

GCC condemns claims of Qatar link to Cairo bomb



Duterte govt says it won't bow to America to get aid



Colorful NBA reporter Sager dies of cancer



150 Fils

OBAMA VOWS RETALIATION AGAINST 'RUSSIAN HACKING'

'WE WILL TAKE ACTION AT A TIME AND PLACE OF OUR OWN CHOOSING'



Min 03°
Max 18°



A tractor carrying people who were evacuated from rebel-held neighborhoods in the embattled city of Aleppo arrives in the opposition-controlled Khan Al-Aassal region, west of the embattled city yesterday. — AFP (See Page 7)

ALEPPO EVACUATION HALTED

GUNFIRE ERUPTS AS REGIME, REBELS TRADE BLAME

BEIRUT: The evacuation of eastern Aleppo stalled yesterday after an eruption of gunfire, as the Syrian government and rebels threw accusations at each other, raising fears that a peaceful surrender of the opposition enclave could fall apart with thousands of people believed to be still inside.

The government suspended the evacuation, pulling out buses that had been ferrying out people Friday morning and the day before, after reports of shooting at a crossing point into the enclave. The foreign minister of Turkey, a backer of the rebels, said he was in talks with his counterpart in Iran, a top ally of the Syrian government, to try to get the process back on track.

The suspension demonstrated the fragility of the cease-fire deal under which civilians and fighters inside the few remaining blocks of the rebel enclave in Aleppo were to be taken to opposition-held territory nearby. It appeared to be linked to a separate evacuation to remove thousands of people from two government-held villages besieged by the rebels. The Syrian government says those evacuations and that in eastern Aleppo must be carried out at the same time under the cease-fire deal, but the rebels say there is no connection.

Syrian state media said rebels shelled a road that was supposed to be used by people evacuating from these two villages. The opposition's Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, however, said the Iran-backed Hezbollah fighters had cut the

road to protest a lack of progress in the evacuations from Foua and Kfarya. Buses that arrived at a collection point in Hama countryside to pick up people evacuating from the villages waited for hours without any evacuations happening.

Later yesterday, two rebel spokesmen privy to the talks said the fighters besieging the two Shiite villages, including al-Qaida linked militant group Fatah al-Sham Front, have agreed to evacuate several hundred wounded from the Shiite villages. If it happens, this may lead to the resumption of evacuation from Aleppo.

There were differing reports on how many people had been evacuated from the enclave and how many remained inside, who would be in danger of being caught in the crossfire if the cease-fire falls apart. Reports by opposition activists and officials in eastern Aleppo ranged from 15,000 to 40,000 civilians still inside the tiny enclave, along with some 6,000 fighters.

The evacuations seal the end of the Syrian rebels' most important stronghold - the eastern part of the city of Aleppo - and mark a watershed moment in the country's civil war, now in its sixth year. In announcing the suspensions, Syrian state TV also claimed that the rebels had tried to take captives with them, ones they had seized and were holding in the rebel enclave from bitter battles to defend their territory from a ferocious, weeks-long onslaught by Syrian President Bashar Assad's troops. — AP

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama is promising that the US will retaliate against Russia for its suspected meddling in America's election process, an accusation the Kremlin has vehemently denied.

As the White House grew more bullish about suggesting President Vladimir Putin was personally involved, Obama said he'd spoken directly to Putin about his concerns about Russian meddling. He said whenever a foreign government tries to interfere in US elections, the nation must take action "and we will at a time and place of our own choosing."

"We have been working hard to make sure that what we do is proportional, that what we do is meaningful," Obama said in an NPR News interview airing yesterday.

Obama's remarks were the clearest indication that whatever response the US is planning, it hasn't happened yet. The White House has insisted for months that when the US did retaliate, it might not be made public, a position that has created uncertainty about the strength and timing of any response.

Obama was expected to face questions about the hacking and his response during a news conference at the White House yesterday afternoon. White House officials said it was "fact" that Russian hacking helped Donald Trump's campaign against Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton. White House press secretary Josh Earnest on Thursday also assailed Trump himself over his refusal to acknowledge the hacking and his attacks on the US intelligence community.

The tough talk from the White House fell flat in Moscow, where Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called the accusations baseless and inappropriate. "They should either stop talking about that, or produce some proof at last," Peskov told reporters yesterday. "Otherwise it all begins to look unseemly." — AP

FOUR KUWAITIS ARRESTED IN IRAN

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Friday it is closely monitoring the detention of four Kuwaiti citizens at Iran's Ahavaz area, and coordinating with relevant authorities in order to ensure their release and safe return to their country.

Assistant Foreign Minister for Consular Affairs Sami Al-Hamad said yesterday in a press release that upon instructions from First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait was summoned to deliver him a memo demanding access to the detained Kuwaiti citizens and their safe release.

He added that the Kuwaiti Embassy in Tehran had contacted Iranian authorities to follow up on the arrest of the four Kuwaiti citizens and ask for allowing the Kuwaiti embassy to visit them. He noted that the ministry would continue efforts through its embassy in Tehran and the Iranian embassy in Kuwait in order to ensure their release and safe return. — KUNA

Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: Photo shows lanterns used in decorating a wall as Kuwait temperature reduces below 10 degrees Celsius. — KUNA

Crime

Report

PRECAUTIONARY
DETENTION

KUWAIT: A court recently extended the precautionary detention of a Kuwaiti producer and his Iraqi accomplice for 15 further days over charges of drug trafficking and money laundering. Security sources said that the first suspect denied all charges. The suspect also denied giving his wife a private jet as a gift.

Vehicle on fire

A vehicle caught fire along King Fahad highway. Security sources said that firemen rushed to the scene and managed to control the fire. No casualties were reported.

Saudi rushed to hospital

A Saudi national was rushed to Jahra hospital recently with head injuries which he sustained while fighting in Al-Waha area, security sources said, noting that the man was admitted into ICU.

Financial claim

An Egyptian man has been arrested in Roudha. He was wanted for a KD 4000 financial claim, said security sources. In a separate development, an Egyptian reported that an unidentified person assaulted him and stole his KD 1000. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Bedoon arrested

A bedoon was recently arrested in jaber Al-Ali for drug related cases. He was found in possession of drugs. Security sources said that the suspect had no driving license and was already under the influence of drugs when he was arrested. — Al-Rai/Al-Anbaa

CONFLICTS THREATEN PEACE
CULTURE: KUWAIT DIPLOMAT

NEW YORK: The culture of peace is threatened by global conflicts and wars, a fact that required individuals and societies to stand together against ignorance, violence, as well as religious and sectarian biases, a Kuwaiti diplomat told a UN session late Thursday. In a meeting on the culture of peace held on the sideline of the 71st UN General Assembly, Diplomatic attache at the Kuwaiti delegation to the UN headquarters in New York, Farah Al-Gharabally said that the lack of acceptance and the prevalence of ignorance had held to sorrowful acts of hate and discrimination.

The world needs to find the reasons behind the spread of hate and rigid ideologies, said the diplomat, affirming that addressing such problems will lead to the prominence of peace and love around the globe. She affirmed that Kuwait was keen on peace worldwide, revealing that her country will always stand firm against acts of hate and terror. Kuwaitis were terrorized by an attack on a local Mosque in June of 2015, said Al-Gharabally, affirming that all sectors of Kuwait's society stood behind the leadership of the country against this hateful act. She went on saying that the Kuwaiti constitution secured the rights of all people regardless of creed, ethnic background, language, and other aspects. The legislative and executive powers in Kuwait also launched several initiatives to spread the culture of peace and understanding in the country, said the diplomat who reiterated calls for reinforcing global efforts to fend of terror, hate, and discrimination. — KUNA



Diplomatic attache at the Kuwaiti delegation to the UN headquarters in New York, Farah Al-Gharabally.

EASTERN SUDAN POWER GRID,
KUWAIT-SUPPORTED PROJECT

KASSALA: In a few months, the eastern province of Sudan will witness the completion of the east power grid which will provide electricity and energy to the area. The \$200 million-project, in which the Kuwait Fund for Arabic Economic Development (KFAED) provided a sum of \$165 million, was approved by the international donors' conference for Sudan hosted by Kuwait on December first and second of 2010. The event gathered around \$3.5 billion for the sake of developing Sudan. Speaking about this issue, Executive Director of the East Sudan Development Fund, Abu Obaida Mohamed Duj told KUNA that the power grid will help provide elec-

tricity to some 650 towns and villages, revealing that 700,000 subscribers will benefit from the project.

The infrastructure for the project is already in place, said Duj, adding that electricity will be provided as soon as possible. The official took the chance to thank the Kuwaiti leadership and people for their generous input, affirming that the whole project would not have taken off without the assistance of the fellow Arab country. Senior officials at the Kassala state also expressed their gratitude to Kuwait and hoped that the project will be swiftly launched so that electricity could flow to the region.— KUNA



Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy Sheikh Ali Al-Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah take a group photo with other officials during the students' visit to FAO.— KUNA photos

GCC CONDEMNS CLAIMS OF QATAR LINK TO CAIRO BOMB

RIYADH: Gulf states have condemned Egypt's accusation of Qatari involvement in a Cairo church bombing last week that killed 25 people, a statement from the Gulf Cooperation Council said. "GCC states are upset over dragging the name of member-state Qatar into this heinous crime," the group's Secretary General Abdullatif Al-Zayani said. "This is unacceptable," he said, warning that "unverified statements could harm the strong relations between the GCC and Egypt."

In addition to Qatar, the GCC groups Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Its statement late Thursday came after Qatar denied involvement in Sunday's deadly bomb attack on the Saint Peter and Saint Paul Church in Cairo, which was claimed by the Islamic State jihadist group. On Monday, Egypt accused fugitive Muslim Brotherhood leaders who fled to Qatar of training and financing those responsible for the attack.

Cairo's Interior Ministry pointed the finger at suspect Mohab Mostafa El-Sayed Qassem, also known as "The



Doctor", who travelled to Qatar in 2015. It said Qassem was offered financial and logistical support to carry out attacks in Egypt. Qatar dismissed the claims as baseless, insisting that Qassem visited the Gulf state just "like hundreds of thousands of others." Sunday's incident was the deadliest attack in recent memory on Egypt's Christian minority, who make up about 10 percent of the population. The Brotherhood has denied any

involvement. Meanwhile, Al Zayani has affirmed that the Gulf states are standing side by side with Egypt in its fight against the terrorist organizations. This came in Al Zayani's statement, saying that "Egypt's security is GCC member states' security". He stressed the GCC states' firm stance against terrorism, referring to the Gulf countries' condemnation of bombing church of St Peter in Cairo this week.—Agencies

GCC STUDENTS VISIT UN'S FAO, ITALY'S CIVIL PROTECTION DEPT

ROME: On the fourth day of a journey to Italy, a Gulf student delegation has visited the headquarters of the UN and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Rome, and the Italian Civil Protection Department. The Italian tour is part of the "Youth Ambassadors of the Gulf" initiative. During the FAO visit on Thursday, the students were accompanied by Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy Sheikh Ali Al-Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and the Qatari Ambassador Abdulaziz Ahmed Almalki Aljehni.

The delegation was welcomed by head of the FAO Director General's

Office Mario Lubetkina who stressed that the GCC is a major partner of the organization. The students also took part in a discussion with some of the FAO officials on the role of the major international organization. Lubetkina referred to the cooperation between the FAO and the GCC, saying that the organization offers the bloc's member states technical assistance and consultations on various issues. On his part, the Kuwaiti envoy Sheikh Ali Al-Khaled urged the Gulf youth to get involved in the work and training programs between the FAO and the GCC to gain more expertise and skills.

During the visit to the Civil Protection Department the delegation was briefed by officials there on the nature and the role of authority established in 1982 for mustering national resources to offer assistance in grave emergency situations like earthquakes. They also visited the central strategic operating theaters at the department. In addition, the delegation visited the Islamic Cultural Center and mosque where they met with some Italian Muslim youth, and participated in an open dialogue with Imam Dr Salah Al-Sayed from Al-Azhar.— KUNA

News

In brief

Arab social affairs officials call for eradicating poverty

CAIRO: Arab Social Affairs officials yesterday affirmed necessity of eradicating all forms of poverty in the Arab countries, as part of the sustainable development strategy ending in 2030. The ministers and officials, at end of the Council of Arab Social Affairs' 36th regular session, said in a statement that they decided to hold a special session on sidelines of the UN forum on sustainable development, due in New York next year. They asked the technical secretariat to pursue efforts, in coordination with specialized UN agencies, to back the Arab League member states' efforts for executing the Arab declaration on implementing the sustainable development strategy (2030). They also decided to set up a panel to examine proposed plans, adopted the five-year scheme for 2017-2021 and the one million dollar budget of the Arab social fund for 2017.

First GCC-Slovenian conference kicks off

LJUBLJANA: The first-ever GCC-Slovenian Conference kicked off on Thursday in the Slovenian capital to discuss boosting cooperation, economic, commercial, and investment ties between the two sides amid aspirations to bolster the volume of commercial exchange between the two nations. The conference aims at tackling challenges and development opportunities in GCC countries, in addition to finding ways to boost cooperation between Slovenia and Gulf countries, Karl Erjavec, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, stated to KUNA following the conference opening. This event, which is attended by GCC Secretary-General Abdullatif Al-Zayani and a number of senior Gulf officials, provides a significant chance for exchanging views on improving investment opportunities, commercial exchange, and ways to face joint challenges and obstacles, Erjavec said. He also added that the conference tends to find common grounds of possible procedures between Slovenian and GCC states in order to rise above the current level of economic relations between them.

Kuwait concludes festival marking its 'designation'

KUWAIT: Kuwait National Commission for UNESCO has concluded festivals marking Kuwait's proclamation as the 2016 Islamic Cultural Capital, with activities involving UNESCO-accredited schools. The acting commission secretary-general, Nadia Al-Wazzan, said at the conclusion ceremony, sponsored by Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, that the committee had organized a series of exhibitions and workshops on the occasion. Kamel Abduljelil, General Director of the National Library, affirmed during the ceremony support of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters for the UNESCO activities, noting the full harmony of the two sides' goals and messages, aimed at boosting the role of culture and knowledge for sound nurturing of the youth.

Kuwait's pavilion attracts visitors in Beirut Book Fair

BEIRUT: Kuwait's pavilion at the 60th Beirut international book fair has attracted all kinds of visitors, managing director of the Kuwait's University Journal of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies Sheikha Suhaila Fahad Al-Sabah said yesterday. Sheikha Suhaila added that a variety of 5,500 Kuwaiti-published books were sold during the fair. This contributes to promoting science, knowledge and culture among Arab readers, she said. Kuwait has always been eager to participate in these kind of fairs to display its publications. On his part in a special statement to KUNA, Head of the Arab Cultural Club Fadi Tamim, who organized Beirut's international book fair, hailed Kuwait's distinguished pavilion in the fair, which represents a cultural beacon for the Arab world. Tamim added that maintaining Beirut's fair for 60 years shows the success of the event, pointing out that the fair witnessed an enormous attendance and significant books sales, compared with the sales in last year's fair. More than 180 Lebanese publishing houses in addition of 75 from Arab and foreign countries took part in the event.



ZAIN RECEIVES FOUR TITLES AS PART OF ADVERTISING CREATIVITY AWARD 2016

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, proudly received four titles as part of the Advertising Creativity Award 2016. The award, organized by the Arab Media Forum, came for the fourth year under the patronage of HE Sheikh Salman Al Homoud Al Sabah Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs and the attendance of the Minister's representative, the Information Ministry's Undersecretary Tareq Al Mizrim.

Zain Kuwait's Corporate Communications and Relations Director Waleed Al Khashti and Marketing Communications Manager Najla Al Eisa received the awards during the ceremony, where Zain was awarded with four titles including "Zain's National Day TVC 2016 - Ya Bilady", "Zain's Ramadan TVC 2016 - Live in Peace", "Zain's Eid TVC 2016 - Let's Sing".

In the National Campaigns category, Zain won for its National Day TVC 2016 - Ya Bilady, which was released in line with Kuwait's National Day celebrations in February, and was dedicated to the people of Kuwait and to HH the Amir on the occasion of his 10-year ascendancy to power, and received overwhelming feedback as soon as it was first released on January 29th.

The National Day Production entitled 'Ya Bilady' - translates to 'My Country' - reached nearly 4 million views on Zain's official YouTube channel, and was prepared throughout a period of three months, and witnessed the participation of 150 Kuwaiti children from various public and private schools. The

children were trained for many weeks before shooting, and were involved in several training sessions.

The shooting of the production took place in various locations in Kuwait, including the Shaheed Park and the Mubarikya Traditional Souk. These locations were specifically handpicked to reflect the TVC's nationalistic spirit and provide a patriotic scene. Zain introduced this production in two versions, the first as a regular musical video, and the second for the first time in Kuwait, the company utilized a video using the 360 camera technology, which allowed viewers to enjoy virtual maneuvering while watching the video, as if the viewer is actually living the moment.

In the Ramadan Commercials category, Zain won the award for its Ramadan TVC 2016 - Live in Peace, which aimed at spreading a universal message of peace, and reached over 11 million views on YouTube. The commercial's message of peace is at the heart of the concept, and is a message that resonated with everyone. The main hero in the commercial was the renowned Moroccan artist Saad Lamjarred, who happened to be the highest viewed artist in the Arab world. The TVC also featured Indian child superstar, Harshaali Malhotra, who has gained massive popularity after co-starring in a famous Indian film, also about peace.

Zain was also awarded for its Eid Al Fitir TVC 2016 - Let's Sing, which reached nearly 18 million views on YouTube, and also aimed at spreading the messages of peace and love. The

company was also awarded with the Social Responsibility Creativity Award, which recognized Zain's various social and humanitarian campaigns launched throughout the year 2016 in line with the company's Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy.

It is worth noting that Zain participated in a Public Relations and Marketing discussion panel that came as part of the Advertising Creativity Award 2016 organized by the Arab Media Forum. The event, held in Al Raya ballroom, featured a number of prominent experts, academics, and specialists in the fields of public relations, marketing, and advertising. This awarding comes in light of Zain's distinguished advertising and media involvement, and it further showcases the company's role as a leading private sector company launching several marketing and advertising campaigns all year round.

Zain will continue supporting this very important field which carries significant and informative messaging to the public at large and the communications world as a whole, whether through traditional or modern media tools. The Advertising Creativity Award 2016 was organized for the fourth year by the Arab Media Forum, which has proven itself to be one of the region's most prominent events that attend to Arab Media. The event brought together many ministers, media executives, journalists, academics, authors, actors, businessmen, and social figures from all around the Arab world.



MINISTRY SPRING CAMP

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Deputy PM and Minister of Interior Retired Lit General Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah recently launched the Ministry's spring camp annually held for Ministry personnel, retirees, their families and the families of martyrs. The camp is located next to the Ministry headquarters in Sabhan. The opening ceremony was attended by Undersecretary Lit General Suleiman Al-Fahad and other top security officials.

Fire incidents

A fire broke out in a domestic helper's room on the roof of a house in Sabah Al-Salem area. Security sources said firemen rushed to the scene and managed to control the fire. The house was evacuated and the owner was taken to hospital for treatment. Initial reports suggest that the fire was caused by a short electric circuit. In a separate incident, fire destroyed two vehicles parked outside a house in Qiarowan area.



KRCS LAUNCHES 'CRY FOR ALEPPO' CAMPAIGN

ARABS CALL FOR UN MEETING OVER SYRIA

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has launched a fundraising campaign in support of the displaced Syrians from Aleppo. The campaign will cover five Kuwaiti governorates, KRCS Vice chairman Anwar Al-Hassawi said. The donation campaign has been organized in solidarity with our brothers in Aleppo who have been afflicted with the worst conditions, he added. The KRCS has mustered all potential and voluntary cadres to secure success for the campaign.

The campaign will be organized for two days in each governorate, opening at 09:00 am till 13:00 pm local-time, Al-Hassawi said. He expressed gratitude to the governors who hurriedly responded to the philanthropic call and opened the doors of the governorates to receive donors, both Kuwaitis and residents. Al-Hassawi stressed the need to join the regional and international efforts to stop the Aleppo tragedy. He said that the KRCS is ever ready to enhance its leading role, fulfilling its human responsibility toward the displaced Syrians and the refugees. He also urged all categories of the society to support the KRCS efforts, humanitarian programs and aid initiatives to help the Syrians fleeing death in Aleppo.

Aid to Aleppo

Meanwhile, Kuwait's Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has signed an agreement for cooperation with Qatar Red Crescent Society (QRCS) to provide relief aid to displaced Syrians in the war-battered city of Aleppo. Speaking to KUNA, Deputy Chairman of KRCS Anwar Al-Hasawi said that the society seeks to partner up with international humanitarian organizations to help out those victimized by war in Aleppo, adding that the agreement with QRCS is part of humanitarian endeavors undertaken by KRCS.

Moreover, he noted that both societies will distribute food baskets to displaced Syrians, which will help mitigate the misery they have been forced to endure as a result of war, adding that this is the first aid provided by KRCS on Syrian soil. Al-Hasawi also pointed out that KRCS possesses the expertise needed to deal with conflicts and urgent situations and has the means to provide humanitarian and relief aid. On a donation drive earmarked for Aleppo, he said turnout was highly impressive as citizens and residents alike have contributed. Since the Syrian conflict first broke out more than five years ago, KRCS has launched a myriad of aid campaigns for Syrian refugees languishing in camps in neighboring Jordan and Lebanon.

Emergency meeting

In another development, the Arab League Permanent Delegates' Council has affirmed support for efforts by the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Qatar to hold an emergency meeting of the UN General Assembly to halt "the atrocities carried out by the (Syrian) regime and its allies against the Syrian people." The delegates, at end of their irregular meeting for Syria, issued a statement, calling on the international community to pressure the Syrian regime to open safe humanitarian corridors to exit stranded civilians in the embattled city of Aleppo. It also condemned in strongest terms "the atrocious operations waged against the civilians in the city."

The Arab statement deemed the Syrian regime practices in Aleppo and other Syrian cities as "crimes of war and flagrant breaches of the international laws and the Fourth Geneva Convention," also urging for prosecution of the "aggressors by an international court." The Security Council, the statement said, must shoulder its full responsibilities with respect of preserving security and peace and halt the fighting in all Syrian regions. It re-affirmed commitment to Syria's independence, sovereignty and territorial sanctity and its unwavering stance for combating terrorism. — Agencies



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Harley Street at UCH is a joint partnership with top teaching hospital University College London Hospital, formed in 2006. Based on level 15 in the tower at UCLH, the 18 bed acute facility is a specialist cancer centre for complex and rare conditions. Patient rooms are private and en-suite offering panoramic views across London. We offer medical and surgical care including day case chemotherapy and a comprehensive JACIE accredited bone marrow and stem cell transplant service one of only a few in the UK. The centre offers the pioneering cord blood transplant; this treatment significantly widens the opportunity to find a suitable unrelated donor particularly beneficial for international patients.

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Harley Street at Queen's is a joint partnership with Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals Trust, based at Queen's Hospital Romford, offering advanced cancer, neurosurgical and general surgery treatment. It is the only centre of its kind in Essex and includes a dedicated High Dependency Unit, Chemotherapy Day Care Unit and advanced radiotherapy through a dedicated linear accelerator including

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International

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016

Yemen edging nearer famine as war ruins economy: UN

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IS shows no sign of letup as Mosul battle rages

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Trump keeps reveling in election win at Penn rally

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IDLIB: Turkish medics carry a wounded Syrian woman, evacuated from Aleppo, to a field hospital near Idlib, Syria yesterday. Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said 7,500 civilians have been evacuated from the Syrian city of Aleppo and that he has reached out to Tehran in a bid to keep the process on track.—AP

ASSAD'S ALEPPO WIN DASHES SYRIANS' HOPES OF RETURN

FEARS OF MASS ARRESTS, CRACKDOWN BY ASSAD GOVERNMENT

BEIRUT: They fled Aleppo from different districts and at different stages of Syria's civil war, seeking refuge abroad. Now, for refugees who supported the opposition, President Bashar al-Assad's victory has dashed hopes of ever going home. Even as the uprising in Aleppo and cities across Syria descended into conflict, several former residents interviewed by Reuters said they had hoped there could still be change, a negotiated settlement and a chance to return.

But as Assad reasserts control after the army and its allies routed rebels in Aleppo, these Syrians living in exile fear that a new crackdown that will include arrests and executions, and be worse than anything witnessed pre-war. "If I go back, I'll be executed," said Abdulhamid Zughbi, a 30-year-old who fled besieged eastern rebel-held Aleppo earlier this year for Turkey, seeking medical treatment for his wife and infant son.

"I can't even think about returning as long as the Assad regime is still in power. It's impossible for anyone from the opposition," he said. Nearly 5 million Syrians have fled the country in a conflict that has killed more than 300,000 people and pitted multiple warring sides against each other, including jihadists who have come to dominate the insurgency in many areas.

The permanent displacement of millions of Syrians is one way in which its war and others in the region are causing irreversible changes. Most refugees are in neighboring countries including Turkey and Lebanon, and hundreds of thousands have gone to Europe.

Some will see Assad's win in Aleppo and other gains he has made with Russian and Iranian support as a chance to return and rebuild their lives - but not those involved in dissent when protests began in 2011.

Zughbi took part, then worked for years in medical aid and rescue in rebel-held eastern Aleppo. "My wife was lightly wounded in shelling and my son was ill. I thought I'd take them to Turkey and come back. That day, they closed the road, and I couldn't return," he said, referring to when government forces sealed off the rebel-held part of the city in August. They besieged it for months and then made a lightning advance to drive insurgents out of most of their areas they held in a matter of weeks.

'arrests have just begun'

As residents have poured out of rebel districts, including into areas under government control, the army has begun making arrests,

Zughbi said. "The arrests have just begun. They detain the more prominent people (activists) on the spot ... but for others - now they (the government) have the time, they'll investigate and then arrest them at a later stage.

"A friend of mine went to a government-held area and three days later they detained him." The United Nations voiced deep concern about reports of Syrian soldiers and allied Iraqi fighters summarily shooting dead 82 people in east Aleppo districts this week - accusations denied by the army and the Iraqi militia in question. Assad's opponents accused the government of mass arrests and forced conscription. A Syrian military source denied arrests but said identities of people leaving rebel-held areas were being checked and anyone who was unknown was being put into "specific places" in areas where civilians were gathered. The army says Syrians eligible for military service must serve.

For Abu Rakan, a 51-year-old refugee living in Lebanon, the death of his brother in law, a rebel fighter, and disappearance just days ago of his sister have underscored the danger for anyone linked to the opposition. "If we go back, it'll be more dangerous than before. Anyone

with the opposition is in danger.

"We've lived with this regime for 40 years. We know how it behaves, what it does," he said, referring also to Assad's father and former president Hafez al-Assad, who crushed leftist and Islamist challenges to his rule.

Abu Rakan said he would only return to Syria under a "full national reconciliation", and if there were a freely elected government in place and a new constitution - all of which look more than distant than ever. Hala, an activist who left government-controlled Aleppo in 2014, said she would not trust any settlement between the government and opposition - Assad had to go. "There's no way I can go back while the Assad regime is there," said the 37-year-old, who now lives in Beirut and works for a Syrian citizenship organization.

miserable exile

"Even if there was a kind of reconciliation, we wouldn't be able to live there. The oppression that existed before the revolution will multiply. "When the revolution began we were able to express our views and to live more freely. Even if we weren't arrested, we can't go back, knowing it will be just like it was," she said.—Reuters



ALEPPO: People demonstrate in support of the citizens of Aleppo, following Friday's prayers in Istanbul yesterday. —AFP

YEMEN EDGING NEARER FAMINE AS WAR RUINS ECONOMY: UN

EIGHT OUT OF 10 CHILDREN ARE STUNTED BY MALNUTRITION

GENEVA: Yemen's humanitarian catastrophe is set to worsen as the war has ruined the economy and is stopping food supplies getting through, driving the country to the brink of famine, the top UN aid official in the country told Reuters.

"Throughout the whole of this country kids are dying," said Jamie McGoldrick, UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen. Nearly two years

of war between a Saudi-led Arab coalition and the Iran-allied Houthi movement has left more than half of Yemen's 28 million people "food insecure", with 7 million of them enduring hunger, according to the United Nations.

In the latest setback, Yemen's biggest traders have stopped new wheat imports due to a crisis at the central bank, documents seen by Reuters show.

Already, eight out of 10 children are stunted by malnutrition and every 10 minutes a child dies due to preventable diseases, UN agency figures show. To scrape by, several families often rely on one salary-earner, and child marriage is increasing, with girls married off at the age of 15 on average, and often younger. The UN estimates that 18.8 million people need some form of humanitarian aid but it struggles to deliver supplies, partly because of the war and partly due to a lack of funding. The disruption of wheat shipments will exacerbate the problem.

"We know that early next year we will face significant problems," said McGoldrick, who described the economy as "shredded". Almost half of Yemen's 22 governorates are already officially rated as being in an emergency food situation, he said. That is four on a five-point scale, where five is famine.

"I know there are some worrying developments and the deterioration we've seen in the economy and the health services and the ability to supply food would only give us an estimate that things are going to get much worse," McGoldrick said.

The UN has been conducting a new food assessment in preparation for a new humanitarian appeal in 2017, when it will ask donors for life-saving help for 8 million people. But a famine may still not be officially declared. "Technically these things are easily measured but in reality using the F-word is something that very few people will use because it's so emotive. I would say it's not likely to happen, my personal view." —Reuters

ALASKA MAN CHARGED WITH EVADING SANCTIONS ON IRAN

NEW YORK: An Alaska man has been charged with evading US sanctions on Iran and money laundering, the US Justice Department said on Thursday.

Kenneth Zong, 77, of Anchorage, and one American and three Iranian co-conspirators engaged in fraudulent transactions intended to unlawfully convert and remove Iranian-owned funds worth approximately \$1 billion from South Korean banks, the department said in a statement.

Zong was named as the sole defendant in a 47-count indictment charging him with conspiracy to violate the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations, and money laundering. A federal public defender representing Zong, Rich Curtner, said he did not have an immediate comment because he had not yet met with Zong.

For his work, his Iranian associates paid Zong between \$10 million to \$17 million, the Justice Department said. "In furtherance of the scheme," prosecutors said, Zong transferred \$10 million from South Korea to a co-conspirator in Anchorage who then bought real estate, cars, and an interest in a yacht. Zong is also charged with 43 counts of money laundering, and one count of money laundering conspiracy, in connection with his \$10 million fee.

If convicted on one money laundering charge, Zong faces as long as 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000, the Justice Department said. An arraignment date had not yet been set, the Justice Department said. The US embargo against Iran prohibits, with limited exceptions, the export of products and services to Iran, the Justice Department said. — Reuters

ISRAELI RIGHT WELCOMES TRUMP AMBASSADOR PICK

JERUSALEM: A senior Israeli government official yesterday joined settlers in welcoming US President-elect Donald Trump's nomination of a hardline lawyer to be ambassador to the Jewish state.

David Friedman, a bankruptcy lawyer, supports settlement expansion in the occupied West Bank, characterised by successive US administrations as an "obstacle to peace" with the Palestinians. "Friedman's appointment is good news for Israel," deputy foreign minister Tzipi Hotovely said in a statement. Friedman-a Trump campaign adviser-backs moving the US embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, contrary to Washington's longstanding policy of basing its ambassador in Tel Aviv.

"His positions reflect the will to strengthen the status of Israel's capital, Jerusalem, at this time and an understanding that the settlements have never been the real problem in the region," Hotovely wrote. In a Trump transition team statement Thursday announcing his appointment, Friedman said he wanted to work for peace and looked forward to "doing this from the US embassy in Israel's eternal capital, Jerusalem."

The United States and most UN member states do not recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the city's status is one of the thorniest issue of the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel captured Arab east Jerusalem in the Six Day War of 1967 and subsequently annexed it in a move never recognized by the international community.

The Palestinians claim it as the capital of a future state. The Yesha council, which represents the more than 400,000 Israeli settlers in the West Bank, praised the new ambassador-designate.

"Friedman has a deep love for all of the land and people of Israel, including those in Judaea and Samaria," the group's foreign affairs spokesman Oded Revivi said in a statement yesterday, using the biblical term by which the Israeli right describes the West Bank. "His knowledge and wisdom of the issues will strengthen the bridge between our great nations." — AFP



David Friedman, President-elect Donald Trump's choice for ambassador to Israel. —AP

ISRAELI GROUP ASKS US COURT TO BLOCK BOEING DEAL WITH IRAN

JERUSALEM: An Israeli advocacy group on Thursday asked a US federal court to block aerospace giant Boeing Co.'s planned \$16.6 billion deal with Iran Air, saying the Tehran government must first pay off billions of dollars in damages to families of people killed or wounded by Iranian-backed militant groups. In papers filed in the Northern District of Illinois court, the Shurat Hadin-Israel Law Center organization said it was seeking a lien against Boeing until the damages against Iran are recovered.

"We are going to seize all 100 airplanes," said Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, the group's director. "If Boeing thinks it will simply sell to Iran Air, which is 60 percent owned by the Iranian government, and pretend it is providing some sort of humanitarian civilian aid to a non-governmental entity, we will reveal the truth."

Boeing did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Darshan-Leitner has represented attack victims in dozens of lawsuits in American courts. She said 10 rulings in her favor have ordered Iran to pay victims some \$2 billion in compensation. Thus far, she says she has been able to collect about \$200 million in seized Iranian bank accounts and assets on American soil.

Her organization represents families who are relatives of Americans victims of attacks perpetrated from 1995 to 2006 by Iran-backed groups like the Lebanese Hezbollah and the Palestinian Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Last year the group filed to block the release of \$100 billion in frozen Iranian assets in the United States following the US-led nuclear deal with Tehran. — A

11 BURKINA FASO TROOPS KILLED IN JIHADIST ATTACK

OUAGADOUGOU: Eleven Burkina Faso soldiers were killed yesterday in what local authorities said was the biggest ever jihadist attack on the army, at a base near the restive border with Mali.

"We lost 11 of our men in the attack this morning in Nassoumbou ... the biggest jihadist attack ever perpetrated" against the army, the high commissioner of Soum province, Mohamed Dah, told AFP by phone.

Two more men were missing after

around 40 jihadists riding pick-up trucks and motorbikes attacked the base some 30 kilometres from the Burkina-Mali border, he added. "They were heavily armed with Kalashnikovs and rocket-launchers. They opened fire at the depots, the tents and set fire to some of the vehicles," he added.

A security source who asked not to be named said the assailants were wearing turbans and waving black flags. The army, which said in a statement that the

Nassoumbou base had been attacked in the morning, said it had sent reinforcements. "We have launched a hunt and a more detailed toll will be provided," a security source said. Troops at the Nassoumbou base are part of a 600-strong anti-terrorist battalion that was deployed in January 2013 when France sent in troops to counter a jihadist insurgency in northern Mali.

This is the second direct attack against the Burkina army since jihadist

assailants surfaced in the country in early 2015, mostly staging attacks in the north near the borders of Mali and Niger.

But in January this year, three jihadists left 30 people dead and 71 injured in an attack in the heart of the capital, Ouagadougou. The army has, since 2012, had an anti-terrorist battalion deployed along the country's long border with Mali, an area which is frequently subjected to attacks and kidnappings. — AFP

NIGERIA FAMINE RISK RISING, THOSE IN DANGER MAY DOUBLE IN 2017

GENEVA: Global food security monitors said yesterday that Nigeria's Borno state was at increased risk of famine, with one study projecting the number of those affected will rise to 115,000 in 2017 from 55,000 this year. The northeastern state is the area worst hit by the seven-year Boko Haram insurgency that has killed 15,000 people and uprooted more than 2 million during the Islamist militants' attempt to create a "caliphate" in the area.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), which is backed by UN and other aid agencies, issued a special alert calling for urgent humanitarian action. "There is an elevated likelihood that famine is ongoing and will continue in the inaccessible areas of Borno State assuming conditions will remain similar or worse to those observed in Bama and Banki towns from April to August of 2016," it said. "The current response is insufficient to meet the very large emergency assistance needs."

People displaced by conflict are worst affected, it said, adding that low crop production, disrupted livelihoods and financial crisis were also to blame. Nigerian military forces backed by troops from neighboring states have in recent months ousted Boko Haram from most of an area the size of Belgium that they controlled until early 2015, revealing thousands living in famine-like conditions. The US-based Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) has said at least 2,000 people may have died of famine in the region this year, and the United Nations has said 75,000 children could starve to death over the next few months if they do not receive humanitarian assistance.

