



Time out

GULF TIMES FEATURES

Tuesday, March 6, 2007

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Rebuilding Iraq: Rich rewards despite risks

By Bryan Pearson

HE'S big, he's burly, he talks tough and he's been helping rebuild Iraq for the past three years - but now he's had enough. Like many of the tens of thousands of private contractors who descended on Iraq to grab a slice of the reconstruction pie, David, a US contractor who is reluctant to give out more than a first name, is tired. "I want out of Iraq," he says as he arrives for another six-month stint in a country he has grown to love and to loathe, depending, he says, on the time of day.

Clearly used to the security at Baghdad's international airport, he saunters through the customs lines with his knapsack, ignoring demands by officials that he present himself for a baggage inspection. "If you keep walking they often don't call you back," he says, as he's greeted outside by a team of South Africans who will provide him with a private security escort. "Howzit, my chinas," he says, giving a South African greeting in his American accent.

When pressed, the 43-year-old engineer admits he's here for the money, the adventure and the adrenalin, as is the case with many contractors. But along with the many highs, also come the lows - and the very low lows.

The most vexing problem, he says, is graft. "They also ask how much they have to kick back so they will be awarded the work," he says, smiling. Timothy Carney was appointed by US President George W Bush as co-

ordinator for the Iraqi Transitional Assistance in January. Now the man who must oversee Iraq's difficult economic recovery says fighting graft is one of his biggest challenges. "Corruption is a huge issue," Carney told a media briefing in Baghdad last Tuesday, his first since arriving in the country three weeks ago. "The first way to deal with it is to establish transparency in all of the processes that deal with finance and budget and that is an effort that is already under way," he said. A US government audit pulled no punches in a report in January in which it said reconstruction efforts in Iraq are hampered by widespread violence, corruption and bureaucratic snarls. David could have built schoolhouses in his peaceful hometown and to home regularly to a family, a dog and a weekend stint at the lawnmower. Instead, he chose to work on some of the most dangerous building sites in the world, and knows the problems intimately. "The quality of work is often substandard, there is a shortage of skilled tradesmen and it is difficult to get local workers in some areas of the country," he complains. "Materials are often substandard or counterfeit and obtaining materials locally is at times difficult. Depending on the geography, they must come from Turkey, Syria, Iran, Jordan - all the bordering countries." In the three years he's been building police stations, medical clinics and military bases on behalf of the US military, he's also seen all the violence he wants to see. "We have had numerous instances where workers are threatened or killed. Sites get mortared, snipers



Iraqi youths work at a construction site in Baghdad. A US government audit pulled no punches in a report last month in which it said reconstruction efforts in Iraq are hampered by widespread violence, corruption and bureaucratic snarls.

shoot at the workers. It is a challenge to even get to the sites often times. Around 800 civilians working under contract to the Pentagon have been killed in Iraq since the reconstruction process began after the US-led invasion of March 2003, according to official US figures. Most of these are Iraqis but scores of foreigners have been kidnapped and are either still missing or their bodies have been found - some decapitated. According to David, some new buildings are destroyed by insurgents as fast as they are built. But if the reconstruction programme is beset by problems, it is also awash with cash. The US had by October last year poured in about \$29bn (21bn euros) for Iraqi reconstruction and stabilisation efforts, according to the Government Accountability Office. Bush says he wants Congress to approve another \$1.2bn to help rebuild Iraq while the Iraqi government says it will this year add a further \$10bn of its own funds. The pay packets can be huge, with some contractors making \$100,000 a year or more. Which is why David and thousands like him keep coming back even as some of the bigger concerns, such as US engineering giant Bechtel, pack it in. "Yes I've had enough. I want to go somewhere peaceful," says David, trying to look convincing. "I'll just see out this contract and then for sure I'll be gone. And won't be coming back. Ever. I mean it." - AFP

US blacklists Hezbollah construction charity as terror organisation

By Jihad Siqlawi

FOR Haji Hussain Lahham, whose house was destroyed by Israeli rockets last summer, the Jihad al-Bina construction company has been a blessing, giving him money and help to build anew. But to the US government, this charity arm of the Lebanese Shia party Hezbollah is part of a terrorist group, and has been blacklisted. "Jihad al-Bina's workers are completing the reconstruction of my house, which was levelled by Israeli planes," Haji Hussain said. "The members of Jihad al-Bina are working day and night in southern Lebanon to help people get back on their feet," he added, standing in front of the work site in the town of Saida, where 37 people were killed and 250 homes were destroyed during the fierce 34-day Israeli war against Hezbollah. It was a cross-border raid last July by militants from Hezbollah, in which two Israeli soldiers were captured, that sparked the war, which ended on August 14 with a UN-brokered ceasefire. Haji Hussain said Jihad al-Bina ("Struggle for Rebuilding") gave him \$10,000 to rent accommodation while his house and first-floor tailor's shop could be rebuilt. On February 27, the US government blacklisted the company, saying it was controlled by Hezbollah and funded by Iran - neither of which is disputed in Lebanon. Stuart Levey, the Treasury's under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, said Hezbollah operates Jihad al-Bina "for its own construction needs as well as to attract popular support through the provision of civilian construction services. "We will take action against all facets of this deadly terrorist group," he said in a statement. Under a presidential order, the Treasury froze any US assets held by Jihad al-Bina and forbade Americans from doing business with it. "Jihad al-Bina receives direct funding from Iran, is run by Hezbollah members, and is overseen by Hezbollah's Shura Council, at the head of which sits Hezbollah Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah," the Treasury said. No one in Lebanon disputes the Hezbollah link, which is a matter of common knowledge, as is Iran's financial support. But Abu Mahmud, operations director of Jihad al-Bina, disputes the "terrorist" moniker. "Is it terrorism to help people rebuild their homes, destroyed by American-made Israeli bombs in the course of a war sponsored by the US?" he asked. The company has been around a long time, pointed out a company engineer named Abbas, who declined to give his last name. It was created amid the destruction caused during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and "its members have been mobilised to rebuild after the end of each Israeli aggression" since then. Mahmud said Jihad al-Bina is "more determined than ever to oversee the work after the decision of the American Treasury." He ended on an ironic note: "We are a humanitarian organisation, and are ready to make our know-how available to the American people in case of a natural disaster." - AFP

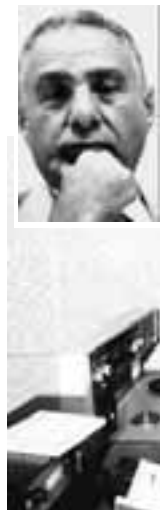
Remembering Salah Khalifa - a pioneer on Qatar's airwaves

ARABIC PRESS REVIEW
By Dr S M M Nainar

SAHAL Khalifa will be remembered forever in the history of Qatar Broadcasting Service (QBS). To him goes the credit for developing several interesting programmes for the Arabic Service. He will also be remembered for the originality of his work. The Holy Qur'an Broadcasting Service, *Noorun wa Hidayat* (Light and Guidance), *Morning Chat* (mostly on religious topics) and *Be My Guest* (a weekly half-hour programme during which he interviewed eminent personalities visiting Doha) and the *Open Dialogue*, a daily noontime dial-in show on local problems, were some of his innovations for QBS. Khalifa also introduced a novel programme titled *Passport* in which he

interviewed academicians, and politicians. The conversation would begin by asking about the number of entry and exit stamps the person had on his or her passport. It would then lead on to the countries which the person had visited. Salah Khalifa joined the QBS in June 1968 and remained with it for nearly three decades. He left Qatar in 1997 for his home country Egypt, where he died last week. A graduate in history from the University of Cairo, Khalifa started out as a teacher, before switching to broadcasting. Within three years of service with the Egyptian Broadcasting Service, he was deputised by the Egyptian government to work for the newly-established United Arab Republic (UAR) radio. The UAR was established in 1958 to merge Egypt and Syria under one political entity. However this unity did not

last for more than three years. It was dissolved in 1961. Gifted with a baritone voice, Salah Khalifa joined the QBS on the strength of his previous outstanding career. He was known for his love of the Arabic language in its classical form and was meticulous in whatever he wrote and spoke. Every programme of his was a literary treat for listeners. His long-time colleague Ismail Harb, who is also associated with the *Gulf Times*, remembers Khalifa as an affable yet firm and polite colleague. Another former colleague, Huda Jad, who writes a regular column in a local Arabic newspaper, has described him as a friend, philosopher and gentleman. "Many of my colleagues and I in the QBS are deeply indebted to Salah Khalifa. We learned a lot from him," she said. (Based on reports in local Arabic newspapers)



Salah Khalifa (above) and (inset) ... known for his original ideas. Photographs courtesy: Arrayah archives

'Oprah of the Middle East' flees over TV row

By Conal Urquhart



Dr Hala Sarhan ... in hot water

THE woman known as the 'Oprah Winfrey of the Middle East' has fled to London in fear for her safety amid a row over allegations that actresses were paid to pretend they were prostitutes on her television show. Dr Hala Sarhan is believed to have left Egypt aboard the private jet of Saudi billionaire Al-Waleed bin Talal when it became clear that the government wanted her arrested. Speaking this week, Sarhan called her accusers "b*****, creeps and liars" and vowed to meet them in court. The presenter has been charged with "aggravating public security and promoting promiscuous and licentious behaviour" but denies wrongdoing. She says that police protected the prostitutes in return for sexual favours and money. The media is dominating the Egyptian media.

The controversy began when three women appeared on the *Hala Show* on the Rotana network to describe working as prostitutes in Cairo bars. They earned, they said, up to £1,000 a month - the average monthly wage is around £40. When Sarhan asked if they were afraid of the police, one admitted they were protected by police, who had sex with them and took bribes. The claim ignited a furious debate - a rival network swiftly ran a series of programmes in which the same women claimed they had been paid by the *Hala Show* to pretend they were prostitutes. They complained too that they were told that their voices and images would be distorted to disguise their identity but they were easily identifiable on the show. Egyptian commentators attacked Sarhan for fabrication

and for 'glamorising' prostitution. Speaking from London, Sarhan said the prostitutes were genuine. "I have all the tapes and I am taking legal action against those that accused me of fabrication," she said. The affair demonstrates the fragility of freedom of expression in Egypt and the sensitivity of the government to criticism of its institutions. Last month a blogger was jailed for four years for criticising the president, Hosni Mubarak. Sarhan says she will return to Egypt to defend her name. The presenter, who is also the head of the satellite network, is no stranger to controversy. Last year viewers from Saudi Arabia launched a campaign against her because her programme "focuses on shameful and impolite topics that contradict our Islamic religion and Arab traditions." - Guardian News & Media

Morocco marks royal birth with 'feminist' celebrations

By Siilkka Tarvainen and Mounhsine al-Hassouni

MOROCCANS will be holding several days of festivities to mark the birth of Princess Lalla Khadija, the second child of King Mohamed VI this week. The baby was born at a clinic at the royal palace on February 28. The 4.16kg girl and her mother, Princess Lalla Salma, were reported to be "in perfect health". Celebrations to mark the arrival of the new royal are expected to match those marking the birth of her brother three years ago, in a signal of growing respect for female children. Dozens of people gathered in front of the palace, where the 43-year-old monarch made an appearance to greet citizens. The warm reception for the new princess is seen as being in line with the "feminist" views of King Mohamed. His reign is known as one of the foremost champions of the rights of women in the

Arab world, according to analysts in Rabat. The government has, for instance, reformed family law, raising the age of marriage for women, making polygamy almost impossible and improving the rights of women in situations of divorce. For weeks already, Morocco had been preparing for the birth of the royal baby. Streets were decorated with flags, lanterns, and flowers, and pavements were repaired in the capital Rabat. Celebrations are to include the slaughter of sheep, prayers, banquets and music over several days throughout the kingdom. In the coming days, Moroccans also expect to see images of the newborn with her mother. The nation never saw Mohamed's mother, but the king has modernised protocol, giving a discreet public role to his wife Lalla Salma, an engineer whom he married in 2002. The palace has also sought to reduce the aura of secrecy surrounding royal life, immediately announcing the birth of Lalla Khadija to counter rumours that she had been born days earlier. Despite the huge gap separating the elite from the poor masses in the kingdom, for change, King Mohamed has retained a certain popularity, and the birth of the new princess has been welcomed as a joyful event. The palace was skilled at protecting the king from criticism by "blaming anything negative on the government," one observer quipped. - DPA



A photograph released on Thursday by the Moroccan Royal Palace shows King Mohamed VI of Morocco with his second child, newborn Princess Lalla Khadija.



