teachers' encouragement, we were able to collect the art we display here. We always encourage creativity in our school and definitely, you will see them in our student's work."

Established in the early 1990s, Dasman Bilingual School caters to both students from the mainstream, as well as students with special needs. "This is the first school in Kuwait established to include students of mainstream and our special needs children. We integrate the mainstream students and the special need students so they will be able to feel they are welcome, because the reality of life is that everyone of us will somehow meet them anywhere. They may be separated by classrooms or buildings but they see each other inside campus. You can see them; we encourage art because art has the great impact on our student's education," said Khalek. Dasman Bilingual School has a total of about 2,800 students.



Spring season

This year's theme was patterned to a 'spring' season in which students showcased their artistic side or individualism. "You can see the drawings and paintings displayed here," said Driaan van Niekerk, High School Art Teacher and Coordinator. "We want to create a winner

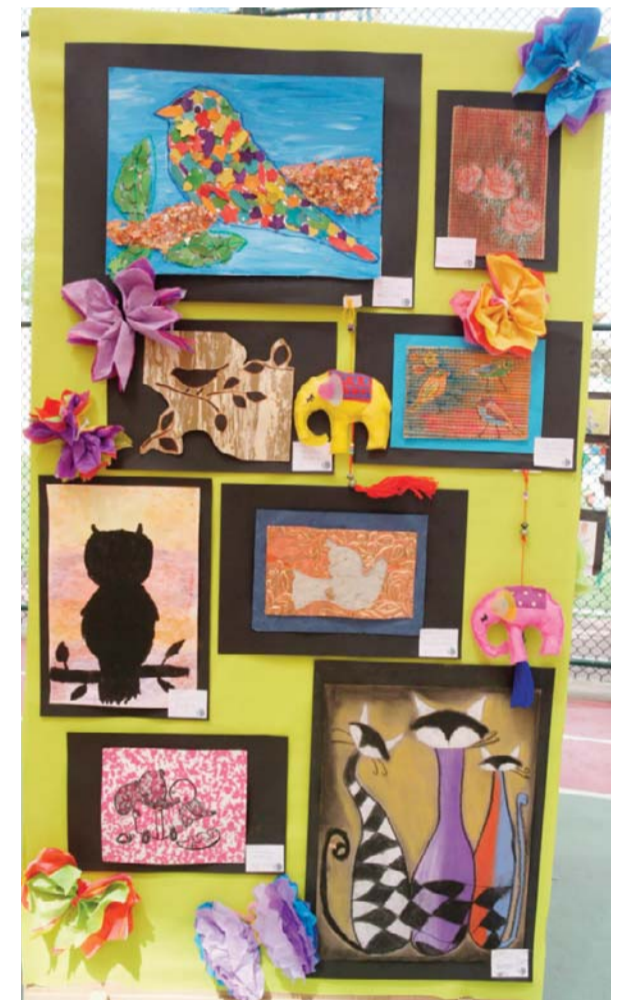
among the community. Most importantly, we want to contribute to the culture."

"We are now living in a globalized world," Van Niekerk said. "We do use globalization in our teaching practices here. It is important to save culture and humanity through art. Art is a reflection and meeting of human and culture

and it shows in the work of art of our students." Around 1,000 students are participating in the art expo, including students with special needs. With regards to the medium they are using, van Niekerk explained: "We tried to expose our students as many types of medium as possible. It depend on levels, but we combined all forms of arts including paintings, sculpture and the mixed digital media. The paintings demonstrate the individuality of each students."

"We want to show the importance of arts through this exhibition," he added. "The level of awareness gained will surely increase, thus helping preserve our culture and traditions; which sometimes become today neglected because we are living in a globalized world. It is the first time that we are doing this, so with this year's success, we plan to organize this event annually," he said.

The school has also participated in many art exhibitions outside its campus. "We had two events organized this year already; one in the Avenues Mall, and another one in Kuwait Magic," he noted. "We want to promote our students' work, and showcase the opportunity of really making art come alive," van Niekerk mentioned.



'WIN BIG WITH LULU' PROMOTION ANNOUNCES WINNERS

Lulu Hypermarket, the leading retailer in the region, organized a prize distribution ceremony for the winners of its 'Win Big with Lulu' promotion, on Thursday, 16 March at its Al-Rai outlet. Members from top management of Lulu handed the prizes to winners in the presence of a large crowd of shoppers and well-wishers.

The 'Win Big with Lulu' promotion, held from 1 February to 4 March, enabled shoppers to participate in a great value-back shopping promotion at any Lulu outlet. Shoppers were given one raffle coupon for every purchase of KD5 worth of goods.

Draws to pick the winners were held on 8 and 9 March at the Hypermarket's Al Rai and Al Qurain outlets. Gift vouchers worth a total of KD18,000 were awarded to 205 lucky winners; with five winning KD600 worth of gift vouchers, 100 winning KD100 gift vouchers, and another 100 winners receiving vouchers worth KD50 each.

The 'Win Big with Lulu' promotion is part of the hypermarket's commitment to hold value-driven promotions, with a range of quality products at affordable prices, which provide an exciting shopping experience for their customers.





IAA officials pose for a group photo with managers of advertising departments of daily newspapers, weeklies and monthly magazines.



IAA honors Kuwait Times.

IAA HONORS MANAGERS OF ADVERTISING DEPARTMENTS



IAA - Kuwait Branch President Walid Kanafani (center) poses with managers of advertising departments of daily newspapers, weeklies and monthly magazines.

The International Advertising Association (IAA) recently honored the managers of advertising departments of daily newspapers, weeklies and monthly magazines in appreciation of their efforts and continued cooperation and support for the activities of the International Advertising Association and outstanding success gained by the IAA during 2016. The participants in the ceremony were welcomed by the president and board members of IAA. The dinner banquet was held at the Holiday Inn, Salmiya.

Then president of the IAA, Kuwait Branch, Walid Kanafani spoke on behalf of the association. In his speech, he paid tribute for the continuous support and cooperation believing in the goals of the association as well as its role to enhance relations among dailies, magazines and advertisement agencies. At the end of the ceremony, all participants were given mementoes and wishes for further success in the future.



IAA - Kuwait Branch President Walid Kanafani delivers a speech during ceremony.

GULF PROGRAMMING CONTEST TO TAKE PLACE IN KUWAIT FOR THE SECOND TIME

SIX TEAMS FROM GUST DUE TO PARTICIPATE

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) announced that they will be hosting the seventh Gulf Programming Contest (GPC), due to take place on its campus on March 22nd and 23rd. The competition, sponsored by That Al Salasil, and under the patronage of the Private Universities Council, will be attended by Dr Waleed Mural Al Kandari, Undersecretary General for Information and Research. It is organized by the Computer Science Department at GUST, and will host 44 teams from across the GCC.

The Gulf Programming Contest provides an opportunity for university students from around the region majoring in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Management Information Systems, or any IT related subjects to display their abilities in programming and problem solving. The teams will be given eight to ten programming problems to be solved using one PC only. Participating in this contest gives the students the opportunity to prepare for the Arab Collegiate

Programming Contest (ACPC), a qualifying round to the ACM ICPC (Association for Computer Machinery - International Collegiate Programming Contest) World Finals. Many contestants who qualified to the regional and world programming contests are currently working in the most prestigious workplaces such as Google, Facebook, Yahoo, Amazon, and Booking.com

Teamwork

Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr Salah Al-Saharan, said, "The value of participating in this competition is that one learns how to work as a team to accomplish a goal. These are vital skills necessary for success, and when combined with cutting-edge computer-programming talents, we are confident that our students are equipped for success after graduation."

GPC is an extension of the National Programming Contest that was first initiated in the United Arab Emirates. In 2011, the decision was made to expand the contest to include the universities in the Gulf

region. Kuwait was the first country to participate from outside the UAE, and GUST was the first university to represent Kuwait at the competition.

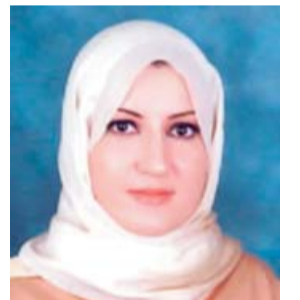
Competitive yet collaborative

Assistant Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr Iqbal AlShammari, said "Our students continuously demonstrate creativity, enthusiasm, and diligence, which will propel them far in this competition. Additionally, GPC provides contestants with extracurricular projects that gives them the chance to learn in a competitive yet collaborative environment that is hard to achieve in regular classrooms."

This year, more teams and universities across the region are participating in the contest, which cements the position of Computer Science as a field of growth and importance. Some of the universities participating this year are Qatar University and Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals, King Faisal University and Princess



Dr Salah Al-Sharhan



Dr Iqbal Al-Shammari

Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University from Saudi Arabia, Birla Institute of Science and Technology, Khalifa University, and UAE University from the Emirates, and Sultan Qaboos University and College of Applied Sciences-Sohar from Oman. The other institutions to participate from Kuwait are the American University of Kuwait, Kuwait Technical College, Kuwait University, and the Arab Open University.

Last year, GUST also hosted the GPC 2016 competition, where 32 teams from 12 universities competed from across the Gulf Region. The team "Travelling Salesman" from Khalifa University (UAE) won the first place, team "Kofta" from Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar won second place, and third place was awarded to team "Cyclon3" from American University of Kuwait.



MEXICO SHOWCASES BEST OF ITS CUISINE, CELEBRITY CHEF AT 'TASTE OF KUWAIT'

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Mexico has participated in the recently concluded 'Taste of Kuwait' food festival. The third-year event was held at the Boulevard Park in Salmiya between the 16th and 18th of March, and saw participation and attendance of large numbers of food enthusiasts in Kuwait. Taste of Kuwait's organizers invited several celebrity chefs from around the world in order to promote food and culture. One of the notable invitees at the food festival was Chef Sofia Rangel; a celebrity chef from Mexico. She conducted two separate cooking demos at the event, attended by an audience comprising people from various nationalities.

Tirzo Beltran Torres, Deputy Head of Mission at the Mexican Embassy, thanked Kuwait for the wonderful opportunity to not only showcase mouthwatering delicacies from his home country such as tacos and guacamole, but also to showcase Mexico's unique culture and traditions. "Our participation here is a celebration of Mexican love to best cooking," he said. "We are present here not just to showcase food and the Mexican cuisine, but also to promote the economy and tourism in Mexico. With our celebrity Chef Rangel's presence, we are honored as a country to have her in the Taste of Kuwait festival, so as to showcase the best of the Mexican cuisine, the food we love."

