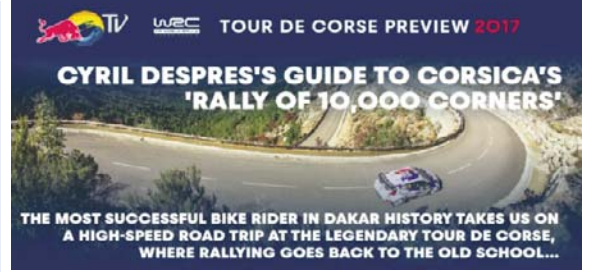


'Eagle Resolve';  
Kuwait, US hold  
military exercise



Chelsea edge  
towards title;  
Hazard shines



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# Kuwait Times Friday Times

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Min 20°  
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NO: 17191 - Friday, April 7, 2017

## PHILIPPINES ARRESTS KUWAITI TERROR SUSPECT, SYRIAN WIFE



Page 9

MANILA: Kuwaiti national (2nd left) and Syrian national (2nd right) are escorted by National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) personnel after a press conference in Manila yesterday. — AFP



Local Spotlight

## NO MORE LICENSES FOR EXPATS



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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A car in Kuwait is a necessity and not merely a means of mobility. Therefore, any proposal to prevent people from this right is unjustified, but nevertheless, such calls continue. MP Safaa Al-Hashem recently submitted a proposal to stop the issuance of driving licenses (first-time) to expatriates, with an exception for domestic workers, for a period of one year until new solutions are developed for the traffic crisis, new control methods are found and until the completion of ongoing road projects.

I am familiar with such demands, but why the exception for household workers, because to me these category of workers don't need a driving license in the first place! Hashem also called to automatically link the driving licenses of expatriates with their work permits to prevent forgery and exceptions by wasta. Other demands in the proposal included that no driving license be issued to any expat unless they hold a driving license from their home country that is certified from the embassy of Kuwait in their country.

I agree with any call to organize the large number of cars and roads in Kuwait, but I doubt such a proposal will solve the problem. Many developed countries have considered several solutions such as allocating special lanes for vehicles and changing road

directions at peak times. I also do not know the objective of enlarging roundabouts without traffic lights to organize traffic flow!

If we want to reduce the number of vehicles, we should have an alternative, such as how to develop public transportation, control taxis, and build a metro, because we all know that taxi services are not fully effective or sufficient, and are uncontrolled. The problem of traffic is due to two reasons - firstly, drivers' lack of awareness and respect of traffic laws, and secondly, the roads, the engineering systems, as well as the geographical locations of residential areas. This matter is in the hands of all ministries of Kuwait and not just the traffic department.

Heavy traffic congestion in the streets of Kuwait is a big problem, and for years, the General Administration of Traffic set many conditions for issuing driving permits for expatriates, including the condition of a minimum salary and others, but this did not prevent the increase in cars and accidents, whether minor or deadly.

The Traffic Department has the right to maintain street order and call for the reduction of road accidents, but prevention will be the solution. We need to find fair solutions - for example, why can't every company provide buses for its workers and employees from their workplaces to their homes?

The need for a car has led some expats to change their job titles on the work permit and lie about their salary on paper. They also tend to become prey for visa traffickers and corrupt people because of their need. The traffic problem is increasing and is present in all countries of the world, so the secret is in finding the correct solutions.

Local VIEWPOINT

## A MAKE-UP SOCIETY: DEPRESSION

By Sana Kalim

local@kuwaittimes.com

Kuwait, this oasis within the hostility of the world, was thought to be the epitome of happiness. Sadly this is not the case. Suicide levels in the country have been gradually increasing over the years, grotesquely morphing a limited problem to a widespread phenomenon.

A BMC Public Health survey presents us with a cascading list from 1991 with 27 cases of suicide, increasing up to 76 cases in 2012 of tormented angels leaving Kuwait with up to nine percent of the population lost in a desolate plain of pure depression according to the Ministry of Health.

