

SUBSCRIPTION

# Kuwait Times



THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2015

RABI ALAWWAL 8, 1437 AH

No: 16732

'Arid' Kuwait producing high-quality honey

4



Gang-rape attacker to walk free in India

11



LeBron crashes into wife of golfer Jason in Cavs' win

43



150 Fils

## AMIR INAUGURATES JABER INTERNATIONAL STADIUM

60,000-SEATER STADIUM - GREAT 'PRIDE, ACHIEVEMENT' FOR KUWAIT



Min 11°  
Max 20°

**KUWAIT:** In the midst of a packed stadium, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah announced the official opening of the multi-purpose Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium yesterday. "With the blessings of Allah, we announce the opening of this huge sports edifice, Jaber Al-Ahmad International," he said in his inauguration speech while attending the event.

"We congratulate our athletes, daughters and sons, on this exceptional sports monument and wish them all success and further accomplishments that raise Kuwait's flag at different regional and international events. "We pray to Allah that he keep our dear nation safe, secure and prosperous and our days filled with joy and laughter," His Highness the Amir added. His announcement was followed by a magnificent display of pyrotechnics that lit up the skies of the Gulf nation.

Also attending the event is His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim, alongside with several local officials and notable figures. The huge event at the 60,000-seater stadium is being marked by the Champions Cup, a match between a star-studded side of ex-internationals, led by renowned Italian coach Fabio Capello, and a Kuwait all-stars side, led by national coach Mohammad Ibrahim. The global side includes greats such as ex-England internationals David Beckham, Paul Scholes, Jamie Carragher and David James, alongside Italy's Alessandro Nesta and Gianluca Zambrotta, Portugal's Luis Figo and Spain's Carlos Puyol and Michel Salgado.

Brazilian legends Ronaldinho and Roberto Carlos also form part of the global all-stars, along with German keeper Jans Lehman, France's Robert Pires, Ukrainian striker Andriy Shevchenko and Jamaican Dwight Yorke. On the local side are Bader Al-Mutawa, Abdulhadi Khamis, Yousif Nasser, Fahad Al-Enezi, Mohammad Jragh, Fahad Al-Ansari, Abdulaziz Al-Mashaan, Talal Nayef, Musaed Neda, Fahad Al-Hajeri, Hussain Hakim, Abdullah Al-Buraiqi, Khaled Ibrahim, Amer Al-Maatouq, Khaled Al-Rashidi, Sulaiman Abdulghafoor. Former Egyptian star Mohammad Abu Traika and the United Arab Emirates' Omar Abdulrahman will also form part of the local side. — KUNA (See Pages 46, 47, 48)



Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium

**KUWAIT:** Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah waves to supporters ahead of a friendly ceremonial match between Kuwait all-stars team and Football Champions Tour Legends yesterday, as part of the inauguration ceremony for the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Crime

Report

## Dead body found

**KUWAIT:** A citizen reported finding a dead body dumped in a trash bin along the seventh ring road, said security sources. At first he thought it was a dummy or doll but on approaching it, he found out that it was a dead human body. A case has been filed and the corpse has been sent to forensic department.

## Policemen assault guard

Three policemen recently assaulted a security guard at Jahra hospital, said security sources. The guard was assaulted because of 'song' he used as a ringing tone. According to the guard's colleague, the security officer received a phone call and when one of the policemen approached him - blaming him for using a song as a ring tone, the man said it was the one he chose for his mobile phone, which did go well with the policeman. He then assaulted him. His colleagues later joined him in beating up the security guard - threatening anybody who interferes. On the other hand, the policemen claimed that the incident happened when the family of someone who was killed in a traffic accident were about to collect his body. They accused the security guard of listening to music with mobile loudspeaker wide-open. He was asked to switch it off but he refused.

## Drunk Kuwaitis arrested

A male and female citizens were recently arrested while heavily drunk inside a vehicle at Ali Sabah Al-Salem area, said security sources noting that the couple also had a bottle of whiskey. In another development, a citizen was recently arrested in Jahra in possession of 41 illicit pills, said security sources.

## Citizen arrested for fraud

A citizen was recently arrested for fraud, said security sources, noting that the suspect had swindled a female citizen - pretending to be an Interior Designer. The suspect allegedly took KD 28,000 from the Kuwaiti lady for some new decorations. According to the victim, the suspect claimed to be working for a famous interior design agency and that he disappeared after collecting the money from her.

## Financial scam

A Yemeni who had been wanted for a KD 62,000 'financial scam' was recently arrested in Salmiya, said security sources. Also, a citizen who had been wanted for robbery was recently arrested in Reggae, security sources said, noting that the man was also found to have criminal records.

## Woman molested

A female citizen reported that someone she knew had sexually molested her at a parking lot in Salmiya. The lady told the police that she "had just broken up" with the suspect. He called her - asking to meet him at a parking lot where he molested her. A case has been filed and the suspect has been summoned.

## KD 560 stolen

A Filipina reported that her compatriot assaulted her in her apartment and stole her KD 560 before disappearing said security sources. A break and entry case has been filed and the search is on for the suspect. Also, an Asian reported that three unidentified people (dressed in civilian clothes) stopped and searched him at a checkpoint in Salmiya and took KD 200 from his wallet. — Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa

## Photo

of the day



**KUWAIT:** Two Kuwaitis make Al-Dayeen - a net used by divers to hunt for oysters. — KUNA

## KUWAIT AIRWAYS RESCHEDULES FLIGHTS IN ACCORDANCE TO NEW BUSINESS STRATEGY

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Airways said it would be rescheduling some of its flights as an initial stage in accordance with its new business strategy. The changes will be applied according to the fifth article of the Freedoms of the Air set of aviation rules, which allows airlines to operate individual routes between two host countries, the state carrier explained in a statement.

Tickets sold specifically on the London-New York, New York-London route will be

suspended, said the airline, however the Kuwait-New York (via London) and vice versa along with the Kuwait-London routes will not be affected. Confirmed flights on the London-New York, New York-London routes until January 16, 2016, will go ahead as planned, however passengers with confirmed tickets for trips on the route after that date will be given the option of either a complete refund or the opportunity to select another airline without any additional costs.

As of March 28, 2016, the airline has also decided to suspend its direct flights to Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and Egyptian cities Sohag and Alexandria, with flights from Kuwait to London, from Kuwait to New York and Kuwait to Manila set to receive an increase in the winter 2016-17 period. The airline is undergoing a complete overhaul as it has completed an initial stage whereby it has received 12 leased Airbus aircraft and awaits the arrival of another 10 Boeing 777 aircraft in 2016. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Upon invitation from the Ministry of Information, an Egyptian media delegation including the Egyptian daily Al-Khbar's Editor-in-Chief Khaled Al-Meer; Al-Mehwar TV channel's chief editor Ahmed Ayyoub; Al-Watan Website's Managing Editor Hashim Dabbour and Writer Suleiman Joudah visited KJA headquarters yesterday. The delegation was received by KJA's treasurer Adnan Al-Rashid and board members Abdul Hameed Da'as, Jassim Kamal and Dehairan AbalKhail.



# FREE

## eeZee INTERNET

### ON WEEKENDS

Subscribe to one of our new monthly eeZee Internet plans starting at KD 5 and enjoy eeZee Internet with FREE unlimited Internet on Fridays and Saturdays\*.

To view all plans, **send NET to 999**

Monthly	<b>KD 5</b>
	<b>5 GB</b> 4G LTE Internet
	<b>FREE</b> <b>Unlimited Internet</b> On weekends
To subscribe Send M2 to 999	

Monthly	<b>KD 8</b>
	<b>30 GB</b> 4G LTE Internet
	<b>FREE</b> <b>Unlimited Internet</b> On weekends
To subscribe Send M1 to 999	

Monthly	<b>KD 20</b>
	<b>1 TB</b> 4G LTE Internet
	<b>FREE</b> <b>Unlimited Internet</b> On weekends
To subscribe Send M10 to 999	

\*Limited-time offer



# Kuwait

though largely of arid land, produces high-quality honey

**KUWAIT:** Although Kuwait is largely a desert country, except for some trees and seasonal shrubs that dot the arid lands, beekeepers have succeeded in producing high-quality honey in large quantities. Bader Yousef Bin Hussein Al-Roumi, interviewed by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), said he had succeeded, following years of experiments in making two kinds of honey; Al-Sidr mixed with rose water, flower and citrus honey. Al-Roumi started raising bees and producing honey 20 years ago as a hobby. It had dawned on him to keep the insects when his son, Shamlan, had presented to him natural honey.

In the beginning, he installed four beehives, but now he boasted of a colony of 21 that produce up to 220 kg of honey per year - 110 kg in the summer season and the same amount in winter. Al-Roumi, who distributes the products to his relatives and friends as gifts, says he is happy to make pure honey, which can cure some diseases, particularly among old people. Best species that can bear the Kuwaiti harsh and dry climate are those of Egyptian origin, said Al-Roumi, who imports the beehives from Egypt, at KD 24 per each. An Egyptian beehive hosts 500 insects with the queen. Beehives should be placed close to green locations, away from filthy places, roads and residential areas.

Toufic Abdullah Almeshari, the assistant secretary general of Arab bees raisers and head of the honey research center at Kuwait Scientific Center said that Kuwait hosts 10,000 beehives, placed at farms, outside houses and at schools. Number of beekeepers has soared to 500, largely as a result of encouraging courses about honey-making practice, held by the club annually. Beekeepers place the beehives in March and harvest the honey in June. During this period of time, the insects feed on Eucalyptus trees and various species of flowers that grow in Kuwait in the spring. The second season begins in September and ends in December. The product is largely extracted from Al-Sidr and Alfalfa.

Bulk of the Kuwaiti honey is made of extractions from Al-Sidr. The country won a gold medal for the product at an international conference, held in South Korea in September. As to problems facing keepers of the useful insect, Al-Roumi mentioned high summer heat and lack of sufficient knowledge about the practice among some amateurs. Kuwait produces 25-35 tons of honey per year. Local production covers 25 percent of the local consumers' needs. The Kuwaiti product costs KD 10-30 per one kg (KD 0.3). Honey is largely viewed as a natural anti-biotic and immunity booster. In ancient times, it was widely used to treat injuries and burns as well as various ailments.—KUNA





**KUWAIT:** The Guards' Resistance Camp recently celebrated the graduation of officers from the National Guards, the Amiri Guards and National Assembly Guards who had undergone five training courses in 'Preventive Inspection', 'Urban Combat' and Commanding, Shooting and maintaining a modern 25 mm cannon.

### AL-MUTAIRI AMONG 'MOST INFLUENTIAL' OIL, GAS PERSONALITIES IN MIDDLE EAST

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait National Petroleum Company's (KNPC) CEO Mohammad Ghazi Al-Mutairi was chosen among the 50th most influential personalities in the Middle East downstream sector of oil and gas. The election was announced in the recent edition of "Refining and Petrochemical Middle East" magazine, KNPC said in a press statement, on Thursday.

The magazine said that "under the unwavering leadership of Mohammad Al-Mutairi, KNPC posted revenue of over \$44 billion in 2014, an increase of \$2.3 billion from the year before." Al-Mutairi joined KNPC in 1987 and has more than 26 years of experience in downstream refining, technologies, and management.

"He has acquired vast experience in senior roles, having worked as deputy managing director of Kuwait's Mina Abdullah and Mina Al-Ahmadi refineries, and as manager of Operations at the Shuaiba Refinery - Kuwait largest and oldest refinery plant to date," the magazine continued narrating Al-Mutairi's biography. It added that "As CEO of KNPC, Kuwait's national oil refining company, Al-Mutairi's responsibilities are huge and encompass the country's entire downstream industry from refining to gas processing and marketing." "Kuwait's refining capacity is currently one of the largest in the GCC, and with Al-Mutairi in charge, it seems to be in the right hands to grow further." — KUNA

## MINISTRY SELLS USED TIRES TO 3 FOREIGN COMPANIES

**KUWAIT:** Chairman of the Municipal Council, Mehalhel Al-Khaled said that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry had signed contracts with three international companies to purchase the accumulating used tires in Kuwait for less than one US dollar per piece. Al-Khaled explained that Kuwait Municipality had previously contract-

ed two local companies through public tender including 38 other companies and that they failed to handle the used tires problem.

"The international companies promised to get rid of the used tires in a short time," he explained, pointing out that the Municipality had failed to handle the problem. "This agreement saves the State considerable sum

of money that is used to be moving the tires from one spot to another," Al-Khaled explained.

He urged local companies to learn from the international companies on how to deal with the problems and how to recycle tires because more and more of them would accumulate in no distance time. — Al-Rai

## KUWAIT PLEDGES \$1 MILLION TO UN CERF

**WASHINGTON:** The State of Kuwait pledged one million dollars to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) Thursday, marking the 10th anniversary of the international relief mechanism that responds within hours to major crises around the world.

In a statement delivered at UN Headquarters in New York, Kuwaiti economist Hiam Al-Fassam commended CERF and emphasized Kuwait's support for a multilateral, humanitarian and rapid response force that would "alleviate the difficulties and dangers faced by human beings."

She noted that Kuwait has decided to increase its annual voluntary contributions to various UN agencies that supply humanitarian aid. It also donated USD one million to CERF last

year. Earlier in the day, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said while CERF was among the first on the ground to respond to natural disasters and the fallout from conflict, there are still obstacles to overcome. "Despite the generosity of donors, the gap between humanitarian needs and the resources available to meet them is growing every year," he said.

"My High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing will soon recommend ways to transform funding so we can provide secure, adequate and predictable resources for people in crisis," he added. "CERF remains well-placed to help address some of the key challenges that have already been identified, including the call for greater collaboration between aid agencies," he affirmed. — KUNA



## MINISTER OF INTERIOR INSPECTS JABER STADIUM

**KUWAIT:** Deputy PM and Minister of Interior, Sheikh Mohammed Al-Khaled Al-Sabah made a final air-borne inspection tour yesterday afternoon before the opening of Jaber Stadium to make sure the traffic and security measures set for the occasion is going according to schedule and plans. The tour started from Ministry of Interior's headquarters in Sabhan where a helicopter took off - carrying the minister and his Undersecretary Lt General Suleiman Al-Fahad.



# ZAIN PARTNERS WITH CUT THE ROPE GLOBAL GAMES DEVELOPER ZEPTOLAB

## FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND GAMING PARTNERSHIP

**KUWAIT:** Zain Group, a leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, announces entering a partnership with Zeptolab, one of the most innovative game developers in the world, for the delivery of exclusive Zain branded gaming content on all mobile devices in markets where Zain operates. This agreement signifies the first time a group-wide gaming partnership has been reached in the region, and will result in Zain's regional customers benefiting from gamification propositions. This reflects Zain Group's tireless efforts to offer its customers the newest and most exciting products and services as it transforms to become a digital lifestyle provider.

Zeptolab, a global gaming company and its popular game, Cut the Rope, which was first launched in 2010, has gone on to have its various versions downloaded a total of 750 million times as of November 2015. The objective of the game is to feed candy to a little green creature named 'Om Nom' while collecting stars. The latest version of the game, Cut the Rope: Magic, is set to be released globally across 220 countries on 17 December, 2015. "What 'magical' means to us is something that stands out from the routine, creating emotions and color, changing familiar things into new and unexpected surprises," said Semyon Voinov, ZeptoLab Creative Director and Co-Founder. "In that sense, our new game is 100 per cent 'magical'! While Cut the Rope: Magic still has familiar things that millions of fans love about the series, there's a new 'transforming' twist that makes our newest game a unique and charming experience."

The partnership between Zain and Zeptolab, will also see the Jordan based entity Maysalward, the regional partner for Zeptolab, support Zain with localization of the game.

This will extend to Zain branding being included in the game and the offering of the game in both Arabic and English versions. Earlier in the year Maysalward supported the localization and Arabization of an earlier version of the game, Cut the Rope 2, with Zain's operation in Jordan. The success of this earlier development was the catalyst that triggered the Group-wide partnership.

Commenting on the agreement, Zain Group CEO, Scott Gegenheimer said, "Digital services are a major growth area for telcos, and as a leading mobile innovator in the Middle East and North Africa, it is imperative for Zain to continue to make these kinds of exciting new partnerships and bring new services to our customers." Gegenheimer continued, "As we evolve to become a digital lifestyle operator, we are moving away from the traditional telco business and delivering new, fantastic experiences, many of which have been developed in collaboration with leading global content players. We look forward to the future cooperation with Zeptolab, and are confident this is only the beginning for the provision of even more compelling mobile gaming content for our customers. It's also rewarding for Zain to involve regional talents such as the Jordanian team of Maysalward when we enter such partnerships with global entities."

Planning for the future and to simplify customer experience in forthcoming game releases, Zain is currently developing the option to allow customers to purchase in app propositions, through a direct operator billing option where customers can utilize their phone credits or pay through their monthly phone bill, avoiding the use of credit cards. According to US digital consulting firm, DigiCapital, mobile games revenue globally is

**The union that was meant to be.**  
Zain and Cut the Rope now have a magical partnership!

www.zain.com

A Wonderful World

forecast to grow from \$29 billion in 2015 to \$45 billion by 2018 at 15% annual growth, making Zain's partnership with Zeptolab very timely and potentially lucrative.

This partnership with Zeptolab further builds on the establishment of the Zain Digital Frontier and Innovation (ZDFI) business unit in 2014, which is charged with launching Zain into the digital space by identifying new business areas, value-adding strategic partnerships, accretive acquisition opportunities and synergistic corporate venturing investments. Collectively, these activities look to create new revenue streams to fully exploit the group's high-speed 4G-LTE

broadband networks, customer assets, network intelligence and payment and billing frameworks.

ZDFI focuses on the areas of innovation; digital services; corporate venturing; and smart cities. Zain is currently working on various ways in which it will further leverage its partnership with Zeptolab given that other than game branding it will provide gamification benefits by awarding bonuses or other products and services to players who reach a certain level in the game. From Zain Group's perspectives, the offer of such content and benefits supports its customer experience, attraction and retention efforts.

# International

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2015

**Clashes, missiles leave  
Yemen truce in tatters**

8

**Suspected Russia raids kill  
32 civilians in north Syria**

9

**EU vows 'uncompromising  
fight' against terrorism**

10



NEW YORK: A meeting of Foreign Ministers about the situation in Syria is pictured at the Palace Hotel in the Manhattan borough of New York yesterday. — AFP

## KEY COUNTRIES MEET TO PUSH SYRIA PEACE PROCESS

### SYRIAN NEGOTIATOR SAYS OPPOSITION WANTS TRANSITION WITHOUT ASSAD

**UNITED NATIONS:** Some 20 foreign ministers gathered yesterday for the latest conference on Syria's civil war, hopeful about arranging a cease-fire and launching peace negotiations in the new year.

But the diplomats remained divided over a resolution that the UN Security Council was expected to adopt just after the talks endorsing the process. The ministers were meeting for the third time to push forward an earlier agreement to implement the cease-fire and start political talks on Jan. 1.

"We need to make sure the political process is irreversible in the face of this severe threat posed by international terrorism," Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said as he headed into the meeting at a New York hotel. "We must realize the political process is going to go backward if we are not making progress," he said.

Wang said the two most important issues are launching political negotiations and implementing the cease-fire. "Without peace talks, the cease-fire cannot be sustained. Without a cease-fire, peace talks cannot continue to produce results," he said.

Serious differences remain between Russia and Iran, which support the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad, and backers of the Syrian opposition, including the United States, key European nations, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Russia and the West continue to be split on the central issue in any discussions on a political transition: the fate of Assad. British Ambassador Matthew Rycroft said negotiations were still taking place on the Security Council resolution. UN diplomats said a key stumbling block was how to address the issue of the transitional government.

"We continue to look at this optimistically and are putting a lot of effort into getting an agreement," Rycroft said. He said the resolution would not break new ground but would enshrine agreements from talks in Vienna and Geneva.

The resolution would be a rare gesture of unity in a Security Council that has been bitterly divided on Syria. But Russian Ambassador Vitaly Churkin said Thursday, "I'm not sure it's going to happen."

A peace plan agreed to last month by 20 nations meeting in Vienna sets a Jan. 1 deadline for the start of negotiations between Assad's government and opposition groups. The plan says nothing about Assad's future but says that "free and fair elections would be held pursuant to the new constitution within 18 months."

On Thursday, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif told The Associated Press there "seems to be no agreement" on two key issues. He said his country has seen "no lists we can agree upon" of Syrian opposition groups that should be included in peace negotiations, or of Syrian groups that should be considered terrorist organizations instead.

"Card-carrying members of Al-Qaida do not satisfy the conditions that we set for members of the opposition," Zarif told reporters, ruling out any affiliates of the extremist group. "The opposition should be serious, and it should be inclusive." Zarif said "we still don't know" if there will be any concrete progress in the talks.

#### Transition rider

Syria's opposition wants a political transition without President Bashar Al-Assad, said Riad Hijab, who was chosen

by Syrian opposition groups as coordinator of a negotiating body to lead future peace talks. The United States, Russia along with Iran, Saudi Arabia and major European and Arab powers outlined a plan last month for a political process in Syria leading to elections within 18 months. It includes a nationwide ceasefire and six months of talks beginning in January between Assad's government and the opposition on forming a unity government.

US Secretary of State John Kerry, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and more than a dozen other ministers will meet for a third time in New York on Friday, to keep up the momentum to get a deal to end the nearly-five-year-old war. Hijab, elected on Thursday by an opposition body set up in Saudi Arabia last week, said Security Council resolutions and the Geneva 1 2012 roadmap provided for a transition without the president and a transitional governing council with full executive powers.

"We are going into negotiations on this principle, we are not entering talks (based on) anything else. There will be no concession," he told reporters yesterday.

Hijab's position highlights the deep differences over Assad's fate and a future political transition in Syria between parties to the talks. Western diplomats have said Western powers, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and others have reluctantly agreed to allow Assad to remain in place during a transition period, a compromise that has opened the door to a shift on Russia's stance. Russia has meanwhile made clear to Western nations that it has no objection to Assad stepping down as part of a peace process, in a softening ahead of the New York talks of its staunch and open backing of Assad, diplomats said. — Agencies

## NEW KURD-ARAB ALLIANCE SEEKS ROLE AS PLAYER IN SYRIA TALKS

**BEIRUT:** Empowered by an effective fighting force on the ground, a newly-formed Kurdish-Arab alliance in Syria is working to position itself as a player in any future peace negotiations with Damascus.

Top international envoys gathered in New York yesterday to push towards a resolution to Syria's nearly five-year war and discuss the formation of an opposition delegation for talks with the regime.

Although less than three weeks old, the Syrian Democratic Council (SDC) is keen to secure a role in that delegation.

The SDC's speedy rise to prominence comes from its links to the Syrian Democratic Forces, a coalition of Kurdish and Arab fighters battling jihadists in north-east Syria. The SDF is dominated by the powerful Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG), the armed wing of the Democratic Union Party (PYD). Since October, the SDF

has pushed back Islamic State group fighters from swathes of land in Hasakeh province with the help of air strikes from the US-led coalition.

And in early December, Kurdish, Arab and other political figures gathered at a two-day conference inside Syria to create the SDC as the political branch of the SDF. It is the SDF's "military weight," Syria analyst Thomas Pierret told AFP, that has made the SDC a force that cannot be ignored in peace talks.

### SDC 'cannot be overlooked'

The SDC's formation coincided with a landmark meeting of representatives from Syria's armed and political opposition in Saudi Arabia. The Riyadh conference saw anti-regime factions agree to negotiate with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad while insisting he must step down at the start of a tran-

sition period. They created a 33-member "supreme committee" to select members of a future negotiating team.

But the meeting in Riyadh excluded both the PYD and the YPG, whose relations with most Arab rebel groups have been tense. Activists and opposition factions accuse the YPG of cooperating with government troops and of ethnic cleansing of Arabs in areas under Kurdish control.

But according to a political figure close to the talks in New York, Russia and the United States are considering the SDC's inclusion in an opposition team. "The Americans found in the Riyadh conference a step forward, but it wasn't enough," the source said. Moscow and Washington will discuss "a united delegation with members of the Riyadh conference and the SDC" in New York, he added.

Samir Nashar, a member of the opposition National Coalition, told AFP of "uncon-

firmed pieces of information" that a Russian-American agreement would see PYD head Saleh Muslim and SDC co-chair Haytham Manna join the opposition team.

### Syria Kurds dominate council

"The SDC is a new voice that cannot be overlooked," Manna told AFP by telephone from France. "We are ready to discuss with the Riyadh body, as a part of the opposition, either to create a joint delegation or to find a path forward," he said. "The SDC is not an alternative for any of these, but is the nucleus of a democratic, secular front that aspires for a state of law." Manna himself pulled out of the Riyadh talks in protest at the participation of Islamist groups. The veteran dissident said the SDC sought a Syria "that has separation of powers, sets limits for the relationship between religion and state, and sees all men and women as equal citizens". — AFP



**SANAA:** A Yemeni man receives food aid from a Yemeni philanthropist who provides aid parcels to families affected by the ongoing conflict between loyalist forces and Huthi rebels, on Thursday in the capital Sanaa. — AFP

## CLASHES, MISSILES LEAVE YEMEN TRUCE IN TATTERS

### GOVT FORCES CAPTURE TWO TOWNS

**ADEN:** A Yemen ceasefire appeared to have collapsed yesterday as government forces captured two towns from rebels and the Saudi-led coalition accused the Iran-backed insurgents of firing two ballistic missiles.

The truce has been repeatedly violated and the coalition warned yesterday that it was close to abandoning the agreement, which was aimed at helping parallel UN-sponsored peace talks in Switzerland. Forces loyal to President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi and allied tribesmen on Friday captured Hazm, the capital of northern Jawf province, after making significant gains in the neighboring region of Marib, tribal sources said.

A day earlier government troops captured the border town of Haradh after crossing over from Saudi Arabia, where they have been trained and equipped, military sources said.

About 1,000 soldiers are involved in the operation in Haradh, an official said, adding that "intensive fighting took place" in the town, which has a population of around 25,000 people.

He said dozens of renegade troops allied with the Iran-backed Huthi Shiite rebels had been killed. The advancing force is now just a few kilometres away from the Red Sea port of Midi, which has been under rebel control since 2010, military sources said. Clashes have been frequent along the border with Saudi Arabia, where rebel strikes have killed more than 80 people since March when the coalition campaign against the rebels began.

### Missiles fired at Saudi

The coalition said yesterday that Saudi air defenses had intercepted a ballistic missile fired from Yemen, while another struck a desert area east of the Saudi city of Najran. The coalition warned that the ceasefire would not hold if violations persisted. Although the alliance wants the talks to succeed, "it will not adhere to the truce for long given the threat to the kingdom's territory," it said.

In 2014, the Houthis advanced from their northern strongholds before occupying government buildings in Sanaa in September that

year and forcing Hadi into exile in Saudi Arabia months later. In mid-November this year, Hadi returned to second city Aden which he declared the provisional capital. Under cover of coalition warplanes and backed by Arab soldiers and heavy weaponry, pro-government fighters have recaptured four southern provinces and Aden since July.

But the rebels still hold the capital and attempts by pro-Hadi forces to retake the strategic province of Tazeh have failed. Delegates at the peace talks being held behind closed doors in Switzerland agreed on Thursday a deal to immediately resume humanitarian aid to Tazeh city, the UN said.

UN envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed welcomed the agreement as "a major step forward that will ensure immediate action to alleviate the human suffering of the Yemeni people." "A large UN convoy, carrying essential humanitarian supplies, reached the most affected districts of the city of (Tazeh) and will start distributing assistance to those in need in the coming days," the statement said. — AFP

## UNREST PUTS HEAVY DAMPER ON BETHLEHEM CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES

**BETHLEHEM, Palestinian Territories:** Near the church in Bethlehem's Manger Square, built over the site where Christians believe Jesus was born, tour guides pace back and forth, waiting in vain for tourist buses that fail to show. Hisham Khamis, a guide for 10 years, stands forlorn under a huge Christmas tree decorated in the black, white, red and green colours of the Palestinian flag.

In recent years "at least 60-70 buses would arrive every morning," he said. "These days... there are four or five, occasionally 10." Bethlehem is preparing for the traditional midnight Christmas mass at the Church of the Nativity, but the atmosphere this year is less than festive.

A wave of violence and protests has deterred many tourists from making the annual pilgrimage to the ancient city in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, though much of the unrest has occurred away from Bethlehem, usually considered a safe destination.

Even so, clashes between stone-throwing young Palestinians and Israeli troops have raged outside Bethlehem hotels, already badly hit by a drop in guests since Israel built a West Bank separation wall that forces visitors from nearby Jerusalem to go through a military checkpoint to get to the town. On a recent day, the smell of teargas and a foul-smelling spray known as "skunk", which the Israeli army uses against protesters, still hung heavy in the air.

Palestinian officials say Bethlehem hotels that are usually 80-90 per cent full at this time of year have not reached even half that level.

The drop is a major concern for a city that lives largely on tourism and where unemployment exceeds 20 per cent.

### Tourists frightened off

Jamal Shehada, who runs a shop selling Santa hats, rosaries and other souvenirs, blames Israeli guides who meet tourists from their flights at the international airport outside Tel Aviv.

With no airport in the Palestinian territories, tourists headed for Christian sites there must start their visit in the Jewish state. "They tell tourists that there are only terrorists in Bethlehem, and many

of them say to themselves, 'We'd be better off buying our souvenirs from the Israelis rather than in Bethlehem,'" Shehada says. He adds that the army has increased the number of roadblocks around Bethlehem, where streets once teeming with tourists during the Christmas period are now empty. — AFP



**BETHLEHEM:** Palestinians dressed as Santa Claus demonstrate in front of the Israeli controversial separation wall in the West Bank city of Bethlehem yesterday. — AFP



## TURKISH BATTLE WITH KURDISH MILITANTS KILLS 55

**DIYARBAKIR, Turkey:** Turkey's pro-Kurdish party leader called for "honorable resistance" against security operations in southeast Turkey yesterday as state media reported 55 Kurdish militants had been killed in three days of urban fighting there.

In Cizre, near the Syrian border, gunfire rattled and smoke rose from buildings, while a helicopter flew over the town, Reuters TV footage showed. A soldier and two other people were killed in the latest clash there, security sources said. The figures indicated a doubling of the death toll in the last 24 hours after President Tayyip Erdogan promised on Thursday the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) fighters would be "annihilated".

A two-year ceasefire between the PKK and Ankara fell apart in July, shattering

peace talks and reviving a conflict that has afflicted the mainly Kurdish southeast for three decades, killing more than 40,000 people. The latest unrest also hit the mainly Kurdish region's largest city, Diyarbakir, where police fired water cannon and tear gas at thousands of people protesting over security operations, which have also targeted its historic Sur district.

Witnesses said people scattered into side streets as the intervention began, coinciding with a call from pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) co-leader Selahattin Demirtas for people to resist the operations.

"We call on our people to expand the struggle and to embrace this honourable resistance," he told a news conference. "If they think they can make us take a step

back by showing a tank gun, they are wrong. We fear nobody but God. We call on all civil society groups to embrace resistance in the lands of Kurdistan," he said.

Anadolu news agency said 49 PKK fighters were killed in Cizre and six in Silopi, while 19 security force personnel were wounded and three militants were taken into custody alive.

Both towns were placed under curfew on Monday before an operation which Turkish media say involves 10,000 police and troops backed by tanks.

Traditionally active in the countryside, the PKK has shifted focus in recent years to towns in the southeast. Ankara has responded with intensified operations against the PKK, designated as terrorist by

Turkey, the United States and European Union.

In Diyarbakir, Demirtas reaffirmed his party's belief that autonomy and self-government, something sought by many Kurds, were the right model for Turkey and "important decisions" on building self-government would be taken at a Diyarbakir congress this month. "We want a return to a healthy negotiating process where autonomy and self-government is discussed," he said.

Peace talks launched in late 2012 between the PKK's jailed leader Abdullah Ocalan and the state ground to a halt early this year ahead of elections, where the HDP exceeded the 10 percent threshold of votes needed to enter parliament. — Reuters

## QATAR'S CHANNEL TO MILITANTS POSSIBLY DANGEROUS, USEFUL

### QATAR HAS BROKERED HOSTAGE RELEASES WITH QAEDA

**DOHA:** To its foes, Qatar's deal-making with armed groups is reckless grandstanding that helps destabilize the Middle East. To its friends, the network of Islamist contacts Doha has built in the process may prove crucial to mediating peace in regional hotspots, including in Syria.

On one thing both supporters and detractors agree: no state has made more of an effort to open channels of communication with militants among Syrian rebels.

Qatar has for years played the role of the Middle East peace broker, using its gas riches and wide-ranging political ties in a policy of international self-promotion to free hostages and secure peace agreements from Sudan to Somalia. As Qatari Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Attiya explained it on Thursday in a speech ahead of National Day: "Diplomacy is a tool we use to empower people and spread security... while taking care not to interfere in the internal affairs of other states."

Others might disagree. A turn in 2011 towards a more interventionist foreign policy supporting Arab Spring revolts and bankrolling Islamist influence has irritated conservative neighbors.

The risks were highlighted on Wednesday, when gunmen kidnapped 26 Qatari nationals from a desert hunting camp

in southern Iraq, following a pattern in recent years of insurgents in Iraq and Syria making millions by kidnapping scores of journalists, soldiers and politicians. The identities of Wednesday's kidnappers are not known but Shi'ite militias, who populate the area where the Qataris were seized, have accused Doha of meddling in their nation's affairs.

