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## Local Spotlight

## RENT CHEATERS



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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**R**ent cheating is a new form of deception in Kuwait. Today's story is not new to me, as I have heard about it many times before, except this seems to be the worst. When you fall victim to rent cheaters, you can end in jail, while they can take your money and sell your furniture too. Guess what? If you thought you can leave the country, you can't, because your name will be on the travel ban list until you settle this matter. It is a pain that no one wishes to deal with, but some expats fall into this trap. My article today may end with an advice, but it is your choice not to trust or deal with rent cheaters.

This letter is from a family that is confronting this nightmare now. They are facing a serious problem if no action is taken by them. Let me explain how this family fell a victim to a rent cheater.

The family of four persons rented a flat in Salmiya four months ago. The haris told them the rent is KD 200 inclusive of water and electricity, plus KD 10 for himself (for cleaning) and KD 200 down payment,

Rent was due by the 5th of every month.

This arrangement seemed suitable to them, and the first three months passed by as agreed. But recently, they received a request to pay KD 50 extra for six months for electricity.

which will be returned when leaving the flat. Rent was due by the 5th of every month. This arrangement seemed suitable to them, and the first three months passed by as agreed. But recently, they received a request to pay KD 50 extra for six months for electricity. The family did not expect this, because these services were included in the rent that was agreed by all.

The family declined to pay, but the haris didn't take no for an answer. Moreover, he began to knock at the door at night, even at 1:00 am, asking for rent from the 24th of every month, threatening that if the family doesn't pay up, they will have to pay KD 400 in rent.

The family wondered over why they should pay KD 400 as the rent is only KD 210! The answer came quickly - the contract was prepared with KD 400 as rent and not KD 200 as this family were told and used to pay. This family didn't notice that when they paid KD 200 as rent every month, they were given a receipt of KD 400. So, legally, the crooked owner can claim extra money any time and can submit these receipts in court.

The family considered going to the police, but they were scared they could face more troubles. The building is run by a real estate company, so they are responsible for the tenants. I certainly believe this family needs legal assistance immediately, and the police can always help them in case of harassment and violations. No one should accept to be threatened by others.

A final tip: Please read and understand what you are agreeing and signing on. Ask for a copy in English and your native language if possible. Don't put your name on something you can't understand.

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



KUWAIT: Masque from a modern Kuwaiti theatre production. — Photo by KUNA/Ghazy Gafaf

## In my view

## A THINLY VEILED SIDESWIPE



By Nejouad Al-Yagout

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**T**here are many of you out there who choose to wear the veil\*, and I respect your choice. I honor your commitment. I know that many of you wear it with pride. You have found immense peace in your decision.

But, there are also many of you out there who are forced to wear it, and I am speaking on behalf of you. I want you to know that I, like many others, feel your pain. Immensely. Your relatives may think it is merely a tiny piece of cloth and you shouldn't be so emotional about it; but you know - yes you know - that being forced to wear it symbolizes far more than that. It means that you have to practice your faith in a way that contradicts your personal views. It breaks my heart to see you struggle because someone else made such a life-altering decision for you. And it breaks my heart a little more knowing that some of you have to take pills for depression because you feel repressed. People - outside the realm of your prison - tell you to remove it, to not be so weak; but, the fabric of society is a thin one, and removing it would most likely tear your family into shreds. You know this. You fear this. This might seem highly dramatic, almost unfathomable, to someone who is not a member of this community; but, this is, in fact, the case.

Last year, a good friend of mine told me that if she removed the veil, her father would never speak to her again.

When she was younger, he informed her, menacingly, that she would not be allowed to go to school if she did not wear it. And so she wore it. This is the same father who took away all her books, years later, and burned them because he feared that too much reading would lead her away from faith. (Ironically, he led her away from faith, because of his antagonism in the name of it). What he didn't know, and doesn't know, for that matter, is that nobody can ever impose faith on another human being. What he doesn't know is that his daughter - like many, many other girls - removes the veil when she goes out or travels. She feels free knowing that her father can never change the way she feels on the inside. But, she feels immense anguish leading a double life and is envious of fellow females of her community, who share the culture of her father, yet are given the choice by their parents on whether or not to veil (even if their mothers are veiled). She is also tormented because she lives in Kuwait, a country where the government gives her the freedom to roam without a veil if she chooses, but she cannot exercise this right.

We, here on planet Earth, interfere all the time. We make life a living hell for others. Every day is Judgment Day. We have forgotten that heaven exists, too, in this world of polarities. The game would be different here, if only we remembered. We would reward people with the power of choice, the power of freedom, instead of punishing them for not adhering to our ways. This coercion to adhere has made hypocrites of all of us. In this way, we are all wearing veils, albeit in different ways.

*\*In this article, the word veil is interchangeable with hijab, niqab, abaya or any other form of ideologically-imposed outerwear*

## Shush....

# The ongoing practice of secret marriages in Kuwait

By Faten Omar

Anyone born into a typical Muslim family cannot avoid the central place that marriage occupies within the concept of a good Muslim lifestyle. Popular Muslim culture invests marriage with such religious significance, that it is often described as comprising "half of all religion". On the other hand, getting married nowadays is not easy, thanks to countless social and economic obstacles, including extortionate dowries, costly wedding extravaganzas and lack of housing.

Marriages held in secret are frowned upon in Islam, and some types of such unions may even be considered haram, despite being prevalent in conservative Arab societies where premarital or extramarital sex is taboo. It is not uncommon, however, in Kuwait for men to take a second wife without permission from his first or from marrying 'temporarily' for other reasons.

People have different motives for entering into this category of marriage. Defenders of such marriages claim that it allows women who might otherwise be unable to enter into a full-fledged marriage, or perhaps don't want to contend with the demands of a full-fledged marriage, to pursue their personal interests within a recognizably Islamic framework. They concede that the practice is not ideal, but don't condemn it as sinful.

Kuwait Times spoke to some women who are married secretly, and therefore preferred to remain anonymous. For a 32-year-old divorced Saudi woman, marriage is all about getting a stable life for her son. "Being a single mother is not easy. With the high school fees, rising rents and low salaries, my son and I could hardly survive," she said. She explained that the Saudi community kept hounding her after her divorce, especially since her ex-husband is her cousin.

Moreover he only gives KD 50 monthly for their son. "After I got fired from my job, I had no income. I went crazy, as I didn't want to lose my child. So I went to an Awqaf-run charity, where a man there helped me. After a couple of months, he asked me to marry him as his second wife, but in secret. Neither he nor me want our families or his first wife to know about it," she told Kuwait Times.

She said with tears that she was steeped in debt, had no job, no money for school fees and no new shoes for her son. "I had to marry him. He is a good, rich man, and was kind to me, so I agreed to marry him in secret." After getting married by a licensed sheikh but with no contract in court, her life changed for the better. "I now have a decent job at the Ministry of Awqaf, a big apartment for me and my son, and I even have a maid, so no more doing the chores," she said with a smile.

### Urfi Marriage

One type of secret marriages is "Urfi". This form of marriage does not require witnesses, and is not registered with state authorities. Couples repeat the words "I marry you" and sign a paper stating that they are married. In Arab countries, Urfi is a way for people to have sex with each other within what is perceived to be a licit framework. The relationship is often kept secret from family members and women often become pregnant but are unable to prove they are married or get a divorce.

For D O, a 23-year-old woman, Urfi marriage was her solution to get married to her poor Christian lover. "My family will not allow me to get married to a Christian man, who also does not have money for Shabka (gold) and cannot afford to throw a big wedding party. We were in love, so we chose Urfi marriage because we did not want to do any haram acts," she told Kuwait Times. She said that they are now husband and wife, and will officially announce their marriage when he is ready and converts to Islam next month.

### Misyar Marriage

Another type of secret marriage is Misyar, which can be defined as a marriage contract between a man and a woman in which the woman waives some of the rights she would have in a normal Islamic marriage. For spinsters, getting older means it is increasingly difficult to

marry. In this case, a woman opts for a husband who is not able to fulfill normal marital duties.

N S, a 36-year-old woman, considers that marrying such a husband is better than remaining unmarried. "Being a spinster in Kuwaiti society means that you are sentenced to death," she reasoned. She said that she got married secretly to a Kuwaiti with four children. "Misyar, as they call it, was my only way to get a husband."

N S is furious with Arab societies and how they force a woman to get married even if she is happy with her single lifestyle. "My family forced me. Every day they told me the popular saying, that 'a shadow of a man is better than a shadow of a wall'. To me it makes no sense, but to many people, having a husband is a priority. My friends stopped welcoming me at their homes because they were scared of me stealing their husbands!" she exclaimed.

### Kuwaiti Laws

A Kuwaiti fatwa official told Kuwait Times that marriage in Islam is a solemn contract for which the Sharia lays down rules and arrangements to guarantee its stability. An Islamic marriage has to meet certain requirements such as ishhar (announcement), payment of the mahr (dower), the consent of both parties, the permission of the wali (woman's guardian) and the presence of witnesses.

So all kinds of secret marriages are haram because of the lack of one or two of these rules, he added. And this is enshrined in Kuwaiti law. In Kuwait's personal status laws - the codified law no 51 of 1984 which applies to Sunni Muslims - a woman is never free to make a marriage decision on her own. She must have a male guardian (wali) to do so on her behalf, regardless of her age. Witnesses to the marriage must be Muslim men for the marriage to be valid. In addition, a man may legally have up to four wives simultaneously. But if the first wife suspects her husband is having a relationship with another woman, even if they are secretly married, the first wife can accuse him of zina (adultery).



# If I held the power TO CHANGE MY SCHOOL...

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

**M**any private schools in Kuwait kicked off the academic year this week. Public schools will resume after the Eid Al-Adha holiday. Kids usually feel very energetic on the first day of school, when they reunite with their friends and talk exaggeratedly about what did during the summer holiday. The sparkle soon fades away by the end of the day, when they realize that they're back to reality - going back to school means waking up early, doing homework, facing exam pressure, and worst of all, less playtime at home!

But what if we let them imagine and visualize how can they make school days better and much more fun? What's the concept of enjoyment and learning in the eyes of these youngsters?

Ghalia Al-Tamimi, 10, seemed a bit confused and didn't know what to change in her school. "I don't know. I like everything in my school, and I don't mind the homework. However, I would make our toilets smell better - they're stuffy and icky!" she exclaimed.

On the other hand, 8-year-old Nadiya Al-Awadhi wishes students and teachers can bring their pets to school. The days then would be less stressful. "It's the only thing I would want to change".

Of course it is unreasonable for schools to be like funfairs. The serious environment and strictness shape students' personalities. Dana Hussain, 12, is aware that life is not all amusement and play. "My school is balanced. There's enough strictness and fun. We don't want things to be too lax. But sometimes I dream that we could get out of our classes at the end of the school day on a really long swirly slide," she said, adding, "I won't change our uniforms though. The winter one is smart and the summer ones are very slim."

Dana's younger sister Aya, 10, disagrees with her, as she does not want to cling to a school uniform. "Our uniforms are so expensive! I want to go to school free to wear more casual and cheaper everyday clothes," she said. "I'm very excited about going back to school. However, if I were an architect, I would make it more colorful, modern and unique to attract more people to join. Also, if I had the power to change the rules, I would allow middle school to organize fun trips and assemblies like the ones we used to do back in primary school," added Aya.

Children are little humans with vast, imaginative minds. Involving them in some levels of decision making in the educational process would create a responsible generation that's going to develop as an effective part of the society. Let's give them a chance to show their capabilities hidden in their small bodies.



Ghalia Al-Tamimi



Dana Hussain



Nadiya Al-Awadhi



Aya Hussain



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# CUP

## *reading for fun*

**Tasseography is the practice of reading tea leaves or coffee grounds for the purpose of fortune telling. Illegal in Kuwait, it is often practiced for 'fun' with a focus on personality traits and past events rather than the future.**

By Nawara Fattahova

**T**wo lines on the top of my cup symbolize hands praying to God, according to Marwa, a coffee ground reader who does it "just for fun". In fact, most of what she told me about previous events was correct. She didn't say much about the future, which I anyways wouldn't have believed.

Tea leaf or coffee ground reading is a kind of fortunetelling, in addition to telling personal situations or events that happened in the past. Known as tasseography, it is done after turning a small-sized cup upside-down on its saucer after drinking Turkish coffee, with the residual coffee grounds remaining in the cup. Various patterns appear on the surface of the cup symbolizing events from the future, past or even the present time.

Tasseography isn't popular in Kuwait as its most often done with Turkish coffee, which is not a traditional drink here. But among Arab expats, the practice continues, though only for fun.

Cup reading is a hobby for 31-year-old Marwa. "I don't get paid for it. I'm doing it for fun and I only read for my friends and colleagues. I have received positive feedback from them, and they almost always tell me that what I read for them out of their cup is true," she told Kuwait Times. Some excerpts:

**Kuwait Times:** Who taught you cup reading?

**Marwa:** I learned from my maternal grandmother about 10 years ago, as this ritual is very popular and important in our community in Egypt.

**KT:** Do you believe what you see in the cup? And do your friends believe it?

**Marwa:** I believe what appears in the cup, otherwise I wouldn't be doing it. I guess they do too, although some of them say they don't believe in events related to the future, as it's haram in Islam to try and predict the future. I read about the past or situations happening to the person in the present time. I never hide anything I see and always tell them the truth, even if it seems bad.

**KT:** Do you read your own cup?

**Marwa:** No I don't read for myself - I think I may affect the creation of patterns in the cup somehow. But I let other cup readers read my cup for me.

**KT:** What are the most popular images or motifs you usually see in the cup and what do they symbolize?

**Marwa:** The dome or mountain symbolizes a vow, such as saying if I pass the exam, I will buy a gift for my sister. The cross symbolizes victory. Small spaces symbolize receiving official papers such as certificates or other documents. Rope or snake symbolizes enemies. Eye symbolizes envy. Woman with a child symbolizes a divorced woman. Dog is an enemy. Roads and curves mean travelling or a way to something. If the cup is dark, it means a messy life. The reading concludes with a fingerprint in the middle of the cup.

According to a sheikh at the fatwa consultancy hotline in Kuwait, tasseography is considered divination, which is haram in Islam. He advised people to pray salat istikhara instead to seek guidance.



# INTERIOR MINISTRY CALLS FOR INCREASED EFFICIENCY

By Hanan Al-Saadoun, Agencies

**KUWAIT:** It is imperative for security personnel to hone their skills to ensure readiness and aptness in dealing with any emergencies, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday. In a speech to open Al-Ahmadi Governorate's Security Directorate building, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled underscored the importance of boosting defense capabilities to overcome security challenges in an efficient manner. Moreover, he noted that safeguarding the people of the nation is of ultimate precedence as he extolled the efforts expended by security forces to uphold security and stability. Furthermore, the Interior Minister said that mounting security challenges call for increased vigilance, adding that all security directorate buildings under construction should be completed on time. "Providing security personnel with an environment conducive to their duties is a necessity," he added. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also attended a security drill designed to illustrate that the nation's defense capabilities are impenetrable to any threats to security.

Halaifa beach was launched yesterday with a large crowd present. Director of the technical office at Ahmadi governorate and Head of 'My Governorate Is More Beautiful' said the environment exhibition, and the cleanup of Abu Halaifa beach was organized by Ahmadi governorate in cooperation with the governorates environment committee.

### Security campaign

Najda police carried out a security campaign in all Kuwait governorates yesterday. 136 wanted persons and residency violators were arrested. Also, five cars were impounded and 345 traffic citations were issued.



### Iranian ship with birds

The Coast Guard caught an Iranian ship with 16 falcons and 100 Houbara birds. An inspection campaign resulted in the discovery of a ship with Iranian flag with its load of birds.

### Jordanian family detained

Land borders security men arrested a Jordanian expat for attempting to enter the country with his family with forged documents. The Jordanian arrived at Salmi border outlet and submitted his and his family's passports. After a thorough check, it was found that the man had been living in Saudi Arabia illegally for nine months.

### Gang busted

Farwaniya detectives have arrested a gang who were posing as detectives. The gang committed lots of criminal activities -including robberies in Andalus area. A citizen had earlier told police his house was broken into and jewelry worth KD 6000 was stolen along with more than KD 6000 in cash. The three suspect (all Syrians) were arrested and sent to concerned authorities.



### Clean up campaign

The campaign to clean up Abu

## News

in brief

### Kuwait and Bosnia officials discuss bilateral relations

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Ambassador to Bosnia-Herzegovina Nasser Al-Mutairi held a meeting with Bosnian Minister of Security Dragan Mektic, discussing with him issues of regional and international importance, said the Kuwaiti embassy in Sarajevo yesterday. Moreover, the meeting also touched on ways to develop bilateral relations, added the statement. Ambassador Al-Mutairi and Minister Mektic both touched on the issue of mutual investments, calling on Bosnians and Kuwaitis to pursue business and commercial ventures as a measure to enhance economic ties.



**Kuwait Ambassador to Bosnia-Herzegovina Nasser Al-Mutairi with Bosnian Minister of Security Dragan Mektic pictured after the meeting. — KUNA**

### Arab League reiterates commitment to Yemen

**CAIRO:** The Arab League yesterday reiterated commitment to resolutions of the Arab Summits and ministerial meetings regarding Yemen, as well as supporting legitimate leadership of the Arab country. The Yemeni conflict and all Arab crises would be discussed at the upcoming foreign ministers' meeting next week, Arab League spokesman Mahmoud Afifi told reporters following talks between Secretary General Ahmad Abul-Gheit and Jordanian Prime Minister Hani Mulqi. He hoped the meeting would be a good chance for the foreign ministers to discuss future actions vis-a-vis conflicts, and the meeting between Abul-Gheit and Al-Mulqi was within this framework. The two officials, he added, discussed the development of the Arab League in order to activate its role at the economic, social, cultural and political levels. Abul-Gheit and Mulqi, said Afifi, underlined importance of the political will to boost the common Arab action through the amendment of the Arab League Charter.

### NCCAL honors 'juniors' of 18th cultural festival

**KUWAIT:** The National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) has honored distinguished participants of the 18th edition of the children and juniors' cultural festival, which kicked off on July 31st and concludes tomorrow. The festival has presented a combo of cultural activities and creativities throughout its various events, which young audience and their families enjoyed, NCCAL's Secretary-General Ali Al-Youha stated. It also organized a number of workshops that aimed at honing cultural skills among children and teens in various art forms, Al-Youha said, reiterating NCCAL's keenness in improving juniors' creativities in order to qualify them for international competitions, which is part of the Council's mission as a sponsoring cultural institution in Kuwait. NCCAL also keen on increasing the number of cultural and art activities and workshops for children and teens through organizing a bunch of festivals and events around the year, he said, pointing out the recent significant development in the infrastructure of Kuwaiti cultural institutions and centers.

## Crime

Report

### KUWAITI SUSPECTS NABBED

**KUWAIT:** An employee at Abdaly outlet left the country through Nuwaiseeb outlet with the help of a friend who claimed he returned an hour later. According to security source, the suspect returned through the airport after 23 days and was arrested by police. The citizen had wanted to go on vacation, so asked his friend to document his return after an hour later. The employee returned through the airport and lied to the immigration officers that he just entered the arrival hall. He was later arrested along with his friend. The suspects confessed to their crimes. They were sent to the Public Prosecution.

### Bangladeshi arrested

A Bangladeshi who escaped from a police patrol in Fahaheel was later arrested by security operatives. 200 tramadol tablets were found in his possession. Ahmadi police patrol spotted a suspicious vehicle in the area. They

### 'Wanted man' detained

Criminal detectives prevented a suspect from escaping after he resisted arrest in front of his parents' home in Fintas. He was wanted on seven break-in theft cases. Detectives learned about his whereabouts, so they went to the place and waited for him until he came out. He is wanted by different governorates for cases and attacks. — Al Rai

### KUWAIT'S CRUDE OIL EXPORTS TO JAPAN DOWN - 3RD MONTH

**TOKYO:** Kuwait's crude oil exports to Japan fell 8 percent in July from a year earlier to 5.93 million barrels, or 191,000 barrels per day (bpd), down - for the third straight month, government data showed. As Japan's sixth-biggest oil provider, Kuwait supplied 6.1 percent of the Asian nation's total crude imports, the Japanese Natural Resources and Energy Agency said in a preliminary report. Japan's overall imports of crude oil declined 8.5 percent year-on-year to 3.14 million bpd for the first drop in four months.

Shipments from the Middle East accounted for 85.4 percent of the total, up 1.5 percentage points from a year before. Saudi Arabia remained Japan's No 1 oil supplier, but imports from the kingdom dropped 6.1 percent from a year earlier to 1.06 million bpd, followed by the United Arab Emirates with 821,000 bpd, down 22.6 percent. Qatar was next at 258,000 bpd, up 9.5 percent. Iran ranked fourth with 256,000 bpd and Mexico fifth with 193,000 bpd, respectively. Japan is the world's third biggest oil consumer after the US and China, importing virtually all its fossil fuels.

### US Dollar stable

Meanwhile, the US Dollar's exchange rate against the Kuwaiti Dinar was stable at 0.301, as similar case with the euro which stood at KD 0.336 compared to Wednesday's numbers, said the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) yesterday. The rate of the Sterling Pound went up to KD 0.396, while the Swiss Franc went down to 0.306 KD. The Japanese Yen went down to KD 0.001. —Agencies

### RETIREMENT HEALTH INSURANCE TO BE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER: MOH

**KUWAIT:** Ministry of Health (MoH) Undersecretaries' Council has announced that the retirement health insurance plan will be effective by mid-October, while "Aafeya" insurance cards will be distributed via health centers following Eid Al-Adha holiday. The executive steps have been taken by the ministry regarding implementing the health

insurance plan for the retirees, which aims at securing the highest level of health service in Kuwait, Dr Mahmoud Al-Abdulhadi, MoH's Assistant Undersecretary, said in a press statement.

Al-Abdulhadi made his remarks following MoH Undersecretaries' Council meeting, held earlier under chairman-

ship of the ministry's Undersecretary Dr Khaled Al-Sahlawi.

The meeting also addressed the construction projects, in addition to plans to enforce law implementation and the organizational structures of each of the ministry's sectors, health programs, and preventive health programs for the retirees, he said. — KUNA



# TRANSPORT FARE UNCHANGED AMID PETROL PRICE INCREASE



— Photos by Joseph Shagra

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** Contrary to people's expectation that the costs of transportation will increase after the petrol price hike yesterday, the price for transportation remained the same - for now at least. The public transport (buses and taxis) did not increase their prices. Bus fare from Khaitan to Shuwaikh was still 250 Fils as of yesterday. The delivery charge for restaurants didn't change either. Three of the most popular fast-food restaurants confirmed keeping to the same price of delivery - 500 Fils.

There are two kinds of taxis - The call taxi (which is more expensive) and the roaming taxi. According to Kuwait Times survey on taxis from different areas, their prices did not change as of yesterday. In fact, most of taxi operators were already charging higher fares more than the price set by the Ministry of Interior - even before the petrol price hike. Some of the (roaming) taxi operators don't even use the meters as stipulated by the Ministry. The taxi drivers always demand prices which are higher than the ones that appeared on the meter.

One of the 'call taxi' operators in Jabriya said that their prices will remain unchanged till next week - at least. "We have to study the situation and see how it works so as to decide whether to increase the price or not. Presently, we charge KD2.500 from Jabriya to Salmiya. Depending on the traffic situation, the price could go up to KD 5," Ahmad said.

Another taxi operator in Salwa also confirmed that the prices remained the same as of yesterday. On August 31, their fare (from Salwa to the Airport) was KD 6 and remained the same as of yesterday. According to the new price list issued by the Ministry of Interior, this is actually the maximum amount they can charge for that trip.

Khalid Al-Mutairi, a roaming taxi operator at Al Rai area is satisfied with the new price list. He said the price hike is fair for both the commuters and the taxi companies. "In the past, the charge was very low and it is unfair for the taxi operators. The meter opens with 50 Fils - and then each kilometer cost 50 Fils. So practically, the taxi operators were not making good profit. Now it should be 350 Fils at a start and then 125 Fils per kilometer," he told the Kuwait Times.

According to Al-Mutairi, the old low prices forced the taxi drivers not to use the meter and demand higher fares instead. "I believe that this problem will be solved with the new regulation. We have not switched to the new prices yet. We have to fix the meter according to Ministry of Interior's new price lists," he added. For now, bus and taxi operators are still operating on the old fares pending on when the new meter will become operational.

Kuwait became the last GCC country to hike subsidized



petrol prices as part of a broader effort to control government costs and cope with drop in oil revenues. The government on Monday approved the higher prices which took effect from

yesterday, with the price hikes ranging from 41 percent for low-octane petrol to 83 percent for environmentally friendly 'ultra' low-emission petrol.

Friday Times

# International

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2016

**'Road terrorism'  
sees traffic  
deaths rise**

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**Mother Teresa  
speeds to  
sainthood**

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**'Lion of Panjshir's  
son ready to take  
up his destiny**

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**NEW YORK:** This file photo taken on September 28, 2015 shows US President Barack Obama (R) and Russia's President Vladimir Putin (L) posing for a photo ahead of a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly at the United Nations headquarters. — AFP

## G20 OFFERS PUTIN LAST STAB AT OBAMA

### ONE MORE CHANCE TO STRONGARM SYRIA, UKRAINE DISCUSSIONS

**MOSCOW:** The G20 summit starting in China on Sunday gives Russian President Vladimir Putin one more chance to try to strongarm US leader Barack Obama over Syria and Ukraine as their fraught relationship nears an end. In recent years the two world leaders have barely been able to hide their disdain for each other as ties between Washington and Moscow fell to their lowest level since the Cold War over the crisis in Ukraine.

Now with elections for a new US president just over two months away, Russian analysts say an emboldened Putin could see the G20 as an opportunity to press for concessions from Obama, particularly on Syria if he wants to make progress on the war before leaving office. While neither the Kremlin nor the White House have announced any official bilateral meeting at the two-day gathering in the eastern Chinese city of Hangzhou, it is expected that the pair will talk at least informally. Putin "will try to get from Barack Obama... what he hasn't been able to obtain from Washington in the past," independent political analyst Maria Lipman told AFP.

But commentators said that with relations between the two sides in the gutter it was unlikely

any major breakthrough would happen before the end of Obama's time in power. "There is very little time left," Alexei Makarkin, from Moscow-based think tank The Centre for Political Technologies, said. "And there is a huge crisis of confidence between the two countries." Russia and the United States back opposing sides in Syria's five-year war, which has left 280,000 people dead and forced half the population to flee their homes.

Moscow, an ally of Damascus, and Washington, which supports moderate rebels fighting to unseat Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, are nominally co-chairs of the international effort seeking a negotiated end to the fighting. The pair have been trying to hammer out a deal on a new ceasefire in Syria and possible cooperation against the Islamic State group and other radical jihadists, but their top diplomats failed to clinch a final agreement at talks in Geneva last week. Obama said earlier in August that while "the US remains prepared to work with Russia to try to reduce the violence and strengthen our efforts" against jihadists, there remained a fundamental gulf. "I'm not confident that we can trust the Russians and Vladimir Putin," he said.

#### From reset to rupture

When Obama first came into the White House there was some hope in the US that Moscow and Washington could improve ties after bitter disputes over the invasion of Iraq and Moscow's war with Georgia. Ex-lawyer Dmitry Medvedev was president and in 2009 Secretary of State Hillary Clinton launched her bid to "reset" relations with the Kremlin. But the much hoped for boost in ties failed to materialize.

When ex-KGB officer Putin-whom Obama had chided for his "Cold War approaches"—returned to the presidency in 2012 amid mass protests the Kremlin blamed on the West, it appeared to spell the end for any real attempts at rapprochement. Ties were ultimately ruptured by Moscow's response to the 2014 pro-EU revolution in Kiev that ousted Russian-backed leader Viktor Yanukovich and threatened to wrench Ukraine out of Moscow's orbit. The Kremlin seized the Crimea peninsula from Ukraine in March 2014—in a dramatic rewriting of post-Soviet borders-before, according to the West, going on to fuel a separatist conflict in Ukraine's east. The US slapped sanctions on Moscow and tried to isolate Putin, but the Russian

strongman muscled his way back to centre stage by launching a surprise bombing campaign in Syria in September 2015 to back Assad. Despite his harsh criticism of the Russian leadership throughout his two terms, Russian foreign policy analyst Fyodor Lukyanov said Obama has always appeared "very prudent" in handling Putin. In 2013 Washington backed away from using military force against Assad's regime after it crossed the "red line" of using chemical weapons, allowing Putin instead to help push Damascus to give up its stockpiles.

Despite firm diplomatic backing, the US has also refused to send much-needed weaponry to Ukraine to help Kiev battle the pro-Russian rebels. "Together Putin and Obama have avoided the worst," Lukyanov said. "They have prevented Russian-American relations from turning into a direct conflict." And with the more hawkish Hillary Clinton now favourite to beat Donald Trump to be the next president, Lukyanov said that Moscow realised it might face a tougher US response in the future. "It will be very difficult for Moscow to find common ground with Washington after Obama's departure," he said. — AFP

## CAMPAIGNERS BLAME RUSSIA CLUSTER BOMB USE IN SYRIA

**GENEVA:** Evidence is growing that Russia is behind a significant increase in the use of cluster bombs in Syria, campaigners said yesterday. A coalition of NGOs led by Human Rights Watch (HRW) said in an annual study that more than 400 people were killed or maimed by the banned munitions in the world last year. They linked the increased use of cluster bombs in Syria to Russian forces who are carrying out air strikes in support of President Bashar Al-Assad's regime.

"Since Russia began its joint operation with Syrian forces at the end last September, we have seen an increase in the number of cluster munition attacks on opposition-held areas," Mary Wareham, HRW's arms advocacy director and editor of the report, told a press conference. "And at the moment we see evidence of cluster munition attacks every week, if not almost every day, which is highly disturbing," Wareham added.

Russia has repeatedly denied using cluster bombs, which spray bomblets indiscriminately. HRW admitted it was difficult to determine whether it was specifically Russian or Syrian forces which had used the bombs. "Nonetheless, this is a joint military operation, so collectively together they are responsible for the actions of their coalition," Wareham said. A total of 248 people were killed or injured by the munitions in Syria last year, almost all civilians, the Cluster Munition Monitor report said.

The bombs also killed or maimed 104 people in Yemen in 2015. The study provides an overview of how countries are implementing a landmark 2008 convention which bans all use, production, transfer and stockpiling of the weapons. Syria and Russia are not among the 100 signatories of the convention, but HRW says they remain bound by international law, which bans the indiscriminate attacks that are the hallmark of cluster bombings.