Glam, glitz and surprises in Geneva feast of cars

Sustainable mobility in the spotlight

By **Reino Rebers**

IF IT'S spring in Europe, it must be Geneva and this year the lakeside motor show at the Palexpo congress centre in the Swiss city can be expected to present a tempting array of previously-unseen cars.

The first big motor exhibition of the season is traditionally a glamorous affair and the major carmakers are not going to let the current industry woes rain on their parade.

The 77th Geneva event runs for 10 days from March 8 to 18 and around 250 exhibitors from more than 30 countries are lined up to attend.

Most of the cars on show will be entering the showrooms in time for the start of the car-buying season, but Geneva also gives a taste of what is further down the pipeline. There are some eye-catching concept cars alongside futuristic, alternative-powered vehicles.

Among the wraps coming off here are those on the revamped version of Ford's family favourite, the Mondeo. It has already been glimpsed in the latest James Bond movie, *Casino Royale* with actor Daniel Craig at the wheel.

The US maker has high hopes for the new car, which weighs in at Geneva in saloon, hatchback and estate form. Based on the platform of the successful S-Max van, the Mondeo boasts dramatic lines and a remarkably refined ride thanks to new suspension.

"People should not be so impressed by what they see that they simply want to own one," said Ford's chief designer Martin Smith, who used to work for General Motors's subsidiary Opel.

The range of engines on offer for the mid-range Ford saloon includes 1.8 and 2 litre petrol units and a new 2.3 litre, 160 horsepower petrol unit with six-speed automatic gearbox. The most important thing about the Mondeo is the look

of the car which now boasts dramatic styling, featuring the company's trademark "kinetic design".

The dynamic lines and muscular shoulders are a throwback to the "loisirs" concept displayed in Frankfurt a few years ago. Over at the DaimlerChrysler stand, the new third-generation C-class marks a bid by Mercedes-Benz to reposition the model as a genuine sports saloon rather than just the little brother of the executive E-class.

This potentially reputation-saving saloon may be enough to draw attention away from reliability problems which have dogged the German marque and the current financial crisis at Chrysler.

Leaked pictures of Audi's new A5 can be found on motoring blogs all over the Internet, but Ingolstadt's glitzy new coupé will not be officially unveiled until Geneva. The car takes its styling cues from the smaller TT, but sports much more flowing lines that motorists have been used to from this manufacturer. Under-bonnet and interior details will be revealed during the event.

There are also rumours that Geneva visitors will be able to take an advance look at the upcoming Opel/Vauxhall Vectra replacement whose styling is likely to influence the whole range from this marque.

Among the other new cars making their debuts in Switzerland will be Fiat's Stilo-successor, the Bravo, the face-lifted BMW 5 and 1 series saloons and two sporting Honda Civic variants. Renault is due to showcase the second-generation Twingo.

Japanese maker Mazda has meanwhile turned the angular hatchback 2 on its head and come up with a much sleeker version of the city car on its Geneva stand.

The platform will be shared with the new Ford Fiesta. Production of the new Mazda2

Around 250 exhibitors from 30 countries are expected to participate in Geneva – the first big show of the season, writes MARTIN BENSLEY



The show was a huge success in 2006. The number of visitors is expected to be more this year.

is being switched from the company's European plant in Valencia, Spain to Mazda's main factory in Hiroshima.

Mouth-watering suppers this year include a new Bentley, a revamped, high-performance BMW M3 and a sleek Maserati Coupé powered by Ferrari's 4.3 litre engine from the F430.

Some unfamiliar names will be bowing in at Lake Geneva, including Chinese maker Brilliance with a mid-range saloon pitched at BMW's 3 series. The BS 6 is scheduled to go on sale in Europe from mid-2007, but not before its mediocre performance in

crash-tests has been improved. Failure to do so after damning results in the German press was a major setback for rivals Landwind last year.

KTM is best known for making motorbikes, but it will be bringing along the X-Bow roadster, a doorless, Audi-engined kit car.

Dutch tuner Donkervoort returns to the fray after an absence of some years with a closed top sports car, the DS GT. Abarth, famous for its breath-on-Fiat, is back too with a cooking version of the Punto hatchback. Of course Geneva would not be the same without a host of

concepts challenging the way motorists look at cars. Switzerland has no auto industry of its own, but the country is home to numerous custom producers, including Rinspeed.

The Exasis is the latest weird and wonderful creation from the stable that has given us the "Splash", the "Senso" and the "zaZen" – a show stealer last year.

It also marks the company's 30th birthday. Visionary designer Frank Rinderknecht says the Exasis is supposed to look like a cross between an off-roader and Auto Union's classic cigar-shaped racing cars of yore. The two-seater is

made of electrically-coated transparent plastic. The car also weighs next to nothing around 750 kilos in fact with acceleration in the Porsche-class.

The lightweight two-cylinder motor turns out 150 hp, but the Exasis can be driven hard with a clear conscience the engine runs on bioethanol fuel which boasts low CO₂ (carbon dioxide) emissions.

The 77th Geneva Salon takes place at the Palexpo congress near the city's airport. For more information see the following websites: www.geneva-palexpo.ch, www.salon-auto.ch. – DPA

CAR MAKERS are hyping sleek new models at this year's Geneva Motor Show with manufacturers for the first time proving that sustainable mobility need not mean driving in the slow lane in a car with a boring design.

This year's show comes only weeks after the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a shocking report on climate change with scientists listing carbon dioxide emissions from power stations and transport as one of the main causes.

Most car makers have been caught off guard as they usually present glittering new models with concept cars featuring more horsepower, more extras and wider tyres fitted to a longer wheel base in Geneva.

All of this comes at a price. Cars with bigger engines and greater performance carry more weight and consume more fuel, emitting more carbon dioxide responsible for the warming of the earth's atmosphere.

Car makers have always argued that they would like to build more economical cars but that the market is ripe with customers simply wanting faster and bigger cars. Volkswagen had little success with its super-economical Lupo while the super small city car in the DaimlerChrysler stable, the Smart, is on probation with a revamped model after stagnating sales.

Sales of fuel-guzzling light trucks and SUVs (Sports Utility Vehicles) have slumped in the United States, plunging General Motors, Ford and Chrysler into a deep crisis while Japanese car makers have made huge market inroads with economical hybrid vehicles such as the Toyota Prius.

In Europe, about half of new cars registered last year were in the mini, small car and compact segment. In Germany, sales of SUVs account for only 2.7% of the total market. Sales of hybrids are also insignificant compared to the US with the Prius failing to catch onto European buyers with its uninspiring design.

But as the European Union is planning higher taxes for dirty petrol and diesel engines, the hybrid and other vehicles on clean-energy drive are becoming an attractive alternative.

Being showcased for the first time in Geneva, is the Saab BioPower 100 Concept, the first production-based engine optimised for pure bioethanol (E100) fuel. The result is a level of performance never seen before from a road car using this fuel.

The Swedish car maker has combined its turbocharging expertise with the use of high octane E100 fuel with the 2.0 litre engine developing 300 hp. Power is complemented by a substantial 400 Nm of torque, giving the engine the characteristics of a naturally – aspirated engine of 4.0 litre displacement. Acceleration from zero to 100 km/h is just 7.6 seconds.

Toyota, the market leader on hybrids, is making its European debut with the FT-HS (Future Toyota – Hybrid Sports) with "green credentials" combined with high performance. – DPA



Saab will present its BioPower 100 Concept car, which runs on bioethanol, at the Geneva show. – DPA

Absolute control in the driver's seat

THE Saab 9-3 is undeniably different and is almost certainly due to independent thinking. Saab started life more than half a century ago.

The car is a driver's car. Everything that matters to driving is concentrated around the driver's seat. The display can be quickly scanned for Profiler settings.

The Profiler system lets the driver customise the car's settings from the driver's seat. A unique Saab feature is the Night Driving panel, taken straight from Saab's aircraft building experience. Press a button and the whole display apart from the speedometer blacks out but when something happens that needs your attention the relevant instrument immediately lights up.

A CoSense system, which is exactly what it says it is, reduces the risk of distraction by briefly delaying incoming phone calls and lowers priority alerts when the brakes are being applied or the turn indicators are operating.

Ideal when on or near a busy crossing, ReAssX (no that is not misspelling) is a Saab special chassis geometry system that ensures smooth interaction of steering, front suspension and the multi-link rear axle. ReAssX enables the rear wheels to steer slightly when turning, helping the car move in the intended direction.

This gives a very responsive driving experience which can be enhanced even further by the addition of Electronic Stability Programme. Any one of four petrol engines can power the 9-3, three of which are turbocharged. The turbocharger gives superb mid-range torque.

The turbo engines are controlled by Saab's own engine management system, Trionic. There are two advanced turbo diesels. The smaller one of the two gives 120bhp at a 'cost' of only 4.9 litres per 100km on the open road.

The automatic transmission is the Sentronic that can also be shifted manually. If you are really into sport driving then consider the addition of shift paddles on the steering wheel. The Sentronic 2, available on the Aero model is a five speed transmission that has two extra intermediate gears which have the effect of giving faster acceleration in auto mode.

An Advanced Voice Recognition system will tell you where to go and is led by satellites, a DVD database and wireless traffic information where available. An integrated telephone is fitted with Bluetooth and a GPRS modem. Incoming calls are heard through the audio loudspeakers or the Bluetooth headset. The same Bluetooth automatically connects the telephone modem to your laptop or PDA, so you can access your e-mail and the Internet.

Saab 9-3

'Ferrari of the East' is reborn in Dresden



The media examine the new Melkus RS 1000 in Dresden. Only 15 of the legendary cars are to be made this time.

DARINGLY designed and once referred to as the "Ferrari of the East" the low-slung, wing-doored Melkus RS 1000 sports car was a proud and popular speedster during the communist era.

Not that there were many of them available. Only 101 of the sleek, drop-nosed racers were made between 1969-79 in East Germany, then the Dresden family firm constructing them was forced to halt production – due to a nosedive in the east's economy.