Critics fear Qatar's policies embolden jihadists whose ultimate aims, if not methods, look similar to those of Islamic State. But others have hailed its role in brokering deals of a kind that may be needed in Syria.

Efforts to end the war have gathered pace in recent weeks: Major powers including Qatar were due to meet in New York after earlier talks in Vienna. Rebel groups who met in Riyadh on Thursday chose a former prime minister to represent them in the peace process.

#### TREASON

One player that has severely tested the effectiveness of Qatar's strategy is the Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate, which, like Islamic State, is widely regarded as unacceptable to all parties in the Syrian conflict and was not invited to Riyadh.

Doha, which sees Nusra Front as one of the most effective fighting forces in Syria, has

tried to push the group to adopt a more moderate Islamist platform in the hope it could eventually split from al Qaeda and be supplied with arms.

That hope remains unfulfilled. The group's leader, Abu Mohamad Al-Golani, said in remarks broadcast on Saturday he remained loyal to Al-Qaeda and had no interest in joining the process in Riyadh which he called a "treason" against Syrian youth.

Nusra on Dec 1 released 16 Lebanese soldiers and policemen as part of a prisoner exchange brokered by Qatar, a deal that a Saudi-owned news site said included a \$25 million cash payment, which Qatar has denied. Diplomats and analysts warn that such deals with Nusra could strengthen the group, which in addition to battling Assad is calling for the establishment of an Islamic government in Syria.

"Nusra wants recognition, they want to be seen both in and outside Syria as a partner so they can establish a lasting foothold in the country," said Marwan Shehada, a Jordanian expert on Islamist groups. "They hope to be embraced by the Qataris in the same way other groups have. Hostage negotiations are a way to raise money but also to boost prestige." Rebranding the Nusra Front to remove legal obstacles preventing the West from supporting it is an idea that Qatar may once have entertained, but has since dropped, analysts say.

"Any attempt by Qatar to moderate Nusra has completely failed," said analyst Ghanem Nuseibeh of Cornerstone Global Associates. "Nusra are al Qaeda. No matter how many prisoner exchanges they do, they will never be accepted by the West as a legitimate actor." Possibly in recognition of the limits to its ambitions, the interventionist aspect of Qatar's foreign policy has been dialled down over the past year. But it still keeps in contact with a wide variety of groups.

Jean-Marc Rickli, an assistant professor at King's College London, said it was important to differentiate between Qatar's active support for groups in Syria and its policy of maintaining a channel of communication. "Whether you like Qatar's policies or not, they do play a role that is unique," he said. "At some point in Syria there will be a need for mediating between all these groups." — Reuters



**DAMASCUS:** Rebel fighters, reportedly belonging to the Faylaq Al-Rahman brigade, wait in a concrete pipe during an operation in the area of Marj al-Sultan's military airport, three days after it was recaptured by the Syrian troops, on Thursday in the rebel-held region of Eastern Ghouta, on the outskirts of the Syrian capital Damascus. — AFP

## SUSPECTED RUSSIA RAIDS KILL 32 CIVILIANS IN NORTH SYRIA

**BEIRUT:** Suspected Russian air strikes have killed 32 civilians, half of them women and children, in three areas in northern Syria, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said yesterday.

Observatory head Rami Abdel Rahman said warplanes bombarded Raqa, the Islamic State group's de facto Syrian capital, as well as the towns of Azaz and Al-Bab in Aleppo province, on Thursday. Six children and 11 women were among the dead, and dozens of people were wounded, the Britain-based monitor said.

The toll in Raqa also included two rescue workers, according to Abdel Rahman, but he said no suspected militants were killed in the three areas that were hit. Russia has been conducting an intense air war on armed opposition groups throughout Syria for nearly three months.

But its campaign has been criticized by the West and by rebels for targeting non-jihadist groups and incurring civilian casualties. The Observatory says it distinguishes between strikes carried out by

Syrian, Russian and US-led coalition aircraft based on flight patterns indicating whether planes took off from inside the country, as well as the type of planes and ordnance used.

It identifies those killed through its broad network of activists, medical workers at local hospitals, and fighters on the ground. According to Abdel Rahman, Russian strikes since September 30 have left 1,900 people dead, including 635 civilians.

The toll includes 526 IS jihadists and 739 other opposition fighters, including Islamists and rebels. More than 250,000 people have been killed since Syria's conflict erupted in 2011. — AFP



**NEW YORK:** China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi arrives for a meeting of the International Syria Support Group at a hotel in New York yesterday. — AP

## POLISH JOURNALIST EXPELLED FROM RUSSIA IN RETALIATION

**WARSAW:** Russia is expelling a Moscow correspondent for a leading Polish newspaper in a tit-for-tat move after a Russian reporter in Poland was stripped of his right to reside in Poland amid suspicions of espionage. Roman Imielki, managing editor for Gazeta Wyborcza, said on Twitter yesterday that correspondent Wacław Radziwiłowicz had been told to leave Russia. The Russian foreign ministry later confirmed the move.

Imielki said "this is a response to the expulsion from Poland" of Leonid Sviridov, a Russia reporter with the Kremlin-funded Rossiya Segodnya news service, who left Poland last Saturday. Poland's Internal Security Agency said Sviridov was a threat to Poland's security, though it kept his case top secret and never revealed what evidence it had against him. Polish media said Sviridov was suspected of spying for Russia, something Sviridov denied.

The Interfax news agency on Friday quoted Radziwiłowicz as saying that he was ordered to leave Russia within a month and was stripped of his Foreign Ministry accreditation, which makes it impossible for him to work in Russia.

He said he had been summoned to the Russian foreign ministry earlier yesterday where his accreditation card was taken from him. Moscow on Friday said plainly that Radziwiłowicz's expulsion for a tit-for-tat move. Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said the Polish journalist was ordered out of Russia "on the principle of reciprocity." "As of today, the Polish correspondent can no longer work as a journalist in the Russian Federation," Zakharova said. "This is a forced step, it was not our choice. But foreign counterparts should realize the consequences of unfounded persecution of Russian journalists."

Prior to the expulsion, Radziwiłowicz was reportedly involved in publishing a book of dialogues between Gazeta Wyborcza's editor-in-chief Adam Michnik and Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny. Navalny's associate Vladimir Ashurkov in a Twitter post yesterday hailed the journalist for an "important role in preparing the book." —AP

## ANGOLAN PRESIDENT DEMANDS CURBS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

**LUANDA:** Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos called yesterday for a crackdown on social media, heightening concerns about the tolerance of dissent or political opposition in Africa's number two oil producer.

In a surprise television address, dos Santos, who has run the former Portuguese colony since 1979, said websites such as Facebook were useful for disseminating information but were being abused to publish "derogatory and morally offensive content". He demanded the government introduce legislation to curb such activities. His statement came hours after a judge suspended the trial of a group of activists accused of rebellion for organizing a reading of US academic Gene Sharp's 1993 book: "From Dictatorship to Democracy: A Conceptual Framework for Liberation".

The book's blurb describes it as "a blueprint for non-violent resistance to repressive regimes". The 15 youths on trial have been electronically tagged and placed under house arrest until proceedings resume next month, the judge said. —Reuters



**BRUSSELS:** European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, left, speaks with European Council President Donald Tusk, center, during a round table meeting at an EU summit in Brussels yesterday. — AP

## EU VOWS 'UNCOMPROMISING FIGHT' AGAINST TERRORISM

### JUNCKER FOR VISA EASING FOR UKRAINE, GEORGIA, KOSOVO

**BRUSSELS:** Shocked by the bloody Paris attacks, European Union leaders yesterday vowed an "uncompromising fight against terrorism" and called for wide-ranging countermeasures ranging from beefed-up immigration controls to a crackdown on illicit weapons trafficking.

Leaders of the 28 EU member countries also pledged quick action to better restrict violent extremists' ability to finance their actions, including via the imposition of asset freezes and other restrictive measures.

The Brussels summit was the first time the EU leaders had assembled since the Nov 13 attacks, claimed by the Islamic State organization, that killed 130 and wounded hundreds more in Paris.

Those attacks "have only strengthened our resolve to continue our uncompromising fight against terrorism and to make full use of all the tools at

our disposal, including close coordination with key partners such as the United States," EU leaders said in a joint statement. They also agreed it was crucial to implement systematic and coordinated border checks at European countries' external frontiers in order to know who was coming and going, and promised to rapidly review proposals by the EU's executive arm to clamp down on the illicit sale of firearms, especially the high-powered semi-automatic weapons that were used by some of the Paris attackers.

#### Visa liberalization

European Commission head Jean-Claude Juncker recommended yesterday the EU should offer visa-free short-stay travel to Ukraine, Georgia and Kosovo, all three locked in bitter disputes with Russia. "The Commission this morning took a positive position on the

liberalization of visas for Georgia, Kosovo and Ukraine," Juncker said after an EU leaders summit in Brussels.

"Accordingly, the Commission was able to propose to EU leaders that they take rapid decisions on visa liberalisation for the three countries," he said. Juncker said he had met pro-western Ukraine President Petro Poroshenko earlier this week iron out the last remaining issues.

Officials said the Commission will draw up a formal proposal early next year which the European Council, the bloc's political leaders, and the European Parliament will then have to approve.

The 28-nation EU suspended visa liberalization talks with Russia as it ratcheted up punitive measures, later to include damaging economic sanctions, over its role in the deepening Ukraine crisis. —Agencies

## RUSSIA OPENS BLACK BOX OF JET DOWNED BY TURKEY

**MOSCOW:** In the presence of foreign experts, Russian officials yesterday opened the damaged black box of a warplane shot down by Turkey last month, promising a transparent probe into the incident.

Officials warned that the memory card sustained damage as they opened the orange-painted flight recorder, with British and Chinese experts observing the procedure, an AFP correspondent saw.

Wearing lab coats and gloves, technicians used screwdrivers, drills, and even a vacuum cleaner as they opened the device under the watchful eyes of military personnel and

dozens of journalists in a live national television broadcast.

"Our specialists extracted the memory card, but unfortunately it sustained mechanical damage," said Sergei Babinov, the deputy head of flight safety in the Russian armed forces, without elaborating on whether flight data could have been lost. "The commission will discuss the situation calling upon international observers," he added.

The military said the black box had sustained damage, including multiple scratches and dents, but had not been exposed to the

fire at the crash site. The black box's findings will be revealed on Monday, the air force said. Sergei Dronov, deputy head commander of the Russian air force, for his part said the device was being analysed "openly for the Russian and international public" after President Vladimir Putin had ordered that it be opened in the presence of foreign specialists.

Moscow and Ankara have been locked in a bitter spat over Turkey's downing of the Su-24 jet on November 24, which led to the deaths of a pilot and another serviceman who attempted to rescue him.

They were Russia's first combat casualties of the Syrian campaign, which it launched on September 30.

Turkey says the Russian jet strayed into its airspace and ignored repeated warnings, while Moscow insisted it did not cross over from Syria and accused Ankara of a planned provocation. "We have sufficient evidence that proves that the Russian aircraft did not violate Turkish airspace," said Dronov, adding that the downed plane had been flying in Syrian airspace 5.5 kilometres (around three miles) from the border with Turkey. —AFP

## INDIA, RUSSIA EYE NUKE, HELICOPTER DEALS BEFORE MODI'S MOSCOW VISIT

**NEW DELHI:** India's prime minister is expected to promote deals for Russian nuclear reactors and military helicopters worth billions of dollars on a trip to Moscow next week, attracted by promises to transfer technology that Western nations have been slow to make.

Russia and India will manufacture 200 Kamov-226T helicopters in a joint venture, a Russian and an Indian government official said, in the first big step for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's campaign to build a domestic industrial base and reduce the military's dependence on expensive imports. Modi, who heads for Moscow on Dec. 23, will also offer Russia a site in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh to build six nuclear reactors of 1,200 megawatts (MW) each, the same sources added.

That is in addition to the six Russia is constructing in neighbouring Tamil Nadu state, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to the press.

New Delhi has turned to Russia as US firm General Electric and Westinghouse, a US-based unit of Japan's Toshiba, are still weighing an entry into India's nuclear energy sector because of a law that makes reactor suppliers liable in case of an accident.

Modi's "Make-in-India" push for a military that has been the world's biggest importer for the last four years has also made little headway, with negotiations stalled over issues including technology transfer and the local assembly of equipment. For Russia, India offers an alternative, fast-growing outlet for its exports as sanctions imposed by the West squeeze the economy.

"While others are making promises, Russia is moving forward with the Make-in-India program," the Russian government source said.

### RUSSIA LET DOMINANCE SLIP

Moscow, which has maintained close ties with India since the Cold War, has in recent years slipped behind the United States and Israel in securing orders in the Indian defence market, estimated to be worth \$130 billion over the next seven years.

Now Russian President Vladimir Putin is banking on India's drive to manufacture at home to regain market share. "The objective is that whatever we do with Russia, that will have a 'Make-in-India' component," said Amitabh Kant, the top Indian bureaucrat leading the push to turn India into a global manufacturing base.

Under an inter-government agreement to be signed during Modi's trip, Moscow will set up a production line for the light helicopters that will supply the Indian military but also eventually Russia, the Russian official said.

India's state-run Hindustan Aeronautics and Anil Ambani's Reliance Defence are in the running as local partners for the deal for the 200 twin-engined helicopters, estimated at \$1 billion, to replace India's ageing fleet of Cheetah and Chetak helicopters. "The choice of the Indian partner has been left to the Indian government. We will work with anyone the government nominates," the official said.

India is also turning to Russia to secure overseas energy assets to help fuel its economy.

Indian Oil Corp and Oil India, both state-owned, are in talks with Russia's Rosneft to buy up to a 29 percent stake in a Siberian oil project, two sources said yesterday.

### RUSSIA HAS THE ADVANTAGE

The helicopter deal would be the first major contract under Modi's drive to build weapons at home that has excited local defence companies but failed to deliver any significant tenders. As some Indian manufacturers look to Western firms for the tie-ups needed to bring in technology and build locally, Reliance is forging closer ties with Russia to jumpstart its nascent bid to develop a defence business from scratch.

A Reliance executive, who asked not to be named, said negotiations to win the joint helicopter venture would not start until the two governments had agreed the deal. Hindustan Aeronautics did not respond to a request for comment.

A source close to Rosoboronexport, Russia's state-owned arms exporter, said India would produce 140 of the choppers and Russia the remaining 60. Pre-contract work is underway and the two sides expect to clarify the agreement during Modi's visit, the source said. —Reuters



**NEW DELHI:** An elderly Indian man rests as he reclines against a tree trunk with a banner against rape, at Jantar Mantar, an area near the Indian parliament where citizens from across the country assemble for protests, in New Delhi yesterday. —AP

## DELHI GANG-RAPE ATTACKER TO WALK FREE TOMORROW

'SETBACK FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTRY'

**NEW DELHI:** An attacker in the deadly gang-rape of a student in New Delhi will be freed this weekend, a court said yesterday, days after India marked the third anniversary of the assault that sparked global outrage. Jyoti Singh, who was 23, died after being brutally assaulted on a moving bus in New Delhi in December 2012, triggering angry protests over India's treatment of women.

The Delhi High Court said it was unable to halt the release of the attacker, who was 17 at the time of the rape, because he had served the maximum three years in a juvenile detention facility. "This is a setback for the entire country. The court said that as per current legislation, he cannot be remanded for more than three years," Anil Soni, one of the lawyers in the case, told reporters.

"The terror that we had faced a few years back will be back on the 20th of December on our streets," he added, referring to the release date. The victim's mother, who on Wednesday publicly named her daughter for the first time, said the parents had failed to secure justice.

"We did not get the justice we were assured of. Finally, a criminal will walk free," a teary-eyed Asha Singh told reporters after the hearing.

Women's rights groups opposed the juvenile's release, mainly on the grounds that it was unclear if he had been rehabilitated and was ready to be reintegrated into society. The court instructed government welfare departments to look after the attacker's post-release rehabilitation and reform over

the next two years. Singh's father said they were mulling appealing the decision in the Supreme Court, India's highest court.

"We have been hurting since 2012. Let's see what we do, right now my head isn't working at all," Badrinath Singh said.

The Indian government introduced tougher penalties for rapists and other measures after the December 16, 2012 attack. But activists blamed stalled parliament proceedings for blocking a key bill that would allow some minors accused of "heinous" crimes to be tried as adults.

Four of the other attackers, who were convicted and handed the death penalty in 2013, have appeals pending in the top court. —AFP



**AMRITSAR:** Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) workers hold a candlelight march during a protest against the Punjab government in Amritsar yesterday. The protest was held against the growing incidence of violence against the Dalit community and demanded a CBI probe into the incidence of Abohar in which the arms and legs of Dalits were chopped. —AFP

# MOTHER TERESA: ANGEL OF MERCY NEARS SAINTHOOD

**KOLKATA:** Mother Teresa, set to become a saint after the Vatican announced yesterday recognition of her second miracle, became a global symbol of compassion for her care of the sick and destitute. A Nobel peace prize winner and known as the "Angel of Mercy" or the "Saint of the Gutters" for her tireless work in India's Kolkata slums, the nun was mourned around the world when she died in 1997. Mother Teresa, often pictured smiling while holding a child and dressed in her white and blue habit, is expected to be elevated to sainthood next September.



**NEW DELHI, India:** In this Aug 25, 1993 file photo Mother Teresa, head of Missionaries of Charity, is photographed, in New Delhi. — AP

But for all the reverence with which her name and memory are treated, Mother Teresa was not without her critics. Renowned British writer Christopher Hitchens accused her of being a political opportunist who struck friendships with dictators and corrupt financiers in exchange for donations to her order. In a 1995 book "The Missionary Position" and a 1994 documentary called "Hell's Angel", Hitchens also accused her of contributing to the misery of the poor with her strident opposition to contraception and abortion.

She has also been accused of trying to foist Catholicism on the vulnerable, with Australian feminist and academic Germaine Greer calling her a "religious imperialist". The beloved nun was born in 1910 to Albanian parents in Skopje, in what is now Macedonia. At the age of 18, she joined the Irish order, the Sisters of Loreto, beginning life as a teaching nun at

one of its sister houses in Kolkata.

Arriving in India as Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in 1929, two years later she took her first religious vows as a nun and adopted the name under which she would achieve worldwide recognition. She began her missionary work with the poor of Kolkata in 1948 and the teeming eastern metropolis, then known as Calcutta, remained her base until her death in September 1997. She started her own order called the Missionaries of Charity in 1950 and opened her first home for the destitute and dying two years later.

### 'Wonderful miracle'

Mother Teresa was beatified by then pope John Paul II in a fast-tracked process in 2003, in a ceremony attended by some 300,000 pilgrims. Beatification is a first step towards sainthood. During the beatification process, the Vatican called on Hitchens to play the ancient role of "devil's advocate" and present arguments against her being blessed.

In 2002, the Vatican officially recognized a miracle she was said to have carried out after her death, namely the 1998 healing of a Bengali tribal woman who was suffering from an abdominal tumor. The second miracle, attributed to the nun and recognized by Pope Francis this week, was the curing of a Brazilian man suffering numerous brain tumors in 2008.

Archbishop of Kolkata Thomas D'Souza said the dying man, an engineer with two children, suddenly woke up without pain after his family prayed to Mother Teresa for her intervention. "It's a wonderful miracle for him. And all because they were praying to the blessed Mother Teresa," he told the NDTV network. A series of her letters published in 2007 caused some consternation among her admirers as it became clear that she had suffered crises of faith for most of her life and even doubted God's existence.

Questions have also been raised over the Missionaries of Charity's finances, as well as conditions in the order's hospices where there has been resistance to introducing modern hygiene methods. She was granted Indian citizenship in 1951 and received a state funeral after her death. Her grave in her order's headquarters in Kolkata has since become a pilgrimage site. — AFP



**CALCUTTA, India:** In this 1978, file photo, Mother Teresa, head of the Missionaries of Charity order, cradles an armless baby girl at her order's orphanage in what was then known as Calcutta, India, in 1978. — AP photos

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT MOTHER TERESA AND MAKING SAINTS

**VATICAN CITY:** The Catholic Church makes saints to provide role models for the faithful, and Pope Francis has followed in the footsteps of his predecessors in churning them out at a rapid clip. The process is cloaked in secrecy and open to criticism, given that it deals with science-defying miracles, politicized choices and significant sums of money, as was recently revealed in some blockbuster books on Vatican finance. But saints aren't going away anytime soon, and Francis has actually made the process easier in some ways by doing away with the miracle requirement for several high-profile saints.

### How are saints made?

A postulator - essentially the cheerleader spearheading the project - gathers testimony and documentation and presents the case to the Vatican's Congregation for the Causes of Saints. If the congregation's experts agree the candidate lived a virtuous life, the case is forwarded to the pope, who signs a decree attesting to the candidate's "heroic virtues." If the postulator finds someone was miraculously healed by praying for the candidate's intercession, and if the cure cannot be medically explained, the case is presented to the congregation as the possible miracle needed for beatification.

Panels of doctors, theologians, bishops and cardinals must certify that the cure was instantaneous, complete and lasting - and was due to the intercession of the saintly candidate. If convinced, the congregation sends the case to the pope, who signs a decree saying the candidate can be beatified. A second miracle is needed for canonization, which means the person becomes a saint. Martyrs - people killed for their faith - can be beatified without a miracle. A miracle is needed, however, for martyrs to be canonized.

### What about mother Teresa's miracle?

A Brazilian mechanical engineer was suffering from a viral brain infection that resulted in multiple abscesses, the church says. In 2008 he was in a coma and dying, suffering from an accumulation of fluid around the brain. Surgery was scheduled for 6:10 pm but the anesthesiologist couldn't immediately intubate him. When the surgeon arrived a half-hour later, he "found the patient inexplicably awake and without pain," according to the postulator, the Rev. Brian Kolodiejchuk.

"The patient asked the doctor, 'What I am doing here?' The next morning ... the patient was fully awake and without any headache; he was asymptomatic with normal cognition," Kolodiejchuk said in a statement. Kolodiejchuk

said the man's wife had been praying for Mother Teresa's intercession specifically during the half-hour when her husband was supposed to be in surgery. Kolodiejchuk said the man has since resumed working and is in good health - and despite tests showing he had become sterile has had two children since. The miracle that got Mother Teresa beatified in 2003 involved an Indian woman, Monica Besra, who said she was miraculously cured of a tumor. Some Indian doctors at the time insisted she was cured by medicine - not a miracle - and expressed concern that belief in such events would turn the poor away from science when they fell ill.

### But hasn't Francis done away with miracles?

In his zeal to give the faithful even more role models, Francis has on several occasions done away with the Vatican's own rules requiring two miracles for someone to be canonized. His most famous waiver involved St. John XXIII, whom Francis canonized along with St. John Paul II in April 2014. The Vatican said Francis had the authority to dispense with the miracle requirement for John.

Francis isn't the only one to bend rules when it comes to saints. Pope John Paul II waived the normal five-year waiting period for Mother Teresa's beatification process to begin and launched it a year after her 1997 death. Pope Benedict XVI subsequently waived the five-year waiting period for John Paul in launching his beatification process weeks after his 2005 death. In the end, John Paul beat out Mother Teresa's record-fast beatification by just a few days when he was beatified May 1, 2011.

### How many saints are there?

During his quarter-century papacy John Paul declared more saints - 482 - than all of his predecessors combined. Some of his big-name saints: Edith Stein, a Jewish-born Carmelite nun who was killed at Auschwitz, and Maximilian Kolbe, a Polish Franciscan friar who sacrificed his life at the death camp so that a man with a family could live. He also beatified a record-number, 1,338. Among them was John XXIII in 2000 and Mother Teresa in 2003.

Benedict continued the process albeit at a slower clip - 44 saints under his watch. Francis overtook John Paul's record within two months as pope: In May 2013, he canonized more than 800 15th century martyrs who were beheaded for refusing to convert to Islam. By canonizing Mother Teresa, he is clearly aiming to give his Holy Year of Mercy an icon for the faithful to venerate around the world. —AP

## US \$1.83 BILLION ARMS SALES FOR TAIWAN DRAWS CHINA'S IRE

**WASHINGTON:** The Obama administration announced a \$1.83 billion arms sale to Taiwan on Wednesday, drawing an immediate rebuke and threats of retaliation from Taipei's rival Beijing. The arms package is the first offered by the US to the self-governing island in four years. Even before its announcement, Beijing, which regards Taiwan as part of its territory, demanded it be scrapped to avoid harming relations across the Taiwan Strait and between China and the US. That was followed by a formal diplomatic protest late Wednesday, although at a lower level than in previous such instances.

"China resolutely opposes the sale of weapons to Taiwan by the US," Vice Foreign Minister Zheng Zeguang said in a meeting with Washington's second-highest ranking diplomat in Beijing. "In order to safeguard the nation's interests, the Chinese side has decided to take necessary measures, including the imposition of sanctions against companies participating in the arms sale to Taiwan," Zheng said, according to a statement posted on the ministry's website.

Such sanctions have been threatened in the past, although there's no evidence they've had any meaningful effect. American and European

Union companies are banned from selling military technology to China, and Chinese companies have extensive links with major overseas firms that often have weapon-making divisions. A US Embassy spokesman, speaking on routine condition of anonymity, declined to comment on the meeting, saying, "we don't get into the content of our diplomatic discussions."

The US maintained there's no need for it to hurt the relationship, which has also been strained by China's island-building in the South China Sea and alleged cybertheft. The administration notified Congress that the proposed arms package includes two decommissioned US Navy frigates, anti-tank missiles, amphibious assault vehicles and Stinger surface-to-air missiles. There's also support for Taiwan's capabilities in intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and a weapons system to defend against anti-ship missiles.

Congress has 30 days to review the sale, but it's unlikely to raise objections. There's been mounting bipartisan concern that Taiwan is inadequately armed to defend itself against an increasingly powerful mainland China. US lawmakers welcomed the announcement. —AP



**IRBIL, Iraq: Defense Secretary Ash Carter speaks to reporters in Irbil. —AP**

**CARTER ADMITS IMPROPER USE OF PERSONAL EMAIL ACCOUNT**

**IRBIL, Iraq:** US Defense Secretary Ash Carter acknowledged on Thursday he sometimes used a personal, unsecured email account to conduct official business after he took office in February, a practice he called "entirely my mistake." His admission followed a New York Times report revealing that he continued the practice even after Hillary Clinton triggered a wave of criticism in March for using a private email account to conduct government business while she was secretary of state. The FBI and several congressional committees are investigating Clinton. Presidential chief of staff Denis McDonough found out in May about Carter's emailing and, through White House counsel, expressed concern to Pentagon lawyers, White House spokesman Josh Earnest said. Carter nonetheless persisted, telling reporters Thursday that he ended the practice "a few months ago." Carter said he did not use his phone for classified information. The Defense Department said all his messages, which appeared to be largely about meetings and speeches, were backed up for record keeping on the department's email system.

**Entirely my mistake**

Earnest made clear that Carter had erred in his email practices, but he said the consequences did not seem significant. He said the Pentagon had expressed willingness to cooperate with congressional inquiries. Carter did not respond directly when asked by a reporter whether he had stopped using his personal account only after the Times filed a Freedom of Information request in September for some of his emails. He repeated that he had stopped "a few months ago. And basically, what that means is I was doing it for longer than I should have." — AP

**US-CUBA AVIATION DEAL ALLOWS 110 SCHEDULED FLIGHTS A DAY**

**HAVANA:** The United States and Cuba have struck a deal to allow as many as 110 regular airline flights a day, allowing a surge of American travel to Cuba that could eventually flood the island with hundreds of thousands more US visitors a year, officials said Thursday on the anniversary of detente between the Cold War foes.

The deal reached Wednesday night after three days of talks in Washington opens the way for US airlines to negotiate with Cuba's government for 20 routes a day to Havana and 10 to each of Cuba's other nine major airports, the State Department said. While it will likely take months before the first commercial flight to Havana, the reestablishment of regular aviation to Cuba after half a century will almost certainly be the biggest business development since the two countries began normalizing relations last year.

Even a fraction of the newly allowed number of flights would more than double current US air traffic to Cuba but it may take years to reach that number. US travel to Cuba has risen by more than 50 percent this year alongside an even great surge in travel from other countries, overwhelming the country's outmoded tourist infrastructure. Havana's international airport is barely able to accommodate current demand for flights into the city and virtually every hotel is booked well into next year.

It seems almost certain that Cuban officials will allow new US flights slowly in order to make sure the government can handle the increase in travel. The United States and Cuba publicly say they're delighted with the state of diplomatic relations a year after Presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro declared the end to more than 50 years of official hostility. The two countries have reopened embassies in Havana and Washington; agreed to a pilot



**PANAMA CITY, Panama: In this April 11, 2015, file photo, Cuban President Raul Castro, left, and US President Barack Obama meet at the Summit of the Americas in Panama City, Panama, Saturday. — AP**

program restarting direct mail service; signed two deals on environmental protection; and launched talks on issues from human rights to compensation for US properties confiscated by Cuba's revolution.

**Shared interests**

Los Angeles Dodgers player Yasiel Puig, from Cuba, holds a young baseball player as he poses for photo ... "We are advancing our shared interests and working together on complex issues that for too long defined and divided us," Obama said in a statement issued Thursday. "Meanwhile, the United States is in a stronger position to engage the people and governments of our hemisphere," he added. "Congress can support a better life for the

Cuban people by lifting an embargo that is a legacy of a failed policy."

The US secretaries of state, commerce and agriculture and the Cuban-born deputy secretary of homeland security have all made official visits to start discussions on unsexy but vital technical matters like produce inspection and port regulations. Sports and cultural activity is heating up too. Havana has been swamped by US celebrities. Music promoters are jostling to hold a US pop concert in the capital early next year. Major League Baseball stars including Cuban-born defectors Yasiel Puig and Jose Abreu were warmly welcomed by the Cuban government this week on a goodwill trip meant to pave the way for spring training games in Cuba in 2016. — AP

Kuwait Times Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call: +965 248 35 616 / 617  
 E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
 ads@kuwaittimes.net  
 Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

**Winter Offers**

<p><b>orca HSS-A-GH Patio Heater</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5000-13000 Watts</li> <li>• Flux: 470-870 gm/hr</li> <li>• Automatic Shut off</li> <li>• Fuel: Butane/Propane /LPG Gas</li> <li>• Anti-Tilt Switch for safety</li> </ul> <p><b>50</b> KD .000</p>	<p><b>orca HSS-RS-SH Patio Heater</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5000-13000 Watts</li> <li>• Flux: 470-870 gm/hr</li> <li>• Automatic Shut off</li> <li>• Fuel: Butane/Propane /LPG Gas</li> <li>• Anti-Tilt Switch for safety</li> </ul> <p><b>60</b> KD .000</p>	<p><b>orca BFH-A-GH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patio Heater</li> <li>• 5000-13000 Watts</li> <li>• Flux: 945 gm/hr</li> <li>• Automatic Shut off</li> <li>• Fuel: Butane/Propane/LPG Gas</li> <li>• Anti-Tilt Switch for safety</li> </ul> <p><b>79</b> KD .000</p>	<p><b>orca BFH-A-SS Patio Heater</b></p> <p><b>90</b> KD .000</p>
---	--	---	---

best AL-YOUSIFI

Credit: Start from SKD + Up to 48 month + Instant approval

**1809 809**

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

## 'GROSS INSTITUTIONAL FAILURE' BY UN ON CHILD SEX ABUSE CASE

**WASHINGTON:** The United Nations' "gross institutional failure" to act on allegations that French and other peacekeepers sexually abused children in the Central African Republic led to even more assaults, according to a new report released Thursday. One young boy who initially reported an attack on his friends now says he has been raped, too.

The independent panel found that the accounts by children as young as 9 of trading oral sex and other acts in exchange for food in the middle of a war zone in early 2014 were "passed from desk to desk, inbox to inbox, across multiple UN offices, with no one willing to take responsibility." Thumbnail image for Sex abuse scandals cast shadow over UN peacekeeping summit

Analysis: Obama to call for more troops from advanced armies, but critics say root of problem is culture of impunity. Among those said to have looked the other way were the UN children's agency, UNICEF, as well as human rights staffers. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in a statement, expressed "profound regret that these children were betrayed by the

very people sent to protect them" and said he accepted the panel's broad findings.

The panel, led by Canadian judge Marie Deschamps, found that UN staffers failed or hesitated to pass the children's allegations to more senior officials, sometimes because of political concerns with France involved; showed "unconscionable delays" in protecting and supporting the children; failed to further investigate the allegations; failed to properly vet peacekeepers for past abuses; and, overall, appeared more concerned with whether one UN staffer had improperly alerted French authorities.

### Vulnerable people

"The welfare of the victims and the accountability of the perpetrators appeared to be an afterthought, if considered at all," the report says. As of now, more than a year and a half after UN staffers first heard the children's allegations of sexual abuse, no one has been arrested. The report lays bare one of the most persistent and embarrassing problems for the UN and its member countries as tens of thousands of peacekeepers

serve in some of the world's most volatile areas: Some vulnerable people are raped by their protectors, and often no one is punished. Many victims are children.

The children in Central African Republic's capital, Bangui, reported the abuses in the middle of deadly chaos. The country had been ripped apart by violence between Christians and Muslims, and thousands of frightened people had sought shelter in squalid camps at the airport. French and other peacekeepers were trying to establish security. The children told UN staffers that they had been hungry and did what the peacekeepers asked in return for food.