Hot and spicy

There are a lot of misconceptions about the Mexican cuisine, including the idea that all Mexican food are hot

and spicy. "We do have some hot and spicy food, but we also have a variety of other options that can be enjoyed by people who do not prefer spicy food items," he said. "We want the people to select the best; including spicy food which they can find here," he added.

According to Torres, the volume of trade between Mexico and Kuwait remains low. "Therefore, we are asking for help to promote our products and tourism in Mexico," he said. "Kuwait is a huge potential market for our agricultural products. The potential for the increase of our trade is so huge as well. But we do have some products in the market already like tuna fish, avocados, raspberries and blueberries."

Kuwait's food industry is estimated at KD 55 billion per annum and is home to over 5,000 restaurants. The food festival brings together world renown celebrity chefs presenting live cooking demos, dozens of local restaurants offering food tasting, live music performances, and family-oriented activities.



Tirzo Beltran Torres, Deputy Head of Mission at the Mexican Embassy. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 00:15 Universal Soldier: The Return
- 02:00 The Borderlands
- 03:45 King Arthur
- 06:00 Blown Away
- 08:00 Bad Company
- 10:00 Survivor
- 12:00 The Throwaways
- 13:45 King Arthur
- 16:00 Robot Overlords
- 18:00 Hudson Hawk
- 20:00 Fury
- 22:15 The Dead Lands

ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 00:50 Gator Boys
- 01:45 The Beauty Of Snakes
- 02:40 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
- 03:35 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
- 04:25 Venom In Vegas
- 06:02 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
- 06:49 Gator Boys
- 07:36 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:00 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:25 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 09:15 Gangland Killers
- 10:10 Life At Vet University
- 11:05 Rugged Justice
- 12:00 Biggest And Baddest
- 12:55 Bondi Vet
- 13:50 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 14:15 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 14:45 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 15:10 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 16:05 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 16:35 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 17:00 Escape To Chimp Eden
- 19:20 The Primeval Forest Of Belovezhzka Pushcha
- 20:15 Village Vets
- 20:40 Village Vets
- 21:10 Catching Monsters
- 22:05 Dr. Dee: Alaska Vet
- 23:00 The Primeval Forest Of Belovezhzka Pushcha
- 23:55 Gator Boys

BBC FIRST

- 01:00 Eastenders
- 01:30 Poldark

- 06:40 How It's Made
- 07:00 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
- 07:25 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild
- 07:50 Awesome Adventures
- 08:15 Awesome Adventures
- 08:40 How It's Made
- 09:05 How It's Made
- 09:30 King Arthur
- 09:55 How It's Made
- 10:20 How It's Made
- 10:45 How It's Made
- 11:10 How It's Made
- 11:35 How It's Made
- 12:00 How It's Made
- 12:25 How It's Made
- 12:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 13:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 14:30 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 15:20 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 16:10 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 17:00 Prototype This
- 17:50 Prototype This
- 18:40 Breaking Magic
- 19:05 Breaking Magic
- 19:30 Wildest Africa
- 20:20 Ecopolis
- 21:10 Tallest Tower: Building The Shard
- 22:00 What Happened Next?
- 22:25 What Happened Next?
- 22:50 What Happened Next?
- 23:15 What Happened Next?
- 23:40 What Happened Next?



- 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
- 06:50 The 7D
- 07:00 Jessie
- 07:25 Jessie
- 07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 07:55 Austin & Ally

- 06:45 Loopidoo
- 07:00 Zou
- 07:15 Calimero
- 07:30 Loopidoo
- 07:45 Henry Hugglemonster
- 08:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 08:25 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 08:50 Goldie & Bear
- 09:15 Miles From Tomorrow
- 09:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 10:00 Sofia The First
- 10:30 Doc McStuffins
- 11:00 The Lion Guard
- 11:30 Goldie & Bear
- 12:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 12:30 Miles From Tomorrow
- 13:00 PJ Masks
- 13:25 PJ Masks
- 13:50 PJ Masks
- 14:20 PJ Masks
- 14:45 PJ Masks
- 15:10 PJ Masks
- 15:40 PJ Masks
- 16:05 PJ Masks
- 16:30 PJ Masks
- 17:00 PJ Masks
- 17:25 PJ Masks
- 17:55 PJ Masks
- 18:20 PJ Masks
- 18:45 PJ Masks
- 19:15 PJ Masks
- 19:45 PJ Masks
- 20:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 20:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 21:00 Unbreakable
- 21:05 Goldie & Bear
- 21:35 Miles From Tomorrow
- 22:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 22:25 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 22:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 23:00 Miles From Tomorrow
- 23:30 Miles From Tomorrow
- 23:55 PJ Masks



- 00:20 Wheels That Fall
- 00:45 Everest Rescue
- 01:35 Everest Rescue
- 02:25 Everest Rescue
- 03:15 Everest Rescue
- 04:05 Everest Rescue
- 05:00 Everest Rescue
- 06:00 Outback Truckers
- 06:50 Street Outlaws
- 07:40 Fast N' Loud
- 08:30 The Island With Bear Grylls
- 09:20 Storage Hunters
- 09:45 How Do They Do It?
- 10:10 How Do They Do It?
- 10:35 What On Earth?

- 02:50 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 03:45 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 04:40 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 05:30 Celebrity Style Story
- 06:00 LA Clippers Dance Squad
- 06:50 El News
- 07:20 LA Clippers Dance Squad
- 08:10 El News
- 09:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 09:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 10:45 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 11:35 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
- 12:25 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
- 13:20 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
- 14:15 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
- 15:10 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
- 16:05 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
- 17:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
- 18:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
- 19:00 El News
- 20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 22:00 Mariah's World
- 23:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



- 00:00 How 2 Win
- 01:00 The Human Calculator
- 02:00 The Human Calculator
- 03:00 The Human Calculator
- 03:50 The Human Calculator
- 04:40 How 2 Win
- 05:30 How 2 Win
- 06:20 The Human Calculator
- 07:10 The Universe
- 08:00 The Human Calculator
- 09:00 The Human Calculator
- 10:00 The Human Calculator
- 11:00 How 2 Win
- 12:00 How 2 Win
- 13:00 The Human Calculator
- 14:00 The Human Calculator
- 15:00 The Human Calculator
- 16:00 The Human Calculator
- 17:00 How 2 Win
- 18:00 How 2 Win
- 19:00 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
- 20:00 Ancient Top 10
- 21:00 Million Dollar Genius
- 22:00 Ancient Aliens
- 23:00 Rome's Lost Legion



- 00:00 Restaurant Stakeout
- 01:00 Mystery Diners
- 01:30 Mystery Diners
- 02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 03:00 Man Fire Food
- 03:30 Man Fire Food
- 04:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 05:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
- 05:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
- 06:00 Chopped
- 07:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 07:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 08:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 09:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 09:30 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 10:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 10:30 Anna Olson: Bake
- 11:00 Man Fire Food
- 11:30 Man Fire Food
- 12:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 12:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 13:00 Chopped
- 14:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 14:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 15:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 15:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 16:00 Siba's Table
- 16:30 Siba's Table
- 17:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 17:30 Anna Olson: Bake
- 18:00 Man Fire Food
- 18:30 Man Fire Food
- 19:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 19:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 20:00 Tia Mowry At Home
- 20:30 Tia Mowry At Home
- 21:00 Patricia Heaton Parties
- 21:30 Patricia Heaton Parties
- 22:00 Chopped
- 23:00 Food Network Star



- 00:20 Ice Road Truckers
- 01:10 Hunting Hitler
- 02:00 Counting Cars
- 02:25 Car Hunters
- 02:50 American Restoration
- 03:40 Fifth Gear
- 04:30 Storage Wars Texas
- 05:00 Hoard Hunters
- 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 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 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 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...
- 18:30 Search For The Lost Giants
- 19:20 Mountain Men
- 20:10 American Pickers
- 21:00 Pawn Stars
- 21:25 Pawn Stars Best Of
- 21:50 Storage Wars: Barry's Best Buys
- 22:40 Counting Cars
- 23:05 Car Hunters
- 23:30 American Pickers



- 00:05 Coronation Street
- 00:35 Coronation Street
- 01:00 Don't Tell The Bride
- 02:00 Coronation Street
- 03:00 Coronation Street
- 03:30 Coronation Street
- 03:55 The Chase
- 04:45 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 05:35 Don't Tell The Bride
- 06:25 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 07:35 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army And Me
- 08:05 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army And Me
- 08:35 The Chase
- 09:30 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 10:25 Midsomer Murders
- 11:55 Murdoch Mysteries
- 12:45 Tonight At The London Palladium
- 13:45 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 15:00 Don't Tell The Bride
- 15:55 Don't Tell The Bride
- 16:50 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army And Me
- 17:10 Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army And Me
- 17:50 Brief Encounters
- 18:45 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 19:00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway



- 00:40 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
- 01:05 Mega Food
- 01:55 Croatia's Finest
- 02:20 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Med
- 03:10 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 03:35 Home Strange Home
- 04:25 Andy And Ben Eat The World
- 04:50 Raw Travel
- 05:20 Cool Spaces
- 06:15 Confucius Was A Foodie
- 07:10 Grandma's Boy
- 07:35 Grandma's Boy
- 08:05 The Great Food Revolution
- 09:00 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
- 09:25 Route Awakening
- 09:55 Cesar Millan: Viva Las Vegas!
- 10:50 World's Best Beaches
- 11:45 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 12:10 Valentine Warner's Wild Table
- 12:40 Mega Food
- 13:35 Croatia's Finest
- 14:00 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Med
- 14:55 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 15:25 Andy And Ben Eat The World
- 15:50 Restoration Man
- 16:45 Raw Travel
- 17:15 Cool Spaces
- 18:10 Cruise Ship Diaries
- 19:05 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 19:30 Andy And Ben Eat The World
- 20:00 Restoration Man
- 20:55 Raw Travel
- 21:20 Cool Spaces