The IPC cited a report by the UN-backed Cadre Harmonize, a regional food security partnership that found 115,000 people in Borno state and more than 5,000 in Yobe state would be at risk from famine in the second half of 2017. The FEWS NET study had confirmed the alarming situation and revealed an ongoing elevated risk of famine that was likely to continue into 2017, the IPC statement said. — Reuters



MOSUL: Civilians leave their houses as Iraqi special forces fight against Islamic State militants in the Mishraq neighborhood in Mosul, Iraq, yesterday. —AP

IS SHOWS NO SIGN OF WEAKENING AS MOSUL WAR ENTERS 3RD MONTH

NEARLY 100,000 FLED CITY FOR SAFETY, FOOD, MEDICAL HELP

BAGHDAD: Islamic State fighters have stepped up counterattacks on Iraqi forces in Mosul amid bad weather as the US-backed offensive to capture their last major city stronghold in Iraq enters its third month. With cloudy skies hampering coalition air surveillance, the militants carried out attacks in three districts of eastern Mosul, Al-Quds, Ta'mim and Al-Nur, over the past four days, residents and security officials said yesterday. "We heard clashes and explosions and then somebody shouting on the loudspeaker of the mosque 'Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, the Islamic State is staying,'" said a Ta'mim resident.

The campaign that started on Oct. 17 has turned into the biggest battle in Iraq since the US-led invasion that toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003. The humanitarian situation of the besieged population is causing alarm amid reports of food, water and fuel shortages, while the fighting is making access to hospitals difficult.

Nearly 100,000 people have fled the city, according to the International Organization for Migration. More than

100,000 Iraqi soldiers, Kurdish fighters and Iranian-backed Shi'ite volunteers are taking part in the offensive. The latter are attacking the militants supply lines in a remote and semi-desert area west of Mosul to avoid fanning sectarian tensions with the city's Sunni population. The Iraqi military estimate the number of militants in the city at 5,000 to 6,000. They are dug in amid the city's remaining population of about one million, moving through tunnels and using suicide car bombs, sharpshooters and mortar fire to slow the advance of the Iraqi forces.

A mainly western coalition is providing air and ground support to the offensive, led by the US with more than 5,000 troops deployed in Iraq. The fall of Mosul would mark the defeat of the ultra-hardline Sunni group in the Iraqi half of the caliphate that also extends over parts of Syria.

The city is by far the largest seized when they overran about a third of Iraq in 2014 and is the place where their leader, Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, declared his theocratic dictatorship.

At the current pace of advance, the offensive is likely to extend into next year, beyond the initial forecast of Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi who pledged to take the city in 2016. The US-trained Counter Terrorism Service, which is spearheading the fighting inside the city, has so far taken about half of its eastern side. Mosul is divided in two parts by the Tigris River that runs through its centre.

Four of the city's five bridges have been destroyed to hamper the movement of the militants and their ability to bring car bombs and weapons from the western side. The fifth was also hit, but only at its edges, only allowing pedestrians to cross. Iraqi forces are holding off using field artillery and air bombardments to avoid civilian casualties, hoping to wear down the militants' resistance, depleting their numbers and their stock of car-bombs, two analysts in Baghdad said. "It is a matter of time before Daesh are defeated inside Mosul," said Ihsan Al-Shammari, who heads the Iraqi Centre for Political Thought think-tank. — Reuters

SYRIAN ARRESTED IN SAUDI OVER PRO-ASSAD FB PHOTO

RIYADH: Saudi police arrested a Syrian resident in Riyadh after he posted a photo of himself on Facebook praising the recapture of his home city of Aleppo by government forces, according to a report in Al-Riyadh newspaper yesterday.

A photo published with the report showed a man with his hand raised and his fingers pointed in a victory sign. His facial features were blurred to conceal his identity.

The newspaper said the resident, identified as being in his 40s, was accused of publishing statements related to the war in Syria. Saudi Arabia is a major regional backer of the rebel brigades fighting to oust Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad. The rebels were dealt a crippling blow this week when Syrian government forces recaptured Aleppo.

Public expressions of dissent are considered criminal offences in the conservative Islamic kingdom, which has jailed people both for physical protests and for online statements. — Reuters



PARIS: A migrant and a fire fighter stand next to a fire brigade truck outside a migrant workers' center after a fire broke out in Boulogne-Billancourt, west of Paris, yesterday. — AP

1 DEAD, SEVERAL HURT IN FIRE AT MIGRANT CENTER IN PARIS

EU OFFERS MORE FUNDS TO AFRICA CURB MIGRATION

PARIS: French police are investigating a fire that broke out in a migrant workers' center near Paris that left one person dead, several injured and forced the evacuation of 300 people. Nanterre prosecutors' office said the fire started around 3.30 am yesterday in the suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt, west of Paris. The Paris firefighters' press office said six people were saved "from a certain death" after being rescued with ladders and 13 people suffered minor injuries after inhaling toxic smoke. Nearly 300 people were evacuated and the fire was quickly extinguished.

Paris police later said one person died, without elaborating. Paris firefighters said three people were seriously injured when they jumped out of the building's upper windows to escape the flames. It was unclear whether the person who died was among those three.

Prime Minister Bernard Cazeneuve promised to investigate and expressed his "solidarity" with the victims in a message posted on Twitter. Investigators have yet to determine whether the fire was arson.

The European Union offered Niger 610 million euros (\$635 million) on Thursday to curtail migration from Africa through the Mediterranean to Europe and said it was seeking more such money-for-migration deals ahead. Some 1.4 million refugees and migrants arrived in Europe this year and last, and the EU wants to cut back on the uncontrolled influx of people.

Niger's desert city of Agadez is a popular waystation for people trying to cross the Sahara to reach Libya and eventually Europe via Italy. This year has become the deadliest on record for those seeking to make the journey.

The EU has already offered similar schemes to Senegal, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Mali, as well as to Afghanistan, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, among others. On Thursday, EU leaders agreed in Brussels they would seek to engage more African countries in such collabora-

tion. The bloc has also strengthened control of its external borders and is trying to deport more people who make it to Europe but have no case for asylum.

But they remain divided over how to share the burden of caring for those asylum-seekers who are already in the EU. More than a year of bickering over how to distribute them among EU states has produced no results so far. The EU leaders, meeting for their final 2016 summit, said their aim now was to overcome the differences by mid-2017.

That is all but certain to prove difficult. Italy, Greece and Malta - the countries where refugees and migrants land after crossing the

Mediterranean - demand those outside the main migration route take in some refugees as well.

They are backed by wealthy countries like Germany, Sweden and Austria, which receive by far the most of those who make it. But eastern EU states, including Poland and Hungary, refuse to take in any, saying that would carry security risks and would change the make-up of their societies.

Other EU states have also dragged their feet. Fewer than 9,000 people have now been relocated from Greece and Italy under a decision dating back to September 2015. It was supposed to cover 160,000 people. — Agencies

NINE CANDIDATES BIDDING FOR SOCIALIST PRIMARY IN FRANCE

PARIS: Nine competitors are bidding to be the Socialist Party's candidate in next year's French presidential election. Among those who declared their candidacy by Thursday's deadline are former Prime Minister Manuel Valls, who is regarded as the front-runner to represent the Socialist party and its allies.

Valls resigned as prime minister earlier this month after announcing he would run to replace Francois Hollande, who won't seek a second term. Valls hopes to unite France's Socialist party but faces tough competition from former Economy Minister Arnaud Montebourg and former Education Minister Benoit Hamon, party rebels who back more left-leaning policies.

Other candidates are Sylvia Pinel, Gerard Filoche, Vincent Peillon, Fabien Verdier, Jean-Luc Bennahmias and Francois de Rugy. The definitive list of contenders will be known on Saturday once approved by the primary's organizers.

Peillon, education minister from

2012 to 2014, also presents himself as the candidate of "unity" while Filoche, who formerly enforced employees' rights as a work inspector, is championing working-class interests. Bennahmias and de Rugy are well known for their green credentials and Pinel has held minister positions in Hollande's governments. The youngest in the race at 35, Verdier remains largely unknown outside political circles.

The primary will take place on Jan. 22-29 over two rounds. All French citizens over 18 are allowed to vote if they pay 1 euro and sign a document saying they share the values of the left.

Other candidates including far-left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon and centrist figure Emmanuel Macron - a former economy minister under Valls - have chosen to run independently. Current opinion polls suggest that the second round of the presidential election could pit Marine Le Pen, the leader of the far-right National Front, against conservative nominee Francois Fillon. — AP

12-YEAR-OLD BOY TRIED TO DETONATE BOMB AT GERMAN XMAS MARKET

BERLIN: A 12-year old German-Iraqi boy tried to detonate a bomb at a Christmas market in the western town of Ludwigshafen last month and planted another explosive device near the town hall a couple of days later, German prosecutors said yesterday. Focus magazine cited security and judicial sources as saying the boy was "strongly radicalized" and apparently instructed by an unknown member of the militant group Islamic State.

A spokesman at the Federal Public Prosecutor Office in Karlsruhe confirmed that officials were investigating the case but declined to comment on any possible Islamic State link. Nobody was hurt in either of the incidents. The boy, born in Ludwigshafen in 2004, is below the age of criminal responsibility, meaning no formal proceedings were launched against him, Public Prosecutor Hubert Stroerber said. The youth welfare office is taking care of the boy and the Federal Public Prosecutor Office is in charge of investigating whether there are any suspects linked to him, Stroerber added.

He said the boy left a backpack containing a self-made nail bomb at the Christmas market on Nov 26, but the device did not go off because the detonator apparently failed. He then planted another explosive device near the town hall of Ludwigshafen on Dec. 5 but an "informant" called the police and specialists defused it, he said. The Focus magazine report said evidence pointed to the child having thought about travelling to Syria last summer to join militants. — Reuters



THE VATICAN: Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos reads to Pope Francis, as they meet at the Vatican yesterday, the words "The bullets have written our past, education will write our future" engraved on a pen made from a recycled bullet once used in the civil war between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). — AP

POPE BRINGS COLOMBIA PRESIDENT, MAIN CRITIC TO TALK PEACE

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis brought Colombia's president and his main political opponent together to discuss the country's rebel peace deal yesterday, making a remarkable personal intervention to seal an accord ending Latin America's longest-running conflict.

The Vatican distributed a photo of the three men sitting at Francis' desk and said the meeting began at 12:35 pm (1135GMT) and lasted 25 minutes.

President Juan Manuel Santos had already been scheduled to meet with Francis yesterday as part of a European tour after picking up this year's Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, and the two met as planned.

The Vatican, though, also invited Santos' right-wing predecessor in the presidency, Alvaro Uribe. Uribe flew overnight from Bogota and met privately with Francis in an unannounced audience after Santos left. The three men then joined up together in Francis' private study to discuss the country's peace accord with rebels, the Vatican said.

Uribe, the country's most popular politician, had led the campaign against Santos' deal with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia that resulted in in the accord's shock rejection in an October referendum. — AP

AFGHAN ASYLUM SEEKERS SENT HOME FEAR DEPORTATIONS WILL ADD TO CHAOS

LONDON: Afghan asylum seekers sent back home this week under a deal negotiated with the European Union fear their forced deportations will prompt other migrants to try to bypass the rules, fuelling chaos in the system.

The process began this week of deporting failed Afghan asylum seekers following an agreement between the European Union and Afghanistan in October with Norway deporting about 13, Sweden about nine and Germany about 34 asylum seekers. Afghans made up a fifth of all migrants entering Europe last year, the second biggest group after Syrians.

The deportation from Germany, where more than a million migrants from the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere have arrived this year, sparked a large demonstration at Frankfurt airport on Wednesday with hundreds of Afghans chanting "Stop Deportation".

"The process is totally unfair and unjust. Some of the deportees went to social welfare department to extend their papers, but they were arrested there," said Rashed Hussein, an Afghan asylum seeker who participated in the demonstration. "We left Afghanistan because of insecurity and lack of rule of

law. But the fact that people are detained by deception and are being deported against their will is also unlawful," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone.

Germany has seen protests against the planned deportations in recent weeks as critics say much of Afghanistan is not safe and returnees might face reprisals with much of the country still under threat from the Taliban, Al-Qaeda and Islamic State.

Afghanistan's Western-backed government is battling militants who have stepped up attacks since the withdrawal of most foreign troops in 2014. The group deportation has created worries among other Afghan asylum seekers in Germany who fear they will be arrested if they went to extend their papers. "I will not go to extend my papers again unless I have legal representative accompanying me," said Murtaza, a participant in the demonstration, who would only give his first name while speaking to the Thomson Reuters Foundation by phone.

"It is totally unfair on Afghan asylum seekers to be deported simply because the European Union paid some money to our government."

German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere said only people who can prove they are refugees fleeing persecution, war or violence are eligible for asylum. He added that one-third of those deported were criminals convicted of offences, from robbery and drugs crimes to rape and homicide. Of the 50 men due on the plane, 16 had disappeared.

The Afghan Ministry of Refugees has said it will help returnees get back to their homes, with a spokesman adding that about 10,000 Afghans had returned from Europe this year. On Tuesday this week, Norway and Sweden deported groups of failed Afghani asylum seekers to Kabul. Mosavi, a returnee from Norway, told media at Kabul Airport that his family is in Norway but he was deported forcefully. "My wife and children should be there and I must be here with my hands tied? They gave me 2,000 Afghani (\$30) and tell me welcome. Why?" he said in a phone interview. The decision to deport asylum seekers in groups has added to the tension and uncertainty of those whose asylum claims have been refused and those who have not yet had asylum interviews.

Mohammad Dawood Niazi, an Afghan asylum seeker from northern Afghanistan living in Sweden, is worried this decision might prompt more asylum seekers not to cooperate with the system, creating more chaos in an already backlogged process.

Arriving in Sweden more than one year ago, he was fingerprinted and sent to a camp in the north where he was given accommodation, food and 700 Swedish crown (\$75) monthly. "Nothing has happened in regard to my immigration matter in this one year," Niazi told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a telephone interview, adding he had no idea when he would be interviewed.

Sweden was once Europe's most welcoming state for refugees and migrants, but since late 2015 it has made a sharp U-turn. Figures in October showed that so far this year, Sweden had rejected four of five Afghans' applications for asylum. In 2014, 60 percent were approved.

Niazi said the uncertainty about the future along with the worries of his wife and three children left behind in Afghanistan has caused him to suffer severe depression. — Reuters



PESHAWAR: Pakistani lawmakers from the provincial Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assembly light candle during a ceremony to mark second anniversary of the attack on a Peshawar school in 2014, in Peshawar yesterday. —AP

PAKISTANI COURT SAYS GOVT FAILED TO CURB MILITANCY

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's top court says in a scathing report that the government failed to curb Islamic militancy and extremism in the country. A commission set up by the Supreme Court to investigate an August Taliban attack that killed over 70 people, mostly lawyers in the northwestern city of Peshawar, released its report yesterday.

The 86-page report, based on recorded statements from 45 officials, says the Interior Ministry and the counter-terrorism department are responsible for security lapses that enabled the attack. It says they "categorically failed" in their tasks. It wasn't immediately clear what impact the report could have or what action could follow.

The report comes as Pakistanis hold memorial ceremonies marking the second anniversary of another Taliban school attack in Peshawar, one which killed 154 people, most of them children. —AP

TIBETAN LEADER URGES TRUMP TO CONFRONT CHINA ON RIGHTS

NEW DELHI: The head of the Tibetan government-in-exile said yesterday he was encouraged by US President-elect Donald Trump's tough stand on China and urged him to ditch backdoor diplomacy on furthering the Tibetan cause and be more confrontational. The United States and its European allies have sought to engage China over allegations of repression since Washington reached out to Beijing back in the 1970s, effectively driving the Tibetan issue out of public forums, Lobsang Sangay said. — Reuters

INDIA'S OPPN CRIES FOUL, SAYS RIGHTS 'TRAMPLED'

GOVT REFUSES DEBATE ON CURRENCY BAN

NEW DELHI: India's parliament ended its latest session yesterday with barely any debate on a currency ban that has caused nationwide chaos, leading opposition parties to claim their democratic rights had been "trampled". Ruling and opposition politicians have traded bitter accusations of responsibility for the failure of parliament to function for almost all of the winter session.

It opened on November 16, a week after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a shock decision to withdraw all high-value notes from circulation—a move aimed at tackling corruption that is widely expected to hit economic growth. In a memorandum to the president, the Congress and several other opposition parties said they were "extremely pained by this trampling of our democratic rights" and warned the currency move could bring "economic disaster".

Modi, who has made a series of public speeches justifying his currency ban, has meanwhile accused the opposition of prevented him from speaking in parliament. "I am not being allowed to speak in Lok Sabha (lower parliament house) so I am speaking in the Jan Sabha (people's gathering)," he tweeted earlier this month. India's two houses of parliament are notoriously rowdy and disruptions are routine, mostly due to loud protests that make it impossible for debates to proceed.

But the latest session has been particularly unproductive. This week, India's President Pranab Mukherjee made a rare intervention, urging politicians to use the streets rather than parliament for protest. In 2015, more than 20,000 Indians, including prominent business

leaders, signed an online petition urging lawmakers to end weeks of rowdy protests that had paralyzed parliament. Parliament had witnessed disruptions through the month-long winter session as the government continued to refuse debate on demonetization issue.

Modi slams opposition

Most of the action, however, spilled outside Parliament yesterday. Modi slammed the Congress and left parties for opposing demonetization and said that "for Congress, the party is above the nation". The opposition counter attacked

by submitting a memorandum to the PM, demanding loan waivers for debt-ridden farmers. It also blamed the government for flouting democratic values and blocking the debate on note ban in Parliament. The centre's claim that note ban has hit black money holders in the country is widely contested by the opposition, who say the government's move to scrap Rs 500/1000 notes has hit poor the hardest. Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge said the parties wanted a debate in Parliament on demonetization but the government flouted all democratic values and blocked it. —Agencies



NEW DELHI: Congress party Vice-President Rahul Gandhi (center) leaves after meeting Indian President Pranab Mukherjee at the Presidential Palace in New Delhi yesterday. India's Vice-President M Hamid Ansari yesterday slammed lawmakers on the last day of parliament's stormy winter session yesterday, which has been marred by daily disruptions and acrimonious sloganeering between government and opposition leaders. —AFP

PUTIN, ABE SIGNAL NO RESOLUTION ON ISLAND DISPUTE

TOKYO: Russia and Japan yesterday signalled there was no resolution after a two-day summit to a decades-long territorial dispute that has blocked them from achieving a peace treaty to formally end World War II hostilities. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe held talks in Abe's ancestral hometown and in Tokyo, in the latest attempt to secure a deal.

"It would be naive to think we can solve this problem in an hour," Putin said at a joint press conference with Abe. "There must be an end to this historic ping-pong," he said. "The fundamental interests of Russia and Japan require a long-term deal."

Abe concurred, but said the effort would continue despite the "difficult path ahead".

"Concluding a peace treaty that has not been concluded in more than 70 years is not easy," Abe said. "But we cannot resolve this issue only by asserting the correctness of each other's claims."

The Soviet Union seized four islands off Japan's northern coast in 1945 in the closing days of the war.

The dispute over the islands, known as the Southern Kurils in Russia and the Northern Territories in Japan, has prevented the two sides from fully putting the conflict behind them. Abe has looked to win concessions by dangling the prospect of major Japanese investment in front of Moscow, which is mired in an economic crisis made worse by falling oil prices and Western sanctions over Crimea and Ukraine.

Before they spoke, the two leaders oversaw a flurry of deal signings by their governments and businesses and agreed to begin negotiations towards possible economic cooperation in the disputed islands. Abe said they had agreed on "more than 60 projects" in economic-related sectors.

"I believe there are a wide range of areas where Japan and Russia have not exercised our fullest

potential, despite the fact that we are neighboring nations," he said.

'Security issues'

Putin said business ties were a way to build confidence. "Our work together on the economic front will help us create a foundation to improve relations," he said. The total contribution from Japan in terms of loans and investment was valued at about 300 billion yen (\$2.5 billion), Kyodo News reported, citing Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Kotaro Nogami.

Despite any largesse from Tokyo, few believe Putin is likely to hand the islands back, not least because of their strategic value sitting astride the entrance to the Sea of Okhotsk. "There are security issues," Putin said. "We have two naval bases in Vladivostok, from where our ships go out to the Pacific. — AFP

CHINA ALARMED AS CHILI 'CONSPIRACY' HEATS UP

BEIJING ACCUSED OF USING BIO WEAPON AGAINST INDONESIA

JAKARTA: China's embassy in Indonesia has expressed alarm at media reports accusing China of using a "biological weapon" against Indonesia, after four Chinese nationals were arrested for planting imported chili seeds contaminated with a bacteria. The headlines splashed across Indonesian media have sparked a wave of anti-Chinese sentiment on social media in a country with a history of simmering resentment towards its giant neighbor and a minority ethnic Chinese community.

Indonesian authorities said the

imported chili seeds confiscated on a farm about 60 km (37 miles) south of the capital, Jakarta, contained the bacteria *erwinia chrysanthemi*, which is harmless to humans but can cause failure in crops. It was the first time the bacteria had been detected in Indonesia, the state-owned news agency Antara quoted the head of the country's quarantine body as saying. Indonesians are among the most avid users of social media in the world, and conspiracy theories about the intentions of the four Chinese nationals running the farm quickly spread.

"Haven't people realized that Chinese attacks on this country are real in many ways. From drugs, illegal workers, now chili bacteria", said a twitter user with the handle @BoengParno.

Authorities burned the chili seeds and destroyed the crop sowed by the Chinese men and 30 Indonesian workers on a leased plot of land near the city of Bogor. The Chinese embassy in a statement said accusations of a plot to use "biological weapons to destroy the economy of Indonesia" carried no basis in facts and were "very worrying". "We hope that the bilateral relations and friendship between the people of China and Indonesia will not be affected by this matter".

Indonesia's maritime affairs minister Luhut Panjaitan criticized some of the outbursts on social media. "Whether it's true or not, some people over react," he said. "Oh, the Chinese invade Indonesia'. Come on. This is the problem with social media ... Without checking, they just spread the rumors."

Indonesia has suffered bouts of anti-Chinese and anti-communist sentiment over its history, and recently. President Joko Widodo was falsely identified as having ethnic Chinese ancestry and being an agent of influence for Beijing during a 2014 election campaign he narrowly won.

There has also been a recent spike on social media of hostility over China's territorial ambitions in the South China Sea as well during the re-election campaign of Jakarta governor Basuki Purnama, an ethnic Chinese Christian.

Hundreds of thousands of Indonesians attended rallies in the past six weeks denouncing Purnama, who is facing trial for blasphemy after criticizing people who had cited the Koran to argue that Muslims should not vote for non-Muslims. On average, ethnic Chinese are far wealthier than other groups in Indonesia and stereotypes persist that they are less patriotic than other Indonesians. — Reuters



SINGAPORE: Philippines President Rodrigo Duterte (centre left) poses for a selfie during a meeting with the Filipino community in Singapore yesterday. — AFP

DUTERTE GOVT SAYS IT WON'T BOW TO AMERICA TO GET AID

MANILA: The Philippines' top diplomat criticized the United States yesterday for deferring a decision on a major aid package over human rights concerns and said the Philippines can survive without it. Foreign Secretary Perfecto Yasay Jr. said the uncertainty over the aid package emerged after President Rodrigo Duterte declared he would chart a foreign policy independent of the United States.

A US government aid agency, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, said this week that its board deferred a vote on a renewal of the development assistance package for the Philippines "subject to a further review of concerns around rule of law and civil liberties." The Philippines had been slated for another aid package after its previous five-year, \$434 million poverty reduction program was completed in May under Duterte's predecessor, Benigno Aquino III. Duterte took office in June.

The agency's spokeswoman, Laura Allen, said Thursday it will continue to monitor events in the Philippines before the next board review in March 2017. The US decision is among the first signs of how concerns about the rule of law and human rights under Duterte could entail economic costs.

The US government, along with European Union and United Nations officials, has raised concerns about Duterte's crackdown on illegal drugs, which has left more than 2,000 suspected drug users and dealers dead in purported gunbattles with police. More than 3,000 other deaths are being investigated to determine if they were linked to illegal drugs. Duterte has lashed out at President Barack Obama, his administration and other critics of his crackdown with expletive-laden tirades.

"If we will be given this assistance ... we first have to bow down to the impositions of conditions that they are making and this is something that we feel is not conducive to strengthening our relationship with friends, especially traditional allies, especially close friends," Yasay said at a news conference in Singapore, where he and other officials are accompanying the president on a two-day visit. "This has always been our appeal to America. — AP

LAWYERS FOR PARK SAY IMPEACHMENT HAS NO LEGAL BASIS

SEOUL: Lawyers for embattled South Korean President Park Geun-hye struck a defiant note yesterday, saying a parliamentary vote to impeach her had no legal basis and should be overturned by the Constitutional Court. Park was indicted in a Dec. 9 vote by a wider-than-expected 234-56 margin, setting the stage for her to become the country's first democratically elected leader to be ejected from office.

"We see no grounds for impeachment and it should be struck down," Lee Joong-hwan, a former prosecutor who is part of the team representing Park, told reporters gathered at the court building where the fate of her presidency will be decided.

Her lawyers also said that it was unlikely that Park would appear before the court when it begins to hear the case. The court could take up to 180 days to reach a decision.

Park, 64, whose father ruled the country for 18 years after seizing power in a 1961 coup, is accused of colluding with long-time friend Choi Soon-sil, who has been indicted and is in custody, to pressure big businesses to

make contributions to non-profit foundations backing presidential initiatives.

Park, who is serving a single five-year term that is due to end in February 2018, has denied wrongdoing but apologized for carelessness in her ties with Choi.

She has refused widespread calls to resign immediately, despite huge weekly protests and parliament's overwhelming vote for impeachment, fuelling concern the political crisis could drag on for months. But her lawyer said her legal team was looking to move quickly.

"We want a quick process and will not request to delay it," Lee said. Although stripped of her presidential powers, which are being wielded by the prime minister, Park retains her title and her official residence.

She has presidential immunity while in office, but risks facing prosecution upon her departure.

Earlier on Friday, an official in the presidential Blue House said parliamentary investigators would not get access to her official residence, citing national security. — Reuters

CONFRONT TRUMP? NY LAWMAKERS WANT PAY RAISE FIRST

ALBANY, NY: While Democratic lawmakers in other states seek to unify against President-elect Donald Trump, those in New York are focused on trying to raise legislative pay to nearly \$100,000 a year. Some pundits say the maneuvering to convene a special session to push the pay raise through either before or just after Christmas is a case study in misplaced priorities and out-of-touch political optics.

"There are a million things they could be doing, and their priority is clearly getting themselves more money," said Doug Kellogg, of the group Reclaim Albany. "It's the holidays and people are busy and focused on other things. Lawmakers know this is unpopular and they're trying to duck accountability."

Members of New York's Assembly and Senate now make \$79,500 for what is technically a part-time job. It's the third-highest legislative salary in the nation, but hasn't been increased in 17 years. One proposal would boost it to \$99,500, which would give New York lawmakers the second-highest salary, just behind No. 1 California at \$100,000. Another would raise it even higher, to \$116,000.

Lawmakers had hoped a state commission would authorize an increase, but the panel balked at the idea last month. That forced the issue back to the Legislature, which must approve a raise by Dec. 31 for it to take effect next year. "People should be paid what they deserve," argued Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, who has led the chamber's Democratic majority in clamoring for the pay raise.

Republicans have been quieter in calling for the increase, with some concerned that in exchange for a bump in their legislative pay they would have to agree to give up the money they make from law firms and other outside employment. The request comes at an especially awkward time for Democrats following a presidential election that handed their party a historic defeat. —AP

TRUMP KEEPS REVELING IN ELECTION WIN AT PENN RALLY

ZINKE PICKED AS INTERIOR CHIEF

HERSHEY, Pa: Donald Trump's barnstorming tour across the states that won him the White House continues to feature far more taunts of triumph than notes of healing after a bruising election.

Thursday's rally in Hershey, Pennsylvania, found the president-elect calling for the mostly white crowd to cheer for African-Americans who were "smart" to heed his message and therefore "didn't come out to vote" for his Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton. "That was the big thing, so thank you to the African-American community," Trump said.

Trump's victory lap continued last night with an event in Orlando, Florida, then wraps up Saturday in Mobile, Alabama. The president-elect boasted to the crowd in Pennsylvania on Thursday that he captured a state that for many Republicans was "the bride that got away." "Everyone leaves Pennsylvania, Republicans, thinking they won Pennsylvania. And they never do. They just don't win Pennsylvania," said Trump. Pennsylvania had not gone for a Republican candidate since 1988. But the Trump campaign staff long thought that the state, rich in white working-class voters, would be receptive to his populist message and not be part of Clinton's hoped-for firewall.

Trump repeatedly campaigned there, drawing some of the largest and loudest



HERSHEY: President-elect Donald Trump speaks during a rally at the Giant Center on Thursday in Hershey, Pa. —AP

crowds of the campaign. He won the state by less than 1 percentage point, giving him a vital 20 electoral college votes. The evening rally in Hershey also featured a nearly 20-minute recap of Trump's election night win with the crowd cheering as the president-elect slowly ticked off his victories state by state, mixing in rambling criticisms of incorrect pundits and politicians from both sides of the aisle.

Trump also edged closer Thursday to completing his Cabinet, announcing his choice for interior secretary: Montana Rep Ryan Zinke, who should fit smoothly into an administration favoring more energy

drilling and less regulation. Trump praised Zinke, a former Navy SEAL, as having "built one of the strongest track records on championing regulatory relief, forest management, responsible energy development and public land issues."

Zinke, 55, was an early supporter of the president-elect and publicly expressed his interest in a Cabinet post when Trump visited Montana in May. As with several other Cabinet selections, Zinke has advocated increased drilling and mining on public lands and has expressed skepticism about the urgency of climate change. — AP

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DANGEROUS WIND CHILLS PUT US IN DEEP FREEZE

CONCORD, NH: Low temperatures and high winds have put the Northeastern US in a deep freeze. Dangerous wind chills of 20 to 30 below in parts of the region made for some crippling conditions yesterday.

"You are talking about 30 degrees below normal highs. That is pretty darn cold," said National Weather Service meteorologist James Brown in Maine. "This is pretty much a piece of Arctic air that came off the North Pole and came into New England."

Forecasters said a storm will follow the frigid weather, bringing chances for snow, sleet and freezing rain across much of the country.

Some schools closed early Thursday and many others delayed opening Friday to avoid a bone-chilling wait at the bus stop. "We're not strangers to these sorts of bitter temperatures on Mount Washington's summit," senior weather observer Mike Carmon said in the

weather observatory's blog at the highest peak in the Northeast. "However, over the last few winters, it's generally late January or February before we experience this sort of polar air outbreak."

The wind chill was down to 85-below at the summit early yesterday. Utility workers were prepared for power outages due to fallen trees. David Flener, field safety manager at Eversource, New Hampshire's largest utility, said workers are well-educated on how to stay warm in the coldest weather, starting before they even arrive on a job site. They are urged to make sure they carry an emergency kit with clothing and food in case they get stranded, and once they arrive, there is a discussion about on-the-job safety.

"We're oftentimes up in buckets, so you're sometimes above the trees and there's a little more wind up there," he said. "You'd be surprised how much heat you lose from the top

of your head." Sara Sankowich, who oversees tree crews for Unitil, said workers are encouraged to watch out for one another to see if they show signs of hypothermia or frostbite. "We'll take every step to make sure they are staying safe out there and that they're not overexposing themselves to the elements," she said.

In upstate New York, along the Lake Ontario shore, wind gusts approached 70 mph and the National Weather Service issued a blizzard warning effective through early Friday morning. Lake-effect snow was accompanied by winds of up to 50 mph, causing whiteout conditions in some places.

Elsewhere in New York, parts of the Adirondack Northway, north of Albany, were closed for more than four hours after a crash involving a tractor-trailer and a snowplow. No injuries were reported. In western Pennsylvania, lake-effect snow bands were

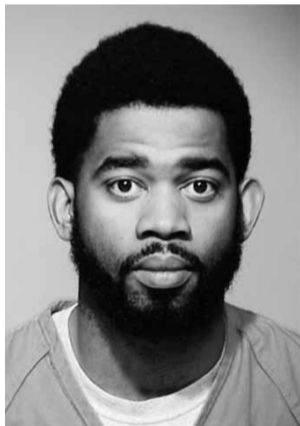
blamed for slick roads and poor visibility. Fifty-nine vehicles crashed in a snowy pileup and three people were hurt. The crash was one of three that shut down different stretches of Interstate 80.

Below-normal temperatures are expected this weekend and into Monday across the entire northern half of the country, from the Pacific Northwest to Maine and as far south as Oklahoma, Arkansas and Virginia, according to the Climate Prediction Center. In Oklahoma, authorities said three people died in separate wrecks and more than 100 traffic crashes were reported after freezing drizzle slickened roads in the Oklahoma City area.

The Oklahoma Highway Patrol reported the fatal crashes on three interstates in the metro area Thursday night. The Oklahoma City Fire Department says its crews responded to multiple wrecks, including an eight-vehicle pileup that shut down traffic. — AP

EX-MILWAUKEE OFFICER CHARGED IN FATAL SHOOTING OF BLACK MAN

MILWAUKEE: Prosecutors charged a Milwaukee police officer Thursday with killing a black man in August, alleging the man had thrown his gun away and was unarmed when the officer fired the fatal shot. Dominique Heaggan-Brown, who is also black, was charged with reckless homicide in the Aug. 13 death of Sylville Smith, which sparked two days of riots on Milwaukee's north side. In the days after the shooting, both the police chief and the mayor had said that police video clearly showed Smith had a gun and was turning toward officers when he was shot. Thursday's criminal complaint echoed that, but went on to describe a second shot, fired into Smith's chest after Smith no longer had his gun.



Milwaukee County

Heaggan-Brown, who was fired in October over an unrelated sexual assault case, shot Smith following a traffic stop. After fleeing police, Smith turned with a gun and was shot once in his bicep, according to the complaint. The second shot occurred less than two seconds later, after Smith was lying on the ground with his hands near his head, according to the complaint. Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm said in the complaint that the video shows Smith throwing the gun over a fence. Heaggan-Brown told state agents that he believed Smith's gun "flew" out of his hand over a fence after the first shot. The officer said he thought Smith was reaching for another weapon in his waistband so he fired the second shot. Chisholm's office said he would not hold any news conference or issue any statement Thursday on the charge and the video would not be released. Heaggan-Brown was scheduled to make an initial court appearance Friday. His attorney, Jonathan Smith, said that he hasn't seen any of the state's evidence but a read of the criminal complaint raises "issues." He didn't elaborate but did promise a "vigorous" defense.

Smith's family issued a statement thanking Chisholm. "We appreciate that the District Attorney has shown independence and sound judgment in prosecuting the officer who shot and killed Sylville," the statement said. "We also appreciate that this is but the first step in holding that officer accountable, but a necessary step in bringing some measure of justice." His mother, Mildred Haynes, told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel the charge should have been tougher. "He shot him in the arm and shot him again in the chest. ... To me, he shot to kill," she said.—AP

BOY'S MOTHER, ACLU WANT ANSWERS IN RENO SHOOTING

14-YEAR-OLD CRITICAL AFTER SHOOTING

RENO, Nev: The American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada joined those pressing school district officials in Reno Thursday for more information about the circumstances and policies that led to a campus officer shooting a 14-year-old boy in a high school courtyard a week ago.

Cheryl Pitchford, the mother of the hospitalized boy, was among 100 of his classmates, friends and family who marched to Washoe County School District headquarters on Wednesday to deliver a petition demanding all campus police carry Tasers and pepper spray.

Reno police say the boy was threatening others with knives when a school district officer shot him in the chest Dec. 7 while surrounded by dozens of students. School district officials have refused to say if their campus officers typically carry non-lethal weapons. They say they can't comment while an investigation continues into the officer-involved shooting that many Hug High students captured on cellphone video and posted on social media.

"There had to be another way," said Pitchford, whose last name is different than that of her juvenile son. David Houston, the boy's lawyer, said the teen had been bullied and beaten before he brought two kitchen knives to the school for fear he'd be attacked again and ended up getting shot by the campus officer.

Holly Welborn, policy director of the Nevada ACLU, said law officers have a duty under state law to use only the degree of force necessary to maintain community safety.

"We intend to review the use of force, emergency and bullying policies of the Washoe County School District and monitor developments as the Reno Police Department's investigation of this matter continues," Welborn said Thursday after submitting a public records request to the school district.