Thumbnail image for French soldiers questioned over CAR child rape. French soldiers questioned over CAR child rape. Nineteen months after the charges first surfaced, four peacekeepers are being questioned over food-for-sex allegations. Almost a year passed before such allegations by a half-dozen children were made public in media reports this past April and May, leading Ban to order the independent investigation. Only then, the new report says, did the UN follow up with the children it had interviewed months ago

and ensure their care. At that point, a new round of interviews found that "some children alleged further cases of sexual abuse by peacekeepers," the report says. And additional children reported abuse. One child, who a year earlier at age 11 had told UN staffers about watching peacekeepers rape his friends, "now reported that he himself had been orally and anally raped."

### Potential victims

The panel found it "appalling" that the children didn't receive immediate medical care. While UNICEF had referred the children to a local NGO partner for medical support, the panel found that in reality a social worker "devoted a total of two hours ... to listening to the children and filling out forms required by UNICEF." The report also calls UNICEF's failure to seek out other potential victims a "serious breach" of the agency's duty to protect children. Meanwhile, the children's allegations took months to reach top UN officials. The report says the head of the UN peacekeeping mission in Central African Republic, Babacar Gaye, was told several times about the allegations, beginning June 1, 2014, and did not act. — AP

## FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE: PUTIN, TRUMP SING EACH OTHER'S PRAISES PUTIN PRAISES TRUMP AS 'BRIGHT AND TALENTED'

**WASHINGTON:** Russian President Vladimir Putin and US presidential candidate Donald Trump praised each other on Thursday, saying they would welcome an improvement in the now-icy relations between their two nations.

Trump - who holds the lead in opinion polls in his bid for the Republican nomination and was dubbed the "absolute leader" in the race by Putin - said that by working together, the United States and Russia could work toward defeating terrorism and "restoring world peace."

The billionaire businessman's remarks were in stark contrast to his Republican rivals' rhetoric. Republicans have frequently taken to bashing Putin and have used his rocky relationship with Democratic President Barack Obama as evidence that the administration lacks strength in international affairs.

Obama has been critical of Putin, and called for sanctions after Russia annexed Crimea. In recent months, the two countries have split on how to fight Islamic State in Syria. Putin has backed Syrian President Bashar Assad, while Obama has called for Assad to step down. Trump, who called Putin "highly respected," has frequently argued that his business background and ability to negotiate deals would allow him to improve relations with Russia, as well as other nations.

### Presidential race

Putin, speaking on Thursday at his year-end news conference, told reporters he welcomed Trump's desire for better relations with Russia. "He is a very flamboyant man, very talented, no doubt about that. But it's not our business to judge his merits, it's up to the voters of the United States," Putin told reporters. "He is an absolute leader of



**MOSCOW, Russia: Russian President Vladimir Putin gestures during his annual news conference. — AP**

the presidential race, as we see it today. He says that he wants to move to another level relations, a deeper level of relations with Russia," Putin said. "How can we not welcome that? Of course, we welcome it." Trump responded that he was honored. "It is always a great honor to be so nicely complimented by a man so highly respected within his own country and beyond," the real estate mogul and former TV reality star said in a statement.

"I have always felt that Russia and the United States should be able to work well with each other towards defeating terrorism and restoring world peace, not to mention trade and all of the other benefits derived from mutual respect." Trump's response was a far cry from the stance of another Republican candidate, former business executive Carly Fiorina. During Tuesday

night's presidential debate, she said she would not even speak to Putin if elected in November 2016 until executing a series of military changes.

### Improve relations

One of Trump's fiercest rivals, Jeb Bush, said Putin's support for him was evidence that Trump is like Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton, a former secretary of state who was part of Obama's early attempts to improve relations with Russia. On Twitter on Thursday, the former Florida governor dubbed Trump "Hillary 2.0." Asked about Putin's comments, White House spokesman Josh Earnest said they sounded pretty close to an endorsement of Trump. But he would not weigh in on whether a Trump presidency would change US-Russian relations. — Reuters

## BRAZIL COURT LIFTS THE BAN ON WHATSAPP

**BRAZIL:** A court order that temporarily banned WhatsApp in Brazil has been cut short after a judge found the ruling unreasonable. Facebook-owned messaging app WhatsApp is alive and kicking in Brazil less than 24 hours after a judge ordered a temporary ban of the app for failing to hand over user info in a criminal case. The trafficker purportedly utilized WhatsApp administrations while carrying out violations, and the court needs access to his interchanges with others.

The interruption of WhatsApp's text message and Internet telephone service caused outrage in Latin America's largest country, where the company estimates it has 100 million personal users, and led to angry exchanges on the floor of Congress. There is a victor in all of this: instant messaging service Telegram, backed by Russian entrepreneur Pavel Durov, said it had registered some 1.5 million new users in several hours due to the blockage.

In a statement about the lower court's order to block the service, Sao Paulo's state court system said only that California-based WhatsApp had ignored two prior judicial orders this year. "Because WhatsApp did not respond to a court order of July 23, 2015, on August 7, 2015, the company was again notified, with there being a fixed penalty in case of non-compliance". Details were murky as the case is sealed, though local media reported it concerned an investigation into Brazil's most powerful drug gang. However, Judge Xavier de Souza has said the service should be re-instated immediately, stating that it was "not reasonable that millions of users be affected by the inertia of the company".

If you're in Brazil, you may have been upset that WhatsApp was blocked. The incident highlighted growing global tensions between technology companies' privacy concerns and national authorities' efforts to use social media to recover information on possible criminal activities. Until today, Brazil has been an ally in creating an open Internet. "I have two WhatsApp groups with my staff", said Luciana Rego, a manager at a household care products company. "This is ridiculous", yelled Congressman Caio Narcio. — www.mytechbits.com

# Kuwait Times BUSINESS

BOJ tweaks stimulus to fuel corporate spending, hiring

Many happy returns as China market marks 25

Ukraine halts payment of \$3bn debt to Russia

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2015



flydubai advises passengers to be punctual to avoid rush



**YORKSHIRE:** Coal miners leave after finishing the final shift at the Kellingley Colliery in Yorkshire, northern England, yesterday. The shutdown of the mine in Yorkshire in northern England closes a 200-year chapter of Britain's industrial history. (Inset) Miner Phil Kelsey, who has worked at Kellingley Colliery in Knottingley, northern England, for 32 years, leaves the lamp room as the last shift finishes on the final day of production, yesterday. — AP



## BRITAIN'S LAST DEEP COAL MINE CLOSES

### GLOBAL COAL DEMAND FELL 0.9% TO 7,920M TONS IN 2014

**KNOTTINGLEY, UK:** Britain's last remaining deep coal mine closed yesterday, with miners walking out after their final shift in a historic milestone for what was once one of the country's most important industries.

Workers in dusty orange overalls and hard hats filed out of the Kellingley Colliery in Yorkshire in northern England, which employed 450 miners to dig coal out 800 metres (2,600 feet) below ground. "I thought that I would see out my career here but it is not to be," coal mine manager Shaun McLoughlin said. "This is a very sad day for everyone connected with the mine, but I am proud that we have done the job safely and professionally," he said.

Known as the dirtiest fossil fuel, coal has fallen out of favor as world governments look to limit emissions and switch to clean energy. "I feel gut-

ted, like everybody else," one miner, Tony Carter, 52, told AFP ahead of the closure.

"It's the end of an era. This week we're history—the last deep mine in England. Our country was built on coal—the industrial revolution," he said. The British government plans to phase out the most polluting coal power stations by 2025, signalling the end for an industry that fuelled the British empire and industrial growth.

"The closure of Kellingley Colliery marks the end of an incredibly significant period in our country's social and economic history," said Philip Lawrence, the chief executive of Britain's Coal Authority. The industry is remembered for the bitter 1980s struggle by miners to stop the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher shutting their workplaces—a deeply symbolic defeat for the unions that helped usher in the lib-

eral British economy of today.

Like many post-industrial areas of Britain, former coal-mining regions have often struggled to adjust to Britain's new service-driven economy, leading to chronic unemployment.

The Kellingley closure will end a vital source of income in the area around the nearby village of Knottingley, and families have been left questioning their future.

Many of the mine's employees, who will receive severance packages of 12 weeks of wages, began there at 15 and fear they may struggle to find other work. "Some of the miners have already found alternative employment, some of the miners are going to retire, some of the miners are looking for jobs," McLoughlin told Sky. "It's very sad but it's the economic truth of it." The area is surrounded by three coal-fired sta-

tions including Drax, which produces between seven and eight percent of Britain's electricity—but only Drax is set to remain operational after 2016.

Earlier this month, 195 nations sealed a landmark deal to curb greenhouse emissions and limit climate change at a United Nations conference in Paris. Global coal consumption has declined for the first time in this century thanks largely to China's economic restructuring, but usage continues to grow in India and Southeast Asia, the IEA said Friday.

The Paris-based International Energy Agency said in a report issued in Singapore that growth in world coal demand halted in 2014 for the first time since the 1990s. China accounts for half of global coal usage. Global coal demand fell 0.9 percent from 7,991 million tons in 2013 to 7,920 million tons in 2014, the IEA said. — AFP

## FLYDUBAI ADVISES PASSENGERS TO BE PUNCTUAL TO AVOID RUSH

**KUWAIT:** Dubai-based flydubai advises its passengers to arrive at the airport on time to avoid the last minute rush as tens of thousands of people make their way home, or go on holiday, ahead of one of the busiest weekends for travel this year.

flydubai, which operates from Sheik Saad Al-Abdullah Terminal in Kuwait, is expecting a surge in numbers of passengers between Thursday 17 December and Saturday 19 December. More than 12,000 passengers a day are expected to travel with flydubai this weekend to destinations like Amman, Beirut, Jeddah, Muscat and Sri Lanka.

### On time

The airline is reminding its passengers as they plan their trips to allow for plenty of time to travel to the airports and to aim to be at the terminal at least three hours before their scheduled flight time. Passengers are advised to check which airport and terminal they are departing from before leaving home.

### Check-in

Check-in for any flydubai flight will close 60 mins before departure. The carrier will not accept passengers who attempt to check-in later than the specified timing. Passengers have the option to check-in online for most of flydubai's destinations, but are required to drop off their checked baggage 60 minutes before the flight departure time.

Passengers who have an e-boarding pass and are travelling with hand baggage only, can proceed directly to



passport control and security clearance. Passengers can also use the self-service check-in kiosks in the departures hall.

### Pack smart

To avoid any delays, passengers are

encouraged to pack smartly and be aware of how much baggage they can take on board and check-in as part of their Business Class and Economy Class allowances.

All liquids, aerosols and gels (LAGs) in the check-in and hand baggage should be in a clear re-sealable plastic bag. For safety reasons, flydubai will not allow passengers to take items powered by lithium batteries such as hoverboards, mini segways, balance wheels and solowheels on board any of its flights. This applies to hand baggage and checked baggage. For more information about restrictions on the carriage of lithium batteries and other dangerous goods, passengers are advised to read the carrier's baggage policy available on flydubai.com.



## OIL HEADS FOR THIRD STRAIGHT WEEKLY LOSS AS SUPPLY WEIGHS

### RUSSIA SAYS NOT CONSIDERING OPEC COORDINATION

**LONDON:** Oil fell yesterday as bearish sentiment driven by oversupply rattled the market and was set to lead prices to a third straight weekly drop, the longest losing streak in four months.

Global benchmark Brent crude traded down 24 cents at \$36.82 a barrel at 1133 GMT. US crude futures fell to a near seven-year low of \$34.41 a barrel but later recovered to \$34.51, down 44 cents on Thursday's close.

The global supply glut that brought prices close to 11-year lows this week means Brent will post losses for a third consecutive year, the first time that has happened since exchange-based oil trading started in the 1980s.

West Texas Intermediate (WTI) futures are set for a second straight yearly loss, the first time that will have happened for the US oil pricing benchmark since 1998.

"Prices are falling on continued bearish

sentiment and maybe WTI has fallen on the conviction that it was priced too high against Brent," said Carsten Fritsch, senior oil analyst at Commerzbank in Frankfurt. The WTI-Brent spread fell to the lowest in 11 months earlier this week at \$1.10 a barrel. The differential has since recovered to \$2.29 as WTI made bigger losses.

Traders were preparing for even lower crude prices next year by taking up more put options to sell US crude in February should prices fall to \$30, \$25 or even \$20 per barrel, according to Reuters data. Russia, one of the world's top oil producers, said yesterday it was not considering coordinating its output policy with OPEC members, adding the organization was not exerting as much influence as it did in the 1970s and 1980s.

Russia has long maintained informal contacts with OPEC and hinted in the past it might be ready to cut oil production to prop up prices. The seemingly unstoppable decline in oil is raising concerns about investment in future supplies, IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said yesterday in Singapore. "The current low oil price makes me worried because it means lower investments in new oil projects," he said. — Reuters

## OPEC OIL PRICE DOWN TO \$31.49 PB

**VIENNA:** The crude basket price went down 79 cents Thursday and stood at USD 31.49 per barrel, compared with \$32.28 pb the previous day, the OPEC said yesterday. The yearly average for the basket last year was USD 96.29 per barrel, it said. The OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran),

Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Meray (Venezuela).

During their recent meeting in Vienna, OPEC member countries had decided to maintain their production at 30 million barrels per day (bpd) despite a surplus in the market estimated at over a million barrels. — KUNA

## INDIA NOV OIL IMPORTS UP 7.2%; SAUDI TOP SELLER

**DUBAI:** India has shipped-in 7.2 percent more oil in November compared with a year ago, ship tracking data obtained from sources and compiled by Thomson Reuters Oil Research & Forecasts showed, with Iran's share in the overall imports declining to its lowest level in eight months.

India has slowed down imports from Iran to restrict annual shipments to within the permissible limits of Western sanctions. Indian refiners together bought about 138,100 barrels per day (bpd) oil from Tehran, a decline of about 24 percent from a year ago, and equivalent to about 3.3 percent of New Delhi's overall imports during the month.

India, the world's fourth biggest oil consumer, shipped in about 5 percent more oil last month compared with October at 4.14 million bpd, the data showed. Imports from the Middle East in November surged to their highest level in eight months, reflecting an increase in the region's share in overall purchases to about 60 percent from about 56 percent last month.

The following table shows India's imports by country according to tanker arrival information. The imports include condensate. Volumes are in '000 bpd. — Reuters



## COAL DEMAND BURNING OUT, EXCEPT IN INDIA, SE ASIA: IEA

**SINGAPORE:** Global growth in coal demand ground to a halt last year for the first time in two decades, but India and Southeast Asian countries are keeping the dirty power burning despite calls to switch to cleaner energy, the IEA said yesterday.

The share of coal is seen dropping in the energy mix of China, as demand levels off amid slower economic growth there, the International Energy Agency said in a report.

Renewable energy sources hydro, wind and solar power may be playing an increasing role in sating global demand while coal capacity ages and shrinks, but India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are "remaining centres of significant coal growth," the report said. Those centres saw demand increasing by 112 million tonnes in 2014 — which compares with a falloff in coal demand in the highly-developed OECD

area of 47 million tons.

Oil rarely competes with coal, but gas, whose price is linked to oil, has emerged as an alternative to coal amid falling crude prices, and gaining market share in some countries, including the United Kingdom, the report noted.

Coal was the bedrock on which Britain's Industrial Revolution was built-but the country's last mine, at Kellingley in Yorkshire, would close Friday ending an era for power generation.

Coal's share of power generation in Britain remains at 20.5 percent-imports will fill the gap-albeit down from 28.2 percent in 2014, according to the latest UK government data. The new government in Poland, where 90 percent of electricity is coal-generated, said last month it will remain attached to coal even as EU partners try to phase it out owing to its role in producing carbon emissions.

Poland had earlier refused to endorse

an amendment to a UN carbon-cutting pact requiring it to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

### Coal's 'golden age' ends in China

Lowering its world demand forecast by over 500 million tons of coal-equivalent (Mtce), the IEA said that "the golden age of coal in China seems to be over". It added that while China's share of coal in its energy output would slide from 29 percent to 27 percent by 2020, India alone would account for half of global demand growth-ASEAN states accounting for half the remainder.

But there is scant evidence the relative Chinese falloff in coal usage will result from any commitment to cleaner energy use in the wake of the Paris conference on climate change. Rather, the coal slide looks largely a consequence of weaker output projections for energy intensive sectors such as steel and

cement.

The report added Beijing had little scope to slash coal's share "given that gas and oil power generation is very limited in China," which uses half of global coal.

It did, however, highlight China's attempts "to diversify away from coal to achieve a more energy-efficient economy and to address local pollution." Noting increasing US gas production, the report forecast that the decline in US coal demand is inevitable to below 35 percent of energy production by 2020 as renewables and shale gas move towards center-stage. But despite reports of its pending demise in a world looking to become progressively greener, coal in 2013 still accounted for approximately two fifths of global electricity needs. Its 29 percent share of total world energy supply made it second only to oil's 31 percent. — AFP

## BOJ TWEAKS STIMULUS TO FUEL CORPORATE SPENDING, HIRING

### WELL-TIMED MOVE TO SPOTLIGHT PRESSURE ON FIRMS

**TOKYO:** The Bank of Japan tweaked its lavish stimulus program yesterday in a well-timed move that spotlights pressures on companies to do more to support growth by raising wages and investing in factories and equipment. This week, the US central bank raised its key interest rate by a quarter percentage point, signaling confidence in the US recovery at a time when Japan is still struggling to re-ignite growth after years of stagnation.

The BOJ said Friday after a scheduled policy meeting that it will expand purchases of shares in exchange traded funds, for companies that increase hiring and investment, by 300 billion yen (\$2.4 billion) from the current 3 trillion yen (\$24 billion).

Coming so soon after the Fed's announcement, the BOJ's policy meeting drew more than the usual amount of speculation over whether more stimulus was planned.

The news briefly pushed the Nikkei 225 stock index up about 500 points, or more than 2 percent, though it lost those gains to close down 1.9 percent. The dollar also jumped against the Japanese yen, to over 123 yen to the dollar, before falling back to 121.70, down from its previous close of 122.58.

The BOJ has been pumping tens of trillions of yen (trillions of dollars) a year into the economy by buying up government bonds and other assets. The overall scale of the program remains intact.

The central bank has yet to make much progress toward a 2 percent inflation target that might signal the recovery has taken hold. The BOJ's policy tinkering sends a message to companies. It also is meant to show the central bank still has room to maneuver despite the near-zero interest rates, Masaaki Kanno of JPMorgan said in a research note.

### An answer

"We believe that today's fine tuning

of the monetary policy is an answer from the BOJ that there still exists the tools of additional easing," he said.

Thanks to the unprecedented barrage of "quantitative easing" by the BOJ, corporate profits have ballooned to record levels. A weak Japanese yen swells the value of companies' overseas profits when brought back to Japan.

Those cash piles exceed 300 trillion yen (\$2.44 trillion), or about 60 percent of Japan's GDP. With the success of his "Abenomics" stimulus strategies at stake, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has stepped up pressure on corporations to spend more of that money on raising wages and investing in factories and equipment.

Friday's move is meant to create fresh incentives to do so. The BOJ's said its purchases will be of ETFs that include shares in companies that are "proactively making investment in

physical and human capital."

Exchange traded funds are investment funds traded on stock exchanges that track an index or assets such as shares, bonds and commodities. The central bank also is designating a similar category of such companies for special support for lending and has extended a special loan support program that largely is aimed at companies hit by the 2011 disasters in north-eastern Japan.

The BOJ also decided to extend the average maturity of the government bonds it buys to 7-12 years from 7-10 years and to increase its real estate investment trust purchases.

It also extended to 10 years the amount of time it will take to sell off stocks it has purchased as part of its asset buying program, to help minimize the impact on share prices. The initial period was five and a half years. — AP



**TOKYO:** Bank of Japan (BOJ) Governor Haruhiko Kuroda answers questions during a press conference after the two-day policy meeting at the headquarters in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP



**NEW DELHI:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi (right) shares a light moment with Chief Executive Officer of Google Sundar Pichai during a meeting in New Delhi yesterday. — AFP

## GOLD RECOVERS FROM BIGGEST DIP IN 5 MONTHS

**LONDON:** Gold edged higher yesterday, recovering from its biggest daily loss in five months as stocks and the dollar retreated, but remained near multi-year lows after the US Federal Reserve lifted interest rates for the first time in nearly a decade.

The metal has recovered some lost ground after bottoming out on Thursday at \$1,047.25 an ounce, within a few dollars of a near six-year low reached on Dec 3.

Spot gold was up 0.6 percent at \$1,057.51 an ounce at 1230 GMT, while US gold futures for February delivery were up \$7.30 an ounce at \$1,056.90. The rate hike sparked a surge in the dollar and global stocks on Thursday, but led to a 2 percent slide in gold. Rising rates lift the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding bullion, while boosting the dollar, in which it is priced.

Gold has tumbled 11 percent this year as investors awaited the rate rise. Now that it is out of the way, attention is turning to the pace of further increases.

"Hiking cycles aren't always bearish for gold. The data is pretty mixed historically," Macquarie analyst Matthew Turner said. "The Fed is more aggressive in its forecast of interest rate rises than the market, but so are they in their expectation of rising inflation. One will only come true if the other does." "That might support gold, or at least neutralise the hiking cycle." Gold is often seen as a hedge against inflation. In other markets, global stocks fell and the dollar sagged slightly, taking pressure off gold.

The metal could revisit \$1,000 an ounce for the first time in six years if it breaks below its early December low at \$1,045 an ounce, according to technical analysts.

"If we can take the low out, which I don't think is unreasonable, \$1,033 is the next stop—that's the high from 2008 — and then \$1,006, and the \$1,000 figure is really the level you should be talking about," Credit Suisse analyst Christopher Hine said. — Reuters



**SHANGHAI:** An investor monitors screens showing stock market movements at a brokerage house in Shanghai. A quarter of a century after it opened for business, the Shanghai exchange as a whole has more than 1,000 listed firms, nearly 100 million investors — more than the membership of the Communist party — and a total market capitalization of \$4.5 trillion. — AFP

## MANY HAPPY RETURNS AS CHINA MARKET MARKS 25

SHANGHAI STOCK EXCHANGE STILL DESCRIBED A 'CASINO'

**SHANGHAI:** When Qian Qimin started investing on the Shanghai Stock Exchange—where trading began 25 years ago today—he lined up at a sports stadium to buy shares of a textile machinery maker, one of just a handful of listed companies.

One share in Shanghai Erfangji cost 1.87 yuan (now 29 US cents) on its first day as a quoted company. It was later taken over in a corporate restructuring and its successor firm is now around 16 times higher. A quarter of a century after it opened for business, the Shanghai exchange as a whole has more than 1,000 listed firms, nearly 100 million investors—more than the membership of the Communist party—and a total market capitalization of \$4.5 trillion. It has given companies a key funding source outside the state-dominated banking system and created new wealth for investors.

The benchmark Shanghai Composite Index, which is based on a symbolic 100 point level on December 19, 1990, closed at 3,580.00 on Thursday. But the market is still widely described as a “casino”—an image it cannot shake—and plagued by poor quality companies and insider trading, analysts said.

Shanghai trading started more than a decade after the launch of economic reforms

that transformed China, but at a time when the Communist Party was still deeply wary of the ultimate capitalist tool.

“At the initial budding stage, it was self-organised and very primitive,” said Qian, 49, now an analyst at brokerage Shenwan Hongyuan. “There was no technical analysis or media coverage. It was actually primitive growth starting from the grassroots.”

After 25 years of growth, he said: “There is no problem calling it a success.”

### Bubble burst

But the government’s management of the market has been brought into question by an unprecedented bail-out earlier this year after a bubble burst in spectacular fashion, with the index plunging nearly 30 percent in three weeks, having surged 150 percent in the previous 12 months.

Casting market principles aside, regulators barred major shareholders from selling, allowed hundreds of companies to freeze trading in their stock and funded a “national team” to buy for the government.

“They destroyed the market in order to save it,” said Fraser Howie, an independent analyst and co-author of “Red Capitalism: The Fragile Financial Foundation of China’s

Extraordinary Rise”.

“They’ve set a very bad precedent by supporting the stock market and giving this impression that the government is there to support it all the time,” he said.

Analysts say more reforms are needed, including fostering institutional investors in a market where most are individual punters bent on short-term gains, and revamping an initial public offerings system under which regulators hand-pick the companies to list and set their flotation prices—instead of the market.

The investor profile grew out of the exchange’s origins, seen as an experiment that could be shut down at any time. In the early days, the exchange was housed in the historic Astor House Hotel, not far from Shanghai’s waterfront Bund.

“It was a small market for only a small group of people who were bold and people who were not that presentable,” said Li Daxiao, chief economist for Yingda Securities, who started as an investor in the early 1990s. “No one really could take pride or speak aloud about trading stocks.” Communist Party members were discouraged by their work units from trading, he recalled.

### Crab-eaters

It did not take long for the first trading scandal to hit the new stock market. In February 1995, what was then China’s biggest brokerage Wanguo Securities launched a flurry of sell orders for Shanghai-listed bond futures in the final minutes of trading to drive prices down. The firm’s president was later jailed and the brokerage forced to merge with another.

Over time the profit motive has drawn in ever more traders. “The first people who ‘ate crab’ have reaped huge gains,” said Li, using a phrase meaning to try something for the first time. “So that has attracted millions of individual investors to flock to the market.”

Long ago it moved to a dedicated building in the city’s new financial district, which authorities said housed the largest physical stock trading floor in Asia. — AFP

## ITALIAN MINISTER DEFENDS TIES IN BANKING SCANDAL

**ROME:** Italy’s reforms minister rejected calls for her resignation yesterday over allegations of a conflict of interest in the rescue of four banks that wiped out the savings of thousands of retail investors.

The anti-establishment 5-Star Movement (M5S) presented a parliamentary vote of no-confidence in Maria Elena Boschi, one of Prime Minister Matteo Renzi’s closest allies, over the collapse and subsequent rescue of the four small lenders. The motion will be voted on later and Boschi looked certain to win. The debate has kept pressure on the government over its handling of the crisis, but there is little evidence in opinion polls that Renzi has been damaged by the furore.

The 5-Star Movement says Boschi should step down because her father had been on the board of one of the stricken banks, Banca Etruria, and she had held shares in the firm, saying this influenced government policy making. Boschi, who is responsible for a major reform of Italy’s constitution that is battling its way through parliament, denied the suggestion and said that if her father had made any mistakes, then he should be held to account.

“I am proud of being part of a government that subscribes to a very simple concept. He who makes a mistake must pay. Whoever it is, without exception,” Boschi said.

The government salvaged Banca Marche, Banca Etruria, CariChieti and CariFe at the end of November, using 3.6 billion euros (\$3.9 billion) from a crisis fund that was financed by healthy Italian banks. However, shareholders and holders of junior debt took heavy losses, which Renzi said was inevitable due to new European Union rules aimed at shielding taxpayers in bank rescues.

“Did Renzi’s government ... favour the bank interests? The answer is evidently ‘yes,’” said M5S’s Alessandro Di Battista. “Minister Boschi has a conflict of interests that is not as big as a house but as big as a bank.”

Boschi, a 34-year-old lawyer who is seen as one of Renzi’s brightest stars, said her father had been on the bank board for barely 10 months before being forced out when the government put the flailing firm under administration in February.

She said neither she, nor any member of her family had traded their modest shares in Banca Etruria since she entered the cabinet last year, meaning their holdings were now worthless. — Reuters

## TELECOMMUNICATIONS GIANT TO CHALLENGE NIGERIAN FINE

**JOHANNESBURG:** MTN, one of Africa’s largest telecommunications companies plans to challenge Nigerian authorities over a hefty fine, the corporation said yesterday.

Acting on legal advice, South Africa-based MTN believes it has “valid grounds” to challenge the Nigerian Communications Commission’s \$3.9 billion fine in the Federal High Court in Lagos, the group said in a statement. MTN will contest the commission’s power to impose a penalty and the amount demanded, said MTN spokesman Chris Maroleng. “The manner of the imposition of the fine and the quantum thereof is not in accordance with the NCC’s powers under the Nigerian Communications Act,” the statement said.

The Nigerian commission fined MTN for failing to deactivate 5.2 million unregistered cellphone SIM cards by an August deadline, a matter of national security in Nigeria where law enforcement says cellphones are used in extremist attacks and kidnappings.

“They have not written to us officially, but if they eventually do we (will) meet them in court,” the commission’s spokesman Tony Ojobo was quoted in the Daily Trust, a Nigerian newspaper. “They want to test our legal and regulatory might and we are surely going to show them.”

The fine, reduced from \$5.2 billion, is more than the \$2.6 billion profit MTN reported making in Nigeria last year. News of the fine in October saw MTN’s stock price drop. The company has also replaced several senior staff members. The CEO of MTN Nigeria resigned along with the head of regulatory and corporate affairs in Nigeria. In South Africa, the group’s CEO stepped down.

Nigeria, with 62 million subscribers before the deactivation, provides about a third of the MTN Group’s profits, according to the company website. MTN has 233 million subscribers in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the website said. — AP

## FRENCH ECONOMIC GROWTH TO SLOW AFTER PARIS ATTACKS

**PARIS:** The French economy is forecast to grow at a slower pace in the fourth quarter due mainly to the impact of the deadly Paris attacks last month, the Insee statistics office said Thursday.

Insee revised lower its estimate of economic expansion in the October-through-December period to 0.2 percent, down from the previous forecast of 0.4 percent, following the series of attacks by jihadists that left 130 people dead. It added that the revision for the last quarter of 2015 would not change its growth forecast for the entire year, which remains at 1.1 percent, the same

as the government’s minimum estimate.

Looking ahead to next year, it forecast 0.4 percent growth in both the first and second quarters of 2016. The national statistics agency also predicted that France’s stubbornly high unemployment rate will begin to come down slightly by mid-2016. It sees a drop of 0.2 point in that period to a jobless rate of 10 percent. Joblessness is a key issue for the Socialist government as President Francois Hollande has vowed not to seek re-election in 2017 if there is no significant decline in unemployment. — AFP

## RICHEST BRITONS PILING UP WEALTH 3 TIMES FASTER THAN POOREST

**LONDON:** The richest Britons are accumulating wealth three times as fast as the poorest, according to new official data likely to heighten concerns Britain is becoming an increasingly unequal society.

For the richest tenth of British households, total wealth including pensions increased by 21 percent between 2012 and 2014. For the bottom half of all households, total wealth rose by just 7 percent during that period, the Office for National Statistics said yesterday.

As in many other countries, inequality is a hot political topic in Britain, which is still feeling the effects from the 2008-09 recession, the worst in many decades. Prime Minister David Cameron's Conservative

Party points to record levels of employment and the fastest growth among developed economies as proof that living standards are improving across the country.

But opposition parties say the poorest are shouldering the biggest burden from government plans to eliminate the deficit, largely through big cuts to welfare spending. Total household wealth rose 18 percent to 11.1 trillion pounds (\$16.6 trillion) between 2012 and 2014, much of it driven through rising private pension holdings, the ONS said.

The figures showed the distribution of wealth was skewed sharply towards the richest, with the most affluent tenth of households controlling some 45 percent of

all wealth. The bottom tenth accounted for less than 1 percent. A separate survey from the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development on Friday further emphasized the sense of worsening inequality among Britons.

Seven out of 10 British employees believe the pay of company chief executives is too high, the CIPD said, with most saying this demotivates them at work.

A concentration of wealth around London has long been a defining feature of Britain's economy, and the official wealth data showed little sign of that changing.

Households in London enjoyed the biggest rise in median household wealth,

increasing 14 percent between 2012 and 2014, followed closely by Scottish households where there was a big increase in pension wealth. But it fell 7 percent in the regions of Yorkshire and the Humber in northern England.

Finance minister George Osborne is seeking to boost infrastructure investment in northern England to generate economic growth more evenly across the country.

Underlining the scale of that challenge, the figures showed more than one in five households in southeast England have wealth amounting to more than 1 million pounds, in part thanks to rising property prices, compared with one in 50 households in the northeast. — Reuters



**SEOUL:** A man walks by an electronic screen showing the Korea Composite Stock Price Index (KOSPI) in Seoul yesterday. Asian stock markets were lower yesterday as a persistent drop in the price of oil weighed on investor sentiment, eroding gains sparked the day before by the Fed's first rate hike in nearly a decade. — AP

## MARKETS DROP AS INVESTORS DIGEST US INTEREST RATE RISE

### EMERGING MARKETS ERASE POST-FED GAINS

**LONDON:** Investors turned cautious yesterday about what a stronger dollar and weak commodity prices could mean for the world economy, as a clutch of central banks moved to cushion the impact of the first US rate rise in nearly a decade.

Initial relief after the US Federal Reserve enacted a long-expected hike earlier this week started to fade, as declines in global stocks and emerging markets showed that the move might not pass off as smoothly as hoped. Wall Street, which has shed all gains made just after the Fed meeting on Wednesday, was set to open lower, following earlier falls in European and Asian stocks.

The dollar weakened but remained on track for its strongest week since early November, as the price of oil hit its lowest level seen since early 2009. "I am still quite bearish about the prospects for the first quarter of next year. The oil price problems are not going away any time soon," said Terry Torrison, managing director at Monaco-based McLaren Securities.

European shares fell from a one-week high reached in the previous session. The pan-European FTSEurofirst 300 index, which had

risen 1.3 percent on Thursday, dropped 0.6 percent. Debt markets built on gains made on Thursday as investors sheltered in less risky assets. Money markets are pricing in fewer rate rises next year than the Fed now projects, reflecting concern about the economy and doubts about significant inflation.