SURVIVOR ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 02:25 Silk
- 03:20 Line Of Duty
- 04:25 Line Of Duty
- 05:25 Eastenders
- 06:00 Doctors
- 06:30 Holly City
- 07:30 Father Brown
- 08:15 Doctor Who
- 09:05 New Tricks
- 10:00 Doctors
- 10:30 Eastenders
- 11:00 Father Brown
- 11:55 Doctor Who
- 12:50 New Tricks
- 13:45 Doctors
- 14:15 Eastenders
- 14:45 Father Brown
- 15:40 Doctor Who
- 16:35 New Tricks
- 17:30 Doctors
- 18:00 Eastenders
- 18:30 Eastenders
- 19:05 Father Brown
- 20:00 Scott & Bailey
- 21:00 Wallander
- 22:50 Orphan Black
- 23:35 Eastenders



- 00:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
- 01:00 The Killing Season
- 02:00 The Killing Season
- 03:00 Hatton Garden Heist: One Last Job
- 04:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence
- 05:00 The Killing Season
- 06:00 The Killing Season
- 07:00 The First 48
- 08:00 The First 48
- 09:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
- 10:00 My Crazy Ex
- 11:00 My Crazy Ex
- 12:00 My Crazy Ex
- 13:00 My Crazy Ex
- 14:00 Private Crimes
- 14:30 Private Crimes
- 15:00 It Takes A Killer
- 15:30 It Takes A Killer
- 16:00 It Takes A Killer
- 16:30 It Takes A Killer
- 17:00 Homicide Hunter
- 18:00 Homicide Hunter
- 19:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
- 20:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
- 21:00 The First 48
- 22:00 Killers: Behind The Myth
- 23:00 Crimes That Shook Britain

- 08:20 Rolling To The Ronks
- 08:45 The Znuzhus
- 09:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 09:35 Elena Of Avalor
- 10:00 Stuck In The Middle
- 10:25 Disney The Lodge
- 10:50 Bunk'd
- 11:15 Bizaardvark
- 11:40 Little Mermaid 2
- 13:00 The 7D
- 13:15 Star Darlings
- 13:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 13:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 14:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 14:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 15:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 15:25 Jessie
- 15:50 Jessie
- 16:15 Disney Cookabout
- 16:40 Austin & Ally
- 17:05 Eco Club
- 17:10 Elena Of Avalor
- 17:35 Stuck In The Middle
- 18:00 Disney The Lodge
- 18:25 The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Beginning
- 19:45 The 7D
- 20:00 Star Darlings
- 20:05 Stuck In The Middle
- 20:30 Bizaardvark
- 20:55 Bunk'd
- 21:20 Shake It Up
- 21:45 Disney The Lodge
- 22:10 Best Friends Whenever
- 22:35 Kirby Buckets
- 23:00 Kirby Buckets
- 23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



- 00:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 00:35 The Hive
- 00:45 Loopidoo
- 01:00 Henry Hugglemonster
- 01:15 Calimero
- 01:30 Art Attack
- 01:55 Zou
- 02:05 Loopidoo
- 02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 02:35 Calimero
- 02:50 Zou
- 03:05 Art Attack
- 03:30 The Hive
- 03:40 Loopidoo
- 03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
- 04:10 Art Attack
- 04:35 Loopidoo
- 04:50 Calimero
- 05:05 Art Attack
- 05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:45 Zou
- 06:00 Art Attack
- 06:30 Henry Hugglemonster



- 00:05 Kids Do The Craziest Things
- 00:30 Prototype This
- 01:20 Prototype This
- 02:10 Dirty Jobs
- 03:00 Dirty Jobs
- 03:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 04:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 05:30 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 06:20 How It's Made



- 06:00 Supa Strikas
- 06:25 Supa Strikas
- 06:50 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6
- 07:15 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6
- 07:40 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 08:10 K.C. Undercover
- 08:35 Milo Murphy's Law
- 09:00 Supa Strikas
- 09:25 Lab Rats
- 09:50 Counterfeit Cat
- 10:20 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 10:45 Atomic Puppet
- 11:10 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 11:35 Gravity Falls
- 12:00 Tarzan 2
- 13:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 13:45 Supa Strikas
- 14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 14:15 Milo Murphy's Law
- 14:40 K.C. Undercover
- 15:05 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 15:30 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 15:55 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 16:25 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 16:50 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 17:15 Kickin' It
- 17:40 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 18:10 Star Wars Rebels
- 18:35 Tarzan 2
- 19:55 Danger Mouse
- 20:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 20:45 Mighty Med
- 21:10 Star Wars Rebels
- 21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 21:45 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6
- 22:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 22:35 Boyster
- 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



- 00:00 Catching Kelce
- 01:00 Catching Kelce
- 01:50 El News



WAR HORSE ON OSN MOVIES HD

- 22:10 Cruise Ship Diaries
- 23:00 Mega Food
- 23:50 Croatia's Finest



- 00:10 Mega Factories: Supercars
- 01:00 Air Crash Investigation
- 02:00 Ultimate Airport Dubai
- 02:55 Map Of Hell
- 04:45 Route Awakening
- 05:10 Route Awakening
- 05:40 Wicked Tuna
- 06:35 Monster Fish
- 07:30 Filthy Riches
- 08:25 Science Of Stupid
- 08:50 Science Of Stupid
- 09:20 Locked Up Abroad
- 10:15 The Border
- 11:10 Miracle Hospital
- 11:35 Miracle Hospital
- 12:05 On Thin Ice: Jade's Polar Dream
- 13:00 Dog Whisperer
- 14:00 Dog Whisperer
- 15:00 Mine Kings
- 16:00 Wicked Tuna
- 17:00 Mystery Of The Himalayan Mummies
- 18:00 Chilean Miners: Buried Alive
- 19:00 Mine Kings
- 20:00 Wicked Tuna
- 20:50 Mystery Of The Himalayan Mummies
- 21:40 Chilean Miners: Buried Alive
- 22:30 Mine Kings
- 23:20 Master Of Disaster



- 00:20 World's Deadliest Animals
- 01:10 The Invaders
- 02:00 Zoo Confidential
- 02:50 Extreme Animal Babies
- 03:45 Animals Gone Wild
- 04:40 Nature's Greatest Talents
- 05:35 Africa's Hunters
- 06:30 Monster Fish
- 07:25 Monster Fish
- 08:20 Wild 24
- 09:15 Survive The Wild
- 10:10 World's Deadliest GPU
- 11:05 Wild Case Files
- 12:00 Dangerous Encounters
- 12:55 Zoo Confidential
- 13:50 Extreme Animal Babies
- 14:45 Animals Gone Wild
- 15:40 Nature's Greatest Talents
- 16:35 Nature's Greatest Talents
- 17:30 The Invaders
- 18:25 Hunter Hunted
- 19:20 Animals Gone Wild
- 20:10 Nature's Greatest Talents
- 21:00 Nature's Greatest Talents
- 21:50 The Invaders
- 22:40 Hunter Hunted
- 23:30 Dangerous Encounters



- 01:00 Jem And The Holograms
- 03:00 High School Musical 3: Senior Year
- 05:00 Paddington
- 07:00 Rataouille
- 09:00 Up
- 11:00 Paddington
- 13:00 Beverly Hills Chihuahua
- 15:00 Eight Below
- 17:00 Mousehunt
- 19:00 Harriet The Spy
- 21:00 Christmas Trade
- 23:00 Eight Below



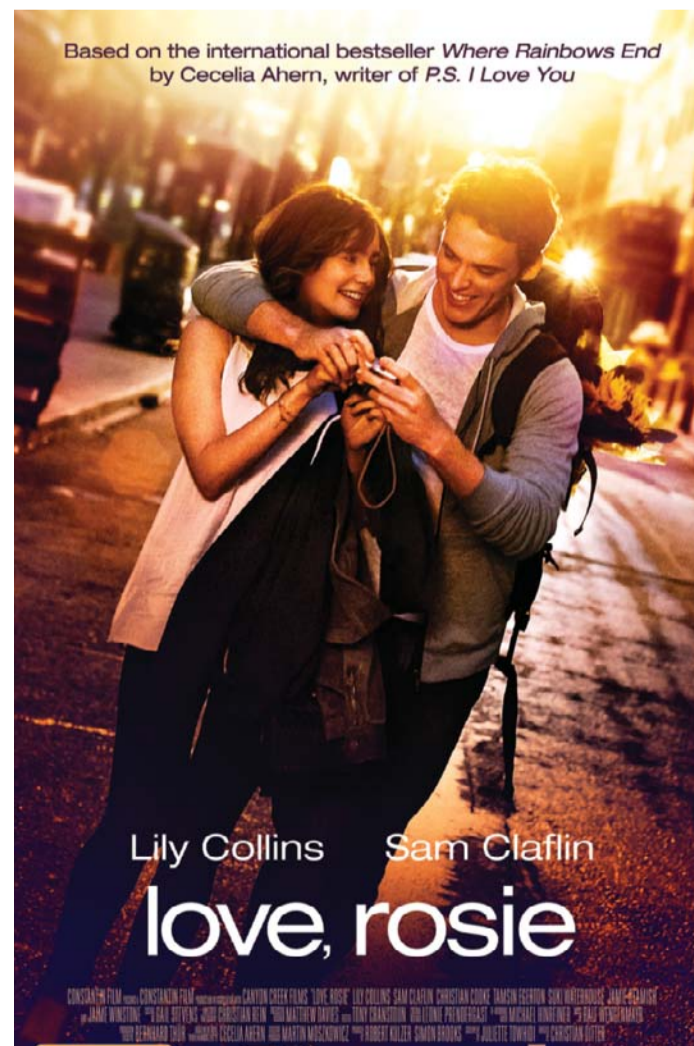
- 00:00 Trainwreck
- 02:15 Outside Bet
- 04:15 Love, Rosie
- 06:15 Lovesick
- 08:00 Outside Bet
- 10:00 Love, Rosie
- 12:00 Lovesick
- 14:00 All About Christmas Eve
- 16:00 Forces Of Nature
- 18:00 The Final Girls
- 20:00 Burying The Ex
- 22:00 The Overnight



- 00:00 Cocaine Cowboys: Reloaded
- 02:30 Touched With Fire
- 04:15 Rosewater
- 06:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost
- 08:00 Fast Girls
- 10:00 Listen To Me Marlon
- 12:00 Middle Of Nowhere
- 14:00 The Girl
- 16:00 Days Of Heaven
- 18:00 Match
- 20:00 The Selfish Giant
- 22:00 The Survivalist