The boy remained in critical but stable condition on Thursday. Houston said earlier he was in a medically induced coma after undergoing surgery follow-



Cheryl Pitchford, third from right, the mother of a 14-year-old Reno boy who was shot last week by a campus police officer, waits for school officials to accept a petition on non-lethal force in the lobby of the Washoe County School District headquarters on Wednesday.—AP

ing a stroke yesterday. Demick La Flamme, the father of a friend of the teen who was shot, organized Wednesday's march.

"Lethal force should not be used as a first response - ever. Especially into a crowd of children," La Flamme said before they began the 2-mile trek escorted by Reno police cruisers and a half-dozen officers on bicycles. "If you take any 82-pound, 14-year-old boy and hit him with pepper spray, he's going to hit the ground." Pitchford, La Flamme and more than a dozen others later jammed into the reception area at the school district headquarters to demand someone formally accept the petition. She showed school officials a cellphone photo of her son with an oxygen mask and other tubes in a hospital bed while pleading for School Superintendent Traci Davis to come forward and better explain what had happened.

Davis told reporters the day after the shooting that the school's emergency response plans worked "flawlessly" and praised the officers' "who acted swiftly to protect the safety of our students."

She's had no comment since she said in a statement Friday that she still believes "the officer's judgment saved other students from deadly force."

Pitchford said isn't seeking an apology from the superintendent. "She wasn't there. It's not her fault," Pitchford said. "It's her fault for not coming out and saying maybe that there was another way, or maybe it was not flawless - like she said in her news conference ... Because she wasn't there. She didn't know." Irene Payne, the school district's chief of communications who accepted the petition, said she couldn't comment on the equipment campus officers typically carry. She hugged Pitchford before the group left the office. Like officers on the campus of the University of Nevada, Reno, school district police are separate from the Reno Police Department but - like their counterparts - are authorized to carry guns.

UNR spokeswoman Kerri Garcia confirmed Thursday all their campus officers carry Tasers along with their service weapons. She said pepper spray is optional.—AP

Kuwait Times 55 BUSINESS

Strong dollar could
defy Trump agenda

16 Chinese leaders pledge
stable currency

17 Spain may shorten
its long work day

18

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016



Cash chaos as Venezuela
stuck in currency limbo

20



FRANKFURT: In this Wednesday, Nov 9, 2016 file photo, a broker reacts as US President-elect Donald Trump appears on a television screen at the stock market. — AP

GLOBALIZATION TOOK HITS IN 2016

WHERE WILL 2017 LEAD US - TO MORE OR LESS?

LONDON: 2016 was the year when globalization, the path that the world economy has largely followed for decades, took some hefty blows. The election of Donald Trump as US president and Britain's decision to leave the European Union have raised questions over the future of tariff-free trade and companies' freedom to move production to lower-cost countries. Borders are back in vogue. Economic nationalism is paying political dividends. "We want our country back" was the rallying cry of those backing Brexit. A sound bite that had echoes in Trump's "Make America great again." Next year, there's scope for more uncertainty with elections in France and Germany to name just two. Trump and Brexit were just two of the year's top stories in the world of business.

Brexit shock

In what was a sign of things to come, Britain voted to leave the EU in a referendum in June. The decision came as a surprise - certainly to bookmakers and many pollsters who had consistently given the "remain" side the edge - and means Britain has to redefine itself after 43 years of EU membership. Prime Minister David Cameron has resigned and the new government led by Theresa May is planning to trigger

the formal process by which the country exits early next year. There are many shades of potential Brexit, from an outright divorce that could put up tariffs on goods and services, to a more amicable parting that sees many of the current trading arrangements kept in place. The pound's fall to a 31-year low below \$1.20 at one point is testament to that uncertainty.

Trump card

Pollsters and bookmakers got it wrong again a few months later when Trump defeated Hillary Clinton in the presidential election. Whether he translates his "America First" platform into action following his inauguration in January will help shape the global economy for the next four years at least. Trump has railed against long-standing trading agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement, punish China for the way it devalues its currency against the dollar, and tax US firms that move jobs overseas.

Markets march on

Trump's victory did not cause the bottom to fall out of the stock market rally that's been largely in place since 2009, when the world economy started to first claw out of its deepest

recession since World War II. In fact, both the Dow and the S&P 500 rallied to hit a series of record highs. Stocks have also benefited from a raft of big corporate deals this year - executives are seeing takeovers as a fast way to generate growth in what is otherwise a low-growth global economy disrupted by non-stop technological innovations. Notable deals in 2016 included the announcement of an \$85 billion merger of Time Warner and AT&T and the \$57 billion takeover of Monsanto by Germany medicine and farm-chemical maker Bayer. The \$100 billion takeover of SABMiller by Budweiser maker Anheuser-Busch InBev was also completed.

China's key role

As the world's second-largest economy, China is playing a bigger role in the functioning of the global economy. Nowhere was that more evident than in the early months of 2016, when jitters over the scale of the slowdown in China caused wild swings in financial markets. Stocks took a pounding while commodities tanked, with oil skidding to 13-year lows, as traders factored in lower demand from resource-hungry China. The slump in commodities weighed heavily on economies like

Australia that are big exporters of raw materials. China's economy is ending the year in relatively good health as authorities try to pivot the economy's focus from manufacturing to more consumer spending. But Trump's promises to take a tough stance in trade will be focusing minds in Beijing.

OPEC takes a stand

For the first time since Dec 2008, at the height of the financial crisis, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries cut its production levels. November's cut, soon followed by non-OPEC countries like Russia, helped push oil prices sharply higher. At over \$50 a barrel, benchmark New York crude is markedly higher than the near 13-year lows around \$30 recorded at the start of the year, when investors focused on high supply and concerns over an economic slowdown. The oil slump helped put several crude-producing countries into severe recessions, including Brazil and Venezuela, and even saw wealthy Saudi Arabia cut back on spending. The question for 2017 is whether OPEC - and non-OPEC - countries can deliver on their production promises. If they do and higher oil prices stick, that will push up inflation in the global economy. — AP

US STOCKS RESUME UPWARD CLIMB AFTER FEDERAL PAUSE

NEW YORK: Wall Street stocks resumed their upward climb to close higher Thursday, with banking shares rising steeply in the wake of the Federal Reserve decision to raise interest rates. The Fed's announcement Wednesday provoked the biggest drop in the market since the November 8 US elections. But investors were back in rally mode after absorbing the rate hike, as well as the rise in the dollar that could pose challenges to multinationals.

"We are back in a place where we are all

expecting an environment that is pro-growth, pro-business, less regulation," said Art Hogan, chief market strategist at Wunderlich Securities. The Dow Jones Industrial Average climbed 0.3 percent to end at 19,852.24. The broad-based S&P 500 closed 0.4 percent higher at 2,262.03, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index advanced 0.4 percent to 5,456.85.

Financial shares led other sectors, with JPMorgan Chase winning 1.5 percent, Bank of America 2.2 percent and Citigroup 1.3 percent.

Yahoo slumped 6.1 percent on worries its latest massive data breach could derail an acquisition by Verizon of its operating assets for \$4.8 billion. Verizon rose 0.4 percent. Yahoo disclosed on Wednesday that personal info from over a billion users was stolen in a hack dating back to 2013.

Facebook gained 0.3 percent after unveiling a tool to root out fake news, misinformation that some claim influenced the 2016 election. Facebook said it would begin testing a

system enabling users to click on news items if they suspect they are fabricated. Rupert Murdoch's 21st Century Fox dipped 0.7 percent after reaching a deal to take control of pan-European pay-TV giant Sky for \$14.8 billion in cash. Food giant Mondelez International jumped 4.4 percent following a report it could be acquired by Kraft Heinz. A note from Morgan Stanley said such a transaction was "logical." Kraft Heinz advanced 1.2 percent. — AFP



DES MOINES: This file photo taken on December 8, 2016 shows US President-Elect Donald Trump speaks in Des Moines, Iowa during the USA Thank You Tour 2016 at the Hy-Vee Hall in the Iowa Events Center. — AFP

STRONG DOLLAR COULD DEFY TRUMP AGENDA

A STRONG DOLLAR WILL ADD TO THE PRICE OF US EXPORTS

NEW YORK: The strong US dollar, boosted further by the Federal Reserve's decision to raise interest rates, could pose challenges to President-elect Donald Trump's economic agenda. The greenback shot to fresh multi-year highs against the euro and other currencies Thursday following the Fed's move Wednesday to increase the benchmark lending rate and its signal about additional rate increases in 2017.

The US currency already had been on an upward trajectory after Trump's election, amid expectations he will push policies that could unleash higher growth and inflation, leading to more interest rate hikes. Many analysts expect the dollar to continue to rise, after gaining five percent against a basket of six currencies since Trump's election.

"We would expect the dollar to continue to strengthen," said Wells Fargo analyst Eric Viloria. The Fed's plans to raise rates further contrasts with "what a lot of other major central banks are doing." Trump himself has warned of the negative effects of a strong dollar, saying during the campaign that "it sounds better to have a strong dollar than it actually is." "If we raise interest rates and the dollar gets too strong, we're going to have some major problems," Trump told CNBC in May. Investors flock to

markets that have higher interest rates seeking better returns, which creates more demand for dollars.

Pros and cons

A strong currency has traditionally been seen as a sign of economic might among nations. But beyond that, there are some economic benefits. Consumers get better prices on everything from imported clothing and toys to luxury cars, keeping inflation low. But while the US remains a strongly consumer-oriented economy, data show exports are becoming more important to the economy.

Exports of goods and services as a percentage of US gross domestic product rose to 12.6 percent in 2015 from 9.1 percent in 2002, according to the World Bank. "The US has been exporting more and more," said economist Joe Naroff. "There is greater sensitivity of the economy to the strong dollar now than it was five or 10 years ago." A wide swathe of the US economy now depends on exports, including farmers in the midwest, steel companies in Ohio and chemical companies in the Gulf Coast.

All of these sectors already were suffering from the strong dollar, according to Federal Reserve's "beige book" report on

economic conditions released in November. Although it also noted that manufacturers can import raw materials at lower prices. Trump has vowed an "America First" approach to economic policy, pressuring companies to build and keep factories in the US. Yet a strong dollar will add to the price of US exports, making it harder for them to compete in other markets.

Multinationals get hit

US stocks also have risen sharply since the election on optimism Trump will cut taxes, streamline regulations and boost public works spending, which would lead to higher corporate profits. Yet, a strong dollar hits multinationals not only by making their goods more costly overseas but by forcing them to convert overseas earnings into dollars at a disadvantageous rate.

Some of these negative impacts will be offset by other Trump pledges, such as a cut in corporate taxes. But "tax reform tends to take a long time," said Aidan Garrib, global macro strategist at Pavilion Financial. And Garrib predicted the strong dollar would hit US companies even more than in 2014, because the greenback is even higher now. "For sure, the strong dollar will hurt," he said. — AFP

NONPROFITS PETITION TRUMP OVER BUSINESS

NEW YORK: A prominent Democratic senator and transparency groups on Thursday stepped up pressure on Donald Trump to sever business ties and eliminate conflicts of interest before becoming US president. Elizabeth Warren said she and other senators would introduce a bill in January that would require Trump to disclose and divest any financial conflicts of interest before the Republican property tycoon is sworn in as president on January 20.

"Placing assets in a true blind trust has been the standard for previous presidents. Our bill makes clear we expect Trump to do the same," Warren tweeted. Democrats are a minority in the Senate and the House of Representatives, meaning that the bill has little chance of being adopted by Congress.

On Thursday a group of protesters representing six organizations, including Public Citizen and Common Cause, were escorted into Trump Tower to deliver petitions they said were signed by more than 400,000 people demanding that the future president separate himself fully from his conglomerate, The Trump Organization. Critics say the company, which has a network of hotels, golf clubs and residences across the globe, could expose Trump to conflicts of interest on a myriad of policies, ranging from tax reform to foreign policy.

"A second grader could see that the only solution to this problem is for President-elect Trump to sell off the family business, yet there is no sign he intends to do this," said Robert Weissman, president of Public Citizen. Trump was originally scheduled to hold a news conference on Thursday to announce plans for his business during his four-year term in office, but postponed it earlier this week to an undetermined date in January.

So far the 70-year-old billionaire has said only that his two adult sons, Donald Jr. and Eric, would take over and that the company would do no new deals while he serves as president. In the interim, neither Trump nor his transition team have offered any new details on what mechanism Trump might adopt.

"I think the priority here is to make sure we get it right and if that takes a little bit more time, then I think the American people understand that," a spokesman told reporters on Thursday. The president of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte, magnified fears about conflicts of interests when he named a local business partner of The Trump Organization a "special envoy" to the United States. — AFP

PHILIPPINES NIXES TRUMP ASSOCIATE'S PROJECT

MANILA: Philippine environment officials have canceled a compliance certificate for a housing project by President-elect Donald Trump's business associate, saying it would endanger a watershed that supplies drinking water to 12 million people. Century Communities Corp. seeks to put up the 58-hectare housing project within the 2,000-hectare La Mesa Watershed in the capital. It is the source of metropolitan Manila's drinking water.

"That's the watershed of 12 million

people and I cannot see the possibility that a business interest is more important than the water our people drink," said Environment Secretary Regina Lopez.

The certificate issued by the previous administration has been canceled because of scientific recommendation against any kind of development inside the watershed, she said.

The company was founded by Jose EB Antonio, named by President Rodrigo Duterte in October as a special

envoy to the United States. It is a subsidiary of Century Properties Group Inc. that Antonio chairs and which has partnered with Trump for the branding of the posh Trump Tower in Manila. The tower is expected to be completed next year.

The company said yesterday it would wait for official communication from the Environment Department before issuing a statement.

The project's construction has not yet started. Officials said some condi-

tions stipulated in the certificate were not fulfilled, including a hydrological study because the department's team was not allowed inside the project site.

A tree-cutting permit for the project could also not be issued because a 2007 presidential proclamation that established a reservation in the watershed would not allow it, they added. The certificate is a requirement for a project with potential significant impact to the environment. — AP

TOKYO'S BENCHMARK INDEX HITS FRESH ONE-YEAR HIGH

TOKYO: Tokyo stocks closed at a fresh one-year high yesterday, posting their longest winning streak since mid-2015 as a slumping yen boosted exporters. But Nintendo dived on profit-taking after the release of its highly anticipated iPhone game Super Mario Run while traders were also worried its price tag may hurt sales.

After Wednesday's Federal Reserve rate hike, the dollar was trading around 10-month highs against the Japanese unit and multi-year highs against the euro. A weaker yen is generally good for profits for Japanese firms doing business abroad, stoking demand for their shares. "The yen is weakening at such a speed that it looks like it's pricing in three US rate hikes next year," Nomura senior strategist Juichi Wako told Bloomberg News.

The dollar bought 118.03 yen yesterday against 118.17 yen in New York Thursday afternoon, while the euro bought \$1.0443 against \$1.0416. The single European currency briefly fell below \$1.04, hitting its lowest level since early 2003. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index added 0.66 percent, or 127.36 points, to end the day at 19,401.15, notching up its ninth successive gain—the longest stretch since May last year. Over the week, the Nikkei advanced 2.13 percent.

The broader Topix index of all first-section shares was up 0.52 percent, or 7.95 points, to finish at 1,550.67. Over the week, the index rose 1.66 percent. US housing sales and durable goods orders for November and a German business confidence reading are on tap next week, while Japan's central bank holds a two-day meeting from Tuesday.

Yesterday, Nintendo tumbled 4.24 percent to close at 26,405 yen. The drop could be a sign that gamers and investors are disappointed by the effort, although analysts said profit-taking may also be at play as the fall comes after a sharp run-up prior to Thursday's release. The most profitable games are free but encourage users to buy extras. Canon rose 0.52 percent to 3,428 yen while electronic parts maker Kyocera climbed 1.98 percent to 5,921 yen.

Banks also advanced, with Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group gaining 1.73 percent to end at 768.1 yen and Mizuo soared 2.18 percent to close at 224.3 yen. — AFP



BEIJING: A woman jumps for a photo near an LED ceiling displaying images of gold and jewelry. — AP

CHINESE LEADERS PLEDGE STABLE CURRENCY, LESS FINANCIAL RISK

CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE THREATS FROM RAPIDLY RISING DEBT

BEIJING: China's leaders pledged yesterday to keep its currency stable and trim bloated heavy industry as they wrapped up an annual planning meeting amid pressure from US President-elect Donald Trump and European leaders over trade. Responding to concern about possible threats from rapidly rising debt, the official Xinhua News Agency said leaders at the three-day meeting also promised to reduce financial risks.

The reports suggested President Xi Jinping's government plans no significant changes despite calls by reform advocates to move faster on pledges to make the world's second-largest economy more productive by giving market forces a bigger role. There was no indication of concessions to pressure from Washington and Europe, which complain Beijing blocks access to its markets in violation of its free-trade commitments. Foreign companies complain Chinese regulators are trying to squeeze them out of technology and other promising industries.

Trump, who takes office in January, has vowed to press Beijing for action by imposing

45 percent tariffs on Chinese goods. Few economists expect him to go that far but any sanctions could hurt Chinese export industries that support millions of jobs. The Economic Work Conference, attended by Xi and other Communist Party leaders, is a throwback to China's era of central planning but still plays a key role in directing development of the state-dominated economy.

Tighter controls

The Chinese leadership is trying to shore up economic growth while reducing reliance on debt that economists worry is dangerously high. Growth held steady at 6.7 percent over a year earlier in the quarter ending in September, propped up by a boom in real estate sales and credit growth. Forecasters expect growth to cool as regulators tighten controls to cool bank lending and housing costs.

Some economists and business groups say they expect no major new initiatives until after a Cabinet reshuffle following a congress of the ruling party late next year. That gather-

ing might see the retirement of some figures from the party's seven-member Standing Committee, China's ruling inner circle, giving Xi a chance to fortify his already extensive powers by promoting allies.

The leadership promised to ensure the "basic stability" of the yuan, according to Xinhua. The currency has weakened against the dollar, prompting concern it might be allowed to fall further. Trump has accused Beijing of suppressing the yuan's exchange rate to help its exporters. Economists say while that was true earlier, the Chinese central bank has spent heavily from its reserves in recent months to prop up the yuan's value. Yesterday's statement promised to press ahead with "supply-side structural reforms," a reference to shutting down excess capacity in industries including steel and cement in which supply exceeds demand. European governments face complaints by steelworkers and others that a flood of low-cost Chinese exports threatens their jobs. US aluminum producers say they are being driven out of business by Chinese imports. — AP

WANDA PLANS TO SELL MADRID LANDMARK

HONG KONG: China's property-to-entertainment conglomerate Wanda yesterday said it will sell a landmark building in Madrid for 272 million euros (\$284 million), due to political and market uncertainties in Spain. The 25-storey building, once the tallest in Spain at 117 meters, will be sold to Spanish property developer Baraka Global Investment, a statement released from Wanda's Hong Kong-listed hospitality

arm said. The disposal was due to "the market and political environment in Spain and the resulting uncertainties on the... development potential of the Madrid property project," Wanda Hotel Development Co. said in the statement.

Wanda bought the historic Edificio Espana, completed in the 1950s under the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco, in June 2014 for 265 million euros (\$277 mil-

lion). But its plans to develop the property into a hotel and shopping centre have encountered hurdles from the local government.

Madrid's new anti-austerity mayor Manuela Carmena has put investors on edge by vowing to sternly scrutinise big building projects approved by the former conservative council. According to Spanish reports, city authorities refused to let

Wanda, which has been on a high-profile overseas acquisition spree in recent years, demolish the building's facade before reconstructing it. The company, owned by China's richest man Wang Jianlin, burst into the international spotlight in 2012 by buying US cinema chain AMC Entertainment for \$2.6 billion. Wang owns more than 200 malls, shopping complexes and luxury hotels across China. — AFP



ATHENS: Pensioners take part in an anti-austerity demonstration in central Athens.— AFP

GREECE ENACTS PENSION HANDOUT DESPITE EURO CREDITOR WARNINGS

'SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS ON BOTH PROCESS AND SUBSTANCE'

ATHENS: Greek lawmakers on Thursday approved a pension handout that has set the country on a collision course with hardline European creditors who accuse the struggling eurozone member of defiance. A total of 196 lawmakers out of 257 present from across the party divide approved the bill in a row that has also brought simmering EU disputes over austerity to the fore. The handout measure, announced by under-pressure leftist Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras last week, earmarks 617 million euros (\$656 million) for a one-off payment to low-tier pensioners.

Athens says the pension handout will come out of a one-billion-euro tax surplus, but European creditors on Thursday said the Greek move raised "significant concerns on both process and substance" regarding the country's bailout obligations. In the joint statement, representatives from the European Central Bank, the European Commission and the European rescue fund said they would now decide whether to uphold a Eurogroup decision granting Greece short-term debt relief earlier this month.

Tsipras on Thursday said the situation had to be resolved "without blackmail" on the part of Greece's creditors. "I

believe that we can have a breakthrough without blackmail and with respect of the sovereignty of each country," said the leftist leader, who fought with his European peers to within an inch of taking Greece out of the euro last year, as he arrived for an EU summit in Brussels.

France weighed into the debate with uncharacteristic force, led by President Francois Hollande who insisted that Greece be "treated with dignity" in the ongoing dispute. France has defended Greece against a hardening stance by Germany and Eurogroup head Jeroen Dijsselbloem. A spokesman for Dijsselbloem on Wednesday said the eurozone was suspending the recently-announced debt relief scheme for Athens in retaliation at not being fully briefed on Tsipras's handout plans—which also include a lower sales tax for Greek islands tackling migration.

"The institutions have concluded that the actions of the Greek government appear to not be in line with our agreements," said the spokesman for Dijsselbloem, who heads the 19-nation eurozone, which oversees Greece's massive 86-billion euro bailout. The dispute escalated within hours, with both French Finance Minister Michel Sapin

and European economic affairs commissioner Pierre Moscovici—himself a former French finance minister—publicly distancing themselves from the Eurogroup decision. "Individual statements are not the collective statements of the Eurogroup," said Sapin, noting the decision had not been taken unanimously by the 19-member club.

Diverging views

The spat has brought to the fore the widely diverging views in Berlin and Paris on the merits of long-term austerity. France has traditionally taken a far softer line on Greece than Germany during the years of negotiations over Athens' crippling debt and need for bailout funds. Tsipras, who has his own troubles at home with his ratings in decline, has taken a stand on the principle of national sovereignty.

"We are not a colony," his government spokesman said last week, when the handouts were first announced. And Tsipras himself on Wednesday said the creditors had to "respect the Greek people, who have made major sacrifices these past seven years in Europe's name". Ironically, Greek pensioner associations have rejected the one-off handout—worth at least 300 euros per person—as "peanuts". — AFP

SPAIN MAY SHORTEN ITS LONG WORK DAY

MADRID: Spain wants to put an end to its distinctive and grueling work day which hurts productivity—and it may move the country's clocks back by one hour to the same time zone as London's to do so. Labour Minister Fatima Banez vowed Monday to seek a "national pact" to bring Spain's working day into line with the rest of Europe and make it easier to achieve a work-life balance. "We want our workdays to finish at six o'clock and to achieve this we will work towards striking a deal with representatives from both companies and trade unions," she told parliament.

While working hours in Spain vary greatly, a typical day runs from 9 am until 7 pm or 8 pm—or even later—with a late afternoon lunch break lasting up to two hours. The long midday break was used in the past by many Spaniards to go home for lunch followed by a short nap, or siesta. But surveys suggest that, at least in cities, people live so far from their offices that few have the time to head home for a snooze.

This schedule means many Spanish workers return from lunch at around 5 pm—when their counterparts in Germany and other northern European countries are already preparing to go home for the day. To cater to after-work shoppers small grocery stores stay open until 9 pm, dinner is served late and popular prime-time television shows run until midnight. One in four Spaniards goes to bed after midnight, according to the Sociological Research Centre (CIS).

Franco changed clocks

Since Spaniards sleep less than their European counterparts they are less concentrated at work, not as productive and have more accidents, said professor Nuria Chinchilla, director of the International Centre for Work and Family at Spain's IESE Business School. Their schedules also take a toll on family life, added Chinchilla, a member of the National Commission for the Rationalisation of Spanish Schedules, a non-profit group campaigning to change work hours.

"We don't have enough children or energy to help them," she said, in a reference to Spain's low birthrate—the second lowest in the European Union—and the high school dropout rate. Contrary to popular belief, cultural norms are not responsible for Spain's quirky rhythms, said Jos Collin, a Belgian entrepreneur who carried out a study on the issue for the commission which he presented to parliament.

Instead they began in the aftermath of Spain's 1936-39 Civil War when many people were forced to work two jobs to make ends meet—an official job until 3 pm and another in the afternoon, he added. During the 1930s Spaniards ate lunch earlier, at 1 pm, and had dinner at 7:30 pm, according to Jose Luis Casero, a businessman and the president of the National Commission for the Rationalisation of Spanish Schedules.

Then General Francisco Franco in 1940 moved Spain onto Central European Time, in line with Berlin and central Europe, from Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). That means Madrid is an hour ahead of London even though it is roughly in the same band of longitude yet it shares the same time as Warsaw some 2,000 kilometers further to the east. As a result the sun appears to rise and set later in Spain, which affects people's habits.

Banez said Monday the government would study the impact of moving Spain back to GMT, a move neighboring Portugal did after it concluded that four years on Central European Time in the 1990s resulted in a sleepier populace and higher electricity bills. — AFP

JOYALUKKAS OPENS ITS 2ND SHOWROOM IN US

NEW JERSEY: Joyalukkas is all set to open its second showroom in the USA in Edison, New Jersey on 17th December. This will now be the 11th country to have the presence of the world's favorite jeweler, thereby giving Joyalukkas a truly global presence. The opening of the new Joyalukkas showroom in Edison, New Jersey is a sparkling example of a well planned and successful expansion drive that has now become the hallmark of the Joyalukkas Group. The expansion drive also includes the opening of another USA showroom in West Devon Avenue, Chicago.



The Joyalukkas Edison, New Jersey showroom will showcase the exclusive brands of Joyalukkas, such as Veda Temple Jewelry, Pride Diamonds, Eleganza Polki Diamonds, Masaaki Pearls, Zenina Turkish Jewelry, Li'l Joy Kids Jewelry, the Apurva Antique collection & Ratna Precious Stone Jewelry along with ethnic, special occasion and contemporary jewel-

ry. The showroom also has ample car parking. Joyalukkas has planned an exclusive inaugural offer in line with the opening.

"The opening of Joyalukkas in the USA is very close to my heart. The large Indian Diaspora can now look forward to their favorite jeweler close to them and not wait to travel to their homeland to buy their dream jewelry. As is the norm, customers can expect a world-class ambience and the widest variety of high-quality jewelry at the best value. All complemented by the very high standards of customer service Joyalukkas is known for," says Mr Joy Alukkas, Chairman & MD, Joyalukkas Group.

MUROUJ WINS SILVER IN THE MENA CSC SHOPPING CENTRE AND RETAILER AWARDS

DUBAI: The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) has announced the winners of the 2016 Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Shopping Centre and Retailer Awards, recognizing the region's most innovative shopping centers for outstanding achievement in retail, retail store design, design and development, and marketing. ICSC has named MUROUJ, Kuwait as a Silver Award winner in the development and design category.

Murouj is a Premium Leisure and Entertainment Destination in Kuwait developed by Al-Jazeera Real Estate Development Co. and designed by R204DESIGN, Los Angeles / executed by Lab 100, Kuwait, as an exclusive mixed-use development with unique food & beverage offerings, high-end brands, health, fitness and recreation outlets. Designed as an outdoor retail and entertainment venue part of the Sahara Golf & Equestrian Club, Murouj defies all conventional norms of shying away from the exterior environment and harsh climatic conditions of Kuwait, by nestling it within a serene garden setting and creating a "comfortable place" for people to meet, dine, chat and enjoy the landscape.

"We are very excited that the ICSC / MECSC Jury has recognized Murouj as a unique project and selected it as a 2016 Award winner for Design and Development Excellence in the MENA region. The development team deserves significant credit for upholding the original vision and ensuring successful execution of the project" - Sidhartha Sabikhi AIA, Founder & Director of International Projects for R204DESIGN.

R204DESIGN is a global planning and architecture firm with offices in Los Angeles, New Delhi, and Dubai. The firm has recently formed a strategic alliance to establish presence in Kuwait by appointing Waleed Shaalan as its Director of Projects for MENA region to serve the needs of the market providing comprehensive planning & architecture services and delivering quality projects in the GCC region.

The 2016 ICSC Middle East and North Africa Shopping Centre and Retailer Awards competition was open to shopping center owners, developers, management companies, architects and designers, and retailers. ICSC announced the winners at an awards ceremony during ICSC REC on Middle East and North Africa in Dubai. All 2016 Gold award recipients receive automatic entry into the 2017 ICSC VIVA Awards, the international program that honors the retail real estate industry's most cutting-edge properties, innovative solutions, and creative responses to market trends. ICSC will announce the victors of the VIVA Awards during RECon 2017 in Las Vegas.



AJMAN REAL ESTATE CONFERENCE SHEDS LIGHT ON MASSIVE GROWTH POTENTIAL

DUBAI: The Ajman Real Estate Conference 1, being organized by the Real Estate Regulatory Agency - Ajman [ARRA], the state-run institution mandated with regulating the real estate activities and developments in Ajman, was inaugurated this morning by Sheikh Abdul Rahman bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa, Director General of Survey and Land Registration Bureau - Bahrain, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Otaibi, prominent business leader - Saudi Arabia and Mr Farook Mahmood, Founder President and Vice Chairman NAR - India Silverline Realty P LTD

Being held under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Humaid Bin Rashid Al Nuaimi, Ruler of Ajman and Member of the UAE Supreme Council and in the presence of HH Sheikh Ammar Bin Humaid bin Rashid Al Nuaimi, Ajman Crown Prince and President of the Executive Council, the theme of the one-day conference at Ajman Emirates Hospitality Center focused on 'Sustainable Development According to Global Standards'.

The conference not only showcased the Real Estate project pipeline in the Emirate but also reinforced the Emirate as a stable investment destination. The conference was a huge success and brought 350 delegates and investors from across the GCC region, India, South Asia, and Pakistan among others and was aimed at harnessing the potential of the Real Estate sector in the Emirate.

HE Yafea Al Faraj, Executive Director of Real Estate Regulatory Agency - Ajman, said: "The 'Ajman Real Estate Conference 1' by Real Estate Regulatory Agency - Ajman is a major step forward for Ajman real estate sector and coincides with the strong growth on witness in the Emirate. These are exciting times for Ajman, and the immense growth potential on offer will get a major boost from the conference."

He added: "The real estate transaction regulations in Ajman have been tightened and escrow accounts put in place. This, coupled with a stable market, offers the right environment for investments. Ajman has over 18,000 ready-to-occupy units available in the market by reputed developers, at unbelievable price points. We believe the Emirate offers returns on investments which are unmatched across the region."

The 'Ajman Real Estate Conference 1' was organized in the midst of strong growth trends in the Ajman Real Estate sector. The Emirate has seen robust real



estate activity in the year to date, with transactions worth Dh1.5 billion finalized. More than 18,000 freehold units were transacted during this period, up 39% compared to 2015.

The Conference also offered plenary sessions and workshops on the future of real estate and sustainable practices for

real estate development in Ajman. Besides highlighting the future of real estate in Ajman, the conference also shed light on the International property measurement standards, sustainability in real estate projects, the role of social media in real estate marketing and held sessions for owners' association.

MEXICAN CENTRAL BANK RAISES RATE

MEXICO CITY: Mexico's central bank raised its key interest rate for the second time in a month on Thursday in response to the US Federal Reserve's own rate hike. The Bank of Mexico (Banxico) said in a statement that it hiked the rate by half a percentage point to 5.75 percent to "counter additional inflationary pressures" and strengthen monetary policy.

Banxico said it took into account the Fed's decision on Wednesday to raise the key federal funds rate by a quarter percentage point to a range of 0.5 to 0.75 percent—the first hike since December 2015 and only the second in a decade. The peso fell following the US Fed's decision. But it gained 0.34 percent Thursday, reaching 20.65 pesos per dol-

lar, after the Mexican central bank's rate hike. The economies of Mexico and the United States are closely intertwined, so any move by the US Fed or the government can influence policy decisions south of their common border.

The Mexican central bank had already raised its rate by half a point to 5.25 percent on November 17 after the

peso was rocked by Republican property tycoon Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election. The Mexican currency has fallen due to the US president-elect's promise to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and threat to curb remittances sent by migrants in order to finance a giant border wall. — AFP

CASH CHAOS AS VENEZUELA STUCK IN CURRENCY LIMBO

BORDERS SHUT TO FIGHT 'MAFIAS' HOARDING OLD NOTES

CARACAS: Venezuelans lined up Thursday to deposit 100-unit banknotes before they turned worthless, but replacement bills had yet to arrive, increasing the cash chaos in the country with the world's highest inflation. Some frustrated customers received expiring 100-bolivar notes when they withdrew money at ATMs, then immediately had to line up again to re-deposit them.

Venezuelans are stuck in currency limbo after President Nicolas Maduro ordered the 100-bolivar note—the largest denomination, currently worth about three US cents—removed from circulation in 72 hours. The government announced late Thursday that Venezuela's borders with Colombia and Brazil—closed to fight "mafias" allegedly hoarding the notes—will stay shut three more days.

'I don't get the joke'

The Thursday deadline was supposed to coincide with the launch of a 500-bolivar bill, the first in a new series of banknotes that will eventually be issued in denominations of up to 20,000 bolivars. But with the new bills yet to arrive in the capital Caracas by midday, Venezuelans were left facing economic chaos. "I don't get the joke," office worker Yarelis Carrero said. "When you with-

draw cash at the ATMs, they give you 100-bolivar bills. And you can't get the new ones inside the bank, either."

She woke up early to get rid of her expiring banknotes only to discover that the bills meant to replace them were nowhere to be found. From Friday, Venezuelans will be able to exchange 100-bolivar bills only at one of the central bank's two headquarters buildings. Maduro, who has presided over an unraveling of Venezuela's oil-rich economy, said the 100-bolivar note had to be killed because "mafias" were hoarding it abroad in what he called a US-backed plot to destabilize Venezuela.

In response, he sealed the borders with Colombia and Brazil, where he says much of the hoarding is happening. Now those frontiers will stay shut until Sunday. That led to pandemonium on the border, as foreigners rushed home and Venezuelans found themselves cut off from precious supplies of food, medicine and basic goods that are in desperately short supply in Venezuela.

Going cashless

Central bank chief Nelson Merentes promised last week that "millions and millions" of new bank notes were on their way. The new bills—which are being printed abroad—were originally meant to

circulate alongside the old ones during a transition period. But Maduro axed that plan when he issued his decree against the 100-bolivar note Sunday.

It accounted for 77 percent of the cash in circulation in Venezuela, according to official figures. Venezuelans had grown used to carrying around huge stacks of them for even the smallest purchases. Now they are stuck with even bigger piles of 10-, 20- and 50-bolivar notes just as the Christmas shopping season is at its height.

Some companies have stopped dealing in cash altogether. One of the main Caracas taxi companies now requires clients to pay for their rides in advance by electronic bank transfer. Standing in line at the bank, customers complained there was no sign of the new banknotes arriving. "Nobody's seen them yet," Saul Bernal said. "A guy I know who works for an armored truck company said even they haven't seen them. Pure lies!"

Pummeled by low oil prices, Venezuela is mired in economic crisis and crippled with the world's highest inflation rate—set to hit 475 percent this year, according to an IMF forecast. Maduro's popularity has plunged amid the turmoil, but the fractured opposition has so far failed to force the leftist leader to relinquish his grip on power.



BRASILIA: Brazilian President Michel Temer (L) and his Chief of Staff Eliseu Padilha (R) gesture during the announcement of new measures to stimulate the economy in the Planalto Palace. — AFP

BRAZIL'S TEMER BEGINS STIMULUS MEASURES TO HALT DISCONTENT

BRASILIA: Brazilian President Michel Temer on Thursday unveiled a slew of stimulus measures to reduce the debt burden of businesses and consumers struggling with the country's worst recession on record amid growing popular discontent. Although limited in scope, the measures aim to appease Brazilians angry at the deepening recession in Latin America's biggest economy and allegations of corruption against Temer and some of his closest allies.