"Equities are all down and bond yields are down - partly because of stocks, partly because of lower oil, so the move is global," said Ciaran O'Hagan, a strategist at Societe Generale. Spanish bonds lagged in Europe as the country braced for its most uncertain election in decades this weekend.

#### STIMULUS MOVES

The Bank of Japan on Friday bolstered its massive stimulus program to try to counter the impact of the Fed move, setting up a new program to buy exchange-traded funds, extend the maturity of bonds it owns to around 12 years and increase purchases of risky assets. In Taiwan, the central bank unexpectedly cut interest rates for the second time this year. "The global macro dynamics from the beginning of a Fed rate hiking cycle are slowly playing out across the world," Angus

Nicholson, market analyst at IG in Melbourne, said in a note to clients.

"In the direct wake of the decision we have seen some dramatic moves in central bank policy with Taiwan cutting its benchmark interest rate, Hong Kong and Mexico both hiking rates, and Argentina removing currency controls." MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan was down 0.6 percent, but still on course to finish the week up 1.5 percent. Emerging market stocks fell 1 percent, back at levels seen before the Fed decision.

Against a basket of other major currencies, the dollar was up 1.3 percent, headed for its best week since early November, although it slipped yesterday.

The dollar sank 1.1 percent against the Japanese currency to 121.16 yen and weakened against the euro. Argentina's peso plummeted 28 percent on Thursday after the country's new government lifted long-held restrictions and floated the currency. President Mauricio Macri has promised to implement free-market reforms in an attempt to heal the crisis-ridden economy. — Reuters

## MEXICO RAISES INTEREST RATE AFTER FED MOVE

**MEXICO CITY:** Mexico's central bank raised its key interest rate Thursday for the first time in seven years to protect the peso after the US Federal Reserve hiked its own benchmark rates.

Banco de Mexico increased the interbanking rate by a quarter-point to 3.25 percent, one day after the Fed hiked its key federal funds rate for the first time since 2006. The bank said in a statement that its first rate hike since August 2008 was "mainly in response" to the Fed's decision to increase the US rate from near zero to 0.25-0.50 percent. Failing to increase Mexico's rate "could generate an additional depreciation" of the peso against the dollar and affect inflation, the statement said.

"This is good news," Finance Minister Luis Videgaray told a news conference. "It sends a signal that the bank is attentive and acting to protect and preserve the country's financial stability." While financial volatility remains a challenge, the moves by the US and Mexican central banks are "good for our economy," Videgaray said.

Mexico's economy is closely linked to what happens in its bigger neighbor to the north. The peso has fallen by 20 percent against the dollar in the past year, mostly due to the drop in global oil prices and the strengthening of the US economy.

The Mexican currency closed at 17.35 pesos against the dollar on Thursday, gaining 0.29 percent from the previous day, when it finished at 17.40 pesos. While the Mexican economy grew more than expected in the third quarter and consumer spending expanded, exports are stagnant and crude prices are still dropping, the central bank said. Latin America's second biggest economy grew 2.6 percent in the third quarter compared to the same period last year. — AFP

## GLOBAL DISASTER COSTS FALL IN 2015: SWISS RE

**ZURICH:** The economic cost of disasters across the world dropped in 2015 to around \$85 billion (78 billion euros) from \$113 billion last year, reinsurance company Swiss Re said yesterday.

Insurance companies covered \$32 billion of the total, it said in its Sigma study. The 2015 figure is much below the annual average over the past decade of \$192 billion, Swiss Re said. The cost of natural disasters alone accounted for \$74 billion of this year's total, it said. The industrial disaster in Tianjin in northeastern China, where massive explosions at a hazardous goods storage firm on August 12 killed 161 people, is estimated to have been the year's costliest catastrophe, with insurers covering more than \$2 billion of the damage, but calculations are ongoing.

Among natural catastrophes, the February winter storms in the United States produced the biggest bill for insurers, costing them around \$2.7 billion.

The Nepal earthquake, which killed 9,000 people and destroyed 500,000 homes had an economic cost of more than \$6 billion, but insurers had to pay out just \$160 million, Swiss Re said.

In this year likely to be the warmest on record, heat waves caused over 5,000 deaths and lack of rainfall also caused considerable destruction by drought and fires. "The overall economic impact of these events was devastating in the areas affected," said Kurt Karl, chief economist at Swiss Re. "Often these areas are the least equipped and have a low level of insurance penetration," he noted. More than 3,000 people died in India and Pakistan when temperatures soared above 48 degrees Celsius (118 F), the reinsurer said. — AFP

## FED RATE PATH A BALANCING ACT FOR YELLEN

**WASHINGTON:** After the riskiest move of her career, US Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen has committed to a balancing act to keep her promise of gradual future interest rate increases.

The slight quarter-point increase decided Wednesday that ended seven years of the near-zero benchmark federal funds rate had been telegraphed well in advance by the US central bank and was met with equanimity by the markets. But the question that now haunts financial players is "how far, how fast" rates will rise, said economist Edwin Truman at the Peterson Institute for International Economics.

"Gradual" is now the key word for Fed statements going forward," said his colleague Angel Ubide, who sees the pace at 100 basis points a year, which would bring the range of the Fed funds rate to 1.25-1.50 percent by the end of 2016.

A number of analysts see the next Fed hike in March. In its statement, the policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) emphasized several times that the trajectory of rate rises from the historic low would be "gradual" and dependent on economic data, while officials would continue to monitor tepid inflation and take into



**NEW YORK:** Specialist Edward Loggie works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange as the rate decision of the Federal Reserve is announced. — AP

account "domestic and international developments."

For the Fed, the policy path is narrow. Lifting rates too rapidly risks undermining the slow, moderate economic recovery from the Great Recession. Allowing them to languish at lows could spark a surge in inflation that could force the central bank to act

aggressively. In its latest projections, the Fed estimated the world's largest economy would grow 2.1 percent this year, slowing from a 2.4 percent expansion in 2014.

"What we would like to avoid is a situation where we have waited so long that we are forced to tighten policy abruptly, which risks aborting what I would like to see as a

very long-running and sustainable expansion," Yellen said in a post-meeting news conference.

Inflation currently is at a weak 0.2 percent annual rate, weighed down by falling oil prices and a stronger dollar that makes US imports less expensive. The Fed has insisted it remains confident that inflation will move towards its 2.0 percent objective.

### Room to move

By exiting the zero-bound rate policy, the Fed is giving itself room to move. If the economy slows, it can lower rates again.

"One shouldn't lose sight of the fact that the FOMC didn't raise rates on Wednesday so much out of economic growth necessity as it did for its own peace of mind," said Patrick O'Hare at Briefing.com. "Dovish" or "hawkish," the future path of rates is the object of multiple interpretations.

Take the FOMC's famous chart known as the "dot plot," which showed the median estimate for rates at the end of 2016 at 1.4 percent. That would seem to indicate a not-so-slow pace of nearly five quarter-point increases in the next year. But the chart also showed that, compared with the dots in September, the arc of hikes is lower. — AFP

## UKRAINE HALTS PAYMENT OF \$3BN DEBT TO RUSSIA MOSCOW DECLINES TO ACCEPT REPAYMENT TERMS

**MOSCOW:** Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said yesterday that his country won't repay a \$3 billion debt owed to Russia by this weekend after Moscow's refusal to accept repayment terms already offered to other international creditors.

The "moratorium" on outstanding debt repayments to Russia effectively means that Ukraine is defaulting on a \$3 billion debt due tomorrow and could jeopardize crucial loans that Ukraine has been receiving from a \$17.5 billion bailout deal with the International Monetary Fund.

It's the latest spat between the two neighbors following a run of gas supply disputes, Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula and support for separatists in eastern Ukraine.

"After Russia refused to accept our offer despite our attempts to reach a restructuring deal, the government is imposing a moratorium on the repayment of the \$3 billion debt to Russia," Yatsenyuk said at a televised government session. "We are ready for court proceedings with Russia."

He did not indicate when Ukraine would be ready to repay the debt. Moscow has previously said it will take Ukraine to court if it fails to pay on time. Alongside the sovereign debt, the government has decided to put on hold the repayment of a combined debt of \$507 million that two Ukrainian state-owned enterprises owe to Russian banks.

It is unclear at this point how Ukraine's imminent default will affect the four-year IMF bailout as the Fund recently said it can continue to lend to countries behind with debt payments as long as the country is trying "in good faith" to reach a deal.

Still, William Jackson, a senior emerging markets economist at London-based



**KIEV:** Prime Minister of Ukraine, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, speaks on the phone in Parliament in Kiev, Ukraine. Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said yesterday that his country won't repay a \$3 billion debt owed to Russia by this weekend after Moscow's refusal to accept repayment terms already offered to other international creditors. — AP

Capital Economists consultancy, said yesterday's announcement "does feed into broader concerns that the country's IMF program is now at risk."

He said the IMF's recent concerns about the Ukrainian parliament's decision to reject a proposed budget for the next year and a new tax code could indicate a "growing risk that the country's bailout could be put on hold."

Ukraine's economy has struggled over the past few years and the country has negotiated repayment terms with creditors,

but not with Russia. In November, Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed a debt restructuring, saying Moscow would be willing to agree to payments of \$1 billion a year between 2016 and 2018.

Ukraine turned down the offer, saying it cannot legally offer Russia a better deal than the one it has negotiated with other debt holders. That deal has seen countries accept a 20 percent write-down of their Ukrainian bond holdings, a move which has cut Ukraine's sovereign debt from \$19 billion to \$15.5 billion. — AP

## S AFRICA POSTPONES SPECIAL CABINET SESSION ON ECONOMY

**JOHANNESBURG:** South African President Jacob Zuma postponed a special cabinet meeting yesterday to discuss the struggling economy, saying the discussion will now take place next month. The meeting had been due to discuss the impact of the "global economic crisis" on the domestic economy and a growth plan Zuma presented in a State of the Nation address earlier in the year.

"The Special Cabinet meeting on the economy that was scheduled to take place today, 18 December 2015, in Pretoria has been postponed to take place after recess next month," a Presidency statement said. South African financial markets took a big hit this month when Zuma unexpectedly axed Nhlhlanhla Nene as finance minister, replacing him with a former mayor with no central government experience. The decision triggered a 9 percent slide in the rand and a major sell-off in the stock and bond market before Zuma backtracked to bring former finance minister Pravin Gordhan back to his old job.

The sacking of Nene, who was keen to rein in state spending in Africa's most industrialised economy, followed a credit downgrade from Fitch and was preceded by Moody's cutting its outlook to "negative", citing increasing political pressures.

Next year's meeting will be closely watched to see if Gordhan can deliver on his promise to maintain a tight cap on spending and curb debt against a backdrop of sluggish growth. — Reuters

## RUSSIAN BANK PLACED INTO TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATION

**MOSCOW:** The Russian central bank said yesterday it was putting major lender Vnesheprombank into temporary administration as the country's economic woes put pressure on the financial sector. Citing the lender's financial difficulties, the central bank said Vnesheprombank had been placed into temporary administration for six months.

According to the Interfax Center for Economic Analysis, Vnesheprombank ranked 34th by total assets earlier this year. Business daily Vedomosti, citing sources, said on Friday that the struggling bank had many top customers including a member of the Russian government.

The lender had also top energy companies including the country's top oil producer Rosneft and state-owned oil pipeline monopoly Transneft among its clients, the newspaper said.

The Russian banking sector has paid a heavy price for the country's economic crisis, brought on by sharp declines in the oil price and Western sanctions over Ukraine. Soaring interest rates accompanied by corporate and household insolvencies have forced banks to set aside large provisions against bad loans. — AFP

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2015

# Weekender

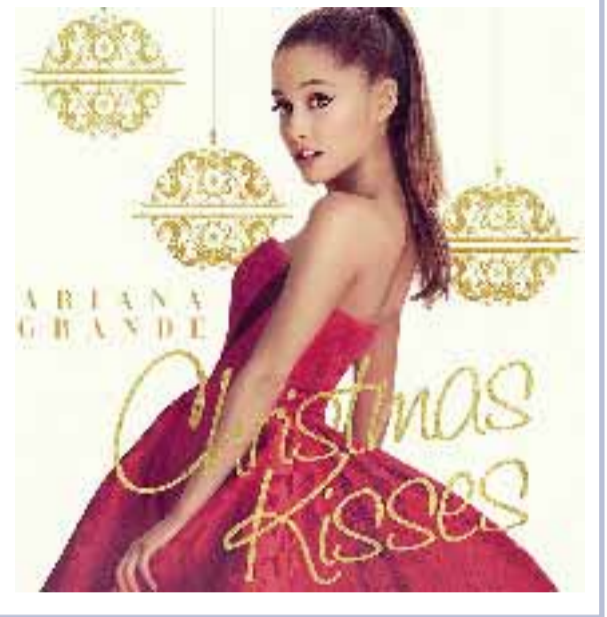
[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)

In this photo taken on Friday, Feb 6, 2015, top model Chantelle Brown-Young, known as Winnie Harlow, gets her make up applied before displaying a Spring/Summer design by Desigual at Madrid's Fashion Week in Madrid, Spain.— AP

**'Star Wars' fans get married at Hollywood's TCL Chinese Theater**

SEE PAGE 22

# Ariana Grande releases surprise Christmas EP



Christmas came early for Ariana Grande fans—the 22-year-old released a surprise Christmas EP Thursday, titled “Christmas and Chill.” The six tracks are original holiday songs, including “Wit It This Christmas,” “December” and “Winter Things.” The singer hinted at her new music with social media posts earlier this week. Grande gave fans a sneak preview of her holiday tunes with nine different Instagram videos and tweets of her new lyrics.

Grande took to Twitter Thursday to answer fan’s questions about the EP, disclosing she made “Christmas and Chill” in just one week with the help of her team. She also told fans via Twitter that the EP title made everyone in the room laugh so she decided to stick with

it. Grande’s first holiday EP, “Christmas Kisses,” was released in 2013 and featured classic holiday favorites like “Last Christmas” and “Santa Baby.”

“Christmas and Chill” isn’t Grande’s only spontaneous decision this year: In July, the singer, alongside boyfriend Ricky Alvarez, was caught on camera licking unsold doughnuts and shouting “I hate America” in a California bakery. She later apologized via a YouTube video that has since been taken down, in which she expanded on her original written apology that addressed childhood obesity in the US.

Other than her original yuletide melodies, Grande recently released the single “Focus,” as fans await the release of her third album expected in 2016. — Reuters

# ‘Star Wars’ fans get married at Hollywood’s TCL Chinese Theater

The Force is definitely with two “Star Wars” fans, until death does them part. Caroline Ritter and Andrew Porters got married outside the TCL Chinese Theater IMAX in Hollywood Thursday. The couple flew to Los Angeles all the way from Australia to say their vows on the red carpet where “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” premiered Monday and also the first “Star Wars” movie premiered in 1977, making them the first ever couple to tie the knot in the TCL Chinese Theater IMAX courtyard. CEO of TCL Chinese Theater Alwyn Hight Kushner introduced the bride and groom, explaining they camped out for 12 days on Hollywood Boulevard in anticipation of the film’s release this week, raising money for the Starlight Children’s Foundation through LiningUp.net.

The ceremony began with R2-D2 gliding down the red carpet aisle accompanied by a violinist playing the “Imperial March.” While the bride and groom weren’t dressed up, the couple stood alongside a wedding party of “Star Wars” characters, including Darth Vader, Chewbacca and a stormtrooper. The officiator Obi-Shawn Crosby started off the ceremony with a few jokes. “I hate when the Wookiee gets a fur ball, it’s awful.”

### The Princess Bride

Crosby began the vows by quoting “The Princess Bride,” starting with his best rendition of “Mwarrriage is what brings up together today. Mwarrriage-that blessed arrangement.” After clearing his throat, Crosby continued, “Our notions of what relationships promise us are often shaped by fairy tales and the unreality of our popular culture. Yes, even movies. Despite what you’ve heard, love is not all you, need nor is it just a game, not especially when you are joining two very different people with two very different strengths, weaknesses,



Australian Star Wars fans Andrew Porters, 29 and Caroline Ritter, 34, celebrate their marriage.

needs and emotions. You must unlearn what you have learned”

“Star Wars” references were unsurprisingly sprinkled throughout the entire ceremony. “One cannot block the power of love anymore than one can stop the twin suns from rising,” Crosby said. “You must assimilate completely with one another even though the trials and tribulations that any new enterprise can bring. Always remember that in a strong relationship, size matters not, even the little things are big things.”

He continued, speaking about love, “It is

remembering to say I love you, or perhaps to respond ‘I know’ at least once a day. It is taking time for the goodbye kiss and the hello kiss. It is never going to sleep angry. And it is at no time ever taking the other for granted. Be patient with one another, for this patience is the way of fellowship. Though there will be dark times and circumstances will try your love, don’t play at riddles in the dark. (...) But fear not, I sense much love in you. Instead stand together to face the galaxy. Form a circle of love that envelops the entire extended family, regardless of species.” “It is not only selecting the

right partner, it is being the right partner. I sense today that Caroline and

### Larger world

Andrew have each found the right partner. Caroline and Andrew, the force tells us the bond of commitment is a solemn one and not to be entered into lightly, but thoughtfully and seriously. We have been taught that we must do and do not, there is no try. Marriage is more than a simple five year mission. You do both understand and accept the responsibilities of this commitment?” Crosby took the couple’s rings, and said, “Do you Caroline commit to Andrew as your partner, joining with him, pledging him your friendship, love and support?”

“Luminous beings are we, and to be filled with love makes us more powerful than you could otherwise possibly imagine. (...) As you have just taken your first step into a larger world, by the power invested in me by Master Yoda, the Jedi Council and the state of California, I now pronounce you husband and wife,” Crosby said. After the vows were finished, IMAX vice president of domestic marketing Duncan MacDonald surprised the couple with a \$5000 check to the Starlight Children’s Foundation in their name and a \$5000 check for their honeymoon.

“This is what it was for guys,” Porters said, pointing to the check for the Starlight Children’s Foundation. “Twelve days guys-hard work, blood, sweat and tears.” The couple celebrated their marriage with a Baskin Robin’s three layer “Star Wars” cake as guests broke into a edition of “Sweet Caroline.” As the newly weds struggled to cut the cake with a lightsaber knife, bystanders shouted out, suggesting they “use the force.” As the ceremony ended, Hight Kushner said, “Caroline and Andrew, may the force be with you always.” — Reuters



Bride Caroline Ritter is walked down the aisle by Darth Vader.



Obi-Shawn Crosby, Chewbacca, Darth Vader, a stormtrooper poses with the wedding cake at the Star Wars-themed wedding of Australian “Star Wars” fans Caroline Ritter, 34, and Andrew Porters, 29, (not in photo) in the forecourt of the TCL Chinese Theatre. — AP photos



Film “Star Wars” character R2-D2 wears a black bow tie with gold wedding bands for the wedding of a couple of Australian Star Wars fans getting married.

## Rita Ora sues to leave Jay Z label



**B**ritish singer Rita Ora, a onetime protegee of rap mogul Jay Z, filed a lawsuit Thursday seeking to leave his company, charging that his interests have wandered elsewhere. The Albanian-born artist remains popular in Britain, where she was a judge on the latest season of "The X Factor" music competition, but has not released an album since her 2012 debut. In a lawsuit filed in a Los Angeles court, Ora said she had multiple records that she hoped to release but was hamstrung by her contract with

Jay Z's Roc Nation. Ora, now 25, was an early signing when Jay Z in 2008 set up Roc Nation, a label and entertainment promotion company. But Ora noted that Roc Nation was not a full-service label, instead needing distribution tie-ups with major players. Without naming him directly, she said that Jay Z has since turned to other pursuits such as the Tidal streaming service. "Roc Nation's initial support for Rita waned as it diverted its focus from a record label business into other ventures, launching various endeavors including a sports management firm and agency and the Tidal Music streaming service," the lawsuit said.

"When Rita signed, Roc Nation and its senior executives were very involved with her as an artist," it said, adding that the company had transformed to the point where "she no longer had a relationship with anyone at the company." Ora said that her contract forbade her from taking her music elsewhere but that Roc Nation considered her under contract until at least 2019. The lawsuit said that Ora should have the right to leave Roc Nation as of yesterday under a longtime California labor code that sets seven years as the maximum amount of time for a contract in which a person cannot change employers. —AFP

## Kygo breaks Spotify record for quick rise



**Norwegian DJ and record producer Kyrre Gorrveit-Dahl, also known by his stage name Kygo, performs during the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize Concert. — AFP**

demand music online. Spotify, the leading streaming site, has faced accusations from a number of artists that it pays back too little for musicians to earn a living.

The Swedish company said that it quickly identified Kygo and cooperated closely with his label, Sony's electronic-oriented Ultra Music. Spotify said it first worked to promote "Firestone" in Europe before launching a global push to acquaint its users with Kygo. "We knew when we signed him that he had a fanatical following, and we were really able to harness that with the support of Spotify as a global partner on the project," Toby Andrews, head of electronic music marketing for Sony Music International, said in a statement. —AFP

**E**lectronic artist Kygo has become the fastest artist to hit one billion streams on Spotify, capping a phenomenal year for him, the music site said Thursday.

The Norwegian DJ, a key figure in the tropical house genre that has won a growing following, reached the billion-mark in a little more than a year. Kygo's first major solo release came in December 2014 — "Firestone," a mellow dance track that gradually builds to the vocals of Australian singer Conrad Sewell.

He later followed up the success with the track "Stole the Show." While hailing Kygo on his own merits, Spotify cited his success as an example of the possibilities of streaming, which offers unlimited, on-



In this image provided by Warner Bros Entertainment Inc, Luke Bracey plays Utah, left, and Edgar Ramirez plays Bodhi in a scene from "Point Break." — AP photos

## 'Point Break' remake features real athletes, not stuntmen

**J**ohnny Utah will do almost anything to catch a criminal. Aficionados of the campy 1990s surfboard cult classic "Point Break" already know that. But the ends to which America's most extreme FBI agent takes his daredevilery nearly 25 years after Keanu Reeves and Patrick Swayze partnered in the original is what makes this generation's version of "Point Break" something more than a by-the-book reboot. Snowboarding, freeclimbing, wingsuit flying, motocross - the new movie features pretty much every kind of death-defying sport you can think of and employs the best in the world at each endeavor to shoot the scenes.

No need to worry, purists: There's surfing, too, along with plenty of Keanu-like cheese to choose from - Johnny: "Ideas can be powerful." Johnny's love interest, Samsara: "Not as powerful as a whaling ship." Deep thoughts. But if anything about this remake lingers 25 years hence, it probably won't be the lines. Rather, it will be the risk and expense the directors and athletes incurred to portray extreme sports in the most realistic light possible. "I've seen a Hollywood snowboard movie where they're showing the same, quote-unquote, trick, but it's two different rotations," said Louie Vito, the Olympic snowboarder who has a cameo in the movie. "It's a lot of little things like that that we notice that can make a movie a lot more corny. But this, having the guys they had do the stunts and the riding, it stays way more true to it."

### Heart-pounding

From Xavier De Le Rue in snowboarding to Chris Sharma in free climbing, "Point Break" serves up a Who's Who list of action-sports stars - some of whom saw opportunities open when the original movie helped bring extreme sports to the masses. "For Generation Xers, that movie was an inspiration for us," said wingsuit pilot Jeb Corliss, who helped with the remake. "It made you think that maybe you can earn a living doing something you love." The filmmakers traveled to four continents and spared no expense to shoot the action.

It took around 60 takes to produce a heart-pounding, five-minute scene of the

movie's philosophical antihero, Bodhi, and his wingsuit-wearing posse jumping off the Jungfrau in the Swiss Alps, dodging mountains and skimming just above valley floors on the way to a safe landing. Corliss called it the most dangerous stunt that's ever been filmed for a movie. Big mountain snowboarders Ralph Backstrom and Mike Basich joined De Le Rue in playing Bodhi, Johnny and the rest for their near-vertical trip down the Aiguille de la Grande in France. One portion of the filming triggered a Class 4 Avalanche.

"Sure, it would have been a hell of a lot easier to shoot these scenes on a green-

### Reluctant acceptance

Well, the tree called "Point Break" is dropping on Christmas - same as the NFL-medical-detective film "Concussion." That movie portrays a league that, for decades, put lives on the line for the sake of entertainment while teetering between denial and reluctant acceptance of football's life-altering consequences. "Point Break" deals with some similar issues differently: Both the movie's characters and the extreme athletes who perform their stunts are more than willing to risk their lives for a cause. They don't shirk from their reality. They revel in it.

"I can't tell you why any one person



In this image provided by Warner Bros Entertainment Inc, Edgar Ramirez plays Bodhi in a scene from "Point Break."

screen stage in Atlanta," director Ericson Core said. "But honestly, that wouldn't respect those sports at all. We pushed the limits as far as we possibly could." These extreme stars are no strangers to this kind of danger. But more often, their travails are performed among themselves or, at best, made into movies and videos that bypass Hollywood and are distributed straight to the niche audiences that care the most about this stuff. It brings special meaning to a question Bodhi poses midway through the movie: "If a tree falls in the woods, and nobody is there to YouTube it, did it really happen?"

does it, but for me, I want to evolve as a human being, see how far I can go," Corliss said. Bodhi takes that ethos and pushes it to the brink - and beyond. This isn't really a spoiler. Whether you memorized the first "Point Break" or are completely new to these movies, it's no mystery from early-on that things cannot end well for "The Bodhisattva." But like its predecessor, the 2015 film is more about the morally complex and adrenaline-saturated journey than the final resting place. Or, as Bodhi puts it: "We're all gonna die. The only question is 'How?'" — AP

## Culture war brews over S African golden rhino figurine



This file photo taken on September 23, 2015 shows the "golden rhino" figurine displayed at the University of Pretoria in South Africa on September 23, 2015. — AFP

For years, South Africa's apartheid government ignored the significance of a "golden rhino" figurine that provides undeniable proof of a sophisticated society existing before white men arrived. But since the end of racist rule in 1994, the stunning object—just 15 millimeters (six inches) long and more than 700 years old—has become a defining symbol of precolonial civilization in South Africa. Described as southern Africa's equivalent of Tutankhamun's mask, the golden foil rhino could be displayed overseas for the first time in the British Museum at an exhibition of South African art late next year. With more than six million visitors passing through the London museum's doors annually, it would make a dramatic world debut for the rhino, which is currently in a little-known gallery at the University of Pretoria.

The question is whether or not the South African government will sign off on the loan. "I think because South Africa has this colonial legacy, people are concerned about heritage objects leaving the country," said Sian Tiley-Nel, manager of the University of Pretoria museums. "But these are just temporary showcases, they will come back," she told AFP. After centuries of political, commercial and military exploitation, history in Africa—and who gets to tell it—is a hotly contested subject.

European museums, with their vast collections of colonial artefacts ranging from Benin bronzes to Ugandan headdresses made of human hair, have a controversial track record on the continent. In August, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe lashed out at Britain's National History Museum for failing to turn over the skulls of African freedom fighters. "Surely, keeping decapitated heads as war trophies, in this day and age, in a national history museum, must rank among the highest forms of racist moral decadence, sadism and human insensitivity," Mugabe said. To date, the South African government has declined to say whether the golden rhino will feature as a star exhibit at the London show. "This matter is still under negotiation and has not been finalized as yet," South Africa's Department of Arts and Culture told AFP.

### Left in limbo

In 1932, a group of white men hunting for treasure discovered the rhino in Mapungubwe hill, a rocky outcrop in the country's northern Limpopo province, where baobab trees tower over herds of elephant. They had stumbled across the remains of a graveyard for the elites of a lost kingdom that was a trading hub in 1220, exchanging ivory and gold for glass beads and cloth with Egypt, India and China.

A former student at the University of Pretoria turned over some of the cache to the school. Despite its obvious significance, the golden rhino was ignored by the colonial—and, later, apartheid—governments, whose regimes were premised on the belief that Africans were primitive. The rhino and other gold artefacts, including a leopard figurine and necklaces, challenged the colonial version of history that South African civilization started when Dutch colonial administrator Jan van Riebeeck landed in 1652. "Mapungubwe has come to show that South Africa has a very rich history," said Tiley-Nel, speaking in the dimly lit gallery where the golden rhino is on display.

"The southern part of Africa was not an empty myth land." Since Nelson Mandela was elected the country's first democratic president in 1994, Mapungubwe has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. —AFP

In this May 23, 1983 file photo, movie fans line up on Philadelphia's Chestnut Street in advance for the premiere of the movie, "Star Wars: Episode VI - Return of the Jedi." —AP photos



## As 'Star Wars' returns, a new generation quakes

Long before I was a movie writer and critic, I was a teenager driving up the Garden State Parkway in a Storm Trooper helmet, inquiring toll booth attendants if they had seen two droids. I don't know what this means for my relationship with "Star Wars" and the coming sequel, "The Force Awakens," which is some mix of boyish excitement and adult despair. I do know that it's difficult to operate a stick shift with a Storm Trooper helmet on and that New Jersey toll booth attendants are a hard bunch to faze.

As "The Force Awakens" makes its way into theaters, moviegoers and critics of generations old and young will again have to wrestle with a cultural force as colossal as the Death Star, whose cinematic firepower is alternatively seen as the vile source to today's franchise-mad blockbuster-crazy Hollywood or the ultimate expression of a glorious movie passion that spans time, galaxies and dreadfully disappointing prequels.

### Superhero movie

For a fairly impersonal epic of corny characters, "Star Wars" inspires curiously personal reactions. It drives some people to don Wookiee costumes and others to curse an entire industry as infantile. Since the 1977 debut of "A New Hope," it's become a generational rite of passage not just to experience the saga, but also to form one's relationship with movies around it, whether in happy lock-step or rebel opposition. "Star Wars" made, and changed, movie and cultural history, and anybody who wants to make sense of either has to take it on," wrote critic Glenn Kenny in "A Galaxy Not So Far Away: Writers and Artists on Twenty-Five Years of Star War."

"Star Wars" didn't, by itself, change movies. But more than any other film, it heralded the blockbuster era that would follow the maverick filmmaking of the '70s — a continuing chapter in movies that swells with every new superhero movie. Lucas, himself, straddled the divide he came to be the poster boy of. Coming off the success of "American Graffiti," which he wrote, his pal Francis Ford Coppola wanted him to direct "Apocalypse Now." (Take a moment to contemplate THAT parallel universe.) Lucas was instead busy with his script for "Star Wars," a project that few expected much of and that Universal Studios passed on before 20th Century Fox paid Lucas to develop it.

But to the astonishment of everyone, including Lucas (who fortuitously negotiated



In this May 25, 1983 file photo, three costumed fans of the "Star Wars" movie trilogy, Kevin Maguire, from left, as an Imperial Fire Control Officer, Stephen Robards, and his brother John Robards as Rebel Fighter Pilots, stand in a line of ticket buyers outside a Boston theater, before the first showing there of the film "Return of the Jedi."

for the sequel and merchandising rights), the movie he called "The Sting" in outer space" was a smash that was still No. 1 at the box office more than 40 weeks after opening. Many critics watched its rise warily. Pauline Kael called the movie "a box of Cracker Jacks which is all prizes." John Simon fretted: "O dull new world!"



In this May 4, 2005 file photo, George Lucas, director of "Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith," poses at Skywalker Ranch in San Rafael, Calif.

All the profits fueled the multiplexes erected through the 1980s. Their walls would blare with Lucas' own sound system, THX, and play countless action sequences designed by Lucas' effects house, Industrial Light and Magic. Many of the forces Lucas unlocked — the merchandizing power, the franchise building, the super-fandom — now

define the modern movie business. Paul Schrader, writer of 1976's "Taxi Driver" and 1980's "Raging Bull," once called "Star Wars" "the film that ate the heart and soul of Hollywood."

### Special effects

"Star Wars," though, was part of a broader and perhaps unstoppable trend. It followed James Bond films and Steven Spielberg's "Jaws" (the first movie to open in wide release). "Superman: The Movie" arrived the year after. "The Force Awakens" now finds itself in a more competitive blockbuster environment, just one of the prime assets in the stable of the Walt Disney Co, which purchased Lucasfilm for \$4.05 billion — a fitting home for "Star Wars" considering Lucas considered it "a Disney movie."

Inheriting Lucas' empire, director J.J. Abrams — one of those kids transfixed by "Star Wars," now grown up — isn't trying to redefine moviegoing. His "The Force Awakens" is more like a restoration project: a blend of new and old; old-school special effects with a more diverse cast. Alongside the old guard of Han Solo and Luke Skywalker, the new characters are effectively stand-ins for new fans.

"It was the idea of what would this new generation be, given that they were standing on the shoulders of characters we knew from years earlier," Abrams said in an earlier interview. "How their history is the history that we know." "Star Wars" ultimately belongs to the young. —AP





A handout picture obtained in London yesterday, shows Britain's Prince William (right), Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge (second left) and their two children Prince George (left) and Princess Charlotte in a photograph taken in late October 2015 at Kensington Palace in London. — AFP

## Britain's Prince George to start at nursery

Prince George will start attending nursery in Britain from early next year, royal officials announced yesterday. The two-year-old son of Prince William and wife Kate is set to attend Westacre Montessori School Nursery in Norfolk, eastern England, near the family's home at Anmer Hall. He is due to start attending before the end of January, Kensington Palace said in a statement.

As the announcement was made, a new photograph of William, Kate, George and his sister Princess Charlotte, born in May, was released. The picture shows the whole family smiling as Kate cradles Charlotte, George stands next to her and William looks on. In its statement, Kensington Palace quoted the nursery as saying: "We are looking forward to welcoming George to our nursery, where he will get the same special experience as all of our children."

