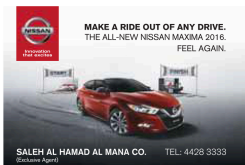


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2.7%	-7.6%	0.94%

Source: Reuters

GULF TIMES

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In brief

QATAR | Aviation
Qatar Airways starts new daily LA service

Qatar Airways rang in the New Year with a new daily, non-stop service between Los Angeles and Doha, which started on January 1. The new route features the airline's landmark Boeing 777-300 and represents Qatar Airways' first passenger service to the West Coast of the US. The expansion to LAX is the first of three new US destinations planned for 2016, along with Boston on March 16 and Atlanta on June 1. "We are honoured to bring our award-winning service to Los Angeles," said Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Akbar al-Baker. **Page 3**

Qatar ExxonMobil Open 2016 kicks off



Qatar ExxonMobil Open 2016 kicked off at the Khalifa International Tennis & Squash Complex yesterday in the presence of HE the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Abdullah bin Nasser bin Khalifa al-Thani. The tournament is organised by the Qatar Tennis Federation and is attended by a strong line-up of players from around the world. Serbs Novak Djokovic cruised past qualifier Dustin Brown of Germany 6-2, 6-2 yesterday. In other matches, Jeremy Chardy of France defeated Qatar's Mubarak Shamoun Zaveri 6-1, while Kyle Edmund of Britain beat Martin Klizan of Slovakia 6-2, 6-3. Damir Dzumhur of Bosnia-Herzegovina defeated Marco Cecchinato of Italy 6-4, 6-2. **PICTURE: Noushad Thekkayil Sport Pages 1 and 2**

Diabetes video on Internet baseless: expert

An expert from the Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) has advised the public to ignore a video circulating on social networks claiming that diabetes can be cured through a weekly injection.

Professor Abdul-Badi Abou-Samra, chairman of Internal Medicine at HMC, calls the information contained in the video baseless and is urging individuals with diabetes to continue using the treatments prescribed by their medical doctors. He has also stressed the importance of patients not altering their treatment plan without first consulting their physician. **Page 2**

AFGHANISTAN | Unrest
25-hour siege ends near Indian consulate

A 25-hour gun and bomb siege near the Indian consulate in the Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif ended late yesterday after all the attackers were killed, officials said. "The clearance operation is over and all the terrorists have been killed," said provincial police chief Sayed Kamal Sadat. Government spokesman Shir Jan Durran said three armed assailants had been killed after they mounted an attack on the diplomatic mission from a nearby building late Sunday. "Our search operation is still going on inside the building," he said, adding that the fighting left one policeman dead and 11 others wounded. **Page 16**

Iran-Saudi crisis deepens

Agencies
Riyadh/Bahrain

Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Sudan followed ally Saudi Arabia's lead in severing or downgrading ties with Tehran over a growing diplomatic row with Iran.

Bahrain and Sudan cut off diplomatic links with Iran yesterday, and the UAE downgraded its ties with the Islamic republic.

Riyadh meanwhile stepped up its own measures against Tehran, with Saudi Arabia's General Civil Aviation Authority announcing that airlines had been instructed to stop all flights to and from Iran.

The diplomatic fallout came only hours after the Saudi government broke off relations with Tehran, where protesters had stormed the Saudi embassy on Saturday night.

The UAE said Iran needed to stay out of Arab affairs and not act like a protector of Arab Shias. "The Arab world isn't a venue for its blatant interference ... Iran does not have guardianship or jurisdiction over a large number of Arabs for some sectarian reason," UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash told Saudi-owned Al Arabiya TV.

Bahrain has announced it is severing diplomatic ties with Iran and asked all the members of the Iranian diplomatic mission Manama to

leave the country within 48 hours.

Bahrain also decided to close its diplomatic mission in Tehran and to withdraw all members of the mission.

The Bahraini Foreign Ministry yesterday summoned the acting charge d'affaires in the Iranian embassy in Manama, Mortadha Sanubari, and handed him an official memorandum thereon.

Sudan on Sunday announced it has decided to expel the Iranian ambassador and the entire mission in solidarity with Saudi Arabia in the face of Iran's plots.

According to Sudan News Agency, a statement of the Sudanese Foreign Ministry said that the move came against the background of the brutal

attack on Saudi Arabia's embassy in Tehran and its consulate in Mashhad.

Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir said that Iran had a long-track record of violating diplomatic missions.

Al-Jubeir underlined at a news conference on Sunday that these attacks fell under "Iran's familiar historic policies, which aim to destabilise the region."

The Cairo-based Arab League said it would hold an emergency meeting at Riyadh's request on Sunday to discuss the attacks on Saudi diplomatic premises and Iranian interference.