The brainchild of Heinz Melkus, a city driving school operator and himself a fanatic sports car enthusiast in the 1960s-70s, the original RS 100 cars were sleek in appearance, and might have been plucked out of a James Bond movie, had their performance matched their looks.

Moulded out of fibreglass, and assembled from parts of the famous put-putting East German Trabant, they were dependent on their Warburg 353.75 horse power two stroke engines for a top speed of 102 miles per hour.

Notwithstanding, East German sports car enthusiasts loved the Melkus RS100, and mourned its passing. Now, 27 years on, the communist East Germany's only sports car

went out of production, it is making a come-back.

Currently, a five-man-strong Dresden firm headed by Peter Melkus, the son of Heinz who died aged 78 last year, is involved in a "re-launch" of the brave two-stroke engine car, that was once the pride of motor-racing circuits behind the Iron Curtain.

"We plan to complete 15 of the Melkus RS 100s, costing 50,000 euros (\$66,238) each, by the end of 2007," explains Peter Melkus. "A dozen of them have already found owners."

Heinz Melkus' 23-year-old grandson, Sepp, says the first of the revamped sports cars based on the original was unveiled at the Dresden Transport Museum, to an audience of 500 recently.

Stylishly spray-painted a gleaming yellow, it drew "oohs" and "aahs" from an audience of 500. "Owners of several of the 'original' RS 100s showed up for the occasion in their vehicles, which added to the atmosphere," said Sepp.

He explained what had led to his grandfather, a gifted mechanic, to build a sports car based in the 1960s. "Driving in Yugoslavia in 1969 in his Warburg he was suddenly overtaken by a sleek-looking

Lotus on the highway. The car made such an impression on him, he determined from that moment on to start building sports cars himself."

Private enterprise of that kind wasn't allowed in the communist state, but with East Germany then gearing up to celebrate its 20th anniversary the authorities surprisingly agreed.

"All told, 101 of the Melkus RS 100s were made from 1969 to 1979, selling at 29,000 East Marks each," said Sepp.

For East Germans, 29,000 marks was a lot of money then, but with the state's drab shops offering little to excite customers, many citizens simply stashed what spare money they had into savings accounts, which more than paid off in 1990 when German reunification occurred and citizens in the east were granted a generous "one-to-one" rate of exchange against the West Mark.

Heinz Melkus, operating with a handful of assistants, in a garage near his Dresden home, spent much of his time in the 1970s constructing his RS 100 cars from segments of Trabant cars and Warburgs, secured from factories and breakers yards in the region. Simultaneously he won recognition throughout

eastern Europe as a racing driver. East Germany's equivalent of Michael Schumacher, he won 80 grand prix events and at the height of his fame was the holder of the Peace and Friendship Cup, the state's top motor-racing trophy.

Sepp Melkus, a trained car mechanic and vehicle designer, points out that the 15 Melkus RS 100s will be the last of their kind to be made by the Dresden company. "Once we have completed our remake of the original, we have plans to embark on the next generation – the Melkus RS 2000," he says.

That is expected to cost around 7,000 euros.

He claimed that design sketches for the RS 2000 were published recently. "We had a very positive resonance and already have one or two potential buyers on the strength of the design," he says, "but of course we will still need to seek investors."

During its 40-year history, the GDR (East Germany) was hardly a car owners' paradise. Citizens had to wait up to 10 years before obtaining the two-stroke, smoke-puffing Trabant – popularly known as "Trabi" – and up to 15 years for the boxy Warburg sedan, produced at the Antonowitz Eisenach (AWE) factory. – DPA

Japanese cars top US survey

JAPANESE automobiles dominated an annual US survey of reliability, with cars made by Toyota, Honda, Scion, Acura and Lexus taking the first five places in the survey released last week by the highly respected *Consumer Reports* magazine. The magazine also recommended 59 used car models to its readers – 55 of which were Japanese. All 10 of the magazine's new car Top Picks for 2007 were Japanese.

The top US car brands in the reliability survey were the Ford Mercury at 10th, while General Motors' best-ranking brand was GMG, which came in at 14th on the list. Chrysler's highest ranking was for its Dodge brand, which was placed 22nd on the list of 36 brands. That was better however than luxury German car maker Mercedes, which came in last on the list.

There was also good news for Korean automaker Hyundai which cracked the top 10 for the first time, ranking seventh. The report said large Japanese and South Korean automakers have, on average, only 11 problems per 100 vehicles, while US autos have 16 problems per 100, and European manufacturers have 19 problems per 100 cars.

"Japanese models are still the most reliable – Toyota and Honda in particular," said Rik Paul, automotive editor for *Consumer Reports*. "For years, their vehicles have consistently been the least problematic and the best in terms of reliability for years."

Paul said that the average 10-year-old Toyota or Honda has the same, or fewer, problems as a 4 or 5-year-old car from US or European automakers. "A 9-year-old Lexus can have fewer problems than a 2006 Mercedes," he said. – DPA

BRIEFS

Mercedes remains dream car for Germans

FOR the sixth consecutive time, most Germans said their dream car was a Mercedes-Benz, according to an opinion poll conducted by TNS Infratest recently. If money was not a factor, some 16.2% of those polled said they would choose a Mercedes, followed by 13.2% who would opt for an Audi and 12.2% for a BMW. Only 5.7% of those polled said they would buy a Porsche sports car while 5.2% of the 1,869 motorists polled said they would choose a modest Opel.

New petrol engine for VW Touan

VOLKSWAGEN has unveiled a new engine range for the Touan compact van with a 125 kW/170hp TSI motor linked to a DSG direct-shift gearbox. A supercharger operates in the lower rev ranges and a turbocharger at higher revs. This combination results in a constant torque band (240Nm from 1,500rpm to 4,750rpm) and low consumption (7.6 litres/100km), according to the car maker. The technical basis for the Twincharger technology is provided by a 1,390 ccm four-cylinder engine that produces the dynamism of a 2.5-litre normally aspirated engine and a central feature of all four models is a gearshift indicator located in the driver's field of view indicating when the next gear would be a better choice.

Audi lowers fuel consumption

THE premium car maker Audi says it is expanding the engine range of its compact A3 and A4 models with improved economy and emissions standards. The range of its two highest-volume model series will be extended with the A3, A3 Sportback 1.9 TDI and A4 2.0 TFSI e in saloon or Avant guise. Direct injection technology has been further refined and a central feature of all four models is a gearshift indicator located in the driver's field of view indicating when the next gear would be a better choice.

BMW engines go French for the first time

GERMAN carmaker BMW is for the first time to install engines made, not in Germany, but in France, according to a report published last week in the newsmagazine *Der Spiegel*. According to the report, BMW is to build a new range of four-cylinder cars at the PSA plant at Douvrin near Lille. The two companies currently produce a 1.6-litre engine for BMW's Mini range and for the Peugeot 207. Now a foreign-made engine is to go into race 1-Series being planned by BMW. The new engine will be produced at *Der Spiegel*, BMW managers no longer fear their brand will be hurt by using a French-built motor. – DPA





CeBIT: A celebration of tech

Conferences, special presentations, forums and lectures add to the array of gadgets and new products to be displayed at the world's largest IT show in Hanover

GRAPHIC chips, cell phone, TV or laptops with 3G technology... No question, these are at the heart of the CeBIT trade fair at Hanover, Germany from March 15 to 21. But even if most visitors to the world's largest IT show think primarily of technology previews being held in the jam-packed exhibition halls, there's more to the CeBIT than meets the eye.



"It's not just exhibitors and trade stands," says Katja Havemeister from the Deutschen Messe AG in Hanover, Germany. A large part of what makes up the CeBIT can be found elsewhere on the fairgrounds.

That includes several special presentations, forums and lectures in the framework of the programme. There are so many events planned that visitors who don't moderate themselves will have no time for the exhibitors. Or visitors can look to the Hanover Congress Centrum, which will be hosting an event parallel to the CeBIT that reflects the future of media.

On March 14 and 15, the Global Digital Magazine Media 2.0 Conference will dedicate itself to the effects of digitalisation on the media industry.

And for those who need a break from the tech buzz: the fairgrounds hold a variety of options for those who can't tell a bit from a byte. The shopping areas between halls 19 and 23 as well as between 16 and 17 provide a chance to buy souvenirs from Hanover.

That even includes things like cuckoo clocks, a big hit with foreigners. This year will also mark the opening of a model train store, as well as a store with handicrafts.

If even shopping is too much stress, there are more relaxed time-outs available too. Thirty-five different culinary companies vend their wares around the fairgrounds, offering 12,500 seats in total. That doesn't include 45 different snack stations, located in almost all of the halls.

The fairgrounds may close at 6pm for visitors, but that doesn't mean the lights go out right away. The trade fair's organisers, Messe AG, report a variety of after-show events in the congress rooms.

Many exhibitors also hold parties at their stands - by invitation only, however. Those generally draw a close by 10pm. After all, there is also much preparation to be done for the next morning. Not least for the army of janitorial staff, who bring the halls back into tip-top form for the next day's wave of visitors. - DPA



A file photo of CeBIT 2006.

Next generation graphic cards at the show

By Tobias Schormann

GAMING and video fans understandably eager for this year's CeBIT: the next generation of graphics cards will be on display at the computer fair in Hanover, ready to support the DirectX 10 standard that is integrated into Windows Vista.

The new graphics chips will make even sharper images a reality. Many hardware makers are also redoubling their efforts from a powerful graphics solutions for laptops. "Graphic chips from the new generation are above all else of interest to gamers," says Carsten Spille, editor at the magazine *PC Games Hardware*.

The introduction of Windows Vista and the new DirectX10 graphics interface are intended to make games much more true-to-life.

"Things like light calculations and shading can be depicted much more clearly," says Jens Neuschaefer, from graphic chip maker Nvidia.

Improved processing of image data is also being aided by a new version of the "unified shader" architecture, allowing landscapes to be drawn more realistically, says Martin Grothe, a product manager from Elitegroup in Munich.

The Taiwanese graphic card maker is using the CeBIT fair to exhibit a model from the Nvidia chip family, the N8800GTX-768MX: as with all cards with current GeForce-8 processors, the card possess

es 768 Megabytes of GDDR-3 memory with 1.8 Gighertz of processing power and a 575 megahertz chip.

Need your pixels to whiz even faster? Overclocked chips are probably the best option: Asus is presenting a water-cooled card at the CeBIT, the EN8800 GTX, which manages to milk roughly 11% more power from the Nvidia chip. That adds up to a 630 Megahertz processor with two gigahertz of effective storage space. - DPA

New laptops, mobiles for special tasks

By Sven Appel

LAPTOPS now account for half of all computers sold. It's not surprising, then, that a variety of new laptops are set to be unveiled at the CeBIT computer trade fair in Hanover.

One noticeable trend is devices tailored to the needs of specific user groups. That includes especially light business models as well as multimedia powerhouses and laptops for computer gamers.

One element common to many of the machines at this year's CeBIT: laptops with integrated 3G modules that allow for quick wireless access to the Internet. One such device is the Lifebook P7230 from Fujitsu-Siemens. The 1.3kg laptop with built in DVD burner and camera for video telephony will be able in stores after the fair for between 2,000 and 2,500 euros (\$2,600 to \$3,248), reports press spokesman Lothar Lechtenberg.