While the older generation of British royals did not typically attend nursery, George will be following in the footsteps of his father. William was sent to an exclusive nursery school near Kensington Palace in London by his mother, the late princess Diana, who had herself worked at a nursery before her marriage to Prince Charles. —AFP

## 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' hits \$50 million Thursday night in US

The Force is already setting a US record with "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" taking in \$50 million to \$55 million in opening Thursday-night shows, preliminary estimates showed. If the estimates hold, "The Force Awakens" will easily beat the previous Thursday-night record of \$43.5 million by Warner Bros.' "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2" in July 2011. The US showings of Disney-Lucasfilm's "The Force Awakens," directed by JJ Abrams, began at 7 pm.

The cast includes Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, Oscar Isaac, Adam Driver, Lupita Nyong'o and Domhnall Gleeson along with original "Star Wars" stars Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher. In a sign of sky-high anticipation, the seventh film in the iconic science-fiction franchise had set a record by selling more than \$100 million worth of advance tickets domestically as of Tuesday-raising expectations that "The Force Awakens" will do more than \$200 million worth of business on its opening weekend domestically. The current record for a launch weekend was set in June by "Jurassic World" with \$208.4 million.

The marketing campaign has triggered plenty of pent-up excitement for the return of Luke Skywalker, Chewbacca and Han Solo, plus the new characters and story line. Disney, which paid more than \$4 billion for Lucasfilm in 2009, had been downplaying expectations, but rival studios and industry analysts believe that "The Force Awakens" will open to \$210 million or more.

"The Force Awakens" is set 30 years after the events of 1983's "Star Wars: Return of the Jedi." The film will be in a total of 4,134 North American locations on Friday—a record for a December opening. "The Force Awakens" also debuted in a dozen international markets on Wednesday with a total of \$14.1 million at the international box office. The film, which carries a production cost of at least \$200 million, opened in 32 additional foreign markets Thursday will open in most other markets Friday. It could eclipse the international opening weekend record of \$316.1 million, set again by "Jurassic World." — Reuters

# Travel industry embraces virtual reality as marketing tool

From roller coasters to cruises to destinations, virtual reality is exploding as a way to market travel. You can parasail and paddle-board using virtual reality content produced by Florida's Visit St Pete/Clearwater Tourism Board. You can land a jet on Hamilton Island in Queensland, Australia, then go swimming with tropical fish in the Great Barrier Reef. You can watch the opening song "Circle of Life," recorded at a live Broadway performance of "The Lion King," and peer around the theater at everything from the aisles and audience, to the performers and

most realistic experience you can have of a place without being there. It's powerful. It gets people excited and engaged and interested in having that experience in real life." Virtual reality offers immersive, 3-D experiences via videos and images with 360-degree perspectives, using a \$100 headset from Samsung or a virtually free cardboard contraption designed by Google. You need your own smartphone, and the \$100 headset works only with certain Samsung models. You can also watch VR videos online with a 360-degree view, though they're not as immersive as using a headset because you're not shutting out your surroundings.

Whichever your method, by moving the device or cursor in different directions, you can see the sky, the floor, down a hallway or around a corner. Mandelbaum said the average user spends 10 minutes on a VR experience, "an eternity" in the digital world. Dolly Parton's theme park, Dollywood, in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, created a VR experience to introduce a new ride, Lightning Rod, billed as the "world's fastest wooden coaster."

### Onsite aquarium

"You can take your phone and spin it up and down, look behind you, to the left or right, to get an idea of what this ride is like," said Dollywood spokesman Wes Ramey, comparing the VR experience to looking at photos or reviews before booking a trip. "The ride will not open until March, but this builds buzz around it. It gives people an opportunity to ride it virtually before it's completed." Mall of America in Minnesota is launching its first VR videos this month, showing its onsite aquarium, Nickelodeon Universe theme park, Santa exhibit, a shopping wing and a choral performance. Carnival Corp.'s new Fathom brand, which plans voluntourism cruises to the Dominican Republic and Cuba, is working on VR content that shows participants in onshore activities like planting seedlings in a reforestation program, reciting English with school children, dancing to Latin music and sharing a meal with locals. And in January, the Dali Museum in St Petersburg, Florida, will launch an "Inside Dali's Mind" VR experience that lets users walk around Dali's imagined structures and meet the characters he painted.

Because so few consumers own viewing devices, some VR producers set up at trade shows, shopping malls, pop-up stores and even on the street where they can provide the headsets. The Miami-based Newlink public relations firm created a VR experience for the Dominican Republic that can be seen on YouTube in a simple 360-degree version, but the company also showed it at trade shows, supplying VR headsets so viewers could get the full effect. As a marketing technique, said Newlink spokeswoman Lourdes Perez, "it is the next big thing." Is there a risk that viewers will be so satisfied by the VR experience that they won't need to see the real thing? Visitors to Seattle's Space Needle observatory sometimes focus less on real views of the city out the windows because they're so mesmerized by virtual views on the observatory's walls, screens and videos. But Mandelbaum's not worried. When YouVisit set up tents in Manhattan where more than 1,000 visitors used VR headsets to experience a Carnival cruise, "the reactions were incredible. They would say, 'I didn't know I could do all that on a cruise.' Once they see what it's like, they're more inclined to book." — AP



This undated rendering provided by Dollywood theme park shows the Lightning Rod wooden roller coaster, in Pigeon Forge, Tenn, scheduled to open in March. — AP photos

props, to the conductor and backstage. And even if you can't afford Dubai's luxury Burj Al-Arab Jumeirah hotel, you can take a 3-D online tour of a royal suite, lobby, helipad, bar, spa, restaurants, marble staircase with cheetah-print carpet and rotating canopy bed.

"VR is taking the world by storm, similar to what mobile did seven years ago," said Abi Mandelbaum, CEO of YouVisit, which has created over 300 VR experiences for destinations, from Vatican City to Mexico's Grand Velas Riviera Maya. "Virtual reality is the



In this Sept 19, 2014, file photo, Anan Bishara, left, and Denise Burrell, right, both from New York, check out a virtual reality display that lets visitors explore the Pike Place Market and other attractions atop the Space Needle in Seattle.



Toney Hughes, general manager of Sherwood Forest Art Gallery on Livernois Avenue, walks through the gallery in Detroit. — AP photos



Mannequins posed as friends talking are displayed at the 1917 American Bistro on Livernois Avenue.

# Detroit's Avenue of Fashion coming back on its own terms

When it comes to Detroit, much of the attention and investment has gone to downtown, Midtown, Corktown and even Mexicantown. But one area coming back on its own terms and with a little less fanfare belongs to part of "Uptown," specifically, a stretch of Livernois Avenue called the "Avenue of Fashion." The commercial district running along Livernois on the city's northwest side became known by that elegant moniker from the 1950s to the '70s, when the street was hopping with shoppers and destination retailers such as B Siegel Co and other high-end shops. The surrounding area remains one of Detroit's most stable, flanked by universities and historic, attractive neighborhoods, but the avenue lost its flair as merchants closed or moved to suburbs and malls.

While revitalization has been under way for several years, there's now a focused effort to capitalize on its past without duplicating it. The tree-lined boulevard seeks its own distinctive vibe through one-of-a-kind apparel shops, restaurants and three art galleries, within a broader revival of Uptown. "We spend an awful lot of time with downtown Detroit, we spend an awful lot of time with Midtown. I think it's time to spend some time with Uptown," Wayne County Executive Warren Evans said recently as he launched an effort to install 160 LED lights in front of and behind shops, alleys and parking lots along Livernois. The lights are paid for by an economic development grant and supplement light poles installed on the avenue.

## Luxury leather

"We've been through some tough times in this city. It's time for neighborhoods - healthy neighborhoods like this one - to get some support and help," he said. Installing lighting to boost visibility and security might not warrant a big news conference elsewhere, but Detroit's public and private sectors struggled for a long time to make such improvements or even provide basic services. While much work remains, many things, including lighting, have improved since the city exited bankruptcy a year ago.

It's not lost on C Grantston Bullard, whose business, CGB Design Studio, received the first exterior light. The owner of the luxury leather and fur shop said he met Evans at a business event and the political leader asked Bullard how he could help business. "I said, 'Well, Mr E, here it gets pitch black at night. We have no lighting whatsoever,'" Bullard recalled telling Evans. "My demographic is (women) 35 to 65, and they come with their kids. ... He said he was going to see what he could do about it."

Bullard credits his decision to bring his studio and boutique to the Avenue of Fashion to Rufus Bartell, owner of a "lifestyle clothing store" on the street called Simply Casual. Bartell estimates he's helped persuade nearly 20 businesses to open, relocate or expand on Livernois. "When I came here 12 years ago ... one of my goals was to get the bars off the windows, be able to drive traffic, drive value and recruit other businesses," Bartell said, adding

## Surrounding residents

"This neighborhood is actually the heartbeat of the city," said Don Studvent, 1917's chef and proprietor. "We have more black-owned businesses just in this part of the city - more than any other neighborhood." Lolita Haley, a real estate agent and program manager of the University Commons community development organization, said success can be sustained without the big names and big checks focused a few miles to the southeast - provided that businesses keep helping each other and surrounding residents support them. "We always appreciate and welcome philanthropy, but I don't want that to be end goal because I know no white horse is getting ready to ride through here," Haley said. "Look at the demise of the neighborhood ... if you don't do something yourself. You've got to do what you can today."

When it comes to Detroit, much of the attention and investment has gone to downtown and Midtown. But one area coming back on its own terms - with less fanfare - belongs to part of "Uptown," a stretch of Livernois Avenue called the "Avenue of Fashion." The district along Livernois on the city's northwest side was known by that moniker from the 1950s to the '70s, when shoppers flocked to retailers. The surrounding area remains one of Detroit's most stable, but the avenue lost flair as merchants closed or moved to suburbs and malls. While revitalization has been going on for several years, there's a focused effort to capitalize on the past without duplicating it. The boulevard seeks its own vibe through one-of-a-kind apparel shops, restaurants and art galleries. — AP



Business owner Larry Swygert, right, talks with Anthony Raynail Higgenbottom as Higgenbottom prepares to install Christmas lights on one of Swygert's buildings on Livernois Avenue.

he keeps business development going through a pop-up shop that allows entrepreneurs to test their products or services. "The history of the avenue is well-documented. However, I'm more concerned with what's next." The current mix includes popular restaurants such as a Kuzzo's Chicken & Waffles, a Bartell family operation, and 1917 American Bistro - named for the year the surrounding Sherwood Forest neighborhood was established.



Don Studvent, chef/owner of 1917 American Bistro on Livernois Avenue, helps customers.



Derek Cain of Flagship, a clothing store, arranges his merchandise in Detroit.

# Cats and dogs partying like animals in ugly holiday sweaters



Catie Savage holds her cat Lambchop while Ziggy looks on, both dressed in their finest ugly Christmas sweaters.



Photo provided by Aimee Beltran shows her Chihuahua Chuy decked out in an ugly Christmas sweater.

Ugly sweaters aren't just a Christmas tradition for people. Cats, dogs and even guinea pigs are joining the party. Zigzilla "Ziggy" and Chopper "Lambchop" got sweaters from PetSmart this year so they'll be ready when they get an invite to their first ugly sweater party, said the cats' owner Catie Savage of New York City. "My non-cat lady friends definitely think I am crazy," said Savage, who handles her cats' Instagram site (@life\_of\_ziggy), with 43,000 followers. She says she enjoys the sweaters more than the cats do, "which makes it even funnier to me."

"PetSmart's ugly sweaters for dogs and cats are among our top five best-selling holiday apparel items so far this season," said Eran Cohen, chief customer experience officer for the pet store. "We even have ugly sweaters for guinea pigs." Television ushered the ugly sweater in and out in the 1980s. Around the turn of the century it enjoyed a revival, starting with adults, who had parties just to celebrate the ugliness. Kids got in on the act and now pets have nosed their way in, giving owners laughs and plenty to photograph.

### Holiday sweaters

Ugly sweater dog events across the country this month included an ugly sweater contest for dogs at a park in Anaheim, California; a dog-friendly ugly sweater 5K run and walk in National Harbor, Maryland; and separate ugly sweater parties for big and little dogs hosted by Chicago Party Animals, one of the nation's largest canine clubs with 2,000 members. You can find ready-made ugly sweaters everywhere from 99 cent stores to high-end stores, but they're an especially hot item at thrift stores - though presumably most shoppers are buying



Catie Savage's cats Lambchop, below, and Ziggy are both dressed in their finest ugly Christmas sweaters in her apartment in New York. — AP photos



Photo shows an 8-year old Chihuahua named Coco out in the winter cold in his new Christmas sweater.

them for people, not pets.

"Our stores collect holiday sweaters year-round," said Marla Eby, marketing and community relations director for Goodwill Southern California. "Then we decorate them, adding ribbons, bows, and embellishments until they are at their gaudy best." "Customers snap up the sweaters as soon as we bring them out on the floor," said vice president of Retail Operations Craig Stone. "They are so popular we can't keep them in stock."

Aimee Beltran of Virginia Beach, Virginia, has turned her blog into an ugly sweater classroom twice, using her 6-year-old Chihuahua Chuy as a model for the finished product. Her advice to

anyone making a pet sweater: "Have fun with it. Don't take it too seriously. Make it your own and your style. There is no right or wrong way to do it." An ugly sweater has to celebrate Christmas. The bolder the colors, the brighter and the more stuff on it, the better - bring on the bows, snowmen, Santas, trees, buttons, stars, sequins, rick-rack, felt, glitter and cotton. Sleeves can be mismatched, misshapen or missing.

### Static electricity

But most pets - including Savage's cats - would probably like to ditch the sweaters. "Dog vision is different than human vision and because patterns are not particularly useful to their vision, dogs probably could care less what their sweater looks like," said Dr Bonnie Beaver, executive director of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists and a professor at Texas A&M University's College of Veterinary Medicine.

Most dogs and cats don't like wearing sweaters unless they got used to being dressed young. "Sometimes the putting on or taking off can cause static electricity, which would make the dog even more anxious the next time," Beaver said. If a dog has grown up wearing clothes or if a dog is small and short-haired and it is cold, a sweater will be OK, but wearing one for a contest "is of no consequence to the dog, which will be focused on the scents around it and not on the real appearance of other dogs," Beaver said. Owners love to have fun with their pets, but "most of this is a people thing," Beaver said. — AP



Catie Savage's cat Ziggy, wearing his ugly Christmas sweater, stares at the Christmas tree.



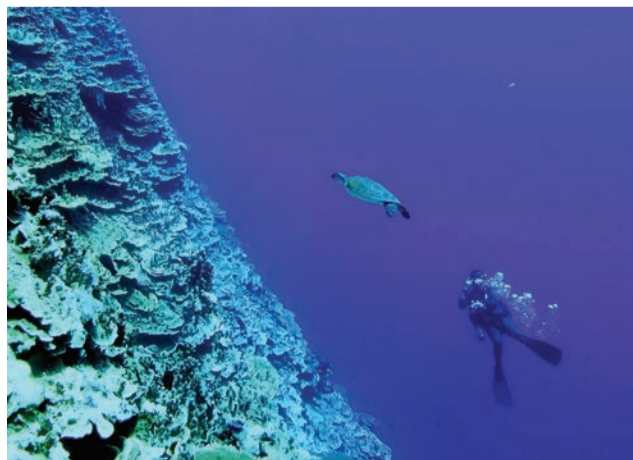
# Diving in the Marshall Islands

with tuna, turtles and wrecks

A dive boat floats over a wreck of a DC3 aircraft in Majuro Atoll at the Marshall Islands.



Diver Hiroaki Ueda swims through a ship wreck in Majuro Atoll lagoon at the Marshall Islands.—AP photos



Diver Hiroaki Ueda swims with a sea turtle on a reef near Majuro Atoll.

It was clear right away it was a tuna swimming past because of the distinctive bumps along its back that lead to its angular tail. And what a whopper. It was about the size of a small person, and seemed unbothered by me bobbing just a few feet away. It was my second dive, with a colleague, in the remote Marshall Islands, located midway between Hawaii and Australia. There's little tourism here, but plenty to see below the surface. During our first dive, in the Majuro lagoon, we'd explored a sunken plane, helicopter and ship in water that was warm and crystal clear.

We started with the plane, an old DC3 that was resting on the sandy bottom at a shallow depth of between 3 and 6 meters (10 and 20 feet), making it accessible for novice scuba divers and even experienced snorkelers.

Fish darted about what were once the cockpit controls and we could see an old strap still hanging inside a window. Along the side we could make out most of the lettering: Sea Star Pacific. A little deeper, the helicopter was shrouded in seaweed and tube-shaped growths. Deeper still was the ship, its rooms and decks accessible with careful maneuvering and the aid of an underwater flashlight.

### Storm surges

I thought at first we might have entered some kind of Bermuda Triangle where craft regularly come to grief. But our guide, Hiroaki Ueda, explained the wrecks had been towed there for divers to enjoy. Ueda first came to the Marshall Islands from Japan in 2007. The dive outfit that hired him soon went bankrupt and so he opened his own business, Raycrew. He's completed some 4,000 dives all over the islands, he said, and loves the endless color and life he finds in the coral.

But climate change is having an impact throughout the Marshall Islands, which are vulnerable to rising seas and storm surges. Last year, Ueda said, he saw extensive coral bleaching, which is when warmer water temperatures cause coral to turn white, increasing its risk of dying. He took us outside the lagoon to the oceanside coral for our second dive. This time we went deeper and I encountered the tuna at about 30 meters (100 feet). We swam alongside a coral bank that dropped away steeply into the abyss below.



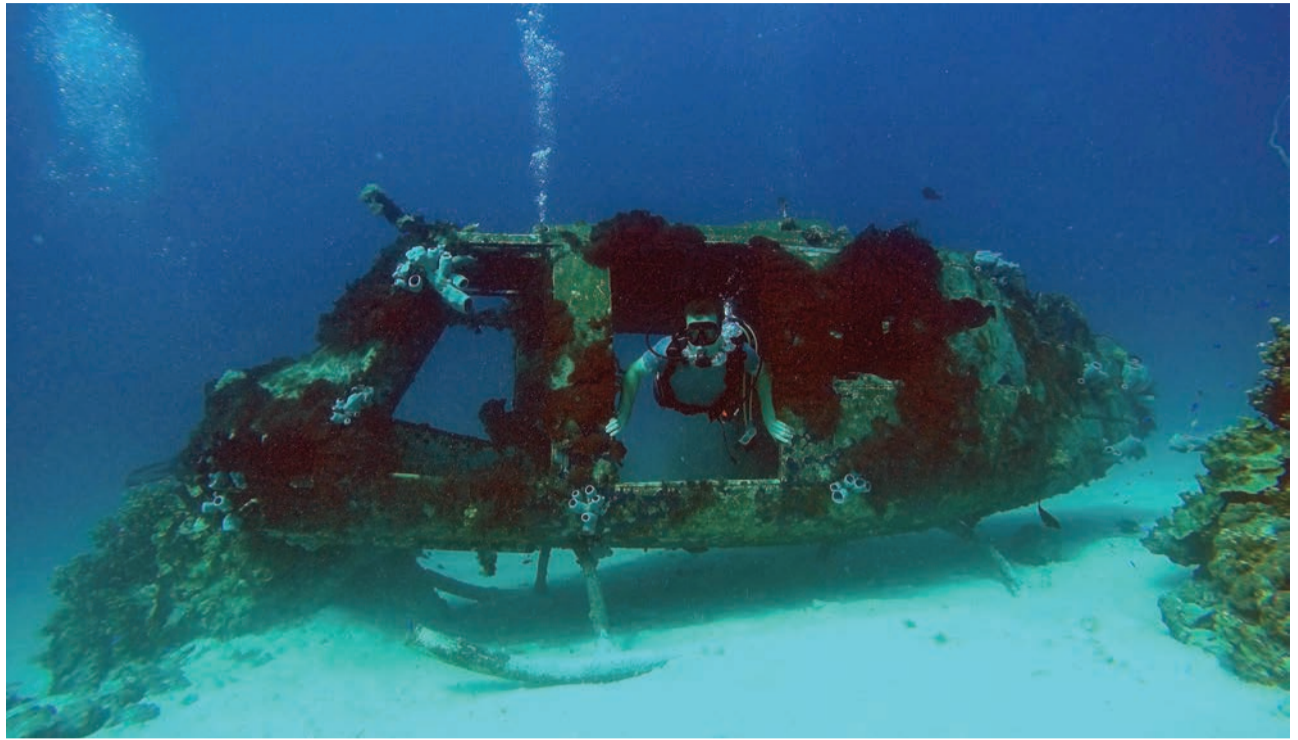
Diver Hiroaki Ueda submerges below his boat as they explore a wrecked DC3 aircraft.



Divers explore a wrecked DC3 aircraft.



Diver Nick Perry swims around a coral reef near Majuro Atoll at the Marshall Islands.



Diver Nick Perry swims through a helicopter wreck in Majuro Atoll lagoon.



Colorful fish swim around coral in Majuro Atoll lagoon at the Marshall Islands.



Diver Nick Perry swims around sea life and coral in Majuro Atoll lagoon.

We saw a turtle swimming lazily along and swam next to it for a short distance before it seemed to sense it was being cornered and darted away. Ueda runs his business from the Marshall Islands Resort, one of just two Western-style hotels in the capital, Majuro. Life on the islands is slow-paced, and sometimes things like the Internet, or the electricity, don't work. In populated areas, the lagoon is ringed with trash, although some young activists are organizing drives to clean it up.

**Sea life**

There's little catering for tourists, which is charming in its own way. We went to a cafe in search of what is apparently the island's only espresso machine - only to find that it had broken down. Perhaps the lack of caffeine is a good thing, though, in place that is so relaxed, and where the people are unfailingly friendly and welcoming. Most scuba divers that come to this part of the world tend to head to the World War II wrecks found around Palau and the Micronesian island state of Chuuk. Some make a stop at the Marshall Islands along the way.

The Marshall Islands also have stunning wreck diving in the Bikini Atoll, although getting there is only for the adventurous. From April through November, the Bikini

government helps organize a handful of trips in which divers live aboard a boat for two weeks and are told of the atoll's history. After the war, Bikini was at the center of the US nuclear testing program. One of those tests sank the USS Saratoga (CV3), an aircraft carrier that is now a favorite for divers. It remains unsafe to eat fish from the Bikini lagoon. Perhaps ironically, that has led to an explosion of sea life there.

**If you go...**

Marshall Islands: United is the only major carrier to fly to the Marshall Islands. Tiny Nauru Airlines also offers some flights. United flights are relatively expensive and depart from Honolulu just three times each week, so it's important to leave plenty of time for connections. Marshall Islands Resort is located in the capital, Majuro. Raycrew dives are operated from an office in the hotel complex by Hiroaki Ueda at about \$75 per dive, depending on the trip.—AP



A diver shines a light to illuminate colorful fish including a Anemone Fish hiding amongst white coral in Majuro Atoll lagoon.

## DRIVING BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION THROUGH CLOUD SERVICES

**KUWAIT:** Cloud services are already demonstrating clear value in the delivery of IT functions and enabling the consumption of solution-packaged IT services. But the key to creating more business value from cloud services comes not from implementing them in an otherwise unchanged organization but more from using cloud services as a catalyst to transform organizations via associated people and business process changes.

True business transformation is unlikely to occur as a result of the implementation of cloud services alone as they mostly represent a substitute of existing IT functionality or a substitute of software for human labor. Instead, business transformation requires people and business process changes to be added to the mix of cloud services. But because business transformation initiatives typically involve high risk/reward scenarios, many organizations are reluctant to pursue them, and those that do often require significant financial justifications.

The economics of public cloud services seem compelling enough in isolation (ie, renting only what you need and when you need it versus buying solutions to accommodate peak capacity and incurring the associated costs of deploying and supporting it over time), as long as the trade-offs relating to potential loss of IT control and the impact on data security, privacy, and location are acceptable. Indeed, IDC analysis using has shown

that moving application development to the public cloud can result in a 73% cost saving when compared with more traditional approaches.

However, some business cases and return-on-investment (ROI) calculations related to cloud services are problematic because they rest on a bed of assumptions, including the degree to which the future costs and benefits of business transformation are understood and included. Likewise, the impact of cloud services on the quality of an organization's output (i.e., its own products or services), or the ability of an IT department to deliver services in support of its overall mission, is hard to measure financially but is an important element of new business value.

Indeed, many end-user organizations are keen to point out that cloud services have some benefits that are harder to quantify financially than others. One oft-quoted benefit is the increased agility of the IT department. This is about both adaptability to change and increased developer productivity. For example, cloud integration services can be a substitute for professionals providing manual systems integration tasks, and some customers have reported up to 66 percent faster and/or 30 percent cheaper integrations through their use of such services.

Another 'financially unquantifiable' benefit that is often identified from IDC's regular discussions with end-user organizations stems from

the high-quality nature of cloud services. Simply put, cloud services are often more standardized than many of the inputs created by humans, and this can reduce one potential source of error or variability within the overall process of what the rest of the organization does.

Crafted correctly, business cases and ROI calculations are tools that can help justify large expenditures, but end-user organizations must explicitly outline their assumptions about the degree of business transformation to be involved (e.g., the degree of transformation, measured in time or dollars, that they are willing to accommodate) and the potential impacts on product or service quality. In addition, organizations must also monitor for actual business benefits that emerge whether or not they were planned at project onset.

### More value

For organizations that want to unlock more value from cloud services, the real opportunity (and risk) comes from using cloud services as a touchstone for proposed changes to business processes, models, strategies, or organizational structures. IDC believes the economic benefits of implementing cloud services - holding all other things constant - will begin to reach a point of diminishing returns unless business transformation becomes part of the equation.

For example, once an organization consolidates its three datacenters into one, or moves

to cloud, or embraces software-defined networks and datacenters, how much more IT efficiency can reasonably be expected? Tackling business transformation involves a higher risk/reward scenario, and this is why so many end-user organizations seek outside help from service providers and industry experts. Ultimately, cloud services are both a delivery model and a consumption model, and both elements need to be factored into compelling business strategies aimed at extracting more value from such services. This is not only true for the products or services created for an organization's customers but also for "delivery" in the context of providing services for an organization's internal users and the services an organization consumes from external providers.

Most cloud providers and end users have been focusing, rightly, on the delivery side of cloud first (since you have to build something before you can use it), but it's the consumption side of the cloud model where end-user organizations will find more interest and lasting value. That value may or may not be immediately quantifiable in financial terms, but implemented alongside the right mix of human inputs and process changes, cloud services undoubtedly have a key role to play in the quest for true business transformation. — *The author is the Group Vice President and Regional Managing Director at IDC, Middle East, Turkey and Africa.*

## FOR MYANMAR'S MANY DRONE ENTHUSIASTS, SKY IS THE LIMIT

**YANGON:** In a ramshackle workshop behind a bustling Yangon market, Kyi Tha fixes the plastic propeller of a home-made drone, one of a growing number of enthusiasts refusing to let poverty clip the wings of their hi-tech dreams. A new generation of creative young inventors have turned to the Internet to catch up with the rest of the world, after years of isolation under junta rule left the country with little access to engineering expertise or cutting-edge technology.

"Studying drone technology is not easy in Myanmar. So we watched videos about it on YouTube," said Kyi Tha, admitting he watch clips for months, patiently enduring notoriously slow web connections in his search for knowledge.

"First we did not have any success, but after experimenting for one year we could do many things," he told AFP. Kyi Tha, 26, and his cousin Thet San, 30, have transformed a modest wooden home into the nerve-centre of their engineering and technology business, Myanmar Future Science.

A workbench in the backyard is cluttered with the signs of feverish invention-boxes of

screws, aluminium rods, and the body of a model aeroplane. Their firm makes its money providing engineering services to the government and private firms, using drones and model aircraft to conduct aerial surveys for maps and assessments of agricultural areas.

But their passion is opening up the world of technology to fellow budding inventors. They have a little shop in their garden packed with tiny motors, propellers and plastic body-parts for drones, planes and radio-controlled cars.

Myanmar's youth are eager to keep up with the latest technological developments, but are often held back by poverty—a legacy of decades under junta rule.

A new ready-made drone could set you back up to 300,000 kyats (around \$230), far beyond the financial reach most young people in Myanmar, where the World Bank puts average annual income per capita at \$1,270. But enterprising gadget builders rely on creativity to keep their costs down to just \$10 — using materials like polystyrene foam packaging to build their models and seeking out cheap engine parts.



**YANGON:** Kyi Tha (L) and his cousin Thet San (R) setting up drones at their drone accessories shop in Yangon. — AFP

"This is our hobby. We are crazy about making things with these accessories, just as many young students in Myanmar would like to do," said Kyi Tha, who imports most of the parts from China.

### Flying free

Drones are the tool of choice for legions of photographers and video-makers eager to capture a bird's eye view of everything from tourist attractions to protests.

Australia has begun using them to track sharks with the hope of protecting swimmers from attack, while Amazon wants to use them for shopping delivery. But their burgeoning popularity has also caused security jitters.

In September a drone crashed at the US Open, causing the match to be interrupted, the latest incident in America, which is considering mandatory registration. In Southeast Asia some countries, like Cambodia, have imposed strict controls on drone use. But the nascent field remains largely unregulated-for now.

Model aircraft are not currently subject to specific legal restrictions in Myanmar, although authorities are believed to be mulling regulation. On weekends and holidays, teams of enthusiasts take their flying machines out for a spin in Yangon and the less populous industrial outskirts of the city. As his new drone swooped

through the air in a park near Yangon's revered Shwedagon Pagoda one local IT worker said most objections he normally receives are vague concerns over "security".

"I just want to show Myanmar's beautiful scenery in my drone footage," he told AFP, asking just to be referred to by his nickname, Ethan.

"People love drone shots, they're awesome. When my drone is flying I feel amazing, very happy," he said.

### Sky's the limit

At the Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University in the central town of Meiktila-whose main building is shaped like an aeroplane-researchers are utilising drone technology for a more scientific purpose.

The university has operated recent drone surveys to assess the impact of devastating monsoon floods that inundated huge areas of the country from July to September, affecting some 1.6 million people at their peak.

"Drone pictures can be very useful for prevention and measuring damage," said Thae Maung Maung, head of the department for Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. He said the purpose of the surveys was to find out the scale of losses from the disaster, map the points where rivers had burst their banks and plot the best place for relief camps.—AFP



**MEIKTILA:** Thae Maung Maung, department head of UAV research, posing with one of his self-made unmanned aerial vehicles at the Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University in Meiktila, some 512 km away from the capital city Yangon. —AFP

# APPLE NAMES JEFF WILLIAMS AS CEO

**SAN JOSE:** Apple named Jeff Williams as its chief operating officer Thursday, a job that hasn't been filled since Tim Cook left the position more than four years ago to become CEO.

Williams has worked at Apple for about 17 years and supervised the launch of the Apple Watch, which went on sale earlier this year. The company said he played a "key role" in the launch of the iPhone.

Apple also announced on Thursday that it hired Tor Myhren from advertising company Grey Group to be vice president of marketing communications. He will start early next year and will oversee Apple's advertisements, websites and product packaging. At Grey, Myhren was chief creative officer and president of its New York office. Apple Inc., based in Cupertino, California, also expanded the roles of two other executives.

It upped Johnny Srouji's position to senior vice president of hardware technologies from vice president and said Senior Vice President of Worldwide Marketing Phil Schiller would now add Apple's app store to his responsibilities. In afternoon trading, Apple shares slipped \$1.95, or 1.7 percent, to \$109.39.

## Apple Pay

Meanwhile, Apple Inc and China's state-owned credit card processor announced plans yesterday to launch the smartphone-based Apple Pay electronic payment system in China. Apple and China UnionPay said they plan to roll

out the system in early 2016, pending approval by regulators. China's biggest shopping season comes ahead of the Lunar New Year holiday, which begins Feb. 8.

Apple Pay is a late arrival in a Chinese electronic payments market dominated by Alipay, an arm of the e-commerce giant Alibaba Group, which accounts for about 80 percent of transactions. The system will allow UnionPay cardholders to make payments via Apple iPhones, Apple Watches and iPads. Apple and UnionPay said they have agreements with 15 Chinese banks to support the system.

Apple declined to say how the company and UnionPay would divide the costs and revenues of their venture.

## Digital wallet

Apple announced a major partnership with China UnionPay on Thursday to put its digital wallet to work in the world's most populous country.

China UnionPay customers will be able to add their bank cards to Apple Pay on iPhones, iPads, or Apple Watch wearables, the companies said in a joint statement.

"China is an extremely important market for Apple and with China UnionPay and support from 15 of China's leading banks, users will soon have a convenient, private and secure payment experience," said Apple senior vice president of software and services Eddy Cue. The service could be available early next year, pending



**SAN FRANCISCO:** Apple Vice President of Operations, Jeff Williams, discusses ResearchKit during an Apple event in San Francisco. Apple named Williams as its new chief operating officer on Thursday a job that hasn't been filled since Tim Cook left the position more than four years ago to become CEO. Williams has worked at Apple for about 17 years and supervised the launch of the Apple Watch, which went on sale earlier this year. —AP

approval of Chinese regulators. Apple touts its digital wallet as letting people make purchases easily and securely, encrypting and hiding away personal data to thwart thieves.