As international worries grew, US Secretary of State John Kerry called his Iranian and Saudi Arabian counterparts, US officials said.

"We are urging calm and de-escalation. The situation needs to be calmed," one official said.

London, Paris and Berlin also expressed concerns, amid fears the dispute could derail efforts to resolve conflicts across the Middle East, from Syria to Yemen.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon spoke by phone with Saudi Foreign Minister al-Jubeir and his Iranian counterpart, Mohamed Javad Zarif, stressing that continued engagement was "in the interest of the region and beyond," his spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

Ban told al-Jubeir that breaking off diplomatic ties with Iran was "deeply worrying."

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Katara opens photo gallery by Italian lensman

Katara—the Cultural Village—in co-operation with the Italian Embassy in Doha, inaugurated on Sunday the “Fish Out of Water (Pesci fuor d’acqua)” photo gallery by acclaimed Italian photographer Carlo Rocchi Bilancini.

Katara general manager Dr Khalid bin Ibrahim al-Sulaiti and Italian ambassador Guido De Sanctis were present at the opening.

Speaking on the occasion, the Katara general manager said the exhibition has a significant role in building cultural and artistic bridges between Qatar and Italy.

“Carlo Rocchi Bilancini has succeeded in presenting inspiring photographs and utilising water as a dominant element in them,” Dr al-Sulaiti observed.

Ambassador Guido De Sanctis said he was pleased to start the year by holding an Italian exhibition at Katara. “I hope this co-operation will lead to holding other events throughout the year,” he said.

A total of 20 portraits are displayed in the exhibition curated by Manuela De Leonardsis. In

each picture—unexpected, theatrical and surprising—the sitter seems to bloom in the water.

“Water is my natural element,” explained Rocchi Bilancini. “It gives me a sense of peace and well-being, calms my neuroses and obsessions. It’s no coincidence that I’m a Pisces: I love everything that’s fluid and adaptable, maintaining its identity while changing form. I love the bright colours, turquoise and deep blue, of water. I have also been influenced by the theories of Otto Rank. In his book *The Trauma of Birth*, every human being suffers the most intense trauma of his or her life at birth, one from which he or she never completely recovers; this is why we all wish to return to the womb. Through this lens, we see that every type of anxiety can be nothing other than a repetition of the anxiety experienced at birth. In much the same way, every pleasure we experience is a repetition of that first pleasure, that of floating inside the body of our mother. In some sense, the swimming pool must represent a great sac, and the

subjects of these photographs—immersed in a type of amniotic liquid—must have enjoyed a pre-birth experience, a return to Eden.”

Rocchi Bilancini has been working on *Pesci fuor d’acqua* (Fish out of Water) since 2006, when he began photographing characters from the ancient city of Todi and the surrounding area. Each individual is completely immersed in water, fully clothed, and some are depicted holding the tools of their trade.

Between 2006 and 2011, when Skira published the series as a photographic monograph with accompanying texts by Federico Sardella, Antonia Mulas, Malcolm Bull and Brian O’Doherty, Rocchi Bilancini shot more than 50 colour photographs. Many show figures from the art and entertainment worlds, among them Marina Ripa di Meana, Lindsay Kemp and Pino Strabbioli.

Pesci fuor d’acqua has previously been exhibited in 2012, in collaboration with the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in the exhibition space La Piscina on the

island of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, during the XIII Architectural Biennale (curated by Ziva Kraus and promoted by Umberto Morena); in 2013 at the Oratorio of Sant’Antonio, Torgiano (Perugia) and in 2014 at the Acta International Gallery in Rome (curated by Manuela De Leonardsis).



Photographer Bilancini (third left) is seen with Dr al-Sulaiti, ambassador De Sanctis and other dignitaries at the opening of the exhibition at Katara.

Falcons and Hunting Festival begins at Sealine



A Qatari boy being guided to watch a flying falcon.

The seventh International Falcons and Hunting Festival (Marni) started yesterday at Sealine. The festival, being held under the patronage of HE Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad al-Thani, will continue until the end of this month.

The events are being held along with Hadad El Tahadee (newborn free falcons) local competition in morning and evening.

Like the previous years, Hadad El Tahadee this time has also attracted a large number of competitors.

Organising committee head Ali bin Khanom al-Mihshadi said: “The main goal of organising this festival is to continue the legacy of our ancestors. The importance of this festival for Qatari people is illustrated through the significant turnout of visitors from all walks of life from the first day.”

Pvo, a tourist from Bulgaria, who was fascinated by the nice weather in the desert, said: “I am really excited to watch the enthralling activities of the falcon festival to get a close glimpse of the Qatari heritage and traditions.”



A view of the audience.



A young competitor releases a falcon at the festival.



A participant prepares to release his falcon.