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Nobel winner wants Saleh's men banned from power



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DOW JONES	QE	NYMEX
12,710.60	8,461.77	98.46
+86.58	-93.45	-1.93
+0.69%	-1.09%	-1.92%

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In brief

QATAR | Statement
Council blasts Israeli action
Qatar's Advisory (Shura) Council has strongly condemned the Israeli authorities' capture of Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) speaker Aziz Dweik and deputy Khalid Tafish. In a statement yesterday, the council described the action as "shameless, immoral, irresponsible" and "contravened all international norms and conventions". The council demanded the immediate release of both the officials. The statement said the council was shocked at the news of the arrest, "particularly as both Dweik and Tafish did not commit any crime".

AMERICA | Internet
Congress puts brakes on anti-piracy bills
US lawmakers stopped anti-piracy legislation in its tracks yesterday, delivering a stunning win for Internet companies that staged an unprecedented online protest this week to kill the previously fast-moving bills. Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid said he would postpone a critical vote that had been scheduled for January 24 "in light of recent events". Lamar Smith, the Republican chairman of the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee, followed suit, saying his panel would delay action on similar legislation until there is wider agreement on the issue. **Page 7**

ARAB WORLD | Music
Composer sets tune for the 'Arab Awakening'
The Oscar-winning composer of movie scores such as *Chariots of Fire* and *Blade Runner* has devised a tune for the "Arab Awakening". The work by Vangelis will be unveiled in an interview with Al Jazeera to be aired today. "It is the first opportunity the public will have had for decades to see the world's most celebrated composer of electronic music speak about his work," an Al Jazeera release said yesterday.

AFRICA | Terror
Explosions rock Nigerian city
At least six people were killed in a string of bomb blasts yesterday in Nigeria's second city Kano and the authorities imposed a curfew across the city, which has been plagued by an insurgency led by the Boko Haram sect. Smoke billowed from the police headquarters for the north in Kano after one blast blew out its windows, collapsed its roof and triggered a blaze that firefighters struggled to control. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the apparently co-ordinated attacks. **Page 12**

New tools to unearth Zubarah secrets

By Bonnie James
Deputy News Editor

Al Zubarah Archaeological Site, hopefully going to place Qatar for the first time on the Unesco World Heritage List, is being explored with cutting-edge technology to seek unprecedented insights from the past.

Researchers from the University of Copenhagen, commissioned by the Qatar Museums Authority (QMA), are conducting geophysical survey and 3D laser scanning alongside ongoing excavations to learn more about the abandoned town on the northwest coast.

Specialist equipment and experts have been brought in from Germany to build upon the success of three previous seasons of excavations at the site, the Gulf's most complete and well-preserved pearl trading and diving town of the 18th-19th centuries.

Experts from Posselt & Zickgraf Prospektionen GbR, a company specialising in archaeological geophysics, have for the first time begun to use magnetometers and ground penetrating radar.

"These techniques enable us to detect differences in the earth's magnetic field that relate to archaeological features and buildings hidden beneath the ground," Prof Alan Walmsley, director of the archaeological excavations at Al Zubarah, told Gulf Times during a site visit.

If it is successful, the plan is to roll it out across the site and other sites in northern Qatar. The techniques allow covering large areas of ground in a relatively short period of time and create a map of archaeological features beneath the ground.

"In the last two days the geophysics team has had some very encouraging results from Qal'at Murair, which used to be the source of freshwater supply to Al Zubarah, where we can now see buried walls and buildings at this large, vanished site," Prof Walmsley said.

The team has already discovered interesting signatures, including a regular alignment of features along the coastline of Al Zubarah that need to be explored further.

Another state-of-the-art technology in use at Al Zubarah this season is 3D laser scanning.

The specialist team from the HafenCity University Hamburg has been called in to record the archaeological remains with high-precision equipment.

"This technology enables us to create very accurate virtual 3D models of buildings, walls and other archaeological features," stated Prof Ingolf Thuesen, director of conservation work at Al Zubarah.

"We use this technique to both record walls and buildings before they undergo conservation and also to monitor the state of preservation across the site," he explained.

Traditionally, archaeologists had to rely only on pencil drawings and photographs to record walls. Although these techniques are still in use, they are being increasingly supplemented by 3D laser scanning and other digital techniques.

Courtyard houses, a warehouse and a palatial building have been excavated in Al Zubarah.

"The excavations continue to turn up a stunning collection of artefacts and some of the new buildings we have excavated this season gives us new ideas of the history and development of Al Zubarah," Prof Walmsley revealed.

The QMA and University of Copenhagen team is continuing excavations at Freiha, also a very important site 3km north of Al Zubarah.

"At Freiha, the excavations will be completed by the end of 2012 season and conservation work at a mosque discovered at the site will begin in due course," he said.

Extensive conservation work is also being carried out by the joint team in the archaeological site, as well as in the nearby 1938 Al Zubarah Fort, itself an important visitor attraction and a source of national pride.