The Port'g' R400 from Toshiba also has a Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS) module. Thanks to the HSDPA transfer process, the machine can hit download speeds of 3.6 megabits per second, the manufacturer claims.

Yet the red distinguishing characteristic of the Intel Core Duo Processor machine is a small added display on the front side: it lets the user view the subject line of e-mails that the computer automatically downloaded, even when the display is closed. This 'edge display' also depicts calendar items which are kept current by the "ActiveNotifications" Windows function.

Michele Zwolinski, a Frankfurt-based analyst at the consulting firm IDC, still does not see the laptops being shown at the CeBIT fair as providing a jolt to the market: integrated UMTS and cameras are not likely to have much of an effect on sales numbers in Germany, he says. That's because it is low prices, not new technology, which has and will continue to be the key to high sales figures.

Jens Uebehnke, product manager at Fujitsu-Siemens, is a bit more optimistic on this topic. He presumes that integrated UMTS will soon also penetrate laptops in the consumer class.

"Packages of this kind will start appearing in April and May," Uebehnke says. Even if many laptops available at sales prices are still coming with Pentium-M chips, it appears that the age of single core processors is drawing to a close. CeBIT visitors will primarily be seeing computers with double core processors, be it Core Duo from Intel or Dual Core from AMD.

Among the most important new developments to be seen at the CeBIT is a new chip set from Intel, claims Joerg Wirgen. Santa Rosa: the project's working title aims at making mobile computers run more powerfully. It's likely to work too - by a few percentage points.

Whether that's enough to make a perceptible difference to users remains to be seen, Wirgen feels. - DPA

New technology comes into play when games are on the line

By Jerri Stroud

ONLINE gamers live or die in the virtual world anyway - on their ability to respond quickly to opponents' moves. While part of that response depends on reflexes, a game's equipment and the Internet can slow down delivery of the response, cause jittery images or lose a player's move altogether.

GameRail, a new St. Louis company, has developed technology that can shave milliseconds off response time to what is called latency - by directly connecting Internet access providers and the servers. The technology also reduces jitter and delivers signals - or data packets - more reliably.

College student Dane Johnston said GameRail tripled the speed of his connections to servers in St. Louis, and significantly cut the response time with servers elsewhere.

"GameRail definitely surprised me with how quickly and effectively it fixed my issues," Johnston said. GameRail, which has its headquarters downtown and an office in Maryland Heights, Missouri, is the brainchild of Blake Ashby, 42, and Chris Gentry, 33, two longtime technology entrepreneurs.

Gentry is an avid gamer who has worked for years to improve computer connections used in games. The venture, organized as Progression LLC, is getting support from River City Internet Group, a Maryland

Heights Internet service provider, and Bob Guller, managing member of the Bandwidth Exchange Buildings LLC in St. Louis. One investor and board member is Mark Senda, the former president of business telecom provider Xpedius Communications LLC in O'Fallon, Missouri. Xpedius was purchased this year by Time Warner Telecom.

GameRail uses telecom "hotels" like the Bandwidth Exchange Buildings to make direct connections to Internet service providers and game servers. Telecommunications and cable companies have robust connections in these hotels, which also house the servers that run the games.

GameRail routes the signals over a nationwide fiber optic network operated by Broadwing Corp, a Texas company. That means a signal goes from a player's Internet service provider to the game server in a single hop.

By contrast, most signals on the Internet move from one carrier to the next, often following a zigzag path to reach their destination.

For example, it's not unusual for a signal from St. Louis to travel through Los Angeles or New York before arriving in Chicago.

"We get a (gamer's) signal before it hits the dirty Internet," Ashby said. "It allows their skill to come through more." Ashby said GameRail can shave 20 to 30 milliseconds off the time needed for a signal to



Dane Johnston uses GameRail from his Lafayette Square apartment in St. Louis, Missouri.

travel from a player to a game server - a savings of 30% to 50 percent, sometimes more.

Dedicated gamers spend hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars on computers and gizmos to speed up processing time, Ashby said.

He doubts they'd blink at \$11.99 a month, the amount the time needed for a signal to

Francisco Bay area, Seattle and St. Louis. "Gamers are very sophisticated consumers," he said. "They will know if we've dropped the ball."

Senda said he's been impressed by GameRail's managers and its knowledge of the gaming market, which has exploded in recent years.

"They understand what the

gamer is looking for," said Senda. Among the entrepreneurial groups he's looked at, "This is probably the most creative and interesting one that I've come across."

Senda said he expects GameRail to begin generating revenue by summer, perhaps sooner. - St. Louis Post-Dispatch/MCT

Buying a used Notebook can be easy on pocket

By Stefanie Zenke

BUYING a used laptop instead of a new one can save you a lot of money. Older devices are available for as little as \$300 to 500 and can provide years of reliable service. Yet the question as to whether the purchase is worth it is largely determined by the intended use and the follow-on costs that can be expected.

"You should therefore figure out beforehand what still works and what might soon malfunction. A little luck doesn't hurt either."

"It's important to be clear about why you need the laptop in the first place," says Peter Leithauser from Second Notebooks.de, a Munich-based shop.

An old used laptop is more than enough for simple word processing. Game freaks who rely on powerful up-to-date technology will be "in a pickle" if they try to use an old device. The age of the laptop isn't necessary all that important when selecting a machine.

"It's a question of how well cared-for it is," Leithauser adds. Key ingredients are few scratches and stains on the screen and a working keyboard.

"Scratches on the casing can't really be avoided, that's part of normal wear and tear," explains Joerg Rink from Hanover-based *c/magazine*. Especially deep cracks may hint that the laptop was dropped, however.

Particularly in the hinges, where laptops are subjected to extra strong stresses, the casing and cover must not show any cracks. Buyers should have a look at the USB ports as well.

"They can be bent if someone forced a USB plug in there with the wrong side up," says Rink. The casing should be subject to a thorough inspection as well: The battery ought to sit firmly in the holder. Batteries lose their storage capacity with increasing age, so you shouldn't expect much from an original battery on a five year old laptop.

"You should check it out in advance if you can, but it's not so easy and you have to be a bit lucky," says Philip Petrasch from the ConCord-JT-Shop in Tuebingen. Buy a laptop with an unreliable battery and you'll be shelling out for a replacement battery sooner rather than later - which often costs as much as the entire rest of the computer. Yet persistent bargain hunters will also often turn up new batteries at a low cost.

The follow-on cost for new batteries can be calculated, but repair and replacement costs are much more difficult to peg, and represent a key risk when buying a used laptop instead of a new one. "That's why you should take the time to try the device out," Leithauser advises.

"The safest bet is a model from a major brand name maker. There are always replacement parts around," he says. It's also a better idea to buy used business models instead of consumer ones, Petrasch recommends.

"Those devices are more expensive, but the differences in areas like workmanship are enormous."

The experts recommend against buying a computer from another private person. Such purchases are quite risky because private sellers are often not subject to guarantee laws.

Depending on where you live, buying used hardware from retail stores usually brings a guarantee with it. And regardless of the legally stipulated guarantee, many dealers offer their own voluntary warranties that go above and beyond the legal mandates. "We offer a one year guarantee on all devices," Petrasch says. "Only wear parts like batteries are excluded."

There are more risks associated with these types of purchases, consumers should gather as much information as possible about the device. The risk averse should instead look for sales on new laptops. They are a bit more expensive, but do bring a certain peace of mind. - DPA

GIZMO CHECK

Play back video clips on digital frames

THE digital picture frame from Brain Photo Technik shows photos and plays back videos. The screen on the DigiFrame 8000 measures 20.32cm diagonally and provides 800 x 600 pixel resolution, its manufacturer reports. A remote control is included in the \$229 retail price.

Camcorder with SD Storage Card

PANASONIC has released a new camcorder to store footage on SD or SDHC cards. The SDR-S10 comes equipped with a ten-times optical zoom and a USB 2.0 port, its manufacturer reports. When recording in 16:9 format, the camcorder provides a resolution of 350 000 pixels, which climbs to 400,000 pixels in 4:3. The device will be available in stores starting in March for \$429.

Two new projectors from Viewsonic

VIEWSONIC is offering two new projectors. The PJ506D offers 2000:1 contrast values, 800x600 pixel resolution and 2000 ANSI lumens of brightness, its maker reports. The device weighs 2.7kg and costs \$669. The 1.8kg PJ358 LCD projector is even lighter. It offers resolution of 1024x768 pixels and possesses a USB port for reading in presentations stored on a USB stick. It costs \$399.

Fee-based subscription from Skype

SKYPE is now offering a new fee-based subscription for Internet telephony. It is called Skype Pro and costs \$2 per month. Skype Pro customers can call into various Dolarpan countries for 3.9 cents plus VAT per call. Skype voicemail is also available for free. - DPA



LG introduces Prada cell phone

All that glitter ... A Japanese model displays a Sony-Ericsson mobile phone, which is studded with diamonds, rubies and sapphires in Tokyo. The designer instrument is valued at \$3mn.

LG has introduced a cell phone designed for the fashion house Prada. Like the iPhone recently introduced by Apple Computer Inc, the Prada Phone has no keypad. Instead of the user operates it by touching a screen. The phone will be available for purchase in March for 600 euros. The tri-band cell phone also is equipped with a camera with 2 million-pixel resolution.

The LCD display has a resolution of 400 x 200 pixels per inch, which supports films in MPEG4 as well as the H.263 and H.264 formats.

The cell phone, which weighs 85g, also has an integrated MP3 player and a radio. - DPA