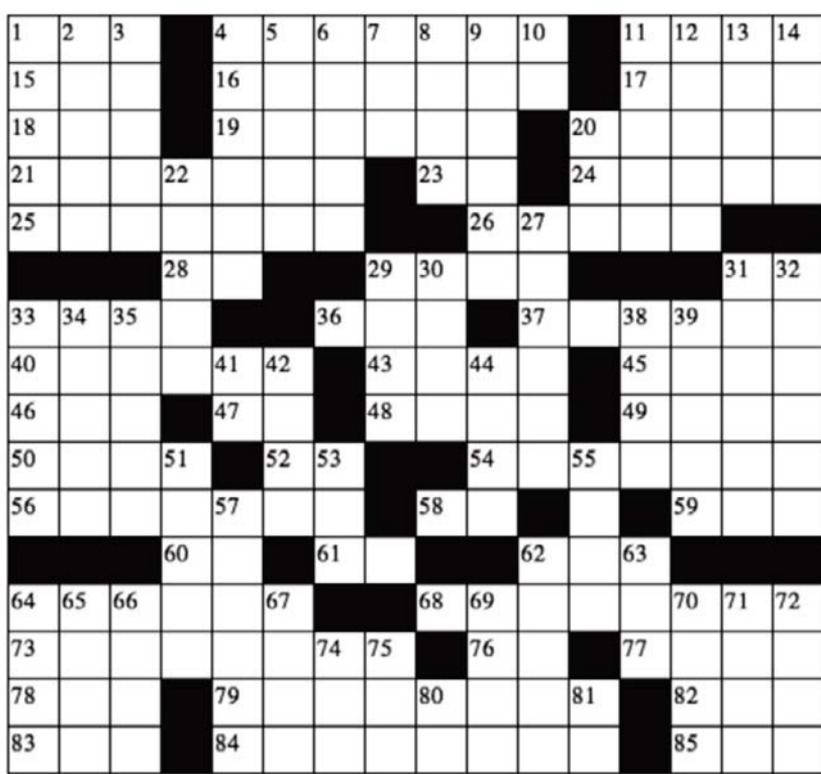


- 00:20 Erick: The Boy With No Face
- 01:10 Randy To The Rescue
- 02:00 Toddlers & Tiaras: Coach Wars
- 02:50 Designer Darlings
- 03:35 Sister Wives
- 04:20 Toddlers & Tiaras
- 05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
- 06:00 Super Soul Sunday
- 06:50 Toddlers & Tiaras: Coach Wars
- 07:40 Sister Wives
- 08:30 Little 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 Super Soul Sunday
- 12:40 Iyana: Fix My Life
- 13:30 Too Ugly For Love?
- 14:20 Little People, Big World
- 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 Cake Boss
- 18:55 Cake Boss
- 19:20 My Big Fat Fabulous Life
- 19:45 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids
- 20:10 Super Soul Sunday
- 21:00 Cake Boss
- 21:25 Cake Boss



LOVE, ROSIE ON MOVIES COMEDY HD

CROSSWORD 1552



ACROSS

1. Experiencing or showing sorrow or unhappiness.
4. A hypocrite who pretends to religious piety (after the protagonist in a play by Moliere).
11. A blue dye obtained from plants or made synthetically.
15. (informal) Of the highest quality.
16. Relating to or like or divided into areolae.
17. (Polynesian) An alcoholic drink made from the aromatic roots of the kava shrub.
18. A serve that strikes the net before falling into the receiver's court.
19. Any of a class of organic compounds having a carbonyl group linked to a carbon atom in each of two hydrocarbon radicals.
21. A short introductory essay preceding the text of a book.
23. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
24. Lower in esteem.
25. The first of the Old Testament patriarchs and the father of Isaac.
26. Strike with disgust or revulsion.
28. That is to say.
33. A unit of illumination equal to 1 lumen per square centimeter.
36. A pass between mountain peaks.
37. United States writer remembered as the secretary and companion of Gertrude Stein (1877-1967).
40. A city in western Germany near the Dutch and Belgian borders.
43. The battle in 1806 in which Napoleon decisively defeated the Prussians.
45. An island of central Hawaii (between Molokai and Kauai).
46. A sizeable hole (usually in the ground).
47. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
48. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
49. A male monarch or emperor (especially of Russia prior to 1917).
50. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
52. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
54. Tall feather palm of northern Brazil with hard-shelled nuts yielding valuable oil and a kind of vegetable ivory.
56. A member of a North American people formerly living in the Colorado river valley in Arizona.
58. A Mid-Atlantic state.
59. An associate degree in applied science.
60. A state in New England.
61. A logarithmic unit of sound intensity.
64. Flesh of scaleless food fish of the southern United States.
68. Set free as from prison or duty.
73. A rejection of belief.
76. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
77. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
78. The smallest multiple that is exactly divisible by every member of a set of numbers.
79. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
82. Devoid of warmth and cordiality.
83. (Greek mythology) The winged goddess of the dawn in ancient mythology.
84. Yellow-flowered primrose native to Alps.
85. A syndrome that occurs in many women from 2 to 14 days before the onset of menstruation.

DOWN

1. Minute floating marine tunicate having a transparent body with an opening at each end.
2. Sour or bitter in taste.
3. Try to prevent.
4. Flightless New Zealand birds similar to gallinules.
5. Any of several tall tropical palms native to southeastern Asia having egg-shaped nuts.
6. Desert shrub of Syria and Arabia having small white flowers.
7. To an excessive degree.
8. The inner and longer of the two bones of the human forearm.
9. Foul with waste matter.
10. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
11. Jordan's port.
12. Of or in or relating to the nose.
13. United States composer noted for his innovative use of polytonality (1874-1954).
14. Remove with or as if with a ladle.
20. (Scotland) A small loaf or roll of soft bread.
22. A strong belief in a supernatural power or powers that control human destiny.
27. The basic unit of money in Macao.
29. A magic power or magic spell.
30. A city in northwestern Syria.
31. The dialect of Malay used as the national language of the Republic of Indonesia or of Malaysia.
32. Mako sharks.
34. A member of a seafaring group of North American Indians who lived on the Pacific coast of British Columbia and southwestern Alaska.
35. Of or pertaining to a number system having 8 as its base.
38. A member of the Dravidian people living in the Nilgiri hills in southern India.
39. The sacred city of Lamaism.
41. The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
42. A quantity of no importance.
44. The compass point that is one point east of northeast.
51. An artistic form of nonverbal communication.
53. A resource.
55. (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
57. Drought-resistant Asiatic tree-like shrub bearing pleasantly acid small red edible fruits commonly used in sherbets.
62. An implement consisting of handle with a free swinging stick at the end.
63. The cry made by sheep.
65. Beyond what is natural.
66. A software system that facilitates the creation and maintenance and use of an electronic database.
67. Semi-evergreen South American tree with odd-pinnate leaves and golden yellow flowers cultivated as an ornamental.
69. A very light brown.
70. A socially awkward or tactless act.
71. Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electromagnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
72. The time during which someone's life continues.
74. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
75. The sixth day of the week.
80. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
81. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Experimenting with new concepts and putting aside the old tried and true create some new possibilities financially for you now. Financial gain and material well-being are among the brighter prospects now. Next week you will see the results but for now you plan. It is the unique and the original that catches and holds your interest. You are in an inventive, original and high-tech frame of mind. You are also beginning some new spending patterns-perhaps focused on high-tech interests: computer, phone, etc. Confident and goal-driven people and new adventures play a more important role in your life. This afternoon is a great time to relax and review the goals that you and a partner have planned. Plan a trip to a zoo, museum or theater soon.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This is a busy but successful day. You may gain through a legal maneuver or some dealings with legal types today-perhaps real estate. A co-worker may be hard to understand; have patience with others that have difficulty in communicating at this time. You may see a colleague today and spend quite a bit of time talking business-the results are good for all concerned. This afternoon you have provided some catch-up time for yourself, perhaps for tending to chores that were set aside from last week. There is still time this evening to visit with young people. You may be opening a door to a new stage of life soon. Look at the road in front of you as widening up-not as turning in another direction. There is good communication with the family.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Schedules or goals may need to be changed or readjusted and you will spend quite a bit of time today on the phone with co-workers regarding these schedules. You may want to readjust your expectations. Work slowdowns or stoppages may have been present last week and you study ways in which to improve progress. An undercurrent of restlessness makes you aware of spending too much time in working the solutions out, but somehow you will be pleased at the effort you and others have put into finding the right changes. Negotiations are being considered. Be aware of keeping a balance in your own day. You are well-disposed to others now-be careful in bending over backwards. Your creative side is strong. Allow yourself time to be creative.



Cancer (June 21-July 21)