"We are consolidating the walls by re-pointing joints in the walls with a special, salt-resistant mortar, and are replacing all the rotten timbers in the Al Zubarah Fort," said Prof Thuesen.

Al Zubarah was nominated by Qatar in January 2011 as a Unesco World Heritage Site. The ongoing work by QMA and University of Copenhagen not only enhances the historical understanding of the site, but also prepares it for presentation to visitors in future.

"We are very aware that visitors from around the world will stream to Qatar for the 2022 FIFA World Cup and our aim is to prepare this amazing site, that showcases the country's pearl fishing and trading past is by then ready to be seen and enjoyed," added Prof Thuesen. **Page 3**



A magnetometer is being used in Al Zubarah to take a peek beneath the ground. **PICTURE:** Dan Britton

Arabs 'seek Syria mission extension'

Reuters
Cairo

Arab states are likely to extend the mandate of their monitors in Syria despite concerns over their inability to bring about an end to bloodshed during their first month there, an Arab diplomatic source said yesterday.

Arab League members have been worlds apart over how to bring about a lasting solution to Syria's crisis and the source told Reuters that they now had little option but to renew the observer mission unchanged.

Factors favouring such a decision included the lack of international appetite for a Libya-style military intervention and an assessment that the

observers were helping to curb at least some of the violence and encouraging peaceful protest.

The 165-person mission expired on Thursday with no sign of a halt to President Bashar al-Assad's crackdown on popular unrest.

"The closer Sunday's meetings of the Arab committee and the Arab foreign ministers get, the more the conviction grows that the Arab monitoring mission in Syria should be extended," the source at League headquarters in Cairo said.

"Yes, there is not complete satisfaction with Syria's co-operation with the monitoring mission. But in the absence of any international plan to deal with Syria, the best option is for the monitors to stay."

Hundreds of people have been killed

since monitors arrived in late December in Syria, where an armed rebellion has grown in recent months, overshadowing civilian anti-Assad demonstrations.

The Arab League source said a proposal to send in soldiers from Arab countries to Syria would be discussed by Arab foreign ministers meeting Cairo tomorrow, but there was no precise plan in place.

The final decision on the mission's extension partly depends on what the head of the monitoring mission, Mohamed al-Dabi, reports tomorrow.

"If the Syrians continue to partially co-operate, as Dabi told the committee two weeks ago, then this partial co-operation is better than leaving the stage open to the Syrian regime alone," the source said. **Page 5**

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A group of participants display their kites at the festival. PICTURE: Jayan Orma

Expatriate forum holds kite festival

The blue sky over Al Dosari Farm at Shahaniya was covered in hundreds of colourful kites yesterday when a large number of Indian expatriates took part in a festival organised by Gujarati Samaj Qatar. This was the fifth year of the kite flying festival, which is celebrated in India on January 14 to celebrate Makar Sankranti. Gujarati Samaj Qatar, a forum of Gujarati families and

affiliated to the Indian Cultural Centre, has been celebrating the occasion on the first Friday after January 14. Kites and the thread used for flying them are imported from the traditional markets in Gujarat, and distributed to the families on first-come basis. Al Dosari Park owner Mohamed al-Dosari had made special arrangements for the festival and provided all facilities for the participants.

Call to boost standards in CBSE Gulf schools

By Ramesh Mathew
Staff Reporter

Even as the curtain falls on the 24th Annual CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education) Gulf Principals' Conference today, resentment is brewing among teachers and many parents of students at Indian schools across the region.

"I doubt if many of the proclamations made at the four-day conference would have life once the annual ritual is completed," a parent said yesterday echoing the feelings.

A former teacher of an Indian school said many principals are forced to hang on to their jobs because of livelihood compulsions, despite being humiliated by the managements in various ways.

"They are compelled to dance to the whims and fancies of the managements and do not listen to the service-related grievances of their colleagues due to obvious reasons," he explained.

It is high time the school managements realised that it is teachers who ultimately deliver the goods to children at the point where it matters most - in the classrooms, a teacher said.

"If the teachers fail to effectively meet the actual requirements of students, what is the point in making tall claims about such meetings," asked a community member, who left the teaching profession a few years ago at a local Indian school owing to the abysmally poor salary package.

Another teacher who quit an expatriate school to take up an

assignment with an international school also echoed similar feelings.

"The interests of most principals are well taken care of by the managements whereas most teachers at Indian schools are a demoralised lot because of the poor salary structure," the teacher said.

Inquiries made among teachers across the region found salaries being paid to most, even at the senior level does not come anywhere near the salaries paid to even junior staffers at some private firms.

At a briefing organised by principals of Indian schools in Qatar prior to the conference, some of them openly acknowledged the difficulty in recruiting qualified, competent and trained teachers from India because of the poor salary structure in their schools. However, they remained clueless about the future course.