Television Listings

	SUPER MOVIES	STAR MOVIES	ESPN SPORTS	FOX SPORTS	HOLLYWOOD CH.	ZEE TV	DISCOVERY CH.	STAR PLUS
5am to 1pm	0500 Four Last Songs (3) 0700 On A Clear Day (2) 1100 Cake (2) 1300 The Kiss (2)	0600 The Marilyn Chambers Story 0735 Thumbelina 0905 Ozzie 1040 A Killer Upstairs 1220 Doctor Doilite 3	0500 College Basketball West Coast Conf. Championship Live 0700 Sportscenter Live 0800 Outside The Lines 0830 Figure Skating Spectacular Exhibition 1000 Sportscenter Live 1100 College Basketball Metro Atlantic Championship 1300 Argentine Open Polo Championship	0600 Fox Soccer Report 0800 NHL: New York Islanders at New York Rangers 1000 Fox Soccer Report 1200 ACC Women's College Basketball Semifinal #2: Teams TBA	0500 Muchmusic VJ Search The Series 0600 The List 0630 The Punk Show 0700 Mmmprofile 0730 The Newmusic Video On Trial 0830 Muchmusic Video 0900 Start! Daily 0930 Start! At The Movies 1000 In Fashion 1030 Fashion Television 1100 Everything 1200 Muchvibe 1300 Muchmusic Special	0500 Sales Slot 0525 Jhalak 0530 WWS 0630 Jai Ganesh 0700 Maa 0730 Mazlein Apni Apni 0800 Sarhadin 0830 Kohi Apna Sa 0900 Jabb Love Hua 0925 Jhalak Exposure 0930 Mamma 1000 Sindoor Tere Naam Ka 1030 Banoo Mein Teri Dulhan 1100 Kasam Se 1130 Saath Phere 1200 Ghar Ki Lakshmi 1230 Betyaann 1230 Movie: Sajjan	0640 Building the Ultimate 0650 Extreme Machines 0700 Firehouse USA 0755 Spy 0850 Thunder Races 0945 Massive Engines 1010 Wheeler Dealers 1105 Myhusters 1200 Firehouse USA 1255 Spy	0500 Meri Saheli 0530 Krishna Kagaz 0600 Kahaani Ghar Ghar 0730 Kesar 0730 Saarthi 0800 Shanti 0830 Shaugh 0930 Sharrat 0930 Karam Apna Apna 1000 Kasauti Zindagi Kay 1030 Kunkum Ek Pyara Sa Bandhan 1100 Bhabhi 1130 Kesar 1200 Saarthi 1230 Kora Kagaz 1300 Shaugh
	MOVIE RATINGS 1 All Viewers, 2 Caution 3 Parental Discretion, V Violence S Adult Content, L Strong Language							
1pm to 7pm	1500 A Promise Kept (2) 1700 The Comeback Season 1900 The Company (2)	1400 The Grudge 1535 Robots 1710 Dirty Deeds 1840 Doctor X	1400 Women's College Basketball Big 10 Championship 1600 ESPN's Major League Baseball Spring Training Detroit Tigers NY Yankees 1900 Sportscenter	1400 Fox Soccer Report 1500 Firsthand Durial Watkins 1530 Euro TV Weekly 1600 Everton vs Sheffield United 1900 Fox Soccer Report	1400 The Art Of The Photograph 1430 Muchmusic Video 1500 Start! Daily 1530 In Fashion 1600 Raw 1630 So 90s 1730 Muchmusic Countdown 1900 Listed	1355 Exposure Jhalak 1430 Film contd. 1530 Kasamh Se 1630 Mamma 1700 Sindoor Tere Naam 2100 Kasam Se 2000 Sales Slot 2055 Exposure Ek Nazar 2100 Kasam Se 2125 Exposure Ek Nazar 2130 Bidwin 2200 Sales Slot 2300 Banoo Mein Teri Dulhan 1800 Maayka 1830 Kasam Se 1900 Saath Phere	1350 Wreck Detectives 1445 Stormproof 1540 Extreme Machines 1655 Massive Engines 1700 Thunder Races 1800 Europe's Richest People 1900 Leonardo's Dream Machines	1330 Sharrat 1400 Virasaat 1430 Karamh Ek Pyara Sa Bandhan 1500 Kahaan Ghar Ghar Ki 1530 Kaun Banega Crorepati - SRK 1630 Kunkum Ek Pyara Sa Bandhan 1700 Karam Apna Apna 1730 Karam Apna Apna 1800 Kasauti Zindagi Kay 1830 Virasaat 1900 Siski
7pm to 5am	2100 Ash Wednesday (3) 2300 The Eastsiders (3) 0100 Shallow Ground 0300 Ash Wednesday (3)	2030 Lock Up 0000 Amen IV The Awakening 0135 The Unauthorized Story Of Monk & Minko 0305 The Perfect Neighbor 0440 Hollywood Shootouts	2000 College Basketball West Coast Conf. Championship 2200 Outside The Lines 2230 College Basketball Metro Atlantic Championship 0030 Figure Skating Spectacular Exhibition Repeat 0100 Women's College Basketball Atlantic 10 Timbersports Series 0200 Sportscenter 0300 College Basketball Mid-Continent Championship Live	2100 Mexican Soccer NHL: New York Islanders at New York Rangers 2200 Mexican Soccer 0300 Golf Central International 0330 Golf Channel TBA	2000 The Spin 0530 ABC World News Flow 2100 Start! Daily 2130 Best Movies! Ever! 2230 ABCs Of Rock 2300 The Story Of... 0000 The Wedge 0100 Mmmprofile 0130 The Newmusic Video On Trial 0200 Muchmusic Video 0300 Start! Daily 0330 Start! At The Movies 0400 In Fashion 0430 Fashion Television	1930 Ghar Ki Lakshmi 2100 Wadyaani 2000 Jabb Love Hua 2030 Maayka 2055 Exposure Ek Nazar 2100 Kasam Se 2125 Exposure Ek Nazar 2130 Bidwin 2200 Sales Slot 2300 Banoo Mein Teri Dulhan 2330 Sindoor Tere Naam Ka 0000 Kasamh Se 0030 Mamma 0100 Saath Phere 0130 Jabb Love Hua 0200 Urja 0230 Narseva Narayan Seva	2000 A Bike Is Born 2100 Myhusters 2200 Mega Machines 2300 Man Made Marvels Asia 0000 FBI Files 0100 The Fight For Iwo Jima 0200 Finding The Fallen 0350 Thunder Races 0445 Europe's Richest People	1930 Kahaani Ghar Ghar 2000 Kunkum Ek Pyara Sa Bandhan 2030 Kabi Bahu Thi 2100 Kayamathi 2100 Kaun Banega Crorepati - SRK 2200 Karam Apna Apna 2300 Karam Apna Apna 2330 Kunkum Ek Pyara Sa Bandhan 2300 Kora Kagaz 0000 Kesar 0030 Shanti 0100 Sharrat 0130 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki 0200 Shaugh 0230 Bhabhi 0300 Kayamathi
5am to 1pm	GEO TV 0505 Bacheh Mun Kay Sachay 0530 Fun Club 0605 Advance Booking 0630 Songs 0705 Akela Na Gana 0730 Khuwab 0805 Paalna 0830 Advance Booking 0905 Bachelor Bewarshi 0930 Noor Jehan 1000 Kkusum 1030 Sheeshay Ka Mehal 1100 Ye Meri Life Hai 1130 Aashna 1200 Safaid Josh 1230 Jassi Jassi Koi Nahin	AMERICA PLUS 0500 The OC 0600 GMA Recorded 0700 Inside The Actors Studio 0800 Everwood 0900 All My Children 1000 Stingers 1100 Everwood 1200 All My Children 1300 Gilmore Girls	FUN CHANNEL 0500 Skate 0530 The Tribe 0600 The Adventures Of The Bush Patrol 0630 High Flyers 0700 Sleeper Club 0730 Explorations 0805 The Littles 0825 Little Mouse On The Prairie 0850 Journey To The Heart Of The World 0915 Gulliver's Travels 0945 Inspector Gadget 1000 Lady Lovely Looks 1025 Princess Tenko 1100 Little Mermaid 1110 Pincopio 1155 The Littles 1220 Little Mouse On The Prairie 1245 Journey To The Heart Of The World	BBC WORLD 0500 BBC News, Weather 0530 World Business Report 0545 Sport Today Sports 0600 BBC News, Weather 0630 Asia Today 0645 Asia Business Report 0700 BBC News, Weather 0730 Handtalk Interviews 0800 BBC News, Weather 0830 World Business Report 0900 BBC News, Weather 0930 World Business Report 1000 BBC News, Weather 1030 World Business Report 1045 Sport Today 1100 BBC News, Weather 1130 Click 1200 BBC News, Weather 1230 Hardtalk 1300 BBC News, Weather	ORBIT NEWS 0500 NBC Nightly News 0530 ABC World News 0600 MSNBC - Carlson 0700 NBC Nightly News 0730 ABC Nightline 0800 Newshour With Jim Lehrer 0900 MSNBC Scarborough 1000 MSNBC Hardball 1100 ABC Nightline 1130 NBC Nightly News 1200 ABC World News 1230 NBC Early Today 1300 MSNBC Live First Look	CNN INTERNATIONAL 0530 World Sport 0600 Anderson Cooper 0700 World News 0730 World Sport 0800 CNN Today 0830 World News International 1200 World News 1230 World Sport 1300 Larry King	DISNEY CHANNEL 0520 Tarzan 0540 Recess 0550 Classic Cartoons 0600 House Of Mouse 0625 Lilo And Stitch 0650 Kim Possible 0710 Emperor's New School 0725 Recess 0750 Fillmore 0800 Breakfast Briefing 0810 Lloyd In Space 0835 Classic Cartoons 0900 Mickey's Club House 0925 Little Einsteins 0950 Jo Jo's Circus 1010 Stanley 1035 Higglytown Heroes 1100 Goof Troop 1125 Recess 1145 Kim Possible 1210 Lilo And Stitch 1235 House Of Mouse 1255 Quack Pack 1300 News And Lifestyle	CHANNEL [V] INT. 0500 Double Shot: Pop 0600 Popparazzi 0630 The Record Shop 0700 America's Next Top Model S7 #3 0800 Parental Control #10 0930 Double Shot 1000 Remote Control 1100 Backpackers #26 1100 Depeche Mode 1200 Popparazzi 1230 The Record Shop 1300 [V] Special: Kasabian TV Special
1pm to 7pm	1300 Pyaree Shammo 1450 Mehndi Walay 1430 Khuda Kee Basti 1505 Tere Pehlo Mein 1510 Kaajal 1605 Advance Booking 1630 Fun Club 1705 Good Food 1730 Razzmatazz 1800 Mehndi Walay 1830 Khuda Kee Basti	1400 Stingers 1500 GMA Live 1700 Gilmore Girls 1800 Related 1900 Supernatural	1305 Gulliver's Travels 1330 Inspector Gadget 1365 Jin Jin And The Panda Patrol 1420 Oliver Twist 1445 Ek The Cat 1510 Heathcliff 1530 Bad Dog 1555 The Littles 1620 Little Mouse On The Prairie 1645 Journey To The Heart Of The World 1710 Gulliver's Travels 1735 Inspector Gadget 1800 Camp Candy 1825 The Adventures Of Pincopio 1850 Peter Pan And The Pirates	1330 Fast Track 1400 BBC News, Weather 1430 World Business Report 1445 Sport Today 1500 World News Today 1530 Handtalk Interviews 1600 BBC News, Weather 1630 Asia Today 1700 BBC News, Weather 1730 Hardtalk 1800 BBC News, Weather 1830 Take Off 1/6 1900 BBC News, Weather	1330 ABC America This Morning Live 1430 NBC Early Today 1500 The Today Show 1600 PBS Newshour 1630 World News 1700 World News Asia 1800 Your World Today 1900 MSNBC Hardball	1400 Business International 1500 World News Asia 1600 World News Europe 1630 World Sport 1700 World News Asia 1800 Your World Today	1320 Tarzan 1340 Recess 1350 Lloyd In Space 1435 Brandy And Mr Whiskers 1500 Recess 1510 Lilo And Stitch 1535 Emperor's New School 1600 Family Odd Parents 1625 American Dragon 1650 Kim Possible 1700 News And Lifestyle 1710 Hannah Montana 1735 The Suite Life Of Zack And Cody 1800 Emperor's New School 1825 Fillmore 1845 Recess Animation 1900 Brandy And Mr Whiskers	1330 Double Shot 1400 Fashion File 1430 Double Shot 1500 One-Tastic 1530 This Cover 1600 Arcade 1630 Cactus Garden #21 1700 Backpackers #26 1730 Double Shot 1800 The Rock Show 1830 Flava 1900 Breaking Up With Shannen Doherty
7pm to 5am	1905 Tere Pehlo Mein 1930 Kaajal 2005 Aashna 2030 Noor Jehan 2105 Khuwab 2130 Advance Booking 2205 Good Food 2230 Razzmatazz 2305 Mehndi Walay Haaath 0005 Khuda Kee Basti 0030 Tere Pehlo Mein 0030 Kaajal 0105 Aashna 0130 Noor Jehan 0205 Pyaree Shammo 0305 Safaid Posh 0330 Sheeshay Ka Mehal	2100 Related 2000 Stargate Atlantis 2030 Las Vegas 2040 E-Ring 0100 Related 0120 Stargate Atlantis 0300 Las Vegas 0400 ER	1915 Dennis 2000 Explorations 2030 The Adventures Of The Bush Patrol 2100 Skate 2130 The Tribe 2200 The Adventures Of The Bush Patrol 2230 High Flyers 2300 Sleeper Club 2330 Explorations 0030 The Adventures Of The Bush Patrol 0100 Skate 0130 The Tribe 0200 The Adventures Of The Bush Patrol 0230 High Flyers 0300 Sleeper Club 0330 Explorations 0430 The Adventures Of The Bush Patrol	1930 Asia Today 2000 BBC News, Weather 2030 World Business Report 2045 Sport Today 2100 BBC News, Weather 2130 Talking Movies 2200 BBC News, Weather 2230 Take Off 1/6 2300 BBC News, Weather 2330 Talking Movies 0000 World News Today Including World Business Report 0100 BBC News 0115 Sport Today 0130 World Business Report 0145 Asia Business Report 0200 BBC News, Weather 0230 Asia Today 0245 Asia Business Report 0300 BBC News, Weather	2000 MSNBC Countdown W/K. Olbermann 2100 MSNBC Live 2200 NBC Dateline 2300 MSNBC Live T. 0000 MSNBC Live T. Carlson 0100 MSNBC Live Hardball 0200 ABC Nightline 0230 ABC World News 0300 NBC Nightly News 0330 ABC World News 0400 MSNBC Live Countdown W/K. Olbermann	2230 World Business Today 2300 World News Europe 2330 World Business Today 0000 World News Europe 0030 World Sport 0100 Business International 0200 CNN Today 0230 World Sport 0300 CNN Today	1925 Fairly Odd Parents 1950 Phil Of The Future 2010 The Suite Life Of Zack And Cody 2035 That's So Raven 2100 Evening News 2125 Boy Meets World 2150 Classic Cartoons 2200 House Of Mouse 2225 Lilo And Stitch 2250 Kim Possible 2310 Emperor's New School 2325 Recess 2350 Fillmore 0010 Lloyd In Space 0035 Classic Cartoons 0100 Mickey's Club House 0125 Little Einsteins 0150 Jo Jo's Circus 0210 Stanley 0235 Higglytown Heroes	2000 Fashion File 2030 Double Shot 2100 Double Shot 2130 This Cover 2200 Popparazzi 2300 America's Next Top Model S7 #3 0000 Video(Scope): Depeche Mode 0100 Parental Control #10 0130 Double Shot 0300 One-Tastic 0330 This Cover 0400 Double Shot: 90's Double Shot: 90's Superstars