"We are taking measures to pull the economy out of the recession," Temer said in a briefing flanked by the head of the Senate and the Lower House. "Even during these turbulent times the government doesn't stop." The government will write off some of the taxes owed by companies reporting losses and allow others to pay their debts in installments to expand their liquidity and improve their access to new credit.

Other microeconomic measures includes forcing banks and credit card companies to either reduce the time they take to process payments or lower the fees they charge businesses. The government will also stimulate long-term credit for real estate. With the country's finances in tatters, Temer has ruled out direct fiscal stimulus in his bid to ease the debt burden of Brazilians as the recession, now finishing its second year, forces droves of companies into bankruptcy and eliminates millions of jobs.

Finance Minister Henrique Meirelles said the government's new measures to raise productivity will go in tandem with government efforts to rebalance the depleted public accounts. The plan aims to lower the cost of doing business in Brazil, streamlining some taxes and cutting red tape to reduce the time it takes to open a new business or export and import goods. Since Temer formally took office in August, he has faced pressure from business groups and political allies to swap austerity measures for policies aimed at jump-starting growth. Economic activity fell 0.48 percent in October, the eighth drop in 10 months, official data showed earlier on Thursday, dashing hopes of an imminent recovery despite a jump in confidence after the impeachment of Temer's leftist predecessor Dilma Rousseff.

The sluggish recovery and corruption allegations threaten to derail Temer's austerity plan aimed at plugging a widening budget deficit that last year cost the once-booming Brazil its investment grade credit rating. — Reuters




CARACAS: People queue outside a bank in Caracas in an attempt to deposit money. — AFP

Kuwait Times Weekender

55
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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016

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FRANKFURT: Seagulls sit on a bar above the river Main in Frankfurt, central Germany yesterday. — AP

**The top 10 movies led by
'Moonlight,' 'La La Land'**

SEE PAGE 26



Rita Ora didn't think she had 'appropriate' body for modeling

The 'America's Next Top Model' host has admitted that she used to feel like her shape wasn't flattering for posing in sexy underwear and turned down several offers to do adverts with designer brands because of her lack of body confidence. She told Marie Claire UK: "I've had a lot of offers to do lingerie lines with a bunch of different designers, massive ones, and I never really wanted to do it, because I never felt like my body was appropriate. It's not the typical model's physique." However, the 26-year-old beauty decided to make a change and team up with Tezenis for a new collection. She continued: "Then I said to myself, 'You know what? That's one of the reasons I should do it'. Tezenis has never collaborated with anyone before and I love to build with a brand and create a story." The 'Body On Me' hit maker attended the prelaunch of Tezenis on Oxford Street in London on Wednesday night and while she flaunted ample assets in a racy black number she said that women should "embrace their body". Responding to claims by Vogue magazine, that baring boobs is not trendy, the 'Body on Me' hit maker told the crowd at the event: "Cleavage is beautiful. I never really was a trend follower, I'm more of a trend setter so I don't listen to things like that. I think girls should embrace their body and their cleavages - I think you should be very proud of who you are, where you're from, what color your skin is, what you represent."

Chris Martin thinks he isn't husband material

The Coldplay front man - who has recently been linked to 'Peaky Blinders' actress Annabelle Wallis - has admitted he is struggling to adjust to the single life following his divorce from Hollywood star Gwyneth Paltrow. Chris - whose divorce was finalized earlier this year - joked: "No one wants to marry me." The rock star - who shares a 12-year-old daughter called Apple and a 10-year-old son called Moses with his ex-wife - said, tongue in cheek, that he had to "trick" Gwyneth into marrying him back in 2003. He told KIIS FM: "I'm just not really nice. I fooled one person once." Chris and Gwyneth famously announced they were "conscious uncoupling" back in 2014, but have since remained on good terms and are even reported to be planning to move back to London in the near future. The duo have made a mutual decision to return to the UK for the sake of their two children. Chris and Gwyneth are said to have already discussed the prospect of buying adjoining properties in north London's up market Hampstead, but they will continue to spend their summers in Los Angeles.



Blac Chyna claims she had to hide her first pregnancy



The 28-year-old model - who has King Cairo, four, with her ex-partner Tyga and one-month-old daughter Dream RenÈe with her fiancé Rob Kardashian - loved being able to share the journey to Dream's birth so publicly with her family, friends and fans. Speaking in a preview for an upcoming episode of 'Rob & Chyna: Baby Special', she said: "With my first pregnancy, I didn't do a maternity shoot, I didn't have a baby shower. "Having to hide your pregnancy is just not a good feeling. So now, with this baby, it's really important everybody that

supported me share this moment." It comes after it was claimed the couple are planning a television wedding special, if they can secure the right price. Rob and Chyna are said to be looking at wedding venues which would be able to be filmed. Meanwhile, the pair have moved in together into Kylie Jenner's old house. A source said at the time: "Rob wants to live with Chyna and spend every day with Dream. He's making a big effort to get along with Chyna. She seems very happy with him. They are getting along great and enjoying parenting together."

Joe Jonas is smitten with girlfriend Sophie Turner



The 27-year-old singer has been reportedly dating the 'Game of Thrones' actress for the past month, and sources now say he is quickly falling head over heels for her because she "has her own money" and isn't using him to get free dates. A source said: "[Joe is] smitten [because Sophie] has her own money. "He loves her because she won't let him pay for her all the time, which is so rare in girls he meets. She insists on paying her own way for flights when he asks her to come see him and offers to pay. "Plus, he thinks she's so smart and sexy." And despite having only been together for a short period of time, the 'Cake by the Ocean' hitmaker already believes the beauty is something special. The source added to New York Post newspaper's Page Six column: "He's telling friends there's something different with her, and he knew it as soon as they met." The former Jonas Brothers member and the 'X-Men: Apocalypse' star reportedly made their relationship official last month when they spent the Thanksgiving holiday season together, after having been romantically linked earlier in November when they were spotted cuddling up at the MTV Europe Music Awards.



Ciara's unborn baby has new Nike trainers

The 31-year-old singer - who already has son Future, two, with ex-fiance Future - shared a cute picture of the tiny custom sneakers made by her NFL player husband on Instagram. Alongside the photo, she wrote: "What In The Cuteness Are These?!?... Our New Little Ones First Pair Of Shoes Designed By Their Daddy (sic)" The army patterned shoes have the words "DANGEROUS WILSON" written across the velcro flap. Meanwhile, the 'Goodies' hit maker - and Russell, 28, recently revealed they know whether they're expecting a boy or a girl and have even decided on a name, but she doesn't want to tell anyone. She said: "I do know [if it's a boy or a girl]. I'm not telling, not yet, but I'm very excited." Asked if they've chosen a name, she added: "We've already done that actually." And the couple aren't the only ones excited about the new addition to their family as little Future "can't wait" to be a big brother. Ciara said: "He rubs my belly and he says, 'Hi baby. I love you, baby,' ... and then he puts my shirt down and says, 'Bye, bye baby.'" "He sees a baby walking, smaller than him and walking-it doesn't matter, it's a baby. So, he goes, 'baby' and he looks at me and he goes, 'Mama, baby' - and he tries to pull my sweatshirt up."

Ryan Reynolds had a pinch me moment

The 40 year old actor who has two-year-old daughter James, and a two-month-old tot, who has yet to be named, with his wife Blake Lively was honored with the golden accolade on Thursday, and has admitted the moment felt utterly surreal to him. The 'Deadpool' star - who was recognized as the Best Actor in a Comedy for his role as Wade Wilson in the fantasy film as well as Entertainer of the Year at this year's Critics' Choice Awards - took to social media to share his

reaction to receiving the honor. Alongside a picture of him crouching beside the star with his name emblazoned on, which was posted to his Instagram account, he wrote: "Thank you to the @ollywoodchamberofcommerce and @20thcenturyfox. This is one of those 'pinch me' moments. But not in the creepy way my Aunt used to do it. (sic)." The Hollywood hunk brought his brood along with him to receive the award in Los Angeles, which is believed to be the first public family outing. And



Ryan's spouse who married in 2012 has also taken to social media to share how proud she is and "always has

been" of her husband, which saw the former 'Gossip Girl' star credit his acting skills in the heartfelt post.

Sofia Richie dreamt of being a singer

The 18-year-old model would turn to her father, 'All Night Long' hit maker Lionel Richie, for advice and support on her career plans, and she learned a lot from him. She said of her singing dreams: "That was when I was younger and I was heavily in singing lessons. "My dad would just sit with me and coach me through things. Those are definitely

moments I'll never forget. "He has the best advice and he's the greatest, but then, yet again, he's my dad!" "So, it's not like you'd take the advice like a regular teacher at school would give you. It's like, 'OK, dad, yeah yeah yeah!" But Sofia turned her attentions to a fashion career in 2014 and though she's posed for the likes of Elle, Vanity Fair and Nylon magazines, and was the face of Madonna's Material Girl line, she admits she wasn't very confident when she started her career. She told Wonderland magazine: "At first, I felt like I was a fish out of water. I did not feel like I fit in whatsoever. "Now, I get it. I understand it, I understand the people, I understand the meaning, I understand the models, I understand the people sitting and watching." And one of the most memorable jobs the teenage star has landed so far was walking in Kanye West's Yeezy Season Four show in New York City, and she had a great time working with the rapper. She said: "[Kanye] literally was like, 'Go out there and have fun!" "All he wanted was us to express his clothes the best way that we could, there weren't really any guidelines to walk in. He was just kind of like, 'Alright, you guys look great, kill it!"



Chris Pratt surprised Anna Faris with a new engagement ring



The couple got engaged in 2008, less than a year before they married, and the 40-year-old actress was stunned when her hunky husband reaffirmed his commitment to her by splashing out on a more lavish piece of jewellery. She gushed: "He just got me this ring. I know. Like two days ago. "I look [at it] and I'm like, 'I can't believe it either! He's an incredibly romantic man and I'm very, very lucky." And the 'Passengers' actor revealed Anna - with whom he has four-year-old son Jack - splashed out on an equally impressive gift for him. He told E! News: "She got me a tractor, so we're kind of even!" The 37-year-old actor is disappointed that his young son is a big fan of superheroes, but has no interest in his 'Guardians of the Galaxy' alter ego Star-Lord. Anna said: "He does like all the Marvel heroes - except Star-Lord!" Chris added: "Like, 'Who do you want to be for Halloween? 'Captain America or Iron Man!' "I was like, 'What about Star-Lord?' 'Nah. Maybe Spider-Man.' The youngster is excited about Christmas, and is hoping Santa brings him a gift he was banned from having a few years ago. Chris said: He wants a remote control helicopter. I got him one two years ago, but Anna was like, 'Honey-he's two. You can't give him a remote control helicopter. He's going to kill somebody!"



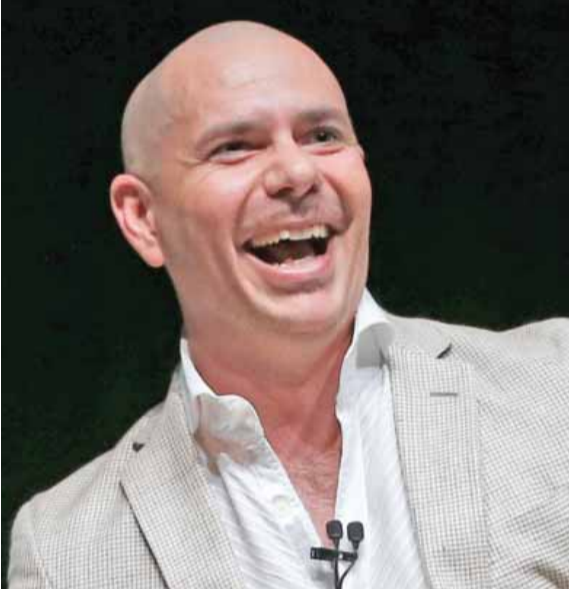
People enjoy skating at a temporary open air ice rink in the center of the Red square in Moscow on December 15, 2016. — AFP Photos

MOSCOW

Skating



Florida agency paid Pitbull 1m for Sexy Beaches promotion



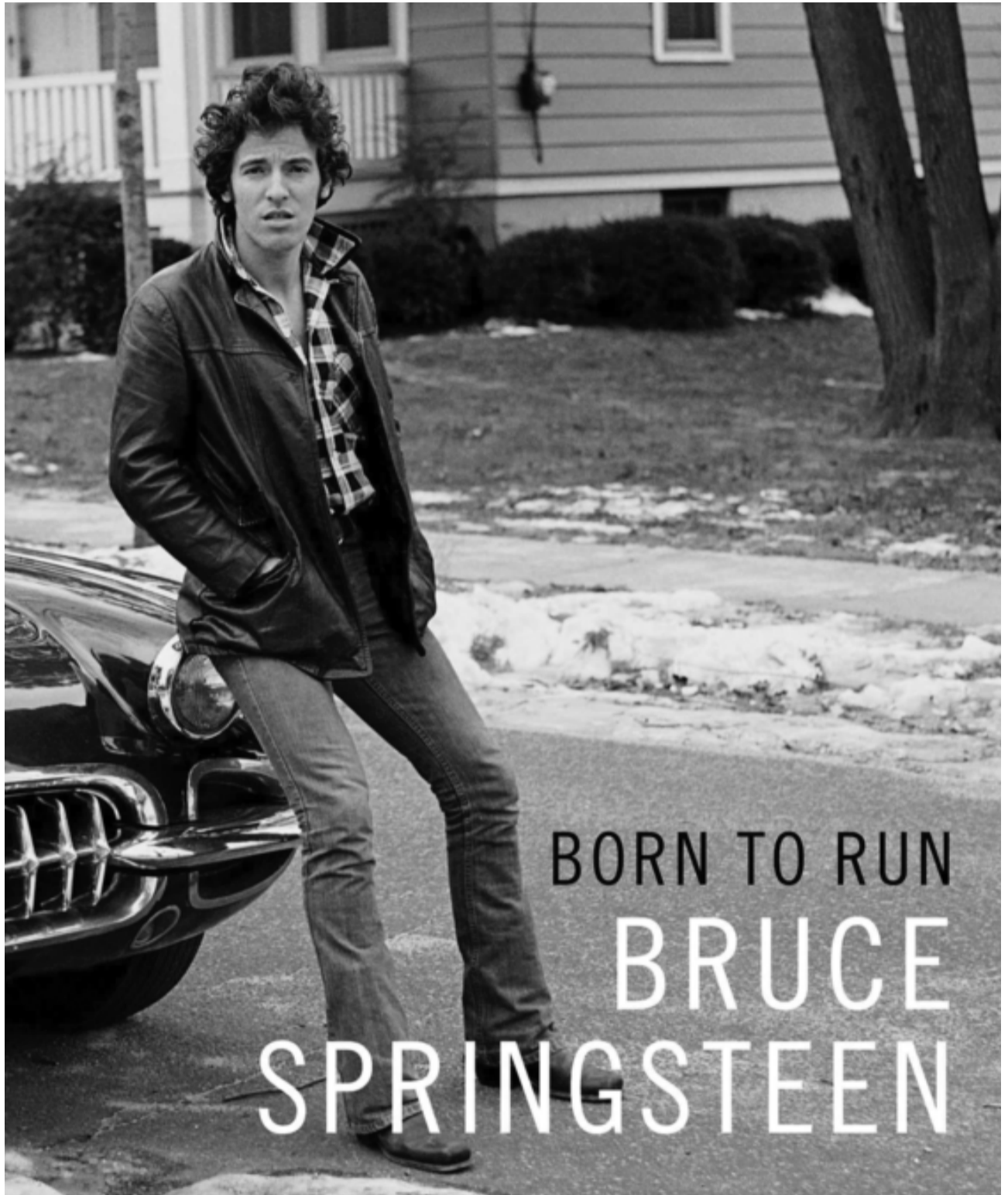
In this file photo, Pitbull appears at the eMerge Americas technology event in Miami Beach, Florida. — AP

Rapper Pitbull released his \$1 million contract with Florida's tourism marketing agency via Twitter on Thursday, two days after a lawmaker sued to find out details of the agreement that included production of a video for the song "Sexy Beaches." Pitbull tweeted "(asterisk)FULL DISCLOSURE - FLORIDA(asterisk)" with a link to the 11-page agreement to produce the "Sexy Beaches" video for Visit Florida and to promote the hashtag #LOVEFL on his social media sites and during concerts. Visit Florida was also responsible for expenses and production costs. Florida House Speaker Richard Corcoran filed a lawsuit Tuesday seeking to have details of the contract disclosed.

Visit Florida refused to say how much it paid the rapper, whose real name is Armando Christian Perez, or details of the arrangement, saying it was a trade secret. Corcoran found that unacceptable, saying taxpayers should know just how Visit Florida was spending its money. "It is unfortunate that it took litigation to lift the veil of secrecy on this particular contract," Corcoran said in a statement. "This was a long unnecessary journey through claims of trade secrets, threats of prosecution, and corporate welfare paid for by taxpayers." House Democratic Leader Janet Cruz said she was furious over the deal.

"The state watches every pen that I buy. We're subject to approval for everything that we buy in our state office," Cruz said. "Yet these guys have the audacity and the arrogance to think that they could spend a million dollars on talent and not have to disclose it." A lawyer for Pitbull let the tweet speak for itself. "There will be no further comment from the Pitbull camp," Leslie Jose Zigel said in an email. Visit Florida didn't return an email and a phone call seeking comment.

The video features images of women frolicking in the surf and sand as well as pictures of iconic Florida hotels such as Miami Beach's Fontainebleau and the pink Don CeSar Hotel in St. Pete Beach. It ends with an image of #LOVEFL written in the sand. Cruz called the video and song lyrics offensive and "awful." Cruz pointed out lines in the song like, "Little mama wanna live it up/Well, little mama better give it up" and "I'm looking for a freak, not a soulmate." The video has nearly 10.7 million views on YouTube. — AP



Springsteen's 'Born to Run' Chevy up for auction

Bruce Springsteen's 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air convertible, referenced in his iconic song "Born to Run," is up for auction and is expected to fetch several hundred thousand dollars. Springsteen super fan Michael Crane said on Thursday the auction of the car was the first in the planned sale of his entire Springsteen collection because he wanted to move on from his long love affair with The Boss. "I've been a fan since I was 7 years old. I got to meet Bruce Springsteen with the car, which was amazing. But I'm ready to move on in my life and I want to pass the torch on to somebody who will enjoy the car and get to drive it," Crane, 46, told Reuters.

Crane, who like Springsteen is also from New Jersey, believes Springsteen

was referring to the car in his 1975 hit "Born to Run" in the line, "I looked out across my hood and saw the highway buckle 'neath the wheels of a gold Chevy 6." The car is being sold on eBay in an auction that ends on Monday. Bidding on Thursday afternoon was \$200,100 - below the undisclosed reserve price. Crane bought the yellow soft-top with orange flames on eBay in 2006 and it was exhibited at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland from 2008-2010. It has registration and insurance documents in Springsteen's name and is in running condition. Springsteen mentioned the car in his 1998 book "Songs."

"In '70's New Jersey, the car was still a powerful image. That summer I bought my first set of wheels for two thousand dollars. It was a '57 Chevy

with dual, four-barrel carbs, a Hurst on the floor and orange flames spread across the hood," the rock musician wrote. Crane, a real estate developer, started collecting Springsteen memorabilia in 2006. He has amassed a collection of handwritten lyrics, guitars, posters and personal effects that has been appraised at over \$7 million. He plans in the coming months, however, to dispose of it all, including Springsteen's 8th grade report card, in which he got a D for music.

"I am selling the whole collection. My love affair with Bruce has become more real. I'm moving on to some bigger projects.

I started a non-profit and I am raising money for orphans and widows now, and it's kind of where my life has taken me," Crane said. — Reuters

The top 10 movies led by 'Moonlight,' 'La La Land'

Associated Press Film Writers Jake Coyle and Lindsey Bahr name their choices for the best films of 2016.

JAKE COYLE:

1. "Moonlight"

The life of Chiron, the young man who grows up in three distinct chapters in Barry Jenkins' masterpiece, is hard and full of pain. And yet "Moonlight" is so abundant with transcendent moments of grace and lyrical splendor. In the film's blue-tinged darkness shines a tortured soul, one of the most intimately and fully realized ones I can remember encountering in a movie.

2. "Cameraperson"

In Kirsten Johnson's memoir-like montage of film, momentary intimacies from a lifetime of making documentaries accrue a staggering poetry. From war zones abroad to her family at home, her camera is a force of connection that binds us, fleetingly.

3. "La La Land"

It's not like we're so overrun with blissfulness and charm that we couldn't use Damien Chazelle's light-footed celebration of classic musicals, Los Angeles, dreams, keytars and Emma Stone. It's not a revolutionary work. It's a knowing and full-hearted resurrection. It's a conversation with nostalgia, held at golden hour between lampposts and tap shoes.

4. "I Am Not Your Negro"

Does anyone's voice sound more urgent today than James Baldwin's? Raoul Peck's documentary, narrated by Samuel L. Jackson, is culled largely from an unfinished manuscript of the writer, intellectual and social critic. Baldwin's words wash over you, at once inspiring in their passion and alarming in their frightful insight into America. But Peck doesn't need to mix in more recent footage to connect Baldwin's thoughts with today. Amid the shards of 2016, Baldwin's relevance is apparent enough.

5. "Sunset Song"

Rare is the combination of formal beauty and deep inner-life that's found in Terence Davies's adaptation of the 1932 novel by Lewis Grassic Gibbon. It was one of two films by the chronically underappreciated Davies this year, the other being his less sublime Emily Dickinson biopic with Cynthia Nixon, "A Quiet Passion." But "Sunset Song," about a young woman growing up in rural Scotland in the years before World War I, is one of the more exquisite and wrenching portraits of lives shaped and ripped apart by history.

6. "American Honey"

Nothing was more thrillingly alive this year than Andrea Arnold's bass-thumping plunge into the American heartland. Arnold, the British director of "Fish Tank," has both a keenly critical eye to what she sees around her and a deeply affectionate one for her young characters. Rihanna (played in a scene set in a Walmart) supplies Arnold's anthem: She finds love in a hopeless place.

7. "Manchester by the Sea"

It might be my third favorite of playwright Kenneth Lonergan's three films (the others are "Margaret" and "You Can Count on Me"), but it's still one of the year's best. Scenes this natural just don't come along. Seemingly



This image released by Magnolia Pictures shows James Baldwin in a scene from the documentary, "I Am Not Your Negro." — AP Photos

quotidian moments flicker with the past, with pain, with humor, with glimpses of insight. Lonergan's way with words is trumped only by the great reaches of his empathy.

8. "O.J.: Made in America"

It's an LA story. Ezra Edelman's 467-minute documentary, released both as one long film and a five-part television series, has an almost Dickensian scope. Edelman uses the case as a prism through which to make a grand portrait of Los Angeles and of America.

9. "Hell or High Water"

David Mackenzie's West Texas heist tale is a genre movie firing on all cylinders. There's the fine acting of Chris Pine, Ben Foster, Jeff Bridges and Gil Birmingham. There's the economical but loose direction of Mackenzie ("Starred Up"). And there's the flavorful, comic dialogue of Taylor Sheridan ("Sicario"). Add it all up and you get a hell of a movie.

10. "The Edge of Seventeen"

The pleasures are similar in Kelly Fremon Craig's spectacular debut: a genre movie (this time a teen coming-of-age comedy in the John Hughes mold) made with uncommon authenticity and wit. And I'm not sure I enjoyed any performance this year more than

Hailee Steinfeld's beset high-schooler who curses her generation as "mouth breathers."

LINDSEY BAHR:

1. "La La Land."

Damien Chazelle's film has more edge than many seem to give it credit for. Like those of its spiritual predecessor Jacques Demy, "La La Land" might be soaked in lavender skies, bright costumes and bouncy songs, but under the surface lingers a gnawing uncertainty about art and ambition and love and sacrifice. And it'll leave you singing "Another Day of Sun," even if it is through wistful tears.

2. "Manchester by the Sea"

The script! The performances! The atmosphere! The score! It's all uncomfortably perfect. "Manchester by the Sea" is a fully realized and affecting American epic about all-consuming grief and the inconvenient, often funny and sometimes impossible life that remains. It's a career-defining role for Casey Affleck.

3. "Jackie"

Moody and unsettling, "Jackie" might not explain the former first lady, but Pablo Larrain's unconventional biopic illuminates her hand in crafting that indelible Camelot



This image released by Magnolia Pictures shows James Baldwin in a scene from the documentary, "I Am Not Your Negro." — AP Photos

legacy for her family, with a pitch perfect performance from Natalie Portman.

4. "Moonlight"

What is really left to be said about "Moonlight"? It's a triumph of storytelling and image about a man's life in Miami told in three stages. Barry Jenkins' film could easily be among the best of any year. Mahershala Ali is rightfully being singled out for his supporting performance as a drug dealer with a conscience, but he is just one part of an extraordinary cast of actors whose names you'll want to know.

5. "The Red Turtle"

A gorgeous, hand-drawn, wordless fable co-produced by Studio Ghibli, "The Red Turtle" is an elegant gem about a shipwrecked man, whose impact will sneak up on you in the most devastating way. Take a pause from all the noise and give it a chance.

6. "20th Century Women"

Mike Mills is better than anyone at creating those transformative environments that look and feel and seem like real life, but better. Here, he transports you to sun-soaked and anxiety-ridden Santa Barbara in 1979 where three women, a wild teen (Elle Fanning), an angry 20-something (Greta Gerwig), and a 50-something mother (Annette Bening) rally around the emotional education of a teenage boy.

7. "I Am Not Your Negro"

There were a few great documentaries about the black experience in America this year, including Ava DuVernay's look at mass incarceration in "The 13th" and the overwhelmingly powerful "O.J.: Made in America," but Raoul Peck's rendering of James Baldwin's words about the lives and assassinations of Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. stands out among the others for its artful poignancy.

8. "Hail, Caesar!"

"Would that it t'were so simple." No single line this year has echoed in my mind as much as Alden Ehrenreich's earnest rube Hobie Doyle trying so, so hard to please the refined Laurence Lauretzn (Ralph Fiennes, also a standout in "The Big Splash"). The Coen brothers' "Hail, Caesar!" came and went with little fanfare, but this is a slapstick lark that just gets more dizzily delightful with every viewing.

9. "Certain Women"

Quiet and calming, "Certain Women" is a slow-cooked meditative poem about the lives of the modern frontierswoman whose beauty will leave your heart aching and warmed thanks to Laura Dern, Kristen Stewart, Michelle Williams, Lily Gladstone and the strong supporting cast. It's the best Kelly Reichardt has ever made.

10. "Sausage Party"

Who knew some of the year's smartest comedy and most rebellious ideas would come from the mouth of a horny hot dog? Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg's irreverent fever dream about food and religion and culture will make you blush, laugh, wince and think. It's not for everyone, but it wouldn't be great if it was. — AP

Women composers look to even up the movie score

As the movie business struggles with diversity and gender equality issues, there are signs of progress on the music front: At least four features being released between now and year's end have been scored by women, and at least two are expected to be major awards contenders. That may not sound like much. But consider this: No female composer has been nominated for an original-score Oscar in the past 15 years, and only four women have been nominated in the entire 81-year history of the category. Two have won: British composers Rachel Portman, for "Emma," and Anne Dudley, for "The Full Monty."

"Rainbow Time," scored by Heather McIntosh, opened Nov. 4. "Elle," with music by Dudley, opened Nov 16; "Manchester by the Sea," with music by Canadian composer Lesley Barber, opened Nov 18; and "Jackie," with music by English composer Mica Levi, was released Dec 2. "What films you get to work on is a roll of the dice, like it is for everybody," says Academy music-branch governor Laura Karpman. "But there is change in the air, and opportunities for women like I haven't seen, ever. People want this within the Academy, and within the business as well." Karpman is also president of the Alliance for Women Film Composers, which staged an all-women film composers concert attended by 1,500 in downtown LA in August.

Recently, Women in Film sponsored another LA concert, showcasing the work of 13 more composers including Deborah Lurie ("Safe Haven"), the most successful American female film composer in terms of box office (15 films grossing over \$400 million). Last year, according to statistics compiled by the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, women made up just 2% of composers working on the top 250 domestic-grossing films; and in 2014, it was just 1% of the top 250. "These numbers just need to change," says music supervisor Tracy McKnight, chair of WIF's newly formed music committee. "We have to be in the conversation. Directors, producers and studios need to have these women on their radar."

Whether by coincidence or a commitment to change, the likelihood of women composers vying for top awards this year is greater than it's ever been. It is impossible to ignore the music of "Manchester by the Sea" or "Jackie," two films that have already gotten buzz for their acting performances. In "Manchester," Kenneth Lonergan's drama about a tragedy-stricken Massachusetts family, it's Barber's use of voices that, the composer says, "felt right for the location and the emotional landscape." The Toronto-based composer wrote music that she thought might complement the classical pieces (Handel, Albinoni, Massenet) Lonergan had already slotted into the film.

She took inspiration from Calvinist hymns brought by the 17th century Pilgrims to New England, wrote a piece for voice, and recorded her 19-year-old daughter-who is studying opera at McGill University singing all the parts via Skype. With the chorale as a starting point, she then wrote additional music for a small chamber orchestra, predominantly strings and piano, all with "a certain amount of restraint, something a little bit cold and inevitable as well." In the case of "Jackie," a searing portrait of Jackie Kennedy in the 1963 assassination of her husband, President Kennedy, and its aftermath, director Pablo Larraín specifically sought a woman and chose Levi, whose "Under the Skin" score earned a 2014 BAFTA nomination.

Says Larraín: "I thought it would be more meaningful if our composer brought a feminine sensibility to the score. Mica understood the direction I had in mind, but came at it in a completely unique way. I would send her scenes and moments and she would send me back music which wouldn't always work for that specific scene but I would find another [scene] where it fit perfectly." Their striking, unsettling use of a massive string sound at the start of "Jackie" has already garnered attention. "I got together a group of instruments that I thought felt resonant to the time because it was a period piece," Levi says. She chose a small ensemble of strings, flute, clarinet, and percussion.

"That story is very unique, not just the privileged position she was in, but also the amount of loss and the kind of extreme trauma that she experienced. I was trying to write music that I think she'd like, something that might move her. The way that it was used came down to where Pablo put it." The opening piece was originally designed for "a more dramatic moment, maybe the middle, Lee Harvey Oswald's assassination," Levi notes. — Reuters

US rapper Common on teaming up with 13TH

American rapper Common said it was "very special" to team up again with director Ava DuVernay on her latest documentary "13TH", which deals with issues of race and the US criminal justice system. The Chicago native, who won a 2015 Academy Award for best song "Glory" from DuVernay's 1960s civil rights drama "Selma," said it was important for him to work on her latest project. "I think it's very, very special. She is like one of those creative, passionate, intelligent beings and visionaries and is committed. So I'm like always saying, ok, what can we do?," Common said in an interview.

The documentary argues that although slavery was officially abolished in the United States 150 years ago, it is still alive in the form of mass incarceration that disproportionately affects black people. The film, which uses television footage, music and interviews with former prisoners, politicians and academics, owes its title to the 13th amendment to the US Constitution, which ended slavery in 1865. Common released in November his eleventh album, "Black America Again," which he hopes will spark a retelling of the black American experience and a past that includes lynchings, discrimination and other injustices.

The album includes the song "Letter to the Free" which was used in DuVernay's documentary. "I had written the first verse



and then I watched the film and then I continued to work on the second verse.

And she and I went back and forth as far as some of the ideas and what we wanted to hear in the second verse," he said. "13TH" is playing on Netflix. "Black America Again" debuted at number 25 on the Billboard 200 charts. — Reuters

Starry 'Sousatzka' Team on Garth Drabinsky's Comeback Musical

There's a Broadway-bound musical now rehearsing in Toronto whose creative team boasts an impressive 12 Tony Awards and 67 nominations. It also has a producer that's served jail time for fraud and forgery in Canada and remains under indictment in the United States. But then, Garth Drabinsky, the impresario ("Ragtime," "Kiss of the Spider Woman") who served 17 months in prison for cooking the books at his once-giant theatrical entity Livent, has never done things the easy way. His current project, "Sousatzka"-starting previews at Toronto's Elgin Theatre Feb 25 — is proof of that. Related Theater Producer Garth Drabinsky Sets Comeback With 'Sousatzka' As his comeback vehicle, he's picked a show with a cast of nearly 50 and based on a 1962 novel by Bernice Rubens and a 1988 movie that starred Shirley MacLaine.

The story of a Polish Holocaust survivor and music teacher whose life is changed by her interaction with a Bengali piano prodigy has here shifted to become the tale of a South African boy fleeing the horrors of apartheid in the early 1980s. Sixty-seven-year-old impresario Drabinsky has always been drawn to shows with that take race as a theme, such as "Ragtime," "Parade," "Show Boat" and "Kiss of the Spider Woman." Still, to many outside observers, "Sousatzka" seems an old-school throwback in a musical theater world governed lately by the traditional-flouting likes of "Hamilton," "Fun Home" and "Dear Evan Hansen."

But you'd never know any of that from talking to the team of high-profile creators Drabinsky has brought together for "Sousatzka": Book writer Craig Lucas ("An American in Paris"), composer David Shire, lyricist Richard Maltby Jr. ("Ain't Misbehavin'"), director Adrian Noble (the former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company), choreographer Graciela Daniele ("Ragtime," "The Visit"), vocal arranger Lebo M ("The Lion King"), and the design team of Anthony Ward, Paul Tazewell and Howard Binkley. The cast is headed by Victoria Clark (a Tony winner for "The Light in the Piazza"), Montego Glover ("Memphis") and Judy Kaye.

Bigger themes

Conversations with many of them revealed a devotion to the show that bordered on the fanatical. And not one of them expressed reservations about working with Drabinsky. "I directed 'Fosse' for Garth," says Maltby of the Tony-winning 1999 showcase of Bob Fosse's work. "He's simply a great producer. He cares about everything. He's both supportive and demanding. He only wants the best work and he pushes you

to get it." Author Lucas admits to having been unenthusiastic about the show's storyline when it was first presented to him. Drabinsky, he recalled, asked him to read the novel and come up to Canada to discuss working on the musical (since Drabinsky would be arrested if he set foot inside US borders).

"It's a good book, but it didn't send me," admits Lucas. "I went up out of deference and respect to Garth. He spoke me to me about the bigger themes that the novel touched in him: The cost of being in exile, the essence of what it is to be a refugee, how two people can share and bring out the best and



the worst of their histories." Glover, who will play the mother of the young South African piano prodigy, had never met or spoken to Drabinsky, but the activist character she was asked to play seduced her. "And when I heard Lebo M was involved, I knew there was no need to worry," she said.

For composer Shire, the man behind the project was as much an attraction for him as the musical itself. "Garth saw something giant in this essentially tiny story," he said. "He realized that over 15 million people are now living in the world as exiles, and the time has come to tell their story. His recent history doesn't figure in it at all for me. If he was back in business, then he was back in business. That's it, plain and simple." In fact, none of the people connected with "Sousatzka" seemed concerned at all about working for a convicted felon. "It's better than working for an unconvicted felon," Maltby quipped. — Reuters

The Worst Films of 2016

No room for run-of-the-mill bad movies here. To qualify for our scroll of shame, a movie had to be one of the truly godawful, the inept, the ugly, the offensive, or—no small offense—the deadly boring. Here is Owen Gleiberman and Peter Debruge's list of the 10 Worst Films of 2016. Owen Gleiberman's 5 worst:

1. "Nina"

The decision to cast Zoe Saldana as the legendary Nina Simone was make no mistake appalling. Saldana is a fine actress, but the subtext of the casting was, "Simone doesn't meet the new standard of beauty." And that's a profoundly racist notion. But even if the casting had somehow been perfect, this unfathomably shoddy and inept biopic, dominated by a threadbare-TV-movie portrayal of Simone's fabled bad behavior (drunken tantrums, etc.), leaves the glory of a great artist by the wayside to bury itself in a monumentally unconvincing version of tabloid trivia.

2. "Blair Witch"

Please, God-please, Antichrist! — no more! No more unlit night murk, no more endless running, no more witchy widgets made of sticks, no more bad young actors pretending to be real people, no more fear-free scares, no more found-footage horror! No more!

3. "Ben-Hur"

What if they built a chariot race and nobody came? The blockbuster dud of the year was a perfect storm of clueless corporate-think, from the casting of limp noodle Jack Huston in the role made legendary by the studly Charlton Heston to the all-over-the-place snoozy mini-series plotting to the decision to pander to the Evangelical demo by playing up Jesus to the franchise-mentality delusion that the chariot climax—so analog! so retro gritty! — was going to be "Gladiator" on wheels.