UnionPay operates China's national inter-bank clearing and settlement system and

reported having issued more than five billion cards to date. Apple launched its digital wallet last year in a move capitalizing on the popularity of its mobile devices and taking on rivals such as Google and PayPal, which are also competing in the market. —Agencies

## CACI IN THE LEAD TO BUY LOCKHEED'S IT BUSINESS

**NEW YORK:** Defense contractor CACI International Inc has emerged as the top contender for Lockheed Martin Corp's government information technology (IT) business, as the interest of rival bidders fades, people familiar with the matter said. Leidos Holdings Inc and Engility Holdings Inc, which were also considering offers, feel discouraged by the prospects of the assets for sale following meetings with Lockheed, the people said this week.

Annual revenues for the government IT business are now between \$4.5 billion and \$5 billion, instead of the \$6 billion initially projected, the people said. CACI, however, remains interested in a potential deal, the people added. To be sure, Lockheed may decide to spin off the government IT business rather than sell it outright, the people said.

The strategic review of the business, which could fetch more than \$4 billion in a sale, was initially slated to conclude by the end of the year, but is now expected to finish in the first quarter of 2016.

The sources asked not to be identified because the negotiations are confidential. Lockheed, Leidos and Engility declined to comment, while CACI did not respond to a request for comment. A deal with CACI would create the largest government services contractor in the United States at a time of lower government spending, increased competition and delays in new contracts. Lockheed, the Pentagon's largest supplier, is looking to pay down debt following its agreement in July to acquire Sikorsky Aircraft, the helicopter unit of United Technologies Corp, for \$9 billion in cash.

The talks between CACI, which has a market value of \$2.4 billion, and Lockheed revolve around a so-called Reverse Morris Trust (RMT) deal for the assets, a transaction that would avert a hefty tax bill. Leidos and Engility could re-emerge as bidders at a later date, according to the sources. In addition, private equity firms are also positioning for the assets, though a deal with them is unlikely given Lockheed's attraction to the tax advantages of an RMT. This month, Lockheed's Chief Financial Officer Bruce Tanner said the company had seen "very high interest" in the services and information technology units. Tanner added that Lockheed would put off a decision on selling or spinning off the units until early next year, explaining that it "tends to take a little longer to handle that level of detail that is expected with more people involved in the process." —Reuters



**MOUNTAIN VIEW:** Google's new self-driving prototype car is presented during a demonstration at the Google campus in Mountain View, California. California unveiled precedent-setting draft rules on Wednesday that would slow the public's access to self-driving cars of the future until regulators are confident the technology is safe. —AP

## US VOWS 'FLEXIBLE' APPROACH ON SELF-DRIVING CAR RULES

### SAFETY WATCHDOG AGAINST PATCHWORK OF REGULATIONS

**WASHINGTON:** The top US auto safety watchdog said he opposes a "patchwork" of state regulations on driverless cars and promised a "nimble, flexible" approach to writing new rules for self-driving vehicles.

Mark Rosekind, head of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, said the agency does not yet have a position on California's proposal to bar autonomous cars without a person in the driver's seat ready to take over.

The proposal is opposed by innovators in driverless cars, such as Google, but is consistent with NHTSA's 2013 guidelines on driverless cars. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx

has asked the NHTSA to review those guidelines to ensure they do not hold back innovations. "We need to figure out how to make sure this is not a patchwork (of state regulations)," Rosekind said on the sidelines of an event on drunk driving. "We are pretty deep into looking at our regulatory framework that we currently have." "We keep talking nimble, flexible. Two years is like ancient now. That's being reviewed," Rosekind said of the 2013 guidance.

Rosekind said NHTSA is talking to state officials in an effort to "have some kind of national approach to this." On Wednesday, the California Department of Motor Vehicles proposed state regu-

lations that would require all autonomous cars to have a steering wheel and throttle and brake pedals when operating on California's public roads citing safety concerns. A licensed driver would need to be in the driver's seat ready to take over in the event something went wrong. Rosekind noted that Europe has a "patchwork" approach to driverless vehicle testing that is "problematic." NHTSA is reviewing California's rules, but states have wide authority to set state driving regulations. Chris Urmson, the director of the Google self-driving project, said California seemed to be shrinking back from its leadership. — Reuters

**Discovery Channel HD**

00:20 Shadow Ops  
01:10 Misfit Garage  
02:00 Wheeler Dealers  
02:50 Engine Addict With Jimmy De Ville  
03:40 How It's Made  
04:05 How It's Made  
04:30 How It's Made  
05:00 How It's Made  
05:30 How It's Made  
06:00 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown  
06:50 Dual Survival  
07:40 Deadliest Catch  
08:30 World's Worst...  
09:20 World's Worst...  
10:10 Misfit Garage  
11:00 Wheeler Dealers  
11:50 Engine Addict With Jimmy De Ville  
12:40 Property Wars  
13:05 Property Wars  
13:30 Property Wars  
13:55 Property Wars  
14:20 Property Wars  
14:45 Storage Wars Canada  
15:10 Storage Wars Canada  
16:50 Alaskan Bush People  
17:40 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
18:30 Mythbusters  
19:20 The Carbonaro Effect  
19:45 The Carbonaro Effect  
20:10 You Have Been Warned  
21:00 Alaskan Bush People  
21:50 Alaska: The Last Frontier (Season 5 Specials)  
22:40 Flying Wild Alaska  
23:30 Shocking Survival Videos  
23:55 Shocking Survival Videos

07:15 H2O: Just Add Water  
07:40 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
08:05 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
08:30 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
08:55 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
09:20 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
09:45 I Love Violetta  
10:00 Best Friends Whenever  
10:25 Home On The Range  
11:50 I Didn't Do It  
12:20 Jessie  
12:45 Miraculous: Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
13:10 Mako Mermaids  
13:35 Dog With A Blog  
14:00 Gravity Falls  
14:30 I Love Violetta  
14:40 Frozen Fever  
14:55 Lolirock  
15:20 The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody  
15:45 Suite Life On Deck  
16:10 Best Friends Whenever  
16:35 Austin & Ally  
17:00 Gravity Falls  
17:25 Girl Meets World  
17:50 The Good Dinosaur Movie Special  
18:00 Brother Bear  
19:30 I Didn't Do It  
19:55 Dog With A Blog  
20:20 Jessie  
20:45 Good Luck Charlie  
21:10 Good Luck Charlie  
21:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
22:00 Binny And The Ghost  
22:25 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
22:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:10 Wolfblood  
23:35 Wolfblood



00:00 Nina Needs To Go  
00:05 Henry Hugglemonster  
00:20 Calimero  
00:35 Zou  
00:50 Loopdidoo  
01:05 Art Attack  
01:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
01:45 Calimero  
02:00 Zou  
02:15 Loopdidoo  
02:30 Art Attack  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:05 Calimero  
03:20 Zou

03:30 Loopdidoo  
03:45 Art Attack  
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:20 Calimero  
04:35 Zou  
04:45 Loopdidoo  
05:00 Art Attack  
05:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:35 Calimero  
05:50 Zou  
06:00 Loopdidoo  
06:15 Art Attack  
06:35 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:50 Calimero  
07:00 Zou  
07:20 Loopdidoo  
08:35 Captain Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
09:05 Sofia The First  
09:30 Miles From Tomorrow  
10:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
10:30 Doc McStuffins  
11:00 Sofia The First  
11:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
11:55 Miles From Tomorrow  
12:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
12:55 Loopdidoo  
13:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
13:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
14:00 Sofia The First  
14:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
14:45 Calimero  
15:00 Doc McStuffins  
15:30 Zou  
15:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
16:15 Sofia The First  
16:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
17:10 Aladdin  
17:40 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears  
18:05 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers  
18:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
19:00 Miles From Tomorrow  
19:30 Sofia The First  
19:55 Doc McStuffins  
20:15 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
20:45 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
21:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
21:35 Sofia The First  
22:00 Aladdin  
22:30 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears  
23:00 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers  
23:30 Lilo & Stitch



00:00 House Of DVF  
00:55 The Grace Helbig Show  
01:25 Hollywood Cycle  
02:20 E! News  
03:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
04:10 Beyond Candid With Giuliana  
05:05 E! Entertainment Special  
06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
07:00 Style Star  
08:20 E! News  
09:15 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
10:15 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
11:10 New Money  
11:35 New Money  
12:05 E! News  
13:05 Stewarts And Hamiltons  
14:05 Hollywood Cycle  
15:00 Hollywood Cycle  
16:00 WAGs  
17:00 WAGs  
18:00 E! News  
19:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
19:30 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
20:00 Dash Dolls  
21:00 Christina Milian Turned Up  
22:00 E! News  
23:00 The Soup  
23:30 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
01:00 Follow Donal... To Vietnam  
01:30 Follow Donal... To Vietnam  
02:00 Bite This With Nadia G  
02:30 Bite This With Nadia G  
03:00 Man Fire Food  
03:30 Man Fire Food  
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Chopped  
07:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
07:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin  
08:00 Chopped  
09:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes  
10:00 The Kitchen  
11:00 The Kitchen

12:00 Chopped  
13:00 Guy's Big Bite  
13:30 Guy's Big Bite  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
17:00 Chopped  
18:00 Siba's Table  
18:30 Siba's Table  
19:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes  
20:00 Chopped  
21:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
21:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
22:00 Man Finds Food  
22:30 Man Finds Food  
23:00 Food Court Wars



00:10 Come Date With Me Australia  
01:05 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
02:00 Coach Trip  
02:25 Emmerdale  
05:15 Coronation Street  
07:30 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
08:25 Michael Flatley: A Night To Remember  
09:20 Midsomer Murders  
11:20 Grantchester  
12:15 The Jonathan Ross Show  
13:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
14:05 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
14:30 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
15:00 The Syndicate  
15:55 The Jonathan Ross Show  
16:50 Michael Flatley: A Night To Remember  
17:45 Grantchester  
18:35 Come Date With Me Australia  
19:00 Seven Days With Aqil  
19:50 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
20:45 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
21:20 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs  
21:40 Michael Flatley: A Night To Remember  
22:35 Come Date With Me Australia  
23:00 Coronation Street  
23:25 Coronation Street  
23:50 Coronation Street



00:10 Locked Up Abroad  
01:00 Ancient X-Files  
02:00 Survive The Tribe  
02:55 Wild Case Files

03:50 Air Crash Investigation  
04:45 Innovation Nation  
05:10 Innovation Nation  
05:40 Mega Factories: Supercars  
06:35 Breakthrough  
07:30 Man V. Viral  
08:25 Dog Whisperer  
09:20 Dog Whisperer  
10:15 Yukon Gold  
11:10 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South  
12:05 Cold Water Gold  
13:00 Ultimate Airport Dubai  
14:00 Mega Factories: Supercars  
15:00 Car SOS  
16:00 Man V. Viral  
17:00 Breakthrough  
18:00 Innovation Nation  
18:30 Innovation Nation  
19:00 The Border  
20:00 Man V. Viral  
20:50 Breakthrough  
21:40 Innovation Nation  
22:05 Innovation Nation  
22:30 The Border  
23:20 Car SOS



00:35 Ariana's Persian Kitchen  
01:00 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
01:25 Cruise Ship Diaries  
01:50 Cruise Ship Diaries  
02:15 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
02:40 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita  
03:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
03:30 Dog Whisperer  
04:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
05:10 Eat Street  
05:35 Hook It, Cook It  
06:00 East Bites West With Chef Wan  
06:25 East Bites West With Chef Wan  
06:50 Access 360 World Heritage  
07:40 Get Stuffed  
08:05 Chefs Run Wild  
08:30 David Rocco's Dolce India  
08:55 David Rocco's Dolce India  
09:20 This Is Brazil  
10:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea  
11:00 A Marriage Of Flavours  
11:25 American Food Battle  
11:50 Maverick Chef  
12:15 Maverick Chef  
12:40 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen  
13:05 Cruise Ship Diaries  
13:35 Cruise Ship Diaries  
14:00 Poh & Co.



00:35 Mythbusters  
01:20 How It's Made  
01:44 How It's Made  
02:08 Mighty Ships  
02:55 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
03:42 NASA's Greatest Missions  
04:29 Mythbusters  
05:16 Mighty Ships  
06:03 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
06:50 X-Machines  
07:37 How It's Made  
08:00 Deadliest Space Weather  
08:23 How It's Made  
08:45 How It's Made  
09:08 How It's Made  
09:30 How It's Made  
12:08 NYC: Inside Out  
12:53 X-Machines  
13:38 X-Machines  
14:23 X-Machines  
15:10 X-Machines  
15:57 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
19:50 How Do They Do It?  
20:15 How Do They Do It?  
20:40 Mighty Ships  
21:25 Food Factory  
21:50 Food Factory  
22:15 Strip The Cosmos  
23:00 How The Universe Works  
23:45 Cosmic Collisions



00:00 Violetta  
00:45 The Hive  
00:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:15 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:40 Wolfblood  
02:05 Wolfblood  
02:30 Violetta  
03:15 The Hive  
03:20 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
03:45 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
04:10 Wolfblood  
04:35 Wolfblood  
05:00 Violetta  
05:45 The Hive  
05:50 Mouk  
06:00 Lolirock  
06:25 Hank Zipzer  
06:50 Girl Meets World



G.I. JOE - THE RISE OF COBRA ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2015

- 14:30 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
- 14:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 15:25 Dog Whisperer
- 16:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 17:15 The Wine Quest: Spain
- 17:40 Hook It, Cook It
- 18:10 East Bites West With Chef Wan
- 18:35 East Bites West With Chef Wan
- 19:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 19:30 Dog Whisperer
- 20:25 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 21:15 The Wine Quest: Spain
- 21:40 Hook It, Cook It
- 22:05 East Bites West With Chef Wan
- 22:30 East Bites West With Chef Wan
- 22:55 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
- 23:20 Cruise Ship Diaries
- 23:45 Cruise Ship Diaries



- 00:20 World's Deadliest
- 01:10 How Big Can It Get
- 02:00 Africa's Blood River
- 02:50 World's Deadliest Killer Three
- 03:45 Elephant Queen
- 04:40 Badass Animals
- 05:35 Animal Intervention
- 06:30 Shark Men
- 07:25 Fish Warrior
- 08:20 Yukon Vet
- 09:15 My Life Is A Zoo
- 10:10 The Invaders
- 11:05 The Incredible Dr. Pol
- 12:00 Ragged Tooth
- 12:55 Animal Underworld
- 13:50 Original Fight Club
- 14:45 The Living Edens
- 15:40 Expedition Wild
- 16:35 A Penguin's Life
- 17:30 Wild Case Files
- 18:25 How Big Can It Get
- 19:20 The Living Edens
- 20:10 Expedition Wild
- 21:00 A Penguin's Life
- 21:50 Wild Case Files
- 22:40 How Big Can It Get
- 23:30 Ragged Tooth



- 00:30 Hot In Cleveland
- 01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
- 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 06:30 My Name Is Earl
- 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 10:30 My Name Is Earl
- 11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 12:30 \$#! My Dad Says
- 13:00 Suburgatory
- 13:30 My Name Is Earl
- 15:30 Hot In Cleveland
- 16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
- 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 18:00 Marry Me
- 18:30 2 Broke Girls
- 19:00 Mr. Robinson
- 19:30 Life In Pieces
- 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 21:00 Hot In Cleveland
- 22:00 Saturday Night Live
- 23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



- 00:00 Better Call Saul
- 01:00 Grey's Anatomy
- 02:00 Survivor: Cambodia
- 03:00 Top Gear (UK)
- 04:00 Survivor: Cambodia
- 05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 06:00 Castle
- 07:00 Bones
- 08:00 Resurrection
- 09:00 Top Gear (UK)
- 10:00 Castle
- 11:00 Bones
- 12:00 C.S.I. Cyber
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Resurrection
- 15:00 Castle
- 16:00 C.S.I. Cyber
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Resurrection
- 19:00 Grey's Anatomy
- 20:00 The Whispers
- 21:00 Heroes Reborn
- 22:00 The Blacklist
- 23:00 Minority Report



CURSE OF CHUCKY ON OSN MOVIES ACTON HD



- 00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 01:00 Good Morning America
- 03:00 Devious Maids
- 04:00 The Leftovers
- 05:00 Good Morning America
- 08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 09:00 Red Band Society
- 11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 12:00 Drop Dead Diva
- 13:00 Once Upon A Time
- 14:00 Red Band Society
- 15:00 Chicago Fire
- 16:00 Live Good Morning America
- 17:00 Drop Dead Diva
- 18:00 Once Upon A Time
- 19:00 Red Band Society
- 20:00 Drop Dead Diva
- 21:00 Once Upon A Time
- 22:00 Devious Maids
- 23:00 The Leftovers



- 00:00 Punisher: War Zone
- 02:00 Curse Of Chucky
- 04:00 G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra
- 06:00 Jaws III
- 08:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief
- 10:00 The Prince
- 12:00 Jaws: The Revenge
- 14:00 G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra
- 16:00 Don't Look Back
- 18:00 Android Cop
- 20:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief
- 22:00 Snitch



- 00:00 Curse Of Chucky-18
- 02:00 G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra
- 04:00 Jaws III-PG15
- 06:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief-PG15
- 08:00 The Prince-PG15
- 10:00 Jaws: The Revenge-PG15
- 12:00 G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra
- 14:00 Don't Look Back-PG15
- 16:00 Android Cop-PG15
- 18:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief-PG15
- 20:00 Snitch-PG15
- 22:00 The Hulk-PG15



- 00:00 Hot Tub Time Machine 2
- 02:00 How To Lose A Guy In 10 Days
- 04:00 Muppets Most Wanted
- 06:00 Problem Child 2
- 08:00 You Again
- 10:00 Muppets Most Wanted
- 12:00 How To Lose A Guy In 10 Days
- 14:00 The Love Guide
- 16:00 You Again
- 18:00 Napoleon Dynamite
- 20:00 The Art Of The Steal
- 22:00 No Way Jose



- 01:00 Penthouse North-PG15
- 03:00 The Disappearance Of Eleanor Rigby: Him-PG15
- 05:00 Return To Nim's Island-PG
- 07:00 Parkland-PG15
- 09:00 Step Up Revolution-PG15
- 11:00 Return To Nim's Island-PG
- 12:45 Miss Julie-PG15
- 15:00 The Railway Man-PG15
- 17:00 Step Up Revolution-PG15
- 19:00 The Disappearance Of Eleanor Rigby: Her-PG15
- 21:00 Short Term 12-PG15
- 23:00 The Master-R



- 01:00 The Man Who Would Be King
- 03:30 Not Fade Away
- 05:45 The Invisible Woman
- 07:45 The Alamo
- 10:30 Against The Ropes
- 12:30 Vanity Fair
- 15:00 Till Human Voices Wake Us
- 17:00 Against The Ropes
- 19:00 White Bird In A Blizzard
- 21:00 At Any Price
- 23:00 Enemy



- 01:45 Dracula Untold-PG15
- 03:30 Bears-PG
- 05:00 Automata-PG15
- 07:00 Whiplash-PG15
- 09:00 The Hundred-Foot Journey
- 11:00 Big Eyes-PG15
- 12:45 The Hobbit: The Battle Of The Five Armies-PG
- 15:15 Postman Pat: The Movie-PG

- 16:45 The Hundred-Foot Journey
- 19:00 The Other Woman-PG15
- 21:00 Wild-18
- 23:00 Lucy-PG15



- 01:15 Goat Story 2
- 03:00 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 04:30 Cher Ami
- 06:00 Snow Queen
- 07:45 Egon And Donci
- 09:30 Jungle Shuffle
- 11:00 The Adventurer: The Curse Of The Midas Box
- 12:45 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 14:15 Blue Elephant 2
- 16:00 Ploddy Police Car On The Case
- 18:00 Jungle Shuffle
- 20:00 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble
- 22:00 Blue Elephant 2



- 00:00 The November Man-18
- 02:00 10 Years-PG15
- 04:00 Tales Of The Night-PG
- 06:00 Schuks! Your Country Needs You-PG15
- 08:00 Need For Speed-PG15
- 10:15 Drumline: A New Beat-PG15
- 12:15 Dragonheart 3: The Sorcerer's Curse-PG15
- 14:00 HairBrained-PG15
- 15:45 Need For Speed-PG15
- 18:00 Ender's Game-PG15
- 20:00 If I Stay-PG15
- 22:00 Bad Words-18



- 04:10 Still Life: A Three Pines Mystery
- 05:40 Big Screen
- 05:55 The Wilby Conspiracy
- 07:40 George Washington
- 09:10 Natural Causes
- 10:40 The Magnificent Seven
- 12:45 Big Screen
- 13:00 True Heart
- 14:30 Movers And Shakers
- 15:50 George Washington
- 17:20 Music Of The Heart
- 19:25 A Star For Two

- 21:00 Into The Badlands
- 22:00 Breaking Bad
- 23:00 Cursed
- 00:40 Coffy
- 02:10 The Hunting Party



- 03:35 Tanked
- 04:25 The Lion Queen
- 05:15 Gator Boys
- 06:02 Treehouse Masters
- 06:49 Leopard Fight Club
- 07:36 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:00 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:25 Tanked
- 09:15 Tanked
- 10:10 Tanked
- 11:05 Tanked
- 12:00 Tanked
- 12:55 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster
- 13:50 The Lion Queen
- 14:45 Killer Iq: Lion vs Hyena
- 15:40 Biggest And Baddest
- 16:35 Killer Iq: Lion vs Hyena
- 17:30 The Lion Queen
- 18:25 Into The Pride
- 19:20 Into The Pride
- 20:15 Into The Pride
- 21:10 Into The Pride
- 22:05 Into The Pride
- 23:00 Blood Lions - Bred For The Bullet
- 23:55 The Lion Queen
- 00:50 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster
- 01:45 The Lion Queen
- 02:40 Killer Iq: Lion vs Hyena



- 03:20 Casualty
- 04:15 The Weakest Link
- 05:00 Teletubbies
- 05:25 The Green Balloon Club
- 05:50 Charlie And Lola
- 06:00 Teletubbies
- 06:25 The Green Balloon Club
- 06:50 Charlie And Lola
- 07:00 Charlie And Lola
- 07:15 Doctors
- 09:40 Doctor Who
- 10:25 Doctor Who
- 11:10 Last Man Standing
- 12:00 Breaking Pointe
- 12:40 Casualty
- 13:30 Eastenders
- 15:30 Call The Midwife
- 17:55 Doctor Who

- 18:40 Doctor Who: The Day Of The Doctor
- 20:00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
- 20:45 Live At The Apollo
- 21:30 Friday Night Dinner
- 22:00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
- 22:45 Live At The Apollo
- 23:30 Friday Night Dinner
- 00:00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
- 00:45 Live At The Apollo
- 01:30 Friday Night Dinner
- 02:00 Doctor Who
- 02:45 Doctor Who: The Day Of The Doctor



- 03:14 Grojband
- 03:35 Johnny Test
- 05:05 Transformers: Robots In Disguise
- 05:50 Regular Show
- 06:00 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 07:00 Transformers: Robots In Disguise
- 07:25 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 08:10 Ben 10: Omniverse
- 09:00 Matt Hatter Chronicles
- 09:20 Teen Titans Go!
- 10:10 We Bare Bears - New
- 10:30 Johnny Test
- 10:55 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 11:20 Adventure Time
- 12:05 Regular Show
- 12:30 Long Live The Royals
- 12:50 Johnny Test
- 13:40 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 14:00 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 14:25 Teen Titans Go!
- 15:10 Matt Hatter Chronicles
- 15:35 Ben 10: Omniverse
- 16:20 Regular Show
- 17:10 We Bare Bears - New
- 17:30 Adventure Time
- 17:55 Steven Universe
- 18:20 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 19:05 Teen Titans Go!
- 19:50 Transformers: Robots In Disguise New
- 20:15 New The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 20:40 Clarence
- 21:00 Regular Show
- 21:50 We Bare Bears - New
- 22:15 Uncle Grandpa
- 22:40 Johnny Test
- 00:10 Adventure Time
- 01:40 Transformers: Robots In Disguise
- 02:02 Transformers: Robots In Disguise

## KNES HOSTS ENERGY4ME TEACHERS & STUDENTS WORKSHOP



The 2015 Energy4me Teachers & Students workshop was graciously hosted by SPE (Society of Petroleum Engineers) and sponsored by Schlumberger Kuwait in conjunction with the Kuwait Oil and Gas Show at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds on Monday, October 12 for teachers and Tuesday, October 13 for students. Kuwait National English School students had the opportunity to join SPE mem-

bers from around the globe to discover the world of Petroleum Engineering and the many career possibilities within the oil and gas industry.

Several other institutions attended the event which included motivational speeches by young entrepreneurs in the field of engineering as well as by senior managers of SPE. The hands-on activities were thoroughly enjoyed by both students and teachers where

they had a glimpse of the challenging process of oil and gas extraction. All these activities required collaborative effort and it was encouraging to see the students confidently sharing ideas and working together. After the workshop they were given a tour of the exhibition conducted by various engineering firms from all over the world. They also distributed gift bags for students and teachers as a token of appreciation for visiting them.

The students who took part in the event wish to share their exciting experience with the rest of the school by conducting a similar workshop for our primary and KS3 classes. It has been a very informative and well-organized event and we look forward to participating in the coming years also.



## KUWAIT CITY MAR THOMA YUJAVANA SAKHYAM ORGANIZES 'WINGS - 2015'

Kuwait City MarThoma Yujavana Sakhyam organized "WINGS - 2015", a Career Guidance Seminar at United Indian School Auditorium, Abbassiya. The seminar envisioned to enlighten students in making the right career choices.

BS Warriar, the renowned career guidance counselor lead the sessions. BS Warriar conducts sessions on various courses, opportunities and parenting. The Career Guidance Seminar included "Various Professional Courses Study", "Parenting & Learning Strategies for facing Entrance/Board Examination" and Q&A session about innovative information focusing on the important choices needed to be made in attaining higher / professional education.

The function started with prayer song

by Vishnu Kumar followed by welcome speech by Anish Thomas (Secretary). The Presidential address was delivered by Rev Sam Koshy T. The event was felicitated by Adv John Thomas P and Hamza Payyanoor. The culmination of the event was marked with a vote of thanks by Anand Abraham (General Convener). More than 400 participants had attended the event. Mr. Geogy Varghese & Ms. Dhanya Sara John hosted the event. This event was coordinated under the leadership of Anish V Cherian (Convener), Parimanam Manoj (Vice President), Mrs. Bisha Anish (Lady Secretary), Jijom Issac (Treasurer), Jojo John (Kaisthana Samiti Member) along with other Sakhyam members.

## CLASS OF 1990 ICSK HOLDS FAMILY PICNIC

The Class of 1990, (12th Standard) ISK (Salmiya) organized a picnic along with their families at a chalet in Kabd on Dec 4. There were multiple games for tiny tots, teenagers, ladies and gents. The ICSK alumni rekindled their sportsmen spirit at a game of football. The families were treated to a scrumptious lunch, tea and dinner. Special thanks to two ISK mates Akil Kazi and Ibrahim Khan who flew in from Dubai. Thanks to the efforts made by the ISK batch mates and their families and most importantly all the spon-

sors for making this day a memorable event. At the close of the day there was prize distribution for the winners of the games and special Merit awards were given to Jeremiah Mathew and Sakina Bankoda for outstanding academic performance. Also special individual gifts were given to the children and ladies while the ISK boys got T-shirts with ISK 1990 imprinted on them. Everyone is keen to meet again in 2016 for more fun-filled extravaganza. Wishing everyone a happy and healthy 2016!!





Ahmedi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Khaled AL-Hamad Al-Sabah sponsored an entertaining day for elderly and disabled people's care home's residents, organized by the social development centers in Fintas and Ali Sabah Al-Salem.

## NBK HOSTS COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS FROM KUWAIT UNIVERSITY

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) recently hosted students from the College of Architecture of Kuwait University in a visit to its new headquarters. The visit comes in line with NBK's vital role in supporting students. The visitors had a tour in the new building to learn more about the features of this state-of-art, environmentally friendly project.

NBK Public Relations officers accompanied the Dean of the College of Architecture Dr Omar Khattab at Kuwait University and the students on their tour of the bank's new headquarters. The engineers and supervisors of the project gave the students a brief presentation about the concept of the environmentally friendly building and its stage of production. The project proposes a prominent addition to the skyline of Kuwait City for its iconic design and magnitude.

NBK continuously supports Kuwait's youth and listens to their feedback. It always offers a range of initiatives as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility to support the education and development of the country's youth. NBK also offers many educational initiatives and training programs for students, fresh graduates and the newly hired.



## CHUTTUVATTAM 2015

Chuttuvattam 2015', a get-together of families from Cheppukulam in Idukki district of Kerala was held at KALA Centre in Mangaf. Major attractions of the event included cultural programs performed by artistically talented members and their families. Songs, group songs and cinematic dances by Kumari Andrilla Ashly, Abraham and Anjaly were well-received. Kerala's traditional Vallappattu by Aji Abraham Motttilal and Albin James was the highlight of the program. Melodious group songs beautifully rendered by talented Ladies Wing led by Sara Ann, Deon, Hanna Marian and Neha were captivating.

Earlier, Thomas Abraham delivered the welcome speech. The public meeting was presided over by Sajeev K. Peter. Felicitation speeches were delivered by Manoj Abraham and Renny Jose. Vote of thanks was rendered by Ajo Abraham. The meeting unanimously elected Sajeev K Peter as the president of 'Chuttuvattam Kuwait' and Thomas Abraham as its general secretary. Ajo Abraham was elected as its treasurer.



## VA CREATES NATIONAL POLICY FOR ROBOTIC LEGS FOR INJURED VETS

**SAN DIEGO:** Paralyzed Army veteran Gene Laureano cried when he first walked again with robotic legs at a New York clinic as part of research sponsored by the Department of Veterans Affairs. But when the study ended, so did his ability to walk. Now he may get the chance to walk everyday: The VA has agreed to pay for the powered exoskeleton for eligible paralyzed veterans with spinal cord injuries - marking the first federal coverage policy for robotic legs in the United States.

Veterans have been petitioning the VA to do this because many cannot afford the \$77,000 needed to pay for the device called the ReWalk. The electronic leg braces were approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in 2014 for individuals to use at home. VA officials told The Associated Press that the agency sent a memorandum Dec. 10 outlining its plans to train staff to be able to provide the ReWalk.

### Hope to see more

Florida Republican Rep Jeff Miller, chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, said his committee has been pushing for the VA to use "innovative private sector technologies and products in order to better serve veterans, and we hope to see more of this in the future."

"In an era where the department is much too fixated on defending its lack of accountability for misbehaving employees and providing services that are far outside the scope of its original mission, it's refreshing to see the VA focusing on something that strikes at the core of what it was set up to do," Miller said in an email.

News of the VA's decision sent shares for ReWalk Robotics up over 100 percent Thursday. Sales have been sluggish since the FDA approval of the system, with few private insurers agreeing to cover it. Most of the 36 individuals who bought the ReWalk in the United States so far paid for it through fundraising or out of pocket. But the company hopes the VA's policy will prompt more private insurers to follow suit. "The VA is leading the world with this," CEO Larry ReWalk Robotics said. "It's fabulous. It really gives individuals a much better life, and makes them much healthier to be able to walk again."

The company said it has evaluated 45 paralyzed veterans who meet the height and weight requirements for the technology - which consists of leg braces with motion sensors and motorized joints that respond to subtle changes in upper-body movement and shifts in balance.

Laureano, 53, is praying his application will go through soon. The former Army corporal remembers the day he first tried the ReWalk at New York's James J. Peters VA Medical Center in the Bronx two years ago. "The tears came down," said Laureano, who was left paralyzed five years ago after falling off a ladder. "I hadn't spoken to somebody standing up in so long." "I just kept remembering the doctor told me it was impossible for me to walk, and then I crossed that threshold from the impossible to the possible," he added.

### Replace wheelchairs

The ReWalk was invented by Israeli entrepreneur Amit Goffer, who was paralyzed in an accident in 1997. Several competing products that use similar technology - nicknamed "electronic legs" - are also being tested in US rehab hospitals. None, including the ReWalk, are fast enough or can be worn long enough to replace wheelchairs. VA pilot studies found paraplegics who used the exoskeleton as little as four hours a week for three to five months experienced better bowel and bladder function, reduced back pain, improved sleep and less fatigue.

"The research support and effort to provide eligible veterans with paralysis an exoskeleton for home use is a historic move on the part of the VA because it represents a paradigm shift in the approach to rehabilitation for persons with paralysis," said Dr. Ann Spungen, who led VA research on the system.

About 42,000 veterans are paralyzed. Of them, a fraction would meet the requirement for an exoskeleton. The apparatus requires specific height and weight requirements and works for paraplegics but not for quadriplegics. A supportive belt around the patient's waist keeps the suit in place, and a backpack holds the computer and rechargeable battery. Crutches are used for stability, and the FDA requires an assistant be nearby.

A dozen VA centers are expected to start training staff to provide the system. The program will likely be expanded in the future, according to ReWalk. Former Army Sgt Terry Hannigan, a 62-year-old paralyzed Vietnam veteran, was the first veteran to get the robotic legs as part of a test of the system. She uses them to walk through the mall and shop at the grocery store.—AP



**NEW YORK:** While ReWalk Robotics service engineer Tom Coulter (right) looks on, paralyzed Army veteran Gene Laureano smiles as he walks using a ReWalk device. — AP

## ANCESTORS MIGHT HAVE LIVED THROUGH ICE AGE

**MIAMI:** After years of studying a mysterious thigh bone from a cave in China, scientists said Thursday they believe it represents an ancient species of human that persisted much longer than previously thought. The 14,000-year-old bone was uncovered in 1989 in Maludong, known as the Red Deer Cave. The trove of fossils it was initially found with went unstudied until 2012.