RADIO STATIONS

QBS ENGLISH SERVICE 0600 Holy Quran and Its Translation 0615 The Breakfast Show (News Summary at 0700) 0845 Arabic/Islamic Programme 0900 Temporo Latino 1000 In All Directions 1100 News Summary 1105 Midday Show 1300 The News 1315 French Transmission 1600 Evening Album 1700 Features Show 1800 The News 1815 Evening Show contd... 2000 News Summary 2005 Soft Tunes 2100 Music in Stereo	ties and events; Music; Schedule of the day; News; Qatari press review; Number 1 1330 News Flash 1345 Charqui Kharbi 1415 French/English programme; World and Arabic music 1530 News Flash 1535 Exceptional Women 1600 Back to English Service	QBS URDU SERVICE 1858 Opening Music 1900 Opening & Holy Qur'an 1910 Hamd or Na'at 1915 Islamic Heritage 1930 News 1945 Songs 2000 Chhoti Si Dunia 2000 Obaid Tahir 2100 Saif Rahur 2100 Mahmood Ahmed 2200 National Anthem	RADIO ASIA MALAYALAM SERVICE 0500 Manjukurum Pular Kalam 0530 Life Magazine 0605 Keralaeyam 0700 Sarasakazham 0800 Hello Rainbow 0900 GMG 1000 Comedy Serial 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World Briefing 2220 World Business Report 2230 Digital Planet 2300 World News 2305 Documentary 2330 The Word 2340 World News 0005 Newshour 0100 World News 0105 World Briefing
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	BBC PRIME	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	STAR WORLD	GRANADA UK	MOVIE CHANNEL	MGM	TV LAND	SUN TV					
5am to 1pm	0600 Popcorn 0700 Garden Invaders 0730 Balamory 0750 Tweenies 0810 Big Cook Little Cook 0830 Tikkiabilla 0900 Boogie Beebies 0915 Tweenies 0935 Balamory 0955 Teletubbies 1020 Fimbles 1040 Big Cook Little Cook 1100 Changing Rooms 1130 Tony And Giorgio 1200 Ground Force 1230 Garden Invaders	0600 Gorillas From Heart Of Darkness 0700 In The Wombs 0800 Animals 0800 Spine Chillers 0900 Planet Wild 0930 Amazing Moments 0900 Crash Science 1100 Naked Science 1200 Is It Real S2	0600 The King Of Queens 0630 The Simpsons 0700 Seinfeld 0730 Hollywood Squares 0800 Friends 0800 Cheers 0900 Oprah Winfrey Show 1000 Miami Vice 1100 Still Standing 1130 Frasier 1200 Life With Bonnie 1230 Rodney	0630 Airline (Series 6) 0700 An Audience With Victoria Wood 0800 Under The 0900 Night And Day 0930 Mission Wild 1000 Upstairs Downstairs 1100 Home To Roost (Series 4) 1130 Emmerdale 1200 Coronation Street 1230 Day One The Shadowmaker	0700 Iznogoud 0900 Mystery Science Theatre 1030 Pop Rocks 1200 Avalanche	0500 Eureka 0745 The Scalphunters 0845 The Passage 1030 The Hawaiians 1240 Taras Bulba	0500 Top Gear 0600 Kojak (2005) 0700 Stargate SG-1 0800 Xena Warrior Princess 0900 The Unit 1000 Survivor Cook Islands 1100 Beauty And The Beast 1200 Prison Break	0530 Super 10 0700 Raja Rajeswari 0730 Malarum Mottum 0800 Ninavugal 0830 Surya 0900 Bandhan 0930 Nimmadhi 1000 Chellamadi Nee Enakku 1030 Sorgam 1100 Afternoon Bulletin 1130 Movie: Pavithra					
	1pm to 7pm	1300 Model Gardens 1330 The Abyss 1430 Keeping Up Appearances 1500 My Dad's The Prime Minister 1530 My Hero 1600 Our Mutual Friend 1700 Popcorn 1800 Big Strong Boys 1830 Changing Rooms	1300 Mad Labs 1330 I Didn't Know That 1400 Baby Catchers Of The Amazon 1500 Killer Leopard 1600 Crash Science 1700 Naked Science 1800 NG's Taboo	1300 Oprah Winfrey Show 1400 Fashion House 1500 General Hospital 1600 Desperate Housewives 1700 Baywatch 1800 The Simpsons 1830 Cheers	1430 Airline (Series 6) 1500 Inspector Morse (Series 2) 1700 The Gentle Touch (Series 4) 1800 Upstairs Downstairs	1330 Surviving Christmas 1500 Mystery Science Theatre 1630 Pop Rocks 1830 The Motorcycle Diaries	1440 One Woman's Courage 1610 White Lightning 1750 Smile	1300 Ugly Betty 1400 Desperate Housewives 1500 Xena Warrior Princess 1600 The Unit 1700 Kojak (2005) 1800 Stargate SG-1	1400 Santhipoma 1430 Kuttys Choice 1500 My Dear Bootham 1530 Murrhanth 1600 Evening News Headlines 1603 Kasturi 1630 Anandham 1700 Malargal 1730 Evening News 1800 Anjali 1830 Kolangal				
		7pm to 9pm	1900 Cash In The Attic 1930 Small Town Gardens 2000 My Dad's The Prime Minister 2030 My Hero 2100 A Place In France 2200 Final Demand 2300 Absolute Power 2330 The Smoking Room 0000 The Kumars At Number 42	1900 Microkillers 2000 Crash Science 2100 Naked Science 2200 NG's Taboo 2300 Microkillers 0000 Mad Labs 0030 I Didn't Know That 0100 Baby Catchers Of The Amazon	1900 Friends 1930 Seinfeld 2000 Falcon Beach 2100 Fashion House 2200 NCIS 2300 Seinfeld 2330 Friends 0000 Falcon Beach 0100 Fashion House 0200 Killer Leopard	1900 In Loving Memory (Series 3) 1930 Emmerdale 2000 Coronation Street 2030 Chiller 2130 Boon (Series 2) 2230 Mary Me (Series 2) 2300 Inspector Morse (Series 2) 0100 The Gentle Touch (Series 4) 0200 Upstairs Downstairs	2100 Moscow Heat 2300 Ray 0200 Monster 2001 0400 Alien Siege	1940 Ghoulies 2100 Sour Grapes 2225 The Voyage 0005 Where The River Runs Black 0140 Give Me Your Life 0310 Blood Games	1900 Criminal Minds 2000 Windfall 2100 Friday Night Lights 2200 C.S.I. Miami 2300 Monster Garage 0000 The Unit 0100 Prison Break 0200 Criminal Minds 0300 Windfall 0400 Friday Night Lights	1900 Arasi 1930 Lakshmi 2000 Surya 2030 Putham Pudhusu 2100 News In Tamil 2200 Thirai Masala 0300 News In Tamil 0330 Putham Pudhusu 0400 Mangayar Choice			
			9pm to 1pm	0700 Today's Business 0800 Squawk Box 1100 Europe Worldwide Exchange	0600 Sky News On The Hour 0630 CBS News 0730 Sky World News 0750 Review & Business 0800 Sky World News 0830 Review & Business 0900 Sunrise 1200 Sky News Today	QATAR TV-2 NO TRANSMISSION	ASIANET TV 0600 Pradhana Varthakal 0605 Tharavishesham 0630 Movie: 0900 WWS 0930 Manishada 1030 Asianet Varthakal 1100 Movie	STAR GOLD 0610 WWS Sky Shop 0625 V Trailers 0630 Ithaas 1025 V Trailers 1030 Anjnam	NICKELODEON 0730 Bottle Top Bill 0745 Lunar Jim 0800 Barney 0830 Blues Clues 0900 Connie The Cow 0915 Pingu 0930 Dora The Explorer 1000 Thomas & Friends 1015 Postman Pat 1030 Bottle Top Bill 1045 Lunar Jim 1100 A House That's Just Like Yours 1130 Hi 5 1200 Tracey Mcbean 1230 Danny Phantom	K TV 0700 Song Sequence 0730 Movie: <i>Thaat Bhoot</i> Thanjavoor 1000 Song Sequence 1030 Movie: <i>Sabapathy</i>	SURYA TV 0700 Nungalude Choice 0730 Ammayachan Urangatha Veedu 0800 Film Express 0830 Music Moments 0900 Anandam 0930 Chechi 1000 Kolangal 1030 News 1045 Movie: <i>Uppukandam Brothers</i>		
				1pm to 7pm	1300 Power Lunch 1400 US CNBC Squawk Box 1600 Squawk On The Street 1700 US Morning Call 1800 European Closing Bell	1500 Lunchtime Live 1700 Sky News Today	1500 Holy Qur'an 1530 Garfield 1600 Marspilami 1630 Play With Me Sesame 1700 In A Heart 1845 Genesis	1330 5 Star Thattukada 1355 Cookery Show 1400 Valkannadi 1500 Mahatma Gandhi Colony 1525 Swantham 1530 Suryaputhri 1555 Munshi 1600 News Time 1630 Malayogam 1700 Shirree 1730 Amma Manasu 1800 Samadooram 1830 Dany the Mandrake	1400 King of Comedy 1430 Kyaa Kool Hai Hum 1800 Sabse Bada Khladi	1300 Yakkity Yak 1330 Hey Arnold 1400 Spongebob Squarepants 1430 All Grown Up 1500 Tracey Mcbean 1530 Danny Phantom 1600 Blues Clues 1630 Dora The Explorer 1700 Barney 1730 Hi 5 1800 Fraggle Rock 1830 Jungle Run	1300 Song Sequence 1330 Movie: <i>Dhinandhorum</i> 1600 Karuppu Vellai 1630 Thirai Minnagal 1700 Andrum Indrum 1730 Movie: <i>Kaadhal Parisu</i>	1330 Comedy Time 1400 Venal Mazha 1430 Hai Kids 1500 Kutties Choice 1530 News 1600 Neelakurinjii 1630 Manassaryadhe 1700 Kanakkinnavu 1730 Prayanam 1800 Kalyanee 1830 Minnu Kettu	
					7pm to 9pm	2000 US Power Lunch 2100 Europe Tonight 2130 Street Signs 2200 US Closing Bell 0000 The Tonight Show With Jay Leno Late Night With Conan O'Brien 0130 NBC Nightly News 0200 Pokerheaven.Com Online Series Of Poker	2000 Live At Five 2130 Sportsline 2200 The Sky Report 2300 World News Tonight 0000 Nine O'clock News 0030 Sky News 0130 Sky News At Ten 0130 Sportsline 0200 Sky News Tonight	1945 Maybe 2000 This Time 2015 World Game 2130 Law and Order 2200 English News 2215 Feature Film 0000 Transmission of Al-Jazeera Channel	1900 Swami Ayyappan 1930 Sanmanassu-Varkaku Samadhanam 1955 DSF Update 2000 Asianet Varthakal 2030 Gulf Varthakal 2230 Star Singer 2330 Amma Manassu 0000 Ting Tong 0030 Kannadi 0100 Sanmanassu-Varkaku Samadhanam 0130 News Hour	2130 King of Comedy 2200 Telemart English Guru 2215 V Trailers 2220 Deedar 2200 V Trailers 0205 Beqabu	1900 Darcy's Wild Life 1930 Unfabulous 2000 My Parents Are Aliens 2030 Tracey Mcbean 2100 Danny Phantom 2130 Yakkity Yak 2200 Hey Arnold 2230 Spongebob Squarepants All Grown Up 2330 Blues Clues 0000 Dora The Explorer 0030 Thomas & Friends 0045 Postman Pat	2000 Sripuru Vedigal 2030 Movie: <i>Soorakkottai Singakkuti</i> 2300 Song Sequence 0200 News 0230 Song Sequence 0430 Movie	1900 Kayamkulam Kochummi 1930 Bhanayan Sookshikkuka 2000 Comedy Time 2030 News 2100 DSF Hungama Fungama 2130 Camy Choice 2200 Film Express 2230 Tharika 2300 Cookery