Despite this, any pleas for help have been masked in an entertainment-focused culture. This is a country of pride and resolution! How could such a tragedy occur in a place like this? According to statistics, the rise in depression is due to a congealed mass of problems: family, financial, and psychological. These are all preventable problems, so why do the victims remain silent up until their final moment? Why do they let their final gasps of this incredible energy that is life be the most agonizingly loud? The most frightening part of all this is that these cases are drowned in ignorance and the taboo of not living golden, blessed days. Society is straining them, straining us, with ideals of perfection while masking our faces with makeup. Tears roll down our cheeks, only for us to get lost in a rising ocean.

They wish that people knew that the worst part about life is the feeling of sheer loneliness, the inability to express the anguish that rages within; and the smiley-face culture that we all live in worsens that

loneliness because they are just too scared to tell the truth. And the blinding truth is that: They can't cope. They are not strong. The sun doesn't look like it has been lovingly crafted for them just to see them happy. Sure, there are times where their makeup cakes off though; these are the times where they say "I do not want to live", or "I will say goodbye in a few moments." Most of the time, these statements are brushed off as if they were dust ruining our immaculate suits.

**I would like to ask you now: Is this really a tragedy?**

Staying alive may be the hardest thing some people will ever do in their lifetime. Staying alive may come easily to some. However, arriving at a natural death may be as triumphant as living for those tortured souls who have to work so hard to continue breathing.

**They are a part of us, aren't they?**

I urge you all to engage in small talk, because behind that hard-earned smile, all those masks and all those clogged layers of makeup is an all-consuming beast of insecurity and insanity. Go to your loved ones, before you see them collapsed from consuming large doses of medicine or poison, hanging or jumping from the height of your carelessness.

I also urge you all to love, love unconditionally - for hope may blossom from a single smile that is passed between strangers in a coffee shop; and with hope, we shall continue to rise from these ashes of hurt, betrayal and burden. These ashes shall not be layered upon us like makeup any more.

Act, before it all becomes a larger beast than we expected it to be, and all of our pills and therapies fail to conjure a miracle.

Or just carry on, carry on. As if it all doesn't matter.

## MORE THAN 1M PEOPLE IN KUWAIT DEPRESSED

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Health reported that from 5 percent to 9 percent of people in Kuwait suffer from depression with the number of those affected, by variant degrees of the illness, amounting to 1.25 million. The ministry released the figures in a statement as it prepares for marking the World Health Day on April 7, the high point in the World Health Organization (WHO) campaign "Depression: Let's talk."

Though depression is the leading cause of suicide, which is, in turn, the second leading cause of death in 15-29-year olds, specialists argue that not all symptoms of depression can be diagnosed as depressive disorders. There are specific symptoms that determine diagnosing the variant forms of the illness such as anxiety, fear, and manic depression, the ministry noted in the statement that is part of an awareness campaign on the illness. The campaign includes scientific programs, specialized lectures, booklets and messages via the social media websites.

It aims to raise the public awareness about the adverse impacts of the illness on family and society, and best treatments as well as the health service providers, notably the Psychological Medicine Hospital. The Hospital cares for 68,740 people who are affected by depression due to stresses of the public life, occupation or physical diseases. In this connection, Dr. Adel Al-Zayed, director of Psychological Medicine Hospital, said many chronic or diseases or accidents can lead to depression or post-traumatic disorders. "The hospital admits nearly 2,000 people with depressive disorders a year," he said. "There is a clear distinction between a transient sense of depression which anybody could feel in case of work-related stresses or death of a dear person, and the illness that could affect a person for a long time.

"Depending on the number and severity of

symptoms, a depressive episode can be categorized as mild, moderate, or severe. A key distinction is also made between depression in people who have or do not have a history of manic episodes. "Both types of depression can be chronic, lasting for an extended period of time with relapses, especially if they go untreated," Dr. Al-Zayed made clear.

**Family, social problems and financial woes**

Kuwait and many other Arab countries have a high prevalence rate of the illness due to family and social problems, coupled with unjustifiable price hikes and the accelerated use of information technologies including smartphones and social media that made people solitary creatures, he explained.

On the WHO vision for depression in 2020, Dr. Al-Zayed said the organization deems the illness the leading cause of ill health and disability worldwide. "More than 300 million people are now living with depression, an increase of more than 18 percent between 2005 and 2015," he said, citing the latest WHO estimates. "Lack of support for people with mental disorders, coupled with a fear of stigma, prevent many from accessing the treatment they need to live healthy, productive lives. "The new estimates have been released in the lead-up to WHO's year-long campaign 'Depression: Let's talk.'