A close look at the faculty of almost all Indian schools in the GCC states would reveal that these schools could pull on, only because of the presence of an array of qualified women who are on their husbands' sponsorship. Such teachers do not quit the teaching profession because their husbands are well paid.

And sometimes in order to compensate their poor salaries, many teachers hold tuitions to make both ends meet, sacrificing even their health.

"Rather than making tall claims and counter claims about the achievements at their meeting, the principals should explore ways to improve the real academic standards of their institutions," a parent suggested.

Retailers eyeing high-growth Rayyan in expansion plans

By Ramesh Mathew
Staff Reporter

Enthused by the ever-growing economic developments in Rayyan and its surroundings in the last few years, a number of retailers across the country, in particular those running establishments in Doha city and its immediate neighbourhood are showing greater interest in opening new outlets in Rayyan and other parts of the country's second largest city.

The latest report of the Qatar Statistical Authority recorded a huge growth in the population in those areas coming under Rayyan municipality in the last few years and the December 2011 figure of more than 455,000 residents within its jurisdiction seem to have influenced the strategy makers in many business groups.

Confirming this to *Gulf Times*, a prominent home appliances distributor in Doha said his company which could open only a comparatively smaller outlet in Rayyan more than a year ago as no appropriate rental space was available in a particular location of that city, is now considering a large establishment in the area. The company official is among many entrepreneurs who feel there is a sizeable gap between the purchasing capacities of the residents in Rayyan and other cities of the country, including Doha.

Rayyan is the only major city in the country which has Qataris as more than one-third of its residents. Again, the statistical authority has disclosed that the maximum number of Qatari families is residing in areas under the Rayyan municipal limits. "The official disclosure that almost one-third of the city's population is women shows the large scale concentration of local families in Rayyan," said an entrepreneur, who recently set up a hypermarket in the area. Their better purchasing power than other communities is increasingly influencing the decisions of entrepreneurs.

According to a Rayyan restaurant operator, who has outlets in at least two different locations in Doha, the twin towns of Rayyan and Muaither are livelier in the afternoons and in particular late in the evening than other places in the country, including Doha. "The opening of a number of large shopping centres in areas coming under Rayyan in the last few years itself indicates the businessmen's rising confi-



A view of one of the busy commercial areas in Muaither. Rayyan and Muaither are a hub for commercial activities in the evenings. PICTURE: Shemeer Rasheed

dence in the growing purchasing power of the local population, concentrated largely in the city and its suburbs," he said.

At least seven shopping centres, including the country's lone "Family only" mall is operating in Rayyan municipality. "Perhaps the only hypermarket functioning round the clock in the country is in Rayyan's Shafi Mosque Street," said a long-time resident of the area. This person recalled that when he set up a supermarket in Rayyan some 15

years ago, not many people were keen on moving to the area. "These days, businessmen are running from pillar to post to get a suitable place to establish their outlets in Rayyan and Muaither," he said.

However, adequate numbers of suitable and purpose-built commercial complexes are hard to find, according to most traders hunting for space in Rayyan.

A visit to the area in the evenings, especially to either Shafi Street or

Muaither gives a true picture of the level of commercial activities taking place in Rayyan and its surroundings. Heavy rush is witnessed in its shopping malls and most other outlets, especially in eateries even on weekdays, it has been found. "Could anyone name a fast food brand not operating in Rayyan area presently?" asked a businessman, who is starting an eatery in the area shortly.

Another company which terminated its operations at Barwa Village a few months ago has also set up their new outlet in Rayyan. "Even though it is too early to predict fortunes in our new area of operations in such a short period, we are certainly receiving more visibility than what it used to be in the Village," said its owner.

Recently, municipal members from areas coming under Rayyan asked Mowasalat to resume its late evening circular bus services from Doha to Rayyan and Muaither which had been stopped several months back. They cited increasing commercial activities in the areas coming under the Rayyan municipal limits.

Hi-tech survey at Al Zubarah site



A 3D laser scanner in use at Al Zubarah Archaeological Site on the northwest coast of Qatar to record walls and buildings (top) and conservation work progressing in Al Zubarah Fort, which is now closed to visitors (below). Al Zubarah Archaeological Site, hopefully going to place Qatar for the first time on the Unesco World Heritage List, is being explored with cutting edge technology to seek unprecedented insights from the past. Researchers from the University of Copenhagen, commissioned by the Qatar Museums Authority, are conducting geophysical survey and 3D laser scanning alongside ongoing excavations to learn more about the Gulf's most complete and well-preserved pearl trading and diving town of the 18th-19th centuries. Experts from Posselt & Zickgraf Prospektionen GbR, a company specialising in archaeological geophysics, have for the first time begun to use magnetometers and ground penetrating radar. The specialist team from the Hafencity University Hamburg has been called in to record the archaeological remains through 3D laser scanning as well. PICTURES: Dan Britton



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