### Russian offensive

Attacks in Syria using the illegal weapons fell considerably in late 2014 and early 2015, but rose again after Russia began supporting Assad's forces last year, HRW and its partners said. In the four years since the Syrian regime launched its first air strikes in July 2012, at least 360 cluster munition attacks have been recorded, with 76 since Russia's intervention began last September. "The actual number is likely far higher," the report said.

The report, which was co-authored by several groups including Handicap International, said there was "compelling evidence" that cluster bombs had been used "on opposition-held areas of governorates such as Aleppo, Homs and Idlib, and on armed opposition groups".

### Soviet-era bombs

Syrian government forces have used at least 13 different types of cluster munitions produced by Russia and Egypt and some dated from the Soviet era, the report said. Several of the cluster bombs dropped since Russian forces entered the Syrian war last year were produced in 1989-91, it added. The report said this appeared to be "a noticeable shift" from before the Russian intervention, "when production markings on the cluster bombs used in Syria showed they were produced in the 1970s and 1980s."

A total of 417 people fell victim to the munitions worldwide last year, with children making up 43 percent of those killed or injured. Yemen is the only other country where cluster bomb attacks have been documented since July 2015. The report said the Saudi-led coalition waging a military campaign in support of Yemeni President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi's embattled government carried out at least 19 cluster munition attacks between April 2015 and last February.

Saudi Arabia has denied using cluster munitions against civilian targets. "The best way to ensure that cluster munitions don't harm civilians in Syria and Yemen is to stigmatize their use and press countries that are using them to stop the attacks," Wareham said. Syria and Yemen dominate the statistics, but six other countries recorded casualties, mainly from unexploded submunitions from attacks that took place years ago. Many of these devices fail to explode on impact, meaning countries such as Cambodia, Iraq, Laos and Vietnam often find it impossible to clear what become de facto landmines. Furthermore, many bomblets are brightly colored, attracting children and exploding when they are picked up. — AFP



**TUNIS:** Tunisians living in Europe drive with all their belongings attached to the roof of their car blocking the rear-view mirror on the motorway from the port city of La Goulette to Tunis on the outskirts of the Tunisian capital. — AFP

## TUNISIA 'ROAD TERRORISM' SEES TRAFFIC DEATHS RISE

### TOUGHER MEASURES TO END WIDESPREAD TRAFFIC OFFENCES

**TUNIS:** Run-down roads, reckless driving and poor vehicle maintenance are all being blamed for a spike in deadly traffic accidents in Tunisia that has safety experts worried. At least 16 people were killed and 85 injured on Wednesday when a lorry's brakes failed and it crashed into a bus in the centre of the country. The dawn accident near Kasserine also left around 15 cars ablaze in one of the country's worst crashes in recent years.

Road traffic deaths rose by nine percent in the first five months of this year compared with 2015, sparking calls for tougher measures to crack down on widespread traffic offences. By the end of May the death toll from road accidents in the nation of some 11 million inhabitants stood at a grim 528 people. "We're experiencing road terrorism. The accident rate is simply terrifying," says Imed Touil, head of the Tunisian Road Safety Association.

In a 2015 report from the World Health Organization, Tunisia had the second worst traffic death rate per capita in North Africa behind war-torn Libya. Tunisia logged 24.4 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants, according to data from previous years, less than Libya's 73.4 but far more than 2.9 in the United Kingdom. Activists say the climate of impunity since Tunisia's 2011 uprising is taking its heaviest toll on the young.

### 'Legal deterrents' needed

"Sixty percent of those killed are aged 15 to 39," Touil says, in a country where authorities have struggled to redress the economy and solve youth unemployment since the revolt that toppled longtime dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. "The state has the primary responsibility," he says, calling for "more legal deterrents" and bemoaning a lack of funding for public awareness campaigns on better driving.

The head of the country's main traffic authority says fines — 40 to 120 dinars (15 to 50 euros) for not wearing a seatbelt or for chatting on the phone while driving—are not

tough enough. Taking away a driver's licence would be much more effective, says Kameleddine Msekni. And then there are the bribes. A video shared online in June showing a policeman demanding a driver hand over 40 dinars caused public outrage and the officer was dismissed.

Tunisia's new government has made tackling corruption a priority more than five years after anger over graft fuelled the uprising. But in central Tunisia, a policeman asking not to be named says he and colleagues find it difficult to bring "increasingly unruly" drivers to order. "Since the revolution, road safety has got worse. Tunisian drivers are not scared of the police anymore and don't respect the traffic rules," he says.

### 'Lethal hazards'

In the capital, traffic violations are rife.

Motorists ignore red lights, hurtle down tram tracks, drive against traffic or double park their vehicles. But it is not just car drivers. Tunisians on scooters defy danger riding around without helmets, often with a child or two crammed in behind the handles. Just outside the capital, a vehicle inspector says the accident rate has nothing to do with Tunisia's ageing cars. It's the "irresponsible drivers", he says, asking to remain anonymous. Driving instructor Houssine Ettounsi says his students start out following the rules, but "become really reckless" once they have their licenses. This month, an editorial in Tunisian daily *Le Quotidien* criticized how easy it was to get a driving license in Tunisia. It slammed both a traffic authority "gangrened" by corruption and "fake license holders" who "turn into lethal hazards". — AFP

## ISRAEL SET TO DEMOLISH SETTLEMENT: MINISTER

**JERUSALEM:** Israel will carry out a court order to demolish the wildcat Jewish settlement of Amona in the West Bank by the end of the year, Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman said yesterday. However, a proposed plan to simply move the settlement to a nearby location has raised international concern. "I have said before and I say again to the settlers of Amona, there is a judgement of the (Israeli) Supreme Court and we shall honor it," Lieberman said at a Jewish school in the occupied West Bank on the first day of the new school year.

Amona, home to about 40 families, was built on lands privately owned by Palestinians, who successfully petitioned Israeli courts for the outpost's removal. After repeated delays, the Supreme Court ordered the settlers' eviction and the demolition of their homes by

December 25 this year. Last month, Israeli settlement watchdog Peace Now said that Lieberman's defence ministry was working to transplant Amona residents to confiscated Palestinian land a few meters from the present site, effectively legalizing the rogue outpost.

"We proposed a lot of alternatives and I hope we can find an option that the Amona settlers will also accept," Lieberman said yesterday. The United States has said it is "deeply concerned" by the relocation plan. "This would represent an unprecedented and troubling step that's inconsistent with prior Israeli legal opinion and counter to longstanding Israeli policy to not seize private Palestinian land for Israeli settlements," State Department spokeswoman Elizabeth Trudeau said last month. — AFP



**INGOLSTADT:** Refugees from Syria (four men in dark blue navy shirts) are trained by instructors of the German army Bundeswehr at the education center of the engineer forces of the German army Bundeswehr. — AFP

# UNSEEN REFUGEES DOMINATE GERMAN REGIONAL ELECTIONS

MIGRANTS CREATE IMPACT ON POLITICAL, SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

**WISMAR:** There's barely a refugee to be seen on the streets of northeastern Germany, but in campaigning for Sunday's regional election they feature everywhere—particularly at rallies of the populist, anti-migrant AfD party. "If we want to feel like we're still in Germany, we need to send a stop signal," cried an AfD candidate, Lars Loewe, on the campaign stump at Wismar, a Baltic coast town of 42,000 inhabitants.

Around 300 mostly middle-aged people and pensioners listened attentively at the rally a week before the vote in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania state, while tourists strolled by, admiring the seaside view with sailboats bobbing in the distance. Dozens of anti-fascist activists had also gathered nearby, waving banners like "Refugees welcome" and "Fck Nzs". The arrival of around a million asylum seekers in the country in 2015 has had a profound impact on Germany's political and social landscape. And analysts predict a voter backlash against the influx will be amplified in the state in Germany's former communist east, the country's least populous and poorest, which in 2006 elected members of the neo-Nazi party NPD to its regional parliament.

**'Resuscitated the AfD'**

Take a stroll around any of the state's key cities, like Rostock, state

capital Schwerin or Chancellor Angela Merkel's constituency Stralsund, and there is little sign of the many refugees Germany has taken in over the past year. After all, the state accepted only a relatively small number under a quota system based on income and population — 25,000 asylum seekers last year. Few of them have stayed, with most seeking greater opportunities to work and study elsewhere. Nevertheless, up and down the state, the talk is all about Germany's refugee influx.

"The people have the impression that we have the reception of refugees under control here, but not in the rest of the country," said Gabriele Sauerbier, who was campaigning at the Wismar street market for the far-left party Die Linke. Juergen Joost, secretary general of Alfa, a splinter party that broke away from the AfD last year, charged that Merkel is to blame for the rise of the populist group. With her decision a year ago to open the German borders to Syrian refugees then stuck in Hungary, "Merkel resuscitated the AfD, which had been left for dead," he said. The AfD, or Alternative for Germany, had started life as an anti-euro party but lost steam as the single currency bloc overcame the debt crisis.

Instead it turned anti-migrant, a strategy that has helped it score strong results in three state elections this year. In the latest pre-election opinion sur-

veys, the AfD was polling at 21 percent, within reach of Merkel's CDU at 22 percent and the Social Democrats (SPD) at 28 percent.

**'They listen to us'**

On the campaign trail, the CDU's candidate Frieder Weinhold sought valiantly to sell the state government's record in bringing down the unemployment rate—which has halved in a decade to around 10 percent. He also pointed out that start-ups and wind farms have sprouted along the coast, signs that a new and sustainable economy has been taking root. But even he conceded that Merkel "should have been a bit more prudent" on the question of refugees.

Die Linke's politicians argue that the root of the people's concerns remains the German "east-west divide" on income, including pensions, with the east still lagging behind a quarter of a century after reunification. That is why there is such anger when the government diverts funds to other causes, like hosting refugees, said Horst Lutz, one of the far-left party's leaders. The AfD, unapologetic about being a one-issue party, is seeking to scoop up the protest vote from those disillusioned by the political elite. Party supporter Hans Juergen said: "At least the AfD listens to us. If something's not right in Germany, we have to take action." — AFP

## POST-ELECTION VIOLENCE STIRS CHAOS IN GABON

**LIBREVILLE:** Gabon's opposition leader said security forces killed two people and wounded 19 at his headquarters yesterday, as violence erupted after President Ali Bongo was declared the winner of disputed polls. Thousands of angry protesters poured onto the streets of Libreville late Wednesday, accusing the government of stealing the election after Bongo won a second term by a razor-thin margin over rival Jean Ping. Gunfire crackled across the city and plumes of smoke billowed from the torched parliament building as protesters clashed with heavily armed security forces.

By mid-morning yesterday, security forces had sealed off the city centre, which was calm and otherwise deserted, and were making arrests around the opposition headquarters, AFP journalists said. It was not immediately clear where Ping—a veteran diplomat and former top African Union official who had earlier declared himself the poll winner—had taken refuge. Scenes of pillaging were reported from outlying districts and telephone and internet communications were cut. The parliament building's facade was blackened by fire and its windows were smashed. Protesters had torn down its huge main gate and torched a sentry box at the entrance.

On the city's main artery, the Boulevard Triomphal—the location of numerous government institutions and foreign embassies—burnt-out buildings and cars could be seen, while makeshift barricades were still smoldering. Security forces had surrounded the opposition headquarters overnight and stormed the building, killing two and injuring more than a dozen there, Ping told AFP. "They attacked around 1:00 am (0000 GMT). It is the Republican Guard. They were bombarding with helicopters and then they attacked on the ground. There are 19 people injured, some of them very seriously," said Ping, who was not himself at the party headquarters.

The president of the opposition National Union party, Zacharie Myboto, who was inside the besieged building, said security forces were hurling tear gas canisters and had opened fire. "For nearly an hour the building has been surrounded. They want to enter the building... it is extremely violent," he said shortly after the siege began.

**Lack of transparency**

A government spokesman said the operation was to catch "criminals" who had earlier set fire to the parliament building. "Armed people who set fire to the parliament had gathered at Jean Ping's headquarters along with hundreds of looters and thugs... they were not political protesters but criminals," said Alain-Claude Bilie-By-Nze. "We have said that the people of Gabon are in danger. They (the international community) should come and help us against the clan (of Bongo)," Ping told AFP.

The results of the presidential election, announced earlier Wednesday, handed Bongo a second term and extended his family's nearly five-decade-long rule. However, the results—which gave Bongo 49.8 percent to Ping's 48.23 percent (a gap of less than 6,000 votes) — remain "provisional" until approved by the constitutional court. The opposition described the election as fraudulent and called for results from each of Gabon's polling stations to be made public to ensure the credibility of the overall outcome—a demand echoed by the United States and European Union.

"This will help give the people of Gabon—as well as the international community—confidence the announced vote tallies are accurate," said US State Department spokesman John Kirby. Ping told France's Europe 1 radio early Thursday: "Everyone knows that he (Bongo) cheated. Ask in Europe. Everyone knows." EU observers said the vote was "managed in a way that lacked transparency" and opposition delegates in the electoral commission have already vowed to fight for a recount. Any appeal by Ping would likely focus on disputed results in Haut-Ogooue province, the heartland of Bongo's Teke ethnic group. — AFP



**LIBREVILLE:** Gabonese police forces patrol as they clear barricades in the streets adjacent to the National Assembly. — AFP

# MOTHER TERESA SPEEDS TO SAINTHOOD

## THOUSANDS EXPECTED AT SUNDAY'S CANONIZATION

**VATICAN CITY:** Affectionately called the "saint of the gutters" during her lifetime, Mother Teresa of Calcutta will be made an official saint of the Roman Catholic Church on Sunday, just 19 years after her death. A Nobel peace prize winner, Mother Teresa was one of the most influential women in the Church's 2,000-year history, acclaimed for her work amongst the world's poorest of the poor in the slums of the Indian city now called Kolkata. Hundreds of thousands of faithful are expected to attend the canonization service for the tiny nun, which will be led by Pope Francis in front of St Peter's basilica.

Although criticized both during her life and following her death, Mother Teresa is revered by Catholics as a model of compassion who brought relief to the sick and dying, opening branches of her Missionaries of Charity (MoC) order around the world. "Even in popular culture she's identified with goodness, kindness, charity," said Father Brian Kolodiejchuk, the MoC priest who campaigned for her sainthood.

In novels or movies often characters say, "Oh, who do you think I am? Mother Teresa?" he told Reuters. Her critics view her differently, arguing she did little to alleviate the pain of the terminally ill and nothing to stamp out the root causes of poverty. In 1991, the British medical journal the Lancet visited a home she ran in Kolkata for the dying and said untrained carers failed to recognize when some patients could have been cured. Kolodiejchuk said her detractors missed the point of her mission, arguing that she had created a place to comfort people in their final days rather than establish hospitals. "We



**ROME:** A visitor passes by pictures of Mother Teresa, the Albanian Roman Catholic nun and missionary, during a photograph exhibition held in Rome yesterday. — AFP

don't have to prove that saints were perfect, because no one is perfect," he said.

### Christianity 'not the only way'

In her adopted India, a primarily Hindu nation, Mother Teresa has been accused of looking to convert the destitute to Christianity - something her mission has

repeatedly denied. The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the umbrella right-wing Hindu organization that helped create India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), also accuses Mother Teresa of reveling in the misery of others.

"As a resident of Kolkata, I feel insulted to see its poverty being glorified by the MoC. As

a Hindu nationalist I also feel that Christianity is not the only way of salvation," said Jishnu Bose, the RSS spokesman in the city. But Mother Teresa still has legions of supporters in India, including BJP Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "All her life she worked to serve poorer sections of Indian society. When such a person is conferred with sainthood, it is natural for Indians to feel proud," Modi said on Sunday in a radio broadcast.

Mother Teresa was born Agnese Gonxha Bojaxhiu of Albanian parents in 1910 in what was then part of the Ottoman Empire and is now Macedonia. She became a nun at 16 and moved to India in 1929, creating her mission in 1950. The Roman Catholic Church has more than 10,000 saints, many of whom had to wait centuries before their elevation. But Mother Teresa, one of the most recognizable faces of the 20th century, was put on the fast track to sainthood after dying of a heart attack on Sept. 5, 1997.

The late Pope John Paul II bent Vatican rules to allow the procedure to establish her case for sainthood to be launched two years after her death instead of the usual five, and she was beatified in 2003. The Church defines saints as those believed to have been holy enough during their lives to now be in Heaven and able to intercede with God to perform miracles. She has been credited with two miracles, both involving the healing of sick people. The latest involved a Brazilian, Marcilio Andriano, who unexpectedly recovered from a severe brain infection in 2008. He and his wife Fernanda will attend the canonization, which is considered the highlight of Pope Francis's Holy Year of Mercy. — Reuters

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MEXICO CITY: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, center, walks to take his place as Mexico's President Enrique Peña Nieto, prepares to speak during a joint statement at Los Pinos, the presidential official residence. — AP

## MEXICAN PRESIDENT LIKELY HURT BY 'ILL-ADVISED' TRUMP MEETING

### MEET COULD BE A PUBLIC RELATIONS DISASTER

**MEXICO CITY:** President Enrique Peña Nieto's meeting with Mexico's most-disliked man is turning into a public relations disaster for a leader already struggling with historically low popularity ratings. Not only did Peña Nieto not demand that Donald Trump apologize for calling Mexican migrants rapists and criminals, but he stood silently by in their joint press conference while the Republican candidate repeated his promise to build a border wall between the countries. "This is an insult and a betrayal," said artist Arturo Meade as he joined a protest against Wednesday's meeting in Mexico City. "What can this meeting bring us except surrealism in all its splendor?"

Televisa news anchor Carlos Loret de Mola marveled that Trump would dare come to Mexico and reiterate his intention to build the wall. "The humiliation is now complete," he tweeted. Particularly irksome to Mexicans was that Peña Nieto appeared to do little to push back against Trump's earlier negative statements about Mexican migrants and unpopular proposals. Peña Nieto "did not even take a really strong stand and talk to Mr. Trump directly to his face and tell him exactly why his stances are not acceptable to Mexicans," said Tony Payan, director of the Mexico Center at Rice University's

Baker Institute. "He sounded tepid and too soft. He essentially rolled over and allowed Mr. Trump to get away with his own goals without getting anything in return."

Peña Nieto did say that Mexicans felt "aggrieved" and had disagreements with Trump, but most felt that it was not enough. Javier Urbano Reyes, a professor in the department of International Studies at the Iberoamerican University in Mexico City, said he thought Trump gained a little with the meeting but Mexico's president lost a lot. "Without a doubt, my perception is that it is going to make it even worse, even stronger the drop in approval," he said, referring to Peña Nieto's near 20-percent approval rating, according to recent polls.

#### Sagging campaign

Former Mexican President Vicente Fox said Trump was trying to boost his sagging campaign. "He fooled him (Peña Nieto)." Peña Nieto and Trump even appeared to disagree about what was said in the meeting. Standing next to Peña Nieto, Trump said the topic of who would pay for the wall would be discussed later. Peña Nieto, at the time, said nothing about the wall.

Hours later, Peña Nieto said in a tweet that he had told Trump clearly in

their private meeting that Mexico would not pay. It seemed to contradict Trump's statement that payment wasn't discussed, but the president's office said only that Peña Nieto made his statement and the topic was dropped. Later Wednesday night, in a speech on immigration in Phoenix, Arizona, Trump made building the wall the featured element of his immigration plan. He referred to Peña Nieto as a "wonderful, wonderful president," but reaffirmed the pledge he had not repeated in Mexico: "They don't know it yet, but they're going to pay for the wall."

Amid the growing uproar in Mexico over the meeting, Peña Nieto told Televisa's Denise Maerker that he'd invited Trump because his policies are a threat to Mexico - precisely the reason why most Mexicans think he shouldn't have met with him. Payan hypothesized that Peña Nieto had little good news to give in his state-of-the-nation address scheduled for Thursday and was looking for a distraction with the "ill-advised" meeting. "Maybe Peña saw the opportunity to distract the attention of the Mexican people," he said. Writer Angeles Mastretta tweeted that Mexicans saw "what was expected: a president who isn't capable of demanding apologies ... how sad." — AP

## WATCHDOG GIVES CLINTON FOUNDATION HIGH MARKS

**WASHINGTON:** A charity watchdog with an ongoing relationship with the Clinton Foundation gave the former first family's nonprofit high marks yesterday, after an evaluation prompted by the heightened interest in the organization. The Clinton Foundation received four out of four stars - the highest rating that Charity Navigator gives after a close look at a charity's finances. The rating is based on annual federal tax documents. It was not intended to reflect whether Hillary Clinton kept donors to her family's foundation at appropriate arm's length or provided favored access as secretary of state.

Charity Navigator is a leading and respected organization that evaluates and rates charities so donors can make informed decisions about contributions. It was itself a member of the Clinton Global Initiative between 2012 and 2014. The Clinton group said Charity Navigator committed to spend an estimated \$2 million over four years through 2016 to review more charities and provide more detailed information about them in its reviews.

Charity Navigator also participated in a Clinton Global Initiative program in 2011 with other groups to identify worthy charities for US veterans, journalism integrity and Islamic outreach, but Charity Navigator did not contribute money as part of that effort. Charity Navigator's president, Michael Thatcher, told The Associated Press that the Clinton campaign did not influence the rating.

#### Intense scrutiny

The four-star badge comes at a time when the Clinton Foundation is under intense scrutiny about whether Clinton granted donors access at the State Department. An AP analysis found that of 154 people outside government with private interests who met or spoke to Clinton by phone, 85 had contributed either personally or through their organizations to the foundation. The Clinton campaign said Clinton would have met with the donors, anyway, in her role as secretary of state.

The watchdog had previously rated the Clinton Foundation with four stars in 2007, and in 2012 downgraded it to three stars due to changes in its methodology. Its original four-star rating was based on the foundation's financial health and performance. In 2012, it also evaluated the charity on accountability and transparency. Charity Navigator requires five independent board members, but the foundation had only three during the 2009 fiscal year, Thatcher said. The downgrade came the same year that Charity Navigator was a member of the Clinton Global Initiative.

The Clinton Global Initiative waived its membership fees for Charity Navigator, as it does for nonprofits, nongovernment organizations and social entrepreneurs. Charity Navigator treated the \$20,000 waiver as an in-kind donation. Thatcher said his group joined Clinton's to mingle with world leaders and promote its ratings. He said the new rating was unrelated to Charity Navigator's relationship with the foundation. "The numbers speak for themselves," he said.

The rating itself is a fixed algorithm, described in detail on the watchdog's website. It looks at the financial health of charities and their accountability and transparency. In the Clinton Foundation's case, it scored 94.74 out of 100. It was dinged on two minor issues, its donor privacy policy and its process for determining the chief executive officer's salary. The Clinton Foundation and Clinton campaign could not immediately be reached for comment. Charity Navigator currently evaluates 8,351 charities, and most get a three-star rating.

#### 'A' rating

According to its 2014 consolidated tax report, the Clinton Foundation spends about 12 percent of its budget on running the foundation. Another charity watchdog, Charity Watch, previously gave the Clinton Foundation an "A" rating on a scale of A-F. Charity Watch has no connection to the Clinton Foundation, said its president, Daniel Borochoff. "We don't want money from charities we rate, because we believe in being an independent charity watchdog," he said.

Charity Navigator stopped rating the Clinton Foundation entirely in 2014 because it said changes in the foundation's business structure were incompatible with the way Charity Navigator calculates its ratings. After what Thatcher described as "unprecedented demand" for a rating for the Clinton Foundation, Charity Navigator asked the foundation to consolidate its tax forms in a way the watchdog could evaluate it. That led to Thursday's four-star rating. — AP

## CIVIL RIGHTS SITES RISK BEING LOST TO HISTORY

**ALBUQUERQUE:** A once-thriving all-black settlement in the New Mexico desert is a ghost town that rarely appears on maps. Tour buses pass but never stop at a Houston building where Latino activists planned civil rights events. Motels that welcomed minority motorists along 1950s Route 66 sit abandoned.

From a Civil War battlefield where Hispanic Union soldiers fought to birthplaces of civil rights leaders, sites linked to the nation's struggle for racial equality are overlooked, neglected and absent from travel guides. Some states like Alabama, once known for discrimination and violence, are making strides to preserve historic sites. Advocates say it's time that more states and local communities work to draw attention to the sites before they are lost forever to memory and time.

The efforts come amid a demographic shift that indicates the US population will be majority-minority by mid-century, highlighting a need to cover all history. "I think generally we need to be more inclusive," said Rita Powdrell, president of the African American Museum & Cultural Center of New Mexico. "There are a lot of sites that should be recognized and remembered because they tell our story."

In Albuquerque, for example, there are no detectable markers for black civil rights advocate and 1950 Nobel Peace Prize Ralph Bunche, who attended school in the city. There also are no historic makers for David C. Marcus, an Albuquerque High School graduate who represented Latinos in landmark desegregation cases in California, including *Mendez v. Westminster* that challenged Orange County's segregated school system.

Though funds are limited, efforts are underway to save some sites. In Houston, a nonprofit recently formed to restore a building that served as a meeting place for Latino civil rights groups during the 1950s, said Ray Valdez, president of the League of United Latin American Citizens' LULAC Council 60. It was there that Gus Garcia and other legendary lawyers met to map out desegregation cases, and John J Herrera planned the historic meeting with President John F Kennedy the night before his assassination. "Previous LULAC leaders left it in bad shape," Valdez said. "They hadn't paid property taxes on it for several years. They hadn't kept maintenance on it for several years."

### Buried memories

The nonprofit hopes to use the building as a community center and museum on Mexican-American history, Valdez said. Not all states and cities are letting time bury memories of their civil rights sites. In Alabama, for example, tourism officials invite visitors to experience such places as the University of Alabama's Foster Auditorium, where Gov. George Wallace stood at the entrance to prevent two black students from entering. The students were later allowed to enroll after President Kennedy placed the Alabama National Guide under federal control.

In nearby Birmingham, the city promotes a civil rights heritage trail. Visitors can see more than 70 sites of national merit designated by the National Register of Historic Places in Birmingham's Civil Rights District. Among those sites are the 16th Street Baptist Church, where four young black girls were killed in a church bombing. Statues of civil rights marchers are at locations of critical demonstrations.

In Oakland, California, there are markers around the city to highlight locations connected to the Black Panther Party of the late 1960s. And also in Albuquerque, city officials are working on a revitalization plan for the De Anza Motor Lodge. The empty and fenced off building was one of the motels that offered lodging to black and Hispanic travelers along the famed Route 66 from Chicago to Los Angeles during segregation.

New Mexico's Tourism Department also promotes the state's Hispanic and Native American heritage, encouraging visitors to take a trip to Taos Pueblo or Santa Fe Plaza. But little is done to promote Blackdom, the all-black frontier ghost town that some advocates say could be turned into a tourism attraction. The state also doesn't have a marker in the northern New Mexico ghost town of Dawson, the birthplace of United Farm Workers co-founder Dolores Huerta. Recently, the Albuquerque Public Schools named a school after pioneer Latino scholar George I. Sanchez, who was born in the city. — AP



**BRASILIA:** Brazil's ousted President Dilma Rousseff, center, waves to a pedestrian as she rides her bike near the official residence of the president, Alvorada Palace. — AP

## BRAZIL'S ROUSSEFF LOSES PALACE BUT LIFE OF LUXURY GOES ON POST-IMPEACHMENT LIFE WON'T BE SO BAD

**BRASÍLIA:** Dilma Rousseff will soon abandon Brazil's beautiful presidential palace along with its luxury sports facilities and helicopter pad-but perhaps post-impeachment life won't be so bad after all. Stripped of office by the Senate on Wednesday, Brazil's first female president joined the ranks of nearly 12 million unemployed in Latin America's biggest country. She'll walk out one last time from the modernist Alvorada Palace in Brasilia, taking her pet dachshund Fafa with her.

She will have to rediscover life without the presidential plane and an army of secretaries, advisors, cooks and guards, along with an approximately \$9,500 monthly salary and other perks that come with governing the country of 206 million people. But she's not exactly being thrown out on the street. Rousseff is expected to return within days to her hometown of Porto Alegre in the south of Brazil, where she keeps a modest apartment.

However, she gets 30 days to check out of the Palácio da Alvorada, which translates as Palace of Dawn. The moving is paid for and she'll be able to use an Air Force plane one last time, *Folha* newspaper reported. She'll also retain eight staff: four guards, two aides, and two drivers, Brazilian media reports say.

### From Dawn to Sadness

As her impeachment trial moved inexorably toward conviction on charges of having illegally manipulated government accounts, Rousseff already started weeks ago to move books and clothes to Porto Alegre, *Folha* reported. Her apartment is in a neighborhood of the seaside city called Tristeza, meaning sadness. However, Rousseff is said to have always been happy there.

Escaping there during her bruising impeachment trial, Rousseff would bicycle in the mornings and see her daughter

Paula, ex-husband Carlos Araujo and grandsons Gabriel and Guilherme, *ZH Política* reported. The sea air "helps her relax," the newspaper quoted politicians close to Rousseff as saying. Some argue she may even be relieved to quit the Alvorada. Designed by the brilliant Oscar Niemeyer, the low, white building on the outskirts of Brasilia might feel cavernous and isolated for a single, elderly woman.

There are glass walls, a vast lawn, enormous swimming pool, separate chapel, and all sorts of goodies like a medical center and movie theater. This being Brazil, there's also a football pitch. "She'll be sorry to leave. She has a 24 hour doctor there. She can't even know how ordinary

Brazilians live and how horrible our public hospitals are," said tour guide Irma Ferreira, 47, who knows the palace well from taking tourists on weekly visits.

But others say something on a more human scale will be a welcome change. "Honestly, I think she'd feel more comfortable with a simpler way of life," said Alexandre Fragos Lacerda, a 41-year-old systems analyst standing outside the Alvorada to show his support for the ex-president. New Yorker Arnold Stevens, who was on one of Ferreira's tours, agreed, calling the palace "very spooky." "It's in such a serene environment, so calm-it belies the drama happening right now," Stevens, 31, said. — AFP

## HAWAII HIT BY STRONG RAIN

**HILO:** Heavy rains hit parts of Hawaii and strong waves pummeled shorelines as a downgraded yet potent Pacific storm passed near the island state. Though Tropical Storm Madeline was no longer a hurricane, the weather's uncertainty couldn't let Hawaii's Big Island relax. There were periods of intense rainfall Wednesday as the National Weather Service downgraded Madeline, with winds falling below hurricane strength of 74 mph.

Wind speed diminished steadily throughout the day and by 11 pm Wednesday, they were swirling at 50 mph. Forecasters said continued weakening was expected. Madeline's center was about 200 miles south of Hilo and moving west-southwest and away from the state at 14 mph. Though the storm was not predicted to make landfall on any Hawaiian island, the Big Island and Maui County remained under tropical storm warnings because of threats from

wind and rain.