INFORMATION

PRAYER TIME
Fajr 4.37am, Shoroq (sunrise) 5.53am, Zuhr (noon) 11.45am, Asr (afternoon) 3.07pm, Maghreb (sunset) 5.39pm, Isha (night) 7.09pm.

DONA ZOO
Open from 8am to 12 noon and 2.30pm to 7pm daily. Tuesdays are reserved for women. Friday for general public in the afternoon only.

CONSUMER COMPLAINTS
Tel: 4408555

HOSPITALS
Visiting Hours:
Hamad General Hospital, Women's Hospital and Rumailah Hospital 6am to 7.30am, 4pm to 8pm.

HELP LINE
Is drinking a problem for you or someone you love?
Call Alcoholics Anonymous: 5605901

LATEST DVD, VIDEO RELEASES
ENGLISH: *Unknown* (Jim Caviezel, Greg Kinnear); *Saw* (Shawnee Amin, Bahar Soomekh); *Pokémon: Destiny Deoxys*

Open Season (Animation); *Nothing* (David Hewlett, Andrew Miller); *Wicker Man* (Nicholas Cage); *King Maker* (Gary Stretch, John Rhys-Davies); *Wicker Man* (Nicholas Cage); *Find Me Guilty* (Vin Diesel); *Akeelah & The Bee* (Keke Palmer, Laurence Fishburne); *Black Hole* (Judd Nelson, Kristy Swanson); *Silther* (Nathan Fillion, Michael Rooker); *Bailey's Billion* (Jackie Burroughs); *Seven Swords*; *Basic Instinct 2* (Sharon Stone); *Tamara* (Jeena Dewan, Katie Stuart).
HINDI: *Bhagam Bhag* (Govinda); *Dhoom 2* (Hrithik Roshan); *Jaana* (Rajesh Khanna, Zeenat Aman); *Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna* (Shahrukh Khan); *Kudiyon Ka Zamana* (Rekha); *I See You* (Arjun Rampal); *Aryan* (Sohal Khan, Sneha Ullal); *Baabul* (Rani Mukherji); *Dil Dija Hai* (Emraan Hashmi, Geeta Basra); *Viva!* (Shahid Kapoor, Amrita Rao); *Umrao Jan* (Aishwarya Rai, Abhishek Bachchan); *Apna Sapna Money Money* (Jackie Shroff, Sunil Shetty); *Urrns* (Sanjay Kapoor); *Rahguzar* (Jimmy Shergil, Saloni); *Don* (Shahrukh Khan).
ARABIC: *Emarat Yaacobian*; *Allemni Hob*; *Oreed Khalaan*; *Dars Khosouy*; *Zarf Tarek*; *Ghaway Hob*; *Mailesh Ahna Bentabdel*.

(Information courtesy: Q-Mart Audio Video at The Mall).

USEFUL NUMBERS
Police, Fire, Ambulance 999
HMC 4392222
Women's (Rumailah) 4393333
HMC (Emergency) 4393507
Veterinary 653063
Water & Electricity 991
Flight Inquiries 4622999
Doha Seaport 4457457
Museum 4442191
Cinema 4671811
Murtaz Post (24-hr Service): 4415566
4432211
(Car) 4483555
Ship Phone Service 4864444
Ministry of Interior main switchboard 4330000
Public Department for passports, nationality and residence 4822882
Capital Security Department 4444420
Criminal Information Department 4477477
Boundaries and Coasts Security 4414488
Civil Defence Department 4413666
Public Relations Department 4448720
Rescue Service 4682888

YOUR STARS

ARIES (Mar 21-April 20): Try not to skirt issues if you think you'll hurt someone's feelings. Get busy putting your place in order. You will have good ideas for home improvement projects. +++

TAURUS (April 21-May 21): Your contributions will be valued and helpful. It might be time for you to take a quantum leap from one career to another. You can make financial gains through your unique and creative approach to business. +++

GEMINI (May 22-June 21): You must watch your tendency to spend whatever you make. You will need to take a look at the renovations that are necessary and try to find the cheapest way to get things done. Social activities or travel should be in your plans. +++

CANCER (June 22-July 22): Try to address the real issues in order to turn things around. You may not see your situation clearly. You will be appreciated for the competence you exhibit and for taking on responsibilities. +++

LEO (July 23-August 22): Look into the cost factor, but don't try to get backing yet. Limitations with females could lead to unfortunate circumstances. You may find a rare antique today. +++

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): Satisfy your passionate mood. All your energy should be directed into moneymaking opportunities. You can make personal changes that will enhance your appearance and bring you greater popularity. +++

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Ask family members for help and you will be able to complete the projects more quickly. You may want to stay in the background today. You must get out and mingle. +++

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): You could find yourself caught in a one sided relationship. Try to curb your tongue and let others at least get a word in. You have your own family to consider as well. Go after your professional goals. +++

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 21): Your best efforts will come through making changes in your home. You should not be concerned with co-workers who insist on spreading rumours. Use discretion in your dealings and refrain from making verbal promises of any kind. +++

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 20): Don't overdo it. You need to enjoy yourself. Avoid any gossip and be careful that you aren't misinterpreted. Your creative input will be appreciated by your boss. +++

AQUARIUS (January 21-February 19): Entertainment should include your whole family. Monitor your budget carefully to avoid unnecessary stress. Accept the inevitable. +++

PISCES (February 20-March 20): You may find that your generosity has been taken for granted. Let others at talents and present your ideas to groups you think you can contribute to. Put some energy into getting back into shape. Listen to reason. +++



Chiefs climb to top



Ricky Wilson

MIKA has finally been toppled from the summit of the Britain's singles chart. *Ruby*, the first UK chart-topper for Kaiser Chiefs, had held the runner-up spot for the past two weeks on download sales alone. It was a hot favourite to surge past Mika when the CD single became available in record shops. But Ricky Wilson, the band's lead singer and frontman, would not take anything for granted.

"There were no celebrations until we were confirmed at No. 1," he said. "I don't know how important it really is to top the chart but I do know it will look good on our discography."

The Leeds-based quintet could enjoy a double celebration next week.

Their second album, *Yours Truly, Angry Mob*, released last week, looks almost certain to

surpass the No.2 position reached in 2005 by *Employment*, their Mercury Music Prize-nominated debut album.

"We weren't certain how our fans would react to the songs on our new album," Ricky admitted. "They still have sing-along choruses and what I hope are incisive lyrics but we're definitely angrier on the new songs. We say what we think about a few things. This is something we didn't tend to do on our first album."

Ricky has also been saying what he thinks about a few people, though usually in response to comments made about Kaiser Chiefs.

"One of the things about our becoming a major band on the British music scene is that we're now a target for others who are usually not so successful. There isn't much point in these people slagging off less

well-known artistes because their remarks wouldn't get into the papers. Consequently, they've had a go at us, Ricky says.

"Most of what has been said doesn't bother me. If you do reply, it just gives more column inches to those who made the original remark. But there have been one or two things recently which couldn't be left unanswered."

Despite the enormous popularity of *Ruby*, Ricky refuses to divulge too much information about the song. He has given multiple answers to the question of whether *Ruby* is a real person or a figment of his imagination.

"It's often nice to leave a little mystery. But no, the song is not about a real person. It contains elements from relationships with a number of people," points out Ricky.

Joel Gibb to take break from music



Joel Gibb

CANADIAN indie band The Hidden Cameras will be inactive for the foreseeable future. Founder-member, guitarist, singer, songwriter and producer Joel Gibb has decided to take a break from music. An artist as well as a musician, Joel intends to concentrate on his artistic endeavours. He is currently showing felt banners, collages and watercolours at Sunday, a contemporary art gallery in New York. Collected under the title *Rise Up Thou Earth*, it is Joel's first solo exhibition. Despite displaying his work in New York, Joel plans to further his career in the art world by moving to London.