You will find yourself more excited about completing a personal project this weekend. This is a time when you and your family can expect some sort of support or recognition, perhaps from the community. You may feel that you are connected with others; the lines of communication are open. Relaxing after all your efforts may find you discussing philosophical things with friends and acquaintances. You may find a relative or two that seems to need you more often, perhaps more dependent. By the end of next month, however, they may take back those little things that you have been doing for them and thankfully, gain some independence. Your own health is getting better and better, but you may still need to work on some relaxation techniques.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are learning to take control over your life. You are beginning to sense improvements in all areas of your life and this trend will continue throughout this whole year. You will be encouraged to make a positive difference in your public life, as well as your private life. All the changes and improvements you want to make will come into focus soon. You have learned much and have developed a positive use of your intuitive powers. You will be able to use what you have learned and be more aware of situations as they are developing around you. Today you will be challenged in the use of words. Writing, summing up a situation or requesting important equipment for your office is part of this use of words. You are successful in your efforts.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may appear commanding and assertive today because you want to complete a few unusual chores before company comes. Close attention to details will help you find a few needed repairs that you had not realized were needed. You are appreciated for your determination. Your sound judgment is good with regard to your finances. If you are artistic, you should allow your dreams and imagination to reach into areas that you have not explored. Regardless of your special talents, music and imagination can take you into levels of consciousness you have never reached before. This energy is safe and fun and will help you to relax. Another good activity is dancing or learning a new type of exercise. Whatever the case, a new type of entertainment is enjoyable.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Remember that you have the power to turn any crises around. Operating any business connected with animals that hunt or protect will make money for you. Providing guards, guides and protective escorts to others could be a source of income as well. You can begin research and investigate all new business ventures and guide others. This is a perfect time to evaluate where you have been in the business world and where you are going now. This is a time during which you may be able to break through and move ahead with your ambitions. You could receive unexpected help from someone older or from authority figures. A teacher may soon appear. This is one of your best days for love! Dreams contain important messages; keep notes.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You feel inspired in the workplace today. This is an easy calm day that should find everything running smoothly. Interaction with authority figures or older people may be in the forecast. Working with, rather than against, the flow of energies today should be easy to do. Community, club or social interests are the topic of conversation during the lunch hour. Think before you act with regard to financial matters today and remember that there is no gain in jumping into a really great-sounding deal without checking it out first. You may be sought after for your advice regarding very personal and emotional issues this evening. You will be able to handle questionable material. You are able to cut through the red tape and get at the basics: truth.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Progressive people and visionary groups or concepts begin to play a more important role in your life. You may be sought after as just the person for a particular volunteer job. You may be asked to weed through a mess and come up with a method or purpose. It is easy for you to swing from one job to another and keep your wits about you. This is the main reason you stay in demand. Resisting the urge to escape is commendable but you must find a way to relax at some point. A disciplined approach to work, health and others of life's essential routines is important. A teammate will be very helpful at this time. A surprise will come to you this evening from an admirer. This evening is for reading and nourishment. You cook this evening... Think green.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your professional future looks bright-so much so that co-workers want to know your secret. You may worry, excessively, about home life and domestic security if you are away from the home place for too long. Create an opportunity to talk with higher-ups and find a way to merge a new person in-to take some out-of-town trips. Compromise is the right attitude of the day. Do not worry about reuniting with friends; this will come soon enough. A love of music and an appreciation for the pleasures of the finer things in life are the signs of the cycle that has begun for you. This is aesthetic and artistic to be sure, but it is also practical and materialistic. There is an opportunity to increase your professional status, physical well-being and family connections.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You could blurt out the wrong thing today or be unable to convey what you really intend to say. Others may disagree with your ideas so do not push an issue just yet. Since you believe that protocol and convention should be exercised, you are well-mannered and gracious to all you come into contact with at this time. This puts you in the front of the class when it comes to showing visitors or new people around your town. Don't be too surprised to find yourself entertaining out-of-town guests tonight. You are appreciated for your ability to get things done. Your own happiness improves as you surround yourself with people who love, affirm and bring out the best in you. Find ways to show appreciation to family members tonight.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

At times, your day gets noisy. Let's face facts; if you are in a business where people must gain the attention of others, your day is noisy. No matter what type of business you are in, your day is noisy, much like a person working in a factory or an auction barn. Today... All is fun and easy to tolerate. You are learning to rise above others with clever ideas and antics that gain the attention of potential customers. This is the way you achieve, move forward and make your money. If you back away and think about the way you do things, you will take note that your life is fun, profitable, albeit a bit noisy. You feel involved in the struggle of competition, success and the conduct of fair play.

WORD SEARCH

Refrigerator

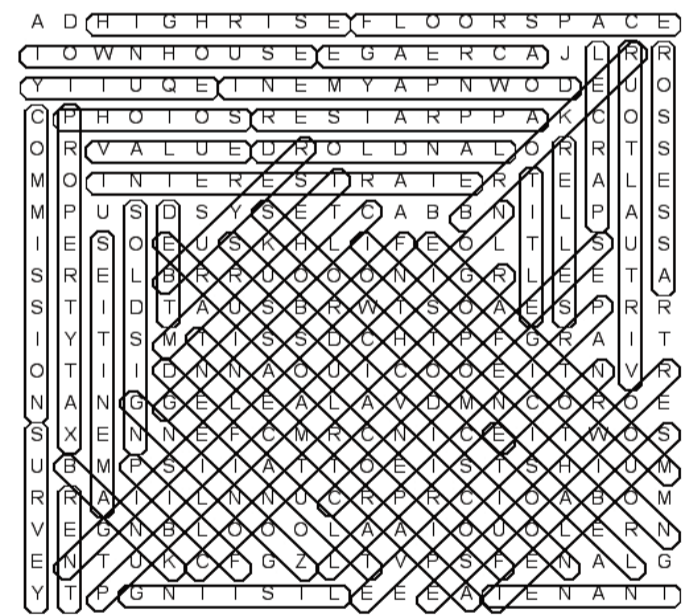
Find and circle all of the refrigerator items that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional item found in many refrigerators.



- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| APPLES | DRAWERS | LETTUCE | ORANGES |
| BACON | DRINKS | LIGHTBULB | PEAS |
| BANANAS | EGGS | MAGNETS | POULTRY |
| BREAD | GRAPES | MAPLE SYRUP | PRODUCE |
| BROCCOLI | ICE CUBES | MAYONNAISE | SHELVES |
| BUTTER | JAM | MEAT | SPINACH |
| CAKE | JUICES | MILK | STRAWBERRIES |
| CARROTS | KETCHUP | MUSTARD | WATER |
| CHEESE | LEFTOVERS | OLIVES | YOGURT |
| COLD | LEMONS | | |

Yesterday's Solution

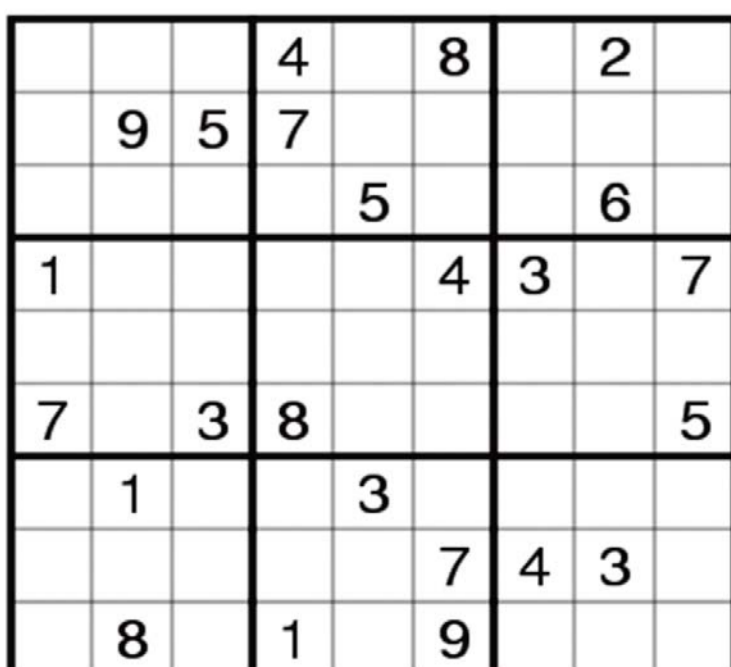
Real Estate 2



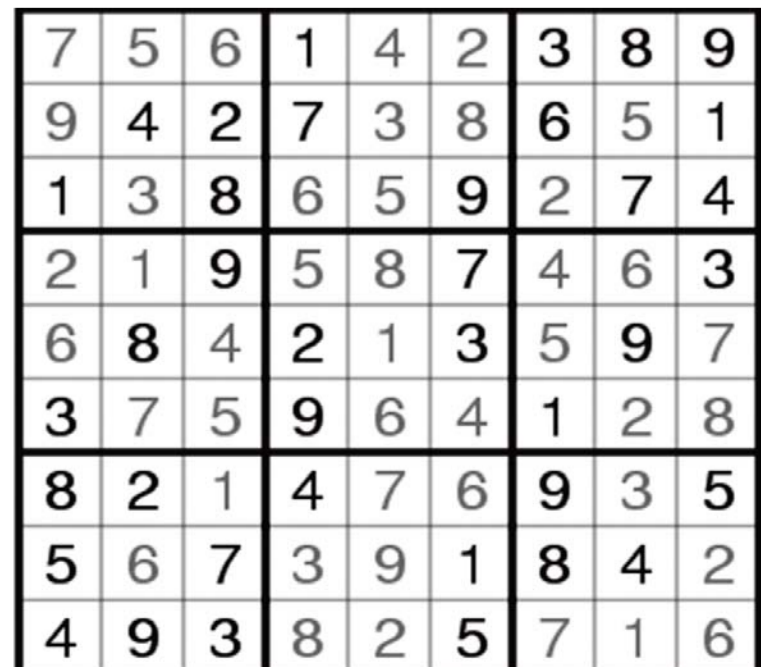
- | | | | |
|------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|
| ACREAGE | DEBT | LANDLORD | SELLER |
| AMENITIES | DEFAULT | LEASE | SHOW HOME |
| APARTMENT | DOWN PAYMENT | LISTING | SOLD SIGN |
| APPRAISER | EQUITY | MARKET | SUBDIVISION |
| ASSESSOR | EVICTION | MORTGAGE | SUBLET |
| BANK | FLIP | PARTCEL | SURVEY |
| BROKER | FLOOR SPACE | PHOTOS | TENANT |
| BUYER | FOR SALE SIGN | PRINCIPAL | TITLE |
| CLOSING | FORECLOSURE | PROPERTY TAX | TOWNHOUSE |
| COMMISSION | HIGH RISE | PUBLIC AUCTION | VALUE |
| CONDO FEES | INSPECTION | RENT | VIRTUAL TOUR |
| CONTRACTOR | INTEREST RATE | ROW HOUSE | ZONING |

The hidden message is: ADJUSTABLE-RATE MORTGAGE

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
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 6819 - 6817
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

DAY: Saturday

18/03/2017

Valid From 7 PM To 7 AM

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY NIGHT: Partly cloudy to cloudy with light to moderate freshening gradually south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with a chance for scattered rain.