Strong winds were gusting on Oahu as a series of bright blue flashes lit up the night sky above Honolulu. The power went off in the hillside neighborhood but the lights in most of downtown Honolulu remained on. There was no rain accompanying the blustery weather and only scattered clouds whizzed by overhead.

On the Big Island, waves crashed into a seawall that surrounds Liliuokalani Gardens Park at Hilo Bay. Water accumulated on the grass of the gardens, leaving stairs of a pavilion partially submerged. "That heavy rainfall is interspersed with sunny patches," said Kanani Aton, spokeswoman for Hawaii County Civil Defense. Officials said residents should continue to be prepared for more rain, strong winds and high surf overnight. The rainfall may lead to dangerous flash floods and mudslides, the weather service warned. — AP

## DELHI WOMEN'S MINISTER SACKED FOR 'SEX TAPE'

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi women's minister has been sacked after a 'sex video' showing him kissing two women was leaked to the media, in the latest scandal involving the Indian capital's government. Women's and children's minister Sandeep Kumar was removed from his post by the Delhi chief minister late Wednesday shortly after the "objectionable" tape was sent to him and national television stations. "We never try to cover up wrongdoings when evidence comes up against our ministers or party workers, unlike other parties," chief minister Arvind Kejriwal said yesterday. "Recd (received) objectionable CD of minister Sandeep Kr. AAP stands for propriety in public life," Kejriwal said on Twitter late Wednesday, announcing the sacking and referring to his anti-corruption Aam Aadmi Party.

Kumar, a married father of one, said he was the victim of a political conspiracy over the tape ostensibly showing him on a bed dressed only in his shorts kissing one of the women. Only snippets of the video have been aired on news channels but they, along with photographs, appear to also show him kissing another woman. "This is a conspiracy against me because I was becoming a prominent face of the Dalit community in the city," Kumar told reporters yesterday, referring to India's lowest social Dalit caste. "Check the authenticity of the CD. It is a matter of investigation, a conspiracy to suppress me."

The opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which rules at the national level and has been embroiled in bitter disputes with Kejriwal's government, called on the chief minister to resign. Kejriwal, an anti-corruption campaigner turned politician, oversaw a dramatic landslide victory over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP at city elections last year. But his government has been hit by controversy, with the law minister arrested in June last year on allegations his law degree was fake and another minister removed over corruption allegations. — AFP

## BEIJING PUTS ON BEST FACE FOR G20 SUMMIT

**BEIJING:** When China signed up to host this week's G20 summit two years ago, it seemed like an ideal venue to showcase its financial accomplishments and assume the mantle of international leadership. Since then it has struggled to steer its giant economy through a slowdown, the free-wheeling stock market went into convulsions, and concerns over chronic industrial overcapacity and massive government lending have deepened.

Beijing's aggressive stance in the South China Sea, where it has created artificial islands in disputed territory, has also created alarm and joins a list of awkward issues authorities are keen to leave off the agenda in the summit city of Hangzhou. The Group of 20, which accounts for 85 percent of world GDP and two-thirds of its population, is the biggest international policy gathering the country has held, and it has made every effort to ensure it goes flawlessly.

The government has dramatically renovated Hangzhou, a tourist destination known for its scenic West Lake, shut down hundreds of factories to ensure telegenic blue skies, and rolled out restrictive security precautions. "We all pin hopes on this summit to inject new life and impetus for world economic growth," foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said this week. But China and its uber-confident President Xi Jinping have other, less selfless ambitions at a gathering that is expected to be short on breakthroughs.

"The whole exercise will be about giving China a lot of face," said Jean-Pierre Cabestan of Hong Kong Baptist University. Xi "wants to show that China will be at the centre of global governance, which the G20 is supposed to be". To that end, Beijing is eager to promote its work on climate change, its new infrastructure bank which poses a potent challenge to the World Bank, and a massive spending plan to build a new Silk Road. "Clearly, Xi will try harder to demonstrate that China is a responsible stakeholder and a responsible neighbor of Japan, South Korea and other Asian countries," Cabestan said. He "will be very keen to demonstrate that China doesn't have any enemies". — AFP



**BAZARAK, PANJSHIR, Afghanistan:** Ahmad Massoud, the son of Ahmad Shah Massoud (center) walks after praying at the tomb of his late father at Saricha of Bazarak District in Panjshir Province. — AFP photos

# 'LION OF PANJSHIR'S SON READY TO TAKE UP HIS AFGHAN DESTINY

**BAZARAK:** His first public appearance was at the tender age of 12, a tiny figure walking, head down in grief, beside his legendary father's coffin. Fifteen years later, Ahmad Massoud, son of Ahmad Shah Massoud—the charismatic, French-speaking mujahedeen commander who held the Soviets at bay and was Afghanistan's last bulwark against the Taliban—is ready to step into the spotlight once more.

When he arrives unannounced at his father's tomb in an immaculate white shalwar kameez, it is as though he were an apparition: a woman in a burqa falls to her knees and wails, while an elderly man in a faded turban wipes his eyes. The young Ahmad has the same deep brown eyes as his father, whose portrait by turns pensive, serious, laughing—adorns every wall, shop, corner of every road in the valley he held undefeated.

Dubbed the "Lion of Panjshir", Massoud the elder was commander of a mujahedeen force that battered one of the world's two superpowers into submission, and later of the Northern Alliance formed to fight the Taliban. He is a national hero, though memories of him in Kabul are tainted by destruction in the capital during the civil war of the 1990s. But in the famed Panjshir Valley, three hours north of the city, devotion is without nuance.

Massoud was killed on September 9, 2001, by two fake reporters sent by Al-Qaeda, the terrorist organization's gift to its hosts in Afghanistan, the Taliban. It was just two days before its attacks on the United States. Fifteen years on Ahmad recounts his father's last days to AFP, surrounded by flowers in the family's garden, their brightness set off by the camel-colored mountains of the valley. Coming face to face with his father's body was a profound shock for a child who, despite war's devastation, had never seen a corpse before. "Everything changed," he says. "From that moment I realized I had to change everything I learned so far, and at the age of 12 I had to be another person."

### Devoted to Afghanistan

All of Panjshir attended the comman-

der's funeral amid chaos: by then the 9/11 attacks had taken place, and Afghanistan—still under Taliban rule—knew it would be war. When Ahmad appeared, crowds surged behind him. The child walked with his head down, his hands clasped behind his back, as his father had done. His clear voice moved mourners to tears as he echoed Massoud's call for independence. It was not until years later that he understood the true burden of his inheritance. "I was in love with astronomy," he said. "I was full of energy, I was on fire."

But one of his father's friends told him: "We expect you to work on a solution for the Afghan people, and I don't think you will find it on another planet." His passion doused, he made instead for London, King's College to study international relations. Now 27, Ahmad is set to complete his schooling and return home. It was all for Afghanistan, he says. "I studied to come back. I have no dual nationalities, I have no property outside Afghanistan, I have nothing... I am completely devoted." Afghanistan in 2016 remains insecure. "This government has kept none of its promises," Ahmad says.

Facing a resurgent Taliban, Washington renewed its military commitments to Kabul in June, and Ahmad expressed his gratitude for international support even as he remained critical of US policies. "With the campaign of Iraq, they completely overlooked Afghanistan and they allowed a false shepherd ... to be in charge," he says, resulting in the mess of today. He refused to name names. But the criticism appeared to target both current president Ashraf Ghani—who shares power in a fragile agreement negotiated by the US with Massoud's ally, Abdullah Abdullah—and Ghani's predecessor, Hamid Karzai.

### 'They hijacked Islam'

Much of the pathos surrounding Ahmad Shah Massoud includes speculation about how Afghanistan would look today had he lived. "He did not want anyone to intervene in Afghanistan," Ahmad says. His father warned the world about



**BAZARAK, PANJSHIR, Afghanistan:** Ahmad Massoud, gestures as he speaks during an interview with AFP at the Jangalak village of Bazarak District in Panjshir Province.

bin Laden, he says, referring to a speech Massoud made to the European Parliament in the spring of 2001 calling for support for Afghanistan "to stand against this". But the world did not listen, Ahmad says, and after 9/11 it was too late. Fifteen years have passed, with billions of dollars spent, and thousands killed. Ahmad brands it all a "waste".

"They killed my father in the name of Islam... They did not care that my father was a Muslim," he says. "They... just hijacked Islam—they do not believe or understand Islam. And I can strongly say, they are not Muslim. They are simply terrorists." So does he see himself taking up a political role on the national stage—MP, minister, president—as did his warrior father, who was defense minister after driving the Soviets out? "Why not," he says—if it is the will of the people. If not, "I become a teacher." At his father's tomb, perched above the valley near rusted Soviet tanks, Ahmad greets the children of admirers and poses for selfies. How does he describe the response? "Love," he says. — AFP



# MYANMAR POWERFUL MILITIA STORMS OUT OF PEACE TALKS

## AN EARLY BLOW TO A LANDMARK GATHERING

**NAYPYIDAW:** Delegates from one of Myanmar's most heavily armed ethnic groups stormed out of peace talks yesterday in an early blow to a landmark gathering aimed at ushering in a new era of peace. The five-day conference in the capital Naypyidaw has been hailed as the best chance in a generation for Myanmar to end wars that have raged for up to 70-years, claiming thousands of lives and keeping the country mired in poverty.

Among the militias attending is the powerful 20,000-strong United Wa State Army. They stopped fighting the government years back in exchange for control of a remote portion of territory bordering China which is now a notorious drug manufacturing hub. They had originally refused to make this week's talks, arguing they signed their own ceasefire with the previous military government back in 1989. But they eventually agreed to attend following discussions last month with de facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi and after pressure was applied by China, which retains signifi-

cant influence over the group.

Yet on day two of the talks four USWA delegates walked out, officials said, reportedly after being told they could not address the gathering. Government peace negotiator Khin Zaw Oo told reporters the Wa had been given observer badges, instead of ones allowing them to speak, angering their delegation. But he played down their departure, saying it was a "misunderstanding" that could be solved. "This is a misunderstanding," he said. "Our committee will go and meet them if they are here (in Naypyidaw). We will negotiate."

### Discrimination

A spokesman for the militia told the Democratic Voice of Burma they had left after being told they were only accredited as observers, calling it discrimination. But Lian Hmung Sakhong, from the Chin National Front, another ethnic group at the talks, denied the Wa faced discrimination. "We give equal rights to them and gave them a front row seat. I would like to confirm again that we did what

they demanded," he said. Several complex ethnic conflicts are rumbling across Myanmar's borderlands, hampering efforts to build the country's economy after the end of junta rule. Many militias have grown rich from trafficking drugs, illegal gems and timber while deep seated distrust remains among ethnic minorities of the country's notorious military which ruled for decades with an iron fist. Suu Kyi wants to convene a meeting to thrash out the precepts of greater federal autonomy for ethnic groups in exchange for peace. While they have not fought against the military for years, the Wa are accused of producing and trafficking huge amounts of methamphetamine and heroin from their secretive holdout and buying weapons with the proceeds. During a visit by Suu Kyi to Beijing earlier this month, Chinese President Xi Jinping promised to support Myanmar's peace process, comments that were widely perceived to be a boost for her new administration's attempts to bring the Wa into the peace process. —AFP

## AUSTRALIA'S TWO BIGGEST CITIES CANCEL MAO ZEDONG CONCERTS

**SYDNEY:** Australia's two biggest cities Sydney and Melbourne cancelled concerts commemorating the death of former Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong, with one citing safety concerns, after Chinese Australians complained the content was insensitive. The incident signifies the continued divisiveness of Mao among Chinese, both at home and abroad, four decades after his death.

In China there is a quiet resurgence in popularity towards Mao, with his image adorning banknotes and his embalmed body attracting hundreds, if not thousands, of visitors a day to Beijing. But there is also continued criticism among Chinese of his reign, under which tens of millions died. For weeks, Chinese in Sydney and Melbourne complained that the "Glory and Dream" concerts, scheduled for September in both cities' town halls, lionize a leader they see as responsible for millions of deaths. Yesterday, a spokesperson for the City of Sydney said in an email that after consulting police, the council had "concerns regarding the potential for civil disturbance, patron-to-patron conflict and staff-to-patron conflict" and cancelled the event. The spokesperson said the concert organizers, who booked the venue and arranged the concerts without council involvement, had also determined that the event was "at high risk of disruption and elevated risk to personal safety". A spokeswoman for City of Melbourne said the concert was also cancelled in that city, but declined to give a reason saying it was the decision of the organizers. — Reuters



**XIENG KHOUANG, Laos:** This picture shows workers from COPE (Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise), holding a prosthetic leg at a mobile clinic in Xieng Khouang. —AFP photos



**VIENTIANE:** This picture shows bomblets from a cluster bomb hanging at the Visitor Centre of COPE, a Laos charity working with the Ministry of Health specializing in limbs for amputees, in Vientiane.

# US BOMBLETS STILL MAIM AS OBAMA GEARS FOR LAOS TRIP

**XIENG KHOUANG:** This year's summer holidays had only just begun when Viet became a fresh casualty of a secret bombing campaign the United States conducted in Laos decades ago. The 13-year-old was helping his family clear fields in June when his shovel disturbed one of the millions of cluster bomblets that still litter his homeland after being dropped some 50 years ago in a sideshow to the Vietnam War.

The legacy of the conflict and its enduring consequences will feature prominently during a visit next week by Barack Obama, the first ever by a US president to Laos. During the trip he is expected to announce the ramping up of a US program to clear unexploded devices, echoing similar moves Washington took in Vietnam as relations between the two former foes blossomed. But any injection of money will come too late for Viet.

Despite lying dormant for decades, the baseball sized bomblet exploded when it was

disturbed beneath the soil, spraying shards of hot metal through his body and hands. Getting Viet the help he needed was a grueling ordeal. "We live very far from the city," his brother recalled to AFP as Viet, dressed in a knock-off French football strip, recovered from his wounds in a hospital in northern Xieng Khouang province. "It was raining and we had borrowed a car but it got stuck on the dirt road," he explained. "So we had to walk for over two hours with my brother bleeding away until a motorcycle drove by and we finally got to the hospital." Viet lost several fingers as a result.

### Death from above

Laos became the world's most-bombed country per capita from 1964 to 1973 as the United States launched a secret CIA-led war to cut supplies flowing to communist fighters during the Vietnam War. More than two million tons of bombs were dropped. About 30

percent did not explode, including an estimated 80 million cluster munition "bomblets". Some 50,000 people were killed or injured by bombs between the start of the war and 2008, according to Laos government data. However, bomb clearances and education campaigns have since reduced the casualty rate to around 40 people a year. One of Asia's least developed nations, Laos is tightly ruled by its communist leaders, who successfully faced down the relentless bombing campaign.

Relations between the two countries were strained for decades but have dramatically improved in recent years, especially as Obama has hailed a "pivot" to the region as a pillar of US foreign policy. His Laos trip, which is preceded by a G20 summit in China, is Obama's 11th visit to Asia since he took office. But the scars of Washington's war in Laos are still visible. During the Vietnam War, Laos' mountainous, jungle-covered eastern provinces were

criss-crossed with North Vietnamese supply lines making them a target for American bombers. Some clearance work has been done. But in Xieng Khouang province, amputees are still a common sight.

### Injured need more

Yhong Vueyha, 63, remembers the bombs falling. He survived. But the war caught up with him years later while taking out the garbage. "I was burning some trash in my yard when a submunition buried nearby detonated, ripping off my arm," he said. "I've become a burden to my family since because I am no longer much use in the fields," he lamented. Yhong should regain some autonomy soon. A few weeks ago Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise (COPE), a Laos charity working with the Ministry of Health that specializes in limbs for amputees, visited his village and took measurements for a prosthetic limb. —AFP

## HONG KONG SCHOOL TERM BEGINS; STUDENTS CALL FOR INDEPENDENCE

**HONG KONG:** Hong Kong schools are becoming a new battleground in a nascent campaign for the city's independence, with some young activists starting the new term yesterday by defying authorities with calls for a split from mainland China. The free-wheeling business hub has been on edge over the past couple of years over a campaign by some residents to preserve and promote their city's freedoms in the face of what they see as a bid by Beijing to curb them. The former British territory returned to Chinese rule in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" pact meant to safeguard its ways but the refusal of Beijing to give ground on a demand for full democracy has sapped many people's faith in the formula.

"One country, two systems' is just a lie so Hong Kong independence is our way out," said one 15-year-old student who is a

member of an umbrella group promoting discussion of independence in schools. As teenagers headed into the Munsang College yesterday, one student dressed in its all-white uniform handed out stickers displaying a mock "Republic of Hong Kong Passport". It was not long before a teacher led him inside. A vice principal told Reuters the boy's material had not been approved by the student council, though the school welcomed balanced debate.

Outside the gates of another school, Ying Wa College, a 17-year-old distributed leaflets urging students to think about alternatives to "one country, two systems". Media reported such campaigning at least six schools. Debate on independence was once unheard of in Hong Kong and for most residents it remains a youthful dream rather than a serious proposal that Beijing will ever

consider. But the fact that it is being debated illustrates what many in the city consider a sea change brought about by 79 days of student-led pro-democracy protests in 2014.

### Warnings

Since then, many city residents have decried what they see as increasing Beijing interference in various sectors to stifle dissent, including in schools. "We are doing what the Communist Party has been doing," Andy Chan, a leader of a pro-independence political party, told Reuters, referring to what he believes is infiltration into student groups by China's ruling Communist Party.

Chan, who was disqualified from running in a city legislative election on Sunday because of his views, said his group was tar-

geting school children as they were future leaders. Authorities have warned against the promotion of independence, saying classroom discussions should be confined to the boundaries set by Hong Kong's mini constitution, the Basic Law, which states the city is an "inalienable part" of China.

Hong Kong's Secretary for Education Eddie Ng told reporters after meeting Ministry of Education officials in Beijing last month he had raised the prospect of ideas on independence "invading" campuses. "No pro-independence advocacy or activities should be allowed in schools," Hong Kong's Education Bureau said in a response to Reuters, adding that teachers should stick to the Basic Law as a framework and avoid "political indoctrination". The bureau has said teachers who promote independence could lose their qualification. —Reuters

## US CHARGES EX-AIR CHINA WORKER FOR SMUGGLING FOR CHINA'S ARMY

**NEW YORK:** An ex-Air China Ltd employee was indicted on Wednesday for smuggling packages onto flights from New York to China on behalf of Chinese military personnel stationed at the country's UN mission, US prosecutors said. Ying Lin, 46, was also accused in an indictment filed in federal court in Brooklyn of obstructing justice by helping a Chinese national the Federal Bureau of Investigation was investigating to flee the country last year.

Prosecutors did not name the Chinese national, but his description matches that of Qin Fei of Beijing, who other court records show the FBI has suspected may be involved with Chinese intelligence. Qin's link to Lin was revealed recently following the filing in court of the FBI's 2015 interview of Ng Lap Seng, a Macau billionaire accused of participating in a UN bribery and who was also linked to Lin. Lawyers for Lin and Qin did not respond to requests for comment. Ng's lawyer declined comment. An Air China spokeswoman did not respond to requests for comment.

China's Defense Ministry declined to comment. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said she "did not understand the relevant situation". She did not elaborate. Lin, a resident of the city's Queens borough, was previously arrested in August 2015 and charged for structuring financial transactions. She pleaded not guilty. The new indictment alleged Lin, while working for Air China at New York's John F Kennedy International Airport, helped smuggle packages onto flights from Chinese military officers at its UN mission and employees at China's consulate.

In return, Lin received discounted liquor from diplomatic duty-free shops and tax-exempt electronic device purchases, prosecutors said. The obstruction charge stemmed from a warning the indictment said Lin gave to a Chinese national after FBI agents interviewed her two adult daughters in October 2015. The indictment said Lin helped the individual, called her "Confederate," depart on an Air China flight for Beijing that Oct 28. While not named, the indictment said Lin was responsible for renovating and furnishing a Long Island residence the "Confederate" owned. Property records list Lin as an agent for Qin's \$10 million Long Island mansion.

In his FBI interview, Ng discussed Qin's mansion. He called Qin a consultant at Ng's company, Sun Kian Ip Group. Prosecutors have accused Ng of giving John Ashe, who served as UN General Assembly from 2013 to 2014, over \$500,000 in bribes to, among other things, support a UN-backed conference center in Macau his company would develop. Ashe, a former UN ambassador from Antigua and Barbuda, died in June awaiting trial. Ng has pleaded not guilty. —Reuters



**NANGARHAR:** An Afghan health worker administers polio drops to a child during a polio vaccination campaign in the Surkh Rod district of Nangarhar province. US lawmakers are pressing Washington to get tough on institutionalized sexual slavery of boys by Afghan forces, with some invoking a human rights law that prohibits American aid to foreign military units committing such violations. —AFP

## MPS URGE CRACKDOWN ON AFGHAN CHILD SEX SLAVERY

### WASHINGTON URGED TO TACKLE INSTITUTIONALIZED SLAVERY

**WASHINGTON:** US lawmakers are pressing Washington to get tough on institutionalized sexual slavery of boys by Afghan forces, with some invoking a human rights law that prohibits American aid to foreign military units committing such violations. The call follows an AFP report in June which revealed the Taliban are exploiting the entrenched practice of pedophilic "bacha bazi"—literally "boy play"—in the Afghan police to mount deadly insider attacks in the country's volatile south.

The revelation prompted congressman Duncan Hunter to demand US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter take "immediate steps to stop child rape" amid an American military presence in Afghanistan. The Department of Defense replied to Hunter last week,

stating in a letter seen by AFP that it was committed to holding perpetrators accountable.

The letter added that General John Nicholson, the US commander in Afghanistan, had "reaffirmed" tactical guidance "stating that when US personnel suspect members of (Afghan security forces) have violated human rights, including child sexual abuse, they must report that... to appropriate (Afghan) officials". The response falls far short of a zero tolerance policy, Hunter said. "At the very least, the US government should state, as a position of official policy, that child rape amid a US force presence won't be tolerated and expectations should be imposed on how allegations and evidence are handled," he told AFP this week. "So

far that's yet to occur beyond a simple reporting requirement."

That view was echoed by other US lawmakers who last year called on watchdog agency SIGAR to launch an independent probe into "predatory sexual behavior" by Afghan forces, which is still ongoing. Many had expressed shock over media reports suggesting the US military had disciplined American personnel who tried to intervene to stop bacha bazi abuse, and urged SIGAR to focus on the implementation of the so-called Leahy Law. The 1997 law, named after Senator Patrick Leahy, prohibits US assistance to allied foreign military and police units against whom credible evidence of grave human violations exists. —AFP

# Lifestyle

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2016

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

Two giraffes stand together in their enclosure at the zoo in Berlin yesterday. — AFP

**Dubai opens massive indoor theme park**

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# Dubai opens massive Marvel-branded indoor theme park



An Emirati woman walks past a statue of Captain America at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. —AP photos



Two women prepare to ride the Thor Thunder Spin at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park.

As summer temperatures soared outside, the world's largest indoor theme park, featuring popular Marvel and Cartoon Network-branded rides, opened its doors to the public on Wednesday in the Middle East's tourist hub of Dubai - the latest in a myriad of new attractions here. The first visitors at the 1.5 million square foot (140,000 square meters) - park reflected the diverse crowds that visit and live in Dubai, home to the world's tallest skyscraper, the Middle East's largest mall and a man-made island in the shape of a palm tree that is dotted with luxury hotels.

Saudi women dressed in abayas, the traditional loose black robes, and the full face-veil, rode alongside tank-top wearing British tourists and Indian families on the park's roller coasters and attractions. Several families with young children complained that some of the rides stalled several times. Others said they were thrilled by the adventure park's indoor boulevard that leads visitors through Marvel and Cartoon Network zones, a "Haunted Hotel" and a Lost Valley Dinosaur zone. The IMG Worlds of Adventure park recorded about 3,000 visitors Wednesday as temperatures rose to 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 Celsius) outside.

#### Exciting rides

Ali Al-Subai, a visitor from Saudi Arabia, said he was happy the Gulf region has a place like this to visit during the summer. The 26-year-old said he visits Dubai at least four times a year and hopes his country too can one day open similar theme parks. "It's very, very nice. Better than I imagined," he said. "We wish for this in Saudi Arabia - the rides, the cinemas." Dubai



Two teenagers look at a statue of the Incredible Hulk that includes a fancy pen on sale at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park.

ruler and United Arab Emirates Vice President Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid toured the more than \$1 billion park earlier on Wednesday. The adventure park is one of two major theme parks opening this year in Dubai, part of an effort to attract 20 million tourists annually by 2020, when the emirate is to host the World Expo. Last year, some 14 million people visited Dubai, according to the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing. The highest share of visitors came from neighboring Gulf countries, with Saudi Arabia topping the list.

Teens Abdullah Jameel and Sultan Al-Suweidi, both from Dubai, said they enjoyed the park more than Universal Studios in Singapore. They said the IMG Worlds of Adventure park wins in their opinion - because of shorter lines and more exciting rides. They beamed after riding the Velociraptor roller coaster that swoops through the indoor park, then juts out into the Dubai desert surrounding the park before going back inside. Another main attraction is the Predator roller coaster, with its sharp, vertical drop.

#### Powerpuff Girls scrambler

Spider-Man too has his own ride, a spinning roller coaster that propels riders through a New York City skyline, soaring much like the fictional superhero would as he fights to save the city from the sinister Doctor Octopus. A Cartoon Network-themed Powerpuff Girls scrambler glides and spins riders upside down, while a 5-D theater experience takes guests through an animated Ben 10 battle scene. The park aims to attract up to 30,000 visitors on peak days. Along with its 22 rides and attractions, the park offers visitors 25 retail

outlets and 28 food and beverage outlets that are expected to contribute to nearly a quarter of the park's overall revenue. At the high-end Marvel Vault store, an extravagant Hulk-inspired gold display that holds a pen with precious stones costs almost 115,000 dirhams (\$31,300).

Despite thrills at every turn, British tourist Tariq Collins said the entry ticket cost of 300 dirhams (\$82) for adults and 250 dirhams (\$68) for children was "a bit pricey". He said there were not as many attractions for his five-year-old daughter as he'd hoped there would be. "Apart from that, great. Very nicely done," he said, before adding that some of the rides were not working. The park's Chief Executive Officer Lennard Otto said this is not uncommon in the theme park industry. "No theme park today, whether it's Disney or Universal, has 100 percent upkeep time on their rides," he said. "Rides will break. They're the same as any other technology. The key for us to try and manage the experience after that."

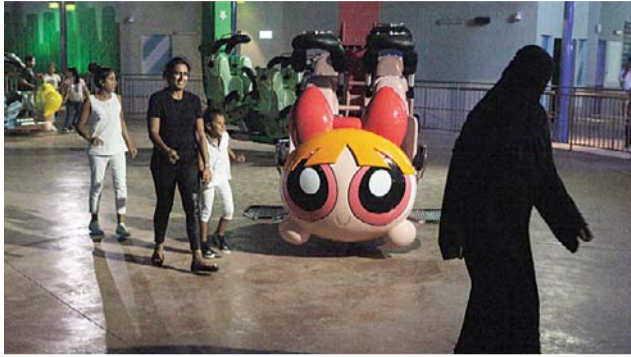
Otto said the park plans to add five more attractions in the coming five years. It's "definitely a new feather in Dubai's cap" and helps fill a gap in the Gulf market for quality entertainment destinations, he said. In October, a \$2.8 billion theme park is slated to open on the main highway connecting Dubai with Abu Dhabi, the UAE seat of government. Dubai Parks and Resorts will feature a Six Flags, a Legoland waterpark and roller coaster, Bollywood-themed rides and shows, and a Motiongate movie-themed park with a Smurfs village. Abu Dhabi is already home to Ferrari World and is planning a Warner Bros.-themed park. —AP



Daredevils ride the Predator roller coaster at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park.



A woman waits for the Powerpuff Girls - Mojo Jojo's Robot Rampage ride to begin at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park.



People get off the Powerpuff Girls - Mojo Jojo's Robot Rampage ride at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park.



An actor portraying a bellhop tries to draw in guests to The Haunted Hotel at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park.



A young boy reacts to having his picture taken at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park.



A man puts a small boy on his shoulders to look at an animatronic dinosaur at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park in Dubai.



People gather near an animatronic dinosaur at the IMG Worlds of Adventure amusement park.

## ARTISTS BACK APPEAL OF 'BLURRED LINES' COPYRIGHT VERDICT

More than 200 musicians have joined Robin Thicke and Pharrell Williams in appealing a landmark court verdict that found that their hit "Blurred Lines" stole from Marvin Gaye. Williams, a leading songwriter, and "Blurred Lines" lead singer Thicke were ordered in March 2015 to pay \$7.4 million to the estate of soul legend Gaye after a jury found that they plagiarized his song "Got to Give It Up." The judgment, later reduced to \$5.3 million, sent shockwaves through the songwriting community, which has been accustomed to lawsuits alleging musical similarities but never expected courts to take such claims seriously.

In a letter of support for the artists' appeal, 212 musicians who said they had no direct benefit from the ruling voiced alarm at the precedent that was being set. The signatories include Belinda Carlisle and fellow members of pop group The Go-Go's, John Oates of chart-topping duo Hall & Oates, Rich Robinson of blues rockers The Black Crowes, Curt Smith of New Wave greats Tears for Fears and members of hard rock groups Great White and Poison. The artists said they were "concerned about the potential adverse impact on their own creativity, on the creativity of future artists and on the music industry in general, if the judgment in this case is allowed to stand." "By eliminating any meaningful standard for drawing the line between permissible inspiration and unlawful copying, the judgment is certain to stifle creativity and impede

the creative process," they said in a court filing.

In what was probably an unintentional allusion to the lyrics of "Blurred Lines," the artists said that the law "should provide clearer rules so that songwriters can know when the line is crossed, or at least where the line is." Since the "Blurred Lines" verdict, a growing number of prominent artists including Led Zeppelin and Ed Sheeran have faced copyright lawsuits. The jury agreed with Gaye's family that the bass line and sounds of a party



Robin Thicke (left) and Pharrell Williams (right) have been sued by Marvin Gaye's estate for plagiarizing his song "Got to Give It Up". —AFP

atmosphere in "Blurred Lines," the top-selling song in the United States in 2013, unjustly imitated 1977's "Got to Give It Up."

Ed McPherson, a lawyer who submitted the artists' letter, said Gaye's family would have a chance to present its own evidence within the next three weeks. Formal arguments for the appeal case are not expected to take place until a year from now, he said Wednesday. —AFP



In this file photo, The Black Eyed Peas perform at Nickelodeon's 24th Annual Kids' Choice Awards in Los Angeles. —AP

## Black Eyed Peas reunite for new 'Where Is The Love?' version

Black Eyed Peas are reuniting after a five-year hiatus for a new rendition of their song "Where Is The Love?" aimed at ending gun violence. "Where Is The Love?" was originally released in 2003 and reached No. 8 on the Billboard singles chart. Black Eyed Peas members will.i.am, apl.de.ap, Taboo and Fergie are joined by such performers as Jamie Foxx, Ty Dolla \$ign, Mary J. Blige, Justin Timberlake and Jaden Smith for the song.