4. "Hillary's America: The Secret History of the Democratic Party"

You've got to say this for the rightwing firebrand-turned-documentary filmmaker Dinesh D'Souza: A few years back, he looked like an outlier, but now he looks like the founding father of fake news. In his latest alternate-reality screed, D'Souza piles on the historical conspiracy theories and flagrant disregard for facts to blame the Democratic Party for everything from slavery to the genocidal killing of Native Americans to the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. (Inner-city poverty? That's their fault too.) By the time he gets to Hillary Clinton, the movie has run out of gas, but that's because D'Souza's real subject is himself: the conserva-



tive martyr-hero preaching truthiness to power.

5. "Alice Through the Looking Glass"

It looks like a special effects factory that threw up. Yet beneath the overbearing onslaught of psychedelic eye candy, there is indeed a tale—a very bad one. It's the backstory of how the Mad Hatter was wounded and abused as a young man, which explains why he turned into that nattering pinwheel-eyed prankster played by Johnny Depp.

What it doesn't explain is why we should care.

Peter Debruge's 5 worst:

1. "The Brothers Grimsby"

Separated from "Borat" director Larry Charles (who was busy embarrassing himself with Nicolas Cage satire "Army of One"), Sacha Baron Cohen plumbed new depths of puerile humor in this ill-conceived spy-movie spoof. As if the gag in which Daniel Radcliffe passes HIV to Donald Trump wasn't in poor enough taste, the film dives even

further into the gutter as Cohen and Mark Strong hide inside an elephant's vagina, where they are unspeakably violated by a bull in heat. (Poor Penelope Cruz, who allowed herself to be objectified first in "Zoolander 2," and then this raunchy piece of garbage.)

2. "Man Down"

Say what you will about Shia LaBeouf, but the guy can act, doing so with an intensity that has become almost scary. Whereas "American Honey" benefits enor-

mously from the star's feral energy, it's not enough to save Dito Montiel's manipulative look at how a recent Afghanistan veteran copes with PTSD. What might have been an exciting reunion between LaBeouf and his "A Guide to Recognizing Your Saints" director instead unfolds like a bad episode of "The Twilight Zone," using a risible case of child endangerment to prove its painfully obvious point.

3. "The Sea of Trees"

Every year, countless inconsolable souls go to Japan's Aokigahara forest to take their own lives—a fact director Gus Van Sant milks for tacky exoticism in this reprehensible melodrama starring Matthew McConaughey as a grieving American who makes an implausibly long journey just to off himself, only to meet a fellow depressive (Ken Watanabe) who convinces him his life is worth fighting for. The worst film of the 2015 Cannes Film Festival finally found its way to American screens more than a year later, by which point a little movie called "Paterson" had improved on the cliché (watch for a playful scene with a magical Japanese tourist).

4. "The Girl on the Train"

"The Help" was a hit in spite of Tate Taylor's direction, not because of it, but that didn't stop Universal from hiring him to helm another female-driven literary sensation. Taylor botches the assignment every which way he can, squandering a courageous lead performance from Emily Blunt and failing to establish the one thing that might have saved this sloppy missing-persons mystery: making us suspect that Blunt's blackout-prone drunk could be responsible. Instead, we don't even buy that she's an alcoholic, which makes the eye-rolling finale in which she stabs the culprit with a corkscrew—all the more laughable.

5. "Kate Plays Christine"

Exploiting the fallacy that actors suffer as much as their characters, indie darling Kate Lyn Sheil pretends to wrestle with how to portray troubled 1970s TV reporter Christine Chubbuck, who notoriously shot herself on the air. Director Robert Greene's fraudulent behind-the-scenes documentary raises questions about spectatorship (the movie insultingly assumes that its audience has come see her pull the trigger) and the emotional toll certain roles take on actors (not understanding how talented professionals separate themselves from the material). Kate can't hack it, but Rebecca Hall was a revelation playing the same character in "Christine," which made my top 10 list. — Reuters

FILM REVIEW

Jennifer Lawrence and Chris Pratt in 'Passengers'

Passengers is the tale of a lonely guy in space, the drama of an ethical conundrum, a love story featuring two of the hottest actors on the planet, and a turbulent sci-fi action-adventure-and for all of that, it manages to be not a very good movie. The two stars, Jennifer Lawrence and Chris Pratt, are both intensely gifted and easy on the eyes, and the film takes off from a not-bad idea, but the set-up is way better than the follow-through. The director, the Norwegian-born Morten Tyldum, made the accomplished WWII brainiac spy thriller "The Imitation Game" (2014), but he turns out to be the wrong filmmaker for an amorous space opera. You can see why when he stages a scene that's supposed to take us out of this world, but doesn't.

We're on the Avalon, a corporate starship that's shaped like a spidery double

played by Michael Sheen like the chipper robot cousin of Lloyd the bartender in "The Shining." But unless either Jim or Aurora manages to live another 90 years or so, this voyage is going to eat up the remainder of their existence, and they've got no one but each other to keep each other company. Since they happen to look like Jennifer Lawrence and Chris Pratt (stranded in space, you could do worse), it starts to seem like things will work out.

They get to know each other and go on a "date," at which point Jim tells Aurora that he'd like to take her to a place that's "the best show in town." He's talking about a deep-space walk. The two don heavy-duty suits and, hanging by a tether, venture outside the ship, into the starry vastness, at which point you may flash back to other visions of flying human rapture—Christopher Reeve whisking Margot Kidder

wakes up, he thinks the voyage of the Avalon is complete (the passengers are scheduled to come out of hibernation four months before the end of the journey). It doesn't take long for him to realize, though, that something is amiss. He's surrounded by chirpy holograms and talking food dispensers—but there's no other live human.

The Avalon is like an abandoned cruise ship, and the movie serves up some witty tweaks of top-down corporate culture, like the way that Jim can't order a first-rate cup of coffee (because he's not a Gold Star passenger), or the fact that he can't get through to anyone back on earth, because everything on the ship is programmed to stonewall you. (No information leaks out, even if your life depends on it.) The situation Jim finds himself in is a gnawing nightmare; it's as if he'd been sentenced to die alone, in 50 years, of boredom. Pratt, beneath the jock sexiness, is a fine actor who lets his eyes dance with playful intent, and with a dash of panic. Jim tries to make a go of things, but after too many days of eating, drinking, and one-man hologram dance-offs, he enters his Jim Morrison-on-the-skids phase.

The question is: Will he rouse a fellow passenger, 90 years before she's scheduled to wake up, in order to save himself? He knows that doing so is indefensible (it's like playing God), but he also knows that if he doesn't make the decision to screw someone else over, he's going to go crazy. The way that "Passengers" forces Jim to weigh his choice, and puts the audience in his shoes, seems responsible enough. Yet that still doesn't make it an infectious thing to build a movie around. Jim's whole relationship with Aurora is based on a selfish and rather creepy act, as well as a lie (the implication that she woke up accidentally, the same way he did). He's crafty about it, but we're waiting for their romance to crash.

Lawrence and Pratt match up nicely, because they're such naturally responsive actors; they're fast, with mutual radar. Lawrence, though a bit less vivid when she's this blonde, gives Aurora a core of survivalist moxie. She will do what the circumstances demand. But can Jim keep his secret? There's only one place for "Passengers" to go, and once it gets there, Jon Spaihts's script runs out of gas. That won't necessarily hurt the movie commercially, since it offers the kind of big-star mashup that every holiday movie season needs. Tyldum handles the dialogue almost as if he were doing a stage play, but he turns out to be a blah director of spectacle; he doesn't make it dramatic. (He does create one cool image, though, of a swimming pool freed from gravity.) There isn't much to "Passengers" besides its one thin situation, and there are moments when the film could almost be "a very special episode of 'Star Trek,'" because Pratt, with his golden-boy smirk, has a Kirkian side, and the voyage they're on is grandiose yet amorphous (like the Enterprise's). The ship itself has a variety of chambers and communal spaces, but it all seems overly familiar and sterile.—Reuters



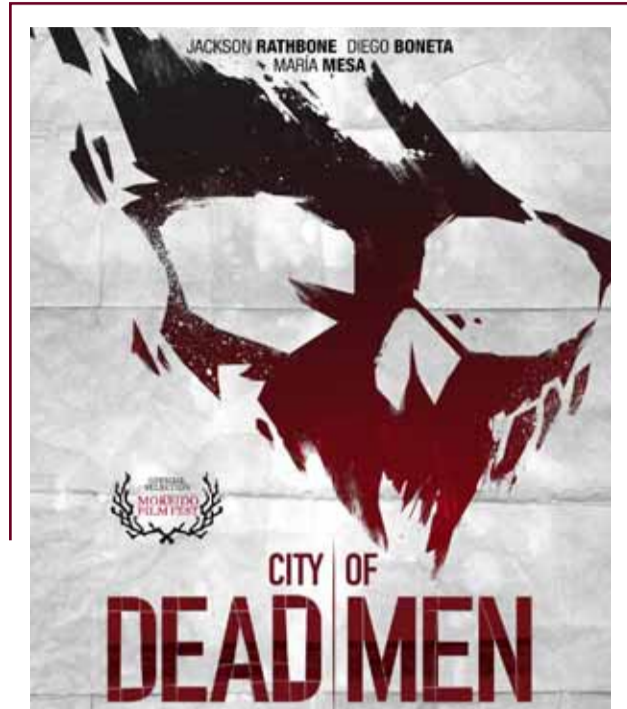
helix. The spacecraft, which is headed for a prefab interplanetary colony called Homestead II (in the future, it seems, off-world lands will become franchises for those tired of life on earth), is carrying 255 crew members and 5,000 volunteer passengers, all of whom are in a state of suspended animation and set to stay that way for 120 years. That's how long the voyage will take. But two of the passengers get woken up early: Jim Preston (Pratt), a mechanical engineer who's jostled to consciousness in his hibernation pod after the ship hits a meteor, and Aurora Lane (Lawrence), a journalist whom Jim deliberately rouses from her slumber so that he'll have someone to keep him company.

The two have all the food, alcohol, and entertainment they could want; there's a basketball court, a video dance floor, and an elegant if empty bar presided over by a red-jacketed android named Arthur,

through the night sky in "Superman," or George Clooney and Sandra Bullock (though they were just pesky colleagues) bobbing around in the awesome void of "Gravity." In different ways, both those movies made your heart skip a beat.

Big-star mashup

But in "Passengers," the big romantic spacewalk is so perfunctory and visually rote that it's about as stunning as a glimpse out the window of an airplane cruising over Cleveland. The scene is a harbinger of what's to come, since the two actors spend the rest of the movie going through the motions of what turns out to be a flavorless and rather predictable fable. Too bad! Because for its opening 45 minutes or so, "Passengers" is a reasonably cunning slice of commercial sci-fi, even as it overtly recycles the strategies of films like "The Martian" and "Moon." When Jim first



The combination of raves, hallucinogens, wild youth, and pagan rituals in a creepy former mental asylum ought to add up to something a lot more exciting than "City of Dead Men." This quasi-horror feature debut for director Kirk Sullivan and scenarist Andrew Poston features slick visual packaging on modest means. But there's not much substance to be found in its murky story of a rootless American getting involved with some vaguely rebellious, possibly demon-worshipping skateboarder types in Medellín. Though VOD outfit Gravititas Ventures is opening the US-Colombia co-production on a handful of US screens Dec 16, including Hollywood's Arena CineLounge and San Francisco's Roxie, it's sure to make more of a (still-limited) impact on demand.

Michael (Jackson Rathbone of the "Twilight" series) is in a sense back home—he was born in Medellín, then shipped north to an unloved California military father when his Colombian mother died. But his return many years later, triggered by guilt over a younger sibling's accidental death, finds him just scraping by in various not-quite-legal ways. Discovered sleeping in an unlocked car, he's saved from the angry owner's fists by passer-by Melody (Maria Mesa). She invites him to "a little party" at a location that turns out to be fairly far-flung. It's a former psychiatric hospital whose current squatters include smirking sinister Diego (Diego Boneta from TV's "Scream Queens"), ringleader to a group of like young outcasts.

Michael is allowed to stay—a decrepit private room with bed in still an upgrade for him—though he's expected to become "one of us" by imbibing mysterious substances and, under the influence, shooting his own reflection in a mirror. After this faux "death" and a few other "rites of passage," he's considered a fellow "Dead Man," free to "Live like you're already dead." This does not immediately appear to mean much beyond reckless skateboarding, tagging, robbing and beating people, plus of course partying at the "hospital's" nightly raves. But membership also apparently comes with disturbing visions of the institution's past (which may have encompassed insidious "experiments" on children) as well as his own dead brother. When Michael finds an unsettling mask, an older local tells him such items have a long history of use in tribal rituals involving suicide and the spirit world. All this is fine as a starting premise.

Unfortunately, "City" is the kind of film where just when we finally feel that premise is about to lead somewhere, the closing credits roll. There are lots of interchangeable jump scares, albeit surprisingly little in the way of violence (let alone sex). The intersection between supernatural and pseudo-scientific malfeasance remains somewhat under-defined; by the time characters take a stab at explaining what's going on, it's hard to care enough to pay close attention. If the actors are just passable, it must be allowed the writing doesn't give them a lot to work with. While "City" doesn't ultimately deliver much in the way of suspense, payoff, or even dead men for that matter, it does look good, with Joshua Reis' widescreen photography frequently bathed in psychedelic-Gothic coloration worthy of late 1970s Dario Argento. Other tech and design contributions are decent.—Reuters

2017 IS THE YEAR YOU TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR SECURITY INTELLIGENCE, AWARENESS

DUBAI: As we approach the year-end attention of course turns to what we can expect to see in 2017 and what we as security professionals need to be prepared for.

In many ways, 2016 was very much the 'Year of the Ransomware Threat', and it is very hard to see that changing much next year. After all most cybercrime is driven by hard cash and the fact remains that most ransomware and extortion attacks are successful.

Estimates from the FBI suggest ransomware could be worth \$1 billion this year but the agency pointed to a jump in cases where victims reported bigger losses, and also hinted that the actual ransom payment totals may be even larger since many choose not to report the crime.

So ransomware and extortion is not going away in 2017, but what else can we expect next year?

First, in 2016 there were some very high profile Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) and we can expect to see even more in 2017 with criminals making more use of techniques like Mirai to leverage IoT and networked

devices to amplify their attacks. These sorts of DDoS attacks powered by cheap, insecure IoT devices could become more common, but they are also likely to become less lethal suppliers harden their defenses and device manufacturers adopt identity-based security to close vulnerabilities.

Second, I expect there will be a change in approach by the criminals using DDoS extortion attacks. Not only will they continue to go after larger demands for payment, but also they will utilize malware like Mirai to target network enabled devices like routers and remote cameras to amplify the attacks and make them more prolonged and adaptive. We are becoming more used to the Internet of Things, but what if criminals turn this against us to demand money via extortion attempts? We have already seen IoT linked attacks in 2016 and this can only increase in 2017.

Third, in all the 'excitement' of IoT and DDoS attacks we cannot afford to lose sight of the continuing threat caused by data breaches. Whether deliberate or accidental, data breaches cost businesses millions of dollars

each year in loss of business; brand damage and reputation. A recent IBM study found that the average cost of a data breach has hit \$4 million-up from \$3.8 million in 2015.

But while these three are likely to be the most common threats faced in 2017, it is important to mention how some threats are more relevant to some organisations than others. The most targeted sectors include healthcare, financial services, retail, and communications and media.

But in no way can any business or individual afford to be complacent. It is critical that you understand your individual threat model and plan in case the worst does happen. You also need to monitor inside and outside of your network and look at the threats revealed through the eyes of an attacker. Only then can you begin to ensure you have enough intelligence and awareness to manage the risks effectively for when the inevitable attack happens.

All in all it's critical that you make sure 2017 is the year you take control of your security intelligence and awareness.



Alastair Paterson, CEO and Co-founder of Digital Shadows

GALILEO, EUROPE'S RIVAL TO GPS SATNAV SYSTEM, STARTS SERVICE

BERLIN: Eight years late and billions over budget, European officials flipped the switch Thursday on a satellite navigation system meant to rival the US-made GPS service that's become a staple feature of smartphones and cars worldwide.

The Galileo system, named after the Italian engineer and astronomer, is designed to provide commercial and government customers with more precise location data than GPS.

Being able to pinpoint a position is critical to a growing range of products and systems, including real-time logistics, self-driving cars and drone delivery services.

Satellite systems such as GPS also play an important role in providing precision timing for financial transactions and energy grids.

The launch of the first 18 Galileo satellites was hit by delays and several failures. One satellite has stopped working and two others ended up in the wrong orbit.

But the European Space Agency managed to launch four satellites on a single rocket last month and expects to have a full complement of 24 satellites, plus spares, in orbit within four years.

Galileo originally was meant to begin service in 2008 at a cost of 3 billion euros (\$3.1 billion), but the development and operation is now expected to cost 13 billion euros by 2020, German news agency dpa reported.

While GPS receivers are standard in millions of devices already, only a handful of gadgets support the Galileo system so far.

Galileo's free consumer signal will provide location data offering precision within about one meter (3 feet, 3 inches), compared to 5 meters (16 feet) or more for GPS. A premium service eventually will offer even greater precision to paying customers and police, fire departments and government agencies. The system is also designed to boost search-and-rescue operations by cutting the amount of time it takes to pinpoint distress beacons used by people lost at sea or in the wilderness.

Galileo is owned by the European Commission, the executive arm of the European Union, based in Brussels. — AP



Bruce Zhou, CEO, AXILSPOT



AXILSPOT EXPANDS OPERATIONS TO MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

DUBAI: AXILSPOT, a global vendor in enterprise wireless networking, announced the launch of its operations in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region. As part of its regional expansion plans, the company will appoint reputed distributors and strengthen its channel network by onboarding partners across the region.

AXILSPOT offers state-of-the-art enterprise wireless connectivity solutions including wireless access points, bridges, base station, enterprise WLAN management platforms and PoE Switches to name a few. A key differentiator of AXILSPOT from its competitors is its patented multi-beam smart selection array system called Rscan, that reduces interference, allows the highest transmission speeds, successfully manages hundreds of concurrent users and offers the more precise location based service (LBS).

"The Middle East and Africa has some of the fastest growing mobility growth rates as well as state of the art service provider technologies. With the arrival of 4G+ technologies in the region, end users want the same lightning fast mobile experiences available from service providers inside their offices, homes and in some public places too. Rscan, the AXILSPOT patented antenna array technology, fitted into all of our products, allows end users to experience the fastest wireless networking transmission speeds with minimum

drop outs and line of sight interference," said Bruce Zhou, CEO, AXILSPOT.

In order to tap the fast-growing mobility opportunity in the region, AXILSPOT also announced its intention to appoint key channel partners in the region across its three partner categories. These include Authorised Solution Partner, Authorised Value Added Distributor, and Master Distributor. Based on the above levels, AXILSPOT channel partners are variably offered Price Discounts, Online Training, Onsite Training, Deal Registration, Market Development Funds, Sales and Marketing Tools, Account Manager, Purchase Demo Kits, Dedicated Sales Person, Dedicated Trained Engineer, Marketing Activities.

"We have a simplified channel partner structure that allows partners to engage with us in the way best suited to their business. We offer significant discount and value benefits to all the three levels of channel partners. Based on our global experience and the large number of leisure hotels, shopping malls, tourist destinations, business events and conferences, in some of the countries in the MEA region, we are very confident that our products will dramatically change the experience of mobile users and visitors in these countries," Bruce Zhou explained.

"This will help us to get traction with the wireless and network solution integrators, as well as technology decision mak-

ers. We are very confident of high levels of our business growth in this region, along with our prospective channel partners," he added.

AXILSPOT is a recent entrant in the global enterprise wireless networking industry with its core intellectual property rights. The company is committed to providing superior products and solutions for the most critical issues in wireless networks today, including how to create affordable reliability and how to meet dramatically increasing needs for connectivity, all over the world.

Swift, sensible, secure, stable, smart, scalable, simple, AXILSPOT is dedicated to providing consistent and the highest-speed wireless coverage and transmission solutions with the 7S WLAN experience. Catering to the entire enterprise and SME market including industry verticals and smart city projects, AXILSPOT provides smarter wireless solutions in four series: Dorado Series, Dolphin Series, Mobula Series and Seal Series.

With patented Rscan Smart Antenna Array Technology, AXILSPOT can deliver very high density of 800+ concurrent users with 5.3G capacity. The patented Rscan Antenna Array Technology ensures AXILSPOT wireless solutions a consistent and high speed wireless coverage over the targeted area without being dropped off due to blind spots and interferences.

YAHOO'S MEGA BREACH SHOWS JUST HOW VULNERABLE DATA IS

NEW YORK: The revelation of Yahoo's latest hack underscores what many Americans have known for years: All those emails, photos and other personal files stored online can easily be stolen, and there's little anyone can do about it. The only saving grace is that the attackers apparently did not exploit the information for fraud. But their true motives remain a mystery. While there are a number of straightforward measures all users should take to protect themselves, relatively few people actually do. And in this case, doing so wouldn't really have mattered. Even the most scrupulous individual countermeasures could only limit the damage.

"Yahoo users could have had immaculate computer security and still been the victim here," said Will Ackerly, chief technology officer at Virtru, a computer security firm he co-founded after working for eight years at the National Security Agency.

"Short of using encryption, there's no way to keep your email from being compromised in this kind of hack."

The mega breach disclosed Wednesday exposed more than a billion user accounts,

the largest such attack in history. The company said the attack happened in August 2013, although Yahoo only discovered it recently. Worse, the company's announcement followed a similar announcement in September about a 2014 hack that Yahoo ascribed to an unnamed foreign government. That breach affected 500 million accounts.

Some experts believe the record-breaking amount of data stolen in the breach announced Wednesday also points to state-sponsored hackers in search of a specific target, which could be why three years later the data still hasn't been spotted for sale on the web. And neither Yahoo breach has yet been linked to online fraud or any specific repercussions for Yahoo users.

But their disclosure closely follows U.S. intelligence concerns about Russian hacking of Democratic emails during the presidential campaign - not to mention recent attacks on a major health insurer, a medical lab-test company and the government office that manages millions of federal employees.

"The lesson is clear: No organization is immune to compromise," said Jeff Hill, direc-

tor of product management for cybersecurity consultant Prevalent. And since most of us are dependent on big organizations that hold our digital lives in their hands, in a broad sense that means no one is safe.

The hacks represent yet another stumble for the struggling Sunnyvale, California, company as it tries to reinvent itself. The breaches occurred during the reign of Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer, a once-lauded leader who has been unable to turn around the company in the four years since she arrived.

Earlier this year, Yahoo agreed to sell its digital operations to Verizon Communications for \$4.8 billion - a deal that may now be jeopardized by the hacking revelations.

Meanwhile, it's clear that Yahoo didn't do enough to protect its users. For example, the company acknowledges using MD5, a password-storage method considered by many experts to be inadequate and inferior to others available at the time of the hack.

One of Yahoo's priorities will now need to be keeping its users updated as its investigation progresses, said Jeremiah Grossman,

chief of security strategy for SentinelOne.

"I think that would go a long way to assuring users and everybody that they're doing the right things," said Grossman, who worked in security at Yahoo from 1999 to 2001. "The best peace of mind in cybersecurity is transparency."

Changing Passwords

There's only so much a company like Yahoo can do to protect its users without damaging its business model, which involves selling advertising based on data gleaned from its users, Grossman noted.

As a result, it can't do things like encrypt user data, which would make the information useless to hackers. Other companies that don't sell advertising, such as Apple, are able to encrypt. And some, such as Google, do so too but not in a way that would have protected against this type of hack. They also hold the keys to that encryption, giving them the access they need for advertising sales.

"If you take a step back, the 1 billion people aren't Yahoo's customers, they're its product," Grossman said.— AP

FACEBOOK GETS SERIOUS ABOUT FIGHTING FAKE NEWS

NEW YORK: Facebook is taking new measures to curb the spread of fake news on its huge and influential social network. It will focus on the "worst of the worst" offenders and partner with outside fact-checkers and news organizations to sort honest news reports from made-up stories that play to people's passions and preconceived notions.

The social network will make it easier for users to report fake news when they see it, which they'll be able to do in two steps, not three. If enough people report a story as fake, Facebook will pass it to third-party fact-checking organizations that are part of the nonprofit Poynter Institute's International Fact-Checking Network. Five fact-checking and news organizations are working with Facebook on this: ABC News, The Associated Press, FactCheck.org, Politifact and Snopes. Facebook says this group is likely to expand.

Stories that flunk the fact check won't be removed from Facebook. But they'll be publicly flagged as "disputed," which will force them to appear lower down in people's news feed. Users can click on a link to learn why that is. And if people decide they want to share the story with friends anyway, they can - but they'll get another warning.

Why Fake News Matters

"We do believe that we have an obligation to combat the spread of fake news," said John Hegeman, vice president of product management on news feed, in an interview. But he added that Facebook also takes its role to provide people an open platform seriously, and that it is not the company's place to decide what is true or false.

Fake news stories touch on a broad range of subjects, from unproven cancer cures to celebrity hoaxes and backyard Bigfoot sightings. But fake political stories have drawn outsized attention because of the possibility that they influenced public perceptions and could have swayed the US presidential election.

There have been dangerous real-world consequences. A fake story about a child sex ring at a Washington, D.C., pizza joint prompted a man to fire an assault rifle inside the restaurant. By partnering with respected outside organizations and flagging, rather than removing, fake stories, Facebook is sidestepping some of the biggest concerns experts had raised about it exercising its considerable power in this area. For instance, some worried that Facebook might act as a censor - and not a skillful one, either, being an engineer-led company with little experience making complex media ethics decisions.

"They definitely don't have the expertise," said Robyn Caplan, researcher at Data & Society, a nonprofit research institute funded in part by Microsoft and the National Science Foundation. In an interview before Facebook's announcement, she urged the company to "engage media professionals and organizations that are working on these issues."—AP



DETROIT: General Motors Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Mary Barra stands next to an autonomous Chevrolet Bolt electric car Thursday, in Detroit. General Motors has started testing fully autonomous vehicles on public roads around its technical center in suburban Detroit.— AP

GM BEGINS TESTING AUTONOMOUS CARS ON MICHIGAN PUBLIC ROADS

DETROIT: General Motors has started testing fully autonomous vehicles on public roads around its technical center in suburban Detroit.

The announcement comes just one week after Gov. Rick Snyder signed legislation that allows the cars to be tested on public roads without a driver or a steering wheel. But the automaker says that for now, it will have human backup drivers for its fleet of autonomous Chevrolet Bolt electric cars.

Testing started Thursday on roads near the tech center in Warren, Michigan. The Bolts will soon move to the entire Detroit metro area, which will serve as the company's main testing center for snowy and cold weather.

Weather is one of the biggest obstacles to autonomous cars because snow

can stop cameras and other sensors from spotting critical things such as lane lines and traffic signals. GM's other public-road testing sites are in warm climates: San Francisco and Scottsdale, Arizona. Currently it's running about 40 autonomous Bolts in tests.

CEO Mary Barra also announced Thursday that GM will build an unspecified number of fully autonomous Bolts on the assembly line where regular Bolts are made, in order to gain expertise in building autonomous vehicles.

The Bolt, which went on sale in California and Oregon this week, can go 238 miles on a single charge and costs about \$30,000 when a \$7,500 federal tax credit is factored in. Autonomous Bolts, which have distinctive spinning laser towers on their roofs, will come off the

assembly line in Orion Township north of Detroit starting next year.

GM had been testing autonomous Bolts on the sprawling technical center grounds for the past few weeks, but wanted to move to public roads soon after the law became effective to take advantage of weather.

"There's so much complexity on public roads," said Doug Parks, the company's vice president of autonomous vehicle engineering. "We're trying to prepare for every different kind of failure mode." Executives wouldn't say when GM would start testing without a human driver, but predicted it would be within a couple of years. GM also wants to start running a fleet of autonomous taxis that could be summoned by passengers and is allowed under the new Michigan law.— AP



00:50 River Monsters
01:45 Bad Dog
02:40 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory
03:35 Tanked
04:25 I'm Alive
05:15 Gator Boys
06:02 River Monsters
06:49 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory
07:36 Swamp Brothers
08:25 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory
09:15 Lone Star Law
10:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
11:05 Wildest Islands Of Indonesia
12:00 Tanked
12:55 Bondi Vet
13:50 The Real Lion Queen
14:45 Preposterous Pets
15:40 Into The Pride
16:35 Rogue Nature With Dave Salmoni
17:30 I'm Alive
18:25 The Real Lion Queen
19:20 Lone Star Law
20:15 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory
21:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet
22:05 Tanked
23:00 Lone Star Law
23:55 Gator Boys



00:00 Tosh.0
00:25 John Oliver's New York Stand Up Show
01:15 Tosh.0
01:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
02:05 Ugly Americans
02:30 Broad City
03:00 Workaholics
03:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
04:15 Key And Peele
05:05 Ridiculousness
05:55 Tosh.0
06:50 Workaholics
07:40 Key And Peele
08:30 Workaholics
09:20 Tosh.0
10:10 Ridiculousness
11:00 Urban Tarzan
11:50 Tosh.0
13:05 Framework
13:55 Ridiculousness
15:10 Hungry Investors
16:00 Workaholics
16:30 Workaholics
16:55 Key And Peele
17:50 The It Crowd
18:15 I Live With Models
18:39 Brotherhood
19:03 The Jim Gaffigan Show
19:50 Idiotsitter
20:13 Tosh.0
20:37 Tosh.0
21:00 The Daily Show - Global Edition
21:30 Chappelle's Show
21:54 Broad City
22:18 Another Period
22:42 Inside Amy Schumer
23:05 The Half Hour
23:30 The Daily Show - Global Edition



01:10 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre
02:00 Sacred Steel Bikes
02:50 Street Outlaws
03:40 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Storage Hunters UK
08:05 How It's Made: Dream Cars
10:10 Gold Rush
11:00 Deadliest Catch
11:50 Catching Monsters
12:40 Fat N' Furious: Rolling Thunder
16:50 Sacred Steel Bikes
17:40 Kings Of The Wild
18:30 World's Top 5
19:20 Marooned With Ed Stafford
20:10 Racing Extinction
21:50 Edge Of Alaska
22:40 Alaska: The Last Frontier
23:30 Gold Rush



00:40 Prototype This
01:30 Weird Or What?
02:20 Mythbusters
03:10 How Do They Do It?
03:35 Food Factory
04:00 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
04:24 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
04:48 Prototype This
05:36 Mythbusters
06:24 Weird Or What?
07:12 How Do They Do It?
07:36 Food Factory
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:26 Food Factory
08:50 Food Factory
09:14 Food Factory
09:38 Food Factory
10:02 Food Factory
10:26 How Do They Do It?
10:50 How Do They Do It?
11:14 How Do They Do It?
11:38 How Do They Do It?
12:02 How Do They Do It?
12:26 Magic Of Science
12:50 Magic Of Science
13:14 You Have Been Warned
14:02 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie
14:50 Race To Escape
15:38 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
16:02 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
16:26 Mythbusters
17:14 Mythbusters
18:02 Weird Or What?
18:50 Weird Or What?
19:40 Weird Or What?
20:30 How To Build... Everything
20:55 How To Build... Everything
21:20 Curiosity: How Does Life Begin?
22:10 Man v Asteroid: An Asteroid Day Special



00:10 Hank Zipzer
00:35 Binny And The Ghost
01:00 Violetta
01:45 The Hive
01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:40 Hank Zipzer
03:05 Binny And The Ghost
03:30 Violetta
04:15 The Hive
04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
05:10 Hank Zipzer
05:35 Binny And The Ghost
06:00 Violetta
06:45 The Hive
06:50 Mouk
07:00 Dog With A Blog
07:25 Dog With A Blog
07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
07:55 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
08:20 Elena Of Avalor
08:45 Star Darlings
08:50 Liv And Maddie
09:15 Jessie
09:40 Jessie
10:05 Jessie
10:30 Good Luck Charlie: The Road Trip Movie
12:10 Good Luck Charlie
12:35 Good Luck Charlie
13:00 Good Luck Charlie
13:25 Good Luck Charlie
13:50 Good Luck Charlie

14:15 Backstage
14:40 Backstage
15:05 Bizaardvark
15:30 Dog With A Blog
15:55 Dog With A Blog
16:20 Stuck In The Middle
16:45 Duck The Halls: A Very Mickey Christmas
17:10 Elena Of Avalor
17:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
18:00 The Next Step
18:25 Sky High
20:00 Star Darlings
20:05 Disney Cookabout
20:30 Elena Of Avalor
20:55 Best Friends Whenever
21:20 Jessie
21:45 Jessie
22:10 Jessie
22:35 H2O: Just Add Water
23:00 Binny And The Ghost
23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



00:00 Doc McStuffins
00:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons
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
03:00 Calimero
03:15 Zou
03:30 Loopdidoo

03:45 Art Attack
04:10 Henry Hugglemonster
04:25 Calimero
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
07:35 Art Attack
08:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
08:30 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
09:00 Little Mermaid
09:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
10:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
10:30 The Lion Guard
11:00 Sofia The First
11:30 Goldie & Bear
12:00 Jake's Never Land Rescue
13:00 Sofia The First
13:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
14:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
14:30 Doc McStuffins
15:00 The Lion Guard
15:30 Sofia The First
16:00 Jake's Never Land Rescue
17:00 Goldie & Bear
17:30 PJ Masks
18:00 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
18:30 Goldie & Bear
19:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
19:30 Little Mermaid
20:00 PJ Masks
20:30 Sofia The First
21:00 Jake's Never Land Rescue
22:00 Goldie & Bear
22:30 Goldie & Bear
23:00 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
23:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse



06:00 Supa Strikas
06:25 Supa Strikas
06:50 Counterfeit Cat
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:15 K.C. Undercover
07:40 Atomic Puppet
08:10 Lab Rats
08:35 Danger Mouse
09:00 K.C. Undercover
09:25 Lab Rats
09:50 K.C. Undercover
10:20 Lab Rats
10:45 K.C. Undercover
11:10 Lab Rats
11:35 Duck The Halls: A Very Mickey Christmas
12:00 Tarzan 2
13:20 Danger Mouse
13:45 Lab Rats
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 K.C. Undercover
14:40 Counterfeit Cat
14:50 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
15:05 K.C. Undercover
15:30 Atomic Puppet
15:55 Lab Rats
16:25 Danger Mouse
16:50 Star Wars Rebels
17:15 Future-Worm!
17:40 Star Wars Freemaker
18:10 Duck The Halls: A Very Mickey Christmas
18:35 Tarzan 2
19:55 Counterfeit Cat
20:20 Star Wars Rebels
20:45 Mighty Med
21:10 Pickle And Peanut
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
22:10 Ultimate Spider-Man
22:35 Boyster
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

06:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
07:20 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
08:20 E! News
09:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
10:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
11:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
12:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:05 E! News
14:05 Just Jillian
15:00 Botched
16:00 Botched
17:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
18:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
19:00 E! News
20:00 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
21:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
22:00 Just Jillian
23:00 E! News
00:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
00:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
01:50 Botched
02:20 E! News



00:00 All Star Academy
01:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:00 Man Fire Food
02:30 Man Fire Food
03:00 Chopped
04:00 Guy's Grocery Games
05:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
05:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
06:00 Chopped
07:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes
08:00 The Kitchen
09:00 Siba's Table
09:30 Siba's Table
10:00 The Pioneer Woman
10:30 The Pioneer Woman
11:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
11:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
12:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
12:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
13:00 Chopped
14:00 Man Fire Food
14:30 Man Fire Food
15:00 Guy's Big Bite
15:30 Guy's Big Bite
16:00 Siba's Table
16:30 Siba's Table
17:00 Man Fire Food
17:30 Man Fire Food
18:00 Chopped
19:00 Man Finds Food
19:30 Man Finds Food
20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:00 Man Fire Food
21:30 Man Fire Food
22:00 Man Finds Food
22:30 Man Finds Food
23:00 Chopped



00:00 America's Book Of Secrets
01:00 Ancient Aliens
02:00 Missing In Alaska
03:00 Ancient Discoveries
03:50 WWII: Europe's Secret Army
04:40 Serial Killer Earth
05:30 America's Book Of Secrets
06:20 Cities Of The Underworld
07:10 The Universe
08:00 Ancient Aliens
09:00 Missing In Alaska
10:00 Ancient Discoveries
11:00 WWII: Europe's Secret Army
12:00 Serial Killer Earth
13:00 America's Book Of Secrets
14:00 Ancient Aliens
15:00 Missing In Alaska
16:00 Ancient Discoveries
17:00 WWII: Europe's Secret Army
18:00 Serial Killer Earth
19:00 Cities Of The Underworld
20:00 Cities Of The Underworld
21:00 Cities Of The Underworld
22:00 Cities Of The Underworld
23:00 Cities Of The Underworld



03:15 EJ NYC
04:10 EJ NYC
05:05 EJ NYC
06:00 Fashion Bloggers



ROBOT OVERLORDS ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016



- 00:20 Ozzy & Jack's World Detour
- 01:10 The Rise And Fall Of El Chapo
- 02:50 Pawn Stars Australia
- 03:15 Pawn Stars Australia
- 03:40 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
- 04:30 American Restoration
- 05:00 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 06:00 Lost In Transmission
- 06:50 Lost In Transmission
- 07:40 Pawn Stars Australia
- 08:05 Pawn Stars Australia
- 08:30 Counting Cars
- 08:55 Mountain Men
- 09:45 Aussie Pickers
- 10:35 Shipping Wars
- 11:00 Shipping Wars
- 11:25 Counting Cars: Best Of
- 11:50 Counting Cars: Best Of
- 12:15 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 13:05 Ozzy & Jack's World Detour
- 13:55 Hunting Hitler
- 14:45 Time Team
- 15:35 Counting Cars
- 16:00 Counting Cars: Best Of
- 16:25 Counting Cars: Best Of
- 16:50 Aussie Pickers
- 17:40 Shipping Wars
- 18:05 Shipping Wars
- 18:30 Pawn Stars
- 18:55 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 19:20 Ozzy & Jack's World Detour
- 20:10 Mountain Men - Closest Calls
- 21:00 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 21:50 Forged In Fire
- 22:40 Time Team
- 23:30 Mountain Men - Closest Calls



THE 5TH WAVE

THE 5TH WAVE ON OSN MOVIES HD



- 03:05 Emmerdale
- 03:30 Emmerdale
- 03:55 Coronation Street
- 06:00 Eggheads
- 06:30 Don't Tell The Bride
- 07:30 Don't Tell The Bride
- 08:30 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 09:45 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 11:00 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
- 11:50 Grantchester
- 12:40 Vera
- 14:30 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
- 15:20 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 16:10 Tonight At The London Palladium
- 17:00 Don't Tell The Bride
- 18:00 Don't Tell The Bride
- 19:00 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 19:50 Tonight At The London Palladium
- 20:40 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 22:10 Eggheads
- 22:40 Coronation Street
- 23:10 Coronation Street
- 23:35 Coronation Street
- 00:05 Coronation Street
- 00:35 Coronation Street
- 01:00 Don't Tell The Bride
- 02:00 Coronation Street
- 02:30 Coronation Street
- 02:55 Coronation Street

- 20:10 Ultimate Animal Countdown
- 21:00 Monster Fish
- 21:50 Animals Gone Wild
- 22:40 Secrets Of The Mediterranean
- 23:30 Shark Men



- 00:30 Cougar Town
- 01:00 Cougar Town
- 01:30 Man Seeking Woman
- 02:00 Man Seeking Woman
- 02:30 It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia
- 03:00 Black-Ish
- 03:30 Kevin Can Wait
- 04:00 Better With You
- 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 05:30 10 Items Or Less
- 06:00 The Grinder
- 06:30 Men At Work
- 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 08:00 Better With You
- 08:30 10 Items Or Less
- 09:00 Black-Ish
- 09:30 Kevin Can Wait
- 10:00 Young & Hungry
- 10:30 Men At Work
- 11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 12:00 The Grinder
- 12:30 Better With You
- 13:00 10 Items Or Less
- 13:30 Men At Work
- 14:00 Kevin Can Wait
- 14:30 Kevin Can Wait
- 15:00 Young & Hungry
- 15:30 Cougar Town
- 16:00 Cougar Town
- 16:30 The Grinder
- 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 18:00 2 Broke Girls
- 18:30 The Simpsons
- 19:00 Wrecked
- 19:30 Dr. Ken
- 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
- 21:00 Cougar Town
- 21:30 Cougar Town
- 22:00 Saturday Night Live



- 00:00 Satisfaction
- 01:00 Mad Dogs
- 02:00 Survivor: Millennials vs Generation X
- 04:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 Prison Break
- 07:00 Drop Dead Diva
- 08:00 Castle
- 09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 10:00 Prison Break
- 11:00 Secrets And Lies
- 12:00 Shark Tank



- 00:00 Dark House
- 02:00 Sharknado 2: The Second One
- 04:00 Legendary: Tomb Of The Dragon
- 06:00 X-Men: The Last Stand
- 08:00 Robot Overlords
- 10:00 Deep Rising
- 12:00 Hercules Reborn
- 14:00 X-Men: The Last Stand
- 16:00 Robot Overlords
- 17:45 Deep Rising
- 19:45 The Berlin File
- 22:00 War Of The Worlds



- 00:00 Adult World
- 01:45 It's Complicated
- 04:00 Jack
- 06:00 Passed Away
- 08:00 The Hundred-Foot Journey
- 10:15 Jack
- 12:15 Forces Of Nature
- 14:15 The Invention Of Lying
- 16:00 The Hundred-Foot Journey
- 18:15 Accidental Love
- 20:00 Easy A
- 22:00 Hit By Lightning



- 01:00 Fast Girls
- 03:00 Frontera
- 05:00 First Response
- 07:00 Red Wing
- 09:00 Stolen From Suburbia
- 11:00 Fast Girls
- 13:00 The Silent Mountain
- 15:00 Breaking Through
- 17:00 Stolen From Suburbia
- 19:00 Trust Me
- 21:00 The Harvest
- 23:00 Catch Hell



- 01:00 Monsters University
- 03:00 Scooby-Doo! And The Beach

- Beastie
- 04:00 My Girl
- 06:00 Paddington
- 08:00 Scooby-Doo! And The Beach
- Beastie
- 09:00 Zootropolis
- 11:00 Paddington
- 13:00 Scooby-Doo! Moon Monster Madness
- 15:00 Home
- 17:00 The Amazing Wizard Of Paws
- 19:00 Peter Pan
- 21:00 My Girl 2
- 23:00 Home



- 01:15 Curve
- 03:00 Miss You Already
- 05:00 The 5th Wave
- 07:00 Barely Lethal
- 09:00 Le Weekend
- 11:00 Miss You Already
- 13:00 The 5th Wave
- 15:00 In The Heart Of The Sea
- 17:00 Dolphin Tale 2
- 19:00 San Andreas
- 21:00 Krampus
- 23:00 The Stanford Prison Experiment



- 01:15 Miffy The Movie
- 02:30 The Tale Of The Princess Kaguya
- 04:45 Worms
- 06:15 The Boxcar Children
- 07:45 Minuscule: Valley Of The Lost Ants
- 09:15 The Unbeatables
- 11:00 Pixies
- 12:30 The Tale Of The Princess Kaguya
- 14:45 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
- 16:00 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
- 18:00 The Unbeatables
- 20:00 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble
- 22:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure



- 01:45 Farewell, My Queen
- 03:30 Eight Men Out
- 05:30 Arlington Road
- 07:30 Monkey Kingdom
- 09:00 Atlas Shrugged Part 2: The Strike
- 11:00 Eight Men Out
- 13:00 Arlington Road
- 15:00 Young Ones
- 17:00 Atlas Shrugged Part 2: The

- Strike
- 19:00 Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps
- 21:30 Ironweed

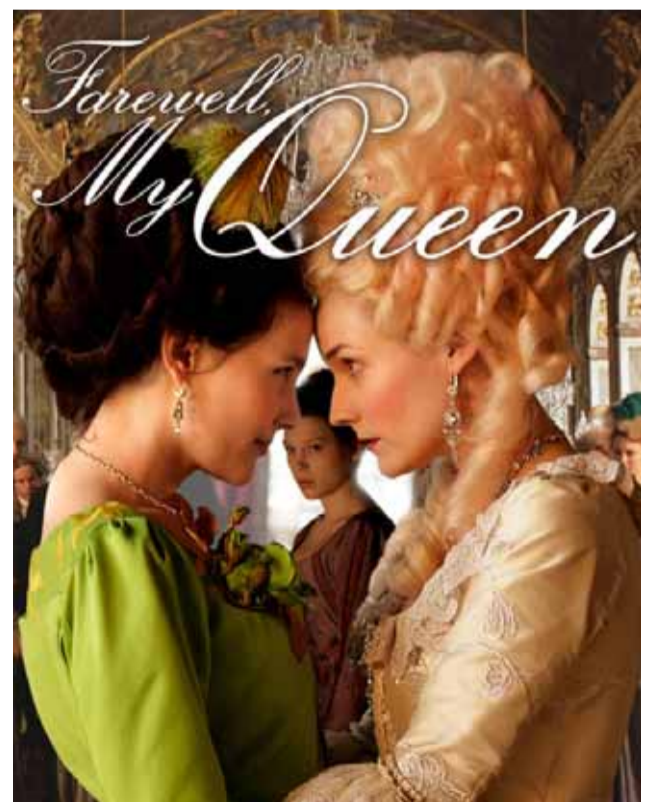


- 00:10 Locked Up Abroad
- 01:00 The Border
- 02:00 Nazi Megastructures
- 02:55 Inside Turkish Airlines
- 03:50 Mega Factories
- 04:45 Air Crash Investigation
- 05:40 Locked Up Abroad
- 06:35 Years Of Living Dangerously
- 07:30 Dirty Rotten Survival
- 08:25 Continent 7: Antarctica
- 09:20 Big Fix Alaska
- 10:15 Do Or Die
- 10:40 Do Or Die
- 11:10 Science Of Stupid Sports
- 11:35 Science Of Stupid Sports
- 12:05 Startalk
- 13:00 Mars
- 14:00 Two Tales Of China

- 14:30 Two Tales Of China
- 15:00 Air Crash Investigation
- 16:00 Mega Factories
- 17:00 Explorer
- 18:00 Years Of Living Dangerously



- 00:15 Louie
- 00:22 Louie
- 00:30 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
- 00:53 Olive The Ostrich
- 00:58 Olive The Ostrich
- 01:03 Max & Ruby
- 01:26 Wanda And The Alien
- 01:37 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
- 01:48 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
- 02:00 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 02:22 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 02:45 Zack & Quack
- 03:05 Team Umizoomi
- 03:28 Louie
- 03:35 Louie
- 03:42 Louie
- 03:48 Paw Patrol
- 03:58 Paw Patrol
- 04:23 Paw Patrol
- 04:46 Paw Patrol
- 05:10 Wanda And The Alien
- 05:19 Wanda And The Alien
- 05:30 Dora And Friends
- 05:53 Dora And Friends
- 06:16 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 06:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 07:00 Paw Patrol
- 07:13 Paw Patrol
- 07:36 Dora The Explorer
- 08:00 Wanda And The Alien
- 08:11 Zack & Quack
- 08:22 Dora And Friends
- 08:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 09:10 Paw Patrol
- 09:35 Shimmer And Shine
- 09:58 Dora The Explorer
- 10:21 Paw Patrol
- 10:45 Little Charmers
- 10:57 Bubble Guppies
- 11:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
- 11:40 Zack & Quack
- 11:52 Team Umizoomi
- 12:15 Louie
- 12:22 Louie
- 12:30 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
- 12:53 Olive The Ostrich
- 12:58 Olive The Ostrich
- 13:03 Max & Ruby
- 13:26 Wanda And The Alien
- 13:37 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
- 13:48 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
- 14:00 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 14:22 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 14:45 Zack & Quack



FAREWELL, MY QUEEN ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

How far can you reduce sugar in a pavlova?

Surprisingly low

By Melissa D'arabian

Pavlovas are dreamy. For the uninitiated, a pavlova (named after the famed ballerina's fluffy tutu) is essentially a meringue shell baked at low heat until the outside is barely golden crisp, but the inside remains soft and billowy, like a creamy marshmallow. The shell then is typically filled with whipped cream, custard, or fruit compote.

And, as mentioned, the result is a dream-come-true. Pavlovas are a splendid choice for entertaining, because contrary to what we

might think of a delicate meringue, these guys are pretty hardy, and you can make them a day or two in advance no problem. Just be sure to keep them in an airtight container so that they don't absorb ambient air moisture and lose their delightful crisp texture, and top just before serving.

As you probably know, meringues are primarily two ingredients: egg whites and sugar. In this the good cop/bad cop pairing, sugar is definitely the bad cop, while egg whites are considered downright health food by many folks who look like they know what they are

talking about at the gym. (They aren't wrong, by the way, one egg white has 5 grams of protein, at only 25 calories and no fat.) The sugar is what gives the pavlovas their luscious interior. So I wondered: Just how low I could go on the sugar without ruining the texture and creating just a weird protein puff that only my gym-friends would want to eat?

The answer: surprisingly quite low. A typical pavlova recipe might have a ratio of 1/4 cup of sugar per egg white in the recipe. I found that I could cut the sugar in half with no noticeable impact on texture and taste. So I kept testing

and reducing the sugar. And the very lowest that yielded a reasonable result was a ratio of 2 teaspoons of sugar per egg white, or one-eighth the typical amount of sugar.

At that level of sugar, the pavlova becomes less flowy, and more airy and crisp, almost styrofoam-y. Two of my kids actually preferred this version! Most of us felt like a little extra sugar was worth the nutritional profile impact, and so I'll share that version - with 4 teaspoons of sugar per egg white, or 1/4 cup sugar to 3 egg whites as the recipe is written. Still, a dessert victory if you ask me.



TANGY RASPBERRY PAVLOVA WITH BALSAMIC GLAZE

Ingredients

Start to finish: 90 minutes, including inactive time
 Servings: 8
 3 egg whites
 1/4 cup sugar
 1/2 teaspoon white vinegar
 1 teaspoon corn starch
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1/4 teaspoon almond extract (optional)

Topping

1 cup light sour cream
 2 tablespoons maple syrup
 1 cup raspberries (or other fruit)
 1-2 tablespoons balsamic glaze (reduced balsamic vinegar) for drizzling
 fresh mint leaves, chopped, for garnish (optional)

Preparation

Preheat oven to 275 F. In a stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, beat eggs on medium speed until foamy, about 1 minutes. Add the sugar and continue to beat on medium high speed until stiff peaks form. Add the vinegar, corn starch and extracts and beat on low until well mixed. (You can use a hand mixer, but times may be a little longer.)

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Spoon the meringue into 8 even, round piles. Use the back of a tablespoon to spread the meringue into circles about 1/2-inch tall, and approximately

3-inches wide. Use the spoon to create a gentle depression in the center of the meringue. Bake for 20 minutes.

Keeping the oven door closed, turn off the heat but leave the pavlovas in the oven for another hour. Remove the pavlovas from the oven and allow to cool completely. Stir the light sour cream and maple syrup together in a small bowl. Remove from the parchment paper gently. Place the pavlova on a plate and spoon 2 tablespoons of the cream into the center. Top with berries and a drizzle of balsamic glaze. Top with a sprinkle of mint leaves, if desired. — AP

17 SATURDAY
DECEMBER 2016

TRY THIS FILLING AND SATISFYING SALAD FOR YOUR WINTER - BLAHS

By Melissa D'arabian

Winter is upon us. I live in San Diego, and let's be honest: The notion of us slogging through a frigid few months awaiting spring's thaw is ridiculous. Yet, I'm cold. It's chilly and cloudy and yes, sometimes, even rainy.

We all spend more time inside the minute sweater becomes jacket-weather. And when the indoor winter-blahs get to me, I turn toward my first line of defense to get out of my funk: my diet. When I'm in a slump, I immediately consider what I am eating. I stop processed sugar, and focus on getting an extra dose of veggies, protein, fiber and healthy fats filled with brain-and-heart-healthy Omegas.

This salad is that dose. It's filled with high-protein Brussels sprouts as that the main green (1 cup of Brussels sprouts has about as much protein as an egg white) coupled with nutrient-rich dark

green kale. Also in the salad are a bunch of crunchy healthy goodies like walnuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, hemp hearts and even flax seed. The varied textures make this dish super satisfying. A little cooked quinoa means that even ground flaxseed and hemp hearts will fit right in without a grainy mouth-feel. And a handful of pomegranate seeds add just the right amount of tart and sweet, rounding out the flavors perfectly. The whole salad is tossed with an avocado ranch dressing that is whipped up in a jiffy in the blender, so even the creamy fatty dressing is a nutritious ally.

It's a gorgeous salad - beautiful to behold and to eat. Sure, add a few ounces of poached or roasted salmon if you want more omegas and protein, but honestly this salad is filling and satisfying all on its own, with 16 grams of protein per serving even in its totally meatless state. Take that, Monday. Take that, winter.

WINTER SALAD WITH AVOCADO RANCH DRESSING

Ingredients

Start to finish: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

2 cups Brussels sprouts, stem end trimmed

2 cups thin slices of Lacinato kale

1 cup cooked quinoa

1/4 cup raw walnuts, chopped

3 tablespoons of raw sunflower seeds

1/2 cup toasted pumpkin seeds (pepitas)

3 tablespoons of raw hemp hearts (hemp seeds)

3 tablespoons of milled flaxseed (flaxmeal)

1/2 cup halved grape tomatoes

1/2 cup pomegranate seeds (also called arils)

1/4 cup chopped cilantro

Dressing:

1/2 large avocado

1/2 cup lowfat buttermilk

2 tablespoons prepared salsa

2 tablespoons lime juice (or lemon juice)

1/4 cup water

1 tablespoon minced shallot

1/2 cup roughly chopped cilantro

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon pepper

Preparation

Slice the Brussels sprouts very thinly with a sharp knife, or run them through a food processor fitted with a slicing blade. You will have about 3 cups of sliced sprouts when done. Mix the sprouts and sliced kale in a large bowl. Add the remaining salad ingredients and toss. In a blender, mix all the dressing ingredients until smooth and creamy. Add an additional tablespoon or two of water if too thick. Pour half the dressing over the salad and toss well. Add more dressing if desired. Serve. - AP

NOTE: Feel free to swap out nuts and seeds for your favorites.

ITALY SWAPS SPLEEN FOR KIDNEY IN WORLD FIRST

ROME: A hospital in northern Italy said it had achieved a world first by successfully transplanting a kidney in the place of the spleen in a six-year-old girl. The child had been on dialysis since birth because of a rare kidney anomaly and a malformation of the abdominal blood vessels, the Molinette hospital in Turin said in a statement.

The youngster, who was not named, had been unable to either urinate or drink, it said. She was operated on at the end of last week. "In order to create the necessary space for the new kidney, a revolutionary and innovative technique was applied, with the removal of the spleen," the hospital said. "The girl is doing very well, she resumed urinating immediately and can finally drink after six years," it said. — AFP

SOUTH KOREA ORDERS RECORD CULL OF POULTRY TO CONTAIN BIRD FLU

MILLIONS OF BIRDS GASSED TO FIGHT OUTBREAK

SEOUL: South Korea has ordered its biggest-ever cull of chickens and other poultry, gassing millions of birds to fight an avian flu outbreak spreading at what the government called an unprecedented rate. Most of the birds culled were egg-laying hens, sending local egg prices sharply higher. Among the first consumers to react, bakeries said they were cutting down on egg purchases and some families said they were switching to other foods. The Agriculture Ministry said on Friday it had ordered the cull of 4 million more birds, which would take to 16 million the total number killed since mid-November, or almost one-fifth of the poultry population.

On Thursday, South Korea raised its bird flu alert status to the highest level for the first time, because of the rapid spread of the H5N6 virus. The government has said it has found 54 cases of the virus in poultry since the first outbreak was

reported on Nov 18. "It appears to be more highly pathogenic and it is spreading more quickly than the H5N8 virus that occurred in 2014," Agriculture Minister Kim Jae-soo told reporters. About 14 million birds were culled until that outbreak was finally brought under control in November 2015.

"We have appointed a central emergency measures headquarters to oversee the situation and reinforce our pan-governmental response measures," added Kim. He was flanked by officials who, like him, were wearing the yellow windbreakers donned during emergencies. Although cases of human infections from the H5N6 virus have been previously reported elsewhere, including China, no cases of human infections have ever been detected in South Korea. Outbreaks of avian influenza have been reported recently in Japan and several European nations, including France, which widened "high risk" restrictions nationwide last

week. Authorities in the southern Chinese city of Macau temporarily closed a poultry market and halted sales of live birds citywide after a trader tested positive for its first human case of the H7N9 bird flu virus, the government said. The 58-year-old man has been quarantined in hospital and has yet to show symptoms. More than 10,000 chickens and pigeons at the Nam Yue market were culled on Tuesday after the discovery of the virus. In Seoul, the average retail price for 30 eggs had risen 15 percent to 6,279 won (\$5.31) by Thursday since the outbreak began, the state-run Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corp said, adding that prices were likely to rise further. "(Eggs) are too expensive...I make rolled omelet often for my meals, but I guess I would have to change it to things like fishcake. My family consumes around two trays per month, but because of the price I would have to make it one," said 67-year-old Jun Chang-gil, who was shopping at Lotte Mart in Seoul. — Reuters



HAYWARD: Solomon, a golden eagle, perches on a branch at the Sulphur Creek Nature Center in Hayward, Calif. The Obama administration has finalized that lets wind-energy companies operate high-speed turbines for up to 30 years - even it means killing or injuring thousands of federally protected bald and golden eagles. According to keepers, a wind turbine near the Altamont Pass severed a portion of Solomon's left wing in 2000 leaving him unable to fly or survive in the wild. — AP

US ACTIVISTS CELEBRATE NEW MARIJUANA LAW

BOSTON: Legal-marijuana activists were in a celebratory mood Thursday as a new voter-approved law took effect in Massachusetts, allowing people 21 and over to possess, grow and use limited amounts of recreational pot. It will be at least another year before marijuana can be legally sold by licensed retailers in the state, and some supporters of the measure are wary that Massachusetts officials might seek changes to the law or delay its full implementation over the coming months. Police warned of a potential spike in people driving under the influence of pot and general confusion about what is allowed under the law.

"Yesterday this would have been a \$100 fine," said Keith Saunders, as he held up a jar containing what he said was slightly less than an ounce of cannabis flower. Saunders, a board member of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, or NORML, gathered with other activists outside the historic Massachusetts Statehouse to celebrate the law. "Ultimately, we are moving toward taking the existing marijuana market in Massachusetts and bringing it above board," he said.

Massachusetts is the first US state on the Eastern seaboard where recreational marijuana is legal, though Maine will soon follow if a recount upholds passage of a ballot measure there. Colorado, Washington and Oregon previously legalized recreational pot and voters in California and Nevada also approved ballot measures last month.

In Massachusetts, adults can possess up to an ounce of pot outside the home, up to 10 ounces inside the home and grow up to a dozen marijuana plants per household. Having spent nearly three decades crusading for relaxed marijuana rules, Bill Downing admitted to a mix of satisfaction and trepidation.

"I am both celebrating and worry-

ing that the law might not be implemented properly," said Downing, member liaison for the Massachusetts Cannabis Reform Coalition.

The concerns stem from public statements by Democratic legislative leaders and Republican Gov. Charlie Baker promising a review and possible changes to the law, which passed by a margin of more than 240,000 votes out of nearly 3.8 million votes cast. The wishes of the voters will be respected, pledged Baker, who strongly opposed legalization. But he defended efforts that may lead to revisions.

"It was a 6,000 word ballot question written by the recreational marijuana industry for the recreational marijuana industry," said Baker, who spoke to The Associated Press before returning from a trade mission in Israel. "So I expect the Legislature will want to deal with things like potency, home rule. What are going to be the rules about where you can locate (retail) facilities and what local control does local government have about that?" In a memo sent Wednesday to police departments in Massachusetts, Secretary of Public Safety Daniel Bennett said implementation of recreational marijuana "will create a complex web of different rules" that law enforcement must navigate.

"Within certain limits, the new law authorizes some conduct that had previously been prohibited. Beyond those limits, however, possession, cultivation and distribution of marijuana remain illegal under state law," wrote Bennett.

Marijuana activists dismissed critics who said legalization will lead to an array of social and public safety problems. "The worst you could is maybe listen to Pink Floyd for two hours rather than one hour," one man joked Thursday as he serenaded supporters with pro-pot tunes in front of the Capitol building. — AP

WOMAN HAS BABY FROM OVARY FROZEN

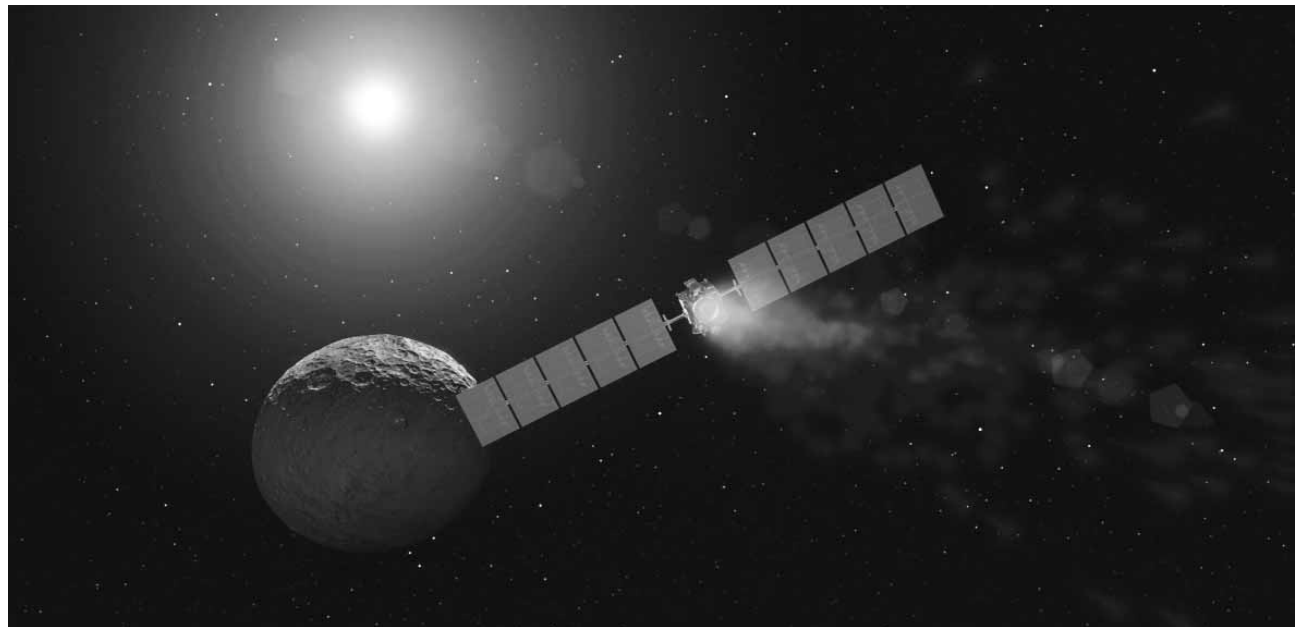
LONDON: A woman in London has become the first to give birth after having her fertility restored using ovarian tissue frozen before the onset of puberty, doctors said. Moaza Al Matrooshi, 24, had her right ovary removed when she was nine years old before undergoing chemotherapy treatment for a severe blood disorder, according to the University of Leeds where the ovarian tissue was frozen.

Her fertility was restored after the preserved tissue was transplanted last year, the university said. "It is the first time that the success of the procedure has been shown in a pre-pubertal girl, and I'm delighted that this young woman has had her baby," said Helen Picton, head of the university's reproduction and early development division, who carried out the freezing. The young woman gave birth to a baby boy at the private Portland Hospital in London on Tuesday, according to the BBC. "It's like a miracle. We've been waiting so long for this result—a healthy baby," she told the British broadcaster.

The Dubai national was born with beta thalassaemia, a blood disorder that reduces the production of haemoglobin and can be life-threatening. She needed chemotherapy in preparation for a bone marrow transplant to treat the disorder but the treatment damaged her remaining ovary, bringing on the menopause in her early twenties, Leeds university said. "Following her transplant her hormone levels began returning to normal, she began ovulating and her fertility was restored," the university explained on its website. "Moaza is a pioneer and was one of the first patients we helped back in 2001, before any baby had been born from ovary tissue preservation," said Picton.

Last year, a Belgian woman gave birth after undergoing the same procedure with ovarian tissue frozen when she was 13 years old. However, "unlike Moaza, she had begun going through puberty when her ovary was removed," according to the university. Adam Balen, chairman of the British Fertility Society, said:

"This is a ground-breaking step in this area of fertility preservation and has the potential to help many young people who face cancer treatment preserve their fertility chances in the future." — AFP



This artistic photo shows the Dawn spacecraft orbiting the dwarf planet Ceres. — AP

SEVERAL SHADOWY CRATERS ON THE DWARF PLANET CERES CONTAIN ICE

LOS ANGELES: Several shadowy craters on the dwarf planet Ceres contain ice, scientists reported Thursday. Deposits of ice have previously been spied in craters on Mercury and our moon, also in regions that are permanently in the dark. The discovery comes from pictures taken by NASA's Dawn spacecraft, which has been in orbit for over a year around Ceres, the largest object in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter.

Scientists identified more than 600 craters in the northern polar region that never receive sunlight. Of these, bright patches thought to be ice were found in just 10 places. Such a small number is unusual and needs further study, said

Thomas Platz of the Max Planck Institute for Solar System Research in Germany who published the discovery in Nature Astronomy.

Ice appears to be widespread, however, just below the surface, according to a separate study in the journal Science. Readings by an instrument on Dawn that can peer below the surface detected abundant ice especially near the poles. It's the long-awaited confirmation of widespread underground ice that scientists have been waiting for, said Thomas Prettyman, a senior scientist at the Planetary Science Institute in New Mexico. Both studies were presented Thursday at the American

Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco.

Powered by ion propulsion, Dawn is the first spacecraft to orbit two celestial bodies to better understand how the solar system evolved. It previously visited the asteroid Vesta, beaming back tens of thousands of pictures of the dry and rugged world. Dawn has been studying Ceres from various altitudes, getting as close as 235 miles (378 kilometers), the distance of the International Space Station above Earth. It previously spotted an inactive volcano on the surface of Ceres. Dawn wrapped up its prime mission this past summer and is currently on bonus time. — AP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

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

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (15/12/2016 TO 21/12/2016)

SHARQIA-1	MARINA-2	360°-3
MOANA 1:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 11:30 AM	INTO THE FOREST 12:30 PM
MOANA 3:15 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 2:30 PM	INTO THE FOREST 3:00 PM
MOANA 5:30 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 5:30 PM	INTO THE FOREST 5:15 PM
MOANA 7:45 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 8:30 PM	INTO THE FOREST 7:30 PM
TAHT AL TARABEZA 10:15 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 11:30 PM	INTO THE FOREST 9:45 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 12:30 AM		INTO THE FOREST 12:05 AM
SHARQIA-2	MARINA-3	AL-KOUT.1
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:30 PM	MOANA 12:30 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 1:15 PM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY-3D 3:30 PM	MOANA 2:45 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 4:00 PM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 6:30 PM	MOANA 5:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 6:45 PM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 9:30 PM	MOANA 7:15 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 9:30 PM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:30 AM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 9:30 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:15 AM
	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 11:45 PM	
SHARQIA-3	AVENUES-1	AL-KOUT.2
MOANA 12:00 PM	MOANA 12:30 PM	MOANA 12:45 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 2:30 PM	LAF WA DAWARAN 2:45 PM	MOANA 3:00 PM
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 4:45 PM	MOANA 5:00 PM	MOANA 5:15 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 7:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 7:30 PM	MOANA 7:30 PM
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 9:15 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA 10:30 PM	MISS SLOANE 9:45 PM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 11:30 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA 12:45 AM	MISS SLOANE 12:30 AM
MUHALAB-1	AVENUES-2	AL-KOUT.3
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 12:45 PM	MOANA -3D- 4DX 11:30 AM	MISS SLOANE 1:15 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 3:00 PM	MOANA -3D- 4DX 1:45 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA 3:45 PM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 5:15 PM	MOANA -3D- 4DX 4:15 PM	MISS SLOANE 6:00 PM
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 8:15 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D- 4DX 6:45 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 8:45 PM
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 10:15 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D- 4DX 9:45 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 10:45 PM
TAHT AL TARABEZA 12:15 AM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D- 4DX 12:30 AM	TAHT AL TARABEZA 12:45 AM
	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D- 4DX 11:30 AM	
MUHALAB-2	MOANA -3D- 4DX 2:15 PM	AL-KOUT.4
MOANA 11:45 AM	MOANA -3D- 4DX 4:45 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 12:15 PM
MOANA 2:00 PM	MOANA -3D- 4DX 7:15 PM	INTO THE FOREST 2:30 PM
MOANA 4:15 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D- 4DX 9:45 PM	INTO THE FOREST 4:45 PM
MOANA 6:30 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D- 4DX 12:30 AM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 7:00 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 8:45 PM		INTO THE FOREST 9:15 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 11:00 PM		COLLATERAL BEAUTY 11:30 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 1:15 AM	AVENUES-3	
	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 12:00 PM	BAIRAQ-1
MUHALAB-3	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 2:00 PM	MOANA 11:45 AM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:00 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 4:00 PM	MOANA 2:00 PM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 3:00 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 6:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 1:15 PM
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY-3D 6:00 PM	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 8:00 PM	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 9:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 10:00 PM	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:05 AM	THE LAST KING 1:00 AM	
		BAIRAQ-2
FANAR-1	AVENUES-4	MOANA 4:15 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 1:30 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 11:30 AM	MOANA 6:30 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 3:45 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 1:30 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY-3D 9:00 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 6:00 PM	MOANA 3:45 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 11:45 PM
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 8:15 PM	Special Show "MOANA" 3:45 PM	
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 10:30 PM	MOANA 6:15 PM	BAIRAQ-3
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 12:45 AM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 8:45 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 12:30 PM
	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 11:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 2:45 PM
FANAR-2	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 1:15 AM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 5:00 PM
MOANA 11:30 AM		ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 7:15 PM
MOANA 1:45 PM	AVENUES-5	MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 10:15 PM
MOANA 4:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 12:30 AM
MOANA 6:15 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D 3:00 PM	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY-3D 8:30 PM	Special Show "ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY" 2:00 PM	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 11:15 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 6:00 PM	
	Special Show "ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY" 6:00 PM	
FANAR-3	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D 9:00 PM	
TAHT AL TARABEZA 12:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:05 AM	
TAHT AL TARABEZA 2:15 PM		
INTO THE FOREST 4:30 PM	AVENUES-6	
MISS SLOANE 6:30 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 12:30 PM	
INTO THE FOREST 9:30 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 2:45 PM	
INTO THE FOREST 11:45 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 5:00 PM	
	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 7:15 PM	
FANAR-4	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 9:30 PM	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 1:00 PM	COLLATERAL BEAUTY 11:45 PM	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 3:45 PM		
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 6:30 PM	AVENUES-7	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 9:15 PM	MOANA 1:00 PM	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:05 AM	MOANA 3:30 PM	
	INTO THE FOREST 6:15 PM	
FANAR-5	INTO THE FOREST 8:30 PM	
THE LAST KING 11:30 AM	INTO THE FOREST 10:45 PM	
MISS SLOANE 1:45 PM	INTO THE FOREST 1:00 AM	
MISS SLOANE 4:15 PM		
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 7:00 PM	360°-1	
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 9:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D 11:30 AM	
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 11:00 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 2:30 PM	
THE LAST KING 1:00 AM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 5:30 PM	
	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY -3D 8:30 PM	
MARINA-1	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 11:30 PM	
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 11:45 AM		
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 2:00 PM	360°-2	
TAHT AL TARABEZA 3:45 PM	ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:45 PM	
COLLATERAL BEAUTY 6:00 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA 3:45 PM	
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 8:15 PM	LAF WA DAWARAN 6:00 PM	
MANTAQH MAHZOURAH 8:15 PM	TAHT AL TARABEZA 8:15 PM	
ROGUE ONE:A STAR WARS STORY 12:30 AM	TAHT AL TARABEZA 10:30 PM	
	TAHT AL TARABEZA 12:45 AM	

CHANGE OF NAME

I HATIM S/o MANSUR, holder of Indian Passport No. K8514434 and Civil ID No. 291072601473 has changed my name to HATIM MANSUR NAJMI, hereinafter in all my dealing and documents I will be known by name of HATIM MANSUR NAJMI. (C 5249) 17-12-2016

I, Chejalla Nageshwar Raju (old name) S/o. Chejarla Pedda Chengal Raju, R/o. H.No. 2/150, Bommavaram (V) & (P), Obulavaripalli (M), Y.S.R. Kadapa, Dist., A.P. hereby state that I have changed my name as CHEJARLA NAGESWAR RAJU (new name). (C 5247) 13-12-2016

ACCOMMODATION

For Filipino Bachelor ONLY near Big Jamiya Farwaniya. Available on December 25, Contact 66826412 or 97512782 13-12-2016

Sharing room with Balcony available from January 2017, with Pakistani family for couple family or ladies health workers. Farwaniya backside, Crown Plaza, Area 6, Street 3. Contact: 99552706. (C 5246) 12-12-2016

FOR SALE

For sell new white faux fur (artificial) coat size M and pre owned like new black leather coat size M made in Turkey Tel. No: 55020291 12-12-2016

EMERGENCY 112



Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is

1889988



PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	05:11
Shorook	06:36
Duhr:	11:44
Asr:	14:34
Maghrib:	16:52
Isha:	18:15

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2016



DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Saturday 17/12/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
KLM	413	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:25
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55
RJA	642	Amman	01:05
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30
DLH	635	Doha	01:55
MSC	511	Alexandria	02:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30
KAC	412	Bangkok	02:50
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:45
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55
KAC	384	Delhi	06:05
KAC	364	Colombo	06:05
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:20
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	06:25
BAW	157	London	06:40
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	07:00
KAC	204	Lahore	07:15
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	08:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40
KAC	382	Delhi	08:45
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05
KAC	352	Kochi	09:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
AVV	653	Sohag	10:10
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
KAC	774	Riyadh	11:05
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:15
IRM	1188	Mashhad	11:15
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30
FDK	801	Damascus	11:45
KAC	618	Doha	11:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
JZR	239	Amman	12:45
FDB	075	Dubai	12:50
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:30
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:35
KAC	564	Amman	13:40
KAC	788	Jeddah	13:45
KNE	231	Riyadh	13:55
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10
FDB	059	Dubai	14:20
KAC	692	Muscat	14:30
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40
KAC	542	Cairo	14:45
KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15
KAC	286	Dhaka	15:20
OMA	645	Muscat	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:50
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:50
KAC	154	Istanbul	15:55
SAW	705	Damascus	16:00
SVA	504	Madinah	16:00
KNE	531	Jeddah	16:05
JZR	535	Cairo	16:10
QTR	1072	Doha	16:10
JZR	787	Riyadh	16:25
JZR	357	Mashhad	16:25
FDB	051	Dubai	16:25
KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	16:35
RJA	640	Amman	16:55
KAC	118	New York	17:00
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:45
JZR	325	Al Najaf	17:50
NIA	251	Alexandria	17:55
SVA	500	Jeddah	18:00
UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
FDB	063	Dubai	18:10
JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
IRA	669	Mashhad	18:55
SYR	341	Damascus	19:00
QTR	1080	Doha	19:00
KAC	512	Mashhad	19:20
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:25

GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
KAC	502	Beirut	19:30
CLX	856	Luxembourg	19:35
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
KAC	104	London	19:50
FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
KNE	381	Taif	19:55
KAC	166	Rome	19:55
MSR	618	Alexandria	20:05
OMA	647	Muscat	20:10
JZR	189	Dubai	20:15
DHX	172	Bahrain	20:20
QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
KAC	562	Amman	20:40
KAC	174	Munich	20:45
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:45
FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
KAC	616	Bahrain	20:50
JAI	572	Mumbai	20:55
KAC	786	Jeddah	21:15
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
KAC	675	Dubai	21:45
QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
KLM	415	Amsterdam/Dammam	22:05
JZR	125	Bahrain	22:05
NIA	151	Cairo	22:10
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15
AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
KNE	533	Jeddah	22:45
JZR	241	Amman	22:45
KAC	1544	Cairo	22:55
KAC	164	Paris	22:55
JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:50

Departure Flights on Saturday 17/12/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
ETD	9860	Bahrain	00:35
PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:50
BBC	044	Dhaka	01:30
KLM	413	Amsterdam	01:50
KAC	417	Manila	02:00
KAC	285	Dhaka	02:25
THY	773	Istanbul	02:25
SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:55
MSC	512	Alexandria	03:05
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
PGT	859	Istanbul	03:35
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
KKK	6505	Istanbul	03:55
OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
CLX	758	Hong Kong	04:25
QTR	1077	Doha	04:40
FEG	938	Sohag	05:00
QTR	1087	Doha	05:50
DHX	173	Bahrain	06:20
FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
KAC	153	Istanbul	06:50
KAC	165	Rome	06:55
JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
RJA	643	Amman	07:05
JZR	238	Amman	07:10
KAC	541	Cairo	07:15
GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	163	Paris	07:25
KAC	773	Riyadh	07:30
KAC	173	Munich	07:35
KAC	787	Jeddah	07:45
JZR	778	Jeddah	07:55
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
KAC	617	Doha	08:00
KAC	563	Amman	08:00
BAW	156	London	08:40
FDB	054	Dubai	08:55
KAC	691	Muscat	09:00
KAC	117	New York	09:00
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
JZR	534	Cairo	09:15
KAC	101	London	09:35
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
KAC	411	Bangkok	10:30

FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
QTR	1071	Doha	10:40
AVV	654	Asyut	11:10
KAC	501	Beirut	11:15
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
RBG	554	Alexandria	11:55
KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	12:05
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:05
IRM	1189	Mashhad	12:30
FDK	802	Damascus	12:45
IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
JZR	786	Riyadh	13:10
KAC	511	Mashhad	13:15
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
FDB	076	Dubai	14:05
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	324	Al Najaf	14:25
KNE	382	Taif	14:50
BON	102	Sarajevo	14:55
KAC	561	Amman	15:00
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
KAC	785	Jeddah	15:15
PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	15:20
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
QTR	1079	Doha	15:40
JZR	188	Dubai	15:40
KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KAC	1543	Cairo	15:55
KNE	684	Madinah	16:00
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	357	Kochi	16:20
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:30
OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:50
SAW	706	KAC/Damascus	16:55
KNE	532	Jeddah	16:55
SVA	505	Madinah	17:00
KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
JZR	240	Amman	17:15
FDB	052	Dubai	17:25
KAC	615	Bahrain	17:35
QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
RJA	641	Amman	17:55
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KAC	353	BLR	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
NIA	252	Alexandria	18:55
JZR	554	Alexandria	18:55
FDB	064	Dubai	19:05
JZR	124	Bahrain	19:15
UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
SVA	501	Jeddah	19:30
MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
IRA	666	Esfahan	19:55
SYR	342	Damascus	20:00
QTR	1081	Doha	20:05
ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
KAC	383	Delhi	20:30
FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
KAC	361	Colombo	20:35
KAC	775	Riyadh	20:45
KNE	232	Riyadh	20:55
CLX	856	Hong Kong	21:05
MSR	607	Luxor	21:05
OMA	648	Muscat	21:10
KAC	205	Islamabad	21:25
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	21:30
QTR	1089	Doha	21:35
DLH	634	Doha	21:35
KAC	741	Dammam	21:45
FDB	5054	Dubai	21:50
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JAI	571	Mumbai	21:55
KAC	351	Kochi	22:00
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15
MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:45
KAC	381	Delhi	22:45
UAE	860	Dubai	22:55
KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	23:05
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
NIA	152	Cairo	23:10
QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
KNE	534	Jeddah	23:35

WORDSEARCH PUZZLE

Animals 2

Find and circle all of the animals that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of an additional animal.

ORC ANTEE KARAP BEAVER
GGRHMADLLEMMINGOOSE
NIEOEOTUEMUIDOLPHIN
IXRLCDCUCSOSURLAWMA
MNPALTEGKANGAROO
AYWUFEOEINREKKOALAC
LLZEMFZPHNAEWEWHALE
FZEBRAEAUOGRHZYRFAH
HATEEHCLGSGBOTHYFYU
RATTTLESNAKEPIINBUBM
BLPDSSTORKTOGNRNABAM
EAE EAHANNROOTIDLPTN
EMEE OBEA RCAUMJLCTN
LPHR BKH OIEC GOARA OEG
TRSICPILRBNUGROWYLB
RETIESLOOESUOLBKOOI
UYHLEASBPEARRIATPR
TCEE GDIRTRAPFN NYEED

- ANTELOPE ELEPHANT JAGUAR ORCA SHREW
- BAT EMU KANGAROO PANTHER STORK
- BEAVER FLAMINGO KOALA PARAKEET TURTLE
- BOBCAT FROG LAMPREY PARTRIDGE WALLABY
- BUFFALO GAZELLE LEMMING PENGUIN WALRUS
- CHEETAH GIRAFFE LYNX PORPOISE WEASEL
- CHICKEN GOOSE MARLIN PUMA WHALE
- COYOTE GORILLA MOCKINGBIRD RABBIT YAK
- CRANE HEDGEHOG MONKEY RATTLESNAKE ZEBRA
- DEER HORSE MOUSE RHINOCEROS
- DOLPHIN HUMMINGBIRD OCTOPUS ROBIN
- DUCK IMPALA ORANGUTAN SHEEP

Yesterday's Solution

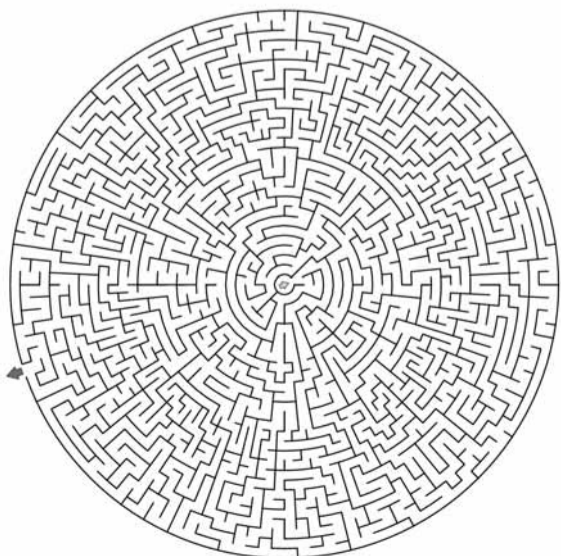
Animals 1

A KYEK NODP MBISON E FOX
T EWIPRBEAROTAGTLLATU
R SWAIALVULTURENAWS
O UCHINCHILLAMAGG(P)
T H CMCCTWTBBNREEDNIER
O SIAANO OHA AELKTIPATR
I NRMTEROERBVACTOON
S FWEONRDRROAWHTON
E YAGATOPIAPGAORGTCE
V LGBODCSSORPERCNIEKR
O LLBOCAMEPECCCHUNRO
D EERWAOMAZPVSKRDALJ
R JSALMONNHDI LEEDAIA
O LGAELCAFRFOHORRDO
O KIUURLPEADHPFUWMTNK
C AOKMRPRTOINNOREHA
C UCTROOOGGNYEKRUTL
A GQHEEWLIEEKRAVDRAA
R LCTLSSEERRPORCUPTINE

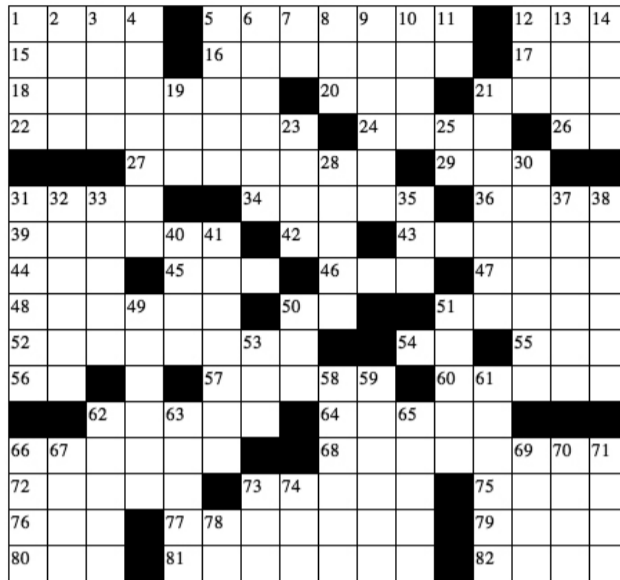
- AARDVARK DONKEY HIPPOPOTAMUS OTTER SALMON
- ALLIGATOR DOVE JACKAL PANTHER SLOTH
- BABOON EAGLE JELLYFISH PARROT SWAN
- BARRACUDA ELK KIWI PEACOCK TIGER
- BEAR FERRET LEOPARD PELICAN TIGER
- BISON FOX LION PIG TURTLE
- CAMEL GECKO LLAMA PORCUPINE TROUT
- CHIMPANZEE GOAT MACAW QUAIL TURKEY
- CHINCHILLA GOPHER MEADOWLARK RACCOON VULTURE
- COBRA HAMSTER MINK RAVEN WOLVERINE
- COUGAR HAWK MOOSE REINDEER WOODPECKER
- CROW HERON NIGHTINGALE ROADRUNNER WREN

The hidden animal is: AMERICAN CROCODILE

CHALLENGING MAZE



CROSSWORD 1463



ACROSS

- (informal) Exceptionally good.
- Relating to ocean depths from 2000 to 5000 meters.
- Administration of a nutritionally adequate solution through a catheter into the vena cava.
- The villain in William Shakespeare's tragedy who tricked Othello into murdering his wife.
- Free from duties or responsibilities.
- A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
- Bound or secured closely.
- The compass point midway between northeast and east.
- (British) A restaurant where tea and light meals are available.
- Panel forming the lower part of an interior wall when it is finished differently from the rest.
- A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.
- The largest of the islands comprising Antigua and Barbuda.
- (informal) Of very poor quality.
- Black birds having a raucous call.
- Depleted of strength or energy.
- A pilgrim who journeys to Mecca.
- An attendant who puts pool or billiard balls into a rack.
- A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
- A mass of ice and snow that permanently covers a large area of land (e.g., the polar regions or a mountain peak).
- Used of a single unit or thing.
- A young woman making her debut into society.
- How long something has existed.
- Any competition.
- Scarabaeid beetle considered divine by ancient Egyptians.
- Fertilizer made of ground bones.
- (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- A period of time containing 365 (or 366) days.
- A fastener (as a buckle or hook) that is used to hold two things together.
- Of or relating to or measured in ohms.
- A crown-like jewelled headdress worn by women on formal occasions.
- Any plant of the genus Reseda.
- Lacking in sympathy and kindness.
- Swelling from excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue.
- (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
- Sexually transmitted urethritis (usually caused by chlamydia).
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
- A doctor's degree in education.
- Tropical American shrub bearing edible acid red fruit resembling cherries.
- Type genus of the Ranidae.

DOWN

- A strong post (as on a wharf or quay or ship for attaching mooring lines).
- Not widely known.
- Largest known toad species.
- Large hawk of Eurasia and North America used in falconry.
- A member of the people inhabiting the Aleutian Islands and western Alaska.
- A furnished sitting room with sleeping accommodations (and some plumbing).
- A Loloish language.
- The compass point midway between south and southeast.
- Ice cream served with a topping.
- A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
- A chronic inflammatory collagen disease affecting connective tissue (skin or joints).
- Brief episode in which the brain gets insufficient blood supply.
- Sudden sharp painful emotion.
- A quantity of no importance.
- A male human offspring.
- Small tree or shrub of New Zealand having a profusion of axillary clusters of honey-scented paper-white flowers and whose bark is used for cordage.
- Armor plate that protects the chest.
- A logarithmic unit of sound intensity.
- Relating to or concerned with a city or densely populated area.
- Covered with paving material.
- A feeling of deep and bitter anger and ill-will.
- A large body of water constituting a principal part of the hydrosphere.
- Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
- German mathematician (1804-1851).
- A medicinal drug used to evoke vomiting (especially in cases of drug overdose or poisoning).
- Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
- From sins, as in religious dogma.
- A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
- The Oceanic language spoken by the Maori people in New Zealand.
- Fermented alcoholic beverage similar to but heavier than beer.
- A plaster now made mostly from Portland cement and sand and lime.
- Relating to the pineal body.
- A large building at an airport where aircraft can be stored and maintained.
- A person who makes deceitful pretenses.
- (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
- Jordan's port.
- At or constituting a border or edge.
- An informal term for a father.
- Lacking excess flesh.
- God of the Underworld.
- A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
- (Irish) The sea personified.
- An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

US BOBSLED, SKELETON AND LUGE ALL ON HOME ICE THIS WEEKEND

NEW YORK: Home-ice advantage is real in sliding sports, and the US is hoping it rings true again this weekend. All three US national sliding programs are hosting World Cups starting Friday. The bobsled and skeleton tour is back in Lake Placid, New York - where temperatures well below zero are expected on Friday - and luge's international schedule continues in Park City, Utah, where Tucker West of the U.S. will aim for a third consecutive win.

It's the first time both World Cup circuits have simultaneously been in the US since December 2013. "There really is a home-track advantage for us," said U.S. bobsled driver Steven Holcomb, who probably has more runs on the track at Mount Van Hoevenberg in Lake Placid than anyone else.

"If you go to any 100-meter track in the world, it's 100 meters. If you race a mile, it's a mile, wherever you are. Bobsledding, it's never the same from one track to another. It's a huge advantage."

That's a big part of why West's first two career wins were at Lake Placid, the track he knows best. Winning on other tracks, that's a sign of becoming a true international contender.

West prevailed in Lake Placid two weeks ago, then won in a one-run race last weekend at Whistler, British Columbia. Training and racing for the entire week was condensed to one day because a shipment of sleds was delayed nearly four days after a massive snowstorm snarled traffic.

Park City is a track where US teammate Chris Mazdzer won the men's singles race last season. "It's kind of hard to put a finger on what the secret sauce is," West said. "Obviously, Lake Placid is a track that I know and love. I've taken many runs there, so I'm comfortable there. Whistler, on the other hand, was just a crazy situation for us."

West is eighth in the World Cup luge overall men's standings, significant because he's gotten points in just two of the four races. He was disqualified from the season-opening race in Igls, Austria, because he and his sled slightly exceeded weight limits. By getting DQ'ed there, he was also ineligible to compete in the Sprint Cup race that same weekend.— AP

FINAL STAGE THE TOUGHEST FOR PARIS - 2024 BID LEADER

PARIS: Paris is the hot favourite to win the right to host the 2024 Olympics Games but, having fallen at the final hurdle before, knows the hardest part is yet to come - convincing the International Olympic Committee (IOC) its bid is the strongest.

In July 2005 in Singapore, London pipped an over-confident Paris, which had lost out to Beijing for the 2008 Games, to win the right to stage the 2012 Summer Olympics, triggering tears in the French camp when the vote results were announced.

Paris has put together a compact bid but three-times Olympic canoeing champion Tony Estanguet, who leads the candidacy with former International Rugby Board president Bernard Lapasset, warned that selling the project will be key. "We're exactly where we wanted to be at this time of the process. What's left for us now is to go and sell our project," Estanguet told Reuters at the Paris 2024 general assembly.

"We have learnt from past bids to come back stronger than Paris 2012 with athletes now at the heart of the candidacy." Paris last hosted the Games in 1924. The winner of the three-horse race between Los Angeles, Paris and Budapest will be announced on Sept. 13, 2017 in Lima.

IOC president Thomas Bach recently said that the bid process was producing "too many losers", and there was speculation that the 2024 and 2028 Games could be awarded simultaneously. "We have not been officially contacted on that, so we stay on track and want to win the 2024 Olympics according to existing rules," Estanguet said.

Betfair have made Paris 8/13 favourites to win the IOC vote, ahead of Los Angeles (9/4) and Budapest (9/2).

"I don't believe in odds and bookmakers," Estanguet said.—Reuters



KRASNAYA POLYANA: In this Sunday, Feb. 23, 2014 file photo, athletes pass by the bell during the men's 50K cross-country race at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia. Russia's top cross-country skiing official said Thursday, she is prepared to cancel upcoming World Cup races in the country amid the Russian doping scandal. — AP

RUSSIA COULD GIVE UP W CUP SKI RACES AMID DOPING SCANDAL

MOSCOW: Russia is prepared to give up hosting rights for some World Cup cross-country skiing races to help the country's image amid a doping scandal. Elena Valbe, the president of the Russian cross-country skiing federation, said she would "absolutely" allow the March 16-19 final round of the World Cup in Tyumen to be moved outside the country if it would generate goodwill to let Russia compete at the 2018 Winter Olympics.

"My deep conviction is that now we need to think about our team going to the Olympics Games," Valbe told state news agency R-Sport on Thursday. "A World Cup stage is a second-level issue."

Russia is again under pressure after a report last week by World Anti-Doping Agency investigator Richard McLaren detailed a vast, state-sponsored doping cover-up involving 12 medalists from the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi.

On Tuesday, the 2017 world bobsled and skeleton championships were moved from Russia after several of the top sliders said they would not compete in the country because of doping concerns, something Valbe argued had set a precedent for more events being transferred or canceled.

"If one federation is doing something, there's probably a joint agreement, or at least they've consulted among themselves," she said.

In July, the International Olympic Committee encouraged winter sports federations not to schedule competi-

tions in Russia because of doping concerns, though the call prompted little response at the time.

On Thursday, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said that an "atmosphere" of suspicion around Russia was not enough to move events like the bobsled world championships. "The anti-doping campaign has turned into an anti-Russian campaign," Medvedev said. "What's atmosphere got to do with it if there's a contract?"

TEST-TAMPERING

Meanwhile, a new site - Germany and the US are potential hosts - will likely be announced in the coming days. The move by the International Bobsled and Skeleton Federation comes less than a week after the latest scathing report from World Anti-Doping Association investigator Richard McLaren showed the depth of doping and test-tampering by Russia during the 2012 and 2014 Olympic cycles. "That's a monumental decision by the IBSF and the right move to protect clean athletes and to tell the world that state-sponsored doping is unacceptable," US women's bobsled pilot Elana Meyers Taylor said. "I am ecstatic about the decision."

Worlds were scheduled to happen over the last two weeks of February in Krasnaya Polyana, Russia, on the track used for the 2014 Sochi Games.

The office of Russian President Vladimir Putin said the move was based on unfounded statements, with

spokesman Dmitry Peskov calling it a "politicized decision." But the Russian bobsled federation said it accepted the move in the spirit of cooperation, and asked for understanding from other sliding teams.

"There are no good decisions in these circumstances and our colleagues have had to choose the lesser evil," the Russian federation said. "We understand that in a situation of mutual distrust, which is not of our creation, it is still possible to host a competition but it's not possible to host a festival, and the world championship should really be a festival which people look forward to with pleasure."

The IBSF worded its decision very cautiously, not implicating the Russian Bobsled Federation in any way. Instead, the international federation said moving worlds was the only way "to allow athletes and coaches from all nations to participate in a competition that focuses on sport rather than accusations and discussions - whether justified or not." Some of the world's best sliders - including reigning Olympic medalists Steven Holcomb, Matt Antoine and Meyers Taylor of the U.S., Martins Dukurs of Latvia and Lizzy Yarnold of Britain - urged the IBSF for weeks to take the action. Latvia's national skeleton team said Sunday that it would boycott if worlds were held in Russia, and Austria and South Korea were also considering such a move. — AP



HOUSTON: In this April 4, 2016, file photo, Craig Sager speaks before the NCAA Final Four tournament college basketball championship game between Villanova and North Carolina in Houston. Sager, the longtime NBA sideline reporter famous for his flashy suits and probing questions, has died after a battle with cancer, Turner Sports announced Thursday. He was 65. — AP



HOUSTON: In this May 12, 2015, file photo, broadcaster Craig Sager, left, talks with Los Angeles Clippers' Glen Davis prior to Game 5 of the NBA basketball Western Conference semifinals against the Houston Rockets in Houston. — AP

COLORFUL NBA REPORTER SAGER DIES AFTER BATTLE WITH CANCER

HOUSTON: Craig Sager never once thought about giving up as he battled cancer for more than two years. "Man, life is too beautiful, too wonderful, there's just too many things," he said in late August from a Houston hospital bed. "It's not just you. It's your family and kids and all. Fight. Fight until the end. Fight as hard as you can."

The end for the beloved TNT broadcaster came Thursday when the man known as much for his outrageous wardrobe as his relationships with the NBA's elite succumbed to an aggressive form of leukemia. Turner Sports announced his death without disclosing details. He was 65 and had worked basketball games for TNT for nearly a quarter-century.

"There will never be another Craig Sager," Turner President David Levy said. "His incredible talent, tireless work ethic and commitment to his craft took him all over the world covering sports."

His son, Craig Jr., posted a loving video tribute to his father, tweeting: "We packed a lifetime and then some into these 28 years together."

Sager's passing brought out condolences from every corner of the NBA and Hall of Famer Larry Bird expressed what many were feeling.

"He was as identifiable with the NBA as any player or coach," Bird said. "The league will not

be the same without him." Magic Johnson echoed those sentiments on Twitter.

"The NBA family lost a legend who changed the way sideline reporters did their job. RIP Craig Sager," Johnson said. It wasn't just the NBA community that mourned his passing, with Vice President Joe Biden and Drake expressing sadness at the loss.

Sager had two bone marrow transplants with his son as the donor before undergoing a third one from an anonymous donor four months ago.

He announced in April 2014 that he had been diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia, and he missed the playoffs and much of the following season as he underwent the first two transplants. Sager revealed in March 2016 that his leukemia was no longer in remission. He said doctors told him the typical prognosis was three to six months to live.

He was overwhelmed by how news of his fight spread and people across the world started talking about the Sager Strong campaign.

His battle brought out the soft side of Gregg Popovich, the prickly San Antonio Spurs coach with whom he had many memorable exchanges during in-game interviews.

Sager never faulted Popovich for his gruff attitude during those interviews. After learning Sager had died, Popovich spoke somberly for



MILWAUKEE: Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo and Jabari Parker wear shirts to honor NBA broadcaster Craig Sager who died earlier before an NBA basketball game against the Chicago Bulls Thursday, in Milwaukee. — AP

nearly two minutes before a game in Phoenix. "If any of us can display half the courage he has to stay on this planet, to live every life as if it's his last, we'd be well off," Popovich said.

Sager sported suits in every color of the rainbow and plenty of shades not found in nature, from teal to fuchsia to magenta. He would match plaid blazers with paisley ties or striped shirts - all in bold hues.

Sometimes lost in the glare of his wardrobe was Sager's relentless nature as a reporter. Every time Popovich would give a terse non-answer, an unfazed Sager would pepper him with another question.

Sager's persistence was on display at the start of his career at age 22. Working for a Braves-affiliated AM radio station in Sarasota, Florida, he hopped a flight to Atlanta for a game with Hank Aaron a home run away from breaking Babe Ruth's career record. After Aaron hit the homer, Sager sprinted onto the field and wound up chasing Aaron down the third-base line. When Aaron's teammates mobbed him at home plate, Sager can be seen in his trench coat in the middle of the scrum.

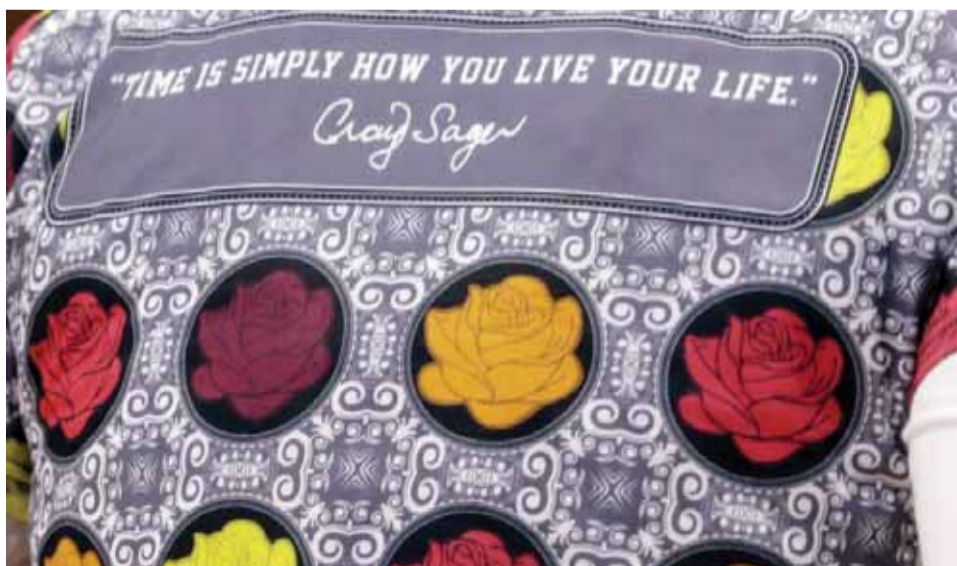
Sager worked as a reporter on the Olympics, Major League Baseball playoffs, the

NFL and the NCAA Tournament, among other sports. But he was indelibly connected to the NBA.

"Craig was as vital to the NBA as the players and coaches," Silver said. "Craig earned widespread respect for his insightful reporting and inspired so many most recently with his courage." Sager got to cover his first NBA Finals in 2016 through an unusual arrangement between TNT and ESPN, which invited him to join its coverage. He marked the occasion by wearing a blazer with a royal blue floral print. In an interview with LeBron James after Game 6, the Cavaliers star turned the tables to giddily ask Sager a question: "How in the hell do you go 30-plus years without getting a Finals game?"

A native of Batavia, Illinois, Sager attended Northwestern, where he walked onto the football and basketball teams, and served as the school's "Willie the Wildcat" mascot for three years.

He worked at several TV and radio stations in Florida after college before spending two years in Kansas City. Sager joined CNN in 1981 after handling the network's first live remote report during the 1980 baseball playoffs. — AP



MILWAUKEE: Milwaukee Bucks' Jabari Parker wear a shirt to honor NBA broadcaster Craig Sager. — AP

WARRIORS DEFEAT KNICKS WITH TEAMWORK

NEW YORK: The Golden State Warriors passed circles around the New York Knicks on Thursday night, assisting on their first 36 baskets over 35 minutes in a 103-90 victory over the undermanned Eastern Conference squad. Klay Thompson had a game-high 25 points and JaVale McGee dropped in 17 in a rare start, helping Golden State improve to 7-0 against Eastern teams this season with a fifth straight win over the Knicks. The 41 total assists gave Golden State (23-4) at least 30 in 19 of their 27 games this season. No other NBA team has reached 30 more than four times. The Warriors topped 40 assists three times this season, becoming the first team to do so since the 1996-97 Chicago Bulls. Kevin Durant (eight), Stephen Curry (eight) and Draymond Green (seven) led the assist barrage against the Knicks team that was without Carmelo Anthony (bruised right shoulder) and Derrick Rose (sore lower back). Durant nearly recorded a triple-double with 15 points and a game-high 14 rebounds to go with his eight assists.

SPURS 107, SUNS 92

Kawhi Leonard and Pau Gasol scored 18 points apiece and San Antonio used a 21-3 run in the fourth quarter to put away Phoenix. LaMarcus Aldridge added 14 points and seven rebounds for the Spurs, who won 14 of 15 road games this season and three in a row overall. San Antonio hadn't played on the road since taking its only loss, 95-91 at the Chicago Bulls on Dec. 8. Leonard and Gasol grabbed 10 and nine rebounds, respectively. Devin Booker had 17 points and Eric Bledsoe added 14 for the Suns, who hung with the Spurs for three quarters before falling victim to the decisive run.

NUGGETS 132, TRAIL BLAZERS 120

Danilo Gallinari scored 27 points, Gary Harris added 18 in his return and Denver took a big lead early and went on to beat Portland. Wilson Chandler had 17 points and eight rebounds for the Nuggets, who snapped a five-game losing streak against the Trail Blazers. Portland won 13 of the previous 14 against Denver but were never in this one. The Nuggets' only win in that stretch was Nov. 9, 2015 in Denver. They held an eight-point lead late in their home opener this year only to see the Trail Blazers rally and win in overtime. Damian Lillard led Portland with 40 points and 10 assists. CJ McCollum scored 23 and Mason Plumlee had 19 points and seven rebounds. The Trail Blazers lost for the fourth time in five games.

BUCKS 108, BULLS 97

Matthew Dellavedova drained a 3-pointer that restored a double-digit lead with 1:34 left as Milwaukee held off a late charge by Chicago.



OAKLAND: Joakim Noah #13 of the New York Knicks goes up for a shot on JaVale McGee #1 of the Golden State Warriors at ORACLE Arena on Thursday in Oakland, California. —AFP

Making a rare appearance in front of a national television audience, the Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo and Jabari Parker put on a show. They combined to hit 24 of 46 shots and sink five 3-pointers to finish with 30 and 28 points, respectively. Antetokounmpo added 14 rebounds, three assists and three steals, while Parker grabbed five boards and dished out three assists. The Bulls' Taj Gibson scored 17 of his 19 in the first half while Jimmy Butler added 10 before the break and finished with a team-leading 21. Dwyane Wade scored 16 of his 20 in the second half.

PELICANS 102, PACERS 95

Anthony Davis scored a game-high 35 points and rookie Buddy Hield had a season-high 21 as New Orleans defeated Indiana. Hield made a season-high five 3-pointers, all in the second half. Jrue Holiday added 16 points and Terrence Jones had 10 points off the bench for the Pelicans, who finished the game on a 17-5 run. Myles Turner led the Pacers with 26 points, Jeff Teague scored 21, Paul George had 18 and Al Jefferson scored 14 off the bench. — Reuters

LOW-PROFILE RBs ARE GAINING GROUND ON NFL'S STARS

MIAMI: Hark the unheralded running backs. Fifth-round picks, an undrafted rookie and a player who was out of the NFL for three seasons are among those bursting into the clear this year, leaving defenses and fans wondering the same thing: Where did they come from?

The surprising success by such low-profile rushers as Jay Ajayi, Jordan Howard, Robert Kelley and Tim Hightower speaks to the challenge of evaluating running backs.

"It's not like it used to be," said Miami Dolphins offensive coordinator Clyde Christensen, an NFL assistant since 1996. "When I first came in the league, you'd watch a tailback in college, and they all had a fullback in front of them, and they all got their 25 carries a game, and you compared them to each other. Now they're coming out of spread offenses, and there are a lot of good running backs out there who play for teams that don't run the ball as much. It's a lot harder comparing them now."

Some of the most frantic scrambling this season has been by teams seeking someone to carry the ball, with the high injury rate at the position creating openings for under-the-radar runners.

Ezekiel Elliott, DeMarco Murray and Le'Veon Bell are having big seasons, as expected. But other Pro Bowl backs - Todd Gurley, Doug Martin, Adrian Peterson, Chris Ivory - have struggled or been hurt this year. Four-time Pro Bowl rusher Arian Foster retired from Miami in October, the day after Ajayi's second consecutive 200-yard game for the Dolphins. Even coach Adam Gase was surprised by the way the job was seized by Ajayi, a fifth-round pick in 2015.

"When we were going into the season, we felt like we were going to get four guys involved in what we were doing," Gase said.

"So we didn't know if we'd really have enough touches to say a guy was going to have a 1,000-yard season."

Ajayi is 44 yards from the 1,000 mark, and one of 11 players on pace to reach the milestone. Six did it last year. Cowboys rookie Elliott leads the league with 1,392 yards. "We've all seen how the league has gone as far as trends with the running backs," Gase said. "It seems like rushing is coming back a little bit. You're seeing teams like Dallas, and obviously we're feeling pretty good about what we've got going on. There are other teams that are leaning on the running back a little more now."

As a result, players like Kelley are obscure no more. Nicknamed "Fat Rob," he has rushed for 587 yards while making six starts for the Washington Redskins, and is averaging 4.6 yards per carry.

In his best season at Tulane, he rushed for 420 yards - one reason he went undrafted. "As a free agent, we didn't see a whole lot," coach Jay Gruden said. "He didn't get many carries at Tulane." Kelley, listed at 6-foot and 220 pounds, has a rugged running style and rarely goes down on the first hit.

"I'm happy with how far I came," he said.

Ditto Howard, a rookie fifth-round pick from Indiana. He's one of the few bright spots this season for the Chicago Bears, rushing for 969 yards with a 5.0 average that ranks third in the league. NFL teams often find their best running back in unlikely places, and tend not to devote high draft picks to the position. Elliott was the lone rusher taken in the first 44 selections of this year's draft. In 2015 the Arizona Cardinals found a gem from Northern Iowa in the third round, and now David Johnson leads the league with 15 touchdowns and 1,830 yards from scrimmage.—AP

NBA results/standings

Golden State 103, NY Knicks 90; Denver 132, Portland 120; San Antonio 107, Phoenix 92; Milwaukee 108, Chicago 97; New Orleans 102, Indiana 95.

Eastern Conference					Western Conference				
Atlantic Division					Northwest Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Toronto	18	7	.720	-	Utah	16	10	.615	-
NY Knicks	14	12	.538	4.5	Oklahoma City	15	11	.577	1
Boston	13	12	.520	5	Portland	13	15	.464	4
Brooklyn	7	17	.292	10.5	Denver	10	16	.385	6
Philadelphia	6	19	.240	12	Minnesota	7	18	.280	8.5
Central Division					Pacific Division				
Cleveland	18	6	.750	-	Golden State	23	4	.852	-
Chicago	13	12	.520	5.5	LA Clippers	19	7	.731	3.5
Detroit	14	13	.519	5.5	Sacramento	9	16	.360	13
Milwaukee	12	12	.500	6	LA Lakers	10	18	.357	13.5
Indiana	13	14	.481	6.5	Phoenix	8	18	.308	14.5
Southeast Division					Southwest Division				
Charlotte	14	12	.538	-	San Antonio	21	5	.808	-
Atlanta	12	13	.480	1.5	Houston	19	7	.731	2
Washington	10	14	.417	3	Memphis	18	9	.667	3.5
Orlando	11	16	.407	3.5	New Orleans	9	18	.333	12.5
Miami	9	17	.346	5	Dallas	6	19	.240	14.5



BRISBANE: Australia's batsman Peter Handscomb plays a shot as Pakistan's wicketkeeper Sarfraz Ahmed (R) looks on during the second day-night cricket Test between Australia and Pakistan in Brisbane yesterday. —AFP

AUSSIES DECIMATE PAKISTAN INNINGS TO TAKE CHARGE

BRISBANE: A withering spell of fast bowling backed up by exceptional catching had Pakistan on their knees as Australia took charge of the day-night first Test in Brisbane yesterday. Australia's three-man pace attack—Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Jackson Bird—decimated the tourists' first

innings under the Gabba lights. Starc and Hazlewood took three wickets each and Bird chimed in with two for seven to leave skipper Steve Smith pondering whether to enforce the follow-on after a seven-wicket final session.

At the close, Pakistan were hanging on at 97 for eight and trailing by 332 runs with Sarfraz Ahmed on 31 and Mohammad Amir not out eight. "We lost the session completely, the credit goes to the Australian bowlers," fast bowler Wahab Riaz said.

"We will definitely try to fight back, obviously it's a huge lead right now, but we can try our level best, try to restrict them, if we get to bowl again."

Rookie Peter Handscomb hit a maiden century in Australia's first innings 429, but it was the bowlers coupled with inept Pakistan batting which had the pink ball hurtling to an early resolution.

Hazlewood put the tourists on the skids with two wickets in two balls in his fifth over. Babar Azam got a thick edge which flew to Steve Smith at second slip for 19 and veteran Younis Khan feathered the next ball to wicketkeeper Matthew Wade for a duck.

Skipper Misbah-ul-Haq was never comfortable under the lights and played well away from his body, nicking to Matthew Renshaw at first slip off Bird for four.

Asad Shafiq soon followed, prodding at Starc to give Khawaja another slips catch for two. Sami Aslam, who was twice clocked on the helmet as he turned his head away from rising Hazlewood deliveries, was caught behind off Bird for 22 off 100 balls.

Wahab Riaz and Yasir Shah followed within minutes of each other but Sarfraz and Amir saw out play to stumps.

Handscomb made the most of his opportunity and followed up a half-century on debut against South Africa in Adelaide last month with a polished 105 in Australia's first innings of 429.

Handscomb was out shortly after tea when he chopped a Wahab delivery on to his stumps, one ball after Josh Hazlewood was caught at first slip in Mohammad Amir's previous over.

Tailenders Nathan Lyon (29) and Bird (19) hit out in a crowd-pleasing last-wicket stand of 49, while Wahab Riaz and Amir both finished with four wickets each.

"Ultimately, we need to take 20 wickets to win the game and if we give the bowlers time to rest up they can come out firing and hopefully rattle through them again," Handscomb said. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

BRISBANE, Australia: Scoreboard yesterday at stumps on the second day of the first cricket test between Australia and Pakistan, a day-night match at the Gabba.

Australia, 1st Innings (Overnight: 288-3)

Matt Renshaw c Ahmed b Wahab	71
David Warner lbw b Amir	32
Usman Khawaja c Misbah b Shah	4
Steve Smith c Ahmed b Wahab	130
Peter Handscomb b Wahab	105
Nic Maddinson c Ahmed b Wahab	1
Matthew Wade c Azhar Ali b Amir	7
Mitchell Starc c Shafiq b Amir	10
Josh Hazlewood c Azhar Ali b Amir	8
Nathan Lyon c Shafiq b Shah	29
Jackson Bird not out	19
Extras: (5lb, 1w, 7nb)	13
TOTAL: (all out)	429

Overs: 130.1. Batting time: 558 minutes.

Fall of wickets: 1-70, 2-75, 3-151, 4-323, 5-334, 6-342, 7-354, 8-380, 9-380, 10-429.

Bowling: Mohammad Amir 31-7-97-4 (1nb), Rahat Ali 22-5-74-0, Yasir Shah 43.1-6-129-2, Wahab Riaz 26-4-89-4 (1w, 6nb), Azhar Ali 8-0-35-0.

Pakistan, 1st Innings

Sami Aslam c Wade b Bird	22
Azhar Ali c Khawaja b Starc	5
Babar Azam c Smith b Hazlewood	19
Younis Khan c Wade b Hazlewood	0
Misbah-ul-Haq c Renshaw b Bird	4
Asad Shafiq c Khawaja b Starc	2
Sarfraz Ahmed not out	31
Wahab Riaz c and b Hazlewood	1
Yasir Shah c Khawaja b Starc	1
Mohammad Amir not out	8
Extras: (3lb, 1w)	4
TOTAL (for eight wickets)	97

Overs: 43. Batting time: 195 minutes.

Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-43, 3-43, 4-48, 5-54, 6-56, 7-66, 8-67.

Still to bat: Rahat Ali.

Bowling: Mitchell Starc 15-2-45-3 (1w), Josh Hazlewood 11-1-19-3, Jackson Bird 9-6-7-2, Nathan Lyon 8-1-23-0.

ALI TON GIVES ENGLAND OPENING DAY HONOURS

CHENNAI: Joe Root urged centurion Moeen Ali and the rest of the England batsmen to put India under pressure yesterday after the visitors made a solid start in the fifth and final Test in Chennai.

The tourists were 284 for four at stumps with Ali (120) and Ben Stokes (five) at the crease after they elected to bat first at Chennai's MA Chidambaram Stadium.

Ali mounted crucial partnerships with Root (88) and Jonny Bairstow (49) to revive the England innings after the visitors lost their openers in the first hour of play.

Ali's 146-run third-wicket stand with Root remained the highlight of the innings as England, who have already lost the series 3-0, search for a consolation win.

"It would be really nice to go home with a win under our belt and we have set it up nicely today, it's (now) about tomorrow going on and taking it forward," Root told reporters on Friday.

"And hopefully Moeen can carry on how he has played today, Stokesy can get in and play one of his mouth-watering innings he is capable of doing," said Root.

Ali, who was promoted to number four following a rejig in England's batting order in the Mohali Test, absorbed the pressure after Root's dismissal to pilot the innings.

"That added responsibility of batting higher up in the batting order he has taken really well on this tour and proved it with two brilliant hundreds," said Root. Root was also responsible for the rebuilding act after the fall of Keaton Jennings (1) and skipper Alastair Cook (10) but he missed out on what would have been his second ton of the series.

ROOT'S 'CHILDISH' REACTION

The Englishman was given caught behind off Ravindra Jadeja by the on-field umpire but India successfully reviewed the decision after a disturbance in the snicko suggested the ball had grazed the bat before going into the keeper's glove.

Root did not seem happy with the call as he dejectedly walked back to the pavilion but later termed his reaction as "childish". "I was convinced I didn't hit it. Obviously the technology suggests otherwise... you probably just have to take it on the chin - I must have got a fine one on it," said Root, who was seen practising on a road inside the stadium on Thursday.

Ali, who was dropped on nought at mid-wicket, showed grit during his controlled knock as he carried on the good work with Bairstow. — AFP



CHENNAI: England's Moeen Ali plays a shot during the first day of the fifth cricket test match against India in Chennai, India, yesterday. — AP

SCOREBOARD

CHENNAI, India: Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the fifth and final cricket Test between India and England in Chennai on yesterday.

England 1st innings:

A. Cook c Kohli b Jadeja	10
K. Jennings c Patel b Sharma	1
J. Root c Patel b Jadeja	88
M. Ali not out	120
J. Bairstow c Rahul b Jadeja	49
B. Stokes not out	5
Extras (b4, lb1, w1, penalty 5)	11
Total (4 wickets, 90 overs)	284

Fall of wickets: 1-7 (Jennings), 2-21 (Cook), 3-167 (Root), 4-253 (Bairstow)

Bowling: Yadav 12-1-44-0, Sharma 12-5-25-1, Jadeja 28-3-73-3, Ashwin 24-1-76-0, Mishra 13-1-52-1, Nair 1-0-4-0.

To bat: J. Buttler, L. Dawson, A. Rashid, S. Broad, J. Ball
India: V. Kohli (capt), M. Vijay, K. Nair, C. Pujara, L. Rahul, P. Patel, R. Ashwin, R. Jadeja, A. Mishra, U. Yadav, I. Sharma.

SPORTS BRIEF

Gundogan suffers
cruciate injury

LONDON: Manchester City's Germany midfielder Ilkay Gundogan has suffered a cruciate knee ligament injury, the club said yesterday. He is likely to be ruled out for several months. "It's so so difficult for him, it's sad for him," manager Pep Guardiola told a news conference. "We're going to miss him a lot, it's unlucky, but that's football. "Now we need him to feel we are there and wait and come back safe. He's going to be operated (on) and be back as soon as possible." Gundogan joined City from Borussia Dortmund in June and was just settling into the side when he sustained the injury during Wednesday's 2-0 win over Watford. Fourth-placed City host Arsenal, who are one place and one point ahead of them, tomorrow. —Reuters

Castillo finalizes
deal with Orioles

BALTIMORE: Free agent catcher Welington Castillo has finalized a \$6 million, one-year contract with the Baltimore Orioles. Castillo's agreement, announced yesterday, includes a \$7 million player option for 2018. He hit .264 with 14 homers and 68 RBIs in 111 games with Arizona last season, when he made \$3.7 million. The 29-year-old, who became a free agent when the Diamondbacks failed to offer a 2017 contract, is expected to take over from four-time All Star Matt Wieters, who became a free agent. Wieters accepted a \$15.8 million qualifying offer last off-season and hit .243 with 17 homers and 66 RBIs in 124 games. He was not given a \$17.2 million qualifying offer last month. — AP

Chapman, Yankees finalize
\$86 million, 5-year contract

NEW YORK: Hard-throwing reliever Aroldis Chapman completed his return to New York when the Yankees finalized his \$86 million, five-year contract on Thursday. Chapman energized fans at Yankee Stadium this year with a fastball of up to 105.1 mph, but New York pivoted to youth as the trade deadline neared and dealt him to the Chicago Cubs on July 25 for touted shortstop prospect Gleyber Torres, right-hander Adam Warren and outfielders Billy McKinney and Rashad Crawford. Chapman helped the Cubs win their first World Series title since 1908, getting the victory in Game 7 against Cleveland last month, then became a free agent. The 20-year-old Torres was selected the youngest MVP in the history of the Arizona Fall League. — AP

Suarez signs contract
extension with Barca

BARCELONA: Barcelona striker Luis Suarez has signed a contract extension with the Catalan club until June 2021. Yesterday's signing came a day after the new deal - which carries a buyout clause of 200 million euros (about \$210 million) - was announced by Barcelona. Suarez's previous contract with the Spanish club was due to expire in 2019. Since transferring from Liverpool in 2014, Suarez has scored 97 goals in 116 matches, helping Barcelona win eight titles, including the 2015 Champions League. The 29-year-old Uruguay striker has 13 goals in 20 games with Barcelona this season. The Spanish powerhouse recently also extended the contract of Brazilian forward Neymar until 2021, and now it will try to seal a deal with Lionel Messi to keep together its formidable attacking trio. — AP

Rafinha signs Bayern
contract extension

MUNICH: Defender Rafinha has extended his contract with Bayern Munich by a year until June 2018, the German giants said yesterday, as they tie down their stellar names. The 31-year-old Brazilian has played 186 matches for the Bundesliga champions and scored four goals since joining in 2011 from Genoa. His contract had been due to expire at the end of this season. Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge called the right-back "an important player for us on the pitch, but also a very popular man in the dressing room". "I have been here almost six years now. Bayern is like a second family to me and one of the best clubs in the world," said the full-back, who joins Franck Ribery and Robert Lewandowski in committing to Bayern. — AFP



MANCHESTER: Tottenham Hotspur's Jan Vertonghen, left, and Manchester United's Zlatan Ibrahimovic during the Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur at Old Trafford in Manchester, England. — AP

ON FIRE ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIC
INDISPENSABLE TO MAN UTD

MANCHESTER: Manchester United striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic has performed so well that he has made himself virtually undroppable this season according to manager Jose Mourinho. The 35-year-old former Swedish international has found the net 14 times in all competitions for United this season after he joined from French champions Paris St Germain on a free transfer.

Ibrahimovic has also played in more matches than any of United's other strikers this season, featuring in 24 of their 26 games so far, and will start up front in the Premier League clash with in-form West Bromwich Albion today.

"Is it almost impossible to leave him out? Yes, it is," said Mourinho at the eve of match press conference yesterday. "As a striker he is one of the impossible positions where you cannot hide.

"He is phenomenal and plays again tomorrow (Saturday) and then one week to rest. "I am not surprised at all. I knew from the physical point of view he could resist but obviously he cannot play 60 matches." Mourinho, who enjoyed a good relationship with Ibrahimovic at Inter Milan when he was in charge there, said he would need to rest him but he was such an integral part of the side it was hard to omit him.

"I must give him a rest. I must leave him out a game," said Mourinho. "He was suspended against Arsenal. So that game he did not play. "In some matches in the Europa League he was on the bench, also against Northampton (in the EFL Cup).

"So now and again I will find him a way to give him a rest. "But as our target striker we can see he is the only one. And the way we normally play we need him."

'A GREAT EXAMPLE IN EVERYTHING'

Mourinho said Ibrahimovic is also a great example to United's youngsters with the manner in which he conducts himself in matches and on the training ground.

"He is a great example in every aspect he is very professional," said the 53-year-old Portuguese. "Great also with his family life and on keeping his family life the most positive and private. "He is a great example in everything and when you have him and Michael Carrick at 35 the kids could not have better examples."

Mourinho's West Brom counterpart Tony Pulis is presently the highest placed British manager in the Premier League with his side seventh, four points behind United in sixth.

Mourinho believes British managers do not get the recognition they deserve for their achievements compared to him and other big name foreign managers

now in charge of Premier League clubs.

"In English football there are different kinds of profiles," he said.

"Tony (Pulis) got trophies everywhere in every club. "He was not relegated with Stoke, it's a trophy. He was not relegated with West Brom, it's another trophy. Not relegated with Palace it's another trophy. And so on, and so on.

"So he has lots of trophies. By trophies I mean reach the target and he did that. "Like some, never relegated, that is a big trophy.

"You are not expecting some of the clubs he manages to be the champion. So for me, yes, English (sic) managers are not looked at as they should be." — AFP

FIFA COUNCIL MEMBER LOSES
APPEAL OF ONE-YEAR BAN

ZURICH: FIFA Council member Wolfgang Niersbach has lost his appeal against a one year ban from soccer in relation to Germany's 2006 World Cup bid. The FIFA ethics committee found Niersbach guilty of failing to report findings about possible unethical conduct and conflicts of interest during the bidding process.

FIFA said yesterday that its appeal committee agreed with the findings of the ethics committee that "a one-year ban from taking part in any football-related activity at national and international level was adequate in this case." Niersbach was a vice president of the 2006 World Cup organizing committee, in charge of media and marketing.

Niersbach retained his elected positions on the top decision-making bodies at both FIFA and UEFA despite resigning as German federation president in November 2015.

He is the first member of the FIFA



Wolfgang Niersbach

Council, which replaced the discredited executive committee in May, to be sanctioned by the ethics division. Niersbach is also a suspect in a Swiss criminal case investigating fraud, money laundering, criminal mismanagement and misappropriation relating to a payment of 6.7 million euros (\$7.3 million) to FIFA in 2005. — AP

CHELSEA, PALACE IGNORED ABUSE TIP-OFF: EX DETECTIVE

LONDON: Premier League leaders Chelsea and fellow London side Crystal Palace dismissed a police warning about a scout who had been convicted for importing child-abuse images, the detective who alerted them told The Times yesterday.

Clive Driscoll, who rose to the rank of chief inspector before retiring, said he might as well have been phoning "from the moon" when he made the call in 2001 about the scout John Butcher.

Butcher was convicted in 1993 of attempting to smuggle child-abuse images into England from the Netherlands and in 2009 he was put on the sex offenders register for seven years after he was caught looking at indecent images.

Butcher, 67, is adamant he has "never physically abused children". The revelations—which will add to the deepening dismay of how football reacted to the allegations at the time in a scandal that has rocked the foundations of the multi-billion pound sport—come days after London police revealed they were looking

into allegations of abuse at 30 London clubs including four unnamed Premier League sides.

It was after Butcher's earlier offence that Driscoll got in touch with Chelsea, Crystal Palace and Millwall over Butcher, who operated as a freelance scout.

"I spoke to Millwall, Chelsea and Palace about Butcher and warned them about him in 2001," he said. "I was a detective inspector at the time and I was phoning them from the police, but I might as well have been phoning from the moon. "I was saying he had a conviction but they just treated it as a football matter." Driscoll, who successfully brought the killers of black teenager Stephen Lawrence to trial after years of frustration over the initial investigation on the part of the victim's family, said he impressed on the clubs the seriousness of the matter.

"All they were concerned about was that he was a good scout, the football I was saying this is slightly more important than that, that this guy had a conviction for importing child pornography."

His revelations will make further uncomfortable reading for Chelsea—whose present owner, the Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich, took over two years after Driscoll informed the club of Butcher's conviction.

His regime was lambasted for imposing a gagging order on former youth player Gary Johnson as a condition of a 2015 agreement to pay him 50,000 pounds (\$63,850, 59,230 euros) over abuse he suffered at the hands of former scout Eddie Heath.

GREATER COMPENSATION

Several other former Chelsea youth players—including a retired policeman have come forward since Johnson broke the gagging order to allege Heath, who died in 1983 aged 54, had either abused them or they knew of his abuse.

Chelsea have launched an investigation—headed by a lawyer—into the allegations about Heath with some speculating that the club could face a group action law suit costing them potentially millions. — AFP



YOKOHAMA: Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo and teammates warm up during a training session at the FIFA Club World Cup soccer tournament in Yokohama, near Tokyo, yesterday. Real Madrid and Kashima Antlers will play in tomorrow's final. — AP

CROC ALERT FOR RONALDO IN CLUB WORLD CUP FINAL

YOKOHAMA: Japan's Kashima Antlers plan to unleash a secret weapon to strike terror into Spanish giants Real Madrid when they meet in this weekend's Club World Cup final: A sharp-toothed crocodile. Though relative minnows on the world stage, a voracious predator with a deadly bite lurks in the Kashima side in the form of defender Naomichi Ueda, who fired a warning ahead of Sunday's Yokohama clash. "I'm a crocodile," he said. "Just as a crocodile will complete its conquest by dragging its prey into the water, I just want to bring them down—whether it's in the air or on the ground, one on one."

Killer reptiles notwithstanding, Kashima face overwhelming odds against a Real side on a club record win streak of 36 matches. They finished a distant third in the J-League season before capturing the championship

playoff less than two weeks ago. But Kashima became the first Japanese side to reach the Club World Cup final after stunning Colombia's Atletico Nacional 3-0 in midweek. "If I don't score again in the final, I'll quickly be forgotten," said striker Yuma Suzuki, who celebrated scoring Kashima's third goal in Osaka by copying Ronaldo's trademark macho man goal pose. "I had no choice," added the 20-year-old, whose celebration after scoring with his first touch off the bench even set tongues wagging on Spanish television.

"It's like a dream. Now I want to do it on front of Ronaldo's very eyes." Whether or not his childhood idol Ronaldo sees the funny side is likely to depend on the score in Yokohama but a defiant Suzuki told Japan's Nikkan Sports: "I will show Real Madrid how Japanese football has grown." Real

coach Zinedine Zidane insisted the European champions and Spanish league leaders would not underestimate the pugnacious Antlers as his side chases a second world title in three years.

"It's basically a home game for them so the conditions favour them," said the Frenchman after his side's comfortable 2-0 semi-final win over Club America. "For us it's all about recovering properly for tomorrow. We will study the Antlers between now and the final and we'll be ready." While Real's collection of global superstars are expected to ease to victory, Suzuki already has his heart set on a consolation prize—Ronaldo's shirt.

"Hopefully I can get to him first and get it," he said after training yesterday. "He might be the enemy during the game but after the final whistle I'll be his greatest fan again." — AFP

WENGER TELLS ARSENAL TO BE BRAVE AGAINST CITY

LONDON: Manager Arsene Wenger wants Arsenal to reinforce their title credentials by beating Manchester City in the Premier League tomorrow and called on his players to show no fear at the Etihad Stadium.

Arsenal slipped to third in the table after being beaten 2-1 by Everton at Goodison Park in midweek, while fourth-placed City recovered from last weekend's 4-2 defeat by Leicester City by beating Watford 2-0 on Wednesday.

The loss at Everton was Arsenal's second league defeat of the season and Wenger said his players needed to show more courage on the ball and take their chances if they wanted to avoid another reverse.

"What is important is that we respond straightaway," the Frenchman told a news conference yesterday. "Big games against Man City mean defend well together and not be timid when you get the ball."

Arsenal's free flowing, possession-based style has been compared to Pep Guardiola's all-conquering Barcelona team of 2008-2012, and Wenger said it was only a matter of time before the Spaniard began to make his mark at City. "He brings his philosophy through," Wenger added. "You expect him to put his print into his team. "What you want of a top-level game is that it reaches the expectation quality-wise. I think that will happen because I am a positive man." City are missing striker Sergio Aguero due to suspension, but Arsenal have a host of absentees as well, with defender Shkodran Mustafi out with an ankle injury, Santi Cazorla out for months and Aaron Ramsey and Danny Welbeck still unavailable. "Look, I don't deny Sergio is an important player for them but they have other important players... we have plenty out," Wenger said.

The Frenchman, who is never shy to point out refereeing mistakes in his post-match news conferences, also pushed for the quick introduction of video technology in the Premier League to help officials make decisions during games. The technology is being tested by FIFA at the ongoing Club World Cup in Japan. "I am a long-time fan," Wenger said. "The speed of the game — referees need help. I would like to see it tomorrow morning." —Reuters



Arsene Wenger

RAIOLA: 'GENIUS' AND 'BIG MOUTH' BEST FRIEND TO THE STARS

HAARLEM: Dressed in a T-shirt and jeans or tracksuit and trainers, it is easy to mistake Mino Raiola for just another chubby beer-loving football fan rather than the razor-sharp mind who dominates the world transfer market.

Raiola, whose Italian roots and love of pasta is highlighted by his family's pizza restaurant, master-minded Paul Pogba's record-smashing 105-million-euro (\$111 million) return to Manchester United in July. He has looked after Swedish great Zlatan Ibrahimovic for the last 15 years and also manages Mario Balotelli, Blaise Matuidi and Henrikh Mkhitaryan. Raiola is said to have raked in 35 million euros in fees from contracts worth 356 million euros this year alone—which includes the Pogba transfer from Juventus to United.

"I don't think Mino was surprised by the deal or the amount," Willem Vissers, a Dutch football writer for the respected daily *De Volkskrant*, told AFP.

"He's a man that always thinks ahead and he's a perfectionist who's always working unbelievably hard to get the best deals for his players," Vissers said.

HUMBLE ROOTS

Raiola was born into humble roots. His family owns a cosy, traditional pizza restaurant on a corner overlooking a canal in the Dutch medieval city of Haarlem. The *Ristorante Napoli* has been a landmark for decades. It is a mix of Dutch-Italian style with terracotta floors and linen-decked tables, old paintings and FC Napoli paraphernalia adorning the walls. Raiola first honed his skills on football and the art of negotiating while waiting tables at the *Ristorante Napoli*.

"The board of the (now defunct) local football club Haarlem FC used to come and dine there at least once a week," said Edwin Struis, a freelance football writer who worked at a Haarlem paper in the early 1990s. "Warranted or unwarranted, Mino would chirp in, giving his opinions on the state of the club and football in general," Struis told AFP. "It got to a point where they simply said, 'Since you know so much, why don't you just join the board?'" said Struis.

Raiola briefly worked as technical director at Haarlem FC, but he had much grander ideas: setting up a co-operation deal to transfer players from Italian club Napoli. Naples is close to the southern

Italian city of Nocera Inferiore, from where Raiola moved with his parents when he was one in 1968.

'SOPRANOS LOOKALIKE'

Many in football mistakenly brushed aside Raiola because of his jeans-and-T-shirt uniform.

Even Ibrahimovic in his autobiography "I am Zlatan" said he thought Raiola was a character from "The Sopranos" TV series when they first met. "In the beginning they all underestimated him because of the way he dressed," said Vissers, who has interviewed the elusive agent and been a keen follower of his career. These days, nobody dismisses Raiola, one of the most powerful people in football.

His first big break came with the signing of Czech midfield star Pavel Nedved, a former Ballon d'Or winner, in 1992. After that, other greats like Ibrahimovic and Pogba followed. It is not all plain-sailing for Raiola however. The Football Leaks media consortium alleged last week that the agent had transferred Pogba's multi-million image rights to the offshore haven of Jersey. The agent has dismissed the reports as imaginary. —AFP

GUARDIOLA RUBBISHES CLAUDIO BRAVO RUMOURS

MANCHESTER: Pep Guardiola made clear yesterday his belief Chilean goalkeeper Claudio Bravo is happy at Manchester City, amid reports the goalkeeper could be on his way back to Spain. The 33-year-old, Chile's most-capped player who skippered them to two successive Copa America titles, left Barcelona to join City for £17m (\$22 million, 19 million euros) in August as Guardiola wanted a new first choice to replace England number one Joe Hart.

Bravo has not had the easiest start to life in Manchester—he was sent off on his return to the Camp Nou in the Champions League in October, and has kept just two clean sheets in his last 14 games.

There have been reports the keeper has told his team-mates he wants to rejoin Barcelona, even though that would mean him being back up to Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

Guardiola, though, is adamant Bravo is happy in England. "I didn't read that. Sometimes, when you (journalists) come here, Simon (Heggie, City's head of media relations) will make a briefing as to what you are going to ask me," said Guardiola.

"But he didn't speak about that issue.

"I don't read too much of newspapers, of the Twitters and Instagrams and Facebooks.

"I spoke with Bravo in the last days, and with his wife as well.

"I saw him here." Their little daughter as well, but I couldn't speak with her because she is just one year old. "And he told me he is so happy."

'GOING TO MISS HIM A LOT'

Guardiola has seen his side drop to fourth place after a strong start that saw them win their first six Premier League games. But they got back on track by beating Watford 2-0 on Wednesday, giving the squad a lift as they prepare for Sunday's meeting with third-placed Arsenal. However, Guardiola will have to do without German midfielder Ilkay Gundogan. The 26-year-old, who joined from Borussia Dortmund in June for a reported fee of £20 million (\$25.1 million, 23.8 million euros), was forced off with a knee injury during that game,

and Guardiola admitted he faces a long absence. "It's so, so difficult for him," said Guardiola.

"We are sad for him. We are going to miss him a lot. A lot. But it's what it is. He's unlucky, sometimes football is like this." In his short time in England, Guardiola has already faced criticism for lacking pragmatism, an accusation also levelled frequently at his Arsenal counterpart Arsene Wenger.

Guardiola is full of respect for the way in which Wenger has pursued an attractive style of play during his 20 years in North London. "Call him the commander-in-chief," Guardiola said.

"He's the boss, no? He's the chief for Arsenal.

"That's why I call him that. I'm the commander-in-chief for Manchester City. I saw many Netflix series and that's why. Commander-in-chief and colonel, I use a lot.

"He has been here a long time. When that happens at a club such as Arsenal, it's because a person is doing a good job.

"I understand it's not easy to win the Premier League, but I have a lot of respect about his career.

"I've said many times that I admire the way he tries to play and especially the quality of the players they like and they buy." — AFP

KOEMAN CALLS FOR CALM HEADS AHEAD OF LIVERPOOL GAME

LIVERPOOL: Everton manager Ronald Koeman has asked his players to keep their emotions under control ahead of Monday's Premier League derby against Liverpool. Everton have not won in the last 11 top-flight matches against their Merseyside neighbours, losing 4-0 in April in a match in which defender Ramiro Funes Mori was sent off for a reckless tackle on Liverpool forward Divock Origi. "The derby is all about the fans, we understand that but we need to be calm and prepare for the game in the way we like," Koeman told a news conference yesterday ahead of his first Merseyside derby.

"It's about preparing the team. You have an emotional part that you need to control. That's the most important." Everton have only one win in their past 19 league games against Liverpool going back to 2007.

"It's not good. One out of 19," Koeman said. "We need to accept how difficult it is, win the game and make the fans happy."

Everton, who beat Arsenal 2-1 in mid-week, are eighth in the league while Liverpool are second, but Koeman has taken

heart from the neighbouring team's recent struggles. Liverpool beat Middlesbrough 3-0 on Wednesday, but were held 2-2 by West Ham United at Anfield and lost 4-3 at Bournemouth this month.

"They are strong, doing well, but lost their way against Bournemouth and drew with West Ham. If Bournemouth can beat Liverpool, we have a possibility," Koeman said. Victory over Arsenal snapped a run of five games without a win for Everton.

"The positive side is that we keep our belief until the end of the (Arsenal) game," he added. "That is part of the character of the players. "We had a good support from the fans and it makes it difficult for teams to play at Goodison Park." Everton trio Gareth Barry, Leighton Baines and Ryan Mason signed new contracts on Friday, but Koeman confirmed Yannick Bolasie's season was over after the forward underwent knee surgery yesterday.

"Bolasie had surgery on his meniscus but now needs another on his anterior cruciate ligament," the manager added. "He will be out for a long time." — Reuters

Live Matches on TV (Local Timing)

English Premier League	
Crystal Palace v Chelsea	15:30
beIN SPORTS 2 HD	
Middlesbrough v Swansea	18:00
beIN SPORTS 9 HD	
Sunderland v Watford	18:00
beIN SPORTS 7 HD	
West Ham United v Hull	18:00
beIN SPORTS 10 HD	
Stoke v Leicester	18:00
beIN SPORTS 2 HD	
Bromwich Albion v Manchester United	20:30
beIN SPORTS 2 HD	
Spanish League Primera Div. 1	
Sporting Gijon v Villarreal	15:00
beIN SPORTS 3 HD	
Atletico de Madrid v Las Palmas	18:15
beIN SPORTS 3 HD	
Granada v Real Sociedad	20:30
beIN SPORTS 3 HD	
Sevilla v Malaga	22:45
beIN SPORTS 3 HD	
Italian Calcio League Serie A	
Empoli v Cagliari Calcio	17:00
beIN SPORTS 4 HD	
Milan v Atalanta	20:00
beIN SPORTS 4 HD	
Juventus v Roma	22:45
beIN SPORTS 4 HD	
German Bundesliga 1st Div.	
Schalke v Freiburg	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Mainz v Hamburger	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Augsburg v Monchengladbach	17:30
beIN SPORTS 5 HD	
Werder Bremen v Koln	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Leipzig v Hertha Berlin	17:30
beIN SPORTS 1 HD	
Wolfsburg v Eintracht Frankfurt	20:30
beIN SPORTS 5 HD	
French League 1st Div.	
Guingamp v Paris Saint	19:00
beIN SPORTS 6 HD	
Montpellier v Girondins	22:00
beIN SPORTS 7 HD	
Stade Rennes v Bastia	22:00
beIN SPORTS 6 HD	
Lorient v Saint Etienne	22:00
beIN SPORTS 1 HD	
Toulouse v Nancy Lorraine	22:00
beIN SPORTS 9 HD	
Caen v Metz	22:00
beIN SPORTS	

Sports



Colorful NBA reporter
Sager dies after
battle with cancer

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VAL D'ISERE: Slovenia's Ilka Stuhec competes on her way to win an alpine ski, women's World Cup combined, in Val d'Isere, France, yesterday. — AP

ILKA STUHEC WINS W CUP ALPINE COMBINED RACE

VAL D'ISERE: Ilka Stuhec moved from third to first and won a World Cup Alpine combined race yesterday for her third victory of the season.

Sitting third after the downhill run, the Slovenian finished .12 seconds ahead of Michelle Gisin and .16 clear of Soffia Goggia following the slalom run on the Oreiller-Killy course. "It feels amazing, because I know my run in the morning was not perfect and I made a few mistakes," Stuhec said. "I've never liked slalom too much, actually. Lately we've been training it a bit more than before."

Stuhec's two other wins this season were in downhill, both in Lake Louise. Prior to this season, she had not placed higher than fourth in a race. "With the self-confidence I have from the races and the results, I'm going fast," Stuhec said.

"I'm feeling confident at the moment and having fun," Gisin, who is the younger sister of Olympic downhill champion Dominique Gisin, secured her first career podium. Her previous best was sixth place last weekend in slalom at the Italian resort of Sestriere. "I'm very happy to share a podium with these two girls who are skiing so good," Gisin said. "Ilka already did such an amazing performance in Lake Louise. I'm just happy I could ski the way I can."

Goggia is also having a breakthrough year. This was her fifth podium in seven races this season and moved her up to second place in the World Cup standings behind American slalom specialist Mikaela Shiffrin.

"I was definitely anxious at the start of the slalom," Goggia said. "Training is one thing, to start in a World Cup is way different. I just tried to get the rhythm in the first gate and keep it." Defending overall World Cup champion Lara Gut was sixth after the downhill and went off course in the slalom. "It's part of the game. One time you win, one time you go out," Gut said. "It's never fun to ski out. I know what (went wrong), but I don't think it's the right place to explain what's going on." Her failure to finish cost her valuable points as she bids to close the gap on Shiffrin - considered her main rival for the overall title.

"I just have to try and not think too much," said Gut, who won last year's downhill in Val d'Isere. "It didn't really work today." Gut, who also won last year's Alpine combined at the French resort, is third in the standings - 14 points behind Goggia and 105 behind Shiffrin.

Shiffrin is skipping the speed events in Val d'Isere and will return for Tuesday's giant slalom in the nearby resort of Courchevel.

American skier Laurene Ross had led the race after going fastest in the downhill run, but she ended up in 10th. It was her second career top-10 finish. "I don't ever go into slalom with any expectations. I don't really ski it very often and it's tough to hang in there," Ross said. "I was just a little bit passive. But I'm happy with the result." There is a downhill race today and a super-G tomorrow. — AP

NORWAY'S JANSRUD WINS VAL GARDENA SUPER-G

VAL GARDENA: Olympic champion Kjetil Jansrud and Norwegian teammate Aleksander Aamodt Kilde finished 1-2 in a super-G yesterday to extend their country's recent dominance in Val Gardena - and in the World Cup speed events.

It could have been another podium sweep for the "Attacking Vikings" but Aksel Lund Svindal wasted a fast start to his run with two major mistakes, ultimately skiing through a gate and not finishing.

Jansrud clocked 1 minute, 31.99 seconds down the Saslong course, finishing 0.06 seconds ahead of Kilde and 0.13 in front of Canadian veteran Erik Guay. Olympic downhill champion Matthias Mayer of Austria finished fourth, 0.48 behind, as he returned to the site of a horrific crash a year ago which ended his season. Olympic combined champion Sandro Viletta was airlifted off the course by helicopter after crashing and brought to a local hospital. It wasn't immediately clear what type of injuries the Swiss racer had.

Jansrud has now won all three speed races this season. He swept a super-G and downhill in Val d'Isere, France, earlier this month. Last year in Val Gardena, Svindal, Jansrud and Kilde finished 1-2-3 for Norway in the super-G. Norwegians have won the Val Gardena super-G five consecutive times, with Svindal posting three victories and Jansrud two. — AP