◆◆

REFORMED US rockers Dinosaur Jr. have placed two tracks from their upcoming album in media player at www.myspace.com/dinosaurjr. *Almost Ready* and *Been There All The Time* are the new songs. They are accompanied by two old favourites, *Freak Scene* and *Just Like Heaven*.

◆◆

THERE is much to enjoy on the Internet for fans of Northern Irish indie trio Ash. The band will return this summer with their fifth

studio album, their first new material since *Meltdown* in 2004. One of the album tracks, *I Started A Fire*, is being offered as a free digital download at www.myfreedownload.co.uk/ash. Another song, *No Place To Hide*, is available for free download from www.myspace.com/ash.

◆◆

FORMER Ash guitarist Charlotte Hatherley is currently on tour promoting her second solo album, *The Deep Blue*. The album was initially promoted with a four-track EP, *Behave*. Videos for her new single and *Behave* can be viewed at www.myspace.com/charlottehatherleyofficial.





Above: Daniel Day-Lewis and Leonardo DiCaprio in *Gangs of New York*. Right: Martin Scorsese directs DiCaprio and Matt Damon in the Oscar-winning *The Departed*. Both projects were produced by Graham King.



Gwen Stefani and DiCaprio in *The Aviator*.

A 'King'-pin in Hollywood

By Craig McLean in London

WHO is Graham King? "I'm a film producer. How do you define a film producer? Wow... my job is to find screenplays, books, articles, and develop those into shooting scripts. Hire the actors, the director - sometimes even finance the movies."

He's involved all the way through overseeing the day-to-day running of the shoot of the film, overseeing the post-production, the release of the movie, the marketing campaigns, trailers. And trying to get the talent to do publicity, which is never easy. So really my job is, from start to finish - everything."

King is the 45-year-old son of a hair dresser and a cabbie from Cockfosters, at the northern end of the Piccadilly line. He's the founder of the Initial Entertainment Group, a Los Angeles-based production company.

IEG is a small outfit, employing 15 people. But by the CEO's estimation they've garnered 58 Oscar nominations in four years. Having previously set up Leonardo DiCaprio's production company, Appian Way, King has also formed another with Johnny Depp, called Infinitum Nihil.

"Graham's got terrific taste," says Matt Damon. "He's always trying to line himself up with people that he thinks are good. And he's producing good movies because of it. On *The Departed*, he was there on set every day. Nobody is overbearing on one of Marty's (Scorsese) sets. It's very clear that we're all there working for Marty."

"It's a very deferential environment. But Graham's done so many things with Marty

now that he definitely has his ear, so if he has a suggestion, he's not shy about giving it."

Scorsese says that King is different from other producers, insofar as his presence during filming is less about keeping a tidy, money man's eye on budgets and schedules. "I find him a comforting figure on the set," says the director. "Unlike some people in the past, who were alarming."

It was King who raised the money to enable Scorsese to make his long-cherished *Gangs of New York* who financed DiCaprio's own pet project, the Howard Hughes biopic *The Aviator*, and who helped get Scorsese on board to direct after Michael Mann bailed out (the *Miami Vice* director didn't fancy another biopic after *Ali* - also a King movie).

It was King who rescued Steven Soderbergh's *Traffic* after Harrison Ford pulled out, and who helped DiCaprio move beyond his *Titanic*-era dreamboat status to become one of the greatest movie stars of the times.

DiCaprio is brilliant as an undercover cop in *The Departed*. He's equally believable in recent release *Blood Diamond*, in which he plays a Zimbabwean ex-mercenary on the trail of a fabulous pink diamond in war-torn Sierra Leone. (King was a producer on that \$100m movie, too.)

When Scorsese finally triumphed at the Oscars this year for *The Departed*, it was as much of an achievement for his producer. That's Graham King, the most powerful Brit in Hollywood.

He's a big, broad guy, dressed in smart-casual black. A resident of Malibu, he has the Californian colouring and the confident

air of a man who has been working in Hollywood for 25 years.

He possesses the staccato spiel of a seasoned salesman. He started out in a lowly job in international sales at Fox television, when the company flogged shows such as *Star Trek* and *Hutch*, *M*A*S*H* and *Dynasty* all round the world.

On leaving school he considered going to college to study economics and computer science. But in 1981, when he was 19, he followed his mum out to LA. She had sold her hairdressing businesses and emigrated after splitting with his dad.

He enrolled at UCLA, taking the subjects he'd planned to study in Britain. But after a few months he landed a three-week temping job at Fox, working in the international television distribution department, dispatching copies of shows to buyers abroad.

Already King was thinking that he'd found his calling. "I loved the business, the industry, I loved Hollywood."

One day, Bill Saunders, Fox's president of international TV sales, ponced a cigarette off a kid in the temping pool. "All right, take one," replied King. "I'm sure you can afford 'em more than I can, but take one."

Saunders, another Englishman, who had worked his way up from the postroom at Fox in London, noticed the youngster's accent, and his pluck. The next day he called King to his office and offered him a permanent job.

He stayed for seven years, mentored by Saunders, learning the art of selling. But with Saunders due to retire, King wanted to move on, too.

Displaying thechutzpah that had taken him to LA in the first place, King decided to escape the corporate world.

Now, King is renowned in Hollywood for his ability to come up with fantastical sums of money to make punishingly expensive movies, by pre-selling films to distributors on the strength of their scripts alone.

Things started with a bang in 1999 when Scorsese couldn't find a backer for his *Gangs of New York* script - "because," says King, "the studios were looking at a budget of around \$90m, \$95m. And a period piece which, with Marty, usually means a 2hr 40 minute movie."

King fronted \$65m. But *Gangs of New York* became an infamously tortuous shoot, taking three years to make.

In that period King also greenlit *Ali* and *Traffic* - he had become friends and shared an office with Catherine Zeta-Jones, in part through expat kinship, after the Welsh actress relocated to LA.

Traffic was a financial and artistic triumph - King savvily held off selling it until the drugs drama had won four Oscars. But he did lose money on *Ali*. He thinks the movie failed because it was too long; the public wasn't ready to buy Will Smith as living legend Mohamed Ali (although he was Oscar-nominated for the role).

King has plenty more on his plate. He and Johnny Depp will start shooting the Indian-set, drugs-'n'-criminals epic *Shantaram* later this year. He's in post-production on two Nicolas Cage actioners, *Next* and *Bangkok Dangerous*.

He's long wanted to make a film in Britain but is frustrated by the parochial attitude.

But King is putting his money where his mouth is and, finally, making a British film. He talks of a "fabulous" script he is developing with Oscar-winning writer-actor-director Julian Fellowes (*Gosford Park*). He couldn't go into much detail but said that it was about the young Queen Victoria.

King's top-to-bottom understanding of his projects is evident. Fellowes thinks, in his choice of director for *The Young Victoria* - a young French-Canadian director named Jean-Marc Vallée. "That's very creative, a lateral-thinking appointment of a brilliant filmmaker. He's one

of those giant Hollywood people who can start a project just by being interested in it. So it seems to me extremely good news for Britain that he's interested in making a film here."

In 2005 he won the Best Picture Bafta and Golden Globe for *The Aviator*, but Scorsese missed out on Best Director. "I'd never won anything in my life other than on a lottery ticket. So there I am, up on stage - and Marty wasn't winning. That was a really hard pill for me to swallow."

King has other dreams for perhaps the greatest living director.

"I would love to make a movie that Marty would star in. He's been in movies, and he did the voice in *Shark Tale*. But I think he's just a personality all of his own. He's bigger than the movie stars some times!"

If anyone could make that happen, it's Graham King from north London. - Guardian News & Media

Producer Graham King with the Oscar for Best Picture for *The Departed* at this year's Academy Awards ceremony.



GARFIELD



POOCH CAFE



BOUND & GAGGED



ADAM



SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9.

Yesterday's solution

4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8



This puzzle is taken from *The Sudoku Book: An Introduction to Sudoku with 101 puzzles*, by Sam Griffiths-Jones (RKP, £5.99, Harriman House). Visit www.dailysudoku.com for a daily graded puzzle, online Sudoku resources and links.

		6	7					
9	8							4
3	5		2	9	8			
2	6		4		1			
1	2		7		6			
6	9	3			8	5		
1					8		7	
	3	7						

DOUBLE CROSSWORD

CRYPTIC CLUES

- ACROSS
- Chopping up the garlic with apathy (9)
 - He's involved when there's madcap mischief around (3)
 - Does he count the score for all but the nineteenth hole? (11)
 - Head's quiet retreat (7)
 - Wide on top? (5)
 - An impressive month (6)
 - Plays for time in the theatre (6)
 - It may be perfect (5)
 - Free to make a speech (7)
 - What is left (11)
 - Look both ways (3)
 - Prevents a head-on collision when its speed's out of control (4-5)
- DOWN
- Part of a week-end supplement (3)
 - A pound to one the hermit will be (5)
 - Pleased about getting in - but didn't look it! (6)
 - Assemble for prayer (7)
 - The best side of a club (5,6)
 - A Paris rep., perhaps, who fixes the prices (9)
 - See me cringe from such crises (11)
 - Proverbially made perfect (9)
 - Observes the intrusion and is furious (7)
 - Dead or possibly idolised (6)
 - Louts break up the plant (5)
 - Cover that may go off with a bang (3)

QUICK CLUES

- ACROSS
- Uneven (9)
 - Muzzle (3)
 - Set up (9)
 - Unfamiliar (7)
 - Guide (5)
 - Madness (6)
 - Hinder (6)
 - Pure (5)
- DOWN
- Impute (7)
 - Scholastic (11)
 - Leaders (3)
 - Set up (9)
 - Disposition (11)
 - Choozy (9)
 - Eat (7)
 - Empty (6)
 - Regret (3)
 - Immature (5)
 - Foliage (6)
 - Republication (7)
 - Total (11)
 - Unawareness (9)
 - Dissonant (11)
 - Choozy (9)
 - Empty (6)
 - Scale (5)
 - Donkey (3)

Yesterday's solutions

- ACROSS: 7 Opaque; 8 Sadden; 10 Sharpen; 11 Nurse; 12 Sulk; 13 Breed; 17 Pause; 18 Just; 22 Trait; 23 Outlast; 24 Mettle; 25 Artist.
- DOWN: 1 Possess; 2 Manacle; 3 Jump; 4 Saunter; 5 Adorn; 6 Under; 9 Intrusion; 14 Earthly; 15 Lunate; 16 Statute; 19 Stump; 20 Faith; 21 Stark.
- ACROSS: 7 Patrick; 8 Come in; 10 Riposte; 11 Leave; 12 Tuna; 13 Board; 17 Scrap; 18 Room; 22 Acute; 23 Dissent; 24 Crofs; 25 Fiquet.
- DOWN: 1 Spirits; 2 Stipend; 3 First; 4 Bowlers; 5 Cedar; 6 Under; 9 Memoranda; 14 Accents; 15 Cover up; 16 Imitate; 19 Watch; 20 Out of; 21 Astr.