The partial femur, though relatively young in age, looks like the bones of far older species like *Homo habilis* and early *Homo erectus* that lived more than 1.5 million years ago, said the study in PLOS ONE. "Its young age suggests the possibility that primitive-looking humans could have survived until very late in our evolution, but we need to be careful as it is just one bone," said co-author professor Ji Xueping from the Yunnan Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology in China.

Until now, scientists believed that the only pre-modern humans who survived in what is now Europe and Asia were Neanderthals and Denisovans, both of which disappeared some 40,000 years ago. They

are believed to have vanished soon after modern humans entered the region, but the new bone suggests another primitive human could have survived far longer, perhaps until the end of the last Ice Age.

"The new find hints at the possibility a pre-modern species may have overlapped in time with modern humans on mainland East Asia, but the case needs to be built up slowly with more bone discoveries," said co-author Darren Curnoe from the University of New South Wales. The thigh bone is small, with a thin shaft much like the bones of *Homo habilis*, which lived 1.5-2.8 million years ago. The individual would have weighed only about 110 pounds, which was quite small for pre-modern and Ice Age human standards.

### Mysterious species

When researchers first announced their discovery of bones in the Red Deer Cave in 2012, describing them as containing an unusual mix of modern and primitive features such as a jutting jaw, broad nose and prominent brow ridges, they were greeted with

skepticism by some scientists. The findings stoked debate over whether or not they represented a new evolutionary line.

"The new discovery once again points towards at least some of the bones from Maludong representing a mysterious pre-modern species," the research team said in a statement. However, more work needs to be done before scientists can declare a new species of human has been found. For now, researchers believe there may have been more different kinds of human living until very recently in southwest China than previously thought.

"The unique environment and climate of southwest China resulting from the uplift of the Tibetan Plateau may have provided a refuge for human diversity, perhaps with pre-modern groups surviving very late," Ji said. "The riddle of the Red Deer Cave people gets even more challenging now," added Curnoe. "Just who were these mysterious Stone Age people? Why did they survive so late? And why only in tropical southwest China?" —AFP

# RISING LAKE TEMPERATURES MAY WORSEN ALGAE BLOOMS

## SWINGS AFFECT AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS IN PROFOUND WAYS

**TRAVERSE CITY:** Some of the world's biggest temperature jumps are happening in lakes - an ominous sign that suggests problems such as harmful algae blooms and low-oxygen zones hazardous to fish will get worse, says a newly released scientific report. An analysis of 235 lakes that together hold more than half the earth's fresh surface water found they have warmed an average of 0.61 degrees Fahrenheit or 0.34 degrees Celsius per decade, the report said. While seemingly insignificant, the increase is bigger than those recorded in the oceans or the atmosphere. Such rapid swings can affect aquatic ecosystems in profound ways, raising concerns about the quality of waters that people rely on for drinking supplies, crop irrigation and energy production. "The message we're getting from our lakes is that they're getting more and more stressed," Catherine O'Reilly, an Illinois State University geologist who led the study, said Thursday. "With these rates of warming, the problems we're seeing will become increasingly common."

Dozens of scientists in six continents took part in the project, funded partly by NASA and the National Science Foundation. The results, made public this week during a meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco, were based on a first-of-its-kind combination of temperature data from satellites and ground measurements over 25 years. They are being published in the group's journal, *Geophysical Research Letters*.

### Rapid changes

Lakes warming at the average worldwide

rate or higher were widespread, including the Dead Sea, Lake Tahoe, Lake Baikal in Siberia and Lake Fracksjon in Sweden. But

Ontario. Only Lake Erie, the shallowest and warmest of the Great Lakes, was below average. Superior, the deepest and coldest,



In this Aug 3, 2014 file photo, algae is seen near the City of Toledo water intake crib in Lake Erie, about 2.5 miles off the shore of Curtice, Ohio. — AP

deep lakes in cold regions had the most rapid changes, said John Lenters of LimnoTech, a water science consulting firm in Ann Arbor, Michigan. They included four of the five US Great Lakes - Superior, Huron, Michigan and

warmed three times faster than the global average.

In addition to rising air temperatures, factors causing lakes to warm vary among regions, scientists said. The Great Lakes and

others in northern climates are losing winter ice earlier, and some areas are getting less cloud cover, exposing their surfaces to more sunlight. Algae blooms flourish in warmer waters. The report predicted a 20 percent boost in lake algae over the next century, including a 5 percent increase in blooms that are toxic to fish and animals. An outbreak of toxic algae left more than 400,000 residents of Toledo, Ohio, and southeastern Michigan without usable tap water for two days in August 2014.

### 'Dead zones'

Such an increase would expand "dead zones" with so little oxygen that fish cannot survive, O'Reilly said. It also would boost emissions of methane, a greenhouse gas even more potent than carbon dioxide, the leading cause of climate change.

Warming causes a different problem for some lakes. In eastern Africa, Lake Tanganyika is less able to blend warm water near the surface with colder layers farther down, reducing distribution of nutrients for algae on which fish feed.

Donald Uzarski, director of the Institute for Great Lakes Research at Central Michigan University, who was not involved with the study, said its findings were consistent with other water temperature measurements in places such as the Great Lakes and Poyang Lake in China. Other likely results of warmer lakes, he said, include lower lake levels, damaged coastal wetlands and exotic species invasions. "What seems to be nothing more than a small change in water temperature produces a domino effect that drastically impacts the ecosystem," Uzarski said. —AP

CLINIC  
PAGE



Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem  
فهد علي المخيزيم

Consultant Pediatrician إستشاري أطفال  
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (17/12/2015 TO 23/12/2015)

**SHARQIA-1**  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 12:30 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 3:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 6:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 9:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:05 AM

**SHARQIA-2**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:30 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 1:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 3:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 6:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 9:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:30 AM

**SHARQIA-3**  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 12:00 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 2:15 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 4:15 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 6:30 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 8:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 10:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:45 AM

**MUHALAB-1**  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 12:30 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 2:45 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 5:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 8:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 11:00 PM

**MUHALAB-2**  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 11:45 AM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 1:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 3:30 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 5:15 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 4:00 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 7:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 7:00 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 10:00 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 10:00 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:05 AM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 1:00 AM

**MUHALAB-3**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 3:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 6:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 9:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:05 AM

**FANAR-1**  
 STRIKE ONE 1:15 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 3:15 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 5:30 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 7:45 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 10:00 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 12:05 AM

**FANAR-2**  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:00 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 2:00 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 4:00 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 6:00 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 8:15 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 10:15 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:15 AM

**FANAR-3**  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 1:00 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 1:30 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 3:45 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 6:45 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 9:45 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 3:45 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 6:45 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 9:45 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 12:45 AM

**FANAR-4**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 12:30 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D 1:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 3:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 6:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 9:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:30 AM

**FANAR-5**  
 DILWALE - Hindi 11:30 AM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 2:30 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 5:30 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 8:30 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 11:30 PM

**MARINA-1**  
 DILWALE - Hindi 12:15 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 3:30 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 6:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 8:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 10:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:45 AM

**MARINA-2**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 11:45 AM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 2:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 5:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 8:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 11:45 PM

**MARINA-3**  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 11:30 AM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 1:45 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 4:45 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 7:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 9:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:15 AM

**AVENUES-1**  
 DILWALE - Hindi 12:45 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 2:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 4:00 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 4:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 7:00 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 7:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 10:00 PM  
 LOAFER - Telugu 10:00 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 1:00 AM

**AVENUES-2**  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 11:30 AM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 1:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 4:45 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 7:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 11:00 PM

**AVENUES-3**  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D 12:00 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 2:15 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D 4:30 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 6:45 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 9:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 11:15 PM

**AVENUES-4**  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 11:45 AM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 2:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 5:15 PM  
 Special Show "DILWALE - Hindi" 5:15 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 8:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 11:45 PM

**AVENUES-5**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 1:15 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D 1:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 4:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 4:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 7:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 7:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 10:15 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 1:15 AM

**AVENUES-6**  
 DILWALE - Hindi 11:30 AM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 2:30 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 5:45 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 9:00 PM  
 DILWALE - Hindi 12:15 AM

**AVENUES-7**  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 1:45 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 4:30 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 7:15 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 10:00 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 12:45 AM

**AVENUES-8**  
 STRIKE ONE 1:15 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 3:30 PM  
 ZINZANA (Emirati Film) 6:00 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 8:00 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 10:15 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 12:30 AM

**AVENUES-9**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 11:30 AM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 2:30 PM

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 5:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 8:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 11:30 PM

**AVENUES-10**  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 2:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 4:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 6:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 8:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 10:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:45 AM

**AVENUES-11**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 3:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 6:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 9:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:30 AM

**360°1**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 12:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 3:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 6:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 9:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:05 AM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 2:00 PM  
 "STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS" 6:00 PM  
 "STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS" 9:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:30 AM

**360°2**  
 STRIKE ONE 12:15 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 2:30 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 4:45 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 7:00 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 9:15 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 11:30 PM

**360°3**  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 12:45 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 3:30 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 6:15 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 9:00 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 11:45 PM

**AL-KOUT.1**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 3:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 6:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 9:15 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:15 AM

**AL-KOUT.2**  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 2:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 4:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 6:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 8:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 10:45 PM  
 DARK MOUNTAIN 12:45 AM

**AL-KOUT.3**  
 STRIKE ONE 11:30 AM  
 STRIKE ONE 1:30 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 3:30 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 5:45 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 8:00 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 10:15 PM  
 STRIKE ONE 12:15 AM

**AL-KOUT.4**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 1:00 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 1:30 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 4:00 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 7:00 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 10:00 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 12:30 AM

**BAIRAQ-1**  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 11:45 AM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 2:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS -3D 5:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 8:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 11:45 PM

**BAIRAQ-2**  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 12:30 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 3:00 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 5:15 PM  
 THE GOOD DINOSAUR 7:30 PM  
 IN THE HEART OF THE SEA 9:45 PM  
 STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS 12:15 AM

## Aluminum Manufacturing Co.

looking for:

- Designers / draftsman
- Site supervisors
- Aluminum technicians

Send CV to bassam - jamal@hotmail.com

### SITUATION VACANT

A single American-Lebanese male living in Salmiya needs a lady worker to help in cooking and cleaning. She must understand and speak English and her timing and salary are negotiable. Call 6641-7504. (C 5100) 19-12-2015

### LOST

Original document policy No. 633003315 of Muhammad Mali by the State Life Insurance Corporation Pakistan, Gulf Zone is report-

ed to have been lost. Anyone finding the same or claiming any interest in it should communicate with State Life office Kuwait. Tel: 22452208. (C 5099)

### FOR SALE

Toyota Aurion - Grande - 2011, full options, km 85000, white color, KD 2650. Mob: 50994848. (C 5097)

KIA Mohave jeep - (6 clr) 2013, white color, excellent conditions, km 87000, KD 3100. Tel: 66729295. (C 5098) 15-12-2015

## Prayer timings

**Fajr:** 05:11  
**Shorook** 06:36  
**Duhr:** 11:44  
**Asr:** 14:34  
**Maghrib:** 16:54  
**Isha:** 18:15



## Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

## Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381



# Flight Schedule

**DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**  
 In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers use seats

Arrival Flights on Saturday 19/12/2015				Departure Flights on Saturday 19/12/2015			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	FDB	063	Dubai	18:05
KLM	413	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:20	UAL	982	Dubai	18:15
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	IRM	1180	Mashhad	18:45
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	ABY	123	Sharjah	18:45
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	QTR	1080	Doha	18:55
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	IRA	669	Mashhad	18:55
MSR	614	Cairo	01:20	KAC	742	Dammam	19:05
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	IRM	1188	Mashhad	19:15
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	KAC	774	Riyadh	19:25
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	KAC	618	Doha	19:35
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	CLX	856	Luxembourg	19:35
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	104	London	19:40
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	19:55
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	MSR	618	Alexandria	20:05
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20	KNE	480	Taif	20:10
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	JZR	189	Dubai	20:15
JZR	503	Luxor	04:25	FDB	061	Dubai	20:20
AGY	680	Alexandria	04:30	OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40	KAC	786	Jeddah	20:30
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	ABY	121	Sharjah	20:35
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
BAW	157	London	06:40	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:55
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	JAI	572	Mumbai	20:55
KAC	416	Jakarta/Kuala Lumpur	07:15	MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00	KAC	676	Dubai	21:45
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25	QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
KAC	344	Chennai	08:30	KLM	415	Amsterdam	22:05
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30	AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:25
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	KAC	564	Amman	22:25
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	FDB	059	Dubai	22:30
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	UAL	981	Bahrain	23:25
OMA	641	Muscat	10:05	JAD	301	Amman	23:30
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
JZR	1351	Al Najaf	11:05	THY	764	Istanbul	23:50
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	JZR	125	Bahrain	23:55
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:15	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:55
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	<b>Departure Flights on Saturday 19/12/2015</b>			
AGY	684	Sohag	11:35	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
IAW	157	Al Najaf	11:50	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
NIA	151	Cairo	11:55	JZR	528	Asyut	00:05
KAC	204	Lahore	12:20	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
JZR	241	Amman	12:50	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:55
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:55
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	MSC	416	Sohag	01:00
JZR	1353	Al Najaf	13:05	KLM	413	Amsterdam	01:35
IRC	6511	ABD	13:05	KAC	283	Dhaka	02:10
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:35	MSR	615	Cairo	02:20
KNE	460	Riyadh	13:50	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	13:55	SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:35
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10	KAC	203	Lahore	03:05
JZR	1141	Dammam	14:30	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	14:45	PGT	859	Istanbul	03:55
KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
KAC	512	Mashhad	14:50	FDB	068	Dubai	04:00
KNE	462	Madinah	14:55	MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
IZG	4167	Mashhad	14:55	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:15
GFA	221	Bahrain	15:00	KKK	6508	Istanbul	04:20
IRM	1186	Tehran	15:00	QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
KNE	472	Jeddah	15:05	THY	765	Istanbul	05:15
NIA	251	Alexandria	15:30	AGY	685	Sohag	05:30
OMA	645	Muscat	15:30	FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
KAC	562	Amman	15:40	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:45	RJA	643	Amman	07:05
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	THY	771	Istanbul	07:05
JZR	535	Cairo	16:10	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:10
QTR	1072	Doha	16:10	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
JZR	357	Mashhad	16:30	JZR	240	Amman	07:15
JZR	1144	Dammam	16:30	JZR	1350	Al Najaf	07:25
FDB	051	Dubai	16:30	JZR	778	Jeddah	07:55
KNE	474	Jeddah	16:35	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	16:40	KAC	511	Mashhad	08:30
KAC	542	Cairo	16:55	QTR	1087	Doha	08:40
RJA	640	Amman	16:55	BAW	156	London	08:45
SYR	341	Damascus	17:00	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	JZR	534	Cairo	09:15
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:25
KNE	470	Jeddah	17:45	JZR	1352	Al Najaf	09:25
JZR	325	Al Najaf	17:50	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:55	UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
KAC	118	New York	17:55	KAC	541	Cairo	09:55
SVA	500	Jeddah	18:00	KAC	101	London/New York	09:55
UAE	875	Dubai	18:00	KAC	561	Amman	10:00
KAC	502	Beirut	18:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:25
				KAC	501	Beirut	10:30
				JZR	356	Mashhad	10:30
				FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
				QTR	1071	Doha	11:00
				KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:00
				OMA	642	Muscat	11:05
				GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
				JZR	1140	Dammam	11:35
				RBG	554	Alexandria	12:00
				JZR	776	Jeddah	12:20
				UAE	874	Dubai	12:30
				AGY	681	Asyut	12:35
				NIA	152	Cairo	12:55
				IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:05
				FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
				MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
				JZR	1143	Dammam	13:35
				JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
				IRC	6512	ABD	13:55
				MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
				UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
				JZR	324	Al Najaf	14:25
				FBA	832	Al Najaf	14:30
				KNE	481	Taif	14:50
				MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:55
				KAC	673	Jeddah	15:00
				KAC	785	Jeddah	15:00
				FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
				QTR	1079	Doha	15:10
				JZR	188	Dubai	15:40
				GFA	222	Bahrain	15:45
				KAC	617	Doha	15:45
				KAC	773	Riyadh	15:50
				KAC	613	Bahrain	15:50
				IZG	4168	Mashhad	15:55
				KAC	741	Dammam	15:55
				KNE	463	Madinah	16:00
				KNE	473	Jeddah	16:05
				IRM	1187	Tehran	16:15
				ABY	128	Sharjah	16:25
				OMA	646	Muscat	16:30
				NIA	252	Alexandria	16:30
				KAC	563	Amman	16:45
				KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
				JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
				KNE	475	Jeddah	17:25
				ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	17:30
				FDB	052	Dubai	17:35
				QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
				UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
				JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
				RJA	641	Amman	17:55
				SYR	342	Damascus	18:00
				SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
				GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
				JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
				KNE	471	Jeddah	18:45
				JZR	238	Amman	18:50
				JZR	554	Alexandria	19:10
				FDB	064	Dubai	19:20
				ABY	124	Sharjah	19:25
				UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
				SVA	505	Jeddah	19:30
				UAL	982	Bahrain	19:30
				IRA	666	Esfahan	19:55
				IRM	1181	Mashhad	20:00
				GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
				IRM	1189	Mashhad	20:30
				KAC	353	BLR	20:40
				KAC	361	Colombo	20:45
				QTR	1081	Doha	20:50
				KAC	351	Kochi	20:50
				KAC	543	Cairo	20:55
				CLX	856	Hong Kong	21:05
				MSR	607	Luxor	21:05
				JZR	124	Bahrain	21:05
				KNE	461	Riyadh	21:10
				KAC	331	Trivandrum	21:10
				ABY	122	Sharjah	21:15
				OMA	648	Muscat	21:20
				FDB	062	Dubai	21:20
				DLH	634	Doha	21:45
				DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
				FDB	5054	Dubai	21:50
				JAI	571	Mumbai	21:55
				KAC	1381	Delhi	22:00
				ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
				KAC	301	Mumbai	22:10
				MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
				ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
				GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
				UAE	860	Dubai	22:55
				KAC	345	Ahmedabad	23:00
				QTR	1083	Doha	23:05
				KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	23:05
				KAC	205	Islamabad	23:10
				ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:15
				FDB	060	Dubai	23:35
				KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:35

Word Search Puzzles

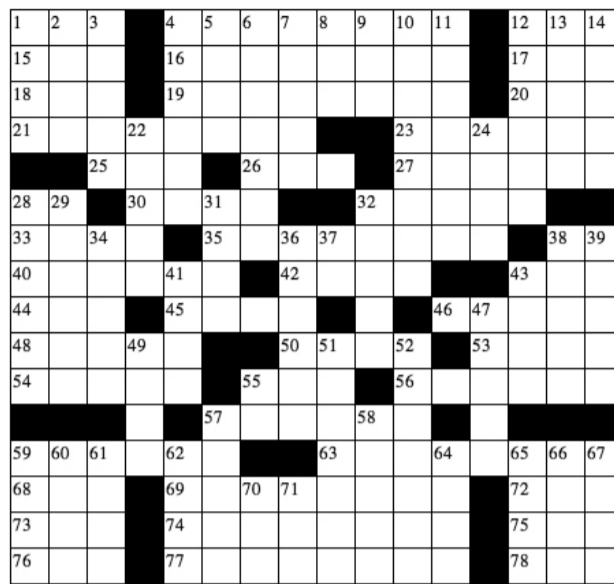
Physics 1

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 30 letters spell an Albert Einstein quotation.

Y D O A C O U S T I C S Q T U C S V N E  
 V A N B D O P P L E R K N U E W I D F E  
 R F C U U A I A C G E I E N A S L I A E  
 C D E C O O C U R O O C T L C R S S R L  
 O E I N E S Y A T P N R N O V C K P A O  
 L N N M A L V A G N I V S A I I Y L D H  
 D S S P U I E N N R N E I E N D R N A A K  
 F I T T T T I R E C T M A C O E Y C Y C  
 U T E Y S Z N T A Y Y H I T T P P E G A  
 S Y I R E S A E I T C A C R O I G M N L  
 I L N E L L A E M E I E L R E D O E I B  
 O Y R V P O L M M O J O T S E P U N K S  
 N F T E I E V A W A M N N W E O X T W E  
 O F U L C R U M R V E C T O R T P E A P  
 T A T T N R S T R I N G T H E O R Y H O  
 W T R Y I P O W E R E R E T E M O M R E H T  
 E O Y G R E N E R E F R A C T I O N I O  
 N M N G P M U L U D N E P L E N G T H S  
 S C I T P O E D U T I L P M A K R O W I

- ACCELERATION
- ACOUSTICS
- AMPLITUDE
- ATOM
- BLACK HOLE
- BUOYANCY
- CENTRIPETAL
- COLD FUSION
- CONVECTION
- DENSITY
- DISPLACEMENT
- DOPPLER
- EINSTEIN
- ELECTRON
- ENERGY
- ENTROPY
- EXPERIMENT
- FARADAY
- FREEZING POINT
- FULCRUM
- GRAVITY
- HAWKING
- IMPEDANCE
- ISOTOPE
- KELVIN
- LAWS
- LENGTH
- LEVER
- MASS
- MECHANICS
- MOMENTUM
- NEWTON
- OPTICS
- PASCAL
- PENDULUM
- POWER
- PRINCIPLES
- QUARK
- REFRACTION
- SOUND
- STRING THEORY
- TESLA
- THERMOMETER
- TRAJECTORY
- VECTOR
- VISCOSITY
- WAVE
- WEDGE
- WORK

CROSSWORD 1114



ACROSS

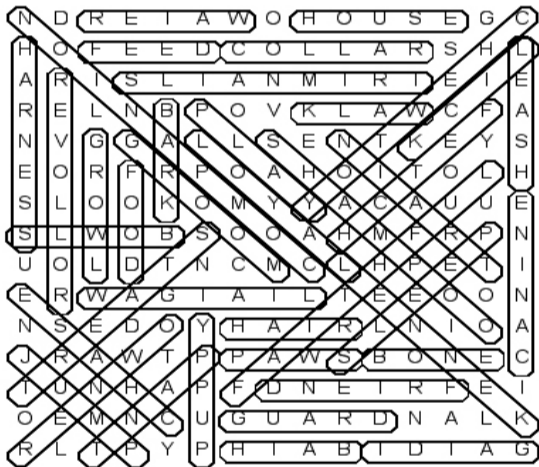
1. Resonance of protons to radiation in a magnetic field.
4. A plane curve formed by the intersection of a right circular cone and a plane parallel to an element of the curve.
12. The portion of the vertebrate nervous system consisting of the brain and spinal cord.
15. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
16. (mathematics) A symbol that represents a function from functions to functions.
17. A broad flat muscle on either side of the back.
18. A coenzyme derived from the B vitamin nicotinic acid.
19. Any lichen of the genus Lecanora.
20. Used of a single unit or thing.
21. Tuberous or rhizomatous perennial herbs.
23. Relating to the condition of immunity.
25. (of securities) Not quoted on a stock exchange.
26. The month following August and preceding October.
27. Constituting or relating to a tail.
28. The sciences concerned with gathering and manipulating and storing and retrieving and classifying recorded information.
30. A Loloish language.
33. (trademark) A liquid that temporarily disables a person.
35. Suggesting the operation of supernatural influences.
40. Small active cicada-like insect with hind legs adapted for leaping.
42. A genus of Mustelidae.
44. (computer science) A coding system that incorporates extra parity bits in order to detect errors.
45. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
46. (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
48. An Indian tree of the family Combretaceae that is a source of timber and gum.
50. (old-fashioned) At or from or to a great distance.
53. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
54. (of pain or sorrow) Made easier to bear.
56. In truth (often tends to intensify).
59. Small shrubby tree of eastern North America similar to the Judas tree having usually pink flowers.

DOWN

63. (Judaism) Jewish holy day celebrated on the sixth of Sivan to celebrate Moses receiving the Ten Commandments.
68. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
69. A mountain peak in south central Sri Lanka (7,360 feet high).
72. The cry made by sheep.
73. The principal activity in your life that you do to earn money.
74. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
75. Canadian hockey player (born 1948).
76. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
77. Shrubby lichens of the family Usneaceae having a flattened thallus.
78. Take in solid food.
1. (Babylonian) A goddess of the watery deep and daughter of Ea.
2. A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
3. (combining form) Indicating radiation or radioactivity.
4. A person of Polish descent.
5. Someone who copies the words or behavior of another.
6. The disqualification of a judge or jury by reason of prejudice or conflict of interest.
7. An edible seaweed with a mild flavor.
8. A decree that prohibits something.
9. A member of the Siouan people inhabiting the valleys of the Platte and Missouri rivers in Nebraska.
10. Former name for the order Crocodylia.
11. Of or relating to the ancient Aramaic languages.
12. Lacking definite form or limits.
13. Wife of Balder.
14. An alloy of iron with small amounts of carbon.
22. French romantic writer (1766-1817).
24. Cornmeal boiled in water.
29. An archaic name for Easter or Passover.
31. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
32. Deciduous shrub of North America.
34. Type genus of Cycadaceae.
36. Leave a camp.
37. A state in New England.
38. With rapid movements.
39. A rechargeable battery with a nickel cathode and a cadmium anode.
41. Weight to be borne or conveyed.
43. A large bundle bound for storage or transport.
47. (Hinduism) An ascetic holy man.
49. English writer and a central member of the Fabian Society (1858-1943).
51. French physicist who invented polarized light and invented the Fresnel lens (1788-1827).
52. Central nervous system stimulant (trade name Ritalin) used in the treatment of narcolepsy in adults and attention deficit disorder in children.
55. A bachelor's degree in science.
57. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
58. An African river that flows northwest into Lake Chad.
60. Very dark black.
61. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
62. A former communist country in eastern Europe and northern Asia.
64. A small cake leavened with yeast.
65. A slender double-reed instrument.
66. A village in eastern Ireland (northwest of Dublin).
67. United States playwright who collaborated with George S. Kaufman (1904-1961).
70. A member of a Mayan people of southwestern Guatemala.
71. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.

Yesterday's Solution

Pet Dog



- BARK
- BATH
- BONE
- BOWLS
- CANINE
- CHASE
- CHEW TOY
- COLLAR
- COMPANION
- FAITHFUL
- FEED
- FETCH
- FOOD
- FRIEND
- GROOM
- GROWL
- GUARD
- HAIR
- HARNES
- HOUSE
- ID TAG
- JUMP
- KENNEL
- LEASH
- LICK
- LOYAL
- OWNER
- PANT
- PAWS
- PLAY
- PUPPY
- ROLL OVER
- SHAMPOO
- SLEEP
- TRAIN
- TREATS
- TRIM NAILS
- WALK TAIL
- WAG
- WATER

The hidden message is: DOGS LOVE YOU UNCONDITIONALLY

Daily SuDoku

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

medium

Yesterday's Solution

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

hard

Yesterday's Solution

A	B	C		E	L	E	G	I	A	C		C	E	L	L							
D	A	H		M	A	R	A	S	C	A		O	T	O	E							
A	L	A		A	G	A		I	N	S	T	A	N	C	E							
D	I	R	A	C				M	S	E	C		T	A	O	S						
				L	I	A	N	A				D	A	L	E							
H	U	A	L	A	P	A	I					R	A	E	T	A	M					
O	R	N	A	T	E			A	R	E	A				I	C	E					
R	A	D	Y	E	R	A						A	R		E	M	B	E	D			
D	L	E						T	A	J	I	K			A	I	R	E				
E	S	S	E	N						D	A	C	E			D	A	B	A			
								A	B	E	D			B	A	B	A	R				
S	C	A	R					C	A	N					K	A	L	K	A			
A	L	E	E							K	A	R	O	K		S	A	E	K			
B	A	G	D	A	D					P	I	P	A	L		M	B	A				
I	I	I								N	A	M	E	S	A	K	E		N	A	B	
N	M	R								A	B	R	A	C	H	I	A			A	B	A



# CERRONE COULD ADD UFC TITLE BELT TO HIS WILD LIFE

**ORLANDO:** Donald Cerrone grudgingly acknowledged he would have to take several months off this year between his eighth consecutive UFC victory and his first shot at the lightweight title while champion Rafael Dos Anjos recovered from injury.

That's a standard schedule for top-level mixed martial artists, who don't share Cerrone's insatiable desire to fight several times every year. There is nothing standard about the thrill-seeking, beer-drinking, extreme-sports-loving, life-maximizing fighter known to all as Cowboy - and Cerrone used his spare time as only he can.

"I took on a bunch of new hobbies, and they cost me a lot of money, so I've got to make some more," Cerrone said. "I took up scuba diving, and my next big thing is BASE jumping. I spent a week in Orlando getting certified for that, so after this fight, I'm excited to see Cowboy in his wingsuit." Cerrone (28-6) started off the year by fighting twice in 16 days, but he'll end it in Orlando on Saturday night by taking on Dos Anjos (24-7) for the UFC 155-pound title. The Fox show at Amway Center also features former heavyweight champion Junior Dos Santos' showdown with Alistair Overeem and a lightweight bout between Nate Diaz and Michael Johnson.

Cerrone styles himself as a good-ol'-boy who would rather be drinking Budweiser on his ranch in New Mexico, but an intellectual curiosity propels his thrill-seeking behavior. The Colorado native started kickboxing professionally because he wanted to travel the world, and his excursions from Japan to Morocco eventually led him to UFC stardom - with a few knocks along the way.

## History of injuries

The former professional bull rider is also an avid wakeboarder, gun enthusiast and rock climber. He has broken his back twice, and he was once disemboweled by the handlebars of his all-terrain vehicle, losing a section of his intestines and stomach after a 60-foot jump gone very wrong. He injured his ankle badly before a bout 2 1/2 years ago, but still beat KJ Noons by unanimous decision. He



Donald Cerrone



**DALLAS:** In this March 15, 2015, file photo, Rafael dos Anjos celebrates after winning the men's lightweight mixed martial arts title bout against Anthony Pettis at UFC 185. Anjos defends his UFC lightweight title belt against Donald Cerrone in Orlando, Fla., today, in a meeting of two fighters who traveled lengthy roads to their showdown. — AP

hasn't had a serious pre-fight injury since then.

Cerrone realizes that his boss, UFC President Dana White, could be understandably curious about his popular fighter's life choices. "Me and Dana have a pretty good understanding," Cerrone said. "He just kind of lets me be me. I've never pulled out of a fight, never not showed up to fight, so injured or not, I'm coming. It's a relaxed intensity I've got to live my life in."

Cerrone also flouts the standard fight-sports wisdom about allowing his body to recover from the training grind. He has fought four times in each of the past three years, declaring himself more interested in fattening his bank account than taking the belt. But his winning streak and his subsequent rise up the lightweight rankings finally did what fatigue, beer and broken backs never could: They forced Cowboy to slow down. He hasn't fought since May, when the

UFC decided to keep him healthy for his title shot while Dos Anjos recovered slowly from a knee injury. Dos Anjos beat Cerrone by unanimous decision in August 2013 - and Cerrone hasn't lost since, piling up eight wins in a stunning 17-month span. The loss forced Cerrone to re-focus his training, and the results have been outstanding.

Yet he's still Cowboy: After spending last weekend in Las Vegas for UFC 194, Cerrone and his friends drove their RV cross-country to the fight, even stopping for a full day along the way to get it fixed. If he wins the title that he claims he never much wanted, Cerrone still plans to keep pushing the limits of life outside the cage. "MMA makes you sore and tired every day," Cerrone said. "I wonder what we're going to be like when we're 50 or 60. I wake up some mornings and just say, 'Oh, God.' And then I go scuba diving." — AP

## NOTABLE SPORTS DEATHS IN 2015

### ATHLETICS

#### Yulia Balykina

Belarusian Olympic sprinter was discovered dead aged 31 in a forest near Minsk in November. Multiple Belarus sprint champion she competed in the 100m and 4x100m relay at London 2012, before picking up a two-year ban for drugs in 2013. A 28-year-old man - said to be her boyfriend - was charged with murder.

### BASKETBALL

#### Phil 'Flip' Saunders

Coach/president of the NBA's Minnesota Timberwolves, who won more than 1,000 games over a 35-year career, succumbed to cancer aged 60 on October 25.

### BOXING

#### O'Neil Bell

The Jamaican-born former cruiserweight champ was gunned down and killed after getting off a city bus on November 27 in Atlanta with police suggesting robbery was the motive. Bell held the World Boxing Council, International Boxing Federation and World Boxing Association titles at the same time after knocking out France's Jean-Marc Mormeck in 2006. He retired with his record at 27-4 with one draw and 25 KOs.

### CRICKET

#### Brian Close

Former Yorkshire and England captain and one of the most physically courageous players in cricket history, died at the age of 84 on September 14. He became aged 18 the youngest player to earn a Test cap when he made his debut against New Zealand in 1949. Close scored almost 35,000 runs as a batsman, including 52 centuries with a highest innings score of 198. He also took 1,171 first-class wickets as an off-spin bowler and over 800 catches as a fielder.

#### Frank Tyson

Former England fast bowler, nicknamed 'typhoon' for his ferocious pace, died aged 85 in his adopted homeland, Australia, on September 27. Remembered for his 28-wicket haul in five Tests during the 1954-55 Ashes series in Australia, which England won 3-1. Born in Lancashire, Tyson played 170 matches for Northamptonshire, claiming 525 wickets at an average of 20.94, and took 76 wickets in 17 Tests for his country. He emigrated after injury forced his retirement at 30 and began a second career as a school headmaster, coach, commentator, journalist and writer.