BY DAY: Clouds will increase gradually with light variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings			
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART 18/03/2017 0000 UTC			
KUWAIT CITY	27 °C	17 °C				
KUWAIT AIRPORT	26 °C	11 °C				
ABDALY	26 °C	10 °C				
BUBYAN	26 °C	16 °C				
JAHRA	26 °C	14 °C				
FAILAKA ISLAND	25 °C	14 °C				
SALMIYAH	23 °C	18 °C				
AHMADI	23 °C	18 °C				
NUWAISIB	23 °C	13 °C				
WAFRA	27 °C	11 °C				
SALMY	24 °C	12 °C				

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Sunday	03/19	Unstable + Thunder rain + dust	24 °C	13 °C	E-SE	25 - 60 km/h
Monday	03/20	M.sunny + raising dust over open areas	26 °C	14 °C	NW	15 - 40 km/h
Tuesday	03/21	Sunny	27 °C	12 °C	VRB-SE	06 - 28 km/h
Wednesday	03/22	Partly cloudy	27 °C	11 °C	NW	10 - 30 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:36
Sunrise	05:55
Zuhr	11:56
Asr	15:23
Sunset	17:58
Isha	19:15

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	27 °C
MIN. Temp.	13 °C
MAX. RH	62 %
MIN. RH	12 %
MAX. Wind	N 53 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	0 mm

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antigua	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		



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-Mikhaezem 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 Maarroof 25713514 Dr. Pradip Gupare 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 Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888 Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924 Physiotherapists & VD Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291 Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees 22666288 Rheumatologists: Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060 Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah 25722290 Internist, Chest & Heart DR. Mohammed Akkad 24555050 Ext 210 Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital 25339667 Consultant Cardiologist Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC 2611555-2622555 Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123
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Psychologists /Psychotherapists

Soor Center
Tel: 2290-1677
Fax: 2290 1688

info@soorcenter.com
www.soorcenter.com

Kaizen center
25716707

Noor Clinic
23845955

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677
Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677

Goldwyn to tackle real-life Scandal in Watergate movie

Thirty-five years ago on Monday, Richard Nixon's re-election campaign approved plans to bug Democratic Party offices at the Watergate complex, setting in motion the most notorious political scandal in US history. Five members of the covert "White House Plumbers" task-force were arrested six weeks later burglarizing the building in Washington, and FBI agents established that the break-in stemmed from a sabotage campaign on behalf of Nixon.

Such was the resonance of the "Watergate" affair-which ultimately led to Nixon's downfall-that most significant scandals since have been appended with the suffix "gate." The ensuing political shockwaves reverberated through the decades, spawning more than a dozen movies including "Nixon" (1995), "Frost/Nixon" (2008) and first and most notably "All the President's Men" (1976).

Currently in post-production, "Felt" is the first attempt to tell the story uniquely from the viewpoint of FBI agent Mark Felt, unveiled years later as "Deep Throat," the anonymous source for reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein during their investigation into the scandal. Starring Liam Neeson in the title role, the movie also features Tony Goldwyn-President Fitzgerald Grant III from ABC's political show "Scandal"-as well as Diane Lane ("Trumbo," "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice").

Unfairly pilloried

"It's a really great script, and Liam Neeson is going to be so great in it. It's got a wonderful cast," Goldwyn, 56, said. The project, first announced 11 years ago and finally filmed in May and June, is directed by Peter Landesman, an author and foreign correspondent turned filmmaker. It is being co-produced by Hollywood veteran Ridley Scott, his second collaboration with Landesman following "Concussion" (2015), which starred Will Smith.

Felt was a longtime deputy to FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover and was passed over to take over the bureau when its founding director died in May 1972. The true identity of Woodward and Bernstein's source remained an enduring mystery and Washington's best-kept secret until the special agent, by then in his 90s-unmasked himself to Vanity Fair magazine in 2005. "I'm the guy they call Deep Throat," Felt, who died three years later, famously told family members.

Felt and his second-in-command, Ed Miller, were convicted in 1980 of having "conspired to injure and oppress the citizens of the United States" over Watergate, although both were eventually pardoned by Ronald Reagan. "After Watergate, they pilloried Felt. It's just such a weird thing. He was unfairly targeted but ultimately pardoned. He was a guy with a long, loyal career. When I read about it, it was a very unfair thing," Goldwyn said.

Chaos

The movie, due out next year, will reaffirm Goldwyn's political chops after five years in "Scandal" and high profile real-life appearances on the campaign trail for Hillary Clinton in last year's presidential election. He said his character Fitz would find the chaos of President Donald Trump's first 50 days-the nationwide protests, the halted travel bans and the persistent stories about links to Russia-"deeply disturbing."

"I'm horrified by it and I think Fitz would be too. I'm a Democrat and Fitz is a Republican but Fitz is about as moderate a Republican as you could ever create," he said. Next up for Goldwyn, who found fame came with a starring role opposite Patrick Swayze as the treacherous Carl Bruner in "Ghost" (1990), is horror movie "The Belko Experiment," which hits theaters Friday.

Greg McLean's violent thriller casts the actor as Barry Norris, a corporate executive who turns to mass murder when his office block becomes the grim venue for a "kill or be killed" social experiment. "I love playing a diversity of characters-the more complex, multi-faceted characters are what I really love about the job," Goldwyn said. "That's why I really love playing Fitz, because he's such a person who has contrast so I get to do all kinds of different things." — AFP



Goldwyn

The Walking Dead promises another 100 episodes

Ratings juggernaut "The Walking Dead" revealed on Friday fans can expect to see its increasingly rancid zombies shambling across their screens for years to come. The AMC show, the most successful basic cable TV series in history, tells the story of sheriff's deputy Rick Grimes, who leads his son Carl and an ever-growing band of survivors in a zombie apocalypse. Showrunner Scott Gimple reminded fans on the opening night of Hollywood's annual PaleyFest television festival that October's season eight opener would be the 100th episode.



"The first episode, I think, is less about that we've reached 100 episodes; it's more about setting up the next 100 episodes," Gimple said. Viewers in 125 countries will be able to witness the milestone achievement for AMC, which has aired the series

since its premiere on October 31, 2010 and distributes it internationally via a deal with Fox. Joining Gimple and his team of executive producers were 11 of the show's stars, including Andrew Lincoln-who plays Rick-fan favorites Melissa McBride and Lauren Cohan and newcomer Tom Payne.

The focus of season six was the debut of arch-nemesis Negan, who shocked fans as he beat one of the best-loved characters to death with his barbed-wire-covered baseball bat, "Lucille." In one of the most talked-about cliffhangers in cable TV history, viewers were not shown who had died and were also made to wait until the new, current season to discover that a second beloved main character had been slain.

Epic tale

"It was a pretty miserable day at the office," Lincoln said of losing two major cast mates at once as part of a grim opening half of season seven. Gimple hinted that the current run, which has three episodes left, would be nowhere near as open-ended as the notorious cliffhanger, which thrilled many but upset a legion of fans who took to social media to complain that they had been manipulated. "The end of the season is very much the end of a chapter," he said, promising the beginning of a "gigantic, epic tale" in October.

Fans at Hollywood's Dolby Theatre-the venue for the Oscars-were treated to preview footage of the main characters sharpening their weapons in preparation for a final showdown with Negan, played by Jeffrey Dean Morgan. And Lincoln provoked gales of laughter with his version of how the show might finally end, with Rick jumping off a bus and performing a series of kung fu moves on a horde of zombies to "earn my action figure"-only to be bitten.

"I'm just waiting to die and I patch up and a day passes... and I don't die. And the whole show is: 'Holy shit, maybe I'm the cure!'" he suggested as delighted fans applauded. "There's a high shot and you see a herd of zombies coming and Rick follows the tracks to go see Carl and the herd walking towards him just separates and he walks through it!" — AFP

A dazzling array of new experiences every day

Jumbo Travel brings you Disneyland Paris' 25th anniversary celebrations

Jumbo Travel in coordination with the Disneyland Paris delegation conducted a roadshow on the 6th of March, 2017 at The Sheraton Hotel Kuwait for travel agents and media showcasing Disney's 25th Anniversary celebrations along with the newest portfolio of attractions, shows and products this year.

It is almost 25 years since Disneyland Park opened just outside Paris. To celebrate this special event, Mickey and Friends are looking further ahead and becoming explorers of the future in an extraordinary, brand new Parade. Their mission: to dazzle guests. Speaking of exploration, the galaxy far, far away is finally within our reach with two new special Star Wars rides: Star Tours: The Adventures Continue and Star Wars Hyperspace Mountain: Rebel Mission. Immersive experience guaranteed.

The festivities continue with two new daytime shows which take place near Sleeping Beauty Castle. As a stunning night-time finale, Disneyland Park also introduces the all-new Disney Illuminations, featuring state-of-the-art technology. Spotlight on the new experiences for the 25th Anniversary of Disneyland Paris! "We simplify access to Disney products for consumers and travel agents alike in Kuwait, while affirming our commitment to promote these spectacular family themed Disney destinations all through a hassle-free travel experience," said Marie-Anne Benedetti, Managing Director at Jumbo Travel and Co.

"Take advantage of up to 30 percent Off + Free Half Board offer valid for purchase until 28th March 2017 and 25 percent Off + Free Half Board offer valid for purchase until 26th April 2016. We urge families to plan ahead and book now for the summer season to enjoy up to six new shows and events; and booking early helps avoid missing out due to massive demand," said Abdullah Y Shamsaldeen, Marketing Manager at Jumbo Travel. In 2017, Disneyland Paris' 25th Anniversary is set to be jam packed with new shows and events taking place throughout the year, including:

Star Tours: The Adventures Continue

Launched at the opening of Disneyland Park in 1992, Star Tours soon established itself as a cult ride. 25 years later, it's back with a new experience, new destinations, a new pilot, new characters and new 3D technology. Introducing Star Tours: The Adventures Continue! Prepare for lift-off on an all-new, action-packed, 3D intergalactic voyage... it's sure to be epic. Thanks to a multitude of new scenes and more than 70 possible mission combinations, guests will never know where the Force might take them. Every ride will offer unique surprises with journeys through the planet Jakku, Naboo, Hoth, Tatooine and more, perhaps even via the Death Star. Guests will travel through the galaxy with a new pilot, C-3PO, meeting heroes they have never encountered until now. Watch out for Darth Vader... Each scenario, journey and unexpected development is random to ensure that guests enjoy an original experience every time and fully immerse themselves in the universe of the Star Wars films. Episodes I to VII inclusive.

Meet the Dark Side of the Force

Good news! Disneyland Paris guests will finally get the chance to meet the formidable Darth Vader every day. Head to the new dedicated area near the Star Tours: The Adventures Continue ride for a private meet and greet. A tip for those who dare to make an appearance? Don't let your guard down when taking photos.

Star Wars Hyperspace Mountain

In spring 2017, Star Wars will take over a legendary space-themed ride. Space Mountain will become Star Wars Hyperspace Mountain for a totally unique experience. In a brand new environment inspired by the Star Wars Universe, guests can join the famous Rebel Alliance and become pilots on a sensational mission. They will travel through the Star Wars galaxy at intense speed, to the epic soundtrack of the saga. The experience will also have amazing visuals with breath-taking special effects. Experience a unique and exciting voyage through the Star Wars universe and enjoy the thrill of evading TIE fighters and an intimidating Star Destroyer.