"The overall goal of the campaign is that more people with depression, everywhere in the world, both seek and get help, he went on. Dr. Al-Zayed noted that women are more susceptible to depression than men due to hormonal changes but when both genders reach the age of 50 they are equally exposed to the illness. Children under the age of 18 are not safe from the illness, he said, noting that 1 percent to 2 percent of them suffer from variant types of depression, including use of aggressive behavior as a way of self-expression. — Kuna

## SYSTEM UPGRADE NOTIFICATION

Dear valued customers,

As part of our ongoing efforts to provide you with superior products and services, Gulf Bank would like to notify you that we will be upgrading a number of banking systems between Sunday, April 9 and Monday, April 10, 2017. We apologize if you experience any difficulties when using or accessing any of the following services:

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# Shoot & Win KUWAIT SCENERY & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Till April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017



## Rules & Conditions

### First prize

- Canon Camera EOS 5D MARK II BODY + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Second prize

- Canon Camera EOS 80D +18-55MM IS STM + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Third prize

- Canon Camera EOS 750D 18-135 IS STM + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Fourth prize

- EOS 750D 18-55 IS STM +Free Bag.
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### Fifth prize

- EOS 750D 18-55 IS STM + Free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Sixth prize

- Canon Camera Dsc Ixus 310 HS + Free Bag.
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### Seventh prize

- Canon Camera PSD 30 BLUE + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Eighth prize

- Canon Camera PSD 30 BLUE + Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Ninth prize

- Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK + free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Tenth prize

- Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK 2085 + free Camera Bag.
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\* For all Jazeera Airways tickets terms and conditions are applied

The photo contest begins on March 12, 2017 and ends on April 20, 2017.

To ensure eligibility for the contest, please submit files in high resolution:

• **Photographic Camera:** Please submit original files (entries should include metadata if possible) in jpg format on CD or flash memory with hard copy on photo paper (size 300 x 400 millimeters or 11.81 x 15.75 inches)

• **Mobile phone or tablet Camera:** Please submit original files in jpg format on CD or flash memory with hard copy on photo paper (A4 size – 210 x 297 millimeters or 8.27 x 11.69 inches).

• **All photographs** should accurately reflect the subject matter and the scene as it appears. 'High Dynamic Range' images are acceptable. Photos that have been digitally altered beyond standard optimization (removal of dust, cropping, reasonable adjustments to exposure, color, contrast, etc.) will be disqualified.

**Caption information should include:**

• Location - Detailed caption of subject matter

If you choose to include people in your submission, you are responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions from the individuals depicted, and must be able to provide copies of these to Kuwait Times upon request.

• **Kuwait Times & Jazeera Airways** has all rights to use the photograph in internal and external communications materials including but not limited to websites and web publications, fact sheets, fundraising publications, advertising, multimedia, annual reports and Kuwait Times' magazines, or by other individuals and organizations for Kuwait Times' use in news stories, newsletters, reports, displays, web pages, videos, membership premiums and the like.

• Winners will be chosen by a panel of independent judges.

• Original coupon should be stuck on the back of each photo with complete information of the participant.

KUWAIT SCENERY & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

2017

### Participation Form

If you are interested in participating fill in the form and send it to Kuwait Times.

- Name: .....
- Tel: ..... ■ Civil ID: .....
- e-mail: .....
- DSLR Camera ☐ ■ Mobile phone or tablet camera ☐
- Caption information: .....



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# Kuwait-US military exercises at Shuwaikh Port



By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait and US military forces held drills at Shuwaikh Port yesterday as part of the joint US-GCC annual military exercises, Eagle Resolve. More than 3,000 military personnel from Kuwait, the GCC and the United States are taking part in the three week exercise.

"These exercises strengthens the cooperation on defense level between the GCC countries and other friendly countries," Lt Gen. Mohammed Al-Khudhur, General Chief of Staff of Kuwait Armed Forces told the Kuwait Times.

"Hasm Aloqban (Eagle Resolve) also raises [Kuwait's]

defensive capabilities to respond to crises. We should always be ready, so we have training to be able to defend ourselves. And I would like to thank all those who participated in this training," Al-Khudhur said.

Exercises include 'insertions', urban warfare, responses to terrorism, capturing hostile forces and joint operational efficacy on land, sea and air.

"This is part of the US commitment to the security of Kuwait which is very long standing," Lawrence Silverman, US Ambassador to Kuwait said. "The training is part of the effort by the United States to support the capabilities of the Kuwaiti forces and our Gulf friends to deal with any threat

from outside enemies and the terrorists," he noted.

Participating militaries include Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, United States and Peninsula Shield Forces. Kuwaiti ministries, institutions and governmental agencies are also participating. This is the Kuwaiti Government's second time hosting this exercise. Kuwait hosted Eagle Resolve 2015; the first iteration was held in Tampa, Florida in 1999.

The exercises will conclude April 19, 2017 and are being conducted across Kuwait.







Lt Gen. Mohammed Al-Khudhur, General Chief of Staff of Kuwait Armed Forces



KUWAIT: Kuwait, GCC and US militaries conduct a variety of military drills as part of the annual Eagle Resolve joint military exercises. Yesterday's drills were held at the Shuwaikh Port and included land, sea and air elements. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat





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The Middle East's Largest Students' Art Competition

# KUWAIT BEAUTIFUL & GREEN STUDENTS ART COMPETITION

March 19<sup>th</sup> Till April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017

HELLO ARTISTS...

Welcome to the Student's Art Competition. I hope you are ready to paint a beautiful painting and win wonderful prizes. The theme for your painting must be related to planting and greening, basically anything pertaining to our environment. We are looking for a great painting. So, please pick up your color pencils, paint brushes, crayons or whatever you prefer and start drawing and painting.

*Good luck to you, our young artists.*

- Competition is open to ages from (6 - 8) (9 - 11) (12 - 14) (15 - 17) and Special needs.
- The competition is open for all schools in Kuwait (Government and Private)
- **The competition will start on March 19th and will continue till April 20th 2017.**
- 10 winners from each category will receive valuable prizes.
- All participants will receive a certificate of appreciation.
- All schools participating in

- the competition will receive an appreciation plaque.
- Any school or individual interested to participate in this competition is welcome to visit the office of Kuwait Times and collect the drawing sheets.
- Drawing sheets will be given to schools FREE of charge.
- Only drawing sheets provided by the Kuwait Times will be allowed.
- You can use any kind of color pencils, paint brushes or crayons.

\* For all Jazeera Airways tickets terms and conditions are applied



\* For more information and updates please visit



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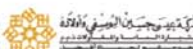


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**Kuwait Times Participation Form**

If you are interested to participate fill the form and send it to Kuwait Times.

From: .....  
We would like to confirm our participation in the above mentioned activity with the total number of participating students so the corresponding number of drawing sheets can be delivered to our school.

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Tel: ..... Fax: .....  
Address: .....  
Total number of interested students are  
6 - 8 years ☐ 9 - 11 years ☐ 12 - 14 years ☐ 15 - 17 years ☐ Special need ☐  
Name: ..... Signature: .....

For more information contact Kuwait Times Tel: 24835616/7 Fax 24835620/1 or send an email to: [ads@kuwaittimes.net](mailto:ads@kuwaittimes.net)





— Photos by Adnan Al-Musawi

# A parliament of owls in Kuwait

## The Q8 Owl Group is the first of its kind in Kuwait and the region

By Nawara Fattahova

**B**reeding or keeping owls as pets is a new phenomenon in Kuwait, although wild owls can be found in the country. In August 2016, a group of owl breeders was formed with nine members. Since then, the team has participated in various activities in Kuwait to spread this passion and let more learn more about these unique and interesting birds.

The Q8 Owl Group is the first its kind in Kuwait and the region. Osama Al-Anezi, its founder, owns a bird shop and bought his first owl last year. "After I bought the owl, my friends liked this beautiful bird and bought owls also. So I came up with the idea of establishing this group so we can gather for various activities. More people have become familiar with owls and want to own one, especially since it's a friendly bird," he told Kuwait Times.

Owls