### FOOTBALL

#### Marton Fulop

Former Hungary goalkeeper, who played for a

string of English Premier League clubs, died from cancer aged just 32 on November 12. He had spells with Tottenham Hotspur, and Sunderland, who signed him in 2007 before loaning him out to English sides Leicester City, Manchester City and West Bromwich Albion. In 2013 he announced that he was taking a break to recover from a tumor removal operation, but never returned to professional football again.

#### Howard Kendall

Liverpool Town Hall's flag was at half mast in honor of the Everton great who died on October 17 aged 69. He won the league title as a player in 1969 as part of the famous 'Holy Trinity' along with Alan Ball and Colin Harvey. Returning as manager in 1981 he guided the club to two league titles, the FA Cup and European Cup-Winners' Cup in the club's most successful era.

#### Udo Lattek

German coach, who won the European Cup, UEFA Cup and European Cup Winners' Cup with three different clubs - Bayern Munich, Borussia Moenchengladbach, and Barcelona died on February 4 aged 80. In total, he won 14 titles and along with Giovanni Trapattoni is the only coach to have won all three major European club titles.

### Junior Malanda

Gifted Belgian under-21 international captain and Wolfsburg midfielder who was killed when the car he was travelling in slid off the road and smashed into a tree on January 10. He had been on the way to Hanover airport to join his Bundesliga club teammates for a winter break in South Africa.

### FORMULA ONE

#### Jules Bianchi

Popular and talented French driver died in hospital in Nice on July 18 from head injuries suffered in a crash at the Japanese Grand Prix in October 2014. He was 25. Bianchi joined the Marussia team in 2013 and competed in 34 grands prix. He was the first F1 driver to perish from a racing accident since triple world champion Ayrton Senna in 1994.

### GOLF

#### Charlie Sifford

A pioneer in breaking the colour barrier as the first African-American golfer on the US PGA Tour and in the World Golf Hall of Fame died aged 92 on February 4. A mentor to 14-time major champion Tiger Woods who regarded him as part of the family. "My grandfather is gone and we all lost a brave, decent and honorable man," said Woods. He served in the US Army in World War II, seeing action in the bloody battle for Okinawa. — AFP

# SRI LANKA 264-7 AT STUMPS ON DAY 1

**HAMILTON:** Angelo Mathews made an unbeaten half century and shared a record 136-run fifth-wicket stand with Milinda Siriwardana to help Sri Lanka to 264-7 yesterday before rain ended the first day of the second cricket test against New Zealand.

Only two run outs and a stumble when the partnership between Mathews (63 not out) and Siriwardana (62) was broken detracted from Sri Lanka's best batting effort of the series, which overturned expectations that the team that bowled first would win the day. New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum won the toss and asked Sri Lanka to bat on a lush green pitch at Seddon Park, expecting his bowlers to dominate in conditions which supported both seam and swing. Apart from Mathews, who maintains a test average in excess of 50, and Siriwardana, who reached his second test half century, Kusal Mendis made 31 and Dinesh Chandimal 47 as Sri Lanka kept up a lively run rate of four per over throughout the day.

The partnership between Mathews and Siriwardana came in only 131 minutes and eclipsed the previous best fifth wicket partnership for Sri Lanka against New Zealand. Trent Boult made the breakthrough when he produced an edge from Siriwardana, which Ross Taylor juggled before securing at first slip.

Taylor had dropped a catch in the same position in the second over of the day which played a part in allowing Sri Lanka to set aside its concerns about the pitch and make a positive start. After a poor batting performance its first test loss of 122 runs, Sri Lanka took a more positive approach from the outset yesterday. Mendis hit the New Zealand bowlers off their lengths, attacking anything that was



**DUNEDIN:** Sri Lanka's Dimuth Karunaratne is about to be caught by New Zealand's BJ Watling, out for 84 off the bowling of Mitchell Santner on the second day of the first cricket test. — AP

## SCOREBOARD

**HAMILTON, New Zealand:** Scoreboard at stumps yesterday on the first day of the second cricket test between New Zealand and Sri Lanka at Seddon Park:

### Sri Lanka, 1st Innings

Dimuth Karunaratne c Watling b Southee	12
Kusal Mendis c Watling b Southee	31
Udara Jayasundera run out	26
Dinesh Chandimal c Watling b Bracewell	47
Angelo Mathews not out	63
Milinda Siriwardana c Taylor b Boult	62
Kithuruwan Vithanage c McCullum b Boult	0
Rangana Herath run out	4
Dushmantha Chameera not out	0
Extras (7lb,12w)	19
Total (for seven wickets)	264
Overs: 67. Batting time: 297 minutes.	
Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-44, 3-115, 4-121, 5-259, 6-259, 7-264.	
Still to bat: Suranga Lakmal, Nuwan Pradeep.	
Bowling: Trent Boult 17-2-43-2, Tim Southee 16-5-51-2 (1w), Doug Bracewell 19-2-79-1 (5w), Neil Wagner 7-0-49-0 (6w), Mitchell Santner 7-0-34-0, Kane Williamson 1-0-1-0.	

full and creating the first uncertainty among the home side's attack.

### 'We're disappointed'

New Zealand took an hour to achieve the first breakthrough, then Tim Southee found a more effective length and dismissed Dimuth Karunaratne (12) and Mendis in quick succession on either side of the first drinks break. "We're disappointed to be honest with the way we bowled. The odd ball every over was letting us down when it came to building pressure," Boult said. "I think we just missed a trick today a little bit but the positive is we did manage to turn it around a little bit."

Rather than going into its shell, Sri Lanka stepped up the attack. Dinesh Chandimal played at the first ball he faced and edged a boundary before slips. He then unleashed a barrage of mainly uppish drives through cover and mid-off to lead Sri Lanka to 108-2 by lunch. Jayasundera made 26 and put on 61 with Chandimal for the third

wicket before being run out in a mixup with his partner, beaten by Mitchell Santner's throw to the wicketkeeper.

Chandimal followed soon after, driving lavishly again and edging to keeper B.J. Watling who has held three catches in the innings and 12 in the series so far. Siriwardana hit five fours and three sixes from 81 balls and Mathews had also hit three sixes among eight boundaries in his 111-ball innings when rain ended the day's play with 23 overs left to bowl. Boult removed Siriwardana, then Kithuruwan Vithanage (0) in the space of three balls before Kane Williamson's direct hit from gully ran out Rangana Herath (4). Sri Lanka lost three wickets within 13 balls and for five runs during that period, allowing New Zealand to balance the match a little by stumps. "It was a pretty good fight back after the Sri Lankans batted well across the whole day," Boult said. "The wicket was pretty green and there was a bit of movement out there but not as much swing as what I thought there might be." — AP

# REDS FULL SCALE MAKEOVER LEAVES LITTLE FOR FANS

**CINCINNATI:** Todd Frazier smacked one ball after another into the outfield seats as the clock ticked away, bringing the capacity crowd at Great American Ball Park to its feet for one of the best moments in the ballpark's history.

The Toddfather delivered the drama in the All-Star Home Run Derby last July, winning it on his final swing. Now, he's been shipped to Chicago, leaving little behind for fans to cheer. The Reds showed their commitment to a full-scale overhaul this week by trading Frazier - the franchise's most popular player - to the White Sox in a three-team deal that brought more prospects.

Hard-throwing closer Aroldis Chapman will likely be gone, too, and very shortly. It will be no surprise if any of the other remaining veterans gets shipped off as well. "No question," Reds director of baseball operations Walt Jocketty said. "It would be tough to trade Joey (Votto) because he's our franchise player. But other than that, we have to approach each deal differently."

The Reds were the talk of baseball when they gave Votto a \$251.5 million, 12-year deal at the start of the 2012 season. They won the NL Central and 97 games that season, their best showing since the days of the Big Red Machine. But they lost in the opening round of the playoff to the Giants, who went on to take the World Series.

Manager Dusty Baker was fired after a wild-card



**CINCINNATI:** In this Sept 12, 2015, file photo, Cincinnati Reds' Todd Frazier hits a single in the sixth inning of a baseball game against the St. Louis Cardinals. — AP

loss to Pittsburgh the following season, and it's been downhill since. The Reds finished fourth with 86 losses in 2014 under Bryan Price, and dropped

98 games last season as the rebuilding began.

No 1 starter Johnny Cueto and Mike Leake were dealt in July, leaving the Reds to finish the season

with an all-rookie rotation that got miserable results. The last 64 games were started by a rookie, the longest such streak in major league history. After treading water and keeping the roster virtually intact for years, the Reds realized it was time to start from scratch.

### Who's next to go?

Votto's contract makes him difficult to trade. He's owed \$199 million through 2023, with his salary set at \$25 million each season from 2018-23. Votto walked a club-record 143 times last season and can expect more of the same with few other threats in the lineup. The Reds have already tried to trade second baseman Brandon Phillips without success. He makes \$13 million next season and \$14 million in 2017. He was eighth in the NL with 173 hits last season, but had only 12 homers and 70 RBIs. Right fielder Jay Bruce batted only .226 with 26 homers and 87 RBIs. He'll make \$12.5 million next season, and there's a club option for 2017 at \$13 million with a \$1 million buyout. Once Chapman is dealt - the Reds are talking to several teams - there's nobody left on the roster with significant closer experience in the majors. And the rotation remains the biggest problem with its lack of experience. Homer Bailey had Tommy John surgery during last season and isn't expected to be ready by spring training. — AP

# LEBRON CRASHES INTO GOLFER WIFE IN CAVS' WIN

**CLEVELAND:** Unable to stop himself, LeBron James launched his 250-pound body into the air, crashing hard into the lap of a courtside spectator unable to get out of his way. He had no idea he'd just plowed over the wife of PGA champion Jason Day. There was nothing anyone could do.

Scrambling for a loose ball, the Cavaliers star flattened Ellie Day, sending her to the hospital during the fourth quarter of Cleveland's 104-100 win over the Oklahoma City Thunder on Thursday night. Ellie Day was treated and released from MetroHealth Medical Center early Friday morning, according to hospital spokeswoman Tina Shaerban Arundel. In an instant, the final minutes of an NBA game had become almost trivial.

Ellie Day, who gave birth to her second child last month, was carried from Quicken Loans Arena on a backboard, placed on a stretcher with her head immobilized and taken to the hospital. She was accompanied from the building by her husband, who moments before the collision had chipped foam basketballs to the crowd as part of a promotion. As she was being treated by medical personnel inside the arena, James came over to check on her, grabbing her hand.

## Loose ball

"She squeezed my hand and said she was fine," James said. "I think she was just a little weary. For me, obviously, her health is very important and hopefully she is doing well. The guys told me she's doing great now. For me, just going for a loose ball, I tried to keep the possession going, I just hate that that was the end result." James was on his way to a 33-point, 11-assist, nine-rebound performance when the collision took place with 5 minutes left.

An hour after the game, James tweeted: "Ellie Day I hope you're doing okay! My apologies! Hope u guys come back to another game soon. Love LJ!" Jason Day, the No. 2-ranked golfer in the world, won the PGA Championship this year for his first major win on the PGA Tour. On Nov. 11, Ellie Day gave birth to the couple's second child, a girl named Lucy.

As his wife was being checked by medical staff, a concerned Jason Day looked on as the Cavs and Thunder played a frantic final few minutes. The Days live in suburban Columbus and have attended Cleveland games in the past. Ellie Day was pregnant when she went to an exhibition game earlier this year. That night on Ohio State's campus, Cavs guard J.R. Smith bought cotton candy for the Days' son, Dash, while he sat on the bench.

Cavs coach David Blatt said he didn't see the full impact of the collision. Blatt has long been nervous about the safety of fans sitting so close to the action. "Honestly, the only thing I saw was LeBron diving for the ball to save the ball," Blatt said. "I kind of got blocked and just saw a sea of bodies. We all hope that she's OK. It's always concerned me, the sideline seats. Always concerned me, because things like that, when you're talking about players of this speed and physicality and effort level, it's not a simple thing. "The powers that be are the ones that really need to decide how to deal with that. He made an honest attempt at the basketball, that's all, obviously. We all hope she's OK."

## Missing guards

Tristan Thompson had 15 rebounds for the Cavs, who improved to 11-1 at home. Russell Westbrook scored 27 and Kevin Durant 25 for the Thunder, who had won six in a row. Oklahoma City was down 98-89 with three minutes left and closed within 103-100, but



**CLEVELAND:** Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James falls into Ellie Day, wife of PGA Tour golfer Jason Day, at left, during the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Oklahoma City. — AP

both Durant and Westbrook missed 3-pointers in the final 10 seconds.

The Cavaliers were missing guards Mo Williams (thumb), Iman Shumpert (groin) and Kyrie Irving, who could make his season debut Sunday against Philadelphia. Thompson added 12 points and his energy kept the Cavs

close in the third quarter. Richard Jefferson added 13 points off the bench for Cleveland, now 31-2 in regular season games at home since Jan. 15.

With the Cavs down 78-74 to start the fourth, Kevin Love made two critical plays to swing the momentum for Cleveland. First, he

pump faked Nick Collison in the air to draw contact and dropped a 3-pointer while being fouled. After knocking down his free throw, Love grabbed a rebound on the defensive end and heaved a look outlet pass to a waiting James, who was bumped before dropping in his layup to put the Cavs up 80-78. As James went to the line, Love walked over following his deep completion and slapped hands with Browns quarterback Johnny Manziel, who was sitting courtside.

## ROCKETS 107, LAKERS 87

James Harden scored 25 points, and Dwight Howard added 16 points and 15 rebounds in Houston's second victory over Los Angeles in six days. Terrence Jones had 16 points to help the Rockets avoid a winless three-game trip. They never trailed in their fifth straight win over the Lakers at Staples Center, Houston's longest road winning streak in the rivalry's history. Kobe Bryant scored 22 points and dunked for the first time in his farewell season, but the Lakers followed up their fourth victory of the season with their 14th loss in 16 games.

## HORNETS 109, RAPTORS 99, OT

Jeremy Lin scored a season-high 35 points and Kemba Walker had 27 as Charlotte beat Toronto in overtime. P.J. Hairston added 14 points, including a 3-pointer with 1:30 remaining in overtime that put the Hornets ahead to stay. DeMar DeRozan scored 31 points, Kyle Lowry added 20 and Terrence Ross had 17 for Toronto. Bismack Biyombo, who spent four seasons with Charlotte, had a career-best 18 rebounds while also blocking seven shots and scoring eight points. — AP



**CLEVELAND:** Ellie Day, wife of PGA Tour golfer Jason Day, is carried off the floor in a stretcher after Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James collided with her out of bounds. — AP

# MOURINHO FIRED OVER 'DISCORD' WITH PLAYERS

**LONDON:** Jose Mourinho's "palpable discord" with Chelsea players forced the club to abruptly end his second spell as manager on Thursday with the team languishing just above the relegation zone only seven months after winning the Premier League. Mourinho's departure came 2 1/2 years after his return to Stamford Bridge and only four months into a new four-year contract signed after winning his third league title with Chelsea.

Despite a succession of humiliating results, the 52-year-old coach had been defiantly insisting he was the right man to oversee the team. But Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich decided he could not risk keeping the fans' favorite in the dugout as the mid-way point of the season approaches with Chelsea only a point above the relegation zone.

"It was a decision taken to protect the interests of the club," Chelsea technical director Michael Emenalo said. "Whilst there is huge sentiment for the individual who has done so much for the club, the fact of the matter remains that Chelsea Football Club is in trouble. The results are not good. There obviously seemed to be a palpable discord between manager and players. And we feel it was time to act. The owner is forced to make what was a very tough decision for the good of the club."

## Dressing room rift

The worst-ever start for a defending champion team in the Premier League was compounded on Monday by a 2-1 loss at surprise leader Leicester. After the match, Mourinho said he was "betrayed" by his players - exposing a dressing room rift.

"This is essentially the same group of players who won the league and the League Cup last season. They did in style and they did it by showing commitment and by sweating tears and blood for the club when needed," Emenalo said in a Chelsea website interview. "The players have a responsibility to go out and prove everybody wrong and show a certain level of commitment ... to try to get the club up the league table."

The personal conduct of the self-styled "Special One" was also proving damaging to Chelsea, with Mourinho engaging in public spats with referees, a television rights holder and even the club's doctor over the last year. Chelsea is engaged in an ongoing legal battle with Dr. Eva Carneiro after she was publicly criticized and then demoted following Mourinho's opening-day outburst.

Now it is Mourinho leaving Chelsea, with Russian billionaire Abramovich preparing for his 10th managerial appointment since buying



**LONDON:** In this Sunday, March 1, 2015 file photo, Chelsea's head coach Jose Mourinho lies on the ground as he celebrates his team winning the English League Cup final soccer match between Chelsea and Tottenham, at Wembley stadium. - AP

the team in 2003 and transforming its fortunes with a huge injection of cash. Emenalo indicated that one of the "quality coaches embedded" at Chelsea would be in temporary charge for Saturday's home match against Sunderland, with the club "working vigorously and actively" to appoint Mourinho's successor.

First hired by Chelsea in 2004, the Portuguese ended a 50-year league title drought and defended the trophy among other successes before losing a power struggle three years later with Abramovich. He was brought back in 2013 by Abramovich in an attempt to restore unity to the club following the divisiveness caused by the appointment of Rafa Benitez as interim manager, who was regularly jeered by fans. Mourinho presented himself as a figure transformed from the fiery character who fell out with Abramovich in 2007, but it was not long before the combativeness returned. He survived a first trophyless season back at Stamford Bridge before cruising to the title in May.

## Every honor

Although Mourinho has won every honor

in English soccer, he never managed to win a European trophy in either of his two spells at Chelsea. He won the Champions League with FC Porto in 2004 and with Inter Milan in 2010, before and after his first tenure at Chelsea.

"All at Chelsea thank Jose for his immense contribution since he returned as manager in the summer of 2013," Chelsea said. "His three league titles, FA Cup, Community Shield and three League Cup wins over two spells make him the most successful manager in our 110-year history." Mourinho was an unsuccessful player whose big break in coaching came when he was hired as an interpreter for English coach Bobby Robson at Sporting Lisbon in Portugal.

Robson took Mourinho with him to Porto and his influence increased as he took on coaching responsibilities. The duo moved to Barcelona for the 1996-97 season, and Mourinho remained at the club under Louis van Gaal following the Englishman's departure. Mourinho returned to Portugal but failed to win any titles during stints as a senior coach at Uniao Leiria and Benfica. That changed in his first full season at Porto, winning the

league, Portuguese Cup and UEFA Cup in 2003.

It was the Champions League win in 2004 that convinced Chelsea to hire him for the first time. He became the third coach to win the European Cup with two teams, with success in the 2010 final with Inter Milan. He then moved on to Real Madrid.

While employed by Inter and Madrid, Mourinho appeared to forget his clashes with the English media, referees and Abramovich as he started openly flirting with Chelsea during a fraught final season in the Spanish capital.

The love affair with Chelsea was rekindled but it proved too difficult to sustain before a second split on Thursday even though fans had been chanting his name throughout the recent turmoil. "The club wishes to make clear Jose leaves us on good terms and will always remain a much-loved, respected and significant figure at Chelsea," Chelsea said in a statement. "His legacy at Stamford Bridge and in England has long been guaranteed and he will always be warmly welcomed back to Stamford Bridge." — AP

## MADRID PRESIDENT DISMISSES MOURINHO, BACKS BENITEZ

**MADRID:** Real Madrid has no intention of replacing coach Rafa Benitez with former Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho, club president Florentino Perez said yesterday. In an interview with a Spanish radio station, Perez didn't dismiss signing Mourinho again, but reiterated that "Benitez is not the problem, he is the solution."

Mourinho left Chelsea for a second time on Thursday as the English team continues to struggle in the Premier League. He was Real Madrid's coach from 2010-13, winning the Copa del Rey in 2011 and the Spanish league in 2012. "No one can know the future, but right now he will not come to Madrid," Perez told Cadena SER. "I have good memories of Mourinho, he helped us elevate our level. It wasn't a bad moment for us. With him in command we returned to where we belonged."

Madrid has been in crisis since a 4-0 home loss to

Barcelona and an embarrassing elimination in the Copa del Rey for using an ineligible player in a match against third-tier club Cadiz. Pressure on Benitez increased after the team's 1-0 loss at Villarreal in the Spanish league last weekend, a result that kept Madrid from gaining ground on Barcelona and Atletico Madrid. Another setback on Sunday against struggling Rayo Vallecano could mean the end of the line for the coach - even if he has Perez's support.

"It's not true that the players don't get along with Benitez," Perez said. "I talk to them. There are no players who want him sacked." Until Mourinho became available on Thursday, former Madrid great Zinedine Zidane was being loudly touted as the immediate replacement to Benitez if he was fired. "I like Zidane, he will be a great coach for Madrid," Perez said. "But not now." — AP



**MADRID:** Real Madrid's head coach Rafa Benitez waits for the start of the game during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Getafe at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium. — AP

## MILAN THROUGH TO CUP QUARTERS WITH 2-0 WIN

**MILAN:** AC Milan is through to the Italian Cup quarterfinals after winning 2-0 at 10-man Sampdoria, Rossoneri coach Sinisa Mihajlovic's former team. M'Baye Niang broke the deadlock five minutes after the break, beating the offside trap to run onto Carlos Bacca's through-ball and fire into the bottom left corner. Bacca sealed the result in stoppage time, thanks to an assist from Keisuke Honda, after Samp had missed clearcut chances to level.

Sampdoria's hopes of a comeback started to fade when defender Ervin Zukanovic was dismissed in the 64th minute for picking up two yellow cards in a matter of seconds - having said something to the referee, moments after being booked for a foul. Milan will fancy its chances of reaching the final. If it beats relegation-threatened Carpi, it will face the winner of the match between the two lower-division sides left in the competition - Alessandria and Spezia.

Earlier, Lazio came from behind to beat 10-man Udinese 2-1 to book a quarterfinal tie against Juventus - a rematch of last season's final. Udinese scored a stunning opener in the 67th minute. Panagiotis Kone flicked up Giovanni Pasquale's cross from the left before swiveling and volleying into the far top corner.

The visitors' lead lasted just three minutes before Alessandro Matri levelled with Udinese down to 10 men after substitute Rodrigo Aguirre had left the pitch for treatment on an injury - shortly after coming off the bench. Aguirre tried to play on but had to admit defeat, leaving Udinese at a numerical disadvantage for the rest of the match as its three substitutions had already been made. Lazio scored the winner 11 minutes from time. Udinese's 18-year-old goalkeeper Alex Meret did well to deny Abdoulay Konko but could do nothing about Danilo Cataldi's header from point-blank range - although the Lazio midfielder appeared to be offside. — AP



**GENOA:** AC Milan's M'Baye Niang celebrates after scoring during an Italian Cup soccer match between Sampdoria and AC Milan.—AP



**ZURICH:** The FIFA logo is pictured outside the FIFA headquarters. — AP

## BLATTER FACES JUDGMENT FROM FIFA ETHICS COURT HE CREATED

**ZURICH:** In the waning days of his presidency, Sepp Blatter attempted to save his job Thursday at the FIFA ethics committee he helped create and whose authority he does not recognize in his case. The suspended FIFA president had been expected to tell four judges he is innocent of wrongdoing during the hearing at the headquarters of soccer's governing body, the first time Blatter has entered the building since he was banned for 90 days in October.

"Blatter looks forward to a decision in his favor, because the evidence requires it," Blatter's lawyer, Richard Cullen, said in a statement after the hearing. "The evidence demonstrates that President Blatter behaved properly and certainly did not violate FIFA's Code of Ethics. This investigation should be closed and the suspension lifted."

With a large bandage on his face, Blatter arrived at FIFA headquarters shortly after 8 am local time (0700 GMT) in a chauffeur-driven car for a hearing that was scheduled to start at 9 am. A spokesman for Blatter, Thomas Renggli, said the Swiss official has had a minor procedure to treat a skin problem on his right cheek.

At 5 pm, Blatter and lead lawyer Lorenz Erni drove away from the building without making any comment. In 2012, Blatter was key to empowering a tougher and more independent FIFA ethics committee that he now insists cannot remove an elected president. "Now it has come back to haunt

him," Mark Pieth, a former anti-corruption adviser to FIFA, told The Associated Press this week. Blatter risks a life ban if the verdict - due early next week - is guilty for approving a payment of about \$2 million from FIFA to Michel Platini in 2011. Platini has also been banned for 90 days.

Otherwise, Blatter could be banned for several years for a conflict of interest between the two longtime FIFA executive committee colleagues. He is also likely to be quizzed about falsifying FIFA accounts. In a Swiss television interview last month, Blatter said it is "humiliating" for a FIFA president to be barred from office by his own ethics committee. He also said the ethics committee he ushered in after a previous corruption crisis had no right to take him down.

### Remove a president

Only the FIFA congress can remove a president, Blatter said at the time. In July 2012, FIFA moved from an in-house committee monitoring unethical conduct to a two-chamber group of prosecutors and judges with freedom and funding to pursue cases. Pieth led a group of anti-corruption experts and soccer officials who steered Blatter and FIFA toward modernizing reforms from 2012-14. Not all were accepted, but the two-chamber ethics court was crucial.

"It must be said that he (Blatter) was the one who pushed it through congress,"

Pieth, a Swiss professor of law, said in a telephone interview. "That was the moment we all believed he is serious, at least about the letter of the changes." Blatter complained about the ethics committee's power to Russian news agency TASS after his 90-day ban was imposed. "They can be independent but they don't need to be against me," he was quoted as saying in October. Blatter was charged by the ethics committee after Switzerland's attorney general opened criminal proceedings against him for the payment to Platini, who is boycotting his own ethics hearing on Friday.

The case centers on Platini getting about \$2 million of FIFA money as uncontracted salary for working as Blatter's presidential adviser in 1999-2002. Platini asked for a salary of 1 million Swiss francs. Blatter has said the former France international had a contract for 300,000 Swiss francs, plus a "gentleman's agreement" to get the rest later. Swiss law obliged FIFA only to pay the deferred money within five years but Platini, by then UEFA president, reportedly asked for the balance in 2010 and was paid in February 2011.

The timing has raised suspicion, coming months before a presidential election when UEFA urged its members to support Blatter against Mohamed bin Hammam of Qatar. Blatter won unopposed after Bin Hammam was implicated in bribing Caribbean voters.—AP

## BAYERN EXTENDS DEALS OF FOUR STAR PLAYERS

**MUNICH:** Amid speculation on the future of coach Pep Guardiola, Bayern Munich extended the contracts of four players, including Germany forward Thomas Mueller and veteran Xavi Alonso. Germany defender Jerome Boateng and Spain defensive midfielder Javi Martinez also received new deals, Bayern said yesterday. Mueller, Boateng, and Martinez are signed through mid-2021.

"Thomas, Jerome and Javi know how to win trophies, including the Champions League," Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz

Rummenigge said. "They will add quality and stability to our team in the long run." The 34-year-old Alonso is signed to the end of the next season. There has been widespread speculation in German and Spanish media that Guardiola is set to announce his departure from Bayern at the end of the season. He is in the final season of a three-year deal.

Bayern plays in Hannover this weekend in the last round before the Christmas break, and Guardiola's decision is expected in the next few days. Speaking at a news confer-

ence on Friday ahead of the Hannover match, Guardiola again declined to reveal his plans.

"Karl-Heinz Rummenigge and I have always said that we'll sit together after the last match (in Hannover), and talk about it and I say this again today," Guardiola said. "Rummenigge knows everything, everything!" Mueller has been at Bayern since 2000, and has become one of the team's most important players. He has 13 goals in 16 Bundesliga matches this season.

"I have the feeling and am convinced that

FC Bayern can play very successful football over the next few years. I'm proud and delighted about extending my contract," Mueller said. Martinez said Bayern has "a magnificent team." "Munich is a perfect city for a professional footballer, everyone is very respectful here, and it's all come together," the Spaniard said. Alonso was the only player whose contract was expiring at the end of the season. "With his experience as a World Cup and Champions League winner, he has become an important part of Bayern," club vice chairman Jan-Christian Dreesen said.—AP

# JABER STADIUM GREAT 'PRIDE,



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait fans wave Kuwait flags during the opening ceremony.

**KUWAIT:** Jaber Stadium inauguration is a source of great "pride" and tremendous "achievement" for the State of Kuwait, UAE's Minister of Culture, Youth and Community Development Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al-Nahayan said yesterday. Al-Nahayan made this remark to the press upon his arrival to Kuwait to be part of the grand opening ceremony of this sporting facility which he described as source of "pride not only to Kuwait but also to all of the GCC countries." "We are one nation celebrating one joy," Al-Nahayan referring to Kuwait's sporting festival. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah inaugurated the Stadium at 7:30 pm (local time). The event featured fireworks show, national operetta and a friendly game by Kuwaiti all-star team led by Captain Mohammad Ibrahim and world all-star team headed by Italian manager Fabio Capello.

#### Hard work

The organizing committee and all the teams involved in arrangements for the occasion have been worked very hard to provide favorable conditions to guarantee a triumphant event. Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh



Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, who is also head of the committee, made the statement on the eve of the occasion.

#### World all-star team happy

Meanwhile, the world all-star football team has expressed joy in visiting Kuwait and taking part in the friendly match against Kuwait national football team.

The team made its remarks during a press conference held by the event's organizing committee with participation of Italian coach Fabio Capello, Luis Figo, a former Portuguese professional footballer, Alessandro Nesta, a former Italian professional footballer, and Mohammad Ibrahim, coach of the Kuwait team, in addition to Kuwaiti players Mohammad Jeragh and Fahad Al-Ansari.

"I'm very happy about my first ever visit to Kuwait on the occasion of this spectacular celebration, and meeting with an elite group of world class footballers, some of whom I worked with in the past," Capello said in the conference. On his part, Figo said that being in the country during the opening festival is a "historic moment" - expressing his happiness towards his fourth visit to Kuwait and seeing the many friends he made. — Agencies



**KUWAIT:** A band performs ahead of a friendly ceremonial match between Kuwait all-stars team and Football Champions Tour Legends yesterday.

# ACHIEVEMENT' FOR KUWAIT



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir is pictured with host of officials including the Information Minister and State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, Ministers and other high-ranking officials during the official opening of the multi-purpose Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium yesterday.



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah arrives for a friendly ceremonial match between Kuwait all-stars team and Football Champions Tour Legends, as part of the inauguration ceremony for the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium.



A band performs ahead of a friendly ceremonial match between Kuwait all-stars team and Football Champions Tour Legends yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2015

Kuwait Times

# Sports



Mourinho fired over 'discord' with players 44



KUWAIT: English footballer David Beckham (right) fights for the ball with Kuwait's Fahad Al-Eneze during a friendly ceremonial match between Kuwait all-stars team and Football Champions Tour Legends yesterday, as part of the inauguration ceremony for the Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## KUWAIT BEAT EX-GLOBAL ALL-STARS SIDE 4-2

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait won the Champions Cup, beating a global side of ex-international stars, 4-2, with Kuwaiti talisman Bader Al-Mutawa getting on the scoresheet and David Beckham providing both assists in a match which marked the grand opening of Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium yesterday. Portuguese legend Luis Figo scored the opener from the edge of the area on the back of a cross from ex-England captain David Beckham.

The two embraced in celebration to the joy of the attending crowd at the 60,000-seater stadium, reminding all of their once remarkable partnership as Real Madrid teammates. Figo's thunderous strike was cancelled out moments later by forward Fahad Al-Hajeri's pinpointed shot which met a wonderful corner kick in the 19th minute. Kuwait later broke the deadlock through their talismanic international

Bader Al-Mutawa with a perfectly executed volley over the head of keeper Jens Lehmann.

Al-Mutawa, who saw that the ex-Germany international had advanced around three feet away from goal, picked up the ball and chipped his masterpiece above a disconcerted Lehmann. Five minutes into the second half, Fahad Al-Enezi added Kuwait's third with a powerful strike on the volley, as the hosts continued to dominate proceedings. Beckham was the mastermind of the global stars' second as Robert Pires rose high to meet another of his excellent crosses. Yousef Nasser added Kuwait's fourth and as he easily scooped up Al-Hajeri's pass made after he cleverly maneuvered his way past an onrushing Roberto Carlos.

In an interview following the match, the man behind the global all-stars said he was "excited to be

in Kuwait for the first time." He described the event at the 60,000-seater packed stadium as witnessing a "special atmosphere." "It was really good - family and friends (were present). I really enjoyed being in this game," he said on his first visit to the Gulf nation.

Asked about his former Premiership side Manchester United's chances, he said that the team have been "a little bit inconsistent" adding that other sides were also displaying inconsistency, therefore there was still a chance for the side to take the title.

On England's Euro 2016 chances, he said that their group, alongside Wales, was a "tough group," adding that when the two fierce rival nations meet it adds a "little bit of a spice in there - something we are excited about."

The 40-year-old also said that winning the treble

for Man United and being England captain were two things he was most proud of in his 20-year-long career.

The huge event, which was marked by a magnificent display of fireworks and renowned local musicians, was attended by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim, alongside local and regional officials and notable figures. The ex-internationals, led by Italian coach Fabio Capello, included other former greats like ex-Barcelona defender and Spain international Carlos Puyol, Brazilian legend Roberto Carlos and former AC Milan forward Andriy Shevchenko. The Kuwait all-stars side was led by national coach Mohammad Ibrahim. — KUNA