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150 Fils

## EGYPT FINDS BELONGINGS, DEBRIS FROM CRASH AT SEA

NO CLUE ON CAUSE, BUT TERRORISM NOT RULED OUT



Min 28°  
Max 41°



CAIRO: Egyptian film director Osman Abu Laban (center) who lost four relatives, all victims of Thursday's EgyptAir plane crash, attends prayers for the dead, at Al-Thawrah Mosque, in Cairo, yesterday. — AP

**CAIRO:** The Egyptian navy said yesterday it had found the personal belongings of passengers and other debris floating in the Mediterranean, confirmation that an EgyptAir jet had plunged into the sea with 66 people on board. The military said it had found the debris about 290 km (180 miles) north of the port city of Alexandria and was searching for the plane's black box flight recorders.

Egypt's President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi offered condolences for those on board, amounting to Cairo's official acknowledgement of their deaths. The defence minister of Greece, which has also been scouring the Mediterranean, said Egyptian authorities had found a body part, luggage and a seat in the sea just south of where the signal from the plane was lost early on Thursday.

Although suspicion pointed to Islamist militants who blew up another airliner over Egypt seven months ago, no group had claimed responsibility more than 24 hours after the disappearance of flight MS804, an Airbus A320 flying from Paris to Cairo. Three French investigators and a technical expert from Airbus arrived in Cairo early yesterday to help investigate the fate of the missing plane, airport sources said.

Egyptian Prime Minister Sherif Ismail said on Thursday that it was too early to rule out any explanation for the disaster. The country's aviation minister said a terrorist attack was more likely than a technical failure. Yesterday's announcement that debris had been found followed earlier confusion about whether wreckage had been located. Greek searchers found some material on Thursday, but the airline later said this was not from its plane. A European satellite spotted a 2 km-long oil slick in the Mediterranean, about 40 km southeast of the aircraft's last position, the European Space Agency said.

While there was no official explanation of the cause of the crash, suspicion fell on the militants who have been fighting against Egypt's government since Sisi toppled an elected Islamist leader in 2013. In October, the Islamic State group claimed responsibility for blowing up a Russian jetliner that exploded after taking off from an Egyptian tourist resort. Russian investigators blamed a bomb smuggled on board. Last year's crash devastated Egypt's tourist industry, one of the main sources of foreign exchange for a country of 80 million people, and another similar attack would crush hopes of it recovering.— Reuters

## US ADDS IS BRANCHES IN LIBYA, YEMEN, SAUDI TO TERROR LIST

**WASHINGTON:** The United States has added the Islamic State group's branches in Libya, Yemen and Saudi Arabia to its global terrorism blacklist and placed six men on its sanctions list.

The three IS branches were declared "specially designated global terrorists," a category that imposes sanctions and penalties on foreign persons who pose a serious risk of committing acts of terrorism that threaten US nationals or national security, the State Department said. The IS group in Libya also was named as a "foreign terrorist organization." The designations freeze any US assets the groups may have and make it illegal for any American national to knowingly provide those groups or conspire to provide them with material support or resources.

The State Department said the three groups emerged as IS branches in November 2014 when IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi announced he had accepted oaths of allegiance from fighters in Libya, Yemen and Saudi Arabia. It said that while IS's presence in each country "is limited to specific geographic locations," the group's affiliates in all three countries

had carried out numerous deadly attacks. The militant group's Yemen branch claimed responsibility for suicide bombings in March 2015 against two mosques in Sanaa, killing more than 120 people.

The IS affiliate in Saudi Arabia attacked Shia mosques both there and in Kuwait, killing more than 50. And the group's Libyan affiliate is blamed for kidnapping and executing 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians, as well as killing scores of others.

Separately, the Treasury Department announced sanctions against six men it accused of providing financial support to terrorist groups. It said the move was aimed at disrupting the fundraising and support networks of Al-Qaeda, Al-Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Islamic State group. The sanctions target "financiers and facilitators responsible for moving money, weapons and people on behalf of these terrorist organizations," said Adam Szubin, the Treasury's acting under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence.— AFP

## RUSSIA REPAYS SOVIET-ERA DEBT OF \$1.7BN TO KUWAIT

**MOSCOW:** Russia has repaid Soviet-era debt to Kuwait of \$1.72 billion, the Russian finance ministry said yesterday. The principal debt stood at \$1.1 billion, while interests amounted to \$620 million, it said. The Soviet Union raised the debt in its dying days in 1991 to pay for "critical" imports, the ministry said. Russia has yet to redeem Soviet-era debt to South Korea, Macedonia and Bosnia.

After the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia has taken up the responsibility to pay off its debts. According to central bank data, as of April 1, Russia's foreign debt stood at \$516.1 billion, the lowest for five years. Banks and other corporates account for more than 92 per cent of the total external debts.— Reuters



KUWAIT: Traditional wooden boats dock in the local port. —KUNA

## ARABS DEMAND THAT UN REMOVE A PANEL FROM ISRAELI EXHIBITION

**UNITED NATIONS:** Arab and Islamic nations are demanding that the United Nations remove a panel from an Israeli exhibition that calls Jerusalem "the spiritual and physical capital of the Jewish people." A letter from the Palestinian UN mission to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and General Assembly President Mogens Lyketteoft circulated Thursday evening expressed "vehement rejection" at the description, echoing protests by Arab nations at the UN and the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

The Palestinians want east Jerusalem

as the capital of a future state. The letter said any references "which purport to assert Israeli sovereignty on this land are legally, politically and morally incorrect and unacceptable." Palestinian Charge d'Affaires Feda Abdelhady-Nasser said the "misleading and inappropriate depictions of Jerusalem negate the Palestinian existence in the city as well as its historical Arab, Muslim and Christian identity and heritage over the centuries."

She said the UN Security Council and General Assembly "have clearly rejected Israel's illegal annexation of east

Jerusalem" and called on Ban and Lyketteoft to take "the necessary measures for the removal of the panel." UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said the Israeli mission followed the rules for mounting an exhibition. While the UN tries to balance the wishes of the country wishing to exhibit without offending another country, he said, it "is not an exact science and ... is not always easy." The exhibition, in a corridor near a popular cafe in the UN basement, includes panels on Israel's Arabs, its technology innovations and other aspects of Israeli life.— AP



## CBK TAKES PART IN AOU'S JOB OPPORTUNITIES EXPO

**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) took part in the job opportunities expo recently organized by the Arab Open University

(AOU). AOU rector professor Nayef Al-Muttairi attended the event. CBK's human resources manager, Mona Al-Abdul Razq stressed the

importance of the expo aimed at enlightening new graduates about the potential job opportunities in the banking sector.

## News

In brief

### Kuwait and Maldives sign trade agreement

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait and the Maldives have hammered out an agreement aiming at developing and promoting bilateral cooperative relations and boosting two-way trade exchange. The agreement was signed by the Kuwaiti minister of trade and industry and the economic development ministers of the Maldives during the former's visit to Male between May 18-19, the Ministry of Trade and Industry said in a press release yesterday. By signing cooperative agreements, the ministry is seeking to develop national products and to boost and promote Kuwaiti exports to foreign and industrial markets, as well as to provide necessary commodities at reasonable prices, it added. Tourism makes up 28 percent of the Maldives' gross domestic product (GDP) and over 60 percent of its foreign currency earners.



Kuwaiti Ambassador to Uzbekistan Ahmad Al-Jeeran is pictured with Speaker of the Legislative chamber of the Oliy Majlis.— KUNA

### Kuwait envoy meets Uzbekistan's speaker

**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti Ambassador to Uzbekistan Ahmad Al-Jeeran met with Speaker of the Legislative chamber of the Oliy Majlis to discuss bilateral relations of the two countries. During the meeting, the two sides also discussed issues of mutual concern and ways to boost bilateral relations in various fields, namely in the economy, a statement by the Kuwaiti Embassy in Uzbekistan said. The Uzbekistani lawmaker praised Kuwaiti parliament's role in international conferences and arenas. He also expressed appreciation to the Kuwaiti government and its contribution through Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) in financing various projects in his country.

### A visit to Mexico City part of tour to muster support

**KUWAIT:** A visit by the Kuwaiti sports delegation to Mexico City last week, ahead of the FIFA Congress 2016, was part of a tour that previously covered the GCC countries, to muster support to lift the suspension of the Kuwaiti sports, MP Abdullah Al-Mayouf said on Thursday. The delegation found out that most football associations taking part in the Mexico City FIFA Congress had no idea about the reasons behind the suspension of the sport in Kuwait, Al-Mayouf, who is head of the parliamentary youth and sports committee, told a press conference at the National Assembly. He quashed claims that the Kuwaiti sports laws contravene with the international ones and the Olympic Charter. Even if this is true, why did the FIFA Congress hold a vote on the continuation of the suspension? He wondered. They should have rather identified the points of contravention between the Kuwaiti and the international laws, and there was no need for a vote, he said.

### Municipality council fires 40 expatriates

**KUWAIT:** Well-informed sources at Kuwait municipality said that arrangements to lay off over 40 expats employees working in the Municipal Council and Municipality branches in various governorates have been finalized. The sources added that some of the affected employees were notified that their last working day would be 2, June. — Al-Rai

## GCC HEALTH BODY CONDONES UNIFIED STRATEGY ON HEALTH COMMUNICATION

**KUWAIT:** GCC Health Communication Council wrapped up a two-day meeting by recommending a new unified strategy to best disseminate health-related information through broadcast, print, and electronic media. Council member and head of the media office at the Ministry of Health Dr Ghalia Al-Mutairi told KUNA yesterday that the meeting (which took place on May 18-

19) came out in favor of boosting cooperation with the WHO, particularly in training personnel on promoting health-related information or campaigns in the GCC region. The meeting also agreed to have members of the Council exchange expertise and research papers on health awareness issues, said Dr Al-Mutairi, with the added emphasis on the use of technology to deliv-

er this awareness to the public. In that regard, she noted that the ministry of Health in Kuwait has already launched a computer App in Arabic for those interested to seek information on childhood diabetes.

Moreover, she said the two-day meeting chose the subject of Healthy Lifestyles for the Council's health campaign for the next three years, to be celebrated in the first

week of March in those years. The Council also decided to shift the TV and Radio health program known as Your Good Health from its current broadcasting venue to that on YouTube to keep up with the public's interest in using new channels of technology, said Dr Al-Mutairi, indicating that the next Council meeting will be in the UAE in 2018. — KUNA

## NBK'S 'I DREAM TO BE' INITIATIVE GRANTS MAHER'S WISH TO BECOME AN ENGINEER

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues its "I Dream to Be" initiative, a first-of-a-kind initiative that aims at granting wishes for children with severe illnesses and special needs around Kuwait, giving them the chance to live their dreams. Maher Al Nabris, 9 years - old boy who is undergoing treatment at Amiri Hospital, has always dreamt to become an engineer.

NBK's family organized a visit for Maher to the construction area of NBK's new Head Quarters, where he was given his own engineering outfit. Representatives of the NBK's construction project with a group of engineers, alongside with Maher and NBK team had a tour in the new building and discovered all the engineering tasks and many other technical responsibilities. "Maher's dream to become an engineer is yet another wish granted through NBK's initiative "I dream to be". We are proud to be a part of the children's dreams and expand our support to them as much as possible," said Joanne Al Abdul Jaleel, NBK Public Relations Officer.

"I Dream to Be" initiative is a lifetime experience for children not only with life-threatening conditions but children with special needs as well," she added. "This initiative is a great way to spread joy and show that there's always a positive side to a difficult situation. We ask children what they want to be and try to fulfill that for them." NBK gives top priority to children through its commitment to corporate social responsibility. NBK works closely with the Kuwait Association for the Care of Children in Hospitals (KACCH), Bayt Abdullah for the Care of Children in Hospice (BACCH) and several other special needs organizations to maximize its reach to all the children in numerous hospitals and schools.

NBK has been at the forefront of supporting Kuwait's community through a range of initiatives towards education, health, sports and social responsibilities. The establishment of NBK's Children Hospital for Oncology and Hematology at Al Sabah Medical Area stands as one of many ongoing corporate social initiatives towards health and children. "I Dream to Be" aims at focusing and supporting NBK's efforts towards children and addressing their needs as much as possible.



# THE 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM EXPO IN KUWAIT

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**Where:** The Marina Mall  
**When:** May 18th – 21st 2016  
**Timings:** 10 AM to 10 PM daily

## KUWAITI BUSINESSWOMEN HIGHLIGHT THE ROLE IN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

**AMMAN:** Two Kuwaiti businesswomen highlighted, during a business meeting in Jordan Thursday, Kuwait's experience in promoting women empowerment and building their abilities. Bedoor Al-Sumait, President of Business and Professional Women Network (BPWN), and Mashael Al-Asousi, BPWN's Secretary, shared their knowledge while attending the first meeting of the Middle East and North Africa Businesswomen's Network (MENA BWN) with participants from Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Sudan, Lebanon, and Morocco.

They stressed the importance of BPWN in hosting various business activities and events in Kuwait that are mainly centered on women's economic, social, and development role. As a member in MENA BWN's board of directors, BPWN is taking part in the meeting to find ways that links Arab

businesswomen and connect them together, Al-Sumait stated to KUNA. The meeting also discussed a number of important issues such as financial inclusion, business networking on local, Arab, and international levels, and business guidance, she said.

It also discussed building abilities, financing possibilities, women empowerment, and boosting ties among MENA BWN members, Al-Sumait added. For her part, Al-Asousi said that the meeting is MENA BWN's first, which main purpose is to follow the decisions resulted from the founding meeting that was held in Bahrain last April. The decisions included a number of initiatives regarding ways of business networking between Arab businesswomen, as well as communication among local, regional, and international economic and development institutions. — KUNA



## ACCIDENT INJURES TWO

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Two Asians were seriously injured in a tripartite accident involving two trucks and a sedan along King Fahad highway. Security sources said that the driver of one of the two trucks lost control and it rolled over landing on top of the sedan.

### Fire in Sabah Al-Salem

A fire broke out in a sports track in Sabah Al-Salem, security sources said, noting that firemen from Qurain rushed to the scene where they found out that the fire had started in a shack used for storing sport equipment. Fortunately, firemen managed to control the flames and prevent the fire from spreading despite the strong wind.

### Inspection campaigns

Police detectives launched several inspection checkpoints and managed to arrest 212 people including suspects, said security sources. Detectives arrested two crime suspects, 15 absconders, 21 violators of residency laws, 76 for not holding any IDs among others. Police also issued 121 traffic tickets.



## Crime

### 'WANDERING MONKEY'

**KUWAIT:** Security forces were recently alerted by some citizens who reported seeing an unattended monkey wandering around Nuzha streets and jumping from one vehicle to another. Security sources said that children were so happy to see the monkey. Kids gave the monkey some nuts and bananas while adults panicked and called the police who caught it and handed it over to PAAAFR.

### Kuwaiti found dead

A Kuwaiti was found dead near a beach, security sources said, noting that initial examination of the body showed that the man drowned and was washed ashore by waves. Further investigations are in progress.

### Caught red-handed

A citizen with a criminal record was caught red-handed in Fintas while attempting to break open a parked vehicle. The suspect admitted to stealing from several other vehicles in the area.

### 20 bags of heroin

An Asian was recently arrested upon his arrival at Kuwait International Airport. 20 bags of heroin were hidden in his luggage. Case papers indicate that the passenger seemed so confused prompting the security operatives to search his bags.

### Cousin accused

A citizen recently filed a complaint accus-

ing his cousin and another of fraud, said security sources. In his report, the man said that his cousin took a huge sum of money from him - claiming to invest it as a business partners and both of them later vanished. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

### Indian commits suicide

An Indian committed suicide by hanging himself in his room ceiling. Security sources said that the man's roommates in Abu Hlaifa discovered the body and called the police.

### Kuwaiti robs expats

A citizen in his thirties was recently arrested for robbing expats. The suspect was seen driving a KD 20,000-worth luxury vehicle already reported stolen in Farwaniya, security sources said. Case papers indicate that two expats were robbed by someone driving a luxury black vehicle who claimed to be a police detective. Detectives sealed off the area and arrested the suspect who admitted robbing eight others in the same area.

### Promoting IS ideas

A citizen recently reported that a high school teacher - accusing him of promoting Islamic State ideas amongst his students. The man added that he had proof that the teacher had travelled to Afghanistan several times and that he had been urging his students to go for Jihad in Iraq. A case was filed and the teacher is currently being interrogated by state security.

## KUWAITI EGYPTAIR CRASH VICTIM AL-MUTAIRI - A TALENTED ACTOR

**KUWAIT:** Abdul Mohsen Mohammed Jabber Suhail Al-Mutairi, the Kuwaiti who died in the EgyptAir plane crash on Thursday was an exceptionally talented theatre actor who had acted in several plays like the 'Um Ali,' a popular comedy. Al-Mutairi used to work for Kuwait Airways until he retired in 1986. In 2003, he got a PhD in accounting and joined Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA). He was also a professor in PAAET. According to his cousin, Hamad Al-Suhail, Al-Mutairi was in Paris where he took his wife for treatment but KIA asked him to go to Cairo to represent it in an economic conference to be held there.

His cousin, Abdullah said that he called him up two days before the crash and informed that he would return to Kuwait via Cairo, where he intended to stay for a day to attend the conference. When the Kuwait embassy in Paris learnt

that a Kuwaiti citizen was on the board the crashed plane, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah instructed the embassy to verify the news, the embassy said in a statement.

"Embassy's officials contacted concerned officials in France. Also there was coordination between the Kuwaiti and French Foreign Ministries and finally it was confirmed that the Kuwaiti national, Al -Mutairi was among passengers of the ill-fated plane, the statement added. The embassy contacted the family of Al-Mutairi in Paris and Ambassador Sami Al-Suleiman and a consular affairs official visited the family to express their condolences and sympathy. The Kuwait government followed up the matter and the embassy put its efforts at the services of the family. — KUNA and Al-Rai



**KUWAIT:** Under the auspices of the Saudi National Guard Minister, HRH Prince Met'eb Bin Abdul Aziz, the National Guard recently celebrated the graduation of the 32nd batch from King Khaled Military Academy, KSA. Kuwaiti National Guard officers participated in the event.

# DASMAN DIABETES INSTITUTE HOSTS THE MEPI END-OF-YEAR CEREMONY

**KUWAIT:** Dasman Diabetes Institute (DDI), which was established by the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, held an end-of-year ceremony in the presence of Dr Qais Saleh Al-Duwairi, Director-General of DDI, and George Sarmiento, Deputy Economic Counselor and First Secretary of the US Embassy to celebrate the successful completion of the "Let's Stay Healthy Today, Kuwait" program.

The program, funded by the State Department's Middle Eastern Partnership Initiative (MEPI) grant, aimed to host high schools from various governorates across Kuwait to attend a range of workshops with the goal of promoting healthy living and ultimately contributing towards the prevention of non-communicable diseases, such as diabetes. The program successfully hosted 19 schools, both public and private, from all 6 governorates of Kuwait, reaching around 400 students in total.



Students visiting the Institute attended a series of workshops providing them with an advanced curriculum surrounding a variety of topics, such as the science of diabetes, digestion and metabolism of food, exercise

physiology, and a hands-on workshop with science experiments to name a few. The program also included a civic project competition where students were challenged to come up with a project idea surrounding healthy living in Kuwait. Students presented their projects at the ceremony and winners were awarded.

The youth play a very important role in the development of the country, and one of DDI's primary goals is to involve the youth in health promotion activities to aid in spreading awareness. Through such education and outreach programs, the Institute aims to nurture Kuwait's future generations, empowering them to take on a more active role in their schools and communities, and leading them towards promoting and maintaining a healthier lifestyle. Holding such activities and events stems from the Dasman Diabetes Institute's mission statement which is to "To prevent, control and mitigate the impact of diabetes and related conditions in Kuwait through effective programs of research, training, education, and health promotion and thereby improve quality of life in the population."



## KFH HONORS KUWAITI INVENTOR AL-JIMAZ

### KUWAITI INVENTOR WINS SILVER MEDAL AT GENEVA EXPO

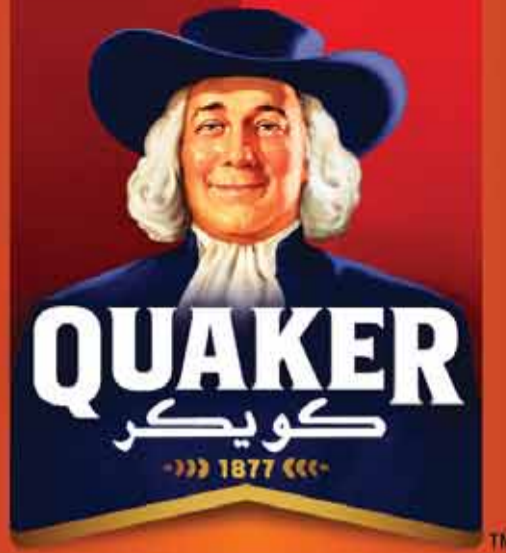


**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has honored the Kuwaiti inventor Nasser Issa Al-Jimaz who won the silver award of the International expo of Inventions in Geneva for innovations in the field of environment protection. The recognition stems from KFH's endeavors to optimally assume the social responsibility, while supporting the talented youth. The arbitration panel at Geneva Expo announced Al-Jimaz a winner of the silver medal in recognition of his invention of reducing the carbon dioxide emissions through absorbing these emissions from air, treating them chemically and turning them into plastic material. The expo showcased 100 new inventions; it gathered 600 inventors from 40 countries. The inventions encompassed different fields of alternative medicine, environment, technology, communication and so forth. KFH sees that winning the award by Kuwaiti inventor Nasser Issa Al-Jimaz at an International exhibition is an excellence award for Kuwait as a whole.



## ABK PARTICIPATES IN ARAB OPEN UNIVERSITY JOB FAIR

**KUWAIT:** Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently announced the successful conclusion of its participation in the Arab Open University job fair which was held at the university campus on the 17th, 18th & 19th May, 2016. The ABK Human Resources team was present at the job fair to engage with students and to share insights on how ABK could support them as they embark on this new journey. ABK's participation reinforces its commitment to supporting Kuwait's youth, which is one of the Bank's primary focuses. It provides fresh graduates with training and career opportunities in the Banking sector and works towards developing their skills and knowledge through the 'ABK Academy' in line with the nationalization policy. For more information on Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) please visit [www.eahli.com](http://www.eahli.com), or contact a customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899.



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# International

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**BLACKWOOD, NEW JERSEY:** Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton speaks during a campaign rally. — AP

## TRUMP, CLINTON SPEECHES TO HIGHLIGHT US DIVISIONS ON GUNS

**WASHINGTON:** Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton will court voters on opposite sides of the gun debate over the next two days in events that will highlight the United States' deep divide on the topic.

Trump and other top Republicans will speak at the National Rifle Association convention yesterday in Louisville, where organizers are trying to unite gun-rights voters by painting Clinton as a foe of their causes who must be stopped.

Clinton will appear Saturday in Florida with the mother of Trayvon Martin and other parents who have lost children to gun violence. She's become a forceful advocate for restrictions meant to reduce the nation's 33,000 annual gun deaths.

The dual appearances highlight the opposing positions the candidates have staked out on gun rights and safety, the prominent role the issue might play in the campaign and the national policy implications for the next president. "If you cherish Second Amendment rights, the stakes have never been higher than they are in this election," NRA spokeswoman Jennifer Baker said.

The NRA - which Clinton listed as an enemy in a debate last year - is warning its 5 million members that Clinton would appoint anti-Second Amendment justices and "implement a radical gun-

control agenda," Baker said. Clinton has said she supports the Second Amendment but that commonsense safety measures are needed to keep firearms out of the wrong hands. She has called for expanding background checks to sales at gun shows and online purchases, and for reinstating a ban on assault weapons.

She has often campaigned with families of gun violence victims and will rejoin many on Saturday as the keynote speaker at an event sponsored by the Trayvon Martin Foundation. The fatal shooting of the unarmed black teenager in 2012 continues to be a flashpoint in the debate. Former neighborhood watchman George Zimmerman recently said he planned to auction off the gun he used in the slaying. Trump, who often notes that he has a concealed-carry permit, has called for making it easier for law-abiding citizens to carry guns for self-protection, saying they could help prevent terrorist attacks and mass shootings. He argues the existing background check system should be fixed, not expanded, and that assault-weapons bans do not work.

The latter view marks a change from 2000, when Trump wrote in a book that he supported the ban on assault weapons as well as a slightly longer waiting period for gun purchases. Supporters of gun

control have been energized by Clinton's campaign and fear a Trump presidency would maintain a national policy that favors easy access to guns.

Clinton "is in tune with what's happening on the streets," said Tanya Keith, 44, a mother of three in Des Moines, Iowa, who got involved in gun-safety advocacy after attending a Clinton event last summer. "I'm not trying to take away anyone's gun. I'm just trying to make it less likely for my daughter to get shot on her way home from school or my son to get accidentally shot on a play date."

Gun sales have boomed during Barack Obama's presidency despite, and perhaps in part because of, several mass shootings and persistent gun violence in cities. His calls to expand background checks have been stymied by the GOP-controlled Congress. He has taken modest steps through executive orders, and Clinton vows to build on that work.

States are moving in vastly different policy directions: Gun-friendly lawmakers keep making it easier to buy and carry guns. Gun-control supporters keep adding restrictions.

California, already among the nation's toughest states on guns, will vote in November on a ballot initiative that would require buyers of ammunition to pass background checks and outlaw high-capacity

magazines. Meanwhile, other states are moving to allow people to carry concealed weapons in more places, including on college campuses, and to do so without having to obtain a permit.

The divide can be exasperating for those who seek a middle ground that would protect gun rights and improve public safety. "All the political rhetoric right now, and Twitter and Facebook ... is polarizing us, telling us we're in one camp or another," said Jonathan Metzl, a professor at Vanderbilt University who studies guns and mental health. "Maybe after the election we can come to terms with this."

Nathan Gibson of Johnston, Iowa, has seen the polarization firsthand. For three years, Gibson and his daughters, 12 and 10, have lobbied to repeal an Iowa law that requires handgun users to be at least 14 years old. The law prevents his girls from competing in some shooting sports, requiring them to drive to neighboring states.

The Republican-controlled Iowa House approved a change in February that would allow children to use handguns under parental supervision. Critics called it the "toddler militia" bill, and Clinton accused the NRA of trying to get more guns in the hands of children. Leaders of the Democratic-controlled Senate killed the bill. — AP

## ISRAEL DEFENSE MINISTER QUILTS, SAYS NETANYAHU FANNING EXTREMISM

**JERUSALEM:** Israel's defense minister resigned yesterday, saying extremists had taken over the country, after he clashed with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the army's handling of a wave of Palestinian violence.

Moshe Yaalon said he no longer had any trust in Netanyahu after the hawkish premier offered his post to a hardliner loathed by the Palestinians, in a bid to expand the governing coalition's majority.

The surprise move by the respected former armed forces chief follows a series of disputes over the military's values and role in society between ministers in Netanyahu's government and top generals backed by Yaalon. "I told the prime minister this morning that due to his conduct in recent developments, and in light of my lack of trust in him, I am resigning from the government and Knesset (parliament) and taking a break from political life," Yaalon said on Twitter.

Netanyahu said that he had wanted Yaalon to remain in government and take the foreign affairs portfolio but he "insisted" on retaining the defense post. "I think that he should have continued to be a full partner in the governance of the state, in the post of foreign minister," Netanyahu said on Twitter. "The change in distribution of portfolios was not a result of a crisis of trust between us. It was a result of the need to broaden the government in order to bring stability to the state of Israel in the face of the great challenges ahead of us," he added. Yaalon's resignation came two days after former foreign minister Avigdor Lieberman said he could bring his far-right Yisrael Beitenu party into Netanyahu's governing coalition if a number of conditions were met, including his being named defense minister.

Netanyahu's right-wing Likud party pressed talks with Yisrael Beitenu on Friday on the terms of a deal to boost the coalition's wafer-thin majority in parliament. Yaalon's resignation does not take effect for two days and, hours after it was announced, he warned in a broadcast address of a rising tide of extremism in the ruling Likud party and the country as a whole. "Extremist and dangerous elements have taken over Israel and the Likud and are threatening (society)," he said in Hebrew. He urged the "sane majority" of Likud voters as well as the rest of the nation "to realize the severe implications of the extremist takeover of the centre, and fight this phenomenon." Yaalon said he had recently "found himself in serious dispute over professional and moral issues with the prime minister, a number of ministers and lawmakers."

Yaalon had been an outspoken defender of the army's handling of an upsurge of Palestinian violence since last October in the face of criticism from hard line ministers and lawmakers. He had also insisted on senior officers' right to "speak their mind" after deputy armed forces chief Major General Yair Golan enraged Netanyahu by comparing contemporary Israeli society to Nazi Germany.

Sane and balanced voice Center-left opposition lawmaker Merav Michaeli said Yaalon's departure deprived the country of a voice of moderation. "We lost a sane and balanced voice in the dangerous and deranged right-wing government Netanyahu is leading," she said.

President Reuven Rivlin, known for having a difficult relationship with Netanyahu, said he was "greatly saddened" by Yaalon's resignation, which he called "understandable, and even appropriate" under the political circumstances.—AP



**JERUSALEM:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, speaks with Israel's Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon during a ceremony for new Israeli Chief of Staff Gadi Eizenkot at the Prime Minister's office on Feb. 16, 2015.—AP



**NICOSIA, CYPRUS:** EgyptAir plane hijack suspect Seif Eddin Mustafa, 59, 2nd left, with t-shirt is escorted by Cyprus police officers as he arrives in a court on April 22, 2016.—AP

## CYPRUS COURT GETS REQUEST TO EXTRADITE EGYPTIAN HIJACKER

**NICOSIA, CYPRUS:** Cypriot prosecutors submitted to court the justice minister's formal request to extradite to Egypt a man who admitted to hijacking an EgyptAir passenger jet with a fake suicide belt in March and diverting it to Cyprus. The court adjourned proceedings in the case of Seif Eddin Mustafa, 59, until May 26 after defense lawyer Robertos Brahimis asked to see a declaration his client handed authorities during the hijacking, which ended peacefully after all 72 passengers and crew aboard the A320 jet were released.

Cypriot authorities said Mustafa had insisted during the six-hour hijacking that a letter be delivered to his Cypriot ex-wife in which he demanded the release of 63 dissident women imprisoned in Egypt. Brahimis said that he intends to use the declaration - as well as Mustafa's initial statement to police after his arrest - to show that his client's political beliefs may put him at risk of not receiving a fair trial or possibly facing torture or death at the hands of Egyptian authorities if he's extradited.

Brahimis also said Mustafa felt his rights of freedom of expression were breached when police manhandled him before yesterday's court appearance and forced him to remove a T-shirt that read, "Victory for January 25, 2011, No to the army 30 July 2013."

The statement refers to the popular uprising against Egypt's former president Hosni Mubarak and the army's overthrow of Mubarak's successor, Mohammed Morsi. Judge Dona Constantinou said the courtroom is no place to express political opinions and defendants must be "appropriately attired." Meanwhile, the head of migrant support group Kisa said it has filed an appeal against a Cyprus Asylum Service decision to dismiss Mustafa's asylum claim because he had committed the hijacking. Doros Polycarpou said that in its decision, the service acknowledged that Mustafa's fear of persecution by Egyptian authorities because of his political beliefs was justified.—AP

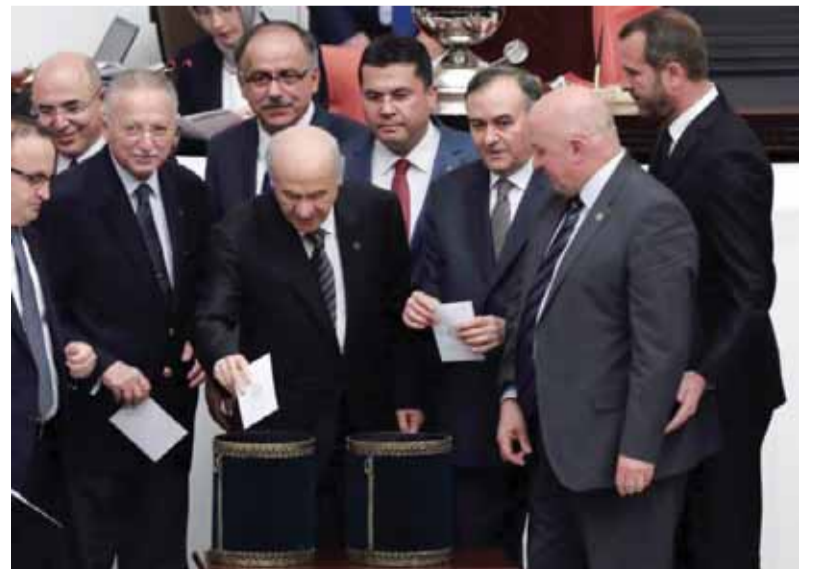
## TURKEY STRIPS IMMUNITY FROM LAWMAKERS, CLEARS WAY FOR TRIALS

**ANKARA:** Turkish lawmakers yesterday approved a bill to amend the constitution to strip them of immunity, a move that paves the way for the trials of several pro-Kurdish and other legislators. When parliament convened in Ankara, 376 deputies in the 550-seat assembly voted in favor of the government-backed bill, which was enough to avoid a referendum. It now needs to be ratified by the president.

The amendment was proposed by the Justice and Development Party after the president accused the pro-Kurdish party, People's Democratic Party, HDP, of being an arm of the outlawed Kurdish rebels and repeatedly called for their prosecution on terror related charges. It puts 138 lawmakers, the vast majority of them from two opposition parties, at risk of prosecution.

Speaking in the Black Sea town of Rize moments ahead of the final round of voting, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan expressed hope for a favorable outcome saying "my people don't want to see criminal deputies in parliament." The decision coincides with a wave of violence in Turkey's southeast following the collapse of a more than 2-year peace process between the state and the outlawed Kurdistan Worker's Party, or PKK.

The HDP, which backs Kurdish and other minority rights, denies accusations that it is the political arm of the PKK, considered a terrorist group by Ankara and its allies. The party has urged the government to end security operations in the southeast and to resume peace efforts.—AP



**ANKARA:** Opposition Nationalist Movement Party leader Devlet Bahçeli, centre, votes at the parliament yesterday.—AP



## LEBANON SUMMONS UN ENVOY OVER 'NATURALIZATION OF REFUGEES'

**BEIRUT:** The Lebanese Foreign Ministry called in Sigrid Kaag, the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL) to explain the claims that UN Secretary-General called for naturalization of refugees and migrants in host countries, including Lebanon.

Sigrid Kaag will be meeting Lebanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Gibran Bassil tomorrow, Friday to discuss the recent report released by Ban Ki-moon under the title of "In safety and dignity: Addressing large movements of refugees and migrants."

The Lebanese government reaffirmed, in a cabinet meeting on Thursday, its opposition to any attempt to naturalize the estimated 1.1 million Syrian refugees in the country, Lebanon's NNA reported. In a related development, the UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said the Secretary General's report was prepared for the September 19 high-level meeting on the large movements of refugees and migrants.

"The focus of the report and the scope of its recommendations are global," he said in a press briefing today. "The report makes no mention of any specific country and seeks primarily to promote more collective action and better responsibility sharing by Member States to address large movements of refugees and migrants."

"It does address the challenge of countries hosting refugees for lengthy periods and calls for measures to better support host communities, to promote social inclusion and to combat discrimination. "The report does not advocate, in any specific cases, for naturalization or granting of citizenship for refugees," Dujarric made clear. "The relevant wording of the report reads: 'In situations in which conditions are not conducive to return, refugees require a status in receiving States to allow them to re-establish their lives and plan for their future. Receiving states should provide a legal status and examine where, when and how to afford the opportunity to refugees to become naturalized citizens,'" he said citing para 86 of the report.—KUNA

## EGYPT ARRESTS RIGHTS ACTIVIST; AMNESTY CONDEMNS MOVE

**CAIRO:** An Egyptian lawyer says authorities have arrested a well known minority rights activist from his home in Cairo. Attorney Doaa Mostafa says Mina Thabet was assaulted by police on Thursday, and taken in for interrogation by national security before he was slapped with a four-day detention order. He faces a long list of accusations, including inciting terrorist activities online and of inciting protests. A member of the same group, Ahmed Abdullah, was arrested last month.

Amnesty International has condemned the arrest, saying Thabet is the latest in a slew of activists working for non-government organizations targeted by the Egyptian government for detention or intimidation.

The watchdog says "these are peaceful activists who must be allowed to carry out their work without fear of harassment or even imprisonment."—AP

## PROTESTERS STORM INTO BAGHDAD'S GREEN ZONE AS SECURITY FORCES OPEN FIRE

**BAGHDAD:** Anti-government protesters stormed into Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone yesterday for the second time in less than a month, despite resistance from security forces who fired tear gas and live bullets, according to a witness and live video.

Witnesses said dozens of people were injured. The protesters included supporters of powerful Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr and people from other groups who are displeased with the government's failure to approve anti-corruption reforms and provide security.—Reuters



**BAGHDAD:** Army Lt. Gen. Sean MacFarland, the top US commander in Baghdad, speaks to reporters yesterday.—AP

## US: IRAQI FORCES RETOOK WESTERN TOWN OF RUTBA

**BAGHDAD:** The retaking of the small western town of Rutba from two years of Islamic State occupation was an important morale booster for Iraqi security forces, the top US commander in Baghdad said yesterday.

Bolstered by US airstrikes, Iraqi ground forces recaptured Rutba this week after Islamic State fighters who had occupied the town for nearly two years fled or put up only light resistance, US military officers said yesterday. Army Lt. Gen. Sean MacFarland, the top US commander in Baghdad, told reporters yesterday that it was an important victory for the Iraqi security forces, even though Rutba is a small town. MacFarland said that taking Rutba from IS will allow the reopening of the main road from Amman to Baghdad, which he said is a significant economic lifeline for Iraq. "Although it's a small town, it's an important success for the Iraqi security forces," he said. Another US officer, Marine Brig. Gen. Bill Mullen, said in a separate interview that US airstrikes outside the town were the decisive factor in the battle, apparently persuading the Islamic State fighters to flee rather than put up substantial resistance. He said there were a "couple of hundred" IS fighters in Rutba before the Iraqi assault. But by the time the Iraqis arrived all but about 30 had fled north to the city of al-Qaim or across the

border into Syria.

Col. Steve Warren, spokesman for the US military command in Baghdad, said the Iraqis had sent about 1,000 troops to Rutba. They were a combination of federal police, Sunni tribal fighters, border security forces and members of the Counter-Terrorism Force. The Islamic State had used Rutba as a staging area for weaponry and foreign fighters flowing into Iraq, Warren said. Beyond the recapturing of Rutba, US officials were focused mainly on preparing Iraqi security forces for an assault on Mosul, which is the Islamic State's main stronghold in Iraq. MacFarland said the US is pushing the Iraqis to prepare for that step but does not want to move too fast, given the Iraqis' military and political limitations. "We don't want to rush them out there and achieve fragile victories," MacFarland told a small group of reporters traveling with Army Gen. Joseph Votel, who was in Iraq on Friday to consult with MacFarland and other US commanders. "We want to make sure that their victories are irreversible."

Asked whether he believes the assault phase of the Mosul operation will be launched before the end of this year, MacFarland said, "I really am reluctant to make predictions."

Weighing on the Iraqi campaign is the political paralysis that has gripped

the government in Baghdad. The Islamic State has also launched a series of deadly attacks in the capital, including suicide car bombings, apparently with the aim of sowing further discord within the government and causing the government to pull some of its forces away from Mosul to help defend Baghdad.

"It's important to make sure that we help keep Baghdad secure," MacFarland said. "It's the center of gravity here. One of the ways we're trying to help the Iraqi security forces is to do that in the most efficient way possible so that it (Baghdad) doesn't become kind of a sinkhole for all of the Iraqi security forces."

He said that "for the most part," Iraqi's political leaders are resisting what he called the temptation to bring significant numbers of Iraqi forces back into the Baghdad area. Already, about half of the Iraqi army is deployed in or near Baghdad.

MacFarland described an Iraqi military leadership of vastly different levels of competence. "I've seen some pretty dang good leaders actually, surprisingly good, out there in some of the units that I've talked to," he said. Some seem almost as good as the officers in his own forces, he said.

He added: "Other times you look at them and say, 'Eh, this guy may not be cutting it.'"—AP

## FOUR KILLED AS POLICE HELICOPTER CRASHES IN FRANCE

**TOULOUSE, FRANCE:** Four members of France's paramilitary police were killed yesterday when a helicopter crashed in a mountainous area of southwest France yesterday, the force said. The helicopter crashed into a cliff face in the area around Cauterets, killing all four people aboard, the force said. The reason for the crash is not yet known.

In a confused initial picture, figures for the number of dead changed several times, but officials said it has now been established that the pilot, co-pilot and two rescue specialists on board were killed.—AFP

## BUCKINGHAM PALACE TRESPASSER WAS CONVICTED MURDERER

**LONDON:** A convicted murderer climbed over a wall and wandered the grounds of Buckingham Palace while Queen Elizabeth II was at home, British prosecutors said yesterday.

Dennis Hennessy, 41, pleaded guilty to trespass during an appearance at Westminster Magistrates' Court. He was arrested in the palace grounds on Wednesday evening. Police said he was not armed, and claimed security measures had "worked effectively."

Prosecutor Tom Nicholson told the court that Hennessy walked around the gardens for about 10 minutes toward the palace before being arrested. As he was detained he asked "is Ma'am in?" - a courtesy term used for the queen.

In a police interview he said had "walked through the gardens admiring the view." Prosecutors said Hennessy was on parole after being convicted of the murder of a homeless man in 1992. Judge Howard Riddle sentenced Hennessy to four months in prison for trespassing and two months, to run concurrently, for damaging an alarm system. Several intruders have breached security at the queen's London residence over the years - including a naked paraglider who landed on the roof in 1994. In 2013, two men were arrested on suspicion of burglary - one in the grounds and one inside an area of the palace that's open to the public during the day. In 1982, an unemployed man named Michael Fagan managed to climb up a drainpipe and sneak into the queen's private chambers while she was still in bed. Elizabeth spent 10 minutes chatting with the intruder before calling for help when he asked for a cigarette.—AP



**LONDON:** Armed police officers work at the main gate of Buckingham Palace on Thursday.—AP



**IDOMENI, GREECE:** A girl plays next to the fence on the Macedonian border on Thursday.—AP

## EU STATES AGREE TO MAKE IT EASIER TO LIMIT VISA-FREE TRAVEL

**BRUSSELS:** European Union nations agreed yesterday to make it easier to suspend its visa waiver program with some countries, just as Turkey is trying to secure visa-free travel for its citizens.

EU interior and migration ministers sealed an agreement on the emergency brake system during talks in Brussels. The so-called "suspension mechanism" would come into play to ensure security and if a country fails to respect its agreements. It would apply to Georgia, Ukraine, Kosovo and Turkey.

French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve said that "we can't allow visa liberalization to happen without any precautions, without a managed calendar or in a rush as some want to impose on us. So we have taken an extremely firm position."

Dutch Migration Minister Klaas Dijkhoff, who chaired the meeting, said that "visa liberalization has great advantages for the EU and third countries. Yet we need an emergency brake for all visa free counties to make sure that visa liberalization cannot be abused."

EU lawmakers must also endorse the scheme for it to come into force. The system would kick in to ensure security or if a country fails to readmit people who left its territory but are not allowed to stay in Europe.

Ministers and EU officials have been at pains to point out that the mechanism applies to all visa waiver countries so that Turkey does not feel targeted. The EU has offered Turkey a visa waiver as incentive - along with up to 6 billion Euros (\$6.8 billion) for Syrian refugees and fast-track EU membership talks - to get it to stop migrants leaving for Europe and take back the thousands who have arrived in Greece from Turkey since March 20.

While the number of migrants arriving in the Greek islands has dropped significantly since that agreement came

into effect, the EU believes that Ankara must do more. "There's still work to be done when it comes to processing people and giving them an individual assessment of their claim to asylum, and then getting people readmitted to Turkey," said Dijkhoff, who is chairing the meeting in Brussels.

Under the migration agreement, the EU pledged to grant a visa waiver to Turkey by June 30. But President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has rejected an EU

demand to narrow the scope of Turkey's anti-terror laws to end crackdowns on journalists and dissenters.

It appears that October might now be the earliest date by which Turkish citizens could be eligible for short-term visa-free visits to Europe. "To get visa liberalization, it's important that they change their terrorism law. Mr. Erdogan says he doesn't want that, so that's a problem, no?" said Belgium's top migration official, Theo Francken.—AP

## EU'S JUNCKER WARNS UK OF CONSEQUENCES FOR 'DESERTERS'

**LONDON:** European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker said yesterday that "deserters" from the EU would have to accept being outsiders, in his strongest warning yet against Britain voting to leave the bloc next month. "Deserters won't be welcomed with open arms," he told French newspaper Le Monde. "The United Kingdom will have to accept being considered a third party, who we won't be bending over backwards for," he said. "That is not a threat, but our relations will no longer be as they are today". Juncker's intervention comes after US President Barack Obama used a visit to London last month to urge Britain not to leave the European Union when it votes in a referendum on June 23 and after warnings from the International Monetary Fund and the Bank of England of the economic risks of going it alone.

Prime Minister David Cameron has also warned of the economic and security risks of leaving the bloc, but opponents insist Britain will thrive. Justice Secretary Michael Gove, a leading Brexit campaigner, has conceded

that Britain may no longer have access to the single market but says it will be in other EU countries' interests to maintain strong trade ties.

In a speech last month, Gove denied that Britain was "destined for a bleak, impoverished future on the outside". "What will enrage, and disorientate, EU elites is the UK's success outside the union," he said.

There was no immediate reaction to Juncker's comments from the "Leave" camp, but he is not a popular figure in eurosceptic circles, viewed as the man behind a push towards greater EU integration. Former London mayor Boris Johnson, a leading figure in the Brexit campaign, sparked outrage last weekend by saying the EU was behaving like Adolf Hitler in trying to create a European super state. With just over a month to go, the latest opinion polls suggest the "Remain" camp is in the lead. A compilation of the six latest polls by the What UK Thinks research project puts "Remain" on 55 percent and "Leave" on 45 percent, excluding undecided.—AFP

POPE UNDER FIRE FOR MEETING FRENCH CARDINAL ACCUSED OF SEX ABUSE COVER-UP



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis shaking hands with Cardinal Philippe Barbarin yesterday, the under-fire Archbishop of Lyon suspected of covering up for a pedophile priest in a scandal that has rocked the Church in France. — AFP

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis came under fire yesterday after meeting Cardinal Philippe Barbarin, the Lyon archbishop who is suspected of covering up for a pedophile priest in a scandal that has rocked the Church in France.

"There was a meeting, nothing out of the ordinary," Vatican spokesman Federico Lombardi said, adding that he expected the two men had discussed the crisis in the French church, as well as regular business.

A support group for the alleged victims in the French scandal voiced regret that Francis had met with Barbarin while magistrates are still mulling whether the cardinal should face criminal charges.

"We would have liked to have been received instead of the cardinal, we note that once again it's the victims who are sidelined," Bertrand Virieux, a co-founder of Lyon-based group "La Parole Liberee", told AFP.

Virieux said he had written to the pope in March seeking an audience. The surprise meeting with Barbarin came three days after the pope was quoted as saying it would be "nonsensical and imprudent" to seek the archbishop's resignation at this stage, argu-

ing that would be to imply he was guilty of potential criminal charges against him.

French examining magistrates are currently carrying out two preliminary investigations to decide whether to pursue charges against the archbishop for his handling of the allegations against Bernard Preynat, a priest in his diocese who has been charged with sex abuse.

Preynat was charged in January after admitting to sexual assaults on four boy scouts between 1986 and 1991 - crimes which his lawyers say he can no longer be convicted of.

La Parole Liberee says it has identified more than 50 victims. According to the Lyon diocese, Barbarin first received testimony from an alleged victim in mid-2014 and relieved Preynat of his duties in May 2015.

Francis said in an interview with French Catholic newspaper La Croix this week that he believed Barbarin had "taken the necessary measures, and had the situation in hand." "He is brave, creative, a missionary. We should now wait for the outcome of the civilian judicial procedure." — AFP

JAPAN TO ACCEPT 150 SYRIAN REFUGEES

TOKYO: Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced yesterday that Japan will accept up to 150 Syrian refugees as foreign students in the next five years as part of its efforts to help refugees in the war-torn country.

Abe made an announcement at a Cabinet task force meeting on "sustainable development goals" ahead the Group of Seven (G-7) summit in central Japan on May 26-27.

The task force was launched in line with the UN sustainable development goals, which was adopted last September at the UN summit. "The sustainable development goals are global common targets to which all the countries, including developed nations, are addressing. Japan should play a leading role in the global efforts and I urge the government agencies to work as a team in approaching the issues," Abe told the meeting.

According to the Foreign Ministry, the plan is aimed at extending opportunities of education to Syrian youths deprived of learning opportunities due to the crisis. The arrangement is also expected to foster human resources who will contribute to the recovery of Syria in the future, the ministry said. Under the plan, Syrian students will be accepted by means of such as technical cooperation of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

In addition, Tokyo plans to provide an assistance package of about USD six billion for the Middle East for the three years starting from 2016 in order to prevent the expansion of violent extremism and build "tolerant and stable society" in the region, the ministry said. The package covers such as humanitarian aid for Syrian and Iraqi refugees and assistance for the neighboring countries hosting those refugees, including Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon. The government also plans to train about 20,000 people. — KUNA

NATO EXTENDS AFGHANISTAN TRAINING MISSION

BRUSSELS: NATO foreign ministers agreed yesterday to extend the alliance's key training and support mission in Afghanistan beyond this year as the country continues to face "serious security challenges." NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg said Afghan forces were doing well against Taliban rebels, benefitting from the current military training programs launched in 2015 after the alliance ended its direct combat role. "But Afghanistan continues to face serious security challenges. That is why today, ministers agreed to sustain the Resolute Support mission beyond 2016," Stoltenberg said, without saying how much longer it would continue.

US Secretary of State John Kerry said Thursday that Washington had 9,800 soldiers in Afghanistan, accounting for the bulk of foreign troops in the Resolute Support Mission, and the number would fall to 5,500 in 2017.

NATO members are separately reviewing financial aid to help the Afghan armed forces in a program which was originally planned to run to 2017 but was later extended to 2020. Stoltenberg said total contributions to the Afghan National Army Trust Fund now totaled \$1.4 billion. US forces ousted the Taliban from Kabul in 2001 after the 9/11 terror attacks and NATO then took over military leadership until 2014, when it judged Afghan security forces to be up to the job. — AFP



KUSHTIA, BANGLADESH: Bangladeshi investigators look over the body of 58-year-old homeopathic doctor Sanaur Rahman after unknown assailants hacked him to death. — AFP

BANGLADESH ATTACKERS KILL DOCTOR, WOUND PROFESSOR

DHAKA: Unknown assailants hacked a doctor to death and seriously wounded a professor in a single attack in western Bangladesh yesterday, local police said. Sanaur Rahman, 58, a homeopathic doctor, was riding a motorcycle in Kushtia town with his friend Saif uz Zaman yesterday morning when they were attacked by at least three men, also on a motorbike.

While police said the assault bore similarities to a spate of previous attacks by suspected Islamists, they also said a personal dispute could be the motive for the killing. "The style of murder bears similarity to the recent attacks by the Islamist militants but we cannot yet be sure who actually did it as nobody has claimed responsibility," Kushtia police superintendent Proloy Chisim said.

"We are primarily suspecting personal enmity," he told AFP. Zaman, a professor of

Bengali literature at Kushtia's Islamic University, was critically wounded and flown by helicopter to Dhaka, 240 kilometers (150 miles) away, for emergency treatment.

"We are probing whether there are some other links including a connection to Islamist militants," police inspector Shahabuddin Chowdhury, who was at the scene, said. Rahman's family said he was a popular doctor who handed out free medicine to the poor. "He used to distribute homeopathic medicine to villagers at his garden house every Friday. We don't think he had any enemies," his brother-in-law Obaidur Rahman said.

The pair were both fans of a mystical musical tradition known as Baul, which is popular in Kushtia, with the doctor's brother-in-law saying Rahman used to arrange concerts at his home. Bangladesh's "mystic

minstrels" or Bauls have long been dismissed as hippies and even killed after being branded heretics by religious extremists in the Muslim-majority country.

Yesterday's attack comes amid a wave of murders of liberals, secular activists and religious minorities by suspected Islamist militants in Bangladesh. A Buddhist monk was hacked to death last Saturday while an atheist student, two gay rights activists, a liberal professor, a Hindu tailor and a Sufi Muslim leader have also been murdered since last month. The Islamic State group and a Bangladeshi branch of Al-Qaeda have said that they carried out several of the killings. But the secular government in Dhaka denies that the two extremist groups are behind the attacks, saying they have no known presence in the country, and blames the killings on homegrown militants. — AFP

## VOICES FROM THAILAND: REFLECTIONS ON 2-YEAR COUP ANNIVERSARY

**BANGKOK:** In the early evening of May 22, 2014, all TV screens in Thailand turned blue and up flashed an army emblem. That was the first sign of change. Suddenly, the country's army commander appeared to say he was now in charge.

Without firing a shot or spilling any blood, the military had staged its second coup in eight years - and its 12th since the end of absolute monarchy in 1932. A stern-faced Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha said at the time he had acted to restore stability after six months of political deadlock, protests and deadly violence. He said his goal was to heal Thailand's intractable political divide and "quickly bring the situation back to normal."

Two years later, Thailand is still firmly under military control, although Prayuth has changed his title from general to prime minister. Outwardly, the country has returned to normal. Bangkok is clogged with traffic, protesters have stayed off the streets, resorts and beaches are full of tourists. But under the surface, Thai society, politics and freedoms are in a state of flux. What do Thais think about the coup, and how has Thailand changed in the two years under military control? The AP pres-

ents the views of ordinary people and well-known figures in Thai society to answer those questions in their own voice.

### The professor

Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a leading expert on Thai politics from Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University: "Thailand has changed, but in a way that goes back to the past rather than into the future." "A lot of people had some relief when the coup took place after six months of mayhem and protests. On a daily basis, Thailand became unworkable, ungovernable."

"Initially, there was relief that we had some law and order. Safety in the streets, no demonstrations. But at the expense of pent-up frustrations. And also at the expense of popular rule that people have come to expect." "But two years is a long time in Thai politics. Now people are saying, yes, we had some law and order, to the extreme in fact, too much of it. People have been detained. There has been a lot of coercion, violations of basic civil liberties, at the expense of longer term stability."

"The way ahead is murky. Most worryingly, the coup makers do not have an exit strategy. And it looks the generals aren't



**BANGKOK:** Thai soldiers guard an area to prevent an anti-coup demonstration at Victory Monument. — AP

taking over for the future of Thailand and the Thai people, but for the generals themselves. So I think more people are seeing that and more people are showing dissatisfaction that is going to mount."

### The journalist

Pravit Rojanaphruk, a Thai journalist who is one of the junta's prominent critics: "It's pretty bleak." "As a journalist, there's

been a lot of self-censorship as well as the arbitrary detention of those who refuse to stop calling this regime illegitimate. I have been detained without charges twice. Most recently they have banned my travel to Finland to attend the World Press Freedom Day celebration, which is co-organized with UNESCO." "These are very concrete examples and prove that there exists repression against the media here in Thailand." — AP



**COLOMBO:** Sri Lankan residents wait at a relief camp after being evacuated following flooding in the Kolonnawa suburb yesterday. — AFP

## 500,000 FLEE HOMES AS SRI LANKA FLOOD MISERY WORSENS

**COLOMBO:** Desperate Sri Lankans clambered onto rubber dinghies and makeshift rafts yesterday to escape monster floods in the capital Colombo as officials said half a million people had fled their homes across the island.

The heaviest rains in a quarter of a century have pounded Sri Lanka since last weekend, triggering huge landslides that have buried some victims in up to 50 feet (15 meters) of mud. More than 60 people known to have died so far amid fears that number could spike with many more reported missing.

President Maithripala Sirisena urged people to provide shelter and donate cash or food as offers of assistance came in from overseas. "We have already got some

assistance from our friends in the international community," he said in a televised address. "Now I want to ask private individuals, companies and non-governmental organizations to help in any way you can to help the victims."

The national Disaster Management Centre (DMC) said 21 of Sri Lanka's 25 districts had been affected. Around 300,000 people had been moved to safe shelters while a further 200,000 were staying with friends or family. "Our information is that about half a million people have been driven out of their homes," Finance Minister Ravi Karunanayake told reporters.

"The (state-owned) Insurance Corporation alone received claims against flooded cars and home appliances amount-

ing to 1.1 billion rupees (\$7.5 million). The actual loss is much, much more."

Diluka Ishani, who was being looked after at a school where the military provided meals and bedding, described how her family managed to escape the floods but had lost virtually everything. "We started moving to higher ground as the water level went up and then we found we had no other place to go to," the mother-of-two told AFP in Colombo's Kolonnawa suburb.

Her family had first fled to higher ground near their home but became marooned and had to be plucked to safety on a small navy boat. "The navy saved our lives, but we lost all our belongings. The house is ruined as the water went above our roof." — AFP

## N KOREA URGES SOUTH TO ACCEPT KIM JONG-UN TALKS OFFER

**SEOUL:** North Korea urged South Korea yesterday to accept leader Kim Jong-Un's proposal for military talks and to ease tensions that surged after the North's fourth nuclear test in January.

Kim had offered the military dialogue during a marathon speech to the recently concluded congress of North Korea's ruling Workers' Party—the first event of its kind for more than 35 years.

In an "open letter" published Friday by the official KCNA news agency, the North's National Defense Commission said urgent steps were needed to overcome the current "catastrophic state" of inter-Korean ties. "South Korea must actively respond to our proposal to hold military talks," the letter said, adding that peace could not be achieved at "gunpoint". "We are proposing to put all issues of interest on the table to openly discuss and resolve them," it said.

But Seoul rebuffed the offer yesterday, after earlier dismissing Kim's original proposal as posturing. "We cannot see it as a sincere gesture," a defense ministry official said yesterday after the letter was published. The South had earlier said most of Kim's speech to the party congress had been devoted to talking up his nuclear weapons program.

The "open letter" format reflects the complete absence of direct communication between the two countries after the North announced in February it was cutting the last two remaining hotlines with the South. The hotlines themselves were never used for conversational diplomacy, but were key to setting up meetings where such discussions could take place.

The letter also demanded that Seoul halt all "hostile actions" such as loudspeaker propaganda broadcasts, and prevent activists floating anti-North leaflets over the border by balloon. After the January 6 nuclear test, the South began blasting a mix of news, propaganda messages and Korean pop music across the border using giant banks of loudspeakers. "South Korea must clearly recognize that only dialogue and negotiation will lead to progress in North-South relations," the commission said.

Seoul insists it will only consider engaging in substantive dialogue with Pyongyang if the regime takes a tangible step towards denuclearization. The North has repeatedly said its nuclear arsenal is not up for negotiation. — AFP

# OKLAHOMA LAWMAKERS OK BILL CRIMINALIZING PERFORMING ABORTION

**OKLAHOMA CITY:** Oklahoma lawmakers have moved to effectively ban abortion in their state by making it a felony for doctors to perform the procedure, an effort the bill's sponsor said Thursday is aimed at ultimately overturning the US Supreme Court's 1973 decision that legalized abortion nationwide.

The bill, which abortion rights group Center for Reproductive Rights says is the first of its kind in the nation, also would restrict any physician who performs an abortion from obtaining or renewing a license to practice medicine in Oklahoma. It passed 33-12 Thursday with no discussion or debate; a handful of Republicans joined with Democrats in voting against the bill sponsored by Republican Sen. Nathan Dahm.

Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin, an anti-abortion Republican, has until Wednesday to sign the bill into law or veto it. Spokesman Michael McNutt said she also could allow the bill to become law "without approval" after the five-day period has elapsed. He also said she will withhold comment until her staff has time to review it.

Dahm made it clear that he hopes his bill could lead to overturning Roe v. Wade. "Since I believe life begins at conception, it should be protected, and I believe it's a core function of state government to defend that life from the beginning of conception," said Dahm, R-Broken Arrow.

But abortion rights supporters - and the state's medical association - have said the bill is unconstitutional. Sen. Ervin Yen, an Oklahoma City Republican and the only physician in the Senate, described the measure as "insane" and voted against it.

"Oklahoma politicians have made it their mission year after year to restrict women's access to vital health care services, yet this

total ban on abortion is a new low," Amanda Allen, an attorney for the New-York based center said in a statement. "The Center for Reproductive Rights is closely watching this bill and we strongly urge Governor Fallin to reject this cruel and unconstitutional ban."

Thursday's vote in the Senate comes as the Oklahoma Legislature nears a May 27 deadline for adjournment and is still grappling with a \$1.3 billion budget hole that could lead to deep cuts to public schools, health care and the state's overcrowded prison system.

"Republicans don't have an answer for their failed education policies, failing health care policies and failing fiscal policies, so what do you do in that situation?" said Senate Democratic leader Sen. John Sparks. "You come up with an emotional distraction. That's what this bill is."

Nearly every year, Oklahoma lawmakers have passed bills imposing new restrictions on abortions, but many of those laws have never taken effect. In all, eight of the state's separate anti-abortion measures have been challenged in court as unconstitutional in the last five years.

In 2013, the US Supreme Court declined to hear a case over an overturned Oklahoma law that would have required women to view an ultrasound of her fetus before an abortion is performed. That same year, the Oklahoma Supreme Court struck down a law that would have effectively banned all drug-induced abortions in the state.

In 2014, the state Legislature approved a law requiring abortion doctors to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals, but a challenge is pending before the Oklahoma Supreme Court.

Also Thursday, the Oklahoma House approved a bill that requires the state



**OKLAHOMA CITY:** Sandy Springer, of Edmond, Okla., stands with other members of Bound 4 Life, an anti-abortion group on March 10, 2016.—AP

Department of Health to develop informational material "for the purpose of achieving an abortion-free society," but lawmakers didn't approve any funding for it. The measure, which now goes to the Senate, requires the health department to produce information about alternatives to abortion and the developmental stages of a fetus, but the bill's sponsor says it cannot be implemented without any funding.

Trust Women, a Wichita, Kansas-based

abortion rights foundation that's building an abortion clinic in Oklahoma City, says it's "dismayed" by the passage of the procedure-performing bill, but is undeterred in its plans to open the center.

"Trust Women stands firm on our decision to open a clinic in the largest metropolitan area in the US without a provider," founder and CEO Julie Burkhart said in a statement Thursday. "Women need the services we will offer."—AP

Kuwait Times

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## JURY SELECTION TO BEGIN IN PETERSON MURDER-FOR-HIRE TRIAL

**ST. LOUIS:** Jury selection is set to begin in the murder-for-hire trial of Drew Peterson, the former suburban Chicago police officer accused of plotting to kill the prosecutor who put him behind bars in his third wife's death.

The process will start yesterday in Randolph County in southern Illinois, where Peterson, 62, is serving a 38-year-sentence at the maximum security Menard Correctional Center. Opening arguments are scheduled to start Monday, with the trial anticipated to last at least one week.

The Illinois Attorney General's Office and the Randolph County state's attorney are prosecuting the case against Peterson, who faces a sentence of up to 60 years if convicted of solicitation of murder for hire along with solicitation of murder.

Peterson has pleaded not guilty to charges that he enlisted another inmate between September 2013 and December 2014 to help plan the death of Will County State's Attorney James Glasgow, who is among the state's likely witnesses. Glasgow has previously declined to discuss the alleged threats.

The crux of the state's case is expected to consist of wiretapped conversations between Peterson

and a confidential informant. Prosecutors have not identified a prospective hit man.

A public defender representing Peterson unsuccessfully sought to bar the secretly recorded conversations, arguing that the Will County judge who authorized the wiretap improperly met with the jailed informant, whose name was inadvertently disclosed during pretrial proceedings.

Even as he faces additional time in prison, Peterson is appealing his 2012 murder conviction to the Illinois Supreme Court. A state appeals court ruled in November that evidence against Peterson was sufficient to show he killed Kathleen Savio, whose body was found in the bathtub of her suburban Chicago home in 2004. No date has been given for arguments before the Supreme Court.

Glasgow reopened the investigation into Savio's death after the 2007 disappearance of Stacy Peterson, the ex-Bolingbrook sergeant's 23-year-old fourth wife. Peterson, who remains a suspect in that case, has maintained his innocence. His defense attorneys previously contended that Stacy Peterson had run off with another man and was alive. Peterson divorced Savio a year before her death.



**JOLIET, ILLINOIS:** Former Bolingbrook, Illinois, police officer Drew Peterson arrives to court. — AP

It's not clear if Peterson - who opted to not take the stand in his murder trial - will testify this time. Randolph County State's Attorney said the witness list has been placed under seal.

Should he testify, prosecutors will be able to question Peterson about his murder conviction, Circuit Judge

Richard Brown has ruled. But they won't be able to discuss a 2003 attempt by Peterson to pay \$25,000 to someone whom he asked to "take care of" Savio. The judge has also granted a defense request to allow discussion at trial about the details of the confidential informants own criminal history. — AP

# TRUMP SAYS CAMERON HAS INVITED HIM TO VISIT UK

**WASHINGTON:** Presidential candidate Donald Trump said yesterday British Prime Minister David Cameron had asked him to visit and that he might accept the invitation, an apparent easing of tensions between the presumptive Republican Party nominee and the leader of a major US ally.

Trump, in an interview with MSNBC, said Cameron extended the invitation to visit 10 Downing Street two days ago and that he "might do it." He gave no other details, including when the visit might occur.

Representatives of Cameron's office could not be immediately reached for comment to confirm the invitation. Trump's comments followed a transatlantic exchange between the two men over Cameron's comments criticizing the New York real estate mogul's call for a temporary ban on Muslims entering the United States.

In December, Cameron called Trump "divisive, stupid and wrong" and suggested Trump would unite Britain against him if he visited the United Kingdom. After Trump clinched his party's nomination this month, Cameron acknowledged the achievement but said he stood by his earlier comments and would not apologize.

Trump fired back this week, saying on Monday that he was likely not to have a good relationship with Cameron. But the next day he said he expected to have "a good relationship" and yesterday Trump said Cameron had invited him to London. "I will do just fine with David Cameron. I think he's a nice guy. I



**NEW YORK:** Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks. — AP

will do just fine," Trump told MSNBC on Friday. "But they have asked me to visit 10 Downing Street - and I might do it."

Trump defended his recent comments, saying he was not attacking Britain. As for Cameron, "he came after me a little bit," Trump added. Cameron has said he will work with the winner of the Nov. 8 U.S. presidential election and is committed to

maintaining the special US-UK relationship, his spokesman has said.

Trump's proposed ban also drew criticism from Sadiq Khan, who was elected mayor of London this month and is Muslim. Khan said last week that Trump's "ignorant view of Islam could make both our countries less safe." — Reuters

## SOUTHWEST FLORIDA GOP CONGRESSMAN WON'T SEEK RE-ELECTION

**MIAMI:** Rep. Curt Clawson, Republican Florida congressman, says he won't be seeking re-election so he can spend more time with his family and his father.

Clawson made the announcement in a statement issued by his congressional office Thursday: "Since my mother's passing last year, our family has gone through significant change and transition. I believe that now is a good time to pass the baton and spend more time close to home."

The former businessman first won his congressional seat in 2014 in a special House election to replace former Rep. Trey Radel, who had resigned after pleading guilty to cocaine possession. Clawson defeated three other primary opponents in a heavily Republican district on Florida's Gulf Coast. His current term ends in January 2017.-AP

## SPAIN GIVES NATIONALITY TO 6 OPPOSITION-LINKED VENEZUELAN

**MADRID:** The government says it has granted Spanish nationality to six Venezuelans linked to the opposition, including two family members of jailed opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez.

Deputy Prime Minister Soraya Saenz de Santamaria said yesterday the papers had been granted to Lopez' sister Cristina and her husband Hernan Cifuentes. The government also granted papers to the director of the Venezuela newspaper El Nacional and to his wife and two children.

She said the six were victims of the political persecution prevailing in Venezuela and that Spanish nationality would help them face this with more democratic guarantees.

Spain granted nationality to Lopez's parents in December. The move comes as the opposition challenges Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's 60-day state of emergency decree that gives him decree powers to intervene in the country. — AP

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SENDAI, Japan: Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso (center back) presides over a meeting of finance ministers and heads of central banks of the Group of Seven in Sendai, northern Japan, yesterday. — AP

## G7 AGREES ON 'GO-YOUR-OWN-WAY' APPROACH

### JAPAN BACKS AWAY FROM CALLS FOR JOINT FISCAL ACTION

**SENDAI, Japan:** A rift on fiscal policy and currencies has set the stage for G7 advanced economies to agree on a "go-your-own-way" response to address risks hindering global economic growth at their finance leaders' gathering that kicked off yesterday.

Japan backed away from its previous calls for coordinated fiscal action to jump-start global growth with Finance Minister Taro Aso saying on Friday that while some G7 countries can deploy more fiscal stimulus, others cannot "due to their own situations." That chimed with Washington's stance made clear by a senior US Treasury official that there was no "one-size-fits-all" for the right mix of monetary, fiscal and structural policies.

"Countries with fiscal space have different choices than countries that lack fiscal space," the official told reporters on the

sidelines of the G7 finance leaders' meeting in Sendai, northeast Japan.

"I do think where there is fiscal space, the path-way towards growing global demand would be advanced if it's used," he said, signalling that countries like Germany should boost fiscal stimulus to help revive stagnant global growth. The US official also told reporters Japan should either postpone a scheduled sales tax hike next year or take fiscal measures to compensate for the expected drag on consumption.

Germany showed no signs of responding to calls for big fiscal spending. Its finance minister said on Friday the G7 ministers were now more upbeat about the global economy and stressed that a good balance of monetary, fiscal and structural policies was the only way to foster growth. As years of aggressive money printing

stretch the limits of monetary policy, the G7 policy response to anaemic inflation and subdued growth has become increasingly splintered. G7 officials have signalled that they would not object if Japan were to call for stronger action using monetary, fiscal tools and structural reforms - catered to each country's individual needs. The indications so far was that the G7 finance leaders, while fretting about risks to outlook, probably failed to agree on concrete steps to bolster stagnant global growth at their session on the global economy held yesterday.

#### BREXIT HIGH ON AGENDA

Japan and the United States remained at loggerheads over exchange-rate policy with Washington saying yen moves continued to be "orderly," signalling that Tokyo has no justifica-

tion to intervene in the market to stem yen gains. The rift may be evident again when Aso and U.S. Treasury Secretary Jack Lew hold a bilateral meeting Saturday morning.

The risk of a British vote to exit the European Union in a June referendum, or Brexit, was likely high on the agenda at yesterday G7 session.

"We have no plan B for Brexit," European Union Commissioner Pierre Moscovici told reporters after the meeting, when asked if policymakers would have to stabilize the pound if Britain left the EU.

"The mood around the table (at G7) is that our partners want Britain to remain in Europe," he said. In second-day talks today, the G7 finance leaders will discuss steps to deal with tax evasion and the need to boost cyber-security, among other topics. — Reuters



**CAIRO:** The reflection of Egyptians walking is seen in a shop window at the Khan Al-Khalili market in Cairo yesterday. The latest EgyptAir plane crash is another crushing blow to a country whose tourism-dependent economy is struggling to recover from years of jihadist attacks and political turmoil, analysts said. — AFP

## PLANE DISASTER PROLONGS EGYPT'S ECONOMIC MISERY

THIRD PLANE CRASH IN LESS THAN A YEAR HITS TOURISM WORST

**CAIRO:** Egypt's latest air disaster is another crushing blow to a country whose tourism-dependent economy is struggling to recover from years of jihadist attacks and political turmoil, analysts said.

The crash is the third airline incident in less than a year involving the Arab world's most populous nation, undermining efforts to attract tourists and their much-needed revenues. Officials said it was too early to know whether technical failure or terrorism caused the EgyptAir plane to plunge into the Mediterranean on Thursday with 66 people on board during a flight from Paris to Cairo.

But it follows the bombing of a Russian passenger plane minutes after it departed from an Egyptian Red Sea resort in October, an attack claimed by the Islamic State (IS) group. Whatever the cause of the latest crash, it is certain to have an impact on Egypt's economic recovery, analysts said.

"Egypt's return to international news headlines in the context of a plane crash at its national carrier, no doubt this is very harmful," said Amr Adly, an economist with the Carnegie Middle East Centre in Cairo.

"This will prolong the stumbling of the tourism sector," he said. The key industry has been hit by a series of disasters. A 2011 uprising that unseated strongman Hosni Mubarak triggered years of political turmoil that kept many foreign visitors away.

The military overthrew his successor Mohamed Morsi in 2013 and launched a bloody crackdown on the Islamist's supporters. Since then Islamist insurgents have killed hundreds in attacks, mostly members of the security forces but also tourists including those aboard the Russian airliner which IS said it had downed with a bomb hidden in a soda can smuggled into the hold.

The security forces themselves have also killed tourists by mistake. Eight

Mexican tourists died in an air strike in September 2015 after they were mistaken for militants while picnicking in the desert. And in March, an Egyptian man who wanted to see his ex-wife hijacked an EgyptAir flight and forced it to divert to Cyprus. No one was harmed and the man surrendered to police after allowing hostages to take selfies with him.

### 'Recovery postponed'

"All this is adding to the negative sentiment towards Egypt's tourism sector," said Hany Farahat, senior economist at CI Capital in Cairo. "And definitely, it postpones any potential for recovery in 2016 as far as tourism revenues are concerned," he said.

Tourism revenues slumped 15 percent in 2015 and Egypt's foreign currency reserves are under intense pressure, falling to \$17 billion in April from more than \$36 billion in 2010. The recent incidents have dashed hopes of a recovery in the sector, which had seen signs of improvement.

"Arrivals from key markets plummeted in 2011 and started gradually to recover until 2015. But those never achieved the performance from prior to the events," said Kinda Chebib, senior analyst at Euromonitor International. "We believe that the recent events will slow down the ambitions of the local government to achieve the target of 20 million foreign tourist arrivals by 2020," she said in an emailed statement. The repercussions will be felt by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, the former army chief who toppled Morsi then won presidential elections. Sisi enjoyed widespread popularity after toppling Morsi, despite the crackdown on Islamists that left hundreds of protesters dead and thousands in jail. — AFP



**CAIRO:** Tourists shop at the Khan Al-Khalili market in Cairo yesterday. — AFP

## OIL EASES AS FOCUS RETURNS TO OVERSUPPLY

**LONDON:** Oil prices slipped yesterday as investors cashed in on recent gains and focus shifted again to swelling global inventories that have cushioned impact from a series of unplanned supply outages. Global benchmark Brent crude prices traded down 23 cents at \$48.58 a barrel at 1143 GMT.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures traded at \$48.02 a barrel, down 14 cents day on day. "Despite supply disruptions, there is still oversupply and large inventories. Investors have probably shifted focus," said Hans van Cleef, senior energy economist at ABN AMRO in Amsterdam.

Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said he saw supply in excess of demand of around 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd). Oil prices had been supported in recent days by growing supply disruptions in oil producing countries like Nigeria, Canada and Libya.

In Nigeria, militant activity has cut oil exports to a more than 22-year low of under 1.4 million bpd.

In Canada, production has also been cut as wildfires forced closures of around 1 million barrels in daily production, although output is gradually returning. Libyan output has also been hit by internal conflict. Some analysts said they expected oil prices to come further off recent highs, correcting their recent upwards trend. "We feel that markets have moved too high, too far, too soon," Harry Tchilinguirian, lead oil and commodities strategist at French bank BNP Paribas in London, told Reuters' Global Oil Forum.

"The combination of a stronger dollar, still excess supply over demand and ongoing overhang of inventories can be expected to put strong downward pressure on prices." He said oil prices could fall to the mid to high \$30-a-barrel range. — Reuters

## KUWAIT OIL PRICE DOWN 96 CENTS TO \$41.84 PB

**KUWAIT:** The barrel price for Kuwaiti oil went down Thursday by 96 cents to settle \$41.84 per barrel after being at \$42.80 pb the day before, said Kuwait Petroleum Cooperation (KPC) yesterday. In the global market, the price of oil yesterday was relatively stable despite some problems facing Canadian and Nigerian oil supplies. The strength of the US dollar and expectation that the Federal Reserve would increase the interest rates by June also played a factor in the stability of the price.

The Brent mix price was down 12 cents to settle at \$48.81 per barrel, a similar case was with the June and July contracts for the American crude which went down by 3 and 11 cents to settle at \$48.16 and \$48.67 pb respectively.

Meanwhile, the OPEC daily basket price stood at \$43.84 a barrel Thursday, compared with \$44.88 the previous day, the OPEC said yesterday. The annual average of the OPEC basket price hit \$49.64 pb, it said in a press release. The new OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following:

Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Meroy (Venezuela).

During their recent meeting in Vienna in late 2015, OPEC member countries had decided to maintain their production at 30 million barrels per day (bpd) despite a surplus in the market estimated at over a million barrels. — KUNA



## NIGERIA URGED TO ADOPT FLEXIBLE FOREX POLICY TO TACKLE MELTDOWN

**LAGOS:** Financial experts yesterday urged Nigeria to adopt a more flexible foreign exchange policy or risk economic meltdown, as oil reserves dwindle and fresh unrest cuts oil production.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) holds its monthly monetary policy meeting next week, and it will have to grapple with the fallout from the slump in global oil prices that has slashed government revenue. The naira currency has weakened and inflation risen to 13.7 percent, while a lack of foreign exchange has hurt businesses and left fuel importers unable to buy supplies.

Sebastian Spio-Garbrah, from DaMina Advisors, said the CBN should announce "a dramatic 180-degree change" at the meeting "to stave off a full-blown fiscal, financial and economic meltdown".

More than 20 of Nigeria's 36 states are struggling to pay staff salaries, he said and the government's cash reserves for May and June were "almost depleted". The CBN has resisted calls to devalue the naira from the official rate of 197-199 to the dollar, even as black market rates used by most businesses and importers are at about 350.

Nigeria relies on oil exports for 70 percent of government revenue but the global crude price slump and attacks on oil pipelines and facilities have cut output to 1.4 million barrels per day.

The government budgeted for 2.2 million bpd this year. Bismark Rewane, of the Financial Derivatives Company in Lagos, also urged a change of tack, saying "the official price of the naira is not appropriate because of the prevailing realities".

"Policymakers have to adopt a more flexible exchange rate policy in order to remove the distortions in the system," he told AFP. Sola Oni, of Lagos stockbrokers Sofunix Investment and Communications said: "We just don't have the dollars to back up our imports anymore. So, the best thing is for the central bank to allow market forces to determine the value of the naira." Nigeria's government has followed recommendations from the International Monetary Fund to tackle repeated shortages of fuel caused by subsidy payments. Last week it increased official petrol prices by 67 percent to match the amounts paid by motorists for weeks as dwindling supplies forced prices higher on the streets. But the hike sparked labour unrest.— AFP

## CHINA OKAYS SWEEPING PLAN TO PURGE ONLINE FINANCE INDUSTRY

**BEIJING:** China's government has approved a sweeping plan to clean up the country's online financial sector, according to sources with direct knowledge of the matter, including rules to limit the activities of P2P lending firms, the source of recent fraud scandals.

The government plan, which was drafted by China's central bank, follows a mid-April videoconference with 14 ministries and regulators organized by the State Council, the country's cabinet, which approved the plan document seen by the sources. The plan outlines stricter rules for peer-to-peer (P2P) platforms, where lending increased 300 percent last year to 440 billion yuan (\$67 billion), according to Citigroup research, forbidding them from holding their clients' capital in house. Instead, client funds must be deposited with a qualified third-party banking institution and kept separate from a P2P platform's own corporate funds, the plan said, while firms must also set up "firewalls" to manage transactions with affiliates.

In February, authorities arrested 21 officials of Ezubao, once China's biggest P2P lending platform, which collected \$7.6 billion in less than two years from more than 900,000 investors. Ezubao used savvy marketing, authorities said, to fund "a complete Ponzi scheme", that used investor funds to support a lavish lifestyle for company executives. Internet lending has made headlines not just in China recently, with the US Department of Justice opening an investigation into San Francisco-based Lending Club Corp this week after the online lender admitted it had falsified documentation when selling a package of loans.—Reuters

# RUSSIA: OPEC DECISION ON 'COORDINATION' UNLIKELY

## NOVAK SAYS GLOBAL SUPPLY EXCEEDING DEMAND

**SOCHI/MOSCOW:** Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said yesterday that OPEC was unlikely to take any decisions on coordinated action regarding the oil market at its meeting early next month. Some of the largest global oil producers, including Russia and OPEC's Saudi Arabia, failed to reach agreement in April to freeze oil production in a deal which was thought would help to speed up the market rebalancing by three to six months.

Novak told reporters in Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi yesterday that currently, he saw global supply exceeding demand by some 1.5 million barrels of oil per day (bpd), with a forecast of an average oil price in 2016 at \$40-50 per barrel. "In my

opinion, any decisions on coordination which would require an obligatory fulfilment, are unlikely to be taken," Novak told Russian state TV in an interview.

"Because we see quite big disagreements inside OPEC on the further development of the situation and on what should, or opposite, should not be done for the market to reach a balance."

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries is scheduled to meet on June 2 in Vienna, the group's first such meeting since a new energy minister was appointed in Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter. Saudi Arabia refused to sign last month's oil output freeze deal without com-

mitment from Iran, which, in its turn, argued that it wanted to reach pre-sanction levels of production before signing up to any agreement.

Novak reiterated to Rossiya-24 TV channel that a balance between supply and demand on global oil markets should not be expected before mid-2017. Separately, he told reporters that Russia was ready to meet OPEC for consultations if such a meeting was proposed. "Russia is not an OPEC member... If there are any consultations outside the OPEC summit by OPEC and non-OPEC member countries we will look at such proposals (of consultations)... But there are no such proposals yet," he said.—Reuters



**SENDAI:** Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso (center) speaks during a meeting of finance ministers and heads of central banks of the Group of Seven in Sendai, northern Japan yesterday.—AP

# ASO 'MISSPOKE' ABOUT SOME G7 FINANCE CHIEFS ON BREXIT

**SENDAI:** Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso said yesterday that some Group of Seven financial leaders had expressed support for a British exit from the European Union, a remark quickly retracted by his staff. Aso, 75, told reporters in Sendai, northern Japan, where he is chairing a meeting of G7 finance ministers and central bankers, that some financial chiefs had said Brexit would be good.

A Japanese Finance Ministry offi-

cial told reporters that Aso had misspoken. "What the minister meant was that it would be good if Britain remained in the EU," the official told reporters shortly after Aso's news conference. Britain holds a referendum in June on whether to leave the European Union.

While the global economy continues a moderate recovery, downside risks and uncertainty remain over the outlook, Aso said, citing Brexit among

the risks. A British exit would trigger volatility in global financial markets, undermine post-World War Two European efforts towards integration and raise questions about Britain's \$2.9 trillion economy. The G7 groups the United States, Japan, Britain, Canada, Germany, Italy and France. The finance leaders are meeting to discuss ways to prop up global growth in the run-up to a G7 summit in Ise-Shima on May 26-27.— Reuters



**KANPUR:** An Indian laborer carries buffalo hides that are laid out to dry in the sun, as part of the leather production process, on the banks of the river Ganges in Kanpur yesterday. — AFP

## EU'S MOSCOVICI SAYS GREEK DEBT RELIEF DEAL 'VERY CLOSE'

### EUROZONE MINISTERS TO MEET TUESDAY

**SENDAI:** European Economic Affairs Commissioner Pierre Moscovici yesterday said negotiators were "very close" to reaching a debt-relief deal for cash-strapped Greece. Athens is battling to win debt relief from its European Union creditors, arguing that its burden of loan repayments is too hefty to be sustainable, but Germany has opposed such a move. Eurogroup head Jeroen Dijsselbloem has said he wants a deal for the debt-racked country at a meeting of eurozone finance ministers on Tuesday. "We are approaching a crucial moment in these discussions and I am confident and hopeful that we can reach a positive conclusion because it is simply in everyone's interest to do so," Moscovici told a news briefing at a G7 finance ministers meeting in Japan.

"We're very close, very very close." A senior US Treasury official at the G7 meeting said it was "certainly encouraging" to see signs of progress in Greek debt talks. "It means there is going to have to be some serious conversations about debt restructuring," added the official, who asked not to be named. "There is going to have to be serious actions by Greece on the commitments it has made. There is going to have to be an

understanding of whether the path is a truly sustainable one."

There is general public distaste in Germany, Europe's biggest economy and effective paymaster, for the 86-billion-euro (\$96 billion) bailout program for Greece. Through a series of painful labor market reforms over the years and tight fiscal policy, Germany has managed to bring its own public finances back into the black, and many think Greece should do likewise. Berlin believes Greece should be granted debt relief only in 2018 after it has fully complied with its EU bailout. On Thursday, the International Monetary Fund said Greece would need a lengthy period free from debt payments to stay afloat if the EU does not agree to cutting the debt up front.

The government of Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras is eager to win the green light from its creditors to unlock much needed cash from the bailout to avoid defaulting on its huge debt payments this summer.

Greece is on the hook to repay big loans to the European Central Bank and IMF in July, and has already fallen behind paying for everyday government duties and public sector wages. — AFP

## INDIA WILL SIGN IRAN PORT CONTRACT DURING MODI TRIP

**NEW DELHI:** India will on Monday sign a commercial contract with Iran to build and run a strategic port on Iran's southern coast, the Indian government said yesterday, to help it gain a foothold in Iran and win access to central Asia and Afghanistan. Talks to build the Chabahar port have been on for years but since the scaling back of Western sanctions against Iran, India has pushed hard for the project so it doesn't lose out to other such as China, who are keen to invest.

The deal under which India will develop two terminals and cargo berths at Chabahar, on the Gulf of Oman, will be signed during a visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Iran beginning on Sunday.

Gopal Baglay, a foreign ministry official in charge of Iranian ties, said India would make an initial investment of more than \$200 million in the port, of which India's Exim Bank would provide a credit line of \$150 million. "The focus of the trip is connectivity and infrastructure," he told reporters.

India is blocked from land access to Afghanistan and through it to the central Asia countries because of opposition from Pakistan, which sees India's expansive diplomacy in the

region as a threat. Baglay said India, Afghanistan and Iran would separately sign an agreement to set up a trade and transport corridor during Modi's trip that will have Chabahar as the hub. Road and rail links are to be built so that landlocked Afghanistan can get access to the Iranian port as an alternate to the Pakistani port of Karachi.

"The trilateral agreement will be a game changer for regional connectivity especially for Afghanistan which can find an assured and reliable alternate access to India via sea," Baglay said. Chabahar is about 100 km (60 miles) from Pakistan's Gwadar seaport which China is developing as part of a \$46 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. The Chinese project, coming on top of investments in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives raised disquiet in India about China's expanding reach in the region and prompted faster movement on the Iranian project.

"A major flaw in India's current policy towards Iran has been the lack of implementation of signed agreements," said Meena Singh Roy, an expert on India's ties with Iran at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses. — Reuters

## GOLD SET FOR BIGGEST WEEKLY DROP IN TWO MONTHS

**LONDON:** Gold edged higher yesterday after two days of losses but remained on track for its biggest weekly slide in nearly two months on growing expectations of an increase in US interest rates as soon as next month. The dollar retreated from its highest in nearly two months against a currency basket but was heading for a third week of gains, keeping up pressure on gold.

Spot gold was up 0.2 percent at \$1,256.70 an ounce at 0906 GMT, while US gold futures for June delivery gained \$2.90 to \$1,257.70. Spot prices are down 1.5 percent this week and facing a third straight week of losses. "From the point of view that the dollar has strengthened it makes sense that precious metals pare back some of the recent gains," Saxo Bank analyst Ole Hansen said.

"We, however, managed to find support at \$1,245, a key reversal level on gold. Negative yields and the prospect of higher inflation will continue to provide support." New York Fed President William Dudley said on Thursday that there was a strong sense among central bank officials that markets were underestimating the probability of policy tightening. That came a day after the minutes of the Fed's April meeting revealed that most policymakers felt a rate increase might be appropriate as early as next month. Gold is highly sensitive to rising rates, which lift the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding bullion. The metal has rallied 18 percent this year as investors bet the Fed would hold off on further increases.

"The gold environment now is substantially different from what was apparent several weeks ago, when a weaker dollar and a benign rate environment were providing an element of support," INTL FCStone said in a report. "This is no longer the case." Holdings of the world's largest gold-backed exchange-traded fund, SPDR Gold Shares, rose by 4.5 tons on Thursday to their highest since November 2013. Gold demand in Asia was subdued this week by a strengthening dollar and weak seasonal demand in major trading centres.

In other precious metals, Silver rose 0.6 percent to \$16.57, while platinum was up 0.9 percent at \$1,016.49 and palladium gained 1.2 percent to \$561.22. Palladium was the biggest faller of the week, down 4.7 percent. A deepening deficit in the palladium market this year was predicted by industry experts gathered for Platinum Week in London. — Reuters

## FRENCH FIRMS TWEAK CEO PAY GUIDELINES IN BID TO AVOID NEW LAW

**PARIS:** Companies like Renault will have to pay more attention to shareholder votes against executive pay awards, France's two main business organizations said yesterday, as they tightened guidelines in the hope of avoiding threatened legislation. President Francois Hollande, currently weathering protests and strikes against unpopular labor reforms, warned on Tuesday that the government would give legal clout to shareholder votes on pay unless companies acted on them.

Renault sparked outrage after its board waved through chief executive Carlos Ghosn's 7.2 million euro (\$8.1 million) 2015 package despite a non-binding majority vote against it.

The employer's groups, AFEP and Medef, said amendments to their code of conduct will require company boards to take account of rejection votes and report back to shareholders at the next annual general meeting. "The code is there to address these issues and it works," Medef head Pierre Gattaz said. "It's troubling to hear talk of new executive pay laws and constraints when France is already struggling to improve its business attractiveness."

The revised code stops short of requiring bosses' pay to be cut following a rejection vote of the kind suffered by Renault on April 29, instead leaving the final decision to the board.

A corporate governance commission set up to oversee the AFEP-Medef code urged Renault on Thursday to make "significant changes" to its pay practices. Renault had no comment, a spokesman said yesterday. Some lawmakers are in no mood to wait and have proposed amendments to a business transparency bill that would cap executive pay and subject raises to shareholder approval. — Reuters

## OIL SEARCH TO BUY INTEROIL FOR \$2.2BN IN PNG DEAL

**SYDNEY:** Papua New Guinea explorer Oil Search yesterday said it had bought rival InterOil in a multi-billion-dollar deal, but will sell off some of the assets to French energy giant Total to fund part of the takeover. Oil Search is to pay \$40.25 per share for the US-listed company for a total value of approximately \$2.2 billion, as it looks to boost its interests in a key liquefied natural gas (LNG) project under development in resource-rich Papua New Guinea.

The Papua LNG Project, which will be operated by Total, includes one of Asia's largest undeveloped gas fields, Elk-Antelope. The deal comes amid expectations that Asian demand for LNG will ramp up in coming years, analysts said.

"The combination of the companies will increase Oil Search's exposure to the world-class Papua LNG Project, which is expected to be the next major LNG development in PNG," Oil Search said in a statement. Oil Search, set up in 1929 and with most of its assets in PNG, is already a partner with US oil giant ExxonMobil on a separate project in the Pacific nation. — AFP

## XEROX SAYS URSULA BURNS WON'T BE CEO AFTER COMPANY SPLITS

**NEW YORK:** Xerox says Ursula Burns, the first black woman to run a Fortune 500 company, won't be CEO after the company splits in two later this year. Burns, 57, was named CEO of Xerox in 2009. She has spent her entire career at the company, working her way up from an internship in 1980 to the top job seven years ago. Xerox said Friday that after the split, Burns will become chairman of a newly formed document technology company, which will include its printer and copier business. The second company will focus on business process outsourcing, providing payment processing and other services.

Xerox, based in Norwalk, Connecticut, said it is searching for CEOs for both companies. Xerox announced in January that it would separate into two independent publicly traded companies after being pressured by activist investor Carl Icahn, who argued that the separate companies would be more valuable. Shares of Xerox Corp. rose 14 cents, or 1.6 percent, to \$9.19. — AP



**LAS VEGAS:** Ursula Burns, president and chief executive officer of Xerox, talks as Alan Mulally, president and chief executive officer of Ford, looks on during a Power Panel discussion at the 2012 International CES in Las Vegas. — AP

## GIANT OPEN-PIT CHILEAN COPPER MINE MOVES UNDERGROUND

**CHUQUICAMATA, Chile:** Chilean miners at one of the world's biggest open-pit mines will soon be digging for copper underground, in a move to extend the life of the century-old site for 40 years. The Chuquicamata mine and six other pits owned by state company Codelco together provide 11 percent of world copper output—some 1.7 million tonnes a year, according to the firm.

However the gargantuan Chuquicamata pit—five kilometers (three miles) long, three kilometers wide, and one kilometer deep—is reaching the point where it is no longer cost-effective to operate using current extraction methods. The solution? Go underground. "This will not be just any underground mine," said Roberto Pasten, who manages Codelco's Chuquicamata divi-

sion. "We're talking about this becoming one of the world's two or three largest underground mines, so this isn't an easy project," Pasten said. The Chuquicamata mine produces some 300,000 tons of copper a year.

Chile is the world's biggest copper-producing country, accounting for 28 percent of global production, according to the Chilean Copper Commission.

### Clawing for copper

Chuquicamata is located in far northern Chile some 2,870 meters (9,400 feet) above sea level in one of the driest places on the planet. Known to locals simply as Chuqui, the mine employs nearly 6,000 people. The site is so vast that three-story-high Komatsu dump

trucks, equipped with tires the size of two adults and capable of carrying a 330-tonne load, are swallowed into the hole as they zig-zag down 10 kilometers of road towards the pit floor. Dinosaur-sized mechanical shovels at the bottom claw into the ground with scoops large enough to hold a crew of workers, and dump piles of rock into the truck's hopper.

On each round trip, the giant 18-cylinder dump trucks guzzle the equivalent in fuel of what an average car uses in 21 months. "It's becoming too expensive to transport each ton of minerals given how deep the pit is," said Pasten. Although the mining operations will shift underground, the system and vehicles for extracting the copper are forecast to be less costly. "If we do not carry out these changes ...

definitely our level of production will collapse, and Codelco's position in the world copper market will decline," Pasten said.

After a decade on the drawing board, digging for the underground phase began in 2012 under former president Sebastian Pinera. Currently there are nine kilometers of tunnels linked mainly to the mine's ventilation system, and another 7.5 kilometers for vehicles.

Some 1,000 kilometers of galleries and tunnels are planned, equal to the distance between Paris and Berlin. About a quarter of the project has been completed, and when it is finished in 2019, it should extend Chuquicamata's productive life for four more decades. — AFP



**PARIS:** Head of the French association for private firms (AFEP) Pierre Pringuet (left) and head of French employers' association Medef Pierre Gattaz (right) give a press conference yesterday in Paris. — AFP

## US, UK, FRANCE, GERMANY BACK BUSINESS WITH IRAN

WESTERN POWERS SAY CERTAIN FORMS OF TRADE ARE PERMITTED

**BRUSSELS:** Foreign banks and businesses should not hold back from conducting legal business with Iran, Western powers said yesterday. In a joint statement released after talks in Brussels, the United States, the European Union, France, Britain and Germany sought to reassure companies that, after the Iran nuclear deal, certain forms of trade are permitted.

"We will not stand in the way of permitted business activity with Iran," the four powers plus the European Union said. "And we will not stand in the way of international firms or financial institutions engaging with Iran, as long as they follow all applicable laws," they added.

Under the terms of the Iran nuclear deal signed last year and implemented in February, international sanctions aimed at Tehran's nuclear program have been dropped. But the United States has maintained its sanctions targeting Tehran's alleged sponsorship of armed movements in the Middle East and its ballistic missile programme.

European banks, which often have subsidiaries on US soil, have therefore been slow to resume business with Iran, fearing prosecution in the United States. But, a joint statement by the western parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — the implementation side of the Iran deal—gave business the green light.

"The interest of European and other global firms in Iran is high," the statement said. "And it is in our interest and the interest of the international community to ensure that the JCPOA works for all participants, including by delivering benefit to the Iranian people," it continued. "This includes the reengagement of European banks and businesses in Iran."

US Secretary of State John Kerry—a key architect of the Iran deal—was in Brussels for a NATO ministers meeting, and held talks on the Iran deal while he was there.

President Barack Obama's administration has been criticized at home for moving too quickly to allow Iran to return to

the international fold after agreeing to nuclear controls. But Tehran's leaders have complained that the deal was over-sold, arguing that they upheld their end of the bargain in surrendering most of their nuclear enrichment capacity in return for sanctions relief.

Meanwhile, European banks have been reluctant to renew ties with the Islamic republic, fearing that—despite the end of some sanctions—they could fall foul of US law. "We understand that firms may continue to have specific sanctions-related questions or concerns about doing business in Iran," the statement said. "And we stand ready to provide expeditious clarifications," it added, encouraging banks and other enterprises to come forward and seek advice as to how to deal legally with Iran. "We encourage firms to approach our governments to address remaining questions, rather than forgo opportunities due to misperceptions or lack of information." — AFP

## NEW POLL SHOWS STRONG SUPPORT FOR PAID FAMILY LEAVE PROGRAMS

**CHICAGO:** Time off from work to care for a child or relative is codified in federal law. Now, an overwhelming majority of Americans 40 and older want that time away from the job to be paid.

An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll released yesterday said 72 percent support paid family leave. Democrats were more likely to back it, but Republicans also expressed strong support. Overall, support was stronger among people age 40-64 and among women.

At least 19 states are considering paid family leave laws, but only three have

active programs. New York, the latest to approve it, will launch its program in 2018. "There is a lot of interest and a lot of momentum," said Ellen Bravo, executive director of Family Values @ Work, an advocacy group. "We hope that over the next five years a critical mass of states will win these policies." Bravo said the state wins are paving the way for a federal law.

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act provides for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for most workers to care for a newborn or adopted child or a spouse, child or parent who is seriously ill. A bill to make that leave paid was introduced in

the Senate last year but has gone nowhere in Congress. Among the presidential candidates, both Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders have voiced support for paid family leave. Donald Trump hasn't offered a clear opinion.

"I support (paid family leave) because I feel that in the US, we need to realize that employees, or the workers, can't really do the best job possible if you are worrying about a family member," said Mary Jo Morelli, of the Detroit area. Morelli, 52, said she expects that someday she'll need time off to care for her aging mother and in-laws who are now in their 80s.

Paid family leave works like insurance and is funded via mandatory contributions from workers' paychecks. In New York, about \$1 a week will be deducted. Workers could receive a portion of their pay for up to eight weeks in the program's first year. That will increase to 12 weeks, double what other states offer.

Most workers use the benefit to care for a newborn or adopted child, according to data from the California, New Jersey and Rhode Island programs. Workers also can use it to care for an aging parent, spouse or other relative. —AP



**WALPOLE:** A "Sold" sign in front of a house in Walpole, Massachusetts yesterday, the National Association of Realtors reports on sales of existing homes in April. — AP

# MIDWEST MOSTLY DRIVES US HOME SALES GROWTH

## HOUSING SECTOR STEADY DESPITE RISING PRICES

**WASHINGTON:** Midwestern homebuyers helped spark a national increase in real estate sales during April, a sign that demand for housing remains steady despite rising prices and tight inventories.

Sales of existing homes rose 1.7 percent last month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.45 million, the National Association of Realtors said yesterday. Americans are eagerly searching for homes. But rising prices and few sales listings have limited the number of people who can afford to buy. Steady hiring and ultra-low mortgage rates have provided a foundation of buyer demand. That demand, however, has yet to coax more sellers into the market during the traditional spring buying season when sales volumes are generally highest.

"Low inventory of homes for sale continues to dampen homebuyers' ability to find properties in the face of solid job and wage growth," said Ralph McLaughlin, chief economist at the real estate firm Trulia. Sales jumped 12.1 percent in the Midwest, generally the most affordable region for housing. Purchases increased

slightly in the Northeast but fell in the South and West. A shortage of sales listings are pushing up home values, creating affordability pressures for some potential buyers. The number of listings has fallen 3.6 percent over the past 12 months. Prices have climbed so substantially in the West that sales volumes have actually declined from a year ago, evidence that buyers are priced out of the market where home values have constantly eclipsed wage gains. The median home sales price was \$232,500 in April, a 6.3 percent increase from a year ago. But sales have been strong enough so far this year that the Realtors expect total sales to rise 3 percent from 2015, revising an initial forecast of nearly flat sales in 2016.

First-time buyers accounted for 32 percent of sales last month. The increase marks a slight improvement from the 30 percent share in March but remains below the historic average of 40 percent. The absence of new listings reflects the long reach of the housing bubble, which burst roughly nine years ago and triggered a vicious recession. The ensuing crash left

millions of owners to this day - nearly seven years into a recovery - without the equity to sell their homes and still have money for a down payment on another. The wave of foreclosures led to mass purchases by investors, who are renting homes instead of re-selling them as prices have recovered in recent years.

Builders have yet to relieve the supply pressures, despite some additional construction this year. Housing starts advanced 6.6 percent in April to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.17 million units, the Commerce Department said this week. That gain makes up part of a decline in March. Ground breakings are running ahead of last year's pace, largely because of a dramatic increase in the construction of single-family houses, especially in the Midwest and South. Demand has held up in large part because of low interest rates.

The benchmark 30-year mortgage rate stayed near three-year low this week at 3.58 percent, according to mortgage buyer Freddie Mac. Rates are lower than both the 3.84 percent average last year and the historic average of roughly 6 percent. — AP

## REPORT: FOOD PRICES DOUBLE AS WATER BECOMES SCARCE, POPULATIONS SWELL

**LONDON:** Swelling populations and demand for food combined with ever scarcer water and land resources could lead to a doubling of food prices and trigger civil unrest in some developing countries, a new report says. Demand for food with a higher environmental impact, such as meat, has surged as emerging countries like China and India grow in size and in wealth, said Martin Halle, policy analyst at Global Footprint Network (GFN).

"A few things are very clear: the demand for food is going up tremendously because of population growth," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"[Food production] is becoming more unstable because climate change is affecting production, in the context of growing land and water scarcity. There's very little leeway between supply and demand." In the past, countries were able to meet those demands by growing more food on more land. But this has come at a cost, Halle said, since the planet is now running out of water and arable land. The last time the world saw a severe food crisis was in 2007 and 2008, the report said, when extreme weather events hit major grain producing regions the year earlier, causing spikes in the demand and cost of food. The higher prices led to social and political unrest in North Africa, the Middle East and South East and South Asia. The report published this week by GFN and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) said most of the same countries, namely Morocco, Bangladesh, Tunisia and Indonesia, are again at risk if food prices were to increase in the next few years.

### CLIMATE CHANGE VOLATILITY

Climate change and extreme weather patterns will further increase volatility in food production, Halle added, meaning food prices will become more unstable in the coming years.

"The real game-changer comes when you factor in the environmental constraints - climate change, land scarcity and water scarcity, and all of these are linked," said Halle.

Drought is becoming more frequent and severe in places like southern Africa, and that - combined with the recent El Nino phenomenon - is taking a heavy toll on rural lives and economies. For example, maize prices in South Africa, the continent's top producer of the staple crop, reached near record highs late 2015, in the face of rolling heat waves and poor rains over key growing areas. Using models from data across 110 countries, the study found that if the cost of food doubled, household spending would increase by more than 10 percent in 37 countries. — Reuters



**RENNES:** People queue to refuel at a gas station yesterday in the western city of Rennes, following the blockades of several oil depots by protesters opposed to the government's proposed labor law reforms. —AP

SATURDAY, MAY 21, 2016

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# Weekender



**Cannes spotlight puts Iranian cinema center stage**

SEE PAGE 23

# Clapton returns to blues roots on new album

In his first album as a septuagenarian, guitar virtuoso Eric Clapton is revisiting the blues roots that shaped his distinctive sound. On "I Still Do," the artist's 23rd studio album which comes out today, Clapton revisits songs by blues greats but has also recorded two original songs which have a strikingly similar feel. Clapton, who often makes lists of the greatest living guitarists, put out the album amid persistent talk that he will soon retire.

1977's "Slowhand," which featured his hits "Lay Down Sally," "Cocaine" and "Wonderful Tonight." Clapton had initially worked with Johns, a fellow Briton, largely because of a contractual dispute that kept the guitarist away from his artistic base of the United States. But if the former member of Cream and The Yardbirds further cemented his reputation as a chart-topping rocker with "Slowhand," "I Still Do" returns firmly to the blues.



Eric Clapton performs at the 2014 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival at Fair Grounds Race Course in New Orleans. — AP

He declared himself fed up with touring in 2014 but last year played a series of shows for his 70th birthday at New York's Madison Square Garden and London's Royal Albert Hall. "I Still Do" marks the first time in nearly four decades that the 71-year-old worked with producer Glyn Johns, a force behind the classic rock sound of bands including The Who, Led Zeppelin, The Rolling Stones and The Eagles. Johns produced one of Clapton's most-loved albums,

He opens the album with "Alabama Woman Blues," a standard written by the highly influential early 20th-century pianist and singer Leroy Carr. Clapton brings to the song-and the album-his signature deliberate, melodious licks, a characteristic of the blues in the vein of the late B.B. King. Clapton's two original tracks, "Spiral" and "Catch the Blues," both heavily reference the musical heritage. "I just keep playing these blues / Hoping I don't lose," he sings on "Spiral."

## Mystery collaborator

Clapton turns to a lighter, airy feel on "I Will Be There," driven by the harmony of a backing vocalist and a deep, rich-toned guitar solo. But the song has also set off a guessing game as to the identity of Clapton's collaborator. The album credits "Angelo Mysterioso," triggering speculation that the song was a posthumous recording with late Beatle George Harrison who was close to Clapton and had appeared under a similar name on past collaborations.

Clapton denied that Angelo Mysterioso was Harrison-but has vowed not to reveal who it is, saying the pseudonym was due to corporate objections to crediting the artist by name. The most common hypothesis on social media is that Angelo Mysterioso is the late Beatle's son Dhani Harrison. A less likely theory is that it is young English star Ed Sheeran, who recently performed the song with Clapton in Japan, although Sheeran has not been shy about collaborations under his own name.

## Interpreting Dylan

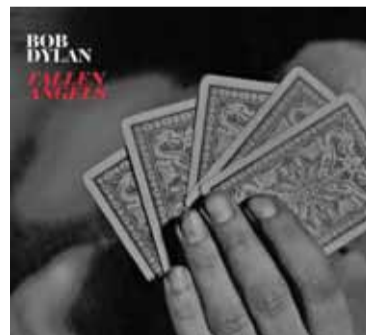
In the most original choice on the album, Clapton covers "I Dreamed I Saw St Augustine" by Bob Dylan, the rock legend who is releasing his own album of cover songs today. Clapton stays true to Dylan's steady-driving narrative style but, instead of harmonica and a rock backdrop, Clapton brings in his blues touches and an accordion.

Two songs on the album were written by J.J. Cale, the Oklahoma-born guitarist who proved a major influence on Clapton with his understated riffs and incorporation of rock style into the blues. Clapton's last album in 2014 was entirely a tribute to Cale, who had died a year earlier. Clapton, speaking to Rolling Stone magazine about "I Still Do," said he preferred to return to the studio rather than put out a best-of compilation. "At least this album is fresh in that it's me, at this moment," he said. — AFP

## Bob Dylan returns to standards on 'Fallen Angels'

After his own songs have been covered by hundreds of artists over the past half century, Bob Dylan is turning the tables for a second time in as many years. On "Fallen Angels," which comes a year after the similarly themed "Shadows in the Night," Dylan once again offers his interpretations of American standards popularized by Frank Sinatra. Opting to use his own band, and not an orchestra, Dylan creates a relaxed, mellow mood and sounds in fine spirits as he croons his way through 12 familiar songs including "Young at Heart" and "That Old Black Magic."

Dylan has long sprinkled in cover songs, both on his records and in concert, over his incomparable career. And this isn't even the first time he's released entire records of covers back-to-back. The last time he did it, in 1992 and 1993, Dylan revisited the folk songs that powered his ascent in the early 1960s. Those records, which preceded a late-career



renaissance kicked off with 1997's "Time Out of Mind," were met with a shrug by many longtime Dylan fans.

Those looking for new Dylan material may feel the same kind of ambivalence to "Fallen Angels." Perhaps the feelings of the 74-year-old Dylan, who has spent his career largely avoiding the unwieldy expectations of fans and critics, can be best surmised with lyrics from "Come Rain or Come Shine," which closes the record. — AP

## Country artists welcome Beyonce to the format



Beyonce presents the award for record of the year at the 58th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. — AP

When Beyonce dropped a country tune inside her new visual album "Lemonade," it was the biggest crossover news in country music since Justin Timberlake brought down the house at the Country Music Association Awards last year alongside Chris Stapleton. The Houston native's Southern music roots are interwoven throughout the No. 1 album, but on "Daddy Lessons," she mixes New Orleans horns and country lyrics and messaging with a sprinkle of Texas enthusiasm. And many in Nashville are welcoming music's reigning queen to the format.

Country singer Dierks Bentley said he loved the whole album, but when he heard "Daddy Lessons," he immediately thought it was a country song. "There is just something intangible about it that it feels like a country song," Bentley said. "It's not just choruses that are catchy and verses that could be intermixed anywhere as some pop songs are. It's a real story that she tells about what's going on in her life growing up." Added Karen Fairchild of Little Big Town: "She has some stories to tell - that's clear on 'Lemonade.' And that's what makes country music great."

The Dixie Chicks covered the song during their current national tour and even Blake Shelton defended the song from critics who say it's not country. Female country artists in particular have loved Beyonce's emphasis on the feminine perspective in pop music for years: Reba McEntire cut a version of Beyonce's "If I Were a Boy" in 2010. Even country superstar Garth Brooks said he can learn from Beyonce. "I was lucky enough to get to see Beyonce's Vegas show ... I mean, take out your notebook and take notes. No matter how long you've been on the stage - take notes on that one," Brooks said.

"Daddy Lessons," which debuted at No. 41 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart, starts off with an extended horn intro, but then Beyonce namechecks her home state of Texas. Led by an acoustic guitar with hand claps marking the rhythm, she sings about lessons she learned from her father and former manager. With its lyrical references to the Second Amendment, the Bible and guns, "Daddy Lessons" could easily pass as the latest feisty hit from Miranda Lambert.

Fairchild said that Lambert would be a perfect duet partner for Beyonce on "Daddy Lessons," adding "but I am getting in on that, if that's happening." Nationally syndicated country radio host Bobby Bones played the song on his iHeartRadio morning show, "The Bobby Bones Show," and said the feedback from his listeners was positive. — AP



## Singer Cher turns 70, fans pay tribute

Singer and actress Cher turned 70 yesterday, prompting fans to take to Twitter to celebrate the pop diva's career spanning over five decades. The California native gained musical recognition as part of duo Sonny & Cher in the 1960s before embarking on a solo career that made her a household name, with hits such as "Dark Lady," "If I Could Turn Back Time" and "Believe".

Fans marked the occasion by posting their favourite pictures of the music star, who has some 25 studio albums, a Grammy Award as well as an Oscar to her name, on Twitter. — Reuters

# Cannes spotlight puts Iranian cinema center stage

As Iranian films and actors compete this weekend at Cannes attention is turning toward the country's thriving independent cinema sector which is succeeding despite tough regulations. Religious, political and cultural red lines represent obstacles to filmmakers and actors in the Islamic republic. Scripts must be pre-approved by the state. Most learn to live with the restrictions but some leave the country, seeking more artistic freedom. "The Salesman" by Oscar-winning director Asghar Farhadi is challenging for the prestigious Palme d'Or while "Varoonegi" (Inversion) directed by Behnam Behzadi, is competing in the sidebar section "Un Certain Regard".

Farhadi's latest effort has already generated interest from US distributors, The New York Times quoted French co-producer Alexandre Mallet-Guy as saying. This year in Cannes, two Iranian actresses compete for best actress; self-exiled Golshifteh Farahani in "Paterson", by the award-winning US director Jim Jarmusch, and Taraneh Alidoosti in Farhadi's "The Salesman". The momentum is partly due to Farhadi's talent, most notably marked by his best foreign film Academy Award in 2012 for "A Separation", a dark but touching tale of family break up set in Tehran.

"With the large global distribution of this film Farhadi gave a great visibility to Iranian cinema, that in fact started long before him," Agnes Devictor, a professor at the Sorbonne in Paris, specializing in Iranian cinema, told AFP. "A Separation" won a Golden Globe in the same category and his follow-up, "The Past", set in France, was nominated for the Palme d'Or in 2013.

Farhadi is not alone in gaining accolades. In 2015, "Nahid", Ida Panahandeh's debut feature won the promising future prize in Un Certain Regard. Dozens of cinemas screened the film in

France, Spain and Greece. Distribution companies such as the France-based Noori Pictures, headed by Katayoon Shahabi, have played a major role in bringing Iranian films to a wider audience. Shahabi, a "lioness" who has become "the embodiment of independent film abroad" according to Devictor, is among the eight jurors for Cannes 2016.

The success abroad reflects a continued rise at the box office. Domestic sales in the first month of the Persian year (March 20 to April 20) totaled 267 billion rials (\$8.9 million), more than the entire annual box office two years ago, media reported. But filmmaking in Iran has its own challenges. Jafar Panahi, whose "Taxi"-barred from screening in Iran-won the Golden Bear in Berlin film festival in 2015, is not

allowed to exit the country or make films. At the beginning of Cannes this year more than 30 major European film organizations appealed to Iran's government to grant clemency to a young director sentenced to 223 lashes. Keywan Karimi, 30, was sentenced to six years in prison in 2015 but five years of the term was suspended later.

## Nude controversy

Other stars have fallen foul of the authorities. Farahani, lead actress in Farhadi's "About Elly", was one of those who left Iran a few years ago. The first top Iranian actor to star in a Hollywood film, she raised eyebrows in her homeland when she appeared in Ridley Scott's "Body of Lies" in 2008, alongside Leonardo



This file photo shows Iranian director Asghar Farhadi posing as he arrives for the 39th edition of the Cesar awards ceremony in Paris. — AFP

DiCaprio. But beyond the big screen Farhadi, who is starring in the fifth of the "Pirates of the Caribbean" films, caused major controversy in her homeland by posing nude for a French magazine. Leila Hatami, Farhadi's top actress in "A Separation" and a Cannes 2014 juror was criticized by Iranian authorities after kissing the Cannes president Gilles Jacob on the cheeks when on the red carpet.

She later apologised. Abbas Kiarostami, one of the most well-known Iranian directors worldwide working in France for over a decade, believes recent cinema success comes from a wave of independent filmmakers. "On the one hand there is the state cinema, financed by the authorities... then there is an independent sector that is flourishing," said Kiarostami who won the Palme d'Or at Cannes in 1997 for Taste of Cherry (Ta'm e Guilass). "Today, unknown filmmakers are arriving from the most far-flung provinces." Amir Pouria, an Iranian film critic, told AFP that Farhadi has helped break down Western stereotypes of movies coming out of the Islamic republic. — AFP



(From left) Iranian director Behnam Behzadi, Iranian actress Sahar Dolatshahi and Iranian actor Ali Mosaffa during a photocall for the film 'Inversion (Varoonegi)' at the 69th Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, southern France. — AFP

## Universal launches 'Walking Dead' attraction

Universal Studios said Wednesday it would mark Independence Day by freeing its horde of undead onto an unsuspecting Hollywood public, offering a first look at its new "Walking Dead" attraction. It is the latest tie-in in a burgeoning entertainment industry offshoot that has seen dozens of theme park attractions based on movies and TV shows spring up across the United States in recent years. Universal, in southern California, released a behind-the-scenes video showing the making of its "walkers" and confirmed a July 4 opening date for the walk-through attraction, which recreates scenes from the record-breaking AMC show.

"We're getting the chance to utilize molds that were created specifically for the show and translate them into parts of the attraction," series executive producer Greg Nicotero said. "We're creating animatronic walkers that guests will be able to see. It's never been done before. It's one-of-a-kind, state-of-the-art and I can't wait." The experience combines real-life actors with animatronics to recreate the lumbering monsters, including the iconic cut-in-half zombie from the pilot, dubbed "Bicycle Girl" by fans.

The attraction follows the opening of "The Wizarding World of Harry Potter" in April, 15

years after the boy wizard's last big-screen adventure. Together with the recently introduced "Despicable Me Minion Mayhem," the

award-winning "The Simpsons" park area and "Transformers: The Ride-3D," the attraction sees Universal partnering with Hollywood for



Candidates act for the camera as they wait to perform in front of a jury at "The Walking Dead" Casting Call Auditions for the future Walking Dead attraction at Universal Studios Hollywood, in Universal City, California. — AFP

a merchandising merry-go-round to rival Disney's. Meanwhile, Warner Bros. is opening its Los Angeles studio lot to offer fans a sneak peak at authentic props, costumes and even a prison cell set used in its hotly-anticipated summer blockbuster "Suicide Squad" more than two months ahead of its release.

"DC Universe: The Exhibit"-an homage to origins of DC Comics that features the outfits worn by Margot Robbie and Jared Leto in the movie-opens on May 24. The attraction includes Batcave props from Ben Affleck's first outing as the Caped Crusader in "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice," which has made almost \$870 million worldwide. "Since 1934, DC Comics has built a legacy of creating the world's greatest superheroes and super-villains," said Danny Kahn, head of Warner's studio tours.

"DC Universe: The Exhibit gives you the chance to explore the world of these characters from their first comic book appearance to our latest feature blockbusters." The studio previewed the attraction for the media on Wednesday, inviting along special guest Gene Simmons, the Kiss bass player and vocalist, who is an ardent comic book fan. "I grew up at a time when comic books were kids' stuff and looked down on," he told reporters. "Guess what? We win. The geeks win." — AFP



# Australia

*Fashion Week*







Models wear creations by Australian designer House of Cannon.



# Stolen Christopher Columbus letter returns to Italy

A letter penned by Christopher Columbus in 1493 was returned to its rightful resting place in Italy Wednesday, ending a years-long investigation into its theft and forgery. The rare missive in which the Italian explorer describes his voyage to the Americas was tracked down several years ago in the Library of Congress in Washington. "Five hundred years after it was written, the letter has made the same trip back from America," Italian Culture Minister Dario Franceschini said at a ceremony in Rome to mark the handover, thanking US authorities for helping to return the precious document.

Columbus wrote the original letter to his patrons King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, a year after embarking on his historic journey across the Atlantic. The explorer likely drafted the letter while voyaging back to Europe, dating it March 4, 1493, the day he landed in Lisbon. The letter was then



Italian Carabinieri officers stand by a reprinted copy of Christopher Columbus original letter written in 1493 about the discovery of the New World, on the stand below, and a fake of the reprinted copy, above, during a press conference in Rome, Wednesday. — AP

translated into Latin, the lingua franca of the time, and copies were made for distribution around Europe where it played a key role in expanding knowledge of the "New World."

Eleven copies were made in 1493 and six others between 1494 and 1497. The printer Stephan Planck published two of the first editions in Rome, and one copy became the property of the Riccardiana Library in Florence. At an unknown date, it was stolen from there and replaced with a forgery. After receiving a tip off alerting them to the fraud in 2010, American investigators confirmed that a New York-based antiquarian book dealer had bought the letter in 1990. Two years later it sold at auction for \$300,000 to a buyer who donated it to the Library of Congress. The file on the original theft remains open. The stolen letter will return to Florence and go on public display. No one knows what happened to the original Spanish text. — AFP



The uniform worn by Capt Kathryn Janeway, portrayed by Kate Mulgrew, right, and another "Star Trek: Voyager" character are displayed in the exhibit.



EMP Museum curator Brooks Peck steps through a Jefferies Tube as he leads media members on a tour of displays for the exhibit, "Star Trek: Exploring New Worlds."

# Museum celebrates **Star Trek** at 50 with artifacts, tribbles

It's been 50 years since the Starship Enterprise began its five-year mission to boldly go where no man had gone before, and Seattle's EMP Museum is marking the anniversary with an exhibition honoring "Star Trek" and its influence on pop culture and society. "Star Trek: Exploring New Worlds" opens Saturday and is filled with geeky artifacts from all the Star Trek series and movies - from sections of the original Enterprise bridge to a costume worn by Benedict Cumberbatch in the latest movie. One uniform worn by every captain and one of only two



A display featuring the character Data, from the series, "Star Trek: The Next Generation" is shown in the exhibit, "Star Trek: Exploring New Worlds."

phasers still in existence from the original series is on display among more than 100 props and artifacts. Keep an eye out for the tribbles that apparently escaped from their display case. There are half a dozen scattered around.

Some of the set pieces are clearly showing their age, which curator Brooks Peck says is a sign of the less-than-ideal way some of them have been stored in garages and transported from collector to collector. But the new exhibit is much more than artifacts and costumes. The museum does its best to illustrate how Star Trek was both a reflection of its times and a



A display of tribbles, small animal characters featured on an episode of "Star Trek," appear as part of an exhibit, "Star Trek: Exploring New Worlds" celebrating the "Star Trek" franchise at the EMP Museum, in Seattle. — AP



Costumes and pieces of the set of the "Star Trek" TV series are displayed in the exhibit, "Star Trek: Exploring New Worlds."

catalyst for social change - from a starring role by a black actress to a Russian character featured during the Cold War and interracial and same sex relationships.

### Technical difficulties

The show's influence on popular culture and even architecture is also on display, including a place to listen to Star Trek inspired bands, a

Visitors are asked to wrestle with some of the Star Trek's ethical themes, such as what makes us human, in interactive display screens called "Away Team Encounters." Although the objects cannot be touched, there's plenty of opportunity to explore in other ways: put yourself in a scene from the "Wrath of Kahn" movie, crawl through a "Jefferies Tube," create your own Star Trek story line and take your picture in a Borg regeneration station.

An opportunity to act out a scene involving a transporter and then have the scene emailed home was not available at the press preview, because of technical difficulties. The curator of the exhibit joked that people who volunteer for the transportation experience will do so at their own risk. Even the most ardent Star Trek fans might see something new at this exhibit, including a cardboard model of the set that was used to plan out scenes. And they might learn something too, including the role Lucille Ball played in creating the original series. If you don't know the answer to that Star Trek trivia, this exhibit is for you.

### If you go...

Emp museum: On the Seattle Center campus, 325 5th Ave N, Seattle; Museum admission for adults is \$22 if purchased online. The Star Trek exhibit costs an additional \$5. Open daily 10 am to 5 pm.



A foam finger in the shape of the Vulcan salute is displayed along with a photo of President Barack Obama and actress Nichelle Nichols, who played Lt Nyota Uhura in "Star Trek," in a display for the exhibit, "Star Trek: Exploring New Worlds".

# Gardens, 100-acre park at Indianapolis Museum



Flowers and landscaping at Oldfields Gardens, part of the Indianapolis Museum of Art campus in Indianapolis.



A rustic path lined with spring flowers at the Virginia B Fairbanks Art & Nature Park, part of the Indianapolis Museum of Art campus in Indianapolis.

There's a lot going on in Indianapolis this spring, between the presidential primary and the Indy 500. For visitors or locals looking to get away from the hubbub, consider a visit to the gardens and nature park on the campus of the Indianapolis Museum of Art.

The grounds include an unusual outdoor space for contemplation called "Park of the Laments." Art lovers will want to

start inside the museum, of course, where the collection ranges from Vincent van Gogh to Georgia O'Keeffe to intriguing exhibitions of contemporary art and design.

But make sure to allow an hour or more for exploring the extraordinary grounds outside the museum building. Here you'll find Oldfields Gardens and the 100-acre Virginia B Fairbanks Art & Nature Park. The

gardens are part of the Lilly House estate. You can tour the historic mansion, which was once the home of JK Lilly Jr, an Indianapolis businessman. But on a beautiful spring day, the gardens are the place to be. Every path is lined with colorful flowers and the trees rain down fragrant blossoms in the breeze. From the gardens, make your way to the Art & Nature Park. You'll find a canal, a lake, fields, meandering paths, outdoor art installations and even an old-fashioned swing set where you can kick your feet up to the sky.

The artwork includes "Funky Bones," 20 white benches that form a huge human skeleton. "Funky Bones" was the setting for a scene in the young adult book "The Fault in Our Stars," written by John Green, who was born in Indianapolis. And don't miss "Park of the Laments."

Walls made of smooth gray stone rise on either side as you descend a staircase into a tunnel, then emerge into a grassy field edged by more stone walls. Whether your laments are personal, political or otherwise, it's a peaceful spot for clearing the mind.

**If you go...**

Indianapolis museum of art: 4000 Michigan Road. Museum admission for adults is \$18. Some areas of the IMA campus are free, including the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park. Open Tuesday-Sunday, 11 am-5 pm and until 9 pm on Thursdays.



In this April 19, 2016 file photo, colorful flowers bloom at Oldfields Gardens, part of the Indianapolis Museum of Art campus in Indianapolis. — AP photos



Photo shows "Funky Bones," an outdoor artwork at the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park.



Photo shows "Park of the Laments," a contemplative space at the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park.

# Best of Indianapolis: Neighborhoods, restaurants, art



**S**o, Indianapolis, are you an old Rust Belt city or are you the next Brooklyn? Maybe a little of both - though locals bristled at a recent article in Bon Appetit magazine that compared Indy's dining scene to Brooklyn's hipster vibe. The fact is, Indianapolis has its own identity, thank you

very much, and shouldn't be defined by what counts as cool elsewhere. Sure, there's old-school Indianapolis: massive stone monuments that swallow blocks of downtown, divine corned beef sandwiches at Shapiro's and shrimp cocktail with the world's hottest horseradish at St Elmo's. The Indy 500 celebrates its 100th race this year.

But don't let the abandoned Coca-Cola bottling plant on Massachusetts Avenue fool you into thinking the city's best days are behind it. Not only is "Mass Ave" hopping with small shops and creative eateries, but other corners of the city are bubbling with energy too. You can see it along the Canal Walk, lined with artwork and popular with joggers, and even in the HGTV show "Good Bones," where rundown houses in rebounding Indy neighborhoods are renovated by a mother-daughter team. One thing's for sure. Indy's old nickname, Naptown, is now best used ironically, with a hashtag, because this city has woken up.

#### What's new

Indy's dining scene is exploding. Milktooth serves breakfast and lunch, including a heavenly sour cream biscuit with bacon maple butter. At Black Market's communal tables, adventurous palates will enjoy roasted marrow bones and beef tongue cocktail, while more conventional diners can have roasted half chicken and braised lamb shoulder. Tinker Street's menu has four sections: small plates, botanical, land/water and confections. Sweet pea cake is a favorite dessert.

The Indy 500 has long had a museum onsite, but fans will also want to see what's new on Main Street in Speedway, the suburb where the racetrack is located. Have a craft beer at the Daredevil Brewing Co., or a pinot noir at The Foyt Wine Vault, owned by the family of race-car driver AJ Foyt. For a wild ride, try Speedway Indoor Karting, which employees like to say is "not your grandfather's go-kart."

#### Classic attractions

Downtown, stroll or jog the Canal Walk and White River State Park. The Eiteljorg

Museum of American Indians and Western Art has a terrific exhibit about the Grand Canyon through Aug 7. The massive neoclassical Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument, a symbol of the city, honors soldiers from the Civil War and other conflicts before World War I. The nearby Indianapolis War Memorial honors World War I veterans. A memorial to the USS Indianapolis, a ship that was torpedoed in the Pacific during World War II, is at the north end of the Canal Walk.

At the Indianapolis Museum of Art, enjoy Georgia O'Keeffe, Edward Hopper and a mesmerizing lobby installation made from books



The Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument in Indianapolis.



Photo shows Edwards Drive-In, an Indianapolis eatery known for its pork tenderloin, a local specialty.



In this April 20, 2016 file photo, the Lola T152 entered by car owner Roger Penske in his first Indianapolis 500 is displayed in the museum at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway in Indianapolis.

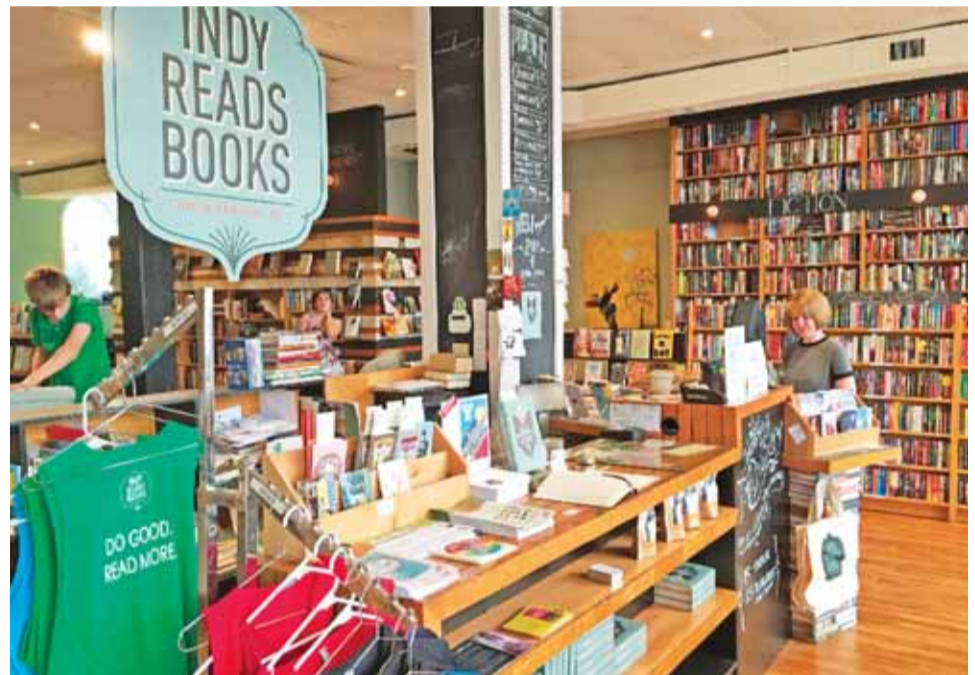


In this file photo, Republican presidential candidate, Sen Ted Cruz, R-Texas, holds his sandwich during a campaign stop at Shapiro's Delicatessen, in Indianapolis.

donated by the public, suspended from the ceiling. Then head outside: Museum grounds offer formal gardens, rustic trails and a 100-acre park. Outdoor art includes "Funky Bones," a giant skeleton made from benches that was featured in the book "The Fault in Our Stars," written by Indy-born John Green; and "Park of the Laments," a hauntingly serene spot with stone walls, a tunnel and grassy walled field. Nearby Crown Hill Cemetery, one of the coun-

decor and Elvis on the jukebox. Indianapolis is dotted with tributes to one of its most famous sons, the late counterculture writer Kurt Vonnegut. The Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library displays his typewriter, rejection letters and other intriguing mementos. There's also a restaurant named for his novel "Bluebeard" and a German beer garden, Rathskeller, in a building his grandpa designed.

A mural of Vonnegut towers four stories high over a parking lot on Massachusetts Avenue, but the street has many other attractions worth seeing. Near the mural, there's the Ball & Biscuit (get the cocktail with the egg white!), Stout's Footwear (founded in 1886) and "Ann Dancing," a hypnotic animated neon sculpture. At the other end of Mass Ave, the Black Market restaurant faces Indy Reads Books, an independent bookstore that sells mostly donated used books to support a literacy program. In between are groovy gift shops, boutiques and Crimson Tate, a quilting store. In the Fountain Square-Fletcher Place area, look for the "YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL" sign featured in the "Good Bones" show, along with funky restaurants and vintage stores. — AP



This photo shows Indy Reads Books, an independent bookstore in Indianapolis.



Photo shows a mural in Indianapolis called "My Affair with Kurt Vonnegut," by Pamela Bliss.

try's largest cemeteries, has acres of hills, trees and statuary. Notables buried here include Depression-era gangster John Dillinger. The Children's Museum of Indianapolis offers immersive, interactive exhibits on everything from dinosaurs to ancient Egypt and contemporary China.

**Tips**

Downtown offers many dining options and attractions, but if you're heading to the art museum, Speedway or far-flung funky neighborhoods, you'll need wheels. Consider Bluelndy, a program where drivers pick up and drop off electric cars around the city.

Indianapolis is a major convention city. When 35,000 firefighters show up, hotel rooms are scarce and rates rise. Indiana came under fire in 2015 for an anti-LGBT law, but many businesses around Indianapolis now welcome visitors with signs that say: "This business serves everyone."

**Hanging out**

Pork tenderloin is a thing here. Find a food truck or try it at Edwards Drive-In, with 1950s



Photo shows an installation in the lobby of the Indianapolis Museum of Art called "False Ceiling."



**SAN FRANCISCO:** People gather in "The Forum" during a preview of the new Apple Union Square store on Thursday in San Francisco. Apple is getting ready to unveil a stylish new product that's not for sale, a new look for its stores. The iPhone maker is overhauling its nearly 480 stores worldwide, starting with its new location in San Francisco. — AP

## APPLE STORES GETTING NEW LOOK AS OTHERS STRUGGLE

IPHONE MAKER UNVEILS REVISED APPROACH TO RETAILING

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Apple is getting ready to unveil a stylish new product that's not for sale - a new look for its stores. The iPhone maker is overhauling its nearly 480 stores worldwide, starting with its new two-story location in San Francisco.

Apple provided a glimpse of its revised approach to retailing on Thursday, the 15th anniversary of the company's first stores in Virginia and California. Since then, Apple's stores have become renowned for their elegant design and employees roaming the floor offering assistance, helping make them among the most profitable in retailing. Despite their success, the stores have been growing stale, said longtime Apple analyst Tim Bjarin of Creative Strategies.

"This is a chance to reimagine a retailing concept that Apple had already nearly perfected," Bjarin said. Apple could use a boost. Although it remains the world's most valuable company, sales of both its iPhones and iPads have been falling as consumers increasingly hang on to the devices that they already own and hold off on upgrading. The slowdown is the main

reason Apple's stock has fallen by nearly 30 percent during the past year.

The San Francisco store, scheduled to open to the public Saturday, is supposed to conjure the ambiance of a town square where people can gaze through giant windows to savor views of the city as they stroll through spacious aisles.

It also features a 42-foot-tall sliding glass door that opens up to San Francisco's busiest shopping district. "This is a company statement, not just a retail store," Angela Ahrendts, Apple's retailing chief, said in an interview with The Associated Press.

Unless they're in San Francisco, most Apple fans won't be able to see the new look for a while. The Cupertino, California, company plans to convert about 5 to 10 percent of its existing stores to the concept annually, Ahrendts said. Some stores will probably have to be moved from their current locations in malls to accommodate all the changes. The new layout culminates two years of research by Ahrendts, who Apple CEO Tim Cook lured

away from luxury fashion brand Burberry in 2014 to restyle the stores as consumers increasingly shop online instead of brick-and-mortar merchants.

Much of that shift has been driven by the ubiquity of the iPhone and other smartphones that have made it even easier for shoppers to compare prices and buy products on the go. The upheaval is causing sales to slow or shrink at many major retailers as people spend less time at the mall.

"It is kind of our fault that retail is changing," Ahrendts said. "Therefore, we realized that we needed to do something different with our physical space." Even Apple is being affected by the online migration, with its digital store attracting more than three times the 400 million people who visited its brick-and-mortar stores last year.

The store changes include dispersing various accessories down a row of cubicles along a wall to simulate the experience of walking from one small store to the next. Apple is calling this area "The Avenue." Apple's heavily used "Genius Bar" for fixing problems with its devices is being renamed "Genius Grove" and being relocated into a bigger area of the store with more tables and chairs to create a more relaxing atmosphere for those who might be stressed about a malfunctioning iPhone or computer.

Apple is also setting up cubes and balls in an area called "The Forum" that can seat up to 100 people for educational sessions about photography, music and other topics covered by experts in the field. Bigger stores like the one in San Francisco will have a space called "The Boardroom" where tech startups and other small businesses can hold closed-door sessions. The company is also earmarking outdoor space at its stores in major cities that is supposed to be like a small park that will be open to all comers around the clock. — AP

## APPLE BOSS TO MEET INDIA'S MODI AND HIS GOLD IPHONE

**MUMBAI:** When Apple Inc CEO Tim Cook meets Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi this weekend as part of an Asian tour aimed at boosting sales, he will sit down with a man whose penchant for a selfie - often using his gold iPhone - can get him into trouble.

Modi breached electoral rules when he photographed himself holding his party's symbol of a lotus flower immediately after casting his vote in the 2014 general election, one of the many selfies he regularly takes with his Apple phone. Cook meets the 65-year old prime minister in New Delhi on Saturday, and will be hoping Modi's enthusiasm for phones can help Apple as it tries to bolster sales in India.

While smartphone usage is surging as the middle class swells, most Indians still can't afford Apple's iPhones and the company has only about 2 percent market share in a country where 100 million phones were sold last year. Apart from snapping the usual selfie, Modi is likely to tell Cook that if Apple wants to sell more phones in India, it should make them there, and help the prime minister realise his ambition of turning the country into a manufacturing powerhouse.

Cook will also have to remember not to come between Modi and his love of the limelight: on a trip to Silicon Valley in September Modi appeared to shove Facebook boss Mark Zuckerberg aside so that the cameras could capture him fully. Cook and Modi's meeting will cap an unusually long trip to India that has seen the Apple boss pray at an elephant-god temple in Mumbai, watch cricket and dine with Bollywood stars. — Reuters



**In this undated photo provided by Uber, a Ford Fusion hybrid outfitted with radars, laser scanners and high-resolution cameras drives along the streets of Pittsburgh. — AP**

## UBER TESTING SELF-DRIVING CAR IN PITTSBURGH

**DETROIT:** Uber is testing a self-driving car on public streets in Pittsburgh. Uber says it has outfitted a Ford Fusion hybrid with radars, laser scanners and high-resolution cameras. It's using the car to test self-driving capability and collect mapping data.

A trained driver remains behind the wheel for now. Uber says it's still in the early stages of its self-driving tests and needs to make sure the technology is safe.

The San Francisco ride-hailing company says Pittsburgh is an ideal place to test self-driving cars because it has a wide variety of weather and road types.

Uber Technologies Inc. announced a partnership with Pittsburgh's Carnegie Mellon University last year. It has also opened its own Advanced Technologies Center, which is led by a former Carnegie Mellon robotics engineer. — AP

## DEVELOPERS LOOK TO WIDEN REPERTOIRE OF PEPPER, JAPAN'S LAUGHING ROBOT

**TOKYO:** Japanese developers of a robot are asking the public to come up with ideas for what their waist-high humanoid can do and they are offering a software development kit for programmers to get creative. The fast-selling robot, known as Pepper, can already laugh and serve coffee and is being used as a waiter, salesman and customer service representative in about 500 companies in Japan, including Nestle, Mizuho Bank and Nissan.

Now its creators, SoftBank Corp, have started offering a kit, Pepper SDK for Android Studio, that will allow programmers to develop new tasks. The offer comes ahead of the July pre-sale launch of the robot in the United States. Pepper, which costs 198,000 yen (\$1,800), has been in high demand in Japan. The first six batches of the robot, each averaging 1,000 units, sold out in less than a minute. — Reuters

## OCULUS RESPONDS TO AL FRANKEN'S VR PRIVACY QUESTIONS



**Al Franken attends the 68th Annual Writers Guild Awards in New York. Oculus responded to Sen Al Franken's questions about consumers' privacy when using the Oculus Rift virtual reality system. — AP**

**LOS ANGELES:** The virtual reality company Oculus relies heavily on Facebook for security and shares information about its users with VR creators. Those details were among the insights Oculus provided in response to Sen Al Franken's questions about consumers' privacy when using Oculus' VR systems.

Franken posted the response from the Facebook-owned company Thursday detailing how Oculus collects and stores user data. Oculus' head-mounted Rift system features a pair of high-definition screens that surrounded users' visions with views of virtual worlds. The headset is worn on users' heads and can detect movement, location and sound.

Oculus said collecting the physical movements of users is a necessary tool to deliver "a safe, comfortable and seamless VR experience."

The company also said it relies on Facebook's data centers and technical infrastructure to host its VR platform, as well as over 200 security professionals from Facebook to help keep the data secure.

"We believe VR has the power to change the world by enabling people to experience anything, any-

where, with anyone, and know that this will only be possible if we invest in the security of our community," Jordan McCollum, Oculus' general counsel, wrote in the letter dated May 13.

Oculus noted that it shares information with Facebook and aggregated data about users with VR developers but stopped short of indicating whether it has sold such information to third parties.

Sen. Al Franken, D-Minn., wrote an open letter to Oculus CEO Brendan Iribe on April 7 asking for details about user data collected by the new VR system. He asked the company to respond by May 13.

Franken called Oculus' response detailed and said he plans to continue working with the company to ensure that users know how data is being collected, used and shared.

The Oculus Rift began shipping to consumers March 28. It costs \$599 and features a headset with a microphone and a pair of high-definition screens capable of broadcasting images when connected to a high-powered PC. The company has struggled to fulfill orders because of component shortages. — AP

## DARTMOUTH CONTEST SHOWS COMPUTERS AREN'T SUCH GOOD POETS

**HANOVER, NH:** Computers are pretty good at stocking shelves and operating cars, but are not so great at writing poetry. Scientists in a Dartmouth College competition reached that conclusion after designing artificial intelligence algorithms that could produce sonnets. Judges compared the results with poems written by humans to see if they could tell the difference.

In every instance, the judges were able to find the sonnet produced by a computer program.

The yearlong competition was a variation of the "Turing Test," named for British computer scientist Alan Turing, who in 1950 proposed an experiment to determine if computers could have human-like intelligence. Results were announced Wednesday night.

A three-judge panel that included Pulitzer Prize-winning author Louis Menand was asked to read 10 submissions - six produced by humans and four by two different algorithms. The machines were given nouns - including "wave," "tourist" and "floor" - and programmed to produce a sonnet. The software packages didn't have the flow or narrative of a good poem. Some also had "idiosyncrasies of syntax and diction, uses of language that were just a little off," Menand said in an email interview. Competition co-founder Dan Rockmore, a Dartmouth professor, said he was surprised at the computers' poor showing. But he wasn't that surprised.

"The judges were hunting for machines so they are not looking at a Hallmark card and reading the poem inside," he added. The results of the competition also included a short story segment and one involving computer and human DJs. Computer algorithms were not much better at writing short stories, failing to fool a panel of judges - although one judge was tricked by one story.

The sets of music produce by DJs - played behind a black curtain at Dartmouth's Hood Museum of Art - were more of a challenge with dancers having a difficult time determining who produced the various sets. Two algorithm entries managed to confound about 40 percent of the dancers. — AP



**HANOVER:** Dartmouth College students dance on campus in Hanover, NH, to music that was generated either by humans or a computer and they vote on whether humans or a machine spun each set as the results were beamed in real time onto the wall above them. — AP



**MOUNTAIN VIEW:** Google CEO Sundar Pichai gives closing remarks at the end of the keynote address of the Google I/O conference on Wednesday in Mountain View. — AP

## WITH OPPORTUNITY COMES CHALLENGES: GOOGLE'S NEW DAYDREAM VR VISION

**NEW YORK:** Upcoming virtual-reality headsets based on Google's new Daydream VR system could give more people a taste of VR and make better games and applications affordable. But there are hurdles, including a need to buy a new Android phone - no iPhones.

On Thursday, Google offered more details on its plans to develop a range of VR headsets that promise to be more comfortable and durable than its ultra-cheap Cardboard headset. Google will make one and share design guidelines with other manufacturers.

There will also be a wireless motion controller - functioning like a fishing rod, a steering wheel or a pointer - to permit more-sophisticated VR experiences.

Sophisticated systems such as Facebook's Oculus Rift and the HTC Vive are expensive, limiting their appeal to gamers and other tech enthusiasts. Alternatively, cheaper VR headsets that tap the power of smartphones are typically tied to one manufacturer's phones, such as Samsung's or LG's.

Daydream headsets will work with a range of phone brands. Gartner analyst Brian Blau says he believes the Daydream-

powered devices could prove to be a "thorn in the side" of both Samsung and Oculus, which teamed up to make a similar VR headset, called Gear VR, late last year.

Here's a look at challenges that come with the opportunities:

### YOU MUST BUY A NEW PHONE

You'll need a higher-end phone running the upcoming "N" version of Android. Existing phones won't have the right hardware, and cheaper "N" phones won't either, so you might have to spend a few hundred dollars more for a top-of-the-line model.

Google says at least eight manufacturers, including Samsung, HTC, and Huawei, will make compatible phones this fall. It's a matter of adding sensors and good-enough screens, among other things. Because these phones don't exist yet, Daydream will need time to grow, says Jan Dawson, chief analyst at Jackdaw Research.

Furthermore, Daydream won't work with Apple's iPhones, whereas Google Cardboard headsets do.

### CHEAPER, BUT NOT CHEAPEST

Though no price was announced, the

Daydream headsets will be more expensive than Cardboard, likely in the ballpark of Samsung's \$100 Gear VR. By contrast, Google sells Cardboard for as little as \$15, and many brands, including The New York Times, give them away as part of promotions. The price difference gives you better materials - not cardboard - and a strap to keep your hands free.

Still, the new headsets will be much cheaper than high-end VR systems like the Rift and the Vive. Those cost several hundred dollars, not including a powerful personal computer with fast-enough graphics.

### IT'S NOT FULL VR

Higher-end systems offer more, including full position tracking on the Vive. As you walk around a room, images on the headset change to reflect your new perspective.

Smartphone-based VR is more like a 360-degree movie in 3-D. You're meant to watch it sitting down at the same spot. Moving around won't change the perspective.

It's the difference between climbing Mount Everest by gripping virtual ladders, or watching someone with a 360-degree camera do it. —AP



04:10 Ghoulies  
05:30 The Bridge In The Jungle  
06:55 Big Screen  
07:10 The Night They Raided Minsky's  
08:50 The Garbage Pail Kids Movie  
10:25 Duplex  
11:55 The Magnificent Seven  
14:00 Big Screen  
14:15 Fuzz  
15:45 Geronimo: An American Legend  
17:40 The Bridge In The Jungle  
19:05 If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium  
20:45 Big Screen  
21:00 Fear The Walking Dead  
22:00 Talking Dead: Fear Edition  
23:00 Fear The Walking Dead 00:00  
Breaking Bad  
01:00 Swamp Thing  
02:30 Savage Harvest

16:30 Shamwari: A Wild Life  
17:25 Gangland Killers  
18:20 Rugged Justice  
19:15 Gator Boys  
20:10 Village Vets  
20:40 Village Vets  
21:05 Austin Stevens: Snakemaster  
22:00 Rugged Justice  
22:55 Ten Deadliest Snakes  
23:50 Gator Boys  
00:45 Gator Boys  
01:40 Gangland Killers  
02:35 Biggest And Baddest



03:20 Stella  
04:10 Father Brown  
05:00 Doctors  
09:00 Eastenders  
11:00 Sinbad  
13:15 Death In Paradise  
14:10 Doctors  
15:10 Death In Paradise  
18:00 Doctors  
18:30 Eastenders  
19:00 Gates  
19:20 Father Brown  
20:05 Call The Midwife: Christmas Special 2015  
21:00 The Musketeers  
21:55 Wallander  
23:30 Doctors  
00:00 Eastenders  
00:30 Father Brown  
01:15 Call The Midwife: Christmas Special 2015  
02:10 The Musketeers



03:00 The Great Train Robbery  
04:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos  
05:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook  
06:00 The FBI Files  
09:00 Homicide Hunter  
10:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook  
11:00 The First 48  
12:00 The First 48  
13:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
14:00 Curious & Unusual Deaths  
15:00 Gangs Of Britain...  
16:00 I Killed My BFF  
17:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook  
18:00 Diabolical Women  
19:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
20:00 Curious & Unusual Deaths  
21:00 Gangs Of Britain...  
22:00 Killer Kids  
23:00 Homicide Hunter  
00:00 Evil Up Close  
01:00 The Ghost Inside My Child  
02:00 Killer Kids



03:40 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 Fast N' Loud  
10:10 Gold Rush  
11:00 Curse Of The Frozen Gold  
11:50 Outback Truckers  
12:40 Storage Wars Canada  
14:45 Property Wars  
16:00 Property Wars

16:50 Edge Of Alaska  
17:40 Ice Lake Rebels  
18:30 You Have Been Warned  
19:20 The Pop Illusionist  
20:10 What Happened Next?  
21:00 Edge Of Alaska  
21:50 Ice Lake Rebels  
22:40 Railroad Alaska  
23:30 What Happened Next?  
00:45 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive



03:00 Untamed & Uncut  
03:50 Ultimate Survival  
04:40 How It's Made  
05:05 How It's Made  
05:30 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman  
06:20 Mythbusters  
07:00 Doki  
07:25 Doki  
07:50 Kids vs Film  
08:40 Bad Dog  
09:30 Storm Chasers  
16:10 Strangest Weather On Earth  
17:00 Ultimate Survival  
18:40 Wildest Africa  
19:30 Troy  
20:20 The Willis Family  
21:10 NASA's Greatest Missions  
22:00 Untamed & Uncut  
00:30 Storm Chasers  
02:10 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman



03:00 Evil Stepmothers  
03:48 Evil Kin  
04:36 Blood Relatives  
05:24 The Perfect Murder  
06:12 I Was Murdered  
07:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner  
07:50 Blood Relatives  
12:00 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones  
16:10 Suspicion  
17:00 California Investigator  
17:25 California Investigator  
17:50 Southern Fried Homicide  
18:40 Murder Comes To Town  
19:30 Swamp Murders  
20:20 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall  
21:10 Suspicion  
22:00 I'd Kill For You  
22:50 The Haunted  
23:40 The Haunted



03:05 How It's Made  
03:29 Mythbusters  
04:16 How It's Made  
05:03 Alien Mysteries  
05:50 Prototype This  
06:37 How Do They Do It?  
07:23 How It's Made  
11:08 How Do They Do It?  
11:53 Food Factory  
14:10 Food Factory USA  
14:57 Mythbusters  
18:05 How The Universe Works  
19:40 Alien Mysteries  
21:15 Secret Space Escapes  
22:00 How Do They Do It?  
22:22 How Do They Do It?  
22:45 How It's Made  
01:08 Through The Wormhole  
02:42 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman



03:15 The Hive  
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
04:10 Hank Zipzer  
04:35 Binny And The Ghost  
05:00 Violetta  
05:45 The Hive  
05:50 Mouk  
06:00 Lolirock  
06:25 Sofia The First  
06:50 Gravity Falls  
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
07:40 Hank Zipzer  
08:05 Shake It Up

08:30 Shake It Up  
08:55 Hannah Montana Forever  
09:45 H2O: Just Add Water  
10:10 H2O: Just Add Water  
10:35 Geek Charming  
12:05 Violetta Recipes  
12:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
12:20 Jessie  
12:45 Girl Meets World  
13:10 Alex And Co  
13:35 Best Friends Whenever  
14:00 Gravity Falls  
14:25 Descendants Wicked World  
14:30 Shake It Up  
14:55 Shake It Up  
15:20 H2O: Just Add Water  
16:10 Liv And Maddie  
17:00 I Didn't Do It  
17:25 I Didn't Do It  
17:50 Violetta Recipes  
18:00 Let It Shine: Rap Battle Edition  
19:30 Evermoor Chronicles  
19:55 Evermoor Chronicles  
20:20 Best Friends Whenever  
20:45 Good Luck Charlie  
21:10 Good Luck Charlie  
21:35 H2O: Just Add Water  
22:00 Binny And The Ghost  
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:10 Hank Zipzer  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost  
00:00 Violetta  
00:45 The Hive  
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:40 Hank Zipzer  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:30 Violetta



02:20 Zou  
02:30 Loopdidoo  
02:45 Art Attack  
Disney XD  
06:00 Booster  
06:10 Super Matrak  
06:35 Super Matrak  
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
07:25 K.C. Undercover  
07:50 Supa Strikas  
08:15 Supa Strikas  
08:40 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
09:10 Kirby Buckets  
09:35 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
10:00 Supa Strikas  
10:25 Lab Rats  
11:20 Lab Rats  
11:45 Lab Rats  
12:10 Lab Rats  
12:35 Lab Rats  
13:00 Toy Story  
14:30 Phineas And Ferb  
14:45 Kickin' It  
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
15:15 Rocket Monkeys  
15:40 Guardians Of The Galaxy  
16:05 Mighty Med  
16:30 Star Wars Rebels  
16:55 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
17:25 K.C. Undercover  
17:50 Supa Strikas  
18:15 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
18:40 K.C. Undercover  
19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
19:10 Anndroids  
19:35 Star Wars Rebels  
20:00 Mighty Med  
20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
20:55 K.C. Undercover  
21:20 Supa Strikas  
21:45 Lab Rats  
22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



03:15 Kourtney And Kim Take Miami  
06:00 Fashion Bloggers  
06:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
07:20 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
13:05 E! News  
14:05 Christina Milian Turned Up  
15:00 WAGs  
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  
22:00 WAGs  
23:00 E! News  
00:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
00:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
01:50 New Money  
02:20 E! News



03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
03:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
04:00 Man Fire Food  
04:30 Man Fire Food  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Chopped  
07:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
07:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
08:00 Chopped  
09:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes  
10:00 The Pioneer Woman  
10:30 The Pioneer Woman  
11:00 Siba's Table  
11:30 Siba's Table  
12:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics  
12:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics  
13:00 Chopped  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
17:00 Chopped  
18:00 Siba's Table  
19:00 Private Chef  
20:00 Chopped  
21:00 Cutthroat Kitchen  
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
23:00 Private Chef  
23:30 Private Chef  
00:00 Chopped



RUSH HOUR 2 ON OSN MOVIES COMEDY HD



01:00 Cutthroat Kitchen  
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives



03:00 Copenhagen Bowl 2014  
03:30 Copenhagen Open 2015  
04:00 The 808  
04:30 World Of X Games 2014  
05:30 Concrete Pow Wow  
06:00 That First Glide  
07:30 16 Below - Generation 3  
08:00 Copenhagen Bowl 2014  
08:30 Copenhagen Open 2015  
09:00 Standard Snowboard Show  
09:30 Insane Cinema: Girls Of Summer  
10:00 Master Debaters With Jay Mohr  
10:30 Rockstar Masa Pro 2007  
11:00 GKA  
11:30 Bucky's Backyard Bowl-B-Q  
12:00 Master Debaters With Jay Mohr  
12:30 Vans Get-N Classic, Vol. 2  
13:00 Copenhagen Bowl 2014  
13:30 Copenhagen Open 2015  
14:00 The Crew  
14:30 Insane Cinema: Machotaildrop  
16:20 Looking Thru The B-Sides  
16:30 The South  
17:00 Copenhagen Bowl 2014  
17:30 Copenhagen Open 2015  
18:00 Nuclear Cowboyz 2011  
18:30 16 Below - Generation 3  
19:00 Street League Of Skateboarding 2015  
21:00 The South  
21:30 Vans Get-N Classic, Vol. 2  
22:00 Pull  
22:30 Pull  
23:00 Choose Your Fate  
00:00 World Of X Games 2014  
01:00 Brasil Surf  
02:00 World Of X Games 2014



03:00 Fresh Off The Boat  
03:30 Black-Ish  
04:00 Living With Fran  
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
05:30 Better With You  
06:00 My Name Is Earl  
06:30 Community  
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:00 Living With Fran  
08:30 Better With You  
09:00 Fresh Off The Boat  
09:30 2 Broke Girls  
10:00 The Simpsons  
10:30 Community  
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
12:00 My Name Is Earl  
12:30 Living With Fran  
13:00 Better With You  
13:30 Community  
14:00 Black-Ish  
14:30 2 Broke Girls  
15:00 The Simpsons  
15:30 Parks And Recreation  
16:00 Suburgatory  
16:30 My Name Is Earl  
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
18:00 Galavant  
18:30 Dr. Ken  
19:00 Last Man Standing  
19:30 Crowded  
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
21:00 Parks And Recreation  
21:30 Suburgatory  
22:00 Saturday Night Live  
23:00 Married  
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
00:30 Parks And Recreation  
01:00 Suburgatory  
01:30 Saturday Night Live  
02:30 Married



03:00 Game Of Thrones  
04:00 After The Thrones  
04:30 Curb Your Enthusiasm  
05:00 The Fever  
07:00 A Child's Garden Of Poetry  
08:00 Lucky Louie  
08:30 Flight Of The Conchords  
09:00 Veep  
09:30 Hello Ladies: The Movie  
11:00 Muhammad Ali's Greatest Fight  
13:00 In Vogue: The Editor's Eye  
14:00 Lucky Louie  
14:30 Flight Of The Conchords  
15:00 Veep



THE EXPENDABLES 3 ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

15:30 The Pentagon Wars  
17:15 Muhammad Ali's Greatest Fight  
19:00 Allegiance  
20:00 The Sopranos  
21:00 True Detective  
22:00 Ballers  
22:30 Funny Or Die Presents  
23:00 The Wire  
00:00 Dave Attell: Captain Miserable  
01:00 The Sopranos  
02:00 True Detective



04:00 Good Morning America  
06:00 The Fosters  
07:00 C.S.I.  
08:00 Prison Break  
09:00 Minority Report  
10:00 Shark Tank  
11:00 Survivor: Kaoh Rong  
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
14:00 C.S.I.  
15:00 Live Good Morning America  
16:00 Sleepy Hollow  
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
18:00 Prison Break  
19:00 Grey's Anatomy  
20:00 Unforgettable  
21:00 Criminal Minds  
22:00 The Blacklist  
23:00 Agent X  
00:00 Unforgettable  
01:00 Criminal Minds  
02:00 The Blacklist



03:00 Transformers: Age Of Extinction  
06:00 Breakdown  
07:45 The Berlin File

09:45 Jurassic Attack  
11:15 Transformers: Age Of Extinction  
14:15 Stranded  
16:00 The Berlin File  
18:00 Automata  
20:00 Swelter  
22:00 The Expendables 3  
00:00 Bullet  
02:00 The Berlin File



04:00 Blended  
06:00 Rush Hour 2  
08:00 What About Bob?  
10:00 Blended  
12:00 Encino Man  
13:45 The Preacher's Wife  
16:00 What About Bob?  
18:00 That Awkward Moment  
20:00 St. Vincent  
22:00 Three Night Stand  
00:00 The Babymakers  
02:00 That Awkward Moment



03:00 One Last Look  
05:00 Two Night Stand  
07:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost  
09:00 Escape  
11:00 The Truth About Emanuel  
13:00 Escobar: Paradise Lost  
15:00 Late Bloomers  
17:00 The Dependables  
19:00 The Truth About Emanuel  
21:00 Miss Meadows  
23:00 Before I Go To Sleep  
01:00 The Bronx Bull



03:00 The Pacifier  
05:00 The Incredibles  
07:00 Dinosaur Island  
09:00 Oz The Great And Powerful  
11:15 Tinker Bell And The Legend Of The NeverBeast  
13:00 Inspector Gadget  
15:00 Diary Of A Wimpy Kid  
17:00 Strange Magic  
19:00 Alice In Wonderland  
21:00 The Mighty Ducks  
23:00 Diary Of A Wimpy Kid  
01:00 Alice In Wonderland



04:00 The Brass Teapot  
06:00 Hitting The Apex  
08:30 What Dreams May Come  
10:30 Won't Back Down  
12:30 Where Angels Fear To Tread  
14:30 Anna Karenina  
17:00 What Dreams May Come  
19:00 The Savages  
21:00 About Time  
23:30 I Origins  
01:15 What Dreams May Come



03:00 Cuban Fury  
05:00 Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2  
07:00 Tracers  
09:00 Cuban Fury  
11:00 Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2

12:45 Transcendence  
14:45 The Song  
16:45 The Good Lie  
18:45 The Theory Of Everything  
21:00 Jackie & Ryan  
23:00 Dope  
01:00 Deliverance Creek



04:30 Moomins And The Comet Chase  
06:00 Pororo: The Racing Adventure  
08:00 Blackie And Kanuto  
10:00 The Three Dogateers  
11:30 Kikoriki: Team Invincible  
13:00 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend  
14:30 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure  
16:00 Curious George: Back To The Jungle  
18:00 The Three Dogateers  
20:00 Baby Geniuses And The Space Baby  
22:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure  
23:30 Curious George: Back To The Jungle  
01:00 Blackie And Kanuto  
02:45 Baby Geniuses And The Space Baby



03:45 Julie And Julia  
06:00 Paranoia  
08:00 Shadow Witness  
10:00 Son Of Batman  
12:00 Brick Mansions  
14:00 Step Up Revolution  
16:00 Shadow Witness  
17:45 Godzilla  
20:00 Good People  
22:00 American Sniper  
00:15 Top Five  
02:00 Shadow Witness



03:15 To The Wonder  
05:15 The Bling Ring  
07:00 Con Air  
09:00 Planes  
10:30 33 Postcards  
12:15 Muppets Most Wanted  
14:15 Iron Man 3  
16:30 John Rabe: Part 2  
18:15 Mrs. Miracle  
20:00 The Recruit  
22:00 Real Steel  
00:15 Agora  
02:15 Devil's Knot



03:00 The Listener  
04:00 Fit For Fashion  
05:00 Melissa & Joey  
05:30 Melissa & Joey  
06:00 Cougar Town  
06:30 Cougar Town  
07:00 Making Mr.Right  
08:00 Grey's Anatomy  
09:00 Grey's Anatomy  
10:00 The Listener  
11:00 The Listener  
12:00 Fit For Fashion  
13:00 Melissa & Joey  
13:30 Cougar Town  
14:00 The Secret Life Of The American Teenager  
15:00 Castle  
16:00 Lost  
17:00 Scrubs  
17:30 Happy Endings  
18:00 The Walking Dead  
19:00 The Walking Dead  
20:00 The Walking Dead  
21:00 Scrubs  
21:30 Happy Endings  
22:00 Private Practice  
23:00 Private Practice  
00:00 Making Mr.Right  
01:00 Lost  
02:00 The Walking Dead



03:10 Movie Talk  
03:35 Houston  
05:25 Amreeka  
07:00 Good Intentions  
08:30 Standby

09:55 Peter Gabriel: Scratch My Back  
11:10 Genesis: Sum Of The Parts  
12:45 Wreckers  
14:10 Lock Chamer  
15:30 Good Intentions  
17:00 Standby  
18:25 In Conversation With  
18:55 Genesis: Sum Of The Parts  
20:30 Here  
22:00 Heat Wave  
23:30 Falling Awake  
01:25 Wreckers  
02:50 Peter Gabriel: Scratch My Back



03:30 Two In A Million: Born With Scales  
04:20 Randy's Wedding Rescue  
05:10 Randy's Wedding Rescue  
06:00 Say Yes To The Dress, Äi Bridesmaids  
06:50 Cake Boss  
07:35 Love At First Swipe  
08:22 Bakery Boss  
09:57 Two In A Million: Born With Scales  
10:45 My 600lb Life  
11:35 Something Borrowed, Something New  
13:35 Our Little Family  
14:25 Oprah's Lifeclass  
15:15 Cake Boss  
17:17 Two In A Million: Born With Scales  
18:05 Belief  
18:55 Cake Boss  
19:20 My 600lb Life  
20:10 Something Borrowed, Something New  
20:35 Something Borrowed, Something New  
21:00 Ask Oprah's All Stars  
21:50 Belief  
22:40 Monsters Inside Me  
23:30 What Have I Got  
23:55 What Have I Got  
00:20 My Extreme Excess Skin  
01:07 90 Days To Wed  
01:55 Long Island Medium



03:05 Maverick Chef  
03:30 Carnival Eats  
03:55 Eat Street  
04:20 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet  
04:45 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia  
05:10 Lee Chan's World Food Tour  
05:35 Eat Street  
06:00 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
06:25 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
06:50 The Best Job In The World  
07:15 The Best Job In The World  
07:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
08:30 Chasing Time  
08:55 Places We Go  
09:20 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
09:45 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
10:10 Rustic Adventure Argentina  
10:35 Street Food Around The World  
11:00 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt  
11:25 Top Tables, Top Cities  
11:50 David Rocco's Dolce India  
12:15 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
12:40 My Dubai  
13:05 Home Strange Home  
14:00 Cradle Of Mandopop  
14:55 Maverick Chef  
15:25 Carnival Eats  
15:50 Eat Street  
16:20 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
16:45 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
17:15 Rustic Adventure Argentina  
17:40 Street Food Around The World  
18:10 Cruise Ship Diaries  
19:05 Maverick Chef  
19:30 Carnival Eats  
20:00 Eat Street  
20:25 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
20:50 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
21:15 Rustic Adventure Argentina  
21:40 Street Food Around The World  
22:05 Cruise Ship Diaries  
22:55 My Dubai  
23:20 Home Strange Home  
00:10 Cradle Of Mandopop  
01:00 A Marriage Of Flavours  
01:25 Hotel India  
02:15 City Chase Rome  
Nat Geo Wild HD  
03:15 Walking With The Great Apes  
03:45 Strangest Bird Alive  
04:40 Big Baboon House  
05:35 Predator Patrol  
06:30 Monster Fish  
07:25 Hooked  
08:20 Ape Man



# ASSE KUWAIT CHAPTER RECOGNIZES HSE EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

**A**merican Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE), Kuwait Chapter is a premier voluntary, non-profit, Health, Safety and Environmental professional organization, which strives to provide professional guidance, training, consultancy and resources to the HSE Professionals, industrial and social sectors in the region. To recognize and honor the private sector companies for their leadership, excellence and exceptional performance in the field of Health, Safety and Environment in the Gulf Region, AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SAFETY ENGINEERS - KUWAIT CHAPTER organizes ASSE-GCC HSE Excellence Award annually. The award program 2016 was launched on 25th Jan 2016 inviting applications from the Private sector organizations in GCC countries and was concluded with a grand award presentation ceremony on 2nd May 2016 at Hilton Resorts Kuwait. The ASSE GCC HSE Excellence award Program was patronized by Kuwait Petroleum Corporation, supported by IOSH, endorsed by IADC and sponsored by KNPC.

The award ceremony started with welcome address by Sampath Reddy, President,

ASSE-Kuwait Chapter, He briefed about the Chapter activities, its objectives and achievements along with the background of the ASSE GCC Award program. He mentioned that the Kuwait chapter has pioneered the annual award program for 8th time successfully. Santhosh Kumar Shenoy Deputy Director for the ASSE GCC HSE Excellence Award 2016 facilitated the event.

Fadhel Al-Ali, Chairman of ASSE-Kuwait Chapter in his address highlighted the importance of this award program and the value each company is giving to this evidence based award, which showcases successful business models from each organizations that uphold HSE as a business value. He explained about the main theme of the competition "You Perform We recognize" and congratulated the winning companies. He appreciated all the Award program organizing committee members for putting their best efforts to make this program a grand success.

Ali Al Kshawe, Manager HSE, Kuwait National Petroleum Company delivered the keynote speech on behalf of the Chief Guest Mohammed Ghazi Al Mutairi CEO, Kuwait

National Petroleum Company. He congratulated all the award-winning companies and appreciated the initiatives of ASSE Kuwait Chapter for promoting the HSE performance in private sector companies in the GCC region through this award program. He highlighted the importance of HSE and the present day HSE challenges faced by the contractors within the Oil Sector & other Industries in this region.

On this occasion, the message from Mike Belcher, President ASSE, USA who is also one of the adjudication panel member, was broadcasted through the video. Ashok Garlapati, ASSE Global Region Vice President in his speech informed that ASSE chapters has been started in India, Qatar UAE, Pakistan, Egypt, Nigeria Etc. He congratulated all the award winning companies and wished them to continue to keep their good work. Dave Geer, the IADC Regional Director in the Middle East addressed the gathering and acclaimed ASSE initiatives and shared the pleasure getting associated with the ASSE.

Thereafter Sunil Sadanandan, Director ASSE-GCC HSE Excellence Award 2016

Organizing Committee, briefed about the award categories and criteria used to evaluate the HSE management system and their HSE performance of the participating companies. He thanked and congratulated all the companies who participated in the award program. He briefed about the benefits of the award program, which includes motivating companies to excel their HSE performance year by year, setting new benchmarks each year to improve the company image.

He also informed that unlike earlier, this year all the awards were open for all companies and any companies can submit of any award like HSE Performance, Environmental Excellence Award, Corporate Social responsibility award, Management of Driving safety award, Best HSE Initiative award. This year new award Best Risk Management award was introduced for companies to focus more on the risk based approaches for their activities. He also informed that GCC HSE award program was much appreciated by the adjudication panel judges from the ASSE, US.





Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah releases the falcon documentary in Kuwait as Dr Zubair Medammal and others look on.

## INDIAN FALCONOLOGIST FINDS RECOGNITION IN KUWAIT

By Sajeed K Peter

**KUWAIT:** An Indian academic passionate about falconry has carved a niche for himself in Kuwait where falcons enjoy a proud place in Arab national heritage. Zubair Medammal, an enthusiastic falconologist from Kerala, has not only established himself in the vocation and done research on the subject but has also shot a documentary on the rare species of bird in the Gulf.

Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Hamoud Al-Malek Al-Sabah released the falcon documentary in Kuwait. The documentary covers all relevant information about various species of this prized bird and their

characteristic features as well as about falconry, with subtitles such as food and feeding habits, breeding, molting, health and healthcare of falcons, management of falcons in captivity, vocalization, falconry in traditional ways as well as modern falconry, training and taming methods, special features of falcons etc. The 30-minute documentary is in Arabic and English languages. "I was fully aware of the difficulties involved in the mission that I had undertaken. Since falcons fly and live at great heights, it is very difficult to watch their movements and observe their behavior," said Dr Medammal. Medammal made a sonogram of 15 different vocalizations of various

species of the raptor. The falconologist is also looking for a publisher for his book titled "Biology and Behavior of Falcons" which portrays his painstaking and tedious six years of research work on falcons. "The book covers everything on falcons with an emphasis on the breeding and healthcare of the Peregrine/Shahen. The book, in English and Arabic, is an important study material and could be introduced in the syllabus of schools, colleges and universities in the Middle East region," he suggested.

Medammal's doctoral research topic was "Biology and behavior of falcons with emphasis on breeding and healthcare in captivity." He obtained a doctorate degree

from the University of Calicut in the southern Indian state of Kerala in 2004, where he is currently working as assistant professor of zoology. He is also the only one who has recorded and made sonogram of 15 different vocalizations of various species of falcons. After having seen different species of falcons and the method of maintaining them at the Sheikh Zayed Falcon Research Center, in the UAE, he opted to be an independent falconologist. Perceiving it as a challenge, he studied and trained in falconry (including artificial breeding) in Germany. Medammal had visited Kuwait Falcon Hospital. Zubair said the shooting of his documentary film on falcons in the Gulf region was completed. The shooting covered all the GCC countries like Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman. "I want to raise awareness about falconry among people in the Gulf countries in addition to India where 100,000 DVDs of the documentary will be distributed to students at free of charge," Zubair told.

Falconry is considered a rich heritage and the bird is a status symbol among in Arab tribes in Kuwait and other Gulf countries. It is the only bird that has a passport with a microchip embedded that enables it to travel across the region except Oman. Medammal is the first non-Arab to be granted membership in the Emirates Falconers Club. He was also honored with the Pravasi Award for outstanding research in foreign countries presented by the government of Kerala, and India's National Award 'JC International' as an outstanding young personality. Apart from the Gulf countries, Medammal also visited Germany, China, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Iran, besides spending months in the Silent Valley hills along the Western Ghats in Kerala as part of his research work.



Dr Zubair Medammal with a falcon during his visit to Kuwait

## PLAIN CIGARETTE PACKS BECOME LAW IN UK, FRANCE

**LONDON:** The days of branded cigarette packets in Britain and France are numbered as new plain packaging laws came into effect yesterday, hailed by anti-smoking campaigners despite resistance from tobacco firms. The logos and distinctive colors on cigarette packets will be replaced with neutral packaging, a move that health campaigners said was a major step in reducing demand for a "deadly and addictive product".

The new packs will be introduced in both countries over the coming months following similar legislation in Australia credited with helping to cut down on smoking rates, especially among young people. British retailers will have a year to sell existing stock and those in France have until January 1, at which point branded packets of cigarettes and hand-rolled tobacco will become a thing of the past. "For too long glitzy, cleverly designed packaging has lured young people into smoking," British Lung Foundation chief executive Penny Woods said. "Australia introduced plain packaging in 2012 and has already seen a decline in smoking rates.

"If just a fraction of the 200,000 children in the UK who start smoking a year

are discouraged, thousands of lives will be saved." Cancer Research UK's chief executive Harpal Kumar said: "This is an important milestone in our efforts to reduce the devastating toll that tobacco exerts on so many families every day. "It's the beginning of the end for packaging that masks a deadly and addictive product," he said. French Health Minister Marisol Touraine said: "Plain packaging is ugly and intentionally so. The aim is to destroy the attractiveness of many cigarette packs". The packs in Britain and France will all have to be a drab green color and, as in the rest of the European Union, 65 percent of the pack will be taken up by health warnings.

### 'Nothing will change'

Tobacco giants Philip Morris International, British American Tobacco, Imperial Tobacco and Japan Tobacco International (JTI) failed in a last-ditch legal challenge against the British legislation on Thursday. JTI has said it intends to appeal. "The fact remains that our branding has been eradicated and we maintain that this is unlawful," said Daniel Sciamma, JTI's UK managing director. Simon Clark, director of the British smok-



**LONDON:** This file photo released by Action on Smoking and Health (UK) (ASH (UK)) in London shows a mock-up design of a standardized cigarette pack. — AFP

ers' group Forest, said the packaging rules "treat adults like children and teenagers like idiots", adding that "no-one starts because of the packaging".

There were also skeptical reactions

on the streets of London. With cigarette in hand, passerby Faheem Malik said: "When you're addicted to smoking, you'll ignore it. I already ignore the warning on the packs". — AFP

## ZIKA STRAIN FROM AMERICAS OUTBREAK SPREADS IN AFRICA FOR FIRST TIME: WHO

**GENEVA:** The Zika virus strain linked to surging cases of neurological disorders and birth defects in Latin America has for the first time been found in Africa, the World Health Organization said yesterday. The UN health agency announced that the Zika virus strain circulating in Cape Verde had been shown to be the same as the one behind an explosion of cases in the Americas. "This is the first time that strain of Zika which has been showed to cause neurological disorders and microcephaly ... has been detected in Africa," Matshidiso Moeti, WHO's Africa regional chief, told reporters in Geneva. The so-called Asian strain of the virus has infected some 1.5 million people in hardest-hit country Brazil alone, and was detected in Cape Verde through the sequencing of Zika cases in the island nation.

"It is the same genetic material as the virus in Brazil," WHO spokeswoman Marsha Vanderford told AFP. "The findings are of concern because it is further proof that the outbreak is spreading beyond South America and is on the doorstep of Africa," Moeti said. "This information will help African countries to re-evaluate their level of risk and adapt and increase their levels of preparedness," she added. Experts agree that Zika is behind a surge in cases of the birth defect microcephaly-babies born with abnormally small heads and brains-after their mothers were infected with the virus.

The virus, which also causes the rare but serious neurological disorder Guillain-Barre Syndrome, is mainly spread by two species of Aedes mosquito but has also been shown to transmit through sexual contact. WHO believes the Asian Zika strain was imported to Cape Verde by a traveller coming from Brazil, before it began spreading locally last October. As of May 8, 7,557 suspected Zika cases had been registered in Cape Verde, as well as three microcephaly cases, WHO said. No cases of Guillain-Barre Syndrome have been registered in the country so far.



**WASHINGTON:** Sen Maria Cantwell, D-Wash, left, and Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee Chairman Sen Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn, head to the Senate chamber on Capitol Hill in Washington. — AP

The African strain of the Zika virus, which takes its name from Uganda's tropical Zika forest where it was first discovered in 1947, has been widespread on the continent since then. But until recently, Zika sparked little concern, as it usually causes only mild, flu-like symptoms, and it appeared many Africans had built up immunity against the virus.

### Worst-case scenario

But it remains unclear what impact the arrival of the new strain to the continent will have, said Bruce Aylward, WHO chief on outbreaks and health emergencies. "We know that the African strain has circulated in part of Africa for decades now," he told reporters. "What we don't know is the population immunity that may have been left behind on the way, and also whether or not that will mitigate some of the impact of this new ...

strain," he said. Aylward said WHO hoped serological surveys would help rapidly establish "whether or not there is some degree of population immunity that will help reduce some of that vulnerability."

But he stressed that for now it was important to move forward "against a worst-case scenario" and assume Africans would be as vulnerable as people in Latin America to the impact of the strain. Cape Verde and other African countries at risk should inform pregnant women especially about the risks associated with the Asian strain of the Zika virus, as well as about the best ways of protecting against infection, including avoiding mosquito bites, WHO said. The UN agency also urged countries to step up efforts to detect microcephaly, Guillain-Barre and other neurological disorders linked to Zika and their preparedness to deal with increases in cases. — AFP

## YELLOW FEVER OUTBREAK 'SERIOUS' BUT NOT GLOBAL HEALTH EMERGENCY

**GENEVA:** A deadly yellow fever outbreak in Angola and Congo is of great concern but does not amount to a global health emergency, the World Health Organization said Thursday. The UN health body said an emergency meeting of experts had determined that "the urban yellow fever outbreaks in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a serious public health event which warrants intensified national action and enhanced international support."

But the committee stopped short of declaring a so-called Public Health Emergency of International Concern, as it did during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the current surge in birth defects and neurological disorders linked to the spread of Zika virus in the Americas. Yellow fever has been raging since last December in Angola, especially in the capital Luanda, killing 293 people to date and infecting another 2,267. Cases have been imported to Kinshasa in DR Congo, and there is some evidence the disease has been spreading locally in that city.

"Urban yellow fever is a particularly dangerous and concerning situation, because of both the potential for explosive spread in urban settings with high mortality and also the risk of international spread," Bruce Aylward, WHO chief on outbreaks and health emergencies, told reporters. Cases have also been imported to Kenya, and the Angola outbreak has been proven to be the source of 11 infections in China. Earlier on Thursday, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) warned that limited vaccine supplies, inadequate disease surveillance systems, poor sanitation and continuous movement across Angola's borders "could turn a national outbreak into a global crisis".

### Vaccinate all travellers

Professor Oyewale Tomori, who chaired the WHO emergency meeting, said the committee agreed the outbreak could potentially evolve into a global crisis and had called for intensified surveillance in the affected countries and at-risk nations and mass vaccination. WHO also reiterated its call for the vaccination of all travellers, and especially migrant workers to and from Angola and DR Congo to keep the outbreak from spreading internationally.

There is no specific treatment for yellow fever, a viral haemorrhagic disease transmitted in urban settings mainly by the Aedes aegypti mosquito, which also spreads Zika, dengue and chikungunya. The percentage of people immunized against yellow fever remains low in many parts of Africa, even though the vaccine is nearly 100 percent effective and relatively cheap. WHO has sent 11.7 million doses to Angola and there are plans to vaccinate 2.2 million people in DR Congo. — AFP

# LUNG CANCER BREATHALYZER IN UK CLINICAL TRIALS

'LUNG CANCER KILLS ABOUT 1.5 MILLION PEOPLE A YEAR'

**NEW YORK:** A breathalyzer designed to detect the early signs of lung cancer is undergoing clinical trials at 17 British hospitals, with the aim of having the non-invasive technology in clinics in 2017. Cambridge-based Owlstone Medical has developed a microchip sensor technology to measure the volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in patients' exhaled breath. Breath testing is already a recognized method for linking specific VOCs in exhaled breath to a certain medical condition, but current techniques are often expensive, slow and complex to use.

Co-founder and CEO of Owlstone Medical Billy Boyle said their device is much smaller and cheaper than existing technologies; potentially making it a viable tool for doctor's surgeries. "Historically chemical analyzers take up half the size of a room and cost half a million dollars. So what we've been able to do is use microchip technology to shrink it down from these massive devices to something about the size of a button. And once it's in that form factor, you can build it directly into these disease breathalyzer technologies," Boyle told Reuters. Boyle said their sensors were originally developed for detecting explosives and toxic gases but were re-programmed to identify the chemical markers of diseases, with a lung cancer breathalyzer the first to reach clinical trial.

Lung cancer kills about 1.5 million people a year, according to the World Health Organization, and is the leading cause of cancer death across the world. Only about 10 percent of patients live more than 5 years, in part because the disease is usually diagnosed too late. However, the chemical markers of lung cancer are present even in the earliest

stage of the disease. Owlstone Medical says their breathalyzer can pick out these minute traces of cancer, meaning current treatments can be administered with a much greater chance of successfully curing the disease.

## Late stage

Boyle said that if the disease is detected early existing treatments work more effectively. "The challenge is most people present when it's very late stage, and it's about managing symptoms as opposed to curing them. So the key thing that you can do is detect the disease early; and that's what we think the breathalyzer technology allows for," he said. Developed over 10 years with 28 million dollars (USD) of investment, the device can detect and identify multiple chemicals in a gas flow at very low concentrations, typically parts per billion. Patients wear a breathalyzer mask and breathe normally for several minutes while the sample is collected.

Dr Robert Rintoul, from Papworth Hospital in Cambridge, where one of the devices is undergoing clinical trials, said the quick, non-invasive breathalyzer could be an important tool for doctors to help determine if high risk patients should be referred for testing in hospital.

"If you have a lung cancer inside your lung, that cancer is producing a range of chemicals in very, very minute amounts. And this device can collect those samples, those tiny amounts of volatile organic compounds, which we can then analyze in the laboratory. And in effect, it's a bit like a fingerprint. If you have a lung cancer we believe that we can detect these samples and that fingerprint will tell us whether the person has lung cancer or

not," said Rintoul. The breathalyzer is also being tested at 16 other hospitals, the largest trial of this type ever conducted. The clinical study will involve up to 3,000 people who are due to have a biopsy because there is a concern that they may have lung cancer. Prior to having the biopsy, breath samples will be collected from the patients. Once the results of the biopsy are known, doctors will be able to validate the chemical markers they detected in the breath as being lung cancer.

## Smart phone

"We've now started putting this into clinics so patients who are coming through and getting other types of tests can provide a breath sample so you can match the two; the tests that are currently used today with what you pick up in the breath. And at the end of that process you have a clinical trial result which means you can start to use it in clinic," said Boyle. He added that their sensors could one day be used directly by patients if the technology was adapted into a handheld device or built in to a user's smart phone.

"The chip today is already incredibly small, so it's not that hard to envisage how you could put it not only into GP's surgeries, but also into other places where sensor technology can be used directly by patients, by consumers - so they can take control of their own health data and their own health destiny." In the UK there are about 45,000 new cases of lung cancer each year, costing the Nation Health Service (NHS) 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.6 billion). Owlstone is aiming to save 10,000 lives and save the NHS 245 million pounds a year with early detection of the disease using their technology. — AP

## US: 1 IN 8 SWIMMING POOLS CLOSED FOR HEALTH VIOLATIONS

**MIAMI:** One in eight swimming pools in five populous states are closed upon inspection due to dirty and potentially dangerous water, US health authorities said Thursday. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's report was based on data from nearly 50,000 pools, hot tubs and water parks in five states where such facilities are most popular—Florida, New York, Arizona, California and Texas. "Most inspections of public aquatic venues (almost 80 percent) identified at least one violation," said the report.

"One in eight inspections resulted in immediate closure because of serious health and safety violations," it added. The report, based on data from 2013, said the parasite *Cryptosporidium*—which can cause diarrhea and vomiting—has emerged as the leading culprit in water-related outbreaks. The highest number of closures came in kiddie pools, or wading pools, one in five of which were found to have serious violations. "The most common violations reported were related to improper pH (15 percent), safety equipment (13 percent), and disinfectant concentration (12 percent)," said the report. Water's pH level indicates how acidic or basic it is.

"Almost one third of local health departments do not regulate, inspect or license public pools, hot tubs and water playgrounds," said Michele Hlavsa, chief of CDC's Healthy Swimming Program. "We should all check for inspection results online or on site before using public pools, hot tubs or water playgrounds and do our own inspection before getting into the water," she said. According to Robert Glatter, an emergency physician at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York, the "results of the study clearly show that more work needs to be done to better safeguard the public at large." Glatter, who was not involved in the report, said people should never swim if they have diarrhea.

"When close to 80 percent of public swimming venues are cited for at least one violation, it's time to wake up and pay attention," said Glatter. "To protect yourself and your family, the best advice is to inquire about the inspection results online, or call ahead before using a specific water venue," he added. "Consider bringing a test kit to check the pH and free chlorine or bromine concentration of the water if you are visiting a public or private pool or hot tub, since this is an important determinant of the general health of the water, and also reflects the ability to prevent the spread of infectious disease." — AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times  
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (19/05/2016 TO 25/05/2016)

<b>SHARQIA-1</b>		OUR KIND OF TRAITOR	10:30 PM	THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	5:00 PM	WARCRAFT 3D	11:15 PM
CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	1:00 PM	KILLING SALAZAR	12:45 AM	THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	7:15 PM	WED 25.05.2016	
Ely Ekhtashou Matou	1:45 PM			THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE- 3D	9:30 PM		
<b>FANAR-3</b>				THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	11:45 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-2</b>	
CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	4:00 PM	CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	12:45 PM	WARCRAFT 3D	9:30 PM	CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	12:15 PM
CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	7:00 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 4	1:45 PM	WED 25.05.2016		THE JUNGLE BOOK	3:15 PM
X-MEN: Apocalypse	10:00 PM	CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	3:45 PM	WARCRAFT	12:15 AM	SARBJIT (Hindi)	5:30 PM
Ely Ekhtashou Matou	1:00 AM	CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	6:45 PM	WED 25.05.2016		NO THU	
BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	4:00 PM	NO FRI+SAT+MON				THE JUNGLE BOOK	5:45 PM
BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	7:00 PM	CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	9:45 PM	<b>360°- 2</b>		THU	
BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	10:00 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 4	12:45 AM	KILLING SALAZAR	1:00 PM	CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	8:30 PM
WARCRAFT	10:00 PM	BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	3:45 PM	KILLING SALAZAR	3:15 PM	CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	11:30 PM
WED 25.05.2016		BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	6:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	5:30 PM		
WARCRAFT	12:30 AM	BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	9:45 PM	KILLING SALAZAR	7:45 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-3</b>	
WED 25.05.2016				KILLING SALAZAR	10:00 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	12:00 PM
				KILLING SALAZAR	12:15 AM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	3:00 PM
						X-MEN: Apocalypse	6:00 PM
						X-MEN: Apocalypse	9:00 PM
						X-MEN: Apocalypse	12:05 AM
<b>SHARQIA-2</b>		<b>FANAR-4</b>		<b>360°- 3</b>		<b>PLAZA</b>	
X-MEN: Apocalypse	12:15 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	12:30 PM	LES VISITEURS 3	12:00 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	4:00 PM
X-MEN: Apocalypse	3:15 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse -3D	3:30 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 4	2:15 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	7:00 PM
X-MEN: Apocalypse	6:15 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	6:30 PM	LES VISITEURS 3	4:15 PM	NO FRI+MON	
X-MEN: Apocalypse	9:15 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse -3D	9:30 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 4	6:30 PM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	10:00 PM
X-MEN: Apocalypse	12:15 AM	X-MEN: Apocalypse	12:30 AM	LES VISITEURS 3	8:30 PM	NO THU+FRI+MON	
				JU ON: THE GRUDGE 4	10:45 PM	BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	7:00 PM
				JU ON: THE GRUDGE 4	12:45 AM	FRI+MON	
						BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	10:00 PM
						THU+FRI+MON	
						<b>LAILA</b>	
						THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	4:15 PM
						X-MEN: Apocalypse	6:45 PM
						X-MEN: Apocalypse	9:45 PM
						NO WED	
						WARCRAFT	9:45 PM
						WED 25.05.2016	
						<b>AJIAL.1</b>	
						THE ANGRY BIRDS MOVIE	4:00 PM
						THU	
						CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR	6:30 PM
						THU	
						BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	3:30 PM
						NO THU	
						BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	6:30 PM
						NO THU	
						BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	9:30 PM
						<b>AJIAL.2</b>	
						SARBJIT (Hindi)	4:15 PM
						MARUDHU (Tamil)	7:00 PM
						NO THU	
						SARBJIT (Hindi)	7:00 PM
						THU	
						SARBJIT (Hindi)	9:45 PM
						NO THU	
						BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	9:45 PM
						THU	
						<b>AJIAL.3</b>	
						X-MEN: Apocalypse	4:00 PM
						NO FRI	
						X-MEN: Apocalypse	7:00 PM
						NO FRI+MON	
						MARUDHU (Tamil)	10:00 PM
						NO THU+FRI+MON	
						BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	4:00 PM
						FRI	
						BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	7:00 PM
						FRI+MON	
						BRATMOT SAVAM (Telugu)	10:00 PM
						THU+FRI+MON	
						<b>AJIAL.4</b>	
						KING LIAR- Malayalam	3:30 PM
						KING LIAR- Malayalam	6:30 PM
						KING LIAR- Malayalam	9:30 PM



# Flight Schedule

## DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers use seats

### Arrival Flights on Saturday 21/5/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	501	Alexandria	00:05
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:00
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30
JZR	125	Bahrain	01:40
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40
RJA	642	Amman	01:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45
JZR	553	Alexandria	01:50
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:30
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40
KAC	514	Tehran	03:50
QTR	8301	Doha	04:10
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
JZR	529	Asyut	06:55
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15
KAC	344	Chennai	08:15
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
SYR	341	Damascus	10:30
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
JZR	359	Mashhad	10:50
IRM	1188	Mashhad	11:10
JZR	325	Al Najaf	11:20
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30
IRC	6511	ABD	11:40
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	11:55
NIA	151	Cairo	12:20
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
JZR	241	Amman	12:30
SAW	701	Damascus	12:35
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
THY	766	Istanbul	13:10
FDB	8053	Dubai	13:25
IRC	526	Mashhad	13:35
TBM	6313	Mashhad	13:45
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:50
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:55
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:00
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:15
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20
JZR	779	Jeddah	14:25
KAC	512	Mashhad	14:30
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:50
KAC	788	Jeddah	15:00
KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05
OMA	645	Muscat	15:10
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:10
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
RJA	640	Amman	16:00
FDB	051	Dubai	16:10
QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
JZR	257	Beirut	16:25
KAC	118	New York	16:30
KNE	531	Jeddah	16:35
JZR	787	Riyadh	16:45
NIA	251	Alexandria	16:50
KAC	562	Amman	16:55
KAC	680	Muscat	16:55
IRA	669	Mashhad	17:10
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
JZR	357	Mashhad	17:30
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
KAC	792	Madinah	17:45
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:50

QTR	1080	Doha	17:55
SVA	500	Jeddah	17:55
KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	18:20
KAC	502	Beirut	18:35
KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35
KAC	774	Riyadh	18:35
FDB	8061	Dubai	18:50
KAC	742	Dammam	18:50
CLX	856	Luxembourg	18:50
KAC	618	Doha	18:55
KAC	542	Cairo	18:55
KAC	104	London	19:00
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
FDB	063	Dubai	19:10
KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:15
JZR	535	Cairo	19:30
JAI	572	Mumbai	19:35
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
FDB	059	Dubai	19:50
JZR	177	Dubai	19:50
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:05
KNE	381	Taif	20:10
ABY	121	Sharjah	20:10
MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
MSR	618	Alexandria	20:30
QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
FDB	5053	Dubai	20:55
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:05
UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
ALK	229	Colombo	21:20
KLM	415	Amsterdam	21:25
KAC	676	Dubai	21:35
JZR	189	Dubai	21:45
QTR	1082	Doha	21:55
GFA	219	Bahrain	22:00
KAC	564	Amman	22:05
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
ABY	129	Sharjah	22:30
KNE	533	Jeddah	22:45
JZR	185	Dubai	22:55
THY	764	Istanbul	22:55
MSC	403	Asyut	23:10
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:20
JZR	125	Bahrain	23:25
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	23:30
MSR	614	Cairo	23:30
FDB	071	Dubai	23:35
JAD	301	Amman	23:45

KAC	501	Beirut	11:00
KAC	561	Amman	11:20
KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:25
KAC	679	Muscat	11:25
SYR	342	Damascus	11:30
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
JZR	356	Mashhad	11:40
KAC	541	Cairo	12:05
UAE	874	Dubai	12:10
RBG	554	Alexandria	12:10
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:15
IRM	1189	Mashhad	12:20
IRC	6512	ABD	12:40
JZR	534	Cairo	12:40
IAW	158	Al Najaf	12:55
KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
KAC	791	Madinah	13:00
FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
NIA	152	Cairo	13:20
JZR	786	Riyadh	13:20
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
SAW	702	Damascus	13:35
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
FDB	8054	Dubai	14:05
THY	767	Istanbul	14:10
IRC	527	Mashhad	14:35
TBM	6314	Mashhad	14:40
PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	14:45
KNE	382	Taif	14:55
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05
FDB	058	Dubai	15:05
KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
FBA	832	Al Najaf	15:10
QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	617	Doha	15:15
JZR	176	Dubai	15:15
KAC	741	Dammam	15:30
KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KNE	684	Madinah	16:00
KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00
BON	102	Sarajevo	16:05
OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	563	Amman	16:30
RJA	641	Amman	16:55
FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
JZR	188	Dubai	17:10
JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	17:15
QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KNE	532	Jeddah	17:25
UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
NIA	252	Alexandria	17:50
IRA	666	Esfahan	18:10
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
QTR	1081	Doha	19:05
SVA	505	Jeddah	19:25
FDB	8062	Dubai	19:30
KAC	285	Dhaka	19:40
GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
KAC	361	Colombo	19:55
CLX	856	Hong Kong	20:20
JZR	266	Beirut	20:20
FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
JZR	124	Bahrain	20:35
KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
DLH	634	Doha	20:50
ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
KAC	353	BLR	20:55
KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
MSR	607	Luxor	21:30
QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:25
KAC	381	Delhi	22:25
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:30
JZR	238	Amman	22:30
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	22:55
GFA	220	Bahrain	23:00
KAC	205	Islamabad	23:00
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
ABY	120	Sharjah	23:10
KAC	155	Istanbul	23:15
QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:25
KNE	534	Jeddah	23:35
JZR	554	Alexandria	23:45

### Departure Flights on Saturday 21/5/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
JZR	528	Asyut	00:10
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:25
MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
KLM	413	Amsterdam	00:55
MSC	502	Alexandria	01:05
MSC	416	Sohag	01:05
JZR	502	Luxor	01:15
THY	773	Istanbul	01:40
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
THY	765	Istanbul	02:45
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
PGT	859	Istanbul	02:55
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
OMA	644	Muscat	04:00
KKK	6505	Istanbul	04:05
FDB	068	Dubai	04:05
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
PGT	861	Istanbul	04:30
QTR	1077	Doha	04:35
JZR	358	Mashhad	05:00
QTR	8302	Doha	06:10
RJA	643	Amman	06:25
QTR	1087	Doha	06:30
THY	771	Istanbul	06:45
GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
JZR	240	Amman	06:55
FDB	070	Dubai	07:05
JZR	164	Dubai	07:15
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
JZR	324	Al Najaf	07:55
BAW	156	London	08:25
FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
KAC	511	Mashhad	08:40
KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	08:50
JZR	778	Jeddah	08:50
JZR	256	Beirut	09:05
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
KAC	787	Jeddah	09:30
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00
KAC	101	London/New York	10:00
QTR	1071	Doha	10:35
FDB	056	Dubai	10:40

Word Search Puzzles

Moods & Emotions 3

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 13 letters spell an additional word.

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

- ANGER
- APPRECIATIVE
- ARROGANT
- BITTER
- CALM
- CHEERFUL
- CONFIDENT
- CURIOUS
- DISGUST
- DUBIOUS
- EDGY
- ENVIOUS
- EXUBERANT
- FEAR
- FRANTIC
- FRETFUL
- GLAD
- GLEEFUL
- GRATEFUL
- GRIEF
- GRUMPY
- HAPPY
- HOPE
- INDIFFERENT
- JEALOUS
- JOLLY
- JOYFUL
- MOROSE
- MOURNFUL
- NERVOUS
- OUTRAGE
- PUZZLED
- REGRET
- SADNESS
- SCARED
- SCORNFUL
- SORRY
- SURPRISE
- TRANQUIL
- WORRY

Yesterday's Solution

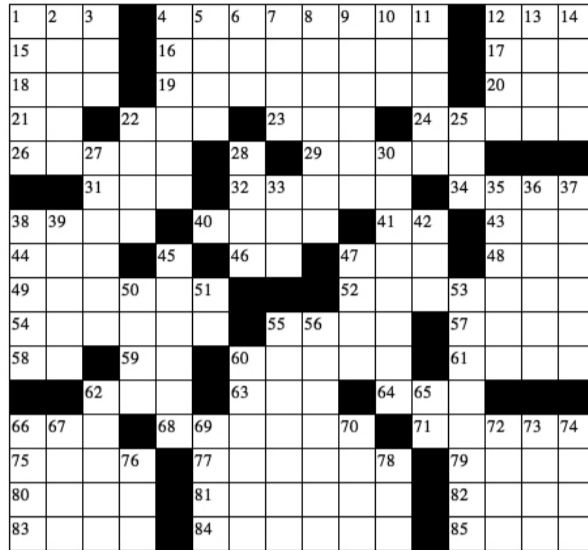
Look Up!

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

- AIRPLANE
- BIG DIPPER
- BIRDS
- BLIMP
- BLUE SKY
- CHIMNEY SMOKE
- CLOUDS
- COMET
- DRONE
- FIREWORKS
- GALAXY
- HAZE
- HELICOPTER
- HOT AIR BALLOON
- JET EXHAUST
- JUPITER
- KITE
- LIGHTNING
- MARS
- MERCURY
- METEOR SHOWER
- MOON
- PLANETS
- POWER LINES
- RAINBOW
- SATELLITE
- SATURN
- SKYDIVER
- SKYSCRAPER
- SKYWRITING
- SMOG
- SOLAR ECLIPSE
- STARS
- STREET LIGHT
- THE SUN
- TREETOP
- UNIVERSE
- VENUS

The hidden message is: UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT

CROSSWORD 1260



ACROSS

- 1. A light touch or stroke.
- 4. Elder brother of Krishna.
- 12. 10 hao equal 1 dong.
- 15. One of the most common of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
- 16. Covered with or as if with a glossy and usually brightly colored coating.
- 17. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
- 18. A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
- 19. Genus of perennial wildflowers of North American plains and prairies.
- 20. Electrical conduction through a gas in an applied electric field.
- 21. Before noon.
- 23. Having any of numerous bright or strong colors reminiscent of the color of blood or cherries or tomatoes or rubies.
- 24. Greek mythology.
- 26. A hidden storage space (for money or provisions or weapons).
- 29. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
- 31. Imperial dynasty that ruled China (most of the time) from 206 BC to 221 and expanded its boundaries and developed its bureaucracy.
- 32. Relative darkness caused by light rays being intercepted by an opaque body.
- 34. A tributary of the Rhine.
- 38. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
- 40. Not only so, but.
- 41. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
- 43. Fish eggs or egg-filled ovary.
- 44. An ugly evil-looking old woman.
- 46. A metric unit of length equal to one hundredth of a meter.
- 48. (computer science) A computer that is running software that allows users to leave messages and access information of general interest.
- 49. An island in the Aegean Sea in the Saronic Gulf.
- 52. Capital of Swaziland.
- 54. Translating an idea into action.
- 57. Small buffalo of the Celebes having small straight horns.
- 58. Half the width of an em.
- 59. A class of proteins produced in lymph tissue in vertebrates and that function as antibodies in the immune response.
- 61. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and

schools.

- 63. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- 64. A slight amount or degree of difference.
- 66. Chiefly perennial grasses of cool temperate regions.
- 68. Analgesic drug (trade name Talwin) that is less addictive than morphine.
- 71. (Phoenician and Philistine) God of agriculture and the earth.
- 75. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
- 77. Having the deep slightly brownish color of gold.
- 79. Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
- 80. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
- 81. Physical discomfort (as mild sickness or depression).
- 82. A condition requiring relief.
- 83. By bad luck.
- 84. (astronomy) The reappearance of a celestial body after an eclipse.
- 85. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.

DOWN

- 1. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
- 2. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
- 3. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
- 4. A port city in southwestern Norway.
- 5. Type genus of the Anatidae.
- 6. A broad flat muscle on either side of the back.
- 7. An independent ruler or chieftain (especially in Africa or Arabia).
- 8. (Old Testament) Wife of Isaac and mother of Jacob and Esau.
- 9. Surveying instrument consisting of the upper movable part of a theodolite including the telescope and its attachments.
- 10. A master's degree in education.
- 11. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
- 12. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
- 13. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- 14. Predatory black-and-white toothed whale with large dorsal fin.
- 22. Of or relating to or characteristic of the Republic of Chad or its people or language.
- 25. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring in the air.
- 27. A Bantu language spoken by the Chaga people in northern Tanzania.
- 28. One thousandth of a second.
- 30. Someone who fails to meet a financial obligation.
- 33. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
- 35. A university town in east central Illinois adjoining Champaign.
- 36. Rub elbows with.
- 37. A net or mesh foundation for lace.
- 39. A mound of stones piled up as a memorial or to mark a boundary or path.
- 42. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
- 45. Originally a person of noble birth trained to arms and chivalry.
- 47. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
- 50. A monocotyledonous genus of the family Iridaceae.
- 51. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
- 53. Large and brightly colored handkerchief.
- 55. A fighter (especially one who participates in brawls).
- 56. Gull family.
- 60. Losing color.
- 62. The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
- 65. A public promotion of some product or service.
- 67. Using speech rather than writing.
- 69. A fit of shivering.
- 70. A strip of land projecting into a body of water.
- 72. A Gaelic-speaking Celt in Ireland or Scotland or the Isle of Man.
- 73. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- 74. A quantity of no importance.
- 76. An associate degree in applied science.
- 78. A potent estrogen used in medicine and in feed for livestock and poultry.

Daily SuDoku

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

hard

Yesterday's Solution

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

easy

Yesterday's Solution

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



# SALE MAKES IT 9-0 AS SOX SNAP LOSING STREAK

**CHICAGO:** Chris Sale went the distance on a masterful four-hitter, becoming the first major league pitcher since 2008 to win his first nine starts, as the Chicago White Sox snapped their season-high four game losing streak by beating Houston 2-1 on Thursday night.

Sale walked none and struck out a season-high nine en route to his second straight complete game. No other pitcher has more than seven victories in the big leagues this season. The Arizona Diamondbacks' Brandon Webb had been the last to post a 9-0 record in his first nine starts. The last White Sox pitcher to accomplish the feat was Eddie Cicotte in 1919, when he won 12 in a row.

Houston broke the shutout bid in the eighth, when Evan Gattis clubbed Sale's first pitch for a home run. Sale lowered his earned run average to 1.58, second to teammate Jose Quintana (1.54) in the American League. He retired the first five batters, allowed a single to Gattis in the second inning then mowed down the next 12 before Jose Altuve singled in the sixth.

## CARDINALS 13, ROCKIES 7

Matt Carpenter homered and drove in a career-high six runs and Matt Adams added four RBIs to lead the St. Louis Cardinals to victory over the Colorado Rockies. St. Louis, which has won three of four, scored a season-high six runs in the fourth inning to take the lead for good. Colorado has lost two straight after a five-game winning streak that ended in a 2-0 loss to St. Louis on Wednesday. Stephen Piscotty, hitting cleanup for only the third time this season, had three hits and drove in two runs for the Cardinals. Trevor Story hit his 12th home run of the season for the Rockies, a solo shot in the seventh. He had three hits.

## BLUE JAYS 3, TWINS 2

Troy Tulowitzki drove in the go-ahead run with a two-out, two-strike single in the 11th inning as Toronto stopped a five-game losing streak. Edwin Encarnacion's two-run home run tied the game in the sixth for the only big hit during a duel between Marco Estrada and Ervin Santana, who pitched eight innings apiece. Estrada and Roberto Osuna (2-0) held the Twins hitless from the fourth through the 10th, and Joe Biagini worked the 11th inning for his first save. Ryan Pressly (1-3) gave up the one-out single to Encarnacion in the top of the 11th that set up the winning run, and Tulowitzki delivered against Fernando Abad to send the Twins to their 16th loss in the last 19 games.

## BREWERS 5, CUBS 3

Junior Guerra struck out a career-high 11 batters and Kirk Nieuwenhuis and Chris Carter homered as the Milwaukee Brewers slowed the Chicago Cubs. Jason Hammel (5-1) allowed four runs and five hits in six innings. He had been 8-0 with a 2.37 ERA in 11 career starts against the Brewers. Chicago, a big-league best 28-11, has lost three times in a four-game span for the first time this season. The Cubs scored seven runs in the three-game series. Making his first start against Chicago, Guerra (3-0) gave up Dexter Fowler's 15th career leadoff homer but settled down to allow three runs and five hits in seven innings. Tyler Thornburg got his first big league save.

## NATIONALS 9, METS 1

Unbeaten Stephen Strasburg struck out 10 batters, Daniel Murphy homered against his old team and Bryce Harper finally got a hit off shaky Matt Harvey as Washington routed New York. Slumping Ben Revere sin-



**CHICAGO:** Chris Sale #49 of the Chicago White Sox pitches against the Houston Astros during the first inning on May 19, 2016 at US Cellular Field. — AP

gled to start a seven-run burst in the third inning and capped it with a two-run triple for a 9-1 lead, chasing Harvey and sending boos bouncing all around Citi Field. The NL East-leading Nationals handed the Mets their sixth loss in seven games. Strasburg (7-0) gave up one run and six hits in six innings, and tied Cubs ace Jake Arrieta for the league lead in wins. Harvey (3-6) was tagged for a career-worst nine runs.

## MARINERS 7, ORIOLES 2

Adam Lind broke open a close game with a three-run homer in the sixth inning as Seattle beat Baltimore to complete another successful road series. Leonys Martin also homered for the Mariners, who took two of three from Baltimore to improve to an AL-best 15-7 in away games. Seattle is 6-0-1 in seven road series. Nathan Karns (4-1) allowed one run and four hits in five innings, striking out five and walking none. The Mariners were nursing a 2-1 lead when Robinson Cano led off the sixth with a double off Tyler Wilson (2-2). After Kyle Seager received an intentional walk, Lind hit an opposite-field drive that barely cleared the left-field wall.

## INDIANS 7, REDS 2

Carlos Santana hit a pair of two-run homers, and Josh Tomlin stayed unbeaten by allowing only five hits while pitching into the eighth inning, leading Cleveland to its the first sweep of their annual intrastate series. The Indians won two games in Cleveland and two at Great American Ball Park by outscoring the Reds 43-16. Neither team had swept the season series that started in 1997. Tomlin (6-0) won his sixth straight decision on the road. The right-hander gave up Joey Votto's two-run homer and fanned seven in 7 2/3 innings.

Santana connected in the fourth off Tim Lincecum, who left the game a few pitches later with a strained left oblique. Santana hit his seventh homer the following inning off Caleb Cotham (0-3), the 34th homer allowed by the major leagues' worst bullpen.

## PIRATES 8, BRAVES 2

Gregory Polanco homered and tripled, John Jaso collected three hits and Pittsburgh rolled to a comfortable victory over Atlanta. Polanco hit a two-run shot to left-center in the second off Mike Foltynewicz (1-2) and finished 2 for 4. The left fielder is hitting .461 (12 for 26) in his last seven games. Jeff Locke (2-3) allowed two runs and seven hits in seven innings to win for just the second time in eight starts this season. Jeff Francoeur went 3 for 4 with his fifth home run of the season for Atlanta.

## YANKEES 4, ATHLETICS 1

Ivan Nova pitched six innings for his second win since moving into the starting rotation and Carlos Beltran hit a two-run homer as the Yankees held on to beat the Athletics. Aaron Hicks added an RBI double while Brett Gardner had two hits and two walks to help the Yankees win the opener of the four-game series. Oakland swept New York when the teams played in the Bronx but got little going against Nova and three relievers. Nova (3-1) allowed one run and four hits in his longest outing this season since replacing the injured CC Sabathia in the Yankees' rotation. The right-hander threw just 62 pitches, had three strikeouts and lowered his ERA to 1.65 in three starts. Josh Reddick homered for Oakland before leaving after appearing to injure his left hand stealing second base in the seventh.

## GIANTS 3, PADRES 1

Jeff Samardzija pitched eight strong innings, Joe Panik had four hits and Brandon Crawford homered for the NL West-leading Giants, who beat San Diego for their season-high eighth straight victory. The Giants went 7-0 on a swing through Arizona and San Diego. They head home to open a three-game series against the Chicago Cubs, who at 28-11 have the best record in the majors. Samardzija (6-2) held San Diego to three hits and one run, struck out eight and walked none. He retired his final 19 batters after giving up an RBI double to Alexi Amarista with two outs in the second. Samardzija was trying to become the third straight Giants pitcher to get a complete game, after Madison Bumgarner and Johnny Cueto went the distance in the first two games of the series. Samardzija threw 105 pitches.

## ANGELS 7, DODGERS 4

Johnny Giavotella singled in the tying and go-ahead runs with two outs in the fifth inning as the Angels rallied to beat the Dodgers, taking three out of four games in the Freeway Series. Mike Trout homered for the second straight game and Carlos Perez added a solo shot for the Angels, who have scored 52 runs in the last eight games after just eight in their previous five games. They have won six of seven. Trout was 2 of 3 with a walk, drove in three runs and scored twice in front of 45,007, the largest crowd for a regular-season game since Angel Stadium was renovated in 1998. Trout has raised his average to .327 after being at .220 a month ago. Jose Alvarez (1-1) worked 1 2/3 innings for the win. Joe Smith pitched the ninth for his fifth save. — AP

## JONES SHUTOUT GIVES SHARKS 2-1 SERIES LEAD OVER BLUES

**SAN JOSE:** Martin Jones made 22 saves in his second straight shutout and Tomas Hertl scored twice to give the San Jose Sharks a series lead for the first time in four trips to the NHL Western Conference final with a 3-0 victory over St. Louis in Game 3 on Thursday night.

Joonas Donskoi also scored to give the Sharks a 2-1 series advantage and move them as close as they've been to a Stanley Cup final. San Jose had won just three games in its first three trips to the conference final, part of a long history of playoff disappointment that is showing signs of coming to an end this season.

San Jose has controlled the play for much of this series, limiting St. Louis' chances and taking advantage of miscues by the Blues to generate enough offense. St. Louis has gone 150:45 without scoring since Jori Lehtera's second-period goal in Game 1 led to a 2-1 victory.

Game 4 is Saturday in San Jose, where the Sharks have won six straight playoff games. Brian Elliott allowed three goals on 14 shots before being pulled midway through the third. The Blues now find themselves trailing a series for just the second time this postseason. Overcoming this deficit may be tougher than coming back last round after losing the opener to Dallas. While the Stars were leaky on defense and rotated between two mostly ineffective goalies, the Sharks have done a stellar job defending in front of Jones, who has been sharp in his first postseason as a starter.



**SAN JOSE:** Nick Spaling #16 of the San Jose Sharks checks Robert Bortuzzo #41 of the St. Louis Blues in game three of the Western Conference Finals during the 2016 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at SAP Center. — AFP

### Soft goal

After allowing the soft goal to Lehtera that led to the Game 1 loss, Jones has been perfect the past two games. He has

stopped 58 straight shots and has posted the first back-to-back playoff shutouts in Sharks history. That kind of goaltending and another dominant performance from

Joe Thornton's line was more than enough for San Jose. That line scored twice, with the first coming off a St. Louis turnover late in the first.

Colton Parayko's breakout pass to Lehtera was broken up in the neutral zone by Brent Burns. Thornton quickly sent the loose puck ahead to Joe Pavelski, who found Hertl for a big slap shot that beat Elliott high to the glove side to make it 1-0 late in the period. Hertl scored again early in the third off a perfect pass from Thornton, ending Elliott's night.

St. Louis coach Ken Hitchcock juggled his lineup after watching his team get outplayed the first two games. Centers Alexander Steen and Lehtera switched lines and Magnus Paajarvi and Dmitrij Jaskin suited up on the fourth line in place of Steve Ott and Scottie Upshall. On defense, Robert Bortuzzo got the nod in place of Joel Edmundson and Parayko moved up to the second pair with Kevin Shattenkirk.

The Blues looked faster early and had the better of the play at the start, holding the Sharks without a shot on goal for more than eight minutes. But St. Louis seemed to lose some steam after Hertl's first goal. Matters only got worse in the second period. Donskoi broke up a pass from Robby Fabbri midway through the second to start an odd-man rush. Logan Couture skated into the offensive zone on a 3-on-2 chance and fed the trailing Donskoi for the wrist shot from the slot that made it 2-0. — AP

## MCILROY BLASTS 'STUFFY' MUIRFIELD'S MEN VOTE

**DUBLIN:** Rory McIlroy blasted Muirfield Golf Club's continued ban on women members on Thursday, claiming the vote was a setback for the sport and only served to highlight its "stuffy" image. Muirfield in Scotland announced a postal vote of members had resulted in a 64% to 36% majority in remaining to be an "all-male" club.

The R&A, as organizers of golf's oldest major, reacted strongly to the vote by stripping Muirfield from again hosting the British Open until such time women are allowed to become members of the club located east of Edinburgh.

"I think for golf's image, as we are trying to break out of this stuffy, old... we are trying to become more with the times and trying to do things to make golf faster, make golf cooler, make more people included," said former world number one McIlroy. "Yeah, today wasn't a great day to do that."

McIlroy, who won the Open in 2014 at Royal Liverpool, said the R&A was right to strip Muirfield of its place on the tournament rota. "Of course they are right. It's taken long enough. Even R&A only started letting women join last year or whatever it was. It's about time that they did. He added: "It's 2016 and times move on. Women make more than men these days. It is what it is. I think everyone should have the opportunity to join a club if they want to."

### 'Bigger picture'

Muirfield first held the British Open in 1892 and has now staged 16 championships including the last in 2013 when Phil Mickelson was handed the Claret Jug for a first time in his career. "My memories of Muirfield aren't very good," added McIlroy who was speaking at the Irish Open where he was in second spot after

the day's opening round. "Bigger picture, it's a great golf course, but there's so many other great golf courses that we play on the Open rota that we're not going to miss one."

Padraig Harrington won back-to-back Opens in 2007 at Carnoustie and then a year later at Royal Birkdale. He too backed the R&A's response. "The R&A have a big responsibility, not just to golf but to society because of the position they hold and they have to do these things," he said after posting a four-over-par 76 on day one of the Irish Open at the K Club.

"It's only right that the R&A do remove Muirfield... if you want to hold yourself out there you have to give an equal chance to everybody. "Muirfield may go ahead and say we want just be a small golf club and mind their own business and that's fine, but minding their own business isn't holding the Open is it?" said Harrington, who has twice competed in Muirfield Opens (2002, 2013).

News the R&A had dropped Muirfield from the 10-strong Open rota sends a strong message to Royal Troon, the club that will host this year's 145th Open, but who have assured the R&A they will be conducting a vote among its all-male members to allow women to join.

If Royal Troon eventually agrees, it will leave Muirfield as the only all-male club in the modern era to host the British Open. Paul Lawrie, who won the 1999 Open at Carnoustie, also supported the R&A decision. "In this day and age I just can't understand why any golf clubs don't allow female members," said Lawrie. "There is no argument on that. It's their golf club and they can do what they want. I'm not telling them what to do but I am I'm surprised to hear they've (Muirfield) done that." — AFP



**IRELAND:** Crowds gather as Northern Ireland's Rory McIlroy makes his way to the 14th tee, during day two of the Irish Open golf tournament at The K Club, County Kildare. — AP

## INJURED ROSE TO MISS PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

**LONDON:** Former US Open champion Justin Rose revealed on Thursday he will miss next week's PGA Championship due to a back injury. World number 10 Rose lost a play-off to Anders Hansen at Wentworth in 2007 and was joint second in 2012, but he won't get a chance to finally lift the trophy this year. The 35-year-old Englishman is coming off a top-20 finish at the Players Championship at Sawgrass and admitted it was a blow not to be able to compete in the PGA's flagship event.

"It is with deep disappointment that I must announce that I will not be able to play the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth," he

said. "I battled the onset of back pain all week at the Players Championship and symptoms worsened during my week at home. I have a great team of people around me who are working diligently to help me get as fit as possible as soon as possible and I must fully focus on rehab at this time.

"I am incredibly sad to have to miss what I regard as my home event, particularly as it's a premier event on the European Tour schedule. Rose's absence is a further setback for the European Tour's most prestigious event after 2014 champion Rory McIlroy, whose foundation is hosting this week's Irish Open, opted not to play. — AFP

## DJOKOVIC, NADAL LINED UP FOR 50TH MEET AT ROLAND GARROS

**PARIS:** Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal could meet for the 50th time after they were placed on a French Open semi-final collision course yesterday. World number one and top seed Djokovic, who turns 29 on the opening day of the tournament on Sunday, needs a Roland Garros title to complete a career Grand Slam after losing three finals in four years, including last season to Stan Wawrinka.

Should Djokovic and nine-time French Open champion Nadal meet in the last-four it will be their 50th career clash in a rivalry which began in 2006 at Roland Garros. Djokovic has the edge at 26-23, claiming the pair's last seven encounters.

Fourth seed Wawrinka is scheduled to take on second seed Andy Murray in the other semi-final. Top seed Djokovic, bidding for a 12th career major, starts his campaign against Taiwan's Lu Yen-Hsun, the world number 100 who made the Wimbledon quarter-finals in 2010. Djokovic is seeded to face Tomas Berdych in the last-eight while he could tackle volatile Australian Bernard Tomic in the fourth round. Tomic was accused by the Serb of lacking commitment after a tame exit at the Madrid Masters last month. Nadal, who lost to Djokovic in the quarter-finals in 2015, had originally been set to be seeded at five until 2009 champion Roger Federer withdrew through injury on Thursday.

Nadal starts his French Open against big-serving Sam Groth of Australia with a potential quarter-final against home hope, and two-time semi-finalist, Jo-Wilfried Tsonga. With his 30th birthday just around the corner, Nadal has arguably the toughest draw of the top men but will be buoyed by a recent return to form which saw him claim the Monte Carlo and Barcelona titles. Italy's Fabio Fognini, who came back from two sets down to beat Nadal at the US Open last year, is a possible third round opponent. Rising Austrian Dominic Thiem, the man who knocked Federer out in Rome, is lying in wait in the round of 16.

### Serena eyes 22nd Slam

Murray, fresh from beating Djokovic in the Rome Masters final, will meet a qualifier in the first round with a potential quarter-final against Japan's Kei Nishikori. Murray has been handed a relatively smooth path although a mouth-watering clash with Nick Kyrgios of Australia is a potential last-eight match-up should Nishikori stumble.

The Japanese fifth seed has never got past the quarter-finals in Paris but was runner-up to Nadal this year on clay in Barcelona and a semi-final loser to Djokovic in Madrid and Rome. Nishikori starts



**PARIS:** Novak Djokovic of Serbia returns the ball during a training session ahead of the French tennis Open yesterday at Roland Garros stadium. — AFP

against Italian veteran Simone Bolelli. Wawrinka opens against Lukas Rosol, the Czech who shocked Nadal at Wimbledon in 2012, while his potential last-eight rival would be Canada's Milos Raonic. In the women's draw, defending champion and top seed Serena Williams, bidding for a fourth Paris title, starts against Slovakia's Magdalena Rybarikova, the world number 76.

The 27-year-old Slovak has never made it beyond the second round in Paris. Williams, just one short of Steffi Graf's Open era record of 22 majors, could face 2010 champion Francesca Schiavone in the third round. Former world number one and two-time Australian Open winner Victoria Azarenka is a potential quarter-final foe for the 34-year-old American.

Fifth seed Azarenka, a semi-finalist in 2013, opens against Italy's Karin Knapp. Second seed Agnieszka Radwanska is scheduled to face 2014 runner-up Simona Halep in the last eight. Radwanska, yet to get past the quarter-finals, takes on Serbia's Bojana Jovanovski first up. Australian Open champion Angelique Kerber, the third seed, is lined up for a last-eight duel with 2015 semi-finalist Tímea Babos. Kerber starts against Dutchwoman Kiki Bertens. Wimbledon finalist Garbine Muguruza and US Open runner-up Roberta Vinci is the other potential quarter-final if seedings go to plan. The women's tournament is missing two-time champion Maria Sharapova who is serving a doping suspension and the injured Caroline Wozniacki. — AFP

## US, CHINA LOOK TO WOMEN FOR MEDALS IN OLYMPICS

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** The United States and China are tipped to finish 1-2 in the medals table at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics, and they'll rely heavily on female athletes to do it. Using a data-processing program to forecast Rio results, United States-based Gracenote - a sports and entertainment data provider - estimates the US will lead the overall count with 102 medals (42 gold) and China will win 78 (31 gold). Russia is third with 66 (22 gold).

Gracenote's monthly forecast predicted Chinese women to win almost 58 percent of their country's medals, and American women to win 57 percent of US medals. Canada's team will also rely primarily on female athletes. Gracenote forecasted Canada to win 17 medals, 12 by women (71 percent); the highest percentage of any large country. Women's disciplines will provide 44 percent of the medals in Rio, with the rest in men's or mixed events. Some other trends leading to the Rio Olympics, which open on Aug 5.

### Australia recovery

Australia is picked to finish fourth in the overall medal table with 41, and also fourth in the gold-medal count with 18. This would be a vast improvement on London, where Australia won 35 (eight gold). Gracenote concludes Britain and Germany will also fight for fourth place. The doping scandals surrounding Russia



**LONDON:** In this July 31, 2012, file photo, US gymnasts, left to right, Jordyn Wieber, Gabrielle Douglas, McKayla Maroney, Alexandra Raisman and Kyla Ross raise their hands on the podium during the medal ceremony for the Artistic Gymnastic women's team final at the 2012 Summer Olympics. — AP

also mean third place is also possible for teams like Australia, Britain and Germany.

### Volatile china

Gracenote's forecasts on China have been volatile. Last August, Gracenote picked China for 72 medals overall. Three months later, it boosted its estimate of 88. This time the ranking is back to 78. "It looks highly unlikely that the Chinese team can

challenge the United States for the most medals this time around," Gracenote wrote in this month's analysis. China led the overall table and gold count in Beijing in 2008, typical of home-country advantage. Home fans help. So does added investment, which nations typically commit to when they want to show off at home. Brazil is picked to win 25 medals, cracking the top 10. It would be by far Brazil's best results. — AP

## OLYMPICS SETS RECORD FOR ATHLETE CONDOMS

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** The Rio Olympics have not yet begun, but the Games have already set a record-in the number of free condoms for athletes. Officials will be distributing 450,000 condoms to the 10,500 athletes expected in Brazil starting on July 24, the day the Olympic Village opens, said Lucas Dantas, a spokesman for the Rio 2016 Committee who spoke with AFP on Thursday.

That's an average of 42 condoms per athlete and a three-fold increase over the number of condoms distributed at the London Olympics, the Folha de Sao Paulo daily reported. One third-or 150,000 — of the condoms to be given out by Brazil's Ministry of Health will be female condoms, Dantas added. Why so many condoms? "There are never enough!" Dantas joked. On a more serious note, he said Brazil is a leader in the world when it comes to AIDS prevention.

"Brazil really encourages safe sex and athletes set an example to the general population. They can play an important role in the fight against AIDS," he said. Dantas also noted that many Olympic athletes do not have access to condoms in their native countries and take the freebies home after the Games. Athletes can obtain the "little shirts of Venus," as condoms are called in Brazil, at the Olympic Village health clinic or from one of 41 dispensers.

Brazil, a country of 204 million people with the largest Catholic population in the world, is a pioneer in the fight against AIDS and offers free treatment to 730,000 HIV-positive people in the country. Every year, Brazil's Ministry of Health distributes more than 600 million condoms, stepping up its efforts during the hedonistic Carnival festival. The Rio Olympic Games kick off on August 5. — AFP



Matches on TV  
(Local Timings)

### ENGLAND FA CUP

**Crystal Palace v Man United** 19:30  
beIN SPORTS 2 HD

### ITALIAN CUP

**AC Milan v Juventus** 21:45  
AD SPORTS 3 HD

### GERMAN DFB POKAL

**Bayern Munich v Borussia Dortmund** 21:00  
beIN SPORTS 5 HD

### FRENCH CUP

**Olympique de Marseille v PSG** 22:00  
beIN SPORTS 6 H

## UAE T20 LEAGUE VOWS TO PAY OVERDUE WAGES

**DUBAI:** The CEO of a fledgling Twenty20 cricket league for retired greats in the UAE yesterday promised its players will receive their final wages that were due more than two months ago and vowed the competition would return next year. The Masters Champions League (MCL), which boasted West Indies batsmen Brian Lara and Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan among its ranks, staged its maiden season in Dubai and Sharjah from Jan 28-Feb. 13.

The MCL sold six franchises for a combined \$90 million, with each team named after an astrological sign. This sextet pledged about \$5.5 million in player wages, but only one team - Gemini Arabians - has paid its players in full, MCL chief executive Zarah Shah told Reuters. The other teams' players are owed their final wage packet, which was due 30 days after the tournament finished, said Shah.

Clubs receive a share of gate money, central sponsorship revenues and broadcast income, plus prize money, and are responsible for players' salaries. "It's late and will be a bit delayed still. We're working with the team owners to get it resolved as speedily as possible," said Shah. She said the delay was because the clubs had cash flow issues and were most likely waiting for money from sponsors.

"They're looking for more time, that's the communication we've had," said Shah, declining to predict when the wages would be paid. The Federation of International Cricketers' Associations (FICA) criticized the MCL's failure to settle its wage bill.

"Cricket is a career, and just like other professionals, players make decisions based on the contracts they sign," FICA executive chairman Tony Irish said in a statement. "We hope that given the potential of this event, MCL pay the outstanding amounts to players immediately." MCL's Shah vowed the 2017 tournament would take place but organisers would try and avoid the logistical problems faced this year due to a clash in dates with the inaugural Pakistan Super League (PSL), which used the same venues as the MCL and was staged from Feb. 4-23.

With the two events overlapping for 10 days, it caused difficulties on some match days as venues had to host back-to-back contests. "The crowds were divided we had to go every day back-to-back and most days had double headers," said Shah, adding the two leagues' schedules will not clash next year. Ahead of the league's launch, she predicted it would generate \$500 million revenue over 10 years and would break even in year three.

She declined to reveal its turnover for this year, saying the final figures had still to be calculated, but described Sharjah attendances as good. During the final three days in Dubai, the 25,000-capacity International stadium was about half full. — Reuters



Mohammed Amir

## PAKISTAN HOPE SPOT-FIXER WILL GET VISA APPROVED

**KARACHI:** Pakistan cricket authorities yesterday submitted a British visa application for spot-fixing convict Mohammad Amir, with officials hopeful of a favorable ruling that will allow him to tour England in July. The left-arm quick was sentenced to six months in an English young offender institution in 2011 after pleading guilty to corruption charges for his role in spot-fixing during the Lord's Test of 2010 — a conviction which could result in him being denied entry. Amir, along with his then captain Salman Butt and fellow bowler Mohammad Asif, were also handed five year playing bans-though Amir was allowed to return to domestic cricket six months early mainly because he confessed to his offence early on.

Now 24, he has made a relatively successful return to the side and Pakistan are eager to use him as a key weapon during the England tour where they play four Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20. "Amir's visa application was submitted today at (the) UK High Commission in Islamabad. He completed the process of the application," a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) release said. Immigration lawyers told The Daily Telegraph last month Amir's case would depend on whether his admission into the country would be contrary to the public good, and would remain at the discretion of the immigration officer dealing with his application. Legal sources said Amir's case was different from Butt and Asif's as he was not deported from England after being released in February 2012.

The fact that Amir was granted a visa by New Zealand in January, and received lenient treatment from the International Cricket Council, is also thought to work in his favor. PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan said he hopes Amir's case would be considered on sympathetic grounds. "I have written a letter to High Commissioner seeking special and sympathetic consideration on Amir's visa," he told AFP. "The

England and Wales Cricket Board is also assisting and are in touch with their Home department, so we hope for a positive response," added Khan, who is

also a former Pakistani envoy to Great Britain. Pakistan will play two side games before the first Test starts at Lord's on July 14. — AFP

## RUSSIA STARTS PROBE INTO OLYMPIC DOPING

**MOSCOW:** Russian prosecutors have launched an inquiry into allegations of doping by Russian athletes at the Olympic Games, authorities said Thursday. The announcement came after the International Olympic Committee announced that 31 athletes had failed doping tests following new examinations of samples taken from the 2008 Beijing Olympics. The New York Times reported this week that US prosecutors have launched their own criminal inquiry into alleged doping by Russian athletes.

Russia's general prosecutor said the department had joined with law enforcement agencies, the sports ministry and the Russian Olympic Committee to "probe information published by a string of media outlets and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) about the use of doping among Russian athletes at the Beijing, London and Sochi Olympics."

"We are planning to send requests for information to the competent authorities of the United States and a number of other countries, within the framework of international legal cooperation, to exchange information about the alleged use of doping."

The prosecutors said in a statement that WADA would also be asked for information. The government's investigative committee was also conducting "pre-investigatory checks" about allegations of "system-

atic violations of anti-doping regulations," said a spokesman Vladimir Markin. "We are probing information published in number of articles cited by Grigory Rodchenkov, a former employee of the Moscow Anti-Doping Laboratory, and Vitaly Stepanov, a former employee of the Russian Anti-Doping Agency (RUSADA)," the spokesman said.

Rodchenkov, now in hiding in the United States, has alleged that Russian secret service and government officials subverted doping tests at the 2014 Winter Olympics laboratory in Sochi to hide failed tests by Russian athletes. The allegations have come as a new blow to Russia's reputation after the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) suspended Russia last year over doping accusations.

The IOC has called the accusations against the Sochi laboratory "worrying". Russian authorities have strongly denied any wrongdoing. Russian track and field athletes could now miss the Rio de Janeiro Olympics because of the IAAF suspension. Russia has not yet said whether it was one of the 12 nations informed that its athletes were among the suspicious tests from Beijing. The Kenyan, Australian and British Olympic committees have said they have not been told of failed tests by their competitors. — AFP

## VALENCIA'S SINGAPOREAN BOSS ADMITS CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

**SINGAPORE:** Asian ownership of European football clubs can be tough because of cultural differences, Valencia's Singaporean president said yesterday after a turbulent period at the Mestalla Stadium. Chan Lay Hoon, who was brought in by Valencia's billionaire owner Peter Lim, said she had had a tough first season at the club marked by the ill-fated reign of Gary Neville. Singapore's Lim is one of a growing number of Asian owners of European clubs including Leicester City's Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha and Tony Xia, who this week agreed to buy Aston Villa.

"It is not easy because there is a cultural difference," Chan told reporters in Singapore,

during a visit by Valencia players. "Spanish people are more expressive. But as Singaporeans, we are more reserved, so direct and every thing is short and sweet," she said. "Such culture differences can sometimes cause a little bit of misunderstandings. They may feel that we are being cold."

But Chan believes more Asians and in particular Chinese owners will continue to invest in European football clubs, whose attractions include their TV revenues and huge popularity in the region. "Now there is a kind of political direction in China about using football. I'm sure there will be more Chinese companies or businessmen looking to buy European clubs," she said.

Lim has come under fire from Valencia fans for his stewardship of the club, especially his appointment of the untried Neville. The former Manchester United defender and TV pundit won just three of 16 La Liga games before being sacked after four months in charge. "I think the biggest issue with Gary was because of language barrier," said Chan. "It didn't work (that well) because for the Spanish culture, they also need to feel a lot of because they are very expressive-warmth and sometimes all these can lose out from a translator," she added.

Clubs in England, Spain and Italy have all lured Asian investors, with Thai tycoon Vichai the biggest success story after Leicester's

stunning Premier League title win this year. Barcelona-based Espanyol were taken over in January by with Chinese entertainment company Rastar Group, while Chinese conglomerate Wanda bought a 20 percent stake in 10-time Spanish champions Atletico Madrid last year. Chan described Valencia's fans as "very passionate" and said they made her even more determined to succeed. "It's a bit different from here-we love football, but it's not our life. But over there its really their life, the whole week they will be talking about football and they look forward to the match," she said. "We need to improve after the last season and we're confident we will have a better season next year." — AFP



Brazilian footballer Kaka

## KAKA HIGHEST PAID PLAYER IN THE MLS

**LOS ANGELES:** Brazilian star Kaka is the highest paid player in Major League Soccer, topping the earnings rankings ahead of Italy international Sebastian Giovinco and United States captain Michael Bradley, figures showed Thursday. Former world footballer of the year Kaka, who plays for Florida club Orlando City, led the earnings with a guaranteed salary of \$7,167,500 (6,336,070 Euros), just ahead of Toronto FC's Giovinco, second with \$7,115,556.

US international skipper Bradley, who also plays with Toronto, was third with wages of \$6.5 million. High-profile overseas stars who have joined the MLS in recent years were the next to feature on the list, with Los Angeles Galaxy's Steven Gerrard fourth (\$6,132,500), ahead of New York City FC trio Frank Lampard, Andrea Pirlo and David Villa.

Lampard, whose New York career has been plagued by injury since his arrival last year, earns \$6 million, while Pirlo was just behind on \$5.9 million. Spanish World Cup winner Villa takes home around \$5.6 million. Rounding out the top 10 were Toronto's American international Jozy Altidore (\$4.8 million), Seattle's Clint Dempsey (\$4.6 million) and Los Angeles Galaxy's Mexican striker Giovanni dos Santos (\$4.25 million).

The list of salaries sheds interesting light on the vast disparities that exist between the league's best-paid players and those at the other end of the scale. The lowest paid player in the league according to the figures is Montreal's Belizean forward Michael Salazar. The 23-year-old earns \$51,492 a year—less than three days wages for best-paid player Kaka.

Unsurprisingly, the highest salaries in the MLS pale beside the wages of the world's best players. Barcelona superstar Lionel Messi earns \$71 million a year while Real Madrid rival Cristiano Ronaldo rakes in \$59 million, according to figures on the Business Insider website. The highest MLS salaries are also comfortably eclipsed by the vast sums being paid by clubs in the Chinese Super League, whose teams splurged a record \$278 million in the most recent transfer window.

Argentinian international Ezequiel Lavezzi joined Hebei China Fortune from Paris Saint-Germain on an annual salary of \$16.8 million while Colombian international Jackson Martinez reportedly earns \$14 million a year with Guangzhou Evergrande. — AFP

## FIFA SEEKS BAN FOR NIERSBACH OVER GERMANY'S 2006 WC BID

**ZURICH:** FIFA's ethics committee yesterday recommended a two-year ban from all football activities for Wolfgang Niersbach, former president of the German Football Association (DFB), over an alleged corruption scandal around the right to host the 2006 World Cup.

FIFA's adjudicatory chamber said they had received a final report from world football governing body's ethics committee investigatory chamber and decided to proceed with formal proceedings against Niersbach. "The investigatory chamber recommends a sanction of a two-year ban from all football-related activity and a fine of CHF 30,000 (27,000 euro, \$30,000)," the judging body said.

Niersbach, vice-president of the 2006 World Cup organizing committee, is still a member of the FIFA Council, and attended last week's Congress in Mexico, as well as being on UEFA's executive committee. He said he would vigorously contest the sanction.

"It's a matter of honor and defense of my rights to oppose this request with all possible legal means," Niersbach said in an interview with German news agency SID, a subsidiary of AFP. "The penalty is incomprehensible. Especially when compared to other cases where the Ethics Commission has not made such harsh judgments in cases of personal advantage and corruption."

"In my case, the charge is based solely on the fact that I did not speak soon enough about things related to the 2006 World Cup," Niersbach continued, adding his "resignation from the presidency of the DFB in November 2015" should suffice. Niersbach, 65, had resigned from the German federation amid accusations the DFB used a slush fund of 10 million Swiss francs (6.7 million euro, \$8 million, according to the exchange rate at that time) in 2000 to buy the right to host the 2006 World Cup finals.

FIFA opened a probe on March 22 targeting six people including Niersbach and Franz Beckenbauer, the German football legend and World Cup organizing committee chief, over their roles in the bidding process, amid allegations of bribery.

Niersbach is accused of "not reporting the violation of the (FIFA) ethics code" by others. The FIFA ethics committee inquiry follows the release of a



**DUESSELDORF:** In this March 6, 2006 file photo German soccer legend and head of the organizing committee Franz Beckenbauer talks to Wolfgang Niersbach during the FIFA Team-Workshop. — AP

report commissioned by the DFB into the 2006 World Cup bidding. That report, released on March 4, said it could not rule out that Germany bought votes to secure the tournament, and linked Beckenbauer to a "mysterious" deal with disgraced FIFA official Jack Warner.

### 'Duties of disclosure'

Along with Beckenbauer, FIFA's in-house prosecutors are investigating three other ex-DFB officials for "possible undue payments and contracts to gain an advantage in the 2006 FIFA World Cup host selection".

They are Theo Zwanziger, a former German federation president, Horst R. Schmidt, an ex-DFB secretary general and Stefan Hans, the DFB's former chief financial officer. Helmut Sandrock, another former DFB secretary general, is along with Niersbach being probed for allegedly failing in his "duties of disclosure". The launch of a fresh corruption investigation comes as FIFA's new president Gianni Infantino is trying to turn the page on the scandal-ridden administration led by Sepp Blatter, whose presidency ended in disgrace last month.

German football has been roiled by allegations, first leveled by magazine Spiegel last October that the DFB used a

slush fund to buy votes to secure the 2016 World Cup. The DFB inquiry, carried out by the law firm Freshfields, outlined a money trail linking Beckenbauer, former Adidas chief Robert Louis-Dreyfus and Qatar's Mohammed bin Hammam, who has since been banned from football for life over corruption claims. Swiss prosecutors are probing the decision to award the 2022 World Cup to Qatar and want Bin Hamman to come to Bern for questioning. A central issue in the German bid was a 10-million Swiss franc (6.7-million euro/ \$8.0-million, according to the exchange rate at that time) payment that Spiegel said was borrowed by the DFB from the late Louis-Dreyfus.

It said the money was to buy the votes of four Asian members of FIFA's 24-strong executive committee. In 2000, Germany won the bid to stage the 2006 World Cup, beating South Africa by 12 votes to 11, with one abstention. Separately, 39 people and two companies have also been charged with corruption by the US justice department, including many of Blatter's former top deputies. Blatter, and his onetime heir apparent Michel Platini, have been banned from football for six years over ethics violations. — AFP

## BECKHAM ASKS MADRID TO BE PATIENT WITH ZIDANE

**VALENCIA:** David Beckham believes Real Madrid should give his former team mate at the club, Zinedine Zidane, time to succeed even if the French great fails to inspire them to victory in the Champions League final later this month. Zidane fell just short of steering the club to La Liga glory, with Real finishing one point behind Barcelona, but can claim his first title since replacing Rafa Benitez earlier this year in the May 28 Champions League final against city rivals Atletico in Milan.

"Madrid needs stability and continuity," Beckham said in an interview with Spanish magazine *Semanal XL*. "It would be good if Zizou (Zidane) continues for some time and that they maintain the players they have today. "Even if they don't win the Champions League, it would be good to let Zizou work. "Stability is key, not just in every aspect of life but in business."

Former England captain Beckham played with Zidane at Real from 2003 until 2006 before the French great retired from football. "Besides being a great friend, he is the person that is most passionate about football and Real Madrid that I have met and the best player I've ever played with," Beckham said.

Zidane was Carlo Ancelotti's assistant in 2013 when Real won the Champions League and had been coaching Real's reserve team, Castilla, in the third division before being named Real's 11th boss in 12 years. He was named La Liga's Manager of the Month for April, picking up the award for the first time this season, following a six-game winning month which helped the team get back into title contention.

### Born to coach

Real trailed Barcelona by 10 points and closed that gap to just one heading into the final weekend of the campaign. "I wasn't born to coach but Zizou, yes," Beckham said. "Zizou, who won everything, was chosen the best player in the world several times and he experienced first hand many situations. There is no former player who garners more respect and admiration.

"It was only natural that he would end up coaching the team. "At this time, they (Real) must be very happy with Zizou. "His job in any case is very difficult because in the last five years, Madrid have had to face the best Barca in history." Real have failed to win La Liga since the 2011-12 campaign while Barca celebrated their sixth league title in eight seasons last weekend.

"Barca is a monster, a well thought out and constructed team, with youngsters that are promoted from the youth team and with (Lionel) Messi, who is from another planet," Beckham said. "When you compete against a team like that one, everything becomes more complicated." Beckham refused to wade into the "senseless debate" over who is the better player between Real's Cristiano Ronaldo and Barca's Messi.

"Both are unique, just like Zizou in his day. They have marked an era. "We will remember the Messi and Cristiano years and both at the same time! "No one had ever maintained that level throughout for so long. "Whoever knows them, they always highlight their persistence and hunger to get better. They want to be the best." — Reuters



**CORUNNA:** Real Madrid's French coach Zinedine Zidane looks on before the Spanish league football match RC Deportivo de la Coruna vs Real Madrid CF at the Municipal de Riazor stadium in La Coruna. — AFP



**LONDON:** This file photo taken on April 23, 2016 shows Manchester United's French striker Anthony Martial (C) as he celebrates after scoring their second goal during the English FA Cup semi-final football match between Everton and Manchester United at Wembley Stadium.— AFP

## MOCKED MARTIAL BECOMES MAN UTD'S FA CUP CHARM

**LONDON:** He started the season dubbed as an expensive panic buy, but Anthony Martial goes into today's FA Cup final against Crystal Palace as the potential savior of Manchester United's season. The French forward's deadline-day move from Monaco, at an initial cost of £36 million (\$52.6 million, 47 million Euros), rising to £58 million, sparked incredulity on both sides of the Channel.

United captain Wayne Rooney had to ask Morgan Schneiderlin, Martial's France team-mate, who the club's star signing was. British tabloid *The Sun* rechristened the club "MADchester United", while French sports daily *L'Equipe* asked: "Where is the sense in the transfer market when an uncapped 19-year-old kid, who has scored 11 goals in 52 games, costs as much as Zidane at his peak?"

United manager Louis van Gaal made a point of emphasizing Martial's "great potential" and said that it would be his successor in the dug-out, rather than the Dutchman himself, who would see the best of the young forward. Martial, however, was in no mood to take his time and made the first repayment on his huge fee with a wonderful solo goal against Liverpool just 21 minutes after coming off the bench to make his debut.

The 20-year-old has since found the net on 16 further occasions, and his goals have proved particularly valuable in the FA Cup. Martial's 83rd-minute equalizer against West Ham United in the quarter-finals kept Van Gaal's side in the competition and with the score locked at 1-1 in last month's semi-final against Everton at Wembley, it was his nerveless stoppage-time strike that sent United into their first final since 2007. His nonchalant demeanor, dazzling footwork and ice-cold finishing have already earned him the adoration of United's fans, who have immortalized their number nine in song.

### 'Could have done better'

"Tony Marshall came from France," goes the chant, knowingly using an Anglicized version of Martial's name. "English press said he had no chance/Fifty million down the drain/Tony Marshall scores again!" Far from being eased into life at Old Trafford, Martial has become a virtual ever-present, playing more minutes of United's Premier League campaign than any outfield player apart from Chris Smalling, Daley Blind and Juan Mata. Together with Jesse Lingard, 23, and 18-year-old sensation Marcus Rashford, Martial has formed a youth-

ful trio whose vibrant displays have helped to keep some of the heat off Van Gaal despite United's pancake-flat football and failure to qualify for the Champions League.

Martial had earned his first senior France call-up just five days before his switch to United, but he now has eight caps and will go into Euro 2016 as a potential starter for the hosts on the left side of the attack in Didier Deschamps's preferred 4-3-3 system.

The only real bone of contention for Martial this season has been his repeated deployment-with both United and France-as a left-sided forward, rather than a central striker. Martial makes no secret of his desire for a central role, but Deschamps prefers to use his pace and directness on the flank and Van Gaal does not consider him suited to playing at centre-forward. For now Martial must bide his time on the wing and in words likely to give right-backs up and down the country shudders-not to mention Alan Pardew's Palace-he is far from satisfied with his accomplishments to date. "I think I could have done better," he said recently when asked to sum up his first season at United. "There were some chances that I missed, but I think next year it will be much better." —AFP

## DEPARTING IBRAHIMOVIC HOPING TO SIGN OFF WITH FRENCH CUP

**PARIS:** Zlatan Ibrahimovic will aim to lift one final trophy as the curtain comes down on his record-shattering Paris Saint-Germain career in today's French Cup final against bitter rivals Marseille. Ibrahimovic, who obliterated Pauleta's club goals record earlier this season and now stands on 154 from 179 games, announced he will leave Paris when his contract expires at the end of June after a trophy-laden four years in France. The Swede will look to fire Laurent Blanc's side to a second straight domestic treble which would send PSG level with Marseille as 10-time winners of the French Cup. Ibrahimovic notched his 37th and 38th league goals in today's 4-0 thumping of Nantes in his final appearance at the Parc des Princes to surpass Argentine striker Carlos Bianchi's 37-goal mark set during the 1977-78 season.

Having been crowned France's player of the year for a record third time, before modestly declaring "I came like a king, left like a legend," Ibrahimovic will look to bow out with his reputation enhanced yet further. Although the 34-year-old has missed training with a sore calf this week, there is no question the Sweden star will spearhead the PSG attack one final time at the Stade de France.

"It's a bit of a sad moment, but the project continues. So does Zlatan's career. You have to go through moments like this to move forward," said Blanc, reflecting on Ibrahimovic's profound impact on the club. "Zlatan has brought the club on enormously, beyond expectations. He has had one of the best seasons as a footballer and it's been a huge pleasure to work with him."

Today will also mark the final appearance for Gregory van der Wiel, with the Dutch defender set to move on having joined PSG in 2012, the same summer as Ibrahimovic. Midfielder Marco Verratti underwent surgery on Monday and the Italy international will not only miss the final but his country's Euro 2016 campaign as a result.

### Chance for salvation

For Marseille, who have gone 27 years since their last French Cup title, today's showdown is a chance to salvage what has been nothing short of a catastrophic season. The club never recovered from the bombshell departure of Marcelo Bielsa in August and finished 13th, their lowest position since the 2000-01 season, having embarked on an unwanted record of 15 home games without a win. However, winger Romain Alessandrini believes taking on the French champions can bring the best out of an underperforming OM side. "We're up against a very good PSG team that is used to winning trophies, so we have nothing to lose," Alessandrini, who was part of the Rennes side beaten 2-0 by Guingamp in the 2014 final, told OM.net. "It's up to us to do everything to win this match, to enjoy it and to bring the cup back to Marseille. "There's an eternal rivalry between the two clubs. It's going to be rather intense to say the least. If we win, it'll be an incredible day for us.—AFP

## DORTMUND EAGER TO RUIN PEP'S BAYERN FINAL GAME

**BERLIN:** Borussia Dortmund aim to ruin Bayern Munich's plans to farewell Pep Guardiola with a seventh title in three years when Germany's top teams meet in today's crunch German Cup final. Victory over their main rivals at Berlin's Olympic Stadium would give Bayern the league and cup double before Guardiola leaves for Manchester City next season. After Bayern lifted the Bundesliga title last weekend, for a record fourth season in succession, Dortmund now want the cup to compensate. "We will do everything to win," promised Guardiola, who admits it will be tough against "the best Borussia (team) in history".

Borussia finished 10 points behind Bayern in the league and want to avoid losing their third straight German Cup final. Dortmund controversially lost the 2014 final 2-0 to Bayern, after extra time, and were beaten 3-1 by Wolfsburg in last year's final. As midfielder Sven Bender put it, Dortmund has "no desire to lose for a third time in succession in Berlin".

Bayern's captain Philipp Lahm says Guardiola has not only improved the quality of Bayern's football, but helped develop each member of the star-studded squad. Now Lahm says the squad must raise their game to win one last title before Carlo Ancelotti takes over as head coach next season.—AFP



**MILAN:** Roma's defender from Greece Kostas Manolas (L) fights for the ball with AC Milan's forward from Italy's Mario Balotelli during the Italian Serie A football match AC Milan vs AS Roma on May 14, 2016 at the San Siro Stadium. —AFP

# MILAN WOES AHEAD OF MUST-WIN CUP FINAL

**MILAN:** Uncertainty over the future of AC Milan hovers over the stricken Italian giants as they look to avoid the ignominy of a season without European football by wresting the Italian Cup from Juventus today. "It would be a huge victory for the team but also in terms of sealing direct entry to the Europa League," club owner and president Silvio Berlusconi told the players at their training ground earlier this week.

Milan, the seven-time European champions, are now a pale shadow of the club that brought Berlusconi no fewer than five Champions League titles between 1989 and 2007. Now increasingly frustrated at Milan's slow decline, Berlusconi has put the club up for sale, recently signing exclusive negotiating rights with a Chinese consortium.

The potential new owners, as much as Berlusconi, will have a keen eye on today's final at Rome's Stadio Olimpico, where league champions Juventus could become the first Italian club to win successive league and Cup doubles. The winner will earn direct entry to the Europa League, meaning if Juventus triumph the qualifying spot for Europe's second-tier competition goes to Serie A's sixth place finisher.

On the final day of the season, Milan were thumped 3-1 at home by Roma, while Sassuolo stunned 10-

man Inter Milan 3-1 to finish four points ahead of the Rossoneri in sixth. Unsurprisingly, town officials have set up large screens in the Tuscan town for thousands of fans to witness their possible and historic entry into European football.

Although a season without the revenues from the lucrative Champions League can be crippling, Milan's failure to qualify for Europe's second-tier club event would leave a bigger stain on their reputation. Former Juventus, Middlesbrough and Derby striker Fabrizio Ravanelli blames Milan's management and recruitment department, which is run by CEO Adriano Galliani. "There's been just too many changes made by Milan's management. They've changed coaches too many times and had no consistency," Ravanelli told Premium Sport.

### No Juve complacency

In keeping with pre-Cup final tradition, both teams will meet Pope Francis and receive his wishes for a match which effectively brings the curtain down on the Italian club season. Yet Milan will need a miracle if they are to shock a Juventus team that, despite sitting only a handful of points above the relegation zone in the autumn, were still too good for the rest in Italy's top flight.

Juventus fought their way back into contention thanks to a defiant 26-

game unbeaten run, and secured a record-equaling fifth successive title with three games to spare. Still, coach Massimiliano Allegri is taking nothing for granted.

"I'm not worried, but we have to have a maximum of respect for them. Milan has a tradition of winning the Cup," said Allegri, who is unlikely to have much sympathy for his old club. Allegri was sacked by Milan in January 2014 after the Rossoneri threw away a three-goal half-time lead on their way to a 4-3 defeat to Sassuolo, and some Milan detractors still claim his sacking was the first step in their steady decline.

Juventus midfielder Paul Pogba, however, said the magic of a Cup final could spring a surprise. "We can't go there thinking we're favorites. We have to remain humble, because it's not always the strongest that wins," said the Frenchman. "It's a final, and Milan aren't going to Rome to hand us the win."

Allegri will be without injury-hit German midfielder Sami Khedira due to a calf injury, while Juve are also without defender Leonardo Bonucci (suspended) and midfield creator Claudio Marchisio (knee). The defending champions are likely to adopt a 3-5-2, with Mario Mandzukic set to be given the nod over Spanish striker Alvaro Morata to partner Paulo Dybala in attack. —AFP

# Sports



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**CLEVELAND:** Cleveland Cavaliers' Kyrie Irving, right, shoots against Toronto Raptors' Bismack Biyombo (8) during the first half of Game 2 of the NBA basketball Eastern Conference finals. — AP

## CLEVELAND MOVES STEP CLOSER TO NBA FINALS

### CAVS RIP RAPTORS FOR 10TH PLAYOFF WIN IN A ROW

**WASHINGTON:** With LeBron James producing another overpowering performance, the Cleveland Cavaliers routed Toronto 108-89 Thursday, stretching their playoff record to 10-0 and moving closer to an NBA Finals return.

James scored 23 points, grabbed 11 rebounds and passed out 11 assists as the host Cavaliers, who swept through the first two playoff rounds, seized a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference finals with game three Saturday at Toronto. "We're just a well-balanced, (well-)oiled machine," James said. "You have to do multiple things depending on how the series and the games go and we've been able to do that."

Kyrie Irving scored a game-high 26 points and Kevin Love added 19 for Cleveland, whose run is one shy of the NBA record playoff start of 11-0 achieved by the Los Angeles Lakers in 1989 and 2001. "It's always difficult to deal with me," four-time NBA Most Valuable Player James said. "It adds even more when you have two all-stars with you who command multiple eyes every possession. They are in such a great

rhythm I can do other things to help us win."

"This is the best I've felt in a while. When you have two guys like this to help you, it takes a lot of things off you." The Cavaliers are two wins from facing the Western Conference champion, either Oklahoma City or defending NBA champion Golden State, in the NBA Finals that begin on June 2. Cleveland lost to Golden State in last year's NBA Finals, but Love was out with an injury and Irving went down with an injury in game one.

"We just do a great job of having each other's backs," said Irving. "We missed our chance last year and we want to make the most of this time." The Cavaliers have led Toronto by 10 or more points throughout the second half in both games and Cleveland's Tyronn Lue, the first NBA coach to win his first 10 playoff games, credits Irving and Love for helping ease the load on James. "When Kevin and Kyrie are playing at a high level it opens the floor for LeBron. He can take a game over," Lue said. "The better the team performs, the easier it is on him."

#### Lethal LeBron

The playoff victory was Cleveland's 17th in a row over foes from the same conference, the longest such NBA streak since 1970-71. "I don't think it feels like a streak," James said. "We won one game. How do we get better the next game? We haven't overlooked any steps. That's why we're in the position we are. We've enjoyed the process."

James, seeking a sixth consecutive trip to the NBA Finals after four years with Miami and last year, is hitting 18-of-26 from the field, dominating Toronto inside. "Great teammates are getting me open," James said. "I'm trying to be aggressive, see what the defense is giving me. Everyone is feeding off one another."

James had his 15th career "triple double"-double-figure statistics in three categories and passed Shaquille O'Neal to reach fourth on the NBA career playoff scoring list. "It's a tribute to the player LeBron has been," Lue said. "When you are a winner like LeBron, you have to expect milestones."

#### Cavs sparked

The Cavaliers closed the second quarter with a 16-2 run to seize a 62-48 half-time edge. "We made some adjustments, changed our defense, got a little more physical that was a big spark," Lue said of that stretch. James had 17 points, eight assists and seven rebounds in the first half. "All great players are going to be playing at that level at this time of year," said Raptors coach Dwane Casey. "He's not doing anything we didn't expect." The Raptors, led by DeMar DeRozan's 22 points, suffered their first back-to-back losses of the playoffs. Kyle Lowry, who scored 43 against the Cavaliers in a regular-season game, had only 10 points on 4-of-14 shooting Thursday but vowed he would bounce back. "I'll find ways," Lowry said. "I know I can be more effective and I will be more effective on Saturday. Their defense is active and rotating but I've been missing shots I won't be missing anymore." And he remains optimistic the Raptors can reach the finals. "I'm super confident," he said. "I'm not down on myself. I don't need much motivation on Saturday." —AFP