Disney Stars on Parade

Another exciting journey awaits guests in the brand new Disney Parade. With dizzying new floats, new music, a plethora of Disney Stars and new costumes, Disney Stars on Parade will dazzle guests of all ages. In Disney Stars on Parade, we follow Mickey and Friends on a real journey of discovery to the land of imagination, divided into eight chapters. Mickey, Minnie, Donald Duck, Goofy and Chip and Dale are explorers of the future... with a steampunk-inspired futuristic look. The heroes of Toy Story are close behind, ready to take guests "to infinity and beyond!" Roar along with Simba to the problem-free Philosophy, "Hakuna Matata!" Similarly, Baloo and Mowgli remind us that all it takes to be happy are "the bare necessities", to the sound of percussion that conjures up a sense of adventure and a jungle atmosphere. Head for Neverland with

Peter Pan and the Lost Boys! The underwater world is also celebrated with Nemo, Marlin and Dory. Listen out for the roar of Maleficent's majestic dragon form, which challenges Prince Phillip and actually breathes fire. Fortunately, the romance of the Disney Princesses always triumphs over evil. The final chapter of this world of wonder ends as the book closes with an icy blast, thanks to the much-loved heroines of Frozen.

Mickey presents "Happy Anniversary Disneyland Paris"

The Disney Stars invite guests to gather in front of the stage at Sleeping Beauty Castle for a huge anniversary celebration, every day of the year. From all over the park, they join together in step until the arrival of everyone's favorite mouse. To mark this exceptional anniversary, Mickey makes a grand entrance dressed in his smartest outfit: a blue and silver dinner jacket in the celebratory colors. 1, 2, 3, 4, it's time to sing together: "Happy Anniversary Disneyland Paris!"

The Starlit Princess Waltz

With a sprinkle of fairy dust, Tinker Bell opens the festivities. Aurora wants to invite the other Disney Princesses to the ball: Ariel, Belle, Snow White, Cinderella, Jasmine, Rapunzel and Tiana. Each princess makes her entrance in a magnificent ball gown, specially created for the 25th Anniversary, to the sound of a romantic fanfare. Their message: to remind the

locations are part of a new nine-night itinerary on the Disney Wonder. Departing from Vancouver, British Columbia, on July 24, 2017, this itinerary also sails to Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway and Tracy Arm Fjord. Icy Strait Point offers a variety of Alaska nature adventures, including a zip line attraction that is one of the longest and highest zip lines in the world. Nearby, Glacier Bay National Park is a spectacular highlight of Alaska's Inside Passage and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Another highlight of this cruise is seeing Hubbard Glacier, the largest and most active tidewater glacier in North America. Displaying extraordinary blue hues and immense beauty, this spectacular glacier is more than six miles wide where it meets the ocean.

A new seven-night Alaska sailing from Vancouver, departing July 17, 2017, includes a call on Icy Strait Point, in addition to Tracy Arm, Skagway, Juneau and Ketchikan. On Aug. 2, 2017, the Disney Wonder will sail its first five-night Alaska cruise from Vancouver to Tracy Arm and Ketchikan.

New Europe destinations

For the first time, Disney Cruise Line will visit Amsterdam, Netherlands, known for its elaborate canal system, tulip fields, windmills and world-class museums housing works by Rembrandt, Vermeer and Van Gogh. On May 13, 2017, the Disney Magic embarks on a 15-night transatlantic crossing from Port Canaveral, Florida, to Copenhagen, with a stop in



audience that every little girl, regardless of her age or background, is a Princess. This show is enhanced by the spectacular fountains in front of Sleeping Beauty Castle.

Disney Illuminations

As night falls, it is time for the final spectacular new experience: Disney Illuminations. This all-new show, featuring state-of-the-art technology, incorporates sound, lights, projections, fountains and breathtaking pyrotechnic effects. Every night, against the backdrop of the Castle, Mickey takes us on a captivating journey, following in the footsteps of the heroes of animated masterpieces. He transports the audience to a dimension where the stories of The Little Mermaid, Finding Nemo and Frozen come to life, with the projection of "live action" film images for the very first time.

Guests will witness an incredible naval battle featuring the Black Pearl, the legendary ship of Jack Sparrow. Finally, stars are on the agenda, with a sequence of "live action images" which will delight all Star Wars fans. Featuring the Millennium Falcon, TIE Fighters and Stormtroopers... The Force is strong with Disney Illuminations. From 26 March 2017, come and enjoy the dazzling new experiences to mark the 25th Anniversary of Disneyland Paris.

Disney Cruise Line unveils new itineraries

In 2017, Disney Cruise Line will sail on new itineraries and to new ports, including first-time visits to new destinations in Alaska and Europe. This summer, Disney Cruise Line also returns to Norway, the British Isles, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean and the Bahamas.

New Alaska itinerary

For the first time, Disney Cruise Line will take guests to Alaska's Icy Strait Point and Hubbard Glacier. These dramatic

Amsterdam along the way. This itinerary also includes a call on Portland, England - another first-time port for Disney Cruise Line.

Portland is a short distance from Stonehenge, the prehistoric ring of standing stones monument that is one of the Seven Wonders of the Medieval World. A visit to Amsterdam also will be part of a 10-night northern Europe itinerary that departs June 18, 2017, from Copenhagen, Denmark, to Dover, England. Other ports on this sailing include Warnemunde (Berlin), Germany; Stockholm, Sweden; Helsinki, Finland; St. Petersburg, Russia; and Tallinn, Estonia. The grand tour of Europe continues throughout the summer with limited engagements in the Baltic, Norwegian fjords, Iceland, British Isles and the Mediterranean.

New Disney Fantasy itineraries: Southern Caribbean

For the first time, the Disney Fantasy will sail from Port Canaveral on longer itineraries - new 10- and 11-night cruises to the southern Caribbean. On June 17, 2017, a new 11-night itinerary will visit Aruba, Barbados, Martinique, St. Kitts, Tortola and Disney's private island, Castaway Cay. On June 28, 2017, a new 10-night itinerary will call on Aruba, Curacao, St. Kitts, Tortola and Castaway Cay.

More castaway cay

Castaway Cay, Disney's private island in the Bahamas, is consistently rated a top port-of-call by Disney Cruise Line guests. To give guests more time at this island paradise, select Disney Dream sailings from Port Canaveral will include two stops at Castaway Cay. Special five-night sailings, departing June 2, 11, 16, 25, 30 and July 9, 2017, will call on Castaway Cay twice and include a stop in Nassau, Bahamas. Special four-night sailings, departing June 7, 21 and July 5, 2017, will visit Castaway Cay twice, also with a stop in Nassau.



Snow covers a path as flower buds are seen on a cherry tree at Tidal Basin due to a snowstorm in Washington, DC.

Half of Washington's cherry blossoms dead after cold snap

This week's bitter cold snap killed about half of Washington's beloved cherry blossoms, and the survivors are now expected to peak at the end of next week, the National Parks Service said Friday. Freezing temperatures that had abruptly followed unseasonably warm weather had the nation's capital fearful for its more than

3,000 prized Japanese cherry trees, a major tourist draw. The mercury dip to about 23 degrees Fahrenheit "killed virtually all of the blossoms that had reached 'puffy white'—the late stages of the bloom cycle—NPS spokesman Mike Litterst said in a statement.

He had told AFP earlier this week that the damage would begin when the temperature dropped to about 27 degrees Fahrenheit. Litterst said the other half of the cherry blossoms were at earlier stages in the bloom process, and just five percent of those appeared to be damaged. "Peak bloom"—the time when 70 percent of the Yoshino trees are in full flower—around Washington's Tidal Basin is now difficult to predict because the death of so many blossoms has distorted NPS models.

But using historic data and current forecasts, horticulturists are anticipating the peak to come "sometime next weekend." The NPS had been expecting peak bloom to fall between March 19 and March 22. Hundreds of thousands of people come to the US capital to see the clouds of pink flowers each year. The National Cherry Blossom Festival is a top tourist draw, bringing in tens of millions of dollars. The festival commemorates the 1912 gift of roughly 3,000 cherry trees to Washington by the mayor of Tokyo, as a symbol of US-Japanese friendship. — AFP



Flower buds on a cherry tree at Tidal Basin are wrapped with ice due to a snowstorm in Washington, DC. — AFP photos



Employees of the National Park Service shovel snow as they clear up a path under early blossom cherry trees at Tidal Basin in Washington, DC.

Afghan Star: Rap, stilettos and a musical revolution

Smoky-eyed Zulala Hashemi, standing tall in four-inch gold heels, wants to sing for women. The 18-year-old has become the first girl to reach the final of popular television music talent show Afghan Star. Hashemi, a native of eastern Jalalabad—a stronghold of Taliban and Islamic State insurgents—will face off against the first rapper of the competition in Monday's final. Their clash will be one of the most trailblazing in the popular show's 12-year history. Quietly rooting for Zulala is Aryana Saeed, one of the judges and an indefatigable women's rights activist. Saeed, who was born in Kabul but usually lives in London, is likened widely to American reality star Kim Kardashian and is despised by religious conservatives for her figure-hugging clothes. Zulala and Saeed hug in a studio at local television station Tolo, their eyelashes fluttering.

"I have never hidden my support as women have little chance in this country," Saeed told AFP. "For the first time people have voted for a girl—and one who comes from a very conservative province, a land of Islamic State zealots." Afghan Star, Tolo's adaptation of

"American Idol", has been a huge hit in conservative Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban regime that banned music and cinema.

But since its launch in 2005, it has also seen a backlash from mullahs for the way it features unveiled women singing and dancing. A woman came in third place in 2008, and since then no female singer has gone beyond 7th or 8th position, said Omid Nezami, the show's presenter and a former contestant.

Escaping into music

Aside from the backing of the public, Zulala can count on support from her mother Merem Hashemi, a smiling woman who designed and hand-stitched all her daughter's on-stage costumes. "Even if I do not win, I will be a singer," says Zulala in her deep voice, determination in her almond-shaped eyes. "I wear traditional dresses but my songs follow the path of Aryana. I want to convey a message to Afghan women: they must claim their rights and explore their talents," she added.

Massood Sanjer, the head of Tolo TV, said it was nothing short of revolutionary that a girl from conservative Jalalabad had reached the finals. "This is exactly what this country needs right now," he enthused, alluding to growing insecurity. Tolo's maze of production sets lie behind a thick steel door, manned by armed guards and barricaded against car bombs and gunfire. The TV station has stopped outdoor recordings owing to security concerns. The Afghan capital is regularly hit with insurgent gun and bomb attacks. Earlier this month, a group of gunmen stormed Afghanistan's largest military hospital in Kabul, killing more than 100 people, according to multiple surviving staff.

Claim your rights!

Competing against Zulala is Sayed Jamal Mubarez, a barber and a young rapper from northern Mazar-i-Sharif city. Dressed in baggy pants, a cap and red sneakers, Mubarez shut down his hair salon for three months to participate in the show, borrowing \$8 from his neighbors for the bus ride to Kabul. At 23, he is the breadwinner of his family and is keenly eyeing the Afghan Star prize—a motorcycle and a trip to Kazakhstan. "Jamal has been in the lead since the beginning," said Omid.

However, his chances are weak if the voting is along ethnic lines in the deeply divided country. Zulala is from the dominant Pashtun majority, whereas Mubarez is a Hazara, a long persecuted minority.

"Every show I encourage the audience to vote for talent, not according to ethnicity," Omid said. In the semi-finals, Aryana Saeed took to the stage, intoning a new song dedicated to Farkhunda and Rukhshana—two Afghan women who were beaten to death and became a symbol of endemic violence against women.

"Your status is that of half a man / But you are punished twice as much (...) Arise and shout / Raise your sleeves / Claim your rights / You can do it!" The final of the show will be live on Monday, on the eve of the Afghan New Year. — AFP



In this photograph, Afghan Aryana Saeed (L) a judge of the television music competition "Afghan Star" poses with young competitor Zulala Hashemi in Kabul.



In this photograph, young Afghan singer Zulala Hashemi, center, performs alongside competitors Sayed Jamal Mubarez, left, and Babak Mohammadi, right, during the television music competition Afghan Star in Kabul.



In this photograph, judges of the television music competition Afghan Star (L/R) Obaid Juenda, Aryana Saeed, Saida Gul Mina and Qais Ulfat take part in the show in Kabul. — AFP photos



In this photograph, young Afghan singer Zulala Hashemi, right, stands alongside competitor Sayed Jamal Mubarez as they perform during the television music competition "Afghan Star" in Kabul.



In this photograph, Afghan Aryana Saeed, a judge of the television music competition Afghan Star sings in Kabul.

FEATURE



Participants take part in St. Patrick's Day parade on the streets of Dublin. — AP photos



Irish President Michael D. Higgins, right, and his wife Sabina applaud during the St. Patrick's Day parade in Dublin, Ireland.

Mythic creatures dance through Dublin on St. Patrick's Day

Performers dressed as colorful creatures from Irish myth and legend danced Friday down the chilly streets of Dublin as Ireland commemorated its national saint in a St. Patrick's Day parade witnessed by hundreds of thousands. Throngs of tourists and Dubliners, many of them donning leprechaun costumes, braved gusty winds to pack the route for the parade as it traveled down O'Connell Street across the River Liffey and on to St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Dublin's parade, by far the largest of dozens nationwide, forms the centerpiece of a four-day festival that marks the start of Ireland's tourist season. Irish President Michael D. Higgins and his wife, Sabina, and other dignitaries watched the hour-long procession from a bandstand. The spectacle was heavy on artistic flair and worldwide connections, featuring marching bands from Germany, France, Switzerland, the Bahamas and the US states of Illinois, Indiana, Oregon and Washington. Firefighters from Berkeley, California, and Westchester, New York, also marched.

Before the parade, Higgins took part in a Roman Catholic service during which sprigs of shamrock were blessed. In his holiday address, the president noted that St. Patrick's Day was celebrated worldwide because the Irish have been emigrating in great volumes for centuries. This globe-trotting tradition represented "a constant feature of the Irish experience, defining us as a people," he said.

This week, Prime Minister Enda Kenny and 27 government ministers — virtually the entire government — left Ireland to promote the country's business, arts and culture at more than 100 events in 27 nations. On Thursday, Kenny met US President Donald Trump at the White House, continuing a holiday tradition that dates back to the Eisenhower administration.

Since 2010, Ireland tourism boosters have worked with governments worldwide to floodlight famous landmarks in green each March 17. The Tourism Ireland agency said Friday that this year's "Global Greening" program transformed a record 275 sites in 44 countries, including Niagara Falls, the Great Wall of China, the Colosseum in Rome, the Manneken Pis statue in Brussels, and the Christ the Redeemer statue overlooking Rio de Janeiro. — AP



An artistic team from the Irish county of Wexford carries a massive rainbow tapestry in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Dublin, Ireland.



Spectators watch as revelers march up Fifth Avenue during the St. Patrick's Day Parade, in New York.



Bagpipers march up Fifth Avenue during the St. Patrick's Day Parade, in New York.



Members of marching band march up Fifth Avenue during the St. Patrick's Day Parade, in New York.



Saint Patrick as portrayed by Irish actor Johnny Murphy clowns around with children watching the St. Patrick's Day parade in Dublin, Ireland.



Models present creations by Amapo during the Sao Paulo Fashion week in Sao Paulo, Brazil. — AFP photos



Models present creations by LAB during the Sao Paulo Fashion Week in Sao Paulo, Brazil.



Models present creations by Jardin during the Sao Paulo Fashion Week in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Lifestyle

SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2017

The Walking Dead promises another 100 episodes

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Models present creations by Amapo during the Sao Paulo Fashion Week in Sao Paulo, Brazil. — AFP

Fashion renaissance: From slick city to hip Hong Kong

Soulless supermalls housing luxury labels, traditional suit tailors, and markets full of cheap designer knock-offs, Hong Kong's flaccid fashion scene has long struggled to compete with the sartorial cool of Tokyo's Harajuku, or the street style of Hongdae in Seoul. But a new generation of independent designers in Hong Kong is changing all that with creations that are putting the city on the international fashion map.

Eschewing advertising and strap lines for Instagram and hashtags, many choose influencers over models, and pop-up events instead of bricks-and-mortar stores, collectively channeling the "Hip Hong Kong" brand-at home and abroad. "Social media is the cornerstone to success as a start-up, brands now have the opportunity of being stocked simply based on their Instagram appeal," says Jasmine Smith, founder of lingerie firm Raven + Rose, pointing to the fact she had a wait list by the time she launched her first collection in the city fuelled by online interest in her images and styling.

Smith has since secured a deal with the Four Seasons, where her designs sit next to international giant La Perla. Her local popularity has helped her springboard internationally: her pieces have been worn by Madonna's backing dancers, American grunge star Alana, and featured on Asia's Next Top Model.

Tired of big brands

"Style pockets" she says are now dotted around the city-from trendy SoHo on Hong Kong island to gritty Kwun Tong and arty Sham Shui Po in Kowloon, these are hotspots where the city's style mavens and

upcoming local designers reign supreme. "What sets Raven + Rose apart is its recognition for those that flirt on the outskirts of what is mainstream," adds Smith. Her #OwnYourBody campaign, which features a range of ordinary women in Hong Kong in her designs, has been shared by thousands.

She is not alone in transforming a loyal local following into international interest. Anais Mak's Jourden brand started as a single line collection in Hong Kong, before being hailed in Vogue and is now stocked at Barneys in the US and Isetan in Tokyo. Last month Polly Ho of Loom Loop won acclaim for her show at New York Fashion Week, while Fiona Lau and Kain Picken of Ffixxed Studios enjoyed similar success in Paris.

Little more than two years after it launched in Hong Kong, start-up retailer Grana secured millions from Alibaba's entrepreneurs' fund. It now ships to 11 countries, with plans to expand across Asia. Ho says: "In the past few years I feel young people are setting up their own brands again. Maybe in response to too much uniform fast fashion." Luke Grana agrees, suggesting people are tiring of what is on offer from the big brands at both ends of the spectrum. "We're already beginning to see luxury fashion brands lowering their prices in Hong Kong due to the decline in sales reported over the last six months.

Fast fashion brands with lower quality apparel are (also) experiencing a drop in sales," Grana adds. The government too is keen to capitalise on renewed interest in Hong Kong's fashion scene, allocating around HK\$500 million (\$65 million) to support local talent in the 2016-2017 budget. The Trade

Development Council (HKTDC) has launched a number of initiatives to showcase emerging brands internationally, collaborating with department stores and staging fashion events in key cities.

"We've noticed lately that the younger generations of fashion designers are rapidly expanding their brands and networks. Many of these talented designers have already built their names locally and are ready to take the next step," says Rebecca Tse of the HKTDC. Last November the body organized for up and coming Hong Kong designers to showcase their collections at key Tokyo department stores, as well as for a special fashion week show in the city, and in Copenhagen, and New York.

Tse admits it is a mutually beneficial arrangement. "The international showcases are a chance to show off the hip Hong Kong brand. Showcasing local talented designers is also a great way to show off the city as a fashion metropolis," she explains.

Creative opportunities

The combination of a rising localism among the city's youth, and a renewed global interest in Hong Kong's cultural scene-both inspired by the 2014 Umbrella Revolution protests against Beijing-may also have helped the city's independent fashion scene. "I think it definitely galvanized certain ideas around the city's identity for a lot of people and this has a really positive flow-on to the creative scenes," says Picken of Ffixxed Studios. "I think part of the (revival) is that many consumers just want something new and unique. Especially young people who want clothes that speak to them and their lifestyle," he adds.



In this picture, Jasmine Smith, founder of lingerie firm Raven + Rose, prepares a presentation box for a customer, during a portrait session at her workspace in Hong Kong.

The city's youth are also turning more to the arts-including homegrown fashion-to express their individuality. Cristina Kountiou, a professor at Hong Kong's prestigious Savannah College of Art and Design, says there has been a surge in interest in the school's fashion programs. She adds: "Now our fashion design students often don't want to leave Hong Kong, choosing to stay on after graduation to make the most of creative opportunities that are growing in the city." — AFP



In this picture, a staff member of start-up retailer Grana adjusts the clothes display as customers (back right) browse in one of their shops in Hong Kong. — AFP photos