A statement says the song and accompanying video scheduled for release Wednesday "calls for calm, asking citizens of the world to stop the hate and violence that has resulted in many lives lost." The proceeds for "#WHEREISTHELOVE" will go to the foundation of will.i.am's i.am.angel. The charity funds educational programs and college scholarships. —AP



Shoppers walk on two levels of the newly opened Westfield World Trade Center mall in New York. — AP photos



The Westfield World Trade Center mall opens in the oculus of the transportation hub in New York.

# The new downtown: Lower Manhattan reborn 15 years after 9/11

**F**ifteen years after the Sept 11th attacks, Lower Manhattan has been reborn. The revitalization of the city's downtown, powered by \$30 billion in government and private investment, includes not just the reconstruction of the World Trade Center site, but also two new malls filled with upscale retailers, thousands of new hotel rooms and dozens of eateries ranging from a new Eataly to a French food hall, Le District.

The statistics alone are stunning. There are 29 hotels in the neighborhood, compared to six before 9/11. More than 60,000 people live downtown, nearly triple the number in 2000. And last year, the area hosted a record 14 million visitors, according to the Alliance for Downtown New York. And while there's plenty to do downtown for free, including seeing the 9/11 memorial park, visitors have also shown a willingness to pay relatively steep prices for certain attractions. The 9/11 museum, which charges \$24, has drawn 6.67 million visitors since its May 2014 opening. The observatory atop One World Trade Center, which charges \$34, has drawn 3 million people in the 15 months since it opened. In comparison, the Statue of Liberty gets about 4 million visitors a year.

"I don't think anyone would have expected that we would have rebounded so robustly, so quickly," said Jessica Lappin, pres-

ident of the Alliance for Downtown New York. "There's the physical transformation at the site itself, but there's also the neighborhood. There's an energy here. People could have given up after 9/11 and nobody would have blamed them. Instead there has been a tenacity, a dedication that is inspiring."

### Revitalization efforts

The Alliance for Downtown New York was founded before 9/11, in 1995, when the "neighborhood was on its heels," Lappin recalled. "The vacancy rate was going through the roof." At the time, downtown was a strictly 9-to-5 area, keyed to the workday rhythms of Wall Street and City Hall, deserted at night and on weekends. Revitalization efforts were just getting underway "when 9/11 hit and changed everything." But as government funding for disaster recovery began to pour in, private investment followed, spurring a massive rebuilding that continues to this day.

For blocks surrounding One World Trade, half-built towers and cranes still clutter the sky, barricades and scaffolding line the streets, and the whine and clatter of jackhammers fill the air. Construction workers in hardhats are as ubiquitous as tourists. The recession hampered efforts to bring businesses back, but

Lappin says private sector employment - 266,000 workers - is finally nearing pre-9/11 numbers. Conde Nast and Time Inc. have relocated downtown. Group M, one of the world's biggest advertising firms, will move into Three World Trade Center when it's complete. So far, three towers have been built with plans for more. The neighborhood is also becoming a shopping destination. Brookfield Place opened last year with luxury retailers like Gucci and Diane von Furstenberg. It also houses Le District, a French food hall with a creperie, cafe, bar and more, as well as Hudson Eats, with outposts of popular local eateries like Mighty Quinn's BBQ and Num Pang's Cambodian sandwiches.

### Massive transit center

A second shopping center, Westfield, opened in August inside the Oculus, a striking white structure designed by famed architect Santiago Calatrava. The curves of the Oculus' two ribbed wings are silhouetted by One World Trade rising behind it. Inside the Oculus, retailers range from Apple to Kate Spade to The Art of Shaving. The complex connects to Four World Trade, where the new Eataly NYC Downtown offers a bounty of bread, cheese, coffee, produce, pasta and more. Below ground a massive transit



Visitors take in the sights at the World Trade Center in New York.



The lower Manhattan skyline, including One World Trade Center and the Brooklyn Bridge, are shown in New York.



The Beekman, center, is being renovated into a luxury hotel in New York.



Window seating in Eataly offers a view of One World Trade Center, right, in New York.



The bar in Eataly's 'osteria della pace' restaurant opens in New York.

center houses subways and a New Jersey PATH train station.

Elsewhere in Lower Manhattan, a Tom Colicchio restaurant is planned for the just-opened Beekman Hotel; the soon-to-open Four Seasons hotel will host a Wolfgang Puck restaurant, and the storied Nobu restaurant will move downtown from Tribeca. Other downtown attractions include Alexander Hamilton's tomb in the graveyard of Trinity Church, the National Museum of the American Indian and the SeaGlass Carousel, which opened last year near where boats leave for the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. But near the top of many visitors' New York itineraries these days is a pilgrimage to the place where planes turned the twin towers into smoking piles of twisted steel and rubble. The tranquil park formally known as the National September 11 Memorial features tree-lined walkways and reflecting pools in the footprints of the twin towers.

Bronze parapets around the pools bear the names of the nearly 3,000 dead. On Monday, park visitors included three siblings from Barcelona, Arantxa, Meus and Pau Saloni, on their first trip to New York. "It's really sad to see all the names, but it's nice to remember them," said Meus. Also visiting Monday were Su-Ting Fu and his family, in town from suburban Westchester. "We lived in New York City when 9/11 happened," he said. "But we hadn't come to see this until today. It's nice to see everything they've done to memorialize it, but I also love the greenery, and how it feels very much like a living type of memorial." Lappin said the neighborhood's rebirth is a fitting tribute to the 9/11 tragedy. "We honor those who were lost, but we also celebrate life and move forward." — AP

## ANCIENT EGYPTIANS USED METAL IN WOODEN SHIPS

A piece of wood recovered at a dig near the Great Pyramid of Giza shows for the first time that ancient Egyptians used metal in their boats, archaeologists said Wednesday. Circular and U-shaped metal hooks were found in one of the components of a boat, discovered the same year as Khufu's "solar boat", buried near the Great Pyramid. Solar boats, buried in pits next to royal burial chambers, may have been used for a pharaoh's funeral procession, while others were intended for travels in the afterworld.

The piece of wood measures eight meters (25 foot) in length, 40 centimeters (almost 16 inches) wide and four centimeters in thickness. From the boats found across Egypt, "we have not found the use of metals in their frames like in this boat", Mohamed Mostafa Abdel-Megeed, an antiquities ministry official and expert in boat-making in ancient Egypt, told AFP on the sidelines of a Cairo press conference. The U-shaped hooks were used "to place the paddles to prevent friction of wood against wood", said Sakuji Yoshimura, an Egyptologist from Japan. The Great Pyramid—also known as the Pyramid of Cheops—is the largest of the three Giza pyramids. It houses the tomb of Pharaoh Khufu who ruled more than 4,500 years ago. — AFP



Egyptian archaeologist Mohamed Anwar works on parts of the second solar boat of Pharaoh Khufu at the restoration laboratory, located behind the Great Pyramid of Cheops (aka Pyramid of Khufu) on the Giza Plateau, on the southern outskirts of the capital Cairo. — AFP



The cover of US publisher Marvel's comic book, featuring Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as a super hero in front of a newstand in Montreal, Canada. — AFP

## Justin Trudeau - Marvel's latest superhero

He snowboards, he hikes, he surfs—Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is already a bit of an action hero. But now, Marvel has made him into a real superhero, in a comic book that hit newsstands Wednesday. Trudeau graces one of two covers of the latest edition of "Civil War II: Choosing Sides"—seated in the corner of a boxing ring, smiling, his elbows resting on the ropes, with the maple leaf symbol emblazoned on his tank top and wearing red boxing gloves.

The 44-year-old prime minister is surrounded by Canadian superheroes Puck, Sasquatch and Aurora—members of the Alpha Flight squad—as Iron Man looms in the background. The main cover in circulation does not feature Trudeau. The comic book also introduces a mysterious new character, Ulysses, who has the power to predict the future.

Trudeau is consulted in his Ottawa office by the members of Alpha Flight after a disagreement breaks out over how to leverage Ulysses's powers. Captain Marvel wants to take measures to prevent crimes before they occur, while Tony Stark (Iron Man) views it as immoral to punish anyone for a crime they have not yet committed. Trudeau takes a principled view, telling his comrades: "Above all else civil liberties must be protected. "I think imprisoning people for crimes they may not even have thought of yet is wrong... I think this is a dangerous path you've embarked on." Trudeau's father Pierre, who also served as Canada's prime minister, also appeared in a Marvel comic released in 1979. — AFP



# Tuna never tasted as good as in this Asian-inspired salad

By Melissa d'Arabian

**C**anned tuna is underrated. Sure, we keep a can or two on hand for the occasional tuna salad sandwich, but most of us don't stray far from the sandwich for this tasty and versatile protein. Canned tuna can be used as a protein swap in many recipes (tuna tacos are amazing!), and it's shelf-stable, inexpensive and chock-full of protein. One cup of drained canned tuna packs in about 40 grams of protein, so it's a filling enough for either lunch or dinner. Budget cooks take note: Tuna is easy to nab on sale for a buck or so a can, even for name brands, so load up when it's on sale since it has an incredibly long shelf life.

Most tuna seems to be packed in water these days to save calories. But I personally like the flavor better of oil-packed fish - it tastes more like fresh fish - so I usually keep a couple of oil-packed cans around for some recipes where I want a richer flavor, and I just drain the oil away. Also, I always keep a can (or jar) of high-end tuna

in my pantry - a quality tuna packed in good olive oil will turn your tuna dishes into restaurant quality, but you'll definitely pay several dollars more. Your call.

Once you have a nice stock of canned tuna in the pantry, get creative. Consider almost any recipe where you use chicken or fish, and see if you can't substitute tuna. Tip: the more sophisticated the dish, the higher end the tuna should be. Mixing up some tuna patties? Chunk light tuna on sale is perfect for the task. Sauteeing up tuna in olive oil, garlic, lemon zest and chili flakes to toss with pasta for company? You'll want to spend a little more.

If you are worried about having taste flashbacks to your childhood of eating pink-spiky tuna-flecked mayo slathered between slices of white fluffy bread, my suggestion is to think about ethnic flavor profiles to redirect your taste buds - Italian (mix tuna into spicy tomato sauces), Thai, Chinese, and Mexican dishes made with canned tuna are some of my favorites.

## CHOPPED ALBACORE SALAD WITH ASIAN DRESSING

### Ingredients

Start to finish: 15 minutes

Servings: 4

4 cups chopped romaine lettuce  
3/4 cup chopped green beans  
3/4 cup chopped carrots  
1/2 cup chopped red sweet pepper  
1/4 cup quartered grape tomatoes  
1/2 avocado, cubed  
1/4 cup chopped almonds  
2 scallions, chopped  
3 5-ounce cans albacore tuna, drained

1/4 cup chopped cilantro

### Dressing

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger  
1 garlic clove, finely minced  
2 tablespoons reduced-sodium soy sauce  
2 tablespoons lime juice  
2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar  
1/4 teaspoon sriracha, or other hot sauce  
1 teaspoon sesame oil  
3 tablespoons grape seed oil, or other neutral oil

### Preparation

Place all the salad ingredients in a large bowl. In a small bowl, vigorously whisk together the dressing ingredients. Spoon about half of the dressing onto the salad and toss to coat. Taste, and add more dressing as desired. Serve immediately.

Nutrition information per serving  
300 calories; 150 calories from fat; 17 g fat (2 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 47 mg cholesterol; 379 mg sodium; 11 g carbohydrate; 5 g fiber; 4 g sugar; 28 g protein



# Roasted Cherry Tomatoes with Burrata

By Katie Workman

If you want to end the summer with a bang and be reminded how the best and simplest ingredients produce the most magical results, then this is the dish to make before the leaves change and thoughts turn to stew. Burrata is a semisoft, white Italian cheese made from mozzarella and cream. Imagine the softest, creamiest fresh mozzarella ever, but the inside is filled with buttery cream that runs out when you cut it open. It's like the cheese version of a molten chocolate cake (a brownie-like cake with warm chocolate sauce in the middle).

Hopefully by now you're ready to jump in the car and find yourself some burrata. It's available at cheese shops and well-stocked supermarkets; if you can't find it, get fresh mozzarella instead, but don't give up the search. Roasting the cherry tomatoes caramelizes them and brings out even more natural sweetness. You don't need to have them on the vine; this dish is also beautiful with an assortment of cherry tomatoes in different colors. You can make the (nut-free) basil oil ahead of time and store it in a covered container in the fridge for up to three days.

## Ingredients

Start to finish: 1 hour

Servings: 8 as an appetizer

1 1/2 pounds cherry tomatoes, on the vine if desired

1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 cup fresh basil leaves

1/4 cup fresh parsley leaves

1/2 teaspoon minced garlic

1 teaspoon lemon juice

1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

Freshly ground pepper to taste

2 balls burrata (about 1/2 pound each), at room temperature

Crusty bread to serve

## Preparation

Preheat the oven to 300 F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and coat it with nonstick cooking spray. Place the tomatoes on the baking sheet and toss them with 2 tablespoons olive oil (if they are on the vine, just drizzle the tomatoes with the olive oil, and use your hands to make sure they are nicely coated). Season with salt and pepper. Roast for about 30 minutes, until they are wrinkly and slightly collapsed.

Meanwhile, make the basil oil: Place the basil, parsley, garlic, lemon juice, 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper in a food processor, and pulse several times to roughly chop. With the motor running, add 1/2 cup of the olive oil through the top of the processor. When the oil is added, scrape down the sides of the food processor and process again.

Transfer the tomatoes to a serving platter along with any juices that they have released, and let cool to barely warm or room temperature. They will release some of their juices as they cool, which is not only OK but desirable. When ready to serve, cut each burrata in half and nestle the cheese among the tomatoes, making sure not to lose any of the creamy filling. You may want to add a bit more salt and pepper. Drizzle about half the basil oil over the tomatoes and cheese and serve with the crusty bread, and the rest of the basil oil on the side for extra drizzling.

## Nutrition information per serving

322 calories; 253 calories from fat; 28 g fat (10 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 40 mg cholesterol; 288 mg sodium; 4 g carbohydrate; 1 g fiber; 2 g sugar; 11 g protein

## ROASTED CHERRY TOMATOES WITH BURRATA AND BASIL OIL





26

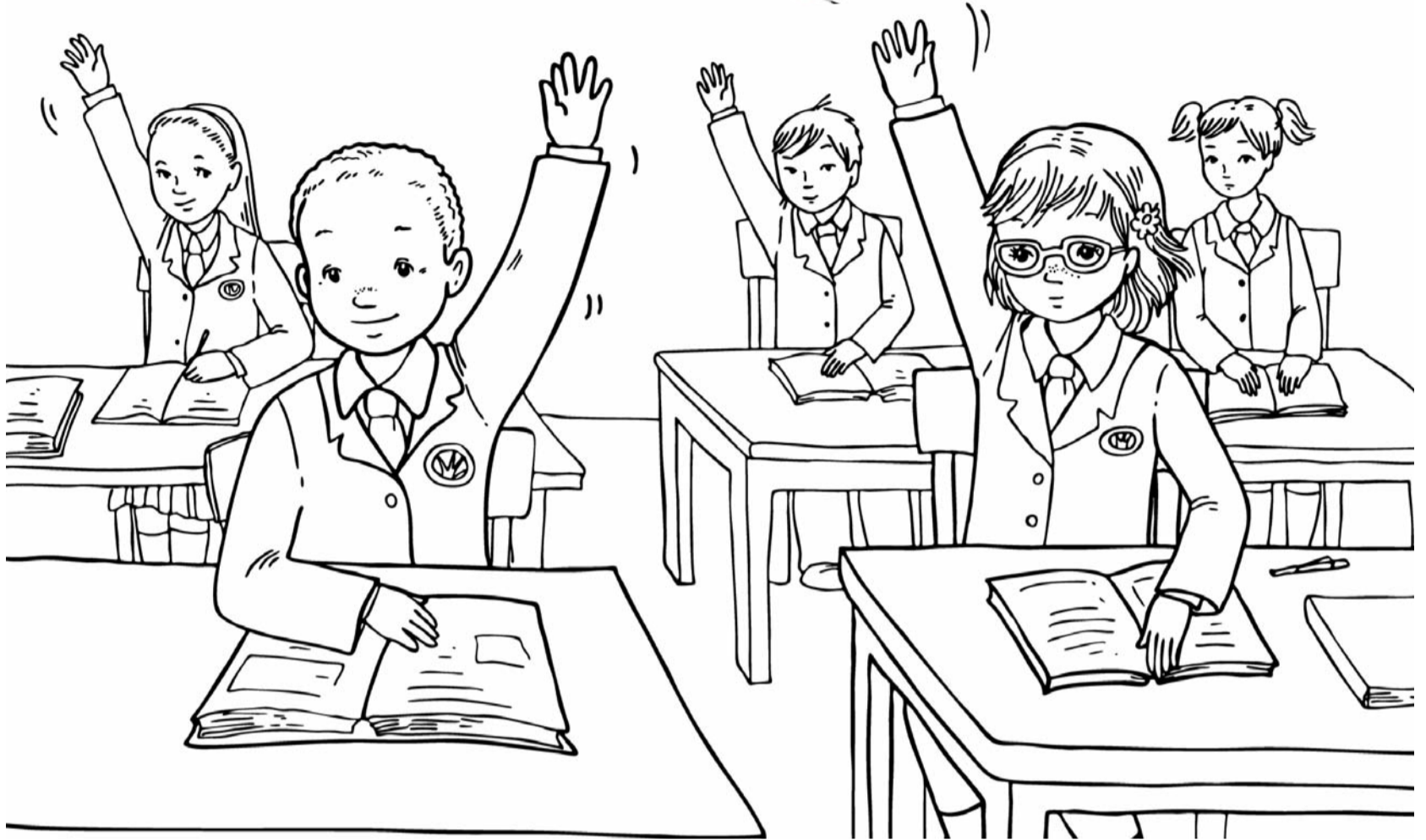
Friday Times

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2016

Kids

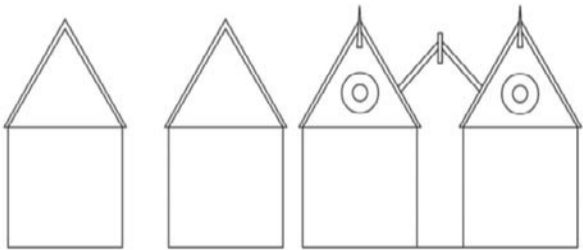


Color the classroom



### Laugh out Loud

#### Learn to Draw a School



Why did the teacher wear sunglasses?

*Because her class was so bright.*



How was your first day of term?

*Fine but some man called Teacher kept spoiling all our fun.*



When do you get shouted at for something you didn't do?

*When you haven't done your homework.*



What is black and white and very hard?

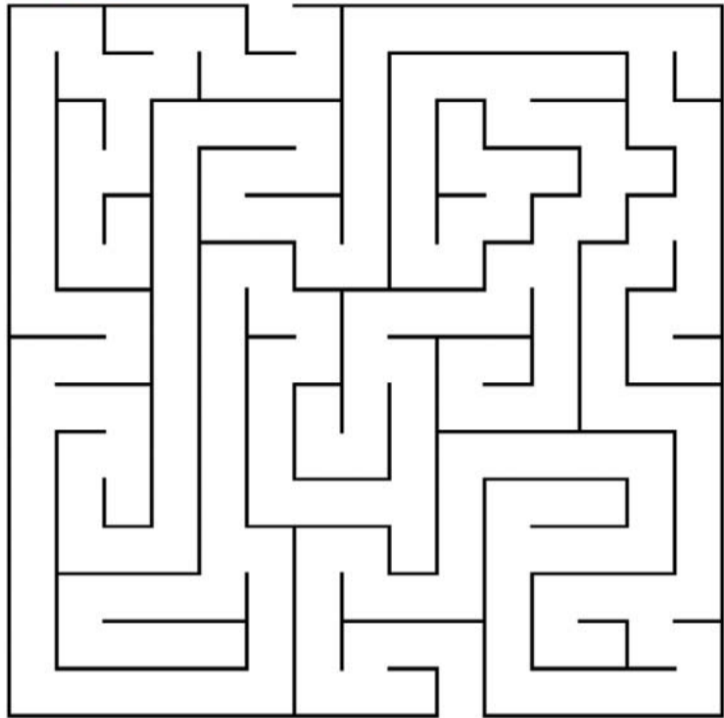
*An exam paper.*





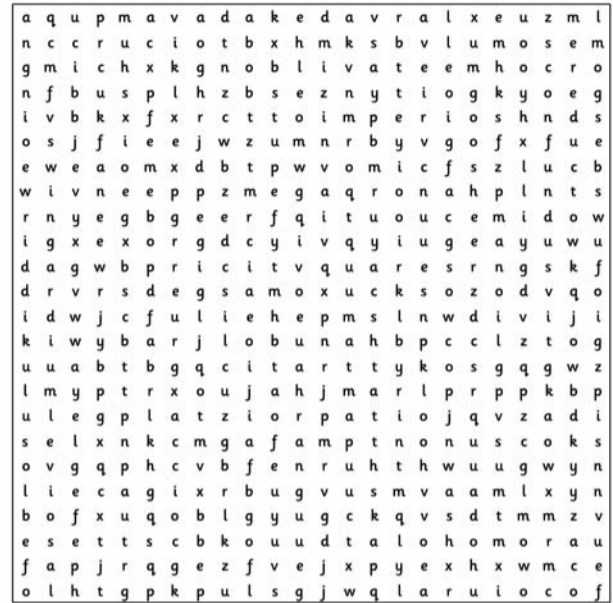
## Back to School Maze

Help the boy find his way through the maze to the school bus.



## Harry Potter Spells

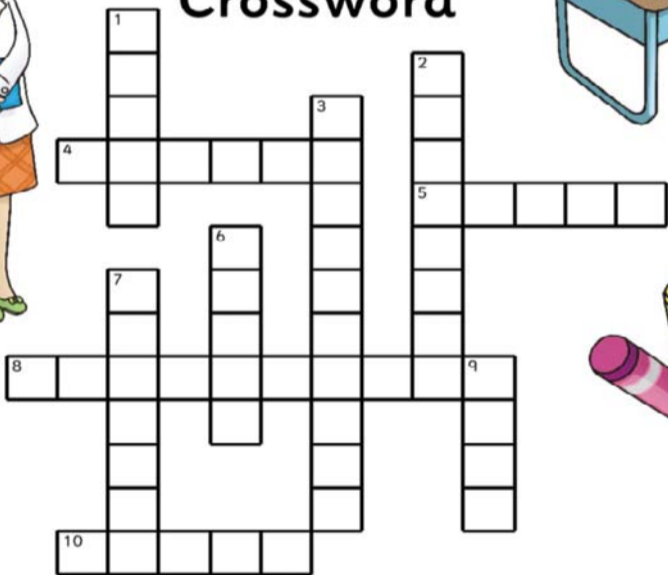
Can you find all the wizard spells in the word search puzzle below?



- |               |            |                    |
|---------------|------------|--------------------|
| accio         | crucio     | expecto patronum   |
| imperio       | obliviate  | sonorous           |
| alohomora     | confundus  | expelliarmus       |
| incendio      | reducto    | stupefy            |
| avada kedavra | engorgio   | impedimenta        |
| lumos         | riddikulus | wingardium leviosa |



## Back to School Crossword



### Across

- Do you need to sharpen yours?
- Write or draw on this.
- You write on this with chalk.
- Please \_\_\_\_\_ your name on your work.

### Down

- Draw straight lines with this.
- It has a keyboard and a screen.
- Where you go to play at break (recess)
- Read these at home or school.
- They help you learn new things.
- The teacher sits here.

Spot the differences





# Friday Times Travel

## BY LAND AND SEA: Outdoor adventures in INDONESIA



**S**tretching more than 4000km from east to west, Indonesia's sprawling island-packed jungle archipelago offers many opportunities for active and adventurous travelers. Superb diving and snorkeling showcases a diverse and colorful underwater seascape, while above the water, challenging surf breaks draw bold board-riders from around the world. On land, trekking, white-water rafting and wildlife watching all combine in a landscape of rugged peaks, tropical jungles and surging rivers.



#### Kayaking

Begin a paddling sojourn in Indonesia by negotiating around the forest-clad banks of a holy mountain lake, before sea kayaking on smooth Balinese waters, or graduating to an exciting multi-day excursion in the more remote Raja Ampat Islands. Based in the Balinese mountain village of Kedisan, C. Bali runs morning tours exploring the volcanic caldera of Danau (Lake) Batur in inflatable canoes, while further south along Sanur's beachy coastline, kayaks can be hired by the hour for leisurely exploration. In the far flung islands of Raja Ampat - around 2000km to the northeast - Kayak4Conservation explores a stunning archipelago of jungle-covered islands and concealed lagoons. Guided adventures include staying at local guesthouses.

#### Snorkeling

With more than 17,000 islands - and hundreds of thousand of different beaches - Indonesia offers some the planet's best places for escaping into warm tropical waters equipped simply with a mask, snorkel and swim fins. On Bali's northern coast, snorkeling trips depart from nearby Pemuteran to explore the waters of Pulau Menjangan ('Deer Island'), while at Tulamben in eastern Bali, the WWII wreck of the Liberty, a US Navy Cargo Ship, is just 50m off the coast. Continue further east to the Gili Islands off Lombok's northern coast for excellent snorkeling straight off arcing sandy beaches - sea turtles are often seen - or swim with whale sharks at Nabire in the remote eastern province of Papua.

#### Diving

Warm tropical waters, a huge variety of seascapes, and the attraction of abandoned wrecks and brilliant marine life make Indonesia one of the finest diving destinations on the planet. For beginners, the tourist-friendly dive schools of Bali and Lombok's Gili Islands provide an introduction to the underwater world - including the opportunity to see manta rays and sunfish off Bali's Nusa Penida - while liveboard boat charters are the best way to explore the expansive reefs and teeming shoals of Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi's Pulau Bunaken and Papua's Raja Ampat Islands.

#### Trekking

Indonesia's huge diversity offers many opportunities to discover different landscapes and cultures, ranging from enlightening day hikes through to multi-day jungle treks and ascents of spectacular volcanoes. Hook up with Sungai Penuh-based Wild Sumatra Adventures to explore the forests and mountain lakes of the Kerinci Seblat National Park or take on the challenge of ascending the chilly summit of

Gunung Semeru, Java's highest peak (3676m). Understanding Indonesia's compelling mix of cultures includes easygoing day walks around Ubud's verdant collage of rice terraces, sleepy villages and ancient temples, or exploring the fascinating local architecture and valleys of Sulawesi's Tana Toraja region.

#### Surfing

From the beginner-friendly breaks of Bali, to brand new locations being discovered every year by intrepid travellers, Indonesia is a hotspot for surfers from

legendary Mentawai Island breaks like Pitstops, Telescopes and Bank Vaults are hugely popular with more than a few Australian and Brazilian boardriders.

#### Bicycling

From downhill journeys through the villages and rice paddies of central Bali to more challenging mountain biking adventures, exploring Indonesia on two wheels is a great way to explore more leisurely and travel at the same speed as the easygoing locals. Biking operators based in Ubud or Kintamani lead



around the globe. The southern beaches of Bali are packed with surf schools, laidback hostels and a pumping after-dark scene, while the islands of Java, Lombok and Sumbawa combine palm-fringed beaches and simple thatched bungalows perfect for a long-stay surfing sojourn. The massive island of Sumatra anchors Indonesia's hottest surf regions including low-key Pulau Nias and up-and-coming Krui, while

tours around winding mountain roads past temples and heritage monuments, while the northern Balinese town of Lovina is a good base for independent day trips to nearby waterfalls. Exploring the backroads of Lake Toba's Pulau Samosir in northern Sumatra includes verdant volcanic views, while Java's cosmopolitan university city of Yogyakarta is a pleasant 17km bike ride from the Hindu temples of Prambanan.



#### White-water rafting

For a small island, Bali packs in a diverse itinerary of outdoor adventure, and rafting the Ayung River near Ubud or the even more rugged and scenic Telagawaja River in eastern Bali are popular day trips after kayaking on Lake Batur or biking downhill from the mountain town of Kintamani. The Grade II to Grade III rapids are at their rollicking best during or just after the wet season (from November to March). Across on Java, the Citarak River offers exciting Grade IV white-water

thrills, and there are also challenging Grade IV rapids on the Sa'dan River in Sulawesi. Based in Tana Toraja, Indosella runs rafting trips negotiating the Sa'dan's 20 rapids. Book a three-day trip to combine overnight stays in riverside huts.

#### Wildlife watching

The world's biggest reptile, superb birdlife and other iconic animals including orangutans and the endangered Sumatra rhinoceros all feature in Indonesia's diverse menagerie. Growing up to 3m in

length and weighing up to 100kg, the legendary Komodo dragon patrols the beaches and scrubby forests of Komodo National Park, while orangutans are best seen along the riverbanks of the Tanjung Puting National Park. Elephant-watching and birding trips combine in Sumatra's Way Kambas National Park - including the opportunity to see the world's smallest rhinoceros - and the diverse fauna of remote Papua includes colorful birds of paradise and exotic marsupials including tree kangaroos.

—www.lonelyplanet.com



WORD SEARCH

Beatles Songs 3

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

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

- ALL MY LOVING
  - ASK ME WHY
  - BECAUSE
  - BLACKBIRD
  - BLUE JAY WAY
  - CRY BABY CRY
  - DEAR PRUDENCE
  - FIXING A HOLE
- GIRL
  - HELLO GOODBYE
  - HEY BULLDOG
  - I FEEL FINE
  - I ME MINE
  - IF I FELL
  - MICHELLE
  - NOWHERE MAN
- PIGGIES
  - SOMETHING
  - TAXMAN
  - THE END
  - WAIT
  - WHAT GOES ON
  - YER BLUES

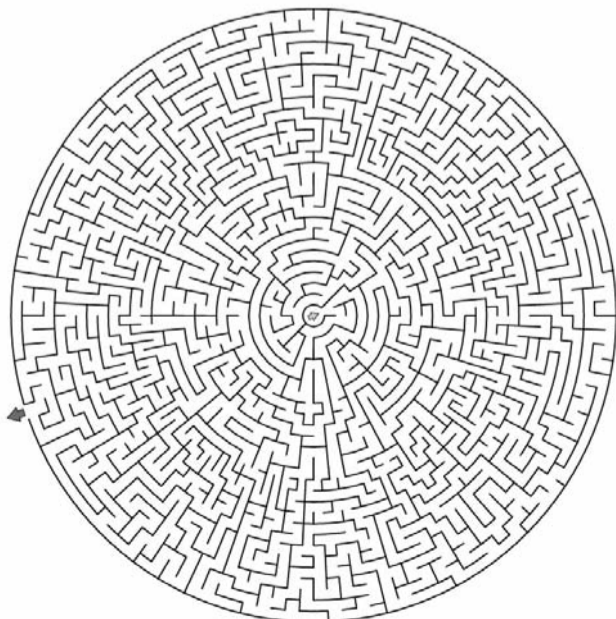
Yesterday's Solution

Beatles Songs 2 - Solution

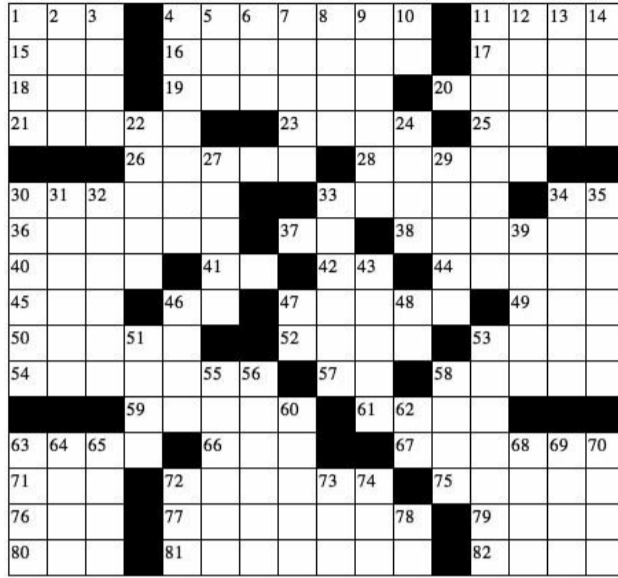
D O P Y H W E M L L E T C R W R T  
 S O E U L B U O Y R O F A E I P  
 H R C L O V E M E D O C W M G O E  
 E E B T I T E L G N Y A S I L W N  
 L H A I O U N F I M O O D Y C O A  
 O T G M M R V O E N T O T N I Q L  
 V E O A E V R V I E H N T P N Y  
 E G O L E I I O R N E E U R O E N  
 S O D O I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

- COME TOGETHER
  - DIG IT
  - DOCTOR ROBERT
  - DRIVE MY CAR
  - FOR NO ONE
  - FOR YOU BLUE
  - GIRL
  - GLASS ONION
- GOOD NIGHT
  - HELP
  - HER MAJESTY
  - I NEED YOU
  - IM A LOSER
  - IM SO TIRED
  - LET IT BE
  - LOVE ME DO
- MAGGIE MAE
  - NO REPLY
  - PENNY LANE
  - POLYTHENE PAM
  - REVOLUTION
  - SHE LOVES YOU
  - TELL ME WHY

CHALLENGING MAZE



CROSSWORD 1361



ACROSS

1. (computer science) The rate at which data is transferred (as by a modem).
4. A state in the southeastern United States on the Gulf of Mexico.
11. In bed.
15. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
16. A man who delivers the mail.
17. Dearly loved.
18. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
19. The cardinal number that is the sum of eight and one.
20. Spanish missionary who founded Franciscan missions in California (1713-1784).
21. An imaginary elephant that appears in a series of French books for children.
23. A carriage consisting of two wheels and calash top.
25. The last imperial dynasty of China (from 1644 to 1912) which was overthrown by revolutionaries.
26. United States chemist (1839-1903).
28. Genus of tropical Asiatic trees having large solitary flowers.
30. A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
36. Of the appetites and passions of the body.
37. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
38. Small striped semiterrestrial eastern American squirrel with cheek pouches.
40. A ruler of the Inca Empire (or a member of his family).
41. A white trivalent metallic element.
42. A Mid-Atlantic state on the Atlantic.
44. 100 avar equal 1 krona.
45. (Irish) The sea personified.
49. The act of using.
50. Marked by strict and particular and complete accordance with fact.
52. English monk and scholar (672-735).
54. Small long-bodied short-legged German breed of dog having a short sleek coat and long drooping ears.
57. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
59. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
61. Greater than normal in degree or intensity or amount.
63. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
66. A master's degree in library science.
67. A state in northwestern United States on the Pacific.
71. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
75. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
76. The law enforcement agency in the Justice Department.
77. Having two colors.
79. Tall woody perennial grasses with hollow slender stems especially of the genera Arundo and Phragmites.
80. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
81. Tropical American shrub bearing edible acid red fruit resembling cherries.
82. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.

DOWN

1. Divulge information or secrets.
2. (obstetrics) The number of live-born children a woman has delivered.
3. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
4. North American republic containing 50 states - 48 conterminous states in North

America plus Alaska in northwest North America and the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific Ocean.

5. A local computer network for communication between computers.
6. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
7. Give a benediction to.
8. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
9. Title used for a married Frenchwoman.
10. An associate degree in nursing.
11. The quality of being able to meet a need satisfactorily.
12. Soviet chief of secret police under Joseph Stalin.
13. Earn on some commercial or business transaction.
14. The phenomenon of resistance to motion through a fluid.
22. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
24. Not only so, but.
27. Strong lightweight wood of the balsa tree used especially for floats.
29. French romantic writer (1766-1817).
31. An accessory or adjoining anatomical parts or appendages (especially of the embryo).
32. A narrow zigzag ribbon used as trimming.
33. Arranged in a sequence of grades or ranks.
34. A Japanese woman trained to entertain men with conversation and singing and dancing.
35. Made of grain or relating to grain or the plants that produce it.
39. German arms manufacturer and son of Friedrich Krupp.
43. (Old Testament) The fourth son of Jacob who was forebear of one of the tribes of Israel.
46. An anxiety disorder associated with serious traumatic events and characterized by such symptoms as guilt about surviving or reliving the trauma in dreams or numbness and lack of involvement with reality or recurrent thoughts and images.
47. A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
48. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
51. Of or relating to or characteristic of the Republic of Chad or its people or language.
53. Jointed and nearly leafless desert shrub having reduced scalelike leaves and reddish fleshy seeds.
55. (prosody) Of or consisting of iambs.
56. Spin or twist together so as to form a cord.
58. A city in northern India.
60. British politician (born in the United States) who was the first woman to sit in the British House of Commons (1879-1964).
62. (Greek mythology) A maiden seduced by Zeus.
64. Open-heart surgery in which the rib cage is opened and a section of a blood vessel is grafted from the aorta to the coronary artery to bypass the blocked section of the coronary artery and improve the blood supply to the heart.
65. An elaborate song for solo voice.
68. A Gaelic-speaking Celt in Ireland or Scotland or the Isle of Man.
69. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
70. A quantity of no importance.
72. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
73. The United Nations agency concerned with the interests of labor.
74. A pass between mountain peaks.
78. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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



03:30 Doctors  
04:05 Doctors  
04:35 Eastenders  
05:05 The Musketeers  
06:00 Holby City  
07:00 Doctors  
07:30 Doctors  
08:00 Eastenders  
08:30 Eastenders  
09:05 Casualty  
10:00 Death In Paradise  
10:55 Call The Midwife  
12:45 Casualty  
13:35 Holby City  
14:30 Doctors  
15:00 Eastenders  
15:30 The Musketeers  
18:15 Doctors  
18:45 Doctors  
19:15 Father Brown  
20:05 Thirteen  
21:00 Thirteen  
21:55 Happy Valley  
22:50 Friday Night Dinner  
23:15 Hunderby  
23:40 Doctors



03:00 Ridiculousness  
03:50 Key And Peele  
05:55 Impractical Jokers UK  
06:20 Key And Peele  
06:50 Tosh.0  
07:15 Tosh.0  
07:40 Gym Rescue  
08:30 Ridiculousness  
09:20 Key And Peele  
09:45 Tosh.0  
10:10 Tosh.0  
10:35 Tosh.0  
11:00 Impractical Jokers UK  
11:25 Gym Rescue  
12:15 Key And Peele  
12:40 Ridiculousness  
13:30 Tosh.0  
13:55 Tosh.0  
14:20 Impractical Jokers UK  
14:45 Lip Sync Battle  
15:10 Key And Peele  
15:35 Tosh.0  
16:00 Tosh.0  
16:30 Hungry Investors  
17:25 Hungry Investors  
18:15 Tosh.0  
18:39 Tosh.0  
19:03 MLE Chowdown: The Turkey Bowl  
19:50 Tosh.0  
20:13 I Live With Models  
20:37 Brotherhood  
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
21:30 Inside Amy Schumer  
21:54 Broad City  
22:18 South Park  
22:42 Underground With Dave Attell  
23:30 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
00:00 Inside Amy Schumer  
00:25 Patton Oswalt: Tragedy Plus



03:40 Auction Hunters: Pawn Shop Edition  
04:05 Storage Hunters  
04:30 Dallas Car Sharks  
05:00 How Stuff's Made  
05:30 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 Mythbusters  
06:50 World's Top 5  
07:40 Incredible Engineering  
Blunders: Fixed  
08:30 Boy To Man  
09:20 Running Wild With Bear Grylls And President...  
10:10 So You Think You'd Survive?  
11:00 Dark Woods Justice  
11:50 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown  
12:40 Mega Shippers  
13:30 Fast N' Loud  
14:20 Misfit Garage  
15:10 Street Outlaws  
15:00 Fast N' Loud  
21:50 Misfit Garage  
22:40 Street Outlaws  
23:30 Life After: Chernobyl  
00:20 Return Of The Great White Serial Killer  
01:10 Fast N' Loud  
02:00 Misfit Garage



03:00 Industrial Junkie  
03:48 Smash Lab  
04:36 Battle Factory  
05:00 Battle Factory  
05:24 How The Universe Works  
06:12 How Do They Do It?  
06:36 Food Factory  
07:00 How Do They Do It?  
07:26 Smash Lab  
08:14 How The Universe Works  
09:02 Industrial Junkie  
09:26 Industrial Junkie  
09:50 How Do They Do It?  
10:14 Food Factory  
10:38 Battle Factory  
11:26 Smash Lab  
12:14 How The Universe Works  
13:02 How Do They Do It?  
13:26 Food Factory  
13:50 Industrial Junkie  
14:14 Industrial Junkie  
14:38 Battle Factory  
15:02 Battle Factory  
15:26 Smash Lab  
16:14 How The Universe Works  
17:02 Industrial Junkie  
17:26 Industrial Junkie  
17:50 Smash Lab  
18:40 How The Universe Works  
19:30 Race To Escape  
20:20 How Do They Do It?  
20:45 Food Factory  
21:10 Mega Builders  
22:00 Race To Escape  
22:50 How The Universe Works  
23:40 Smash Lab  
00:30 How Do They Do It?  
00:55 Food Factory  
01:20 Race To Escape  
02:10 How The Universe Works



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 Hank Zipzer  
06:25 Jessie  
06:50 Disney Mickey Mouse  
06:55 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
07:20 Dog With A Blog  
07:45 Bunk'd  
08:10 Austin & Ally  
08:35 Shake It Up  
09:00 Hannah Montana  
09:25 Hannah Montana  
09:50 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
10:40 Good Luck Charlie  
11:05 Good Luck Charlie  
11:30 Jessie  
11:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
12:00 The 7D  
12:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
12:40 Hank Zipzer  
13:05 Star Darlings  
13:10 Austin & Ally  
13:35 Austin & Ally  
14:00 Liv And Maddie  
14:25 Liv And Maddie  
14:50 Dog With A Blog  
15:15 Hank Zipzer  
15:40 Bunk'd  
16:05 Star Darlings

16:10 Gravity Falls  
16:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
17:00 Backstage  
17:25 Starstruck  
18:55 The 7D  
19:05 Austin & Ally  
19:30 Jessie  
19:55 Violetta  
20:45 Good Luck Charlie  
21:10 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



03:10 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:20 Calimero  
03:35 Zou  
03:45 Loopdidoo  
04:00 Art Attack  
04:25 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:35 Calimero  
04:50 Zou  
05:00 Loopdidoo  
05:15 Art Attack  
05:35 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:50 Calimero  
06:00 Zou

06:20 Loopdidoo  
06:35 Art Attack  
07:00 The Hive  
07:10 Zou  
07:25 Loopdidoo  
07:40 Jungle Cubs  
08:05 Sofia The First  
08:30 Miles From Tomorrow  
08:40 PJ Masks  
09:10 Doc McStuffins  
09:40 Doc McStuffins  
09:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons  
10:00 Sofia The First  
10:30 Sofia The First  
11:00 The Lion Guard  
11:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
12:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
12:30 Gummi Bears  
13:00 Sofia The First  
13:30 Doc McStuffins  
14:00 The Lion Guard  
14:30 Aladdin  
14:55 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
15:05 Goldie & Bear  
15:30 Miles From Tomorrow  
16:00 Doc McStuffins  
16:25 Doc McStuffins  
16:55 Sofia The First  
17:25 Sofia The First  
17:50 The Lion Guard  
18:15 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
18:45 Jake And The Neverland Pirates  
19:00 PJ Masks  
19:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
20:00 Doc McStuffins  
20:30 Sofia The First  
21:00 PJ Masks  
21:30 Aladdin  
22:00 Jungle Cubs  
22:25 Gummi Bears  
22:50 Zou  
23:05 Henry Hugglemonster  
23:20 Calimero  
23:35 Zou  
23:50 Loopdidoo  
00:05 Art Attack  
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
00:45 Calimero  
01:00 Zou  
01:15 Loopdidoo  
01:30 Art Attack  
02:00 Calimero  
02:15 Zou  
02:30 Loopdidoo  
02:45 Art Attack



03:15 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
04:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
05:05 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills  
06:00 Fashion Bloggers  
06:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
07:20 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
08:20 E! News  
09:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
13:05 E! News  
14:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
15:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
16:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
17:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
18:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 WAGs  
21:00 LA Clippers Dance Squad  
22:00 Famously Single  
23:00 E! News  
00:00 Botched  
00:55 Botched  
01:50 Botched  
02:20 E! News



03:00 Man Fire Food  
03:30 Man Fire Food  
04:00 Chopped  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Man Fire Food  
06:30 Man Fire Food  
07:00 Chopped  
08:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics  
08:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics  
09:00 The Kitchen  
10:00 The Pioneer Woman  
10:30 The Pioneer Woman  
11:00 Chopped  
12:00 Guy's Big Bite  
12:30 Guy's Big Bite  
13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
13:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
14:00 Man Fire Food  
14:30 Man Fire Food  
15:00 Chopped  
16:00 The Kitchen  
17:00 The Pioneer Woman  
17:30 The Pioneer Woman  
18:00 Chopped  
19:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
20:00 Cutthroat Kitchen  
21:00 Kitchen Casino  
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
23:00 Iron Chef America  
00:00 Cutthroat Kitchen  
01:00 Kitchen Casino  
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives



06:00 Boyster  
06:10 Super Matrak  
06:35 Super Matrak  
07:00 Pokemon Bw: Adventures In Unova  
07:25 K.C. Undercover  
07:50 Supa Strikas  
08:15 Danger Mouse S1  
08:40 Camp Lakebottom  
09:05 Counterfeit Cat  
09:10 Gravity Falls  
09:35 Lab Rats  
10:00 Rocket Monkeys  
10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man  
10:50 Boyster  
11:20 Boyster  
11:45 Pair Of Kings  
12:10 Pair Of Kings  
12:35 Lab Rats  
13:00 Lab Rats  
13:30 Phineas And Ferb  
13:55 Phineas And Ferb  
14:20 Kickin' It  
14:45 Pokemon Bw: Adventures In Unova  
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
15:15 Supa Strikas  
15:40 Supa Strikas  
16:05 Lab Rats  
16:30 Danger Mouse S1  
16:55 Kirby Buckets  
17:25 K.C. Undercover  
17:50 Annedroids  
18:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty...  
18:40 K.C. Undercover  
19:05 Counterfeit Cat  
19:10 Gravity Falls  
19:35 Pickle And Peanut  
20:00 Lab Rats  
20:25 Supa Strikas  
20:55 K.C. Undercover  
21:20 Gamer's Guide To Pretty...  
21:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy  
22:10 Marvel Avengers Assemble  
22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse



03:40 America: The Story Of The U.S.  
04:30 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents  
05:20 Ancient Aliens  
06:10 The Universe  
07:00 Patton 360  
08:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
09:00 The Universe  
10:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.  
11:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents  
12:00 Ancient Aliens  
13:00 Patton 360  
14:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
15:00 The Universe  
16:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.  
17:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents  
18:00 Ancient Aliens  
19:00 Patton 360  
20:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
21:00 The Universe  
22:00 Ancient Impossible  
23:00 Decoding The Past



AVENGERS: AGE OF ULTRON ON OSN MOVIES HD





- 03:40 Big Rig Bounty Hunters
- 04:30 Pawn Stars
- 05:00 Britain's Bloody Crown: War Of The Roses
- 06:00 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...
- 06:50 Hunting Hitler
- 07:40 Grave Trade
- 08:30 American Restoration
- 08:55 Mountain Men - Closest Calls
- 09:45 Ax Men
- 10:35 Ice Road Truckers
- 11:25 American Restoration
- 11:50 American Restoration
- 12:15 Counting Cars: Best Of
- 12:40 Car Hunters
- 13:05 American Pickers
- 13:55 Hoard Hunters
- 14:45 Hunting Hitler
- 15:35 Grave Trade
- 16:25 Counting Cars: Best Of
- 16:50 Time Team
- 17:40 Aussie Pickers
- 18:30 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 18:55 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 19:20 Ice Road Truckers
- 20:10 Ax Men
- 21:00 Pawn Stars
- 21:25 Storage Wars
- 21:50 Criss Angel: Mindfreak
- 22:15 Criss Angel: Mindfreak
- 22:40 Britain's Bloodiest Dynasty
- 23:30 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar
- 00:20 Britain's Bloody Crown: War Of The Roses
- 01:10 Counting Cars: Best Of
- 01:35 Car Hunters



- 03:25 Don't Tell The Bride
- 04:20 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 05:15 Eggheads
- 05:45 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 07:05 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
- 08:00 Don't Tell The Bride
- 08:55 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 09:50 Murdoch Mysteries
- 10:45 Eggheads
- 11:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
- 12:10 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 13:25 Emmerdale
- 13:50 Emmerdale
- 14:20 Coronation Street
- 14:45 Murdoch Mysteries
- 15:35 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
- 16:30 Don't Tell The Bride
- 17:25 Tonight At The London Palladium
- 18:20 Emmerdale
- 18:45 Emmerdale
- 19:10 Coronation Street
- 19:35 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
- 20:30 Don't Tell The Bride
- 21:25 Tonight At The London Palladium
- 22:20 Coronation Street
- 22:50 Emmerdale
- 23:15 Emmerdale
- 23:40 Murdoch Mysteries
- 00:30 Eggheads
- 01:00 Emmerdale



- 03:45 Brilliant Beasts
- 04:40 The Living Edens
- 05:35 I, Predator
- 06:30 Dr. K's Exotic Animal
- 07:25 Brilliant Beasts
- 08:20 The Living Edens
- 09:15 Wild India
- 10:10 Wild Scotland: Highlands
- 11:05 Dead Or Alive
- 12:00 Shark Men
- 12:55 Intimate Enemies
- 13:50 Dr. K's Exotic Animal
- 14:45 Blitzkrieg Sharks
- 15:40 The Great Elephant Gathering
- 16:35 Secrets Of The Desert Elephants
- 17:30 Wild Scotland: Highlands
- 18:25 Dead Or Alive
- 19:20 Blitzkrieg Sharks
- 20:10 The Great Elephant Gathering
- 21:00 Secrets Of The Desert Elephants



UNSTOPPABLE ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION



- 04:08 Unstoppable
- 06:00 X-Men: The Last Stand
- 08:00 Robot Overlords
- 10:00 Jack The Giant Killer
- 12:00 Unstoppable
- 14:00 X-Men: The Last Stand
- 16:00 Robot Overlords
- 18:00 Armored
- 20:00 Brick Mansions
- 22:00 John Wick
- 00:00 V/H/S 2
- 02:00 The Power Of Few



- 04:00 Three Men And A Baby
- 06:00 Grosse Pointe Blank
- 08:00 Jack
- 10:00 Three Men And A Baby
- 12:00 A Lot Like Love
- 14:00 Bottle Rocket
- 16:00 Jack
- 18:00 Hope Springs
- 20:00 Tammy
- 22:00 Tim And Eric's Billion Dollar Movie
- 00:00 Talladega Nights
- 02:00 Hope Springs



- 03:00 The Girl
- 05:00 Extracted
- 07:00 Fast Girls
- 09:00 Memories
- 11:00 The Girl
- 13:00 Welcome To The Punch
- 15:00 Draft Day
- 17:00 Memories
- 19:00 Rudderless
- 21:00 Nightcrawler
- 23:00 The Rover
- 01:00 Draft Day



- 03:00 Oz The Great And Powerful
- 05:15 Penguins Of Madagascar
- 07:00 Snow Dogs
- 09:00 Treasure Planet
- 11:00 101 Dalmatians
- 13:00 Jem And The Holograms
- 15:00 Coraline
- 17:00 American Girl: Isabelle Dances Into The Spotlight
- 19:00 American Girl: Saige Paints The Sky

- 21:00 Pirates Of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides
- 23:15 Coraline
- 01:00 American Girl: Saige Paints The Sky
- 02:45 Pirates Of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides



- 03:15 Birdman
- 05:15 Philomena
- 07:00 Prefontaine
- 09:00 Monkey Kingdom
- 10:30 Steve Jobs: The Man In The Machine
- 13:00 The Signal
- 15:00 Legends Of The Fall
- 17:30 Monkey Kingdom
- 19:00 Inside Llewyn Davis
- 21:00 Begin Again
- 23:00 Choke
- 01:00 Legends Of The Fall



- 03:00 Inside Out
- 05:00 Seventh Son
- 07:00 Sleeping Beauty
- 09:00 Inside Out
- 11:00 Ant-Man
- 13:00 Big Game
- 15:00 Big Eyes
- 17:00 Cinderella
- 19:00 Goosebumps
- 21:00 The Good Dinosaur
- 22:45 Avengers: Age Of Ultron
- 01:15 No Escape



- 04:15 Cher Ami
- 06:00 Looney Tunes: Rabbit's Run
- 07:45 Blackie And Kanuto
- 09:45 Delhi Safari
- 11:30 Bolts And Blip
- 13:00 Baby Geniuses And The Treasures Of Egypt
- 14:30 The Heart Of The Oak
- 16:00 Marco Macaco
- 18:00 Delhi Safari
- 20:00 Miffy The Movie
- 22:00 The Heart Of The Oak
- 23:30 Marco Macaco
- 01:15 Blackie And Kanuto



- 04:30 The Rewrite
- 06:30 Louder Than Words

- 10:15 4 Babies A Second
- 11:10 The Great Human Race
- 12:05 Hazen's Wild Survival Guide
- 13:00 Wicked Tuna
- 14:00 Breakout
- 15:00 Locked Up Abroad
- 16:00 4 Babies A Second
- 17:00 Myigrations
- 18:00 Hazen's Wild Survival Guide
- 19:00 Colombia's Gold War
- 20:00 4 Babies A Second
- 20:50 Myigrations
- 21:40 Hazen's Wild Survival Guide
- 22:30 Colombia's Gold War
- 23:20 Ape Man



- 03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 03:48 Harvey Beaks
- 04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 04:36 The Haunted Hathaways
- 05:00 Max & Shred
- 05:24 Henry Danger
- 05:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 06:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 07:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 07:48 Winx Club
- 08:12 Harvey Beaks
- 09:24 Harvey Beaks
- 09:48 Henry Danger
- 11:00 Winx Club
- 11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 11:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 12:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 13:00 Breadwinners
- 13:24 The Loud House
- 13:48 Harvey Beaks
- 14:12 Rabbids Invasion
- 14:36 Henry Danger
- 15:00 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 16:36 The Loud House
- 17:00 Sanjay And Craig
- 17:24 Harvey Beaks
- 17:48 Breadwinners
- 18:12 Henry Danger
- 18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 21:24 Breadwinners
- 21:48 Breadwinners
- 22:12 Sanjay And Craig
- 22:36 Sanjay And Craig
- 23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 23:48 Henry Danger
- 00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 00:36 Max & Shred
- 01:00 The Haunted Hathaways
- 01:24 Sanjay And Craig
- 01:48 Sanjay And Craig
- 02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 02:36 SpongeBob SquarePants



- 03:20 Hacking The System
- 03:50 Machine Impossible
- 04:45 Science Of Stupid
- 05:10 Science Of Stupid
- 05:40 Ape Man
- 06:35 Locked Up Abroad
- 07:30 Breakout
- 08:25 Wicked Tuna
- 09:20 Science Of Stupid
- 09:45 Science Of Stupid



LOONEY TUNES: RABBIT'S RUN ON OSN MOVIES HD KIDS



### Aries (March 21-April 19)

Some mix-ups in who gets what instructions could slow down production today. You could be feeling a bit sluggish with your own energies. To improve your vitality, make sure you do not become distracted. Keep notes on the things you want to accomplish before the close of day and in no time, you will achieve your goals. An impressive number of invitations to socialize give you an opportunity to choose activities. Reading scratches an instinctive itch and you may find yourself more involved in a new book or learning about a new financial venture than becoming involved in social affairs at this time. This evening has the potential of being one of your best times for love. If you have a date, stop and purchase flowers or seek out a new restaurant.



### Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This is a great time to work in groups. Your attitude for accomplishing work is to be team oriented. One of the reasons that people like you on their team is that you know how to become one with the group and ignore the temptation to become a leader. New ways to communicate or an easy manner will make conversations and interactions go well. You may have recently been inspired by some business success book or a guide to an investment program. After your workday is complete, you may decide to investigate some of these new possibilities. You may find yourself more talkative with family this evening. Your career always seems to leave little time for family but you have become much more aware of the importance to balance your time.



### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Getting your message across to others is important to you today. Your timing should be perfect, and those around you should find you most spontaneous. You will be presented with facts, figures and accounting procedures. You teach others how to be specific by asking them questions. You are willing to revise and rework difficult but important projects. You may help higher-ups to seriously consider taking a different direction in some project. You become aware of your own potential. A long-distance call from a business associate will verify your views. A loyal friend wants to help you in the garden or trim a tree this afternoon. You may be returning the favor in a few days. A surprise is due-this relates to the lifting of a burden.



### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a perfect time to be assertive and to move forward in your career decisions. You have all the drive and energy you could want-it should be easy to channel it. The path is open and clear. You will find that this is a lucky day and things open up for you in a very natural way. Situations are almost prearranged to let you know which path is the one to take. There are plenty of opportunities to achieve and clarify whatever you set out to do today. There is a greater appreciation for things of value and the idea of value itself is in order. This could be a period of considerable material gain; it is certainly a time when material things have a great deal of importance for you. This evening may be a good time to reevaluate your budget and to simplify.



### Leo (July 23-August 22)

This is a very lucky day for making plans and finding your way through just about any problem you may discover. You feel successful and are able to handle difficult situations. Good advice from a guide or older person may be available-a good day. You will prosper by pursuing your principles and most deep-seated dreams of how life could be. Don't be afraid to project that image-make those dreams real-set goals. Ideas of group cooperation and communion could further your career. Work and career should be a primary focus during this time-network. There are opportunities to make good decisions. You are at your most practical today; what happens now may have a lasting effect on your life direction. Love is available.



### Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Restrictions that seemed to have held you back over the last few weeks have now been freed. If there is some project you would like to attempt or some legal subject that needs attention, now is the time to make your move. Today you make an effort to find people that will encourage intellectual conversations. The mental world appeals to you and you are very discriminating and appreciative when it comes to concepts, ideas, thoughts, etc. You value good research and real inquiry. Writing with all its forms may appeal to you as well-in fact, this could be the day you create that wonderful advertising jingle or a poem for your sweetheart. You could consider a position in the publishing industry. Celebrate tonight.



### Libra (September 23-October 22)

The workplace could be a bit dull without you today. Circumstances can throw you into positions where you enjoy dealing with communications, service or enclosed hidden interests. You may deal with others now through some form of education or psychology. This could mean that you lecture at a school about your profession. You have more than just the gift of gab. Your words and ideas can transport and enchant listeners, carrying them beyond the world as they know it into the world as they wish it could be. Tonight you may decide to visit with friends and enjoy a little theatrical magic. If you are not performing, you could become caught up in the moment and enjoy telling a story to enlighten and enchant others. You enjoy the social setting.



### Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may feel inclined to encourage new ideas, think in new directions and spot new ways in which your company can grow and prosper. This will certainly help secure your job and is one of the reasons your skills are in demand. Continue to enhance your job skills through further education or in teaching what you know. This afternoon you may be dealing with personal matters. It is in creative areas where you excel. Your observations about life are quite accurate. Others will certainly benefit from the advice you offer. Tonight you help motivate a child. You may want to help this child get into a successful self-confident position on a sports team. You enjoy playing the game of life and you encourage others.



### Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Challenging authority and rocking the boat will likely play a big role in your life. Perhaps it is time for a change. The new broom sweeps clean; old patterns of organization and power are ripe for a creative approach. Basic truths will gain you the right response, so think about your presentation. Whatever you do for a living, you have a wealth of creative talents from which to draw. You will find yourself with a growing self-confidence. In summary, from this time forward, expect a more confident, outgoing attitude, for you have brought to close a time of personal examination. A growing sense of direction and self-worth will find you reaching out and establishing yourself. This evening, your attention is drawn to new ideas for a vacation.



### Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find yourself looking forward to some form of group therapy. Whatever the reason for these meetings, you are much happier and confident and you enjoy helping others. Improvements in the workplace are also visible. It is interesting that in your case, your positive attitude is the point of healing. You encourage others and may continue therapy just for that reason alone. You are successful in your helping of others and you may be encouraged to further your education so that you can get paid to help others. Business developments are very promising at this time. Be ready to capitalize on any opportunity that comes your way. Your love plants and working with your plants this afternoon will be where people might find you.



### Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Your outward seriousness and sensible approach to things is obvious. This deliberate sense of responsibility comes across and is central to your personality and the way you interact with others. Everything is run through your checkpoint to see if it holds up and can pass the test. Good for you! You are a student of details; others depend that you will send, receive or provide the correct figures, statistics or general information. This is a good workday in which much can be accomplished. Close personal relationships are likely to undergo some testing. This is a time to cement your ties to others and to make sure they are rock-solid-if they are not, they are apt to crack under stress. Fairness with and responsibility to other people in your life is emphasized.



### Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Frustration, especially in getting things accomplished, if you are not careful, may set today's mood. It would be easy to become upset if you have squeezed yourself into a small, unrealistic time schedule. You may want to step back to reassess and find a different way to accomplish the same result-perhaps you could pull in some temporary help. This may call for a meeting in order to get a variety of ideas and input. You are definitely on the right track. This afternoon you may find yourself interested in the problems of young people. You could find yourself devoting one day a week toward the advancement of child protection or children's educational interests. There is a keen sense of color, of music and the arts-the beautiful and the comfortable.

## COUNTRY CODES

Afghanistan	0093	Kuwait	00965
Albania	00355	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Algeria	00213	Laos	00856
Andorra	00376	Latvia	00371
Angola	00244	Lebanon	00961
Anguilla	001264	Liberia	00231
Antigua	001268	Libya	00218
Argentina	0054	Lithuania	00370
Armenia	00374	Luxembourg	00352
Australia	0061	Macau	00853
Austria	0043	Macedonia	00389
Bahamas	001242	Madagascar	00261
Bahrain	00973	Majorca	0034
Bangladesh	00880	Malawi	00265
Barbados	001246	Malaysia	0060
Belarus	00375	Maldives	00960
Belgium	0032	Mali	00223
Belize	00501	Malta	00356
Benin	00229	Marshall Islands	00692
Bermuda	001441	Martinique	00596
Bhutan	00975	Mauritania	00222
Bolivia	00591	Mauritius	00230
Bosnia	00387	Mayotte	00269
Botswana	00267	Mexico	0052
Brazil	0055	Micronesia	00691
Brunei	00673	Moldova	00373
Bulgaria	00359	Monaco	00377
Burkina	00226	Mongolia	00976
Burundi	00257	Montserrat	001664
Cambodia	00855	Morocco	00212
Cameroon	00237	Mozambique	00258
Canada	001	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Cape Verde	00238	Namibia	00264
Cayman Islands	001345	Nepal	00977
Central African Republic	00236	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Chad	00235	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Chile	0056	New Caledonia	00687
China	0086	New Zealand	0064
Colombia	0057	Nicaragua	00505
Comoros	00269	Niger	00227
Congo	00242	Nigeria	00234
Cook Islands	00682	Niue	00683
Costa Rica	00506	Norfolk Island	00672
Croatia	00385	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Cuba	0053	North Korea	00850
Cyprus	00357	Norway	0047
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Oman	00968
Czech Republic	00420	Pakistan	0092
Denmark	0045	Palau	00680
Diego Garcia	00246	Panama	00507
Djibouti	00253	Papua New Guinea	00675
Dominica	001767	Paraguay	00595
Dominican Republic	001809	Peru	0051
Ecuador	00593	Philippines	0063
Egypt	0020	Poland	0048
El Salvador	00503	Portugal	00351
England (UK)	0044	Puerto Rico	001787
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Qatar	00974
Eritrea	00291	Romania	0040
Estonia	00372	Russian Federation	007
Ethiopia	00251	Rwanda	00250
Falkland Islands	00500	Saint Helena	00290
Faroe Islands	00298	Saint Kitts	001869
Fiji	00679	Saint Lucia	001758
Finland	00358	Saint Pierre	00508
France	0033	Saint Vincent	001784
French Guiana	00594	Samoa US	00684
French Polynesia	00689	Samoa West	00685
Gabon	00241	San Marino	00378
Gambia	00220	Sao Tome	00239
Georgia	00995	Saudi Arabia	00966
Germany	0049	Scotland (UK)	0044
Ghana	00233	Senegal	00221
Gibraltar	00350	Seychelles	00284
Greece	0030	Sierra Leone	00232
Greenland	00299	Singapore	0065
Grenada	001473	Slovakia	00421
Guadeloupe	00590	Slovenia	00386
Guam	001671	Solomon Islands	00677
Guatemala	00502	Somalia	00252
Guinea	00224	South Africa	0027
Guyana	00592	South Korea	0082
Haiti	00509	Spain	0034
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Sri Lanka	0094
Honduras	00504	Sudan	00249
Hong Kong	00852	Suriname	00597
Hungary	0036	Swaziland	00268
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sweden	0046
Iceland	00354	Switzerland	0041
India	0091	Syria	00963
Indian Ocean	00873	Taiwan	00886
Indonesia	0062	Tanzania	00255
Iran	0098	Thailand	0066
Iraq	00964	Toga	00228
Ireland	00353	Tonga	00676
Italy	0039	Tokelau	00690
Ivory Coast	00225	Trinidad	001868
Jamaica	001876	Tunisia	00216
Japan	0081	Turkey	0090
Jordan	00962	Tuvalu	00688
Kazakhstan	007	Uganda	00256
Kenya	00254	Ukraine	00380
Kiribati	00686	United Arab Emirates	00976

# CHINA INTENSIFIES CHECKS AS ZIKA SPREADS

## MALAYSIA REPORTS FIRST INFECTION; INDONESIA STEPS UP CHECKS

**SINGAPORE:** China intensified its checks on people and goods arriving from Singapore yesterday, as an outbreak of the Zika virus in the small city-state was confirmed to have spread to at least one person in neighboring Malaysia. Singapore is the only Asian country with an active transmission of the mosquito-borne Zika virus, which is a particular risk to pregnant women, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Authorities in Singapore, a leading regional financial centre and busy transit hub for people and cargo, reported the first locally-transmitted Zika infection on Saturday, with the number of cases rising to 115 as of yesterday - half of whom were foreigners, mainly from China, India and Bangladesh.

Malaysia confirmed its first case of Zika infection, in a woman who had recently visited Singapore. "We have been tracking Zika for a while now, and knew it was only a matter of time before it reached Singapore," Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong posted on his Facebook page. "Our best defense is to eradicate mosquitoes and destroy breeding habitats, all over Singapore." The United States, Australia and other countries have warned pregnant women or those trying to conceive not to travel to Singapore.

The outbreak and travel warnings come just two weeks before the Singapore F1 motor-racing Grand Prix, a major sporting and tourist draw. Race promoter Singapore GP has said planning for the event is going ahead "as per normal". Singapore's Tourism Board has said it is premature to consider any impact on the tourism industry, stressing the tropical city-state remains a "safe travel destination". More than 55 million

people pass through Singapore's Changi airport each year. Tourism arrivals topped 8 million in the first half of this year, around 1 million more than a year ago.

### 'Negative impact'

China is trade-dependent Singapore's top overseas market, and the Zika outbreak coincides with a dip in overall exports and slowing economic growth in both countries. "If this continues, certainly it will have a negative impact, but it's hard to quantify in percentage terms or dollar value," said Francis Tan, an economist at United Overseas Bank in Singapore. The Zika virus, which has spread through the Americas and the Caribbean since late last year, is generally a mild disease but has been linked to microcephaly - a severe birth defect in which babies are born with abnormally small heads and underdeveloped brains. The World Health Organization, which has declared Zika an international public health emergency, is holding a regular meeting of its Zika emergency committee yesterday to review the spread of the disease. Singapore authorities said late on Wednesday they found some new Zika cases beyond the cluster area where it had initially been detected. They also confirmed a first Zika case in a pregnant woman in the country. Yesterday, Singapore said half of the cases found so far involved foreigners - including 23 Chinese nationals, 15 Indians and 10 Bangladeshis - adding that most patients had recovered. Many of the foreigners are believed to be among the hundreds of thousands of migrant workers who work in Singapore's construction and marine industries. — Reuters



**SINGAPORE:** A pest control worker fumigates the grounds of a residential estate in the Bedok North area of Singapore yesterday. Singapore's Zika outbreak escalated yesterday after Malaysia said one of its citizens returned infected from the city-state as the government expanded its fumigation drive to a new area identified as a potential cluster for the virus. — AFP

## MORE AMERICANS GETTING HIGH

**PARIS:** The number of adult cannabis users in the United States increased by ten million from 2002 to 2014, said a study yesterday that called for better education on the potential pitfalls. The increase coincided with a general rise in the potency of the popular recreational drug and a growing belief that it is not harmful, researchers wrote in The Lancet Psychiatry. The findings, the US-based team wrote, "suggest a potential benefit of education and prevention messages" even as many US states are relaxing cannabis policies.

Based on a survey of over 500,000 US adults between 2002 and 2014, the study found that marijuana use rose from 10.4 percent of the population in 2002 to 13.3 percent in 2014 — from 21.9 million to 31.9 million.

The number of daily or near-daily users was about 8.4 million in 2014, they estimated-up from 3.9 million in 2002. The proportion of people who said they feared great risk or harm from smoking dope once or twice a week, dropped from 50.4 percent to 33.3 percent over the same period. — AFP

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## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (01/09/2016 TO 07/09/2016)

<b>SHARQIA-1</b> MORGAN MORGAN SKIPTRACE MORGAN JAHEEM FI ILHIND MORGAN JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu MORGAN	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 4:00 PM 6:30 PM 8:30 PM 10:45 PM 3:30 PM 6:30 PM 9:45 PM 1:00 AM	<b>MARINA-1</b> MORGAN SKIPTRACE MORGAN SKIPTRACE MORGAN MORGAN MORGAN MORGAN	12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:15 PM 6:45 PM 9:00 PM 11:00 PM 1:00 AM
<b>SHARQIA-2</b> KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS -3D KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS -3D BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:15 PM 10:15 PM 12:15 AM	<b>MARINA-2</b> BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER JAHEEM FI ILHIND BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER	12:15 PM 2:15 PM 4:15 PM 6:30 PM 8:30 PM 10:45 PM 12:45 AM
<b>SHARQIA-3</b> HELL OR HIGH WATER MECHANIC: RESURRECTION KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS MECHANIC: RESURRECTION HELL OR HIGH WATER	1:00 PM 3:15 PM 5:15 PM 7:30 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM	<b>MARINA-3</b> THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS MECHANIC: RESURRECTION MECHANIC: RESURRECTION MECHANIC: RESURRECTION	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:45 PM 5:45 PM 8:00 PM 10:15 PM 12:30 AM
<b>MUHALAB-1</b> HANDS OF STONE HANDS OF STONE HANDS OF STONE MECHANIC: RESURRECTION MECHANIC: RESURRECTION HANDS OF STONE MECHANIC: RESURRECTION JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu THU+FRI+MON JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:00 PM 6:15 PM 8:15 PM 10:15 PM 12:30 AM 4:00 PM 7:15 PM 10:30 PM	<b>AVENUES-1</b> JAHEEM FI ILHIND JAHEEM FI ILHIND ABU SHANAB JAHEEM FI ILHIND JAHEEM FI ILHIND JAHEEM FI ILHIND	1:00 PM 3:15 PM 5:30 PM 8:00 PM 10:15 PM 12:30 AM
<b>MUHALAB-2</b> KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS MORGAN KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS MORGAN MORGAN MORGAN	1:00 PM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM 5:45 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:05 AM	<b>AVENUES-2</b> MECHANIC: RESURRECTION-2D-4DX THE BFG -3D- 4DX MECHANIC: RESURRECTION-2D-4DX THE BFG -3D- 4DX MECHANIC: RESURRECTION-2D-4DX MECHANIC: RESURRECTION-2D-4DX	12:15 PM 2:30 PM 5:00 PM 7:15 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM
<b>MUHALAB-3</b> BLOOD FATHER AKIRA- HINDI JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 1:30 PM 4:45 PM 7:00 PM 9:00 PM 11:00 PM 1:00 AM	<b>AVENUES-3</b> HELL OR HIGH WATER SKIPTRACE AKIRA- HINDI HELL OR HIGH WATER SKIPTRACE SKIPTRACE JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:00 PM 7:15 PM 9:30 PM 11:45 PM 4:00 PM 7:15 PM 10:30 PM
<b>FANAR-1</b> AKIRA- HINDI AKIRA- HINDI JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu JANATHA GARAGE - Telugu AKIRA- HINDI BLOOD FATHER	12:45 PM 3:45 PM 3:30 PM 6:45 PM 10:00 PM 10:00 PM 1:15 AM	<b>360° 1</b> BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER	12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:15 PM 10:30 PM 12:45 AM
<b>FANAR-2</b> MORGAN MORGAN MORGAN SKIPTRACE MORGAN JAHEEM FI ILHIND MORGAN	11:30 AM 1:45 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:15 PM 10:15 PM 12:30 AM	<b>360° 2</b> JAHEEM FI ILHIND JAHEEM FI ILHIND JAHEEM FI ILHIND JAHEEM FI ILHIND JAHEEM FI ILHIND JAHEEM FI ILHIND	1:15 PM 3:30 PM 5:45 PM 8:00 PM 10:15 PM 12:30 AM
<b>FANAR-3</b> KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS MECHANIC: RESURRECTION MECHANIC: RESURRECTION MECHANIC: RESURRECTION	11:45 AM 2:00 PM 4:15 PM 6:30 PM 8:45 PM 10:45 PM 12:45 AM	<b>360° 3</b> AKIRA- HINDI AKIRA- HINDI MOHENJO DARO - Hindi AKIRA- HINDI AKIRA- HINDI	11:30 AM 2:30 PM 5:30 PM 8:30 PM 11:30 PM
<b>FANAR-4</b> BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:30 PM 5:30 PM 7:30 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.1</b> KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS KUBO AND THE TWO STRINGS BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER BLOOD FATHER	11:30 AM 2:00 PM 4:15 PM 6:30 PM 8:45 PM 10:45 PM 12:45 AM
		<b>AL-KOUT.2</b> MORGAN MORGAN MORGAN MORGAN	11:45 AM 1:45 PM 3:45 PM 5:45 PM

## EMERGENCY



# 112

## PRAYER TIMINGS



<b>Fajr:</b>	<b>04:04</b>
<b>Shorook</b>	<b>05:26</b>
<b>Duhr:</b>	<b>11:48</b>
<b>Asr:</b>	<b>15:21</b>
<b>Maghrib:</b>	<b>18:09</b>
<b>Isha:</b>	<b>19:29</b>

## CHANGE OF NAME

Old name: Shaikh Imam Saheb, sur name: Shaikh Madar, Passport No: P0377626, date of birth: 01-01-1954, place of birth: Bhagam Palli, A.P., Civil ID No. 254101101142. Change of name, surname: Pathan, given name: Haroon Khan, S/o Pathan Azeez Khan. Door No: 28/83, Bhavani Nagar, Bethol Colony, Rayachoty, Cuddapah (Dt), A.P. (C 5209) 1-9-2016

I, Mukilarasan Lingesan S/o Lingesan, holder of Indian Passport No. G9180281 and Civil ID No. 287070104885 has changed my name from Mukilarasan Lingesan to Abdul Rahaman, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by name of Abdul Rahaman. (C 5208) 31-8-2016

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

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

# Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2016



US accuses Brussels of 13 billion euro tax grab

TIRED OF CHEAP OIL, SAUDIS EYE PRICE BOOST TO DRIVE ARAMCO IPO Page 41

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**NANTONG, China:** Chinese workers make shirts at a spinners in Nantong, east China's Jiangsu province. G20 leaders will meet in China this weekend in a climate of economic uncertainty and sluggish albeit relatively steady growth - but the absence of an urgent crisis means the forum will be short on breakthroughs, analysts say. —AFP

## G20 NATIONS ENDORSE TRADE BUT TIGHTEN CONTROLS

**BEIJING:** Leaders of the United States, China and other Group of 20 major economies who meet this weekend say more trade would shore up sluggish global growth but are tightening their own controls on imports. China hopes its status as G20 host will give it more sway in managing the global economy and has made trade a theme of the meeting in Hangzhou, a scenic lakeside city southwest of Shanghai. Chinese officials say Beijing will propose a plan to promote commerce through cooperation in finance, tax and energy.

Governments also have said they want to discuss climate change, efforts to reduce surplus production capacity in steel and other industries and limits on use of tax havens, though no detailed agreements are expected. US President Barack Obama, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other leaders will speak out against protectionism, their governments say. But at the same time, G20 governments are ratcheting up restraints on imports of steel and other goods, prompting concern support for global trade might be eroding.

The summit is the first global event for British Prime Minister Theresa May after her country's June vote to leave the European Union, a move seen by some political analysts as the start of a possible wave of nations pulling back from economic integration. In the United States, France and elsewhere, politicians are calling for protec-

tion for local industry. "Protectionism is resurfacing," said a Chinese deputy foreign minister, Li Baodong. "In many parts of the world, we have seen calls for deglobalization."

This year's global trade growth is forecast by the World Trade Organization at an anemic 2.8 percent - its fifth straight year below 3 percent. Global economic growth is forecast by the International Monetary Fund at an equally lackluster 3.4 percent. Progress on initiatives such as Obama's Trans-Pacific Partnership and a WTO plan to help poor countries integrate into global markets has stalled. On Sunday, German Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel said talks on a US-European trade deal "have de facto failed," though EU officials denied that.

In Hangzhou, Obama will call for an "open, integrated global economy," according to a senior American official who described the government's plans on condition of anonymity. "There are very real concerns about globalization and technology, but the answer cannot be to close ourselves off," the official said in an email. Leaders including South Korean President Park Geun-hye say they will call for "inclusive growth" - a reference to spreading economic benefits to millions of people who have been left behind by wrenching change.

Yet despite such endorsements, G20 economies including the United States, Japan and Canada are tightening import controls in

response to what they say are unfair foreign tactics - and the trend is accelerating. The number of restrictions imposed by governments worldwide on imports from machine parts to sugar soared to 150 in the first quarter of this year, according to researchers Simon J. Evenett and Johannes Fritz of the Centre for Economic Policy Research in London. That was up 50 to 100 such measures imposed during the same periods of 2010-15.

The United States has imposed import duties of up to 500 percent on Chinese steel to offset what it says are improper subsidies. Unions for European steelworkers are calling for investigations of low-cost Chinese steel exports they say threaten thousands of jobs. China hit back in April by hiking its own tariffs on European steel. "In a world where global commerce isn't growing any more, governments may conclude that securing larger slices of the world market ultimately requires tilting the commercial landscape against foreign firms," said Evenett and Fritz in a report in July.

That raises the possibility of a "negative feedback loop" of governments responding to weak trade by doing more to protect their companies, further depressing trade, said Evenett and Fritz. So far, protectionist measures don't appear to be to blame for the latest trade slump, said Andrew Kenningham of Capital Economics, which is due mostly to the end of an era of rapid growth driven by China's integration into the global econ-

omy and manufacturing supply chains. "Admittedly, there has been an increase in the absolute number of trade-distorting measures implemented," said Kenningham in an email. "However, they have affected only a very small fraction of products traded."

In May, the EU parliament passed a resolution calling for controls on Chinese imports in the event Beijing is declared a market economy, a status that makes it harder to pursue trade cases. "Politicians on the right or on the far left are talking about closing our market," said Joerg Wuttke, president of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China. "This would be terrible." China has massive surplus production capacity in industries including steel, cement and coal that mushroomed in size during the economic boom. That has prompted complaints Beijing is trying to clear a backlog by subsidizing exports.

"While so much attention is focused on tariffs targeting dumped steel, in fact, state incentives to promote steel exports are a far larger systemic problem," said Evenett and Fritz. Envoys in Hangzhou plan to discuss how to reduce global production capacity for steel, according to Wally Adeyemo, Obama's deputy national security adviser for international economics. Beijing issued plans in February to reduce the size of its steel and coal industries. Plans for other industries including aluminum, glass and solar panels have yet to be announced. —AP

# BOUNCE IN BRITISH FACTORIES SPARKS BOE RATE CUT DOUBTS

## STERLING SURGES AS DOUBTS SURFACE

**LONDON:** British manufacturing staged one of its sharpest rebounds on record in August, a post-Brexit surprise that could prompt the Bank of England to rethink the need to cut interest rates again if other surveys confirm the trend. The recovery far outstripped all economists' forecasts, delivering the strongest signal yet that Britain's economy is performing better than initially feared after the June 23 referendum vote to leave the European Union. The Markit/CIPS Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) - a closely watched gauge of factory activity - jumped to a 10-month high of 53.3 in August after tumbling to a three-year low of 48.3 in July in the immediate aftermath of the referendum.

Sterling soared by more than a cent against the dollar after the five-point monthly increase, which was the joint-largest in the manufacturing survey's nearly 25-year history. "We would expect manufacturing exports to fare well post-Brexit because they gain from falling sterling, but the surprise is that domestic business picked up too," Investec economist Chris Hare said. Manufacturing only makes up about 10 percent of Britain's economy but if the service sector PMI, due on Monday, shows the same trend, it would prompt a rethink among many economists about the short-term Brexit hit to Britain.

The BoE has predicted no growth in the economy in the second half of 2016 and members of its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) have said they are ready to cut already record-low interest rates further. "If the sharp rebound in the manufacturing PMI is mirrored in the services PMI, which

covers more than half of the UK economy, chances are that the MPC would not cut Bank Rate in November," economists at Citi wrote in a note to clients. Since the referendum, consumer demand has held up more strongly than economists expected but other surveys have shown businesses sharply cutting back on investment.

One of Britain's biggest recruiters, Hays Plc, said hiring weakened significantly shortly after the June 23 vote to leave the EU as private sector clients became hesitant to take on new staff. The EEF manufacturers trade body said firms "appear to have their mojo back in August" but added the figures probably exaggerated the sector's true strength and would weaken. Markit, which compiled the PMI, said companies restarted work they had put on hold in July as clients saw business starting to return to normal. There was also an inflow of new export orders on the back of a cheaper currency.

### Longer-term hit?

After the unexpected Brexit vote, sterling fell by more than 10 percent against the dollar and the euro, losses that have not been recouped as markets bet on a long-term hit to British economic performance. Weak PMI surveys in July suggested the economy had begun to contract at the fastest rate since the 2008-09 financial crisis and were a big factor behind the BoE's decision on Aug. 4 to cut rates to a record low and restart bond purchases.

Most of the bank's policymakers also expected to cut rates again this year if the economy worsened as they anticipated -

something a repeat of yesterday's figures would call into doubt. "There are growing indications that the true impact of higher uncertainty following the referendum will instead bleed in over time, rather than showing up conspicuously in one or two quarters," J.P. Morgan economist Allan Monks said. August's manufacturing PMI showed export orders flowed in at their fastest rate since June 2014, though overall order growth was below June's rapid pace. Factories reported that they increased output by the highest amount since January.

A survey published last week had shown export orders rising at the fastest rate in two years in the first part of August, but more subdued domestic demand than the PMI. In the longer run, Britain's access to European export markets remains uncertain. Prime Minister Theresa May's new government has not said when it will start formal talks to leave the EU and has given no detail on whether it would allow unlimited EU migration in return for continued easy trade access - a likely demand of other countries in the bloc.

The flip side of the short-run boost to exports from a weaker currency is signs of rising inflation pressure. The PMI survey showed the biggest rise in input costs in more than five years and manufacturers raised the prices they charged customers at the sharpest rate since mid-2011. The BoE expects higher inflation and lower living standards to be one of the main costs for households from the vote to leave the EU, outweighing gains to trade from a weaker currency. — Reuters

# IMF LIKELY TO CUT GROWTH OUTLOOK AS TRADE WANES

**WASHINGTON:** International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde said the institution will likely downgrade its 2016 global growth forecast again as economic prospects are dimmed by weak demand, flagging trade and investment and growing inequality. Lagarde said in an interview that G20 leaders need to do far more to spur demand, bolster the case for trade and globalization, and fight inequality. And while some major threats to the global economy have yet to materialize, such as recession sparked by Britain's vote to leave the European Union or a collapse in Chinese growth, she described the overall outlook as "slightly declining growth, fragile, weak and certainly not fueled by trade."

"You could argue that Brexit is not really delivering the massive crisis that we had expected, you could argue that the Chinese transition is proceeding reasonably well, and you could argue that low commodity prices have gone up a little bit," Lagarde said. "So this is on the surface." "However, when you look deep down at the economic growth prospects, at the growth potential, at the productivity, we are not getting very good signals, and we will probably be revising down our

forecast for growth in 2016."

The IMF is due to revise its World Economic Outlook forecasts in early October ahead of its annual meetings. Another cut would be the sixth straight growth markdown in about 18 months. Citing global uncertainty over the June 23 Brexit vote, the IMF in July cut global GDP growth estimates to 3.1 percent for 2016 and 3.4 percent for 2017 - down about a tenth of a point for each year. The full economic impact of the Brexit crisis will probably not be fully known until 2017, when more will become apparent about the shape of the future UK-EU relationship, Lagarde said. But she noted that Britons' wealth has already been eroded by a 15 percent decline in the pound's value, and that UK consumer and business confidence data was weak.

Lagarde said she will tell G20 leaders on Sunday and Monday in Hangzhou, China that further reductions in growth potential and more obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, capital and people would hurt all of them. She said people harmed by trade and innovation need to be helped by policies to allow them to retrain and acquire new skills and job mobility. "This is something that all coun-

tries and all governments should be concerned and mobilized about," Lagarde said. The IMF said in a briefing note to G20 leaders that falling trade volumes have contributed to lower GDP growth and urged them to make a stronger case for the benefits of trade.

### Egypt loan deal

Lagarde said she would be spending the next several days speaking with senior officials in a number of countries to persuade them to contribute to about \$5 billion to \$6 billion in bilateral financing to support Egypt. The funds are needed to allow a \$12 billion IMF loan program to be approved by the Fund's board. "The fact that Egypt has now reached an agreement with the IMF is an indication that they are taking their economic restructuring, their economic objectives seriously, and that should encourage either friendly neighboring countries or other bilateral partners to actually participate in the funding," she said. While this is likely to include Middle Eastern and Gulf states that have historically supported Egypt, it also may include other countries that "are willing to chip in" to help Egypt reach its considerable economic potential. — Reuters



**NEW YORK:** Photo shows an employment application form on a table during a job fair at Columbia-Greene Community College in Hudson, NY. The Labor Department released its weekly report on applications for unemployment benefits yesterday. — AP

## US LAYOFFS REMAIN LOW WEEKLY JOBLESS CLAIMS RISE 2,000

**WASHINGTON:** The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits rose less than expected last week, pointing to sustained labor market strength that could push the Federal Reserve closer to raising interest rates. Other data yesterday showed planned layoffs by US-based employers decreased 29 percent in August and labor costs in the second quarter rose far more than previously reported.

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits increased 2,000 to a seasonally adjusted 263,000 for the week ended Aug 27, the Labor Department said yesterday. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast first-time applications for jobless benefits rising to 265,000 in the latest week. It was the 78th consecutive week that claims remained below the 300,000 threshold, which is associated with a robust labor market. That is the longest stretch since 1970, when the labor market was much smaller.

With the labor market nearing full employment, there probably is limited scope for further declines in claims. The four-week moving average of claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, fell 1,000 to 263,000 last week. US stock futures trimmed gains after the data, while US Treasury prices were little changed. The dollar was slightly higher against a basket of currencies. The claims data has no bearing on Friday's employment report for August as it falls outside the survey period. Layoffs declined last month.

### Unit labor costs jump

In a separate report, global outplacement consultancy Challenger, Gray & Christmas said employers in the United States announced plans to shed 32,188 workers from their payrolls in August, down from 45,346 in July. The computer sector dominated job cuts last month, with Cisco Systems announcing plans to reduce its workforce by 5,500. There were also layoffs in the energy, industrial goods and entertainment and leisure sectors.

According to a Reuters survey of economists, nonfarm payrolls likely increased by 180,000 jobs in August after rising by 255,000 in July. The unemployment rate is seen falling one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.8 percent. August's anticipated step-down in job gains would follow two straight months of payroll increases above 250,000. Friday's employment report could determine whether the Fed raises interest rates again later this month or in December. The US central bank increased its benchmark overnight interest rate last December for the first time in nearly a decade. Sustained declines in worker productivity and a spike in labor costs in the second quarter could raise concerns about already tepid corporate profits, which could impact hiring.

In another report, the Labor Department said unit labor costs, the price of labor per single unit of output, increased at a 4.3 percent annual rate as opposed to the 2.0 percent pace reported last month. The trend in labor costs growth, however, remains moderate. Unit labor costs rose 2.6 percent from a year ago. Hourly compensation per hour jumped at a 3.7 percent rate in the second quarter instead of the previously reported 1.5 percent pace. Productivity, which measures hourly output per worker, dropped at a 0.6 percent annual rate instead of the 0.5 percent pace of decline reported last month. It was the third consecutive quarterly drop. — Reuters

## OIL EXTEND LOSSES

**LONDON:** Oil prices weakened further yesterday with sentiment weighed down by a sharp rise in US crude stockpiles, dealers said. At 1130 GMT, US benchmark West Texas Intermediate for October delivery was down six cents at \$44.64 a barrel. Brent North Sea crude for November delivery receded 11 cents to \$46.78 a barrel compared with Wednesday's close.

The market plunged Wednesday after the US Department of Energy (DoE) said commercial inventories in the world's top consumer last week rose to 525.9 million barrels—and were now 16 percent higher than the same period last year. The figures, which came despite a dip in production, poured fresh fuel on fears about a global supply glut that has dogged the crude market for several years. Output was down slightly at 8.49 million barrels per day, a drop of 60,000 barrels per day on last week. But imports rose by 275,000 barrels per day to 8.92 million barrels.

"US crude stockpiles have risen while OPEC heavyweights such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq continue to pump incessantly into a market that is already heavily saturated," said analyst Lukman Otunuga at traders FXTM. He added: "Persistent concerns over the excessive oversupply of oil in the global markets (have) haunted investor attraction towards the commodity. "It is becoming increasingly clear that investors have digested the oversupply reality with the fading optimism over OPEC securing a freeze deal in September's informal meeting enticing sellers to attack further." Prices had soared last month as OPEC and Russia agreed to hold talks to address the supply crisis.

But those gains have been slowly wiped away by a strong dollar-making oil more expensive for holders of other units—and uncertainty over OPEC member and key producer Iran's participation in the talks. Analysts remain doubtful oil producers will agree to any limits at the meeting in Algeria this month. Traders are meanwhile awaiting today's key US jobs data, which could spur the Federal Reserve to hike interest rates and in turn send the dollar higher, denting oil demand further. — AFP

## GOLD HITS 2-MONTH LOW

**LONDON:** Gold dropped to its lowest in more than two months yesterday as European shares rose and investors waited to see if US jobs data could put the Federal Reserve on track to raise interest rates. Spot gold was down 0.2 percent at \$1,306.25 by 1202 GMT, having earlier touched its lowest since June 24 at \$1,303.95. US gold futures fell \$2 to \$1,309.40.

"Having heard the Fed last week saying that the US economy is doing well, an interest rate hike is back on the table and that is driving prices down, especially with the market expecting a good jobs data number tomorrow," Natixis analyst Bernard Dahdah said. "We expect a Fed interest rate hike in December." An upbeat payrolls report would reinforce the view that a US rate increase is likely before the end of the year after Fed Chair Janet Yellen said on Friday that the case for higher rates was strengthening.

On Wednesday Boston Fed President Eric Rosengren said the Fed should consider that quicker interest rate rises over time could stave off risks to the economy, while Chicago Fed President Charles Evans said he was increasingly convinced that US economic growth had slowed permanently. Gold is highly sensitive to rising US interest rates, which increase the opportunity cost of holding the non-yielding asset while boosting the dollar, in which it is priced. "Technical show that gold and silver prices need some correction and will see some mild rebound. But Friday's jobs data is going to be crucial," said Jiang Shu, chief analyst at Shandong Gold Group.

"If the jobs data is going to be good, gold will fall to \$1,260-\$1,270 levels as markets will hope for a rate hike in September." Holdings of SPDR Gold Trust, the world's largest gold-backed exchange-traded fund, posted the first monthly dip for four months in August. They fell 1.27 percent to 943.23 tons on Wednesday and were down 1.6 percent for the month. In other precious metals, silver gained 0.1 percent at \$18.63 an ounce while palladium rose 0.2 percent to \$670.75. Platinum was up 0.2 percent at \$1,050, having touched an eight-week low of \$1,043.20 on Wednesday. — Reuters



**KOLKATA:** Indian vendors sell fish, including the popular hilsa, at a wholesale market in Kolkata yesterday. Each year a large number of hilsa, one of the most popular fish among the people of South Asia, are caught in the Ganges-Brahmaputra river delta of the Bay of Bengal. — AFP

## MANUFACTURING FALTERS AS GLOBAL DEMAND WEAKENS

REST OF ASIA, SOUTH KOREA PMI SLUMP; OTHERS MIXED

**LONDON:** Manufacturers across Asia and Europe showed few signs of returning to health in August, as demand remained fitful at best, although British factories bucked the global trend, surveys showed yesterday. Britain's manufacturing rebounded from the shock of June's vote to leave the European Union, helped by a boost to exports from sterling's post-Brexit slump. Recent data have shown consumer demand holding up, and yesterday's survey suggests manufacturing, which accounts for 10 percent of Britain's economy, is weathering the impact of the vote better than feared.

"The plunge in sterling is boosting the UK's competitiveness, which is helping to support export orders, while the aggressive stimulus from the Bank of England and the smooth transition of political leadership has also helped calm immediate fears for the economy," said James Knightley at ING. "Nonetheless, the risks of recession have not disappeared and with surveys still suggesting a significant pullback on hiring and investment intentions we remain concerned about the prospect of a weaker performance around the turn of the year."

The UK Markit/CIPS Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) jumped to a 10-month high of 53.3 in August after tumbling to a three-year low in July following the referendum. A reading above 50 indicates growth. August's monthly surge was the joint largest in the manufacturing survey's near 25-year history and beat all forecasts in a Reuters poll of economists. After the release, the pound jumped over a cent to \$1.3250, putting it on course for its best day in two weeks. However, survey compiler Markit said reduced sales to Britain were partly to blame for slowdown in orders in the neighboring euro zone.

Manufacturing growth in the currency bloc slowed during August. Much of the expansion remained focused in the north, and the survey hinted at a further slowdown this month. Germany, the

Netherlands and Austria again provided the main power. France and Italy showed declines, Greece stagnated and both Spain and Ireland saw their worst growth since mid-2013. Markit's PMI for the bloc dipped to 51.7 in August from 52.0, below a flash estimate of 51.8. An index measuring output came in at 53.3, below July's 53.9. Manufacturing growth in the United States also eased last month, data are expected to show later on.

Coming a week after the US posted sluggish second-quarter growth, the uninspiring manufacturing surveys may give

Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen pause before a Fed meeting on Sept 20-21 to decide whether to raise interest rates. In China, the world's second-biggest economy the official PMI ticked up to 50.4 in August, compared with the previous month's 49.9. But the private Caixin PMI, which covers a greater share of smaller firms, showed activity stagnated last month. "While it is encouraging that manufacturing activity appears to be stabilizing, there is a risk that this is a 'calm before the storm' moment for the sector," said Danae Kyriakopoulou at Cebr. — Reuters

## CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA LIFTS FOREX BAN ON BANKS

**LAGOS:** The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has lifted a suspension of nine banks from foreign exchange trading for failing to remit some oil money to the government, an official said yesterday. "The erring banks have been readmitted into the inter-bank foreign exchange market after they presented their plans to pay back the money," the CBN official said. The CBN suspended the nine banks last week for withholding \$2.12 billion belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) contrary to a government regulation.

On coming to power in May last year on an anti-graft ticket, President Mohammadu Buhari ordered all government revenues to be paid into Treasury Single Account (TSA) at the CBN to prevent fraud. While government agencies and ministries previously maintained multiple accounts at local banks, Buhari instituted the TSA to ensure that all government funds

were pooled. The decision was to instill more accountability in monitoring government revenue and to eliminate opacity in government.

Last week's ban created tension in the financial system, triggering a crash in the stocks of most of the indicted lenders on the Nigeria Stock Exchange. The foreign exchange market also reacted negatively with the naira currency slumping further on the parallel market to close at 420 to the dollar on Wednesday against 396 before the suspension. Industry experts had appealed for leniency to avoid causing a run on the banks. "We should not kill an ant with a sledgehammer. Banning nine banks from the forex market at this time of recession will worsen the situation," Pascal Odibo at Jeff & O'Brien said. He warned that the ban would deny importers and forex users the opportunity to obtain forex through the banks under scrutiny, ramping up pressure on the black market. — AFP

# CHINA FACTORIES UNEXPECTEDLY EXPAND

## OUTPUT, NEW ORDERS EXPAND AT A FASTER PACE; CONSTRUCTION BOOMS

**BEIJING:** Activity in China's manufacturing sector unexpectedly expanded at its fastest pace in nearly two years in August as construction boomed, suggesting the economy is steadying in response to stronger government spending. The best factory reading since late 2014 may reinforce growing views that China's central bank will be in no hurry to cut interest rates or banks' reserve requirements, for fear of adding to high debt levels or fuelling asset bubbles. But the official fac-

tory survey also highlighted growing lopsidedness in the world's second-largest economy, with larger firms expanding, likely thanks to Beijing's largesse, while smaller manufacturers continued to struggle.

"Our view is that the People's Bank of China doesn't really have any reason to ease until we start to see clear signs of another downturn," Julian Evans-Pritchard, China Economist at Capital Economics said, saying it is concerned

such action could aggravate economic imbalances and credit risks. "I think eventually they'll come under pressure to ease further, but given the economy is still stable, I don't think it'll happen this year," he said, predicting the factory strength could last through the end of the year. The official Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rose to 50.4 in August from 49.9 in July, and above the 50-point mark that separates growth from contraction on a monthly basis.

Analysts had expected a reading of 49.9 for the second month in a row, and some thought there would be added weakness after Beijing ordered many plants around Hangzhou to close to clear the air ahead of China's first summit of G20 leaders Sept 4-5. Yet factory output growth accelerated, with the index rising to 52.6, the highest this year, from 52.1 in July. Total new orders expanded sharply, though export orders continued to shrink, albeit at a more modest pace. —Reuters



**QINGDAO:** Chinese workers install scaffolding at an offshore oil engineering platform in Qingdao, east China's Shandong province yesterday. —AFP

# EU CHAMBER CALLS ON CHINA TO LIFT FOREIGN INVESTMENT CURBS

## CHINA'S 'UNEQUAL INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE' SLAMMED

**BEIJING:** A European lobby group in China yesterday slammed the country's "unequal investment landscape" and called for it to drop wide-scale prohibitions on foreign investment, warning future access to the EU could be at stake. The comments from the EU Chamber of Commerce in China come as Chinese buyers spend billions to snap up stakes in European companies, sports clubs, airports, and infrastructure.

"For the Chinese, Europe is a sumptuous buffet, anything goes, very nice, and for us it's four dishes and a soup, you can't do more," the group's president Jorg Wuttke told reporters at a briefing in Beijing. The remarks preceded a statement from the Chamber said: "While Europe welcomes foreign investment, this lack of reciprocity is unsustainable and could lead to protectionism and increased tension."

It added that it was in China's inter-

est to loosen restrictions and show Beijing "supports globally accepted principles". Chinese investment in Europe has surged over the past two years, growing 44 percent year-on-year in 2015 to 20 billion euros (\$22.3 billion). Beijing has urged its companies to go abroad in search of higher returns and advanced technologies to make Chinese firms more competitive in a range of high-value sectors, from aerospace to agribusiness and robotics.

And the first half of 2016 has seen numerous billion-dollar deals including a \$43 billion bid for Swiss seed technology company Syngenta. Among the top-drawer investments are the purchases of 219-year-old private German bank Hauck & Aufhauser, Italian tyre-maker Pirelli, and a portion of advanced robotics firm Kuka. Pointing to these, the chamber said it is "almost impossible to imagine"

European investors would be allowed to invest in similarly prominent Chinese companies, calling the situation "win-win results, but only in one direction".

China ranked 84th globally-behind Saudi Arabia and Ukraine-in the World Bank's ease of doing business index for 2016, and second to last in an OECD report on the restrictiveness toward foreign investment. If Beijing does not lower market barriers, it cannot assume it will continue to be allowed unhindered access to the EU because this would be politically untenable, Wuttke said. "The stark contrast between (the flow of Chinese investments into Europe) and the closed-up Chinese market will drive a lot of people to the conclusion that China takes advantage of us," he said. "As we have seen with Brexit, globalization also produces losers, and losers have a political voice." —AFP

# AUSTRALIA INFLATION GOES DOWN AS HIGH-RISE APARTMENTS GO UP

**SYDNEY:** Australia has successfully used historically low borrowing costs to spark a boom in home building that has helped shepherd the economy through the dog days of a global mining downturn. Yet the rush of new homes has also compressed rental yields to record lows and put downward pressure on already tepid inflation - an alarming trend rate cuts were supposed to remedy. Rents were the single biggest factor behind the marked inflation slowdown this year that prompted a reluctant Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) to further cut rates to a record low of 1.5 percent, juicing up the housing market even more. "It's ironic. They cut rates to boost housing supply, but that's turned into a material drag on inflation," said George Tharenou, an economist at UBS. The drag on inflation is likely to be protracted, given UBS now believes the building boom will not peak until 2018, and seemingly argues for even more stimulus.

"But there's a limit here. Easing would only push inflation down further," said Tharenou. "With all this housing activity adding to GDP growth, the economy just does not need more cuts." Australia completed 190,000 new homes in 2015, 20 percent more than 10 years ago. Housing starts have since surged to an annualized 229,000, well above estimates of fundamental demand. Approvals to build new homes surged over 11 percent in July, led by a 23 percent jump in apartments. Residential construction directly added 0.4 percentage points to gross domestic product growth in the year to March, and bolstered by spending to furnish new homes, helped the economy boast overall growth of 3.1 percent.

### Capital returns

All this supply has led to a sharp rise in vacancies. Investors in Australia typically buy for capital gains rather than rental returns - understandable given Sydney home prices have climbed around 60 percent in the past four years. An added wrinkle is that investors who buy to let get a "negative gearing" tax break which allows them to offset rental losses against their other income, and there is also a capital gains tax discount on homes held for more than one year. The result has been a flood of rental properties and a drop in rental yields to record lows. This matters because rents are a major component of consumer price inflation (CPI). Rents make up around 7 pct of the CPI basket, more than either health or education. They also comprise an even larger 10 percent share of the core price measures the RBA focuses on. Rental inflation was just 0.7 percent in the year to June, the weakest since the recession of the early 1990s and a world away from the 8 percent-plus seen as recently as 2008. That was a major reason CPI inflation braked sharply to a 17-year low of 1.0 percent in the year to June, while core inflation stood at a record low of 1.5 percent. Both were below the RBA's target band of 2 to 3 percent and directly triggered rate cuts in May and August.

Even after that easing, the RBA conceded inflation would likely not reach even the bottom of its target until late 2018 - with rents fingered as a leading culprit. "The significant increase in apartment supply in train is likely to weigh on rental growth further, so the RBA will find it difficult to return inflation to its target band in the near term," said Tapas Strickland, an economist at NAB. —Reuters



## TIRED OF CHEAP OIL, SAUDIS EYING PRICE BOOST TO DRIVE ARAMCO IPO

**DUBAI:** Two years after triggering an oil price war, Saudi Arabia has seemingly had enough of cheap crude amid budget pressures, fear of a future supply shortage, and as it seeks to offload a stake in state-owned producer Aramco. The change in tone comes as OPEC and other producers such as Russia may resume talks on stabilizing output when they meet in Algeria later this month, after a similar effort to boost oil prices collapsed in April due to Saudi-Iranian tensions. "The Saudis are going to Algeria for a freeze," said a source in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries who is familiar with the matter and declined to be identified. "More and more ministers are now talking among themselves to evaluate their production position."

OPEC in November 2014 made a landmark policy shift, led by Saudi Arabia, refusing to cut production by itself in the hope that lower prices would discourage higher-cost competitors that had eroded the group's market share. Further cementing the impression of a production free-for-all, OPEC ditched its last remaining supply-management tool, an output ceiling, in December 2015. From 2014 until earlier this year, Saudi Arabia's then-minister for oil, Ali al-Naimi, offered little verbal support for prices. The market determined them, Naimi said, but he gave no preferred range or any indication of what levels could be sustained in the long term.

Since Khalid Al-Falih took over as energy minister, the tone has visibly shifted. He says the world needs oil above \$50 per barrel to achieve a balanced market, and raised the prospect of Saudi Arabia resuming its role of balancing supply and demand. Outwardly, there is no sign yet of a definite change in policy. But behind the scenes, Saudi Arabia has been working towards boosting prices, rather than leaving that job to market forces. At OPEC's last meeting in June, held in Vienna, Falih surprised some of his counterparts by proposing OPEC set a new output ceiling, according to several people familiar with the matter.

### Price-boosting action aired

In Vienna, Falih floated a number of ideas in private meetings on how best to manage the supply glut, and questioned independent OPEC analysts during separate meetings as to the possible price impact of a production freeze or even a cut. At private talks with the Nigerian oil minister before the June 2 OPEC meeting, Falih was willing to revive the idea of a production freeze while showing more tolerance towards Iran, which is raising output post-sanctions, sources said. — Reuters

## ARAMCO AND JAPAN TO EXPAND OKINAWA CRUDE STORAGE DEAL

**TOKYO:** Saudi Aramco and the Japanese government are set to agree on a roughly 2 million barrel expansion of crude storage capacity in Okinawa, used by the state-run firm to store oil, Saudi Aramco CEO Amin Nasser said yesterday. Under an agreement with Tokyo, Saudi Aramco and Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (ADNOC) each store up to 1 million kilolitres (6.3 million barrels) of crude oil in Okinawa, southwest of mainland Japan. In return for providing free storage space, Japan gets a priority claim on the stockpiles in case of an emergency. "It would be in the best interest for Saudi Aramco and Japan to increase the capacity," Nasser told reporters in Tokyo. "We are looking at a couple of million (barrels) more than what we have now."

A senior Japanese government spokesman confirmed the two sides had agreed to expand and extend the current storage deal, though details had not been decided. A source familiar with the matter told Reuters the deal was set to be signed in October. Nasser is accompanying Saudi Arabia's powerful Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman on his visit to Japan this week, along with Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih and other ministers. Japan treats the crude oil stored at Okinawa as quasi-government oil reserves, counting half of the barrels stored by Aramco and ADNOC as national crude reserves.

Saudi Aramco has stored crude in Okinawa since February 2011, and has used the facility to supply oil to China, Japan and South Korea among others. Also yesterday, Aramco signed memorandums of understanding on business cooperation in Tokyo with Japanese companies including three major banking groups. — Reuters



**LONDON:** People wait outside the Apple store in Covent Garden in London. The European Commission's demand for Apple to pay Ireland some 13 billion euros in back taxes has put the country in the strange position of refusing the windfall for fear of scaring away valuable investment. — AFP

# EU RULING ON APPLE'S IRISH TAX IS 'TOTAL POLITICAL CRAP'

## US ACCUSES BRUSSELS OF 13 BILLION EURO TAX GRAB

**DUBLIN:** Apple's Chief Executive Tim Cook described an EU ruling that it must pay a huge tax bill to Ireland as "total political crap", but France joined Germany yesterday in backing Brussels as transatlantic tensions grow. European Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager dismissed Cook's broadside, saying the demand for a 13 billion euro (\$14.5 billion) back tax payment was based on the facts.

Washington has lined up with the tech giant, accusing the European Union of trying to grab tax revenue that should go to the US government. But in Ireland itself, public opinion and the government are divided over whether to take the windfall - which would fund the country's health system for a year - or reject it in the hope of maintaining a low tax regime that has attracted many multinationals and the jobs they create.

Apple has said it will appeal the ruling which Cook attacked in an interview with the Irish Independent. "No one did anything wrong here and we need to stand together. Ireland is being picked on and this is unacceptable," the newspaper quoted him saying. "It's total political crap." Vestager has questioned how anyone might think an arrangement that allowed the iPhone maker to pay a tax rate of 0.005 percent, as Apple's main Irish unit did in 2014, was fair. She said yesterday that the calculations were based on data provided by Apple itself and evidence presented during hearings on Apple tax issues in the United States.

Asked if she accepted Cook's comments on the ruling, she told a news conference: "No, I will not. This is a decision based on the facts of the case." The

battle lines are forming on both sides of the Atlantic. In Paris, French Finance Minister Michel Sapin backed Vestager's view that Apple's Irish tax arrangements amounted to abnormal state aid. "The European Commission is doing its job," he told a news conference. "It's normal to make Apple pay normal taxes." German Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel also supported the Commission on Tuesday. However, Britain - which voted in June to leave the EU - has stayed out of the row, saying it is an issue for the Irish government, Apple and the Commission.

### Doing the wrong thing

Opinion is divided on the streets of Dublin. Some argued Ireland had to keep drawing foreign investors with low tax rates to provide jobs. But others said the government should drop the idea of appealing the decision and take the money. "They are doing the wrong thing. They don't care about the normal people," said Louise O'Reilly, 57, a full-time carer for her diabetic and partially blind mother. "The money should be spent on the old-age pensioners who worked all their lives and are struggling to survive." O'Reilly's mother pays 10 euros tax on a monthly pension of 1,050 euros (\$1,170), a higher rate than the EU said Apple's main Irish unit paid on its profits in 2014.

By contrast, Cook estimated Apple's average annual tax on its global profits at 26 percent. "They just picked a number from I don't know where," he said. However, in a separate radio interview he promised to boost tax payments by repatriating billions of dollars in global profits to the United States next year. "I

think that Apple was targeted here," he said. "And I think that (anti-US sentiment) is one reason why we could have been targeted ... I think it's a desire to reallocate taxes that should be paid in the US to the EU." Apple would fight closely with Ireland to overturn the ruling - by far the largest anti-competition measure imposed on a company by the EU - which he said had "no basis in law or in fact".

### Ireland considers appeal

Finance Minister Michael Noonan has insisted Dublin would appeal any adverse ruling ever since the EU investigation began in 2014. However, the cabinet failed to agree on Wednesday whether to accept his recommendation of an appeal. A group of independent lawmakers represented in the minority coalition say they need to consult further with Noonan, tax officials and independent experts.

After five hours of discussion, the cabinet adjourned until Friday when the government said a decision would be made. Any failure of the Independent Alliance group to come on board would cast doubt on the government's survival prospects. Cook played down the possibility of the government failing to appeal the decision. "The future investment for business really depends on a level of certainty," he told RTE radio. "I'm pretty confident that the government will do the right thing." In Washington, US Treasury Secretary Jack Lew criticized the ruling. "I have been concerned that it reflected an attempt to reach into the US tax base to tax income that ought to be taxed in the United States," he said on Wednesday. — Reuters

# TOLES GRAND SLAM LEADS DODGERS PAST ROCKIES

**DENVER:** Andrew Toles hit a grand slam with two outs in the ninth inning and the Los Angeles Dodgers overcame a late six-run deficit to beat the Colorado Rockies 10-8 on Wednesday night for a doubleheader split. Down 8-2, the Dodgers scored three times in the eighth and added five more in the ninth. Toles capped the final inning with a homer off closer Adam Ottavino (0-1) for his first career slam. Luis Avilan (1-0) threw a scoreless eighth for the victory. Kenley Jansen pitched the ninth for his 40th save. Nolan Arenado hit a two-run homer and finished with a Colorado-record 36 RBIs for the month, breaking the August record of 33 set by Andres Galarraga in 1996. In the opener, Tyler Anderson pitched into the seventh inning in the Rockies' 7-0 victory. Anderson (5-5) allowed six hits in 6 1/3 innings against the NL West leaders. He also had an RBI single in the second in the team's first shutout

## GIANTS 4, DIAMONDBACKS 2

Matt Moore struck out seven over 5 1/3 innings for his first career victory at AT&T Park, and San Francisco beat Arizona. Moore walked off in the sixth to a standing ovation from the sellout crowd. The left-hander had lost his initial two home starts since being acquired from Tampa Bay. Moore (2-3) looked strong in his first game since losing a no-hit bid with two outs in the ninth inning at Dodger Stadium. Buster Posey drove in a pair of runs for San Francisco. Santiago Casilla relieved Sergio Romo with the bases loaded and two outs in the eighth and struck out Yasmany Tomas. Casilla finished for his 29th save. Shelby Miller (2-10) was called up from the minor leagues for the start. He allowed two runs and six hits in six innings.

## YANKEES 5, ROYALS 4

Brian McCann had a sacrifice fly in the 13th

into the right-field corner. He emphatically clapped his hands and swung his arms into the air after reaching second base. Addison Reed (4-2) pitched a perfect eighth inning for the victory, the Mets' third in a row. Jeury's Familia closed for his 44th save, establishing a franchise record.

## ASTROS 4, ATHLETICS 3

Evan Gattis hit an RBI single to cap a three-run rally in the eighth inning keyed by a wild pitch on a strikeout, leading Houston past Oakland. Chasing Baltimore for the second AL wild-card slot, Houston swept the three-game series and will open a three-game set Friday at AL West-leading Texas. A's starter Ross Detwiler gave up three hits and left after the seventh with a 3-1 lead. Reliever Liam Hendriks (0-3) got two quick outs in the eighth before George Springer tripled. Alex Bregman then struck out, but reached when the pitch got away, allowing

## RED SOX 8, RAYS 6

Hanley Ramirez hit a grand slam, and Aaron Hill later sliced an RBI single to break an eighth-inning tie to help Boston beat Tampa Bay. Jackie Bradley Jr., who had three hits, and Xander Bogaerts each homered for the Red Sox. Dustin Pedroia had three more hits for Boston. The Red Sox had lost five of its previous seven games after moving into a tie for first place in the AL East. Junichi Tazawa (3-2) earned the victory despite allowing a two-run single after Boston took a 6-4 lead on the homers by Ramirez and Bradley. Craig Kimbrel closed for his 24th save. Erasmo Ramirez (7-10) gave up Hill's single and an RBI double by Bradley in the eighth. Logan Forsythe and Logan Morrison each homered for Tampa Bay.

## BREWERS 3, CARDINALS 1

Kirk Nieuwenhuis homered, Matt Garza pitched into the eighth inning and Milwaukee beat St. Louis to end a six-game losing streak. Nieuwenhuis hit a three-run homer off Luke Weaver (1-2) in the third inning. Garza (5-6) turned in his longest outing of the season, giving up one run and three hits in seven-plus innings while walking two and striking out eight. Tyler Thornburg notched his sixth save in 10 chances. Yadier Molina homered for the Cardinals.

## NATIONALS 2, PHILLIES 1

Jayson Werth homered and Gio Gonzalez pitched six strong innings to lead Washington to a three-game sweep of Philadelphia. Wilson Ramos hit the go-ahead RBI single in the seventh inning to help NL East-leading Washington set a franchise record with its ninth straight victory over the Phillies. The Nationals remained nine games in front of the second-place New York Mets. Gonzalez (10-9) gave up one run and two hits with four strikeouts and a walk. Shawn Kelley got the only batter he faced, Maikel Franco, to ground out to end the game for his seventh save. Freddy Galvis homered for Philadelphia in the game was played through a persistent drizzle. Adam Morgan (1-9) lost his ninth straight.

## ANGELS 3, REDS 0

Ricky Nolasco pitched a dynamic four-hitter for his fifth career shutout and his first victory for Los Angeles, leading the Angels to an interleague sweep of Cincinnati. CJ Cron drove in two runs. The Angels (59-74) have won five straight and eight of 10 to climb out of last place in the AL West. Los Angeles even won without Albert Pujols and Mike Trout, who weren't in the lineup for an early starting game before the Angels' day off. Brandon Finnegan (8-10) struck out nine during seven strong innings of five-hit ball for the Reds. They have lost four straight and eight of 10.

## INDIANS 8, TWINS 4

Corey Kluber struck out a season-high 11 and in his seventh straight victory, helping Cleveland hand Minnesota its 13th straight loss - one shy of tying the club record. Unbeaten since July 3, Kluber (15-8) allowed three runs and six hits in eight solid innings. The right-hander is 7-0 with a 1.94 ERA in his last 10 starts. Carlos Santana and Roberto Perez homered off Pat Dean (1-5), and Jose Ramirez hit a two-run double during a five-run fifth as the AL Central-leading Indians swept the three-game series. Brian Dozier hit his 32nd homer, and Max Kepler also connected for the Twins Minnesota loaded the bases with two outs in the ninth off rookie Perci Garner, making his major league debut. Bryan Shaw came on and threw a wild pitch before striking out Dozier for his first save. —AP



**DENVER:** Nolan Arenado #28 of the Colorado Rockies watches his two-run home run as catcher Yasmani Grandal #9 of the Los Angeles Dodgers looks on during the seventh inning at Coors Field. —AFP

at home this season. Pinch-hitter Stephen Cardullo hit his first career homer in the seventh. The doubleheader was necessitated by a rainout Tuesday.

## CUBS 6, PIRATES 5

Kris Bryant hit his 36th homer and made three solid plays at third base, helping Jason Hammel and Chicago top Pittsburgh for a three-game series sweep. Addison Russell had two RBIs and an outstanding sliding catch as Chicago equaled the best August in franchise history with a 22-6 record, also accomplished in 1932. It was the Cubs' first time with 22 wins in a month since it went 22-10 in September 1945. Heading into the final stretch of the season, the Cubs (85-47) are rapidly closing in on their first division title since 2008. They begin September with the majors' best record at a season-high 38 games over .500 and a whopping 15-game lead over second-place St. Louis in the NL Central. Hammel (14-7) allowed three hits and struck out six after dropping his previous two starts. Ryan Vogelsong was the loser.

inning and Dellin Betances shut down Kansas City in the bottom half in New York's victory. Royals reliever Chris Young (3-9) gave up a single to Didi Gregorius and a double to Starlin Castro to lead off the decisive frame. Matt Strahm came in against McCann for a lefty-lefty matchup, and the New York designated hitter lofted a fly ball to left to score the go-ahead run. Ben Heller (1-0) pitched a perfect 12th to earn his first MLB win, and Betances wrapped up a winning series for the Yankees by working around a leadoff walk for his seventh save. Castro hit a two-run homer for the Yankees. Kendrys Morales hit one for Kansas City.

## METS 5, MARLINS 2

Kelly Johnson's three-run double in the eighth inning broke a tie and lifted surging New York over Miami. Yoenis Cespedes began the rally by singling off reliever A.J. Ramos (1-2). Curtis Granderson walked, and Wilmer Flores flew out to center, advancing a hustling Cespedes to third. After Jay Bruce flew out to right, Travis d'Arnaud walked to load the bases, bringing up Johnson. Johnson drove the ball

Springer to score. Jose Altuve tripled home the tying run and Gattis singled for the lead. Michael Feliz (8-1) pitched a scoreless eighth. Ken Giles closed for his seventh save.

## RANGERS 14, MARINERS 1

Rougned Odor homered twice a day after hitting a game-ending shot and Carlos Gomez connected for a grand slam off Felix Hernandez, sending Texas past Seattle for a three-game sweep. Odor tied a career high with five RBIs, and Adrian Beltre and Ryan Rua also homered for the AL West leaders. Texas (80-54) moved a season-high 26 games over .500 with a fifth straight win. The Rangers matched the 1999 and 2012 Texas teams as the fastest to reach 80 wins. Odor had a two-run shot for a 10-0 lead in the seventh and a three-run homer in the eighth, and leads the team with 27 home runs. On Tuesday night, his two-run homer in the ninth gave Texas an 8-7 win. Martin Perez (9-10) pitched six shutout innings. Hernandez (9-5) matched a season high by allowing six runs in his shortest outing, coming out after four innings.

## BANGLADESH LAND W INDIAN WALSH AS BOWLING COACH

**DHAKA:** West Indies fast bowling great Courtney Walsh has agreed to become Bangladesh's bowling coach and will begin his three-year role this week, the country's cricket board said yesterday. The 53-year-old Walsh, the most successful bowler from the Caribbean with 519 test wickets, recently completed his role as a West Indies selector and his contract with Bangladesh runs until the 2019 World Cup in England.

"Having watched Bangladesh cricket from afar over the years, they are a seriously talented bunch of players," Walsh said in a statement. "Chandika Hathurusinghe has done a wonderful job thus far as head coach so hopefully I can complement his skills and continue the positive progress. "Obviously the West Indies is my home but the chance to go in a new direction on the coaching front and with such a talented group, was one I couldn't look past."

The Bangladesh job will be the first senior role for Walsh, who in the past has managed the West Indies under-19 side and been a bowling consultant for the Jamaica Tallawahs in the Caribbean Premier League among others. Walsh, who played for West Indies for 17 years and also took 227 wickets in one-dayers, will prepare Bangladesh's attack for three 50-over matches against Afghanistan at home before they host a high-profile series against England next month. "We are delighted to have Courtney in our ranks. He is a role model to millions and his fast bowling knowledge is second to none," Bangladesh Cricket Board chief executive Nizam Uddin Chowdhury said. "Bangladesh cricket at present is going through the best pace bowling phase in our history and Courtney's involvement I am sure will take it to greater heights." — Reuters



Courtney Walsh

## NEW DEAL WILL MAKE SONY HUGE CRICKET BROADCASTER

**MUMBAI:** The \$385 million acquisition of TEN Sports is set to make Sony Pictures Networks a major cricket broadcaster in Asia as it seeks to expand its Twenty20-dominated portfolio. Sony Corp-owned SPN holds broadcast rights for the annual cash-rich Indian Premier League Twenty20 cricket tournament while also having the rights for the domestic leagues in South Africa and the West Indies. TEN sports will now add all three formats of international cricket to the network with the broadcast rights of boards in South Africa, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, West Indies and Zimbabwe.

SPN's biggest competitor Star Sports, a unit of Rupert Murdoch's 21st Century Fox, owns rights to cricket giants India's home matches, Australia, England and also the International Cricket Council-organized World Cups. "We have IPL which is the biggest cricket property. That will now be complemented by the rights of five cricket boards that TEN Sports has rights to," SPN Chief Executive NP Singh told Reuters in an interview. "We are already the home of international football. We will now get the UEFA Champions League and the Europa League."

Besides broadcasting the NBA and the NFL in India, SPN also holds rights for the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia, the under-17 World Cup, and soccer leagues such as Spain's La Liga, Italy's Serie A and the English FA Cup. With TEN also holding rights for football's UEFA Champions League, Europa League, French League and English Football League Cup among other sports, it will be a strong mix. — Reuters



**DAMBULLA:** Australian captain David Warner (R) is dismissed by Sri Lankan cricketer Sachith Pathirana as Sri Lanka's wicketkeeper Kusal Perera (L) looks on during the fourth one day international (ODI) cricket match between Sri Lanka and Australia at The Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium. — AFP

# WARNER CRITICIZES PITCHES AFTER ODI SERIES VICTORY

**DAMBULLA:** Australian skipper David Warner criticized preparation of Sri Lanka's pitches following his side's series-clinching one-day international victory against the hosts, saying his batsmen were being prevented from scoring big totals. Warner lauded his teammates for their six-wicket win against Sri Lanka in the fourth ODI on Wednesday, which handed the tourists an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-match series.

Australia easily chased down their target of 213 in just 31 overs as Aaron Finch smashed 55 off 19 balls while George Bailey hit an unbeaten 90 after Sri Lanka struggled to 212 all out in their 50 overs. Warner, whose side suffered their first Test whitewash against the hosts last month, said the sluggish pitches were not ideal for ODI cricket. "It's hard to gain momentum when the wickets prepared are like this," Warner, who took over as captain after the second ODI while Steve Smith is rested, told reporters. "It's a little bit disappointing from our point of view because it's not the way we like to play. We like to play an aggressive brand of cricket. We like to entertain the crowd."

### History and doldrums

England recorded the highest ODI score in history on Tuesday — 444 for 3 in 50 overs against Pakistan at Trent Bridge-while Australia and Sri Lanka have struggled to get past 200 in their series. "When you see games like the England match last night-that's what I love about cricket. I love that kind of atmosphere, and that's why as a youngster I went to watch the game. "But if you come here and you play five games like that, on wickets like they have here at the moment, it is going to be very, very tough to draw a big crowd all the

time," Warner said.

Australia, ranked number one in the 50-over format, finally seemed to master the slow Sri Lankan tracks after scraping past the hosts in their first two victories in Colombo and Dambulla. Finch, who equaled the record for the fastest 50 by an Australian-achieved in 18 balls-gave the visitors a rocket start. "It's always awesome to have one of your players go off like that and for me it is more of a watching tour to be honest," said Warner. "I've been up the other end or in the dugout watching the guys go about it. But it's fantastic - I love that Finch comes out and plays his game. "That's how we play. That's the Australian way," said Warner.

### Test changes

Meanwhile, cricket Australia will pore over its high performance systems in a 'meaty' review following the 3-0 test series whitewash to Sri Lanka, chief executive James Sutherland has said. Australia lost their world number one ranking in tests due to the series defeat and tarnished their reputation as home-track bullies after their batsmen again proved hapless against spin bowling on turning wickets. With a huge challenge in the subcontinent looming against India in less than six months, Sutherland said probing questions were being asked of the national set-up.

"Are some of the fundamental things that we are doing to prepare our players to perform well and be highly competitive in subcontinental conditions passing the test?" Sutherland said in comments published by Fairfax Media. "I think that's where the review gets a little bit more meaty and challenging and more fundamental, going right down into questioning our high performance

systems as well." Sutherland's comments come days after former Australia batsman Matthew Hayden slammed the high performance unit for having too much power over the team and selections.

Hayden claimed head coach and selector Darren Lehmann and the high performance unit headed by former rugby international Pat Howard were undermining the players' ability to build a strong culture. "The players have got to actually wrestle back some of their own power from within rather than listening to your physios, your strength and conditioning coaches, your high performance manager and even your coach for that matter and actually dig in as a group and build the culture," Hayden, a former team mate of Lehmann, fumed on local radio station Triple M.

Australia hired Sri Lanka spin great Muttiah Muralitharan as a coaching consultant to help their batsmen prepare for the South Asian nation's pitches but many appeared clueless when facing veteran left-arm spinner Rangana Herath, who took 28 wickets and was named man-of-the-series. Cricket Australia also regularly sends 'A' and youth teams to the subcontinent but some were failing to adapt, Sutherland said.

"To be a bona fide international cricketer in this day and age you need to be able to adapt to conditions in Australia, conditions in England, conditions in the subcontinent ... wherever you play," he said. "And that adaptability is something that needs to be reviewed because some are adapting and some aren't." Australia gained some consolation from the Sri Lanka tour on Wednesday, with the one-day side winning the fourth match to take an unassailable 3-1 lead in the series. — Agencies

## BLINDED BY THE BRIGHT? US OPEN FASHION LOUD

**NEW YORK:** At this year's US Open, the fashion's so bright, you gotta wear shades. Ultra-bright, neon hues of yellow, pink and orange are exploding all over the courts at Flushing Meadows, with players' decked out in outfits down to the socks and shoelaces that make a screaming, flashbulb-like assault on the rods and cones. Think a desk full of highlighter pens, only brighter.

"It's a very cool outfit," said American player Jack Sock, who took the court Wednesday with an all-fluorescent yellow kit, socks and all. "Maybe because it's New York City, there's that electric feeling and a lot of buzz, excitement, anticipation. ... Loud audiences and loud matches go along with the loud outfits."

The neon trend has been building for years and harkens back to the 1990s, when players such as Andre Agassi in his long-hair days struck a rebellious pose. Nike, in particular, is taking it mainstream this year, with well over a dozen players in the men's and women's draws decked out from head to toe in bright yellow, with black and pink accents that only serve to make the color seem brighter. Rafael Nadal stands apart from his Nike comrades in a relatively staid black outfit, but the soles of his feet are festooned in ultra-bright yellow.

### New York City lights

The color was so ubiquitous that several times in the early rounds, competing players battled it out in the same, official all-yellow Nike line, which the company says takes its cues from "the bright lights of New York City ... bright color spectrums mimic the chromatic shift of neon lights." But does it go too far? When 2009 champion Juan Martin del Potro strode on court for his opening match in gleaming yellow shirt, shorts, socks, shoes and headband, one Twitter commenter struck a familiar snarky tone: "Be one with the tennis ball. Literally turn into one." Another feed, Vamos Delpo Fans, tweeted simply: "Daaaang Nike thats yellow."

Judy Murray, mother of No 2-seed Andy Murray, tweeted on the stylings of a fellow British player: "Has someone attacked Kyle Edmund with a highlighter pen?" Sock may have gotten the better of his opponent Mischa Zverev on the court, but the German more than held his own on the loud scale, with an Adidas ensemble of shocking pink hat, pink and yellow shirt, pink shorts and pink shoes. Zverev even set off the outfit, intentionally or not, with neon yellow tennis strings.

Asked about his neon pink New Balance shoes, which stood out in an otherwise conservative kit of white and black, Canadian Milos Raonic was resigned to go with the fashion flow. "The color is very pink and loud, but I like the outfit," Raonic said. "I like the sort of disconnectedness - that that's sort of the focal point." — AP



**NEW YORK:** Jack Sock, of the United States, hits a forehand to Mischa Zverev, of Germany, at the U.S. Open tennis tournament. — AP



**NEW YORK:** Rafael Nadal of Spain serves to Andreas Seppi of Italy during his second round Men's Singles match on Day Three of the 2016 US Open at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center on August 31, 2016 in the Flushing neighborhood.—AFP

## MUGURUZA, RAONIC CRASH AS THE ROOF SHUTS ON US OPEN

**NEW YORK:** French Open champion Garbine Muguruza and Wimbledon runner-up Milos Raonic crashed out of the US Open Wednesday as the \$150 million roof on Arthur Ashe Stadium rolled smoothly into action for the first time. Third seeded Spaniard Muguruza, who has struggled in the aftermath of her Roland Garros breakthrough in June, slumped to a 7-5, 6-4 loss to Latvia's Anastasija Sevastova, the world number 48. A horribly out of sorts Muguruza rallied from 1-5 down in the second set, saving three match points, but Sevastova, who briefly quit the sport in 2013, held her nerve for the victory. Having not won a match at the US Open in five years before this week, 26-year-old Sevastova now goes on to face Kateryna Bondarenko, a 5-7, 7-6 (7/5), 7-5 winner in three hours over China's Zheng Saisai. "This is why I came back to the sport for the big stages like this and night sessions at the Slams. But I was shaking a little at the end," she said. Muguruza admitted she had been outplayed.

"It was a very tough match. I think I didn't play well. Everything she was doing was working," said the 22-year-old who has never made the third round in New York. Meanwhile, 120th-ranked Ryan Harrison of the United States stunned fifth seeded Raonic 6-7 (4/7), 7-5, 7-5, 6-1 in another second round upset. "It was extremely physical out there. I was playing on adrenaline," said 24-year-old qualifier Harrison who was as high as 43 in the world in 2012. He goes on to face experienced Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis for a place in the last 16. Harrison has now reached the third round of a Slam for the first time after recording just a second win over a top 10 opponent in 27 meetings. Raonic, considered as a potential title dangerman in New York, hit 69 winners but committed 62 unforced errors. "I started cramping midway through the second set. There was a lot of nerves and stress. It was a result of over-exuberance," said 25-year-old Raonic.

### Nadal first winner under roof

Rafael Nadal, the 2010 and 2013 champion, eased past Italy's Andreas Seppi 6-0, 7-5, 6-1 in a match which became the first to be completed under the new retractable roof on Ashe. Light rain caused the structure to be closed at 3-3 in the second set with play only held up for around seven minutes. "It's part of history and I am very happy to be the first to play under the roof," said Nadal, who was also the first to practice beneath the roof on the cavernous 22,000-capacity arena.

Nadal beat Seppi for the eighth time in nine matches and next faces Russia's Andrey Kuznetsov. World number one Novak Djokovic made the last 32 of a major for the 33rd successive



**NEW YORK:** Rafael Nadal of Spain celebrates victory over Andreas Seppi. — AFP

time without hitting a ball when Jiri Vesely of the Czech Republic withdrew from their second round encounter suffering an inflammation of the left forearm. Djokovic will face 34-year-old Russian Mikhail Youzhny, twice a semi-finalist, on Friday for a place in the last 16.

### Konta drama

Britain's Johanna Konta, the 13th seed, collapsed on court with heat sickness before completing a 6-2, 5-7, 6-2 win over Bulgaria's Tsvetana Pironkova. After a medical timeout, the Briton dropped the second set before heading off on a lengthy toilet break which did little to help her opponent's composure in the decider. "I'm a little embarrassed. I'm not a fan of drama. I did the best that I could with the cards that I had," said Konta. Angelique Kerber, the second seeded Australian Open champion, made the last 32 by seeing off 34-year-old Mirjana Lucic-Baroni of Croatia 6-2, 7-6 (9/7). Kerber faces 17-year-old CiCi Bellis of the United States, for a place in the last 16. Croatian seventh seed Marin Cilic, the 2014 champion, made the last 32 by seeing off Sergiy Stakhovsky 6-1, 6-2, 6-3. — AFP



CAIRO: Egyptians participate in a running marathon during the World Humanitarian Day.



CAIRO: A young Egyptian girl rides her bicycle. —AFP photos

# JOGGERS, CYCLISTS RULE CAIRO'S STREETS

**CAIRO:** On a Friday morning in Cairo, Ahmed Shazly stopped a few cars to allow some 3,000 joggers to cross a near-deserted road in the normally gridlocked metropolis. Streets that during the week are snarled with exhaust-spewing cars turn almost silent on weekend mornings-Fridays and Saturdays in Egypt-as most shops and businesses are closed.

Sport in Egypt used to be mainly practiced in clubs reserved for the elite. But now, joggers and cyclists of all backgrounds are using social media to organize group outings across the city. "The streets belong to us. We can run freely," said 31-year-old jogger Shazly, referring to the slogan of his group "Cairo Runners", which organizes runs early on Friday mornings.

Despite the August heat, thousands of joggers gathered at 7am on a recent Friday to start a four-kilometer jog along the Nile on the upmarket island of Zamalek. Most were young adults in flashy sports attire, with headphones plugged in their ears. Many snapped selfies as soon as they crossed the finish line. Cairo Runners, founded in late 2012, attracts between 2,000 and 3,000 people every week. "When you're in a group, even if you're tired, there is a spirit that pushes you to continue," said Karima Hozayen, a 31-year-old freelance translator who runs regularly with a group from her neighborhood.

Others revel in the absence of traffic. More than three million vehicles are registered in Cairo



CAIRO: Egyptians ride their bicycles in the capital.

and its twin province of Giza, according to official figures. "Oxygen! This is perhaps the only time you can enjoy the empty streets, void of cars," said Hozayen, who wore a loose blue T-shirt, her hair in a ponytail and cheeks still rosy after the workout.

### Why no Cairo marathon?

In April, 7,500 people took part in its annual

half-marathon of 21 kilometers, according to founder Ibrahim Safwat. Safwat, 32, said he dreams of organizing an international marathon "like the one in New York, Paris or Beirut". "It's not possible that a city like Cairo, the largest in the Middle East, does not have its own marathon," he said. A few kilometers away, in the commercial city centre, 60 cyclists took a break on a deserted pedestrian street, surrounded by

colonial-era buildings and shuttered stores. "We try to convey a message: the bike is a means of transport," said Mahmoud Shaalan, 27, a hospital administrator who organises weekly bicycle tours.

A resident of a crowded Cairo neighbourhood, he founded the group Pdala a year ago. "At first it was between 10 and 15 each time, now we have increased to 80 or 90," he said. While President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has called on Egyptians to exchange their cars for bikes-even leading a bike tour himself-the dangers of cycling in Cairo are an obstacle to many. The lack of bike lanes forces riders to cope with the anarchy of the traffic. But 52-year-old housewife Inas Ahmed has accompanied her 17-year-old son on bike rides for two years.

"I've liked cycling since I was little," she said, smiling. Under her purple and white helmet she wore a hijab-a headscarf worn by many Muslim women-along with jogging trousers and a white blouse. "At first they laughed at me.

There were always not so nice comments because I am a woman, and of a certain age, on a bicycle," she said. "But when you're in the middle of a group, that helps." Shaalan said some people laugh because they see cycling as a pastime for children. "But we have to change this culture, to understand that people on bikes have rights on the road, that cycling is a lifestyle," he said. — AFP



CAIRO: An Egyptian woman pushes a stroller as she participates in a running marathon during the World Humanitarian Day.



CAIRO: Egyptians participate in a running marathon during the World Humanitarian Day.

## WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE PREMIER LEAGUE TRANSFERS

**LONDON:** Five things we learned from English Premier League transfer window in which a record 1.165 billion pounds (\$1.54 billion/1.39 billion euros) was spent:

### Same old story at Arsenal

Arsene Wenger left it late again to rush through transfers on the final day of trading and the jury is out on whether his new boys will finally bring a title. While Arsenal chief executive Ivan Gazidis said the squad was good enough to win the Premiership, Arsenal are only eighth after three games. Wenger ended up outlaying more than £50 million (60 million euros/\$66 million) for striker Lucas Perez, a player they apparently earlier discounted, and German defender Shkodran Mustafi, who has yet to nail down a regular place in the German national side. Wenger is in the last year of his contract and his future could largely depend on if these two-along with Granit Xhaka and Rob Holding-provide the last pieces of a Premier League winning side puzzle.

### Loan sharks find bargains

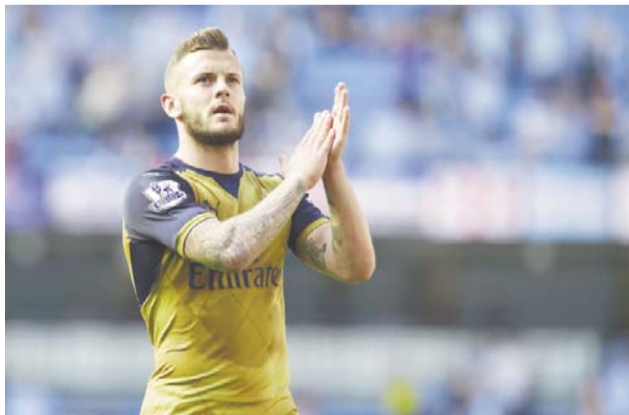
Loans provided a convenient way for Manchester City coach Pep Guardiola to rid himself of ballast even if the club is going to pay the wages of England goalkeeper Joe Hart at Serie A side Torino. It also allowed Guardiola to offload the troublesome Samir Nasri, who is all sweetness and light when he is playing but left kicking his heels could provoke discord. Liverpool took a different tack, cutting their losses by reportedly allowing misfit Italian striker Mario Balotelli to leave on a free transfer to Ligue 1 side Nice—two years after they paid 25 million euros (\$27.9 million) for ‘Super Mario’. However, not every star played ball. Manchester United’s German midfielder Bastian Schweinsteiger declined a loan move to Sporting Lisbon infuriating Jose Mourinho. Schweinsteiger is seemingly content to train on his own and pick up a reported £190,000 a week salary.

### Second chances

The Premier League can be a forgiving place as several players have been offered a second chances, some returning at a vastly higher price. Prime among those is Paul Pogba, leaving for a song to Juventus and returning for a world record 89 million pounds (105 million euros, \$116 million). Arsenal’s new 35 million pound signing Shkodran Mustafi almost gave up football after a dispiriting spell at Everton as a teenager and will hope this is a far more positive experience. Chelsea have offered two players a second opportunity. The biggest surprise was the return of the rampaging if intemperate Brazil centreback David Luiz, whom Jose Mourinho had no regrets about selling in 2014. Spanish left-back Marcos Alonso arrives from Serie A side Fiorentina for a reported £23m. The 25-year-old is in somewhat more glamorous surroundings than his previous English forays, a loan spell at Sunderland and three seasons at Bolton.

### Tougher foreign grip on Premier League

England manager Sam Allardyce received a largely hostile press for his remark he would consider selecting foreign-born players for England if they met the criteria. However, the apparently ceaseless demand for foreign imports could add weight to his argument. About £720m of the £1.165 billion spent in the two months up to Wednesday went to foreign clubs, up from £585m in 2015. — AFP



**MANCHESTER:** This file photo taken on May 08, 2016 shows Arsenal’s English midfielder Jack Wilshere applauding fans after the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and Arsenal at the Etihad Stadium. — AFP



**PARIS:** This file photo taken on May 14, 2016 shows Paris Saint-Germain’s Brazilian defender David Luiz reacting at the end of the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain and Nantes at the Parc des Princes stadium. — AFP

## LUIZ STUNNER, SISSOKO TOPS OFF BILLION-POUND TRANSFER BLITZ

**LONDON:** David Luiz made a surprise return to Chelsea on Wednesday as English Premier League clubs splashed out on the final day of a record-breaking, billion-pound mid-year transfer window. In late deals, Brazil defender Luiz returned after two years at Paris Saint-Germain, while France midfielder Moussa Sissoko left Newcastle United for Tottenham Hotspur. The two moves took spending for England’s top flight to about £1.17 billion (\$1.54 billion, 1.38 billion euros) — smashing the record of £870 million for a single transfer window set last year.

Enriched by a new £5.14 billion domestic TV rights deal, 13 of the 20 Premier League clubs broke their transfer records during the two-month window, in a spree that put Europe’s other top divisions in the shade. “This is the world we are in football,” former Tottenham midfielder Jermaine Jenas told the BBC. “There is that much money flying around since the TV deal that clubs can afford to break their transfer records. They have to keep up. The Premier League is where it is at, clubs have to spend money.” The big leagues of Italy, Spain, Germany and France spent far less. Italy’s Serie A, the next biggest spender, parted with £595 million (700 million euros), according to industry website transfermarkt.com.

One beneficiary of the Premier League’s first billion-pound spend was shaggy-haired Luiz, 29, who is back just two years after he became the world’s most expensive defender with a £50 million move to PSG. Luiz was tipped to lose his place to compatriot Marquinhos at PSG, and has returned to

Stamford Bridge for a reported fee of around £34 million.

### Eastlands exodus

“I’m delighted to return to Chelsea,” Luiz told the Chelsea website after signing a three-year contract on the last day of the two-month window. “We had a fantastic story during my first time at the club and I want to help the team and (manager) Antonio Conte achieve a lot of success.” Chelsea also landed Spanish left-back Marcos Alonso from Fiorentina for a reported £23 million, while their Colombian winger Juan Cuadrado left for Juventus on a three-year loan.

Sissoko, 27, looked poised to join Everton for much of the day, only for Tottenham to reportedly pip the Merseyside club with a late bid. He signed a five-year contract and is thought to have cost Spurs around £30 million. Tottenham also signed France under-21 winger Georges-Kevin Nkoudou from Marseille for £11 million, with Cameroon forward Clinton Njie going the other way on a season’s loan. Everton consoled themselves with a loan deal for West Ham United’s Ecuadorean forward Enner Valencia.

At Manchester City, five players who have fallen out of favour under new manager Pep Guardiola left Eastlands on season-long loans. England goalkeeper Joe Hart completed his move to Italian side Torino and French midfielder Samir Nasri joined Europa League champions Sevilla. Wilfried Bony pitched up at Stoke City, French centre-back Eliaquim Mangala signed for Valencia and defender Jason Denayer joined Sunderland.

### Nice move for Balo

English champions Leicester City broke their transfer record with the £29.7 million capture of Sporting Lisbon’s Algerian striker Islam Slimani, who agreed a five-year contract. Sunderland also broke their club record by signing 22-year-old Gabon midfielder Didier Ndong from French side Lorient for a confirmed fee of £16 million. Mario Balotelli’s miserable spell at Liverpool is finally over after he joined French club Nice on a free transfer. The wayward Italy forward scored just four goals in 28 appearances for Liverpool and spent last season on loan at AC Milan.

Burnley were another club to make the biggest purchase in their history, buying Irish midfielder Jeff Hendrick from Derby County for a reported £10 million. Arsenal’s injury-prone England international midfielder Jack Wilshere, 24, was loaned to Bournemouth after slipping down the pecking order at the Emirates Stadium. While there was a flurry of activity among English clubs, Europe’s other major leagues saw a relatively quiet deadline day.

In addition to Manchester City’s Mangala, Spanish side Valencia signed Argentina international centre-back Ezequiel Garay from Zenit St Petersburg for a reported 20 million euros. Espanyol, who are now under Chinese ownership, signed goalkeeper Diego Lopez on loan from AC Milan and secured a loan deal for Mexico defender Diego Reyes from Porto. In Germany, Werder Bremen signed German winger Serge Gnabry from Arsenal, and Hamburg landed Brazilian defender Douglas from Atletico Mineiro for 10 million euros. — AFP

## NEUER: GERMANY'S SAFE HANDS SKIPPER

**BERLIN:** Manuel Neuer succeeds Bastian Schweinsteiger as Germany captain having already served his apprenticeship in charge of die Mannschaft on the big stage. Neuer donned the captain's armband for all of Germany's Euro 2016 matches, apart from the semi-final defeat when Schweinsteiger made his only start of the tournament. Even when Schweinsteiger came on early against Italy in the quarter-final, Neuer was quick to hand the midfielder the captain's armband: "I wanted to send him a clear signal that we were behind him."

The 30-year-old Neuer has 71 caps to his name and has been Germany's first-choice goalkeeper since the 2010 World Cup with no serious challengers. He made history during the European championships in Germany's 3-0 last 16 win over Slovakia. It was his fifth straight game without conceding a goal for Germany and in the proud 108-year history of the German FA (DFB), no other goalkeeper has managed five consecutive cleansheets for die Mannschaft. Neuer has seen off Sami Khedira, Thomas Mueller and Jerome Boateng to succeed Schweinsteiger as Germany captain.

Head coach Joachim Loew has been a fan since Neuer replaced Rene Adler in goal for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa and his rivals have not had a look in since. "In recent years he has dominated the goalkeeper position like no one before him," head coach Joachim Loew has said of Neuer. "He is an incredible personality, on and off the pitch."

### Quiz show, Disney voice over

At six foot, three inches (1.93cm), Neuer is an imposing presence. But he proved he can deal with quizshow questions just as well as crosses in November 2011. He won half a million euros for charity on a celebrity version of "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?" on German TV. He also voiced over a character in the German version of the Disney cartoon film 'Monsters University' in 2013.

Neuer has been voted the world's best goalkeeper for the last three years and won the Golden Glove award as the best goalkeeper at the 2014 World Cup. His 'sweeper-keeper' style - leaving his goal to act as an extra defender - helped Germany win the world title. He finished third behind Lionel Messi and winner Cristiano Ronaldo for the 2014 Ballon d'Or. His aim is simple: to be the best goalkeeper there is. "My ambition has always been to be as perfect as possible, I have never made any secret of that," Neuer told GQ magazine. "That's how I work everyday in training. I always try to improve myself." It's hard to believe, but some Bayern Munich fans did not want him when he signed from Schalke in 2011 for 22 million euros (\$24.25m). The problem for Bavarian diehards was that Neuer is Gelsenkirchen born and bred and played for city team Schalke. He used to have the initials GE-the city's car registration letters-printed on his boots. Bayern fans were upset when Neuer impersonated Bayern's legendary goalkeeper Oliver Kahn. It did not help that Neuer sobbed his way through his Schalke press conference in April 2011 to announce he was leaving.

'Koan Neuer (No Neuer)' placards appeared at Bayern games. That was forgotten when Neuer went more than a thousand minutes without conceding in his first season at Bayern to break Kahn's record. He has been in goal through Bayern's four Bundesliga title wins over the last four years, the first time a Germany club has managed the feat. Outgoing coach Pep Guardiola described Neuer as 'the best there is' and said he expects the 30-year-old to finish his career in Munich. — AFP



**LILLE:** This file photo taken on June 26, 2016 shows Germany's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer during the Euro 2016 round of 16 football match between Germany and Slovakia at the Pierre-Mauroy stadium. — AFP



**SAITAMA:** Japan's midfielder Keisuke Honda (L) and United Arab Emirates' (UAE) midfielder Khamis Esmael (R) vie for the ball during the World Cup 2018 football qualification match between Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). — AFP

## JAPAN FUME OVER REF HOWLER AS KOREANS SEE OFF CHINA

**SAITAMA:** Japan were left fuming over a refereeing howler after a shock defeat to UAE rocked their World Cup qualifying campaign yesterday, while South Korea held off China to win 3-2. Asian champions Australia overcame a nervy start to beat Iraq 2-0 as Asia's third round of 2018 World Cup qualifying got underway, with 12 teams vying for four automatic berths.

Japan were favorites to beat UAE in Saitama and they took the lead through AC Milan forward Keisuke Honda's header in the 11th minute. But Ahmed Khalil's sumptuous free kick and penalty either side of half-time ensured a 2-1 win for the visitors, who also got lucky when Japan had a late equalizer disallowed. Japan should have finished the game 2-2 but the officials failed to spot that Takuma Asano's shot, clawed away by Khalid Eisa, had crossed the line, as shown by TV replays.

Qatari referee Abdulrahman Al Jassim waved away Japan's protests as the Blue Samurai crashed once again to UAE, their conquerors in last year's Asian

Cup quarter-finals. "The referee was unacceptable," thundered Japan coach Vahid Halilhodzic, when asked about the Asano ghost goal. He added that 2-1 was a "horrible result". "They had many chances, and they lost two goals after a free kick and a penalty kick that could have been avoided," glowered the Bosnian.

### China fight-back

In Seoul, Zheng Zhi's early own goal ultimately condemned China to a 3-2 defeat to South Korea despite a spirited fight-back from the visitors. China's talisman became their fall-guy as he inadvertently bundled Son Heung-Min's free kick into his own net on 20 minutes at Seoul World Cup Stadium. Lee Chung-Yong and Koo Ja-Cheol both scored to pile on the pain for China but the visitors nearly hauled their way back into it following late strikes from Yu Hai and Hao Junmin.

However, a precious equalizer eluded Gao Hongbo's men and they start with a defeat as they embark on the year-long

final qualifying group stage. While South Korea are targeting a 10th World Cup, China have only ever reached the showpiece once, in 2002, although President Xi Jinping has ambitions of awakening the sleeping giant and turning it into a global football power. Earlier, hotshots Massimo Luongo and Tomi Juric were both on target as Australia overcame a dogged Iraq outfit to win 2-0 in Perth.

The Socceroos were strong favorites but they didn't have it all their own way until QPR's Luongo and FC Luzern striker Juric scored in a seven-minute, second-half burst. "It was a great way to come back today," said Juric, who was recalled by coach Ange Postecoglou after missing Australia's friendlies against Greece in June. "There definitely could have been a few more (goals) on our side, but it is a great result to start this campaign." The top two in each of Asia's two groups of six will qualify for the World Cup in Russia, while the third-placed sides will face each other for the right to contest an intercontinental play-off.— AFP

## QATAR PREPARES FOR WORLD CUPS

**DOHA:** Qatar football officials are concerned right now with qualification for the 2018 World Cup finals, but preparations continue apace for the Gulf state's controversial hosting of the 2022 tournament. Despite continued human rights and trade unions concerns over labor, a Swiss corruption investigation into the awarding of the tournament to the tiny Gulf emirate, switching the tournament from its traditional June and July to November and December because of the desert country's fierce summer, and a drop in oil prices hitting the country's energy-reliant economy, Qatar remains on schedule to host football's biggest tournament.

This week, a senior official from the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, the group overseeing the organization of the tournament, told Arabic language daily Al Watan that all

projects for 2022 will be delivered on time. "Work on the Qatar 2022 projects is going full swing," said executive director, Ali Ghanim Al-Kuwari. "All the projects are in an advanced stage of design and implementation."

FIFA is set to make a final decision on the number of stadiums to be used in 2022 by the end of this year, but it is widely expected to be eight. Earlier this summer, Jurgen Muller, FIFA's head of planning and infrastructure, told a Doha conference that Qatar's infrastructure and stadium projects were "well on track". Of the eight stadiums, all but one-Al Bayt-are located in the capital Doha or its suburbs. Building work has begun on six of the stadiums and the first stadium, Khalifa International, should be completed by the beginning of 2017, said Al-Kuwari. Khalifa will also host the World Athletics Championships in 2019. — Reuters

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# Sports

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PARIS : (FILES) This file photo taken on February 16, 2016 shows Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian defender David Luiz running with the ball during the Champions League round of 16 first leg football match between Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) and Chelsea FC at the Parc des Princes stadium. — AFP

## Luiz stunner tops EPL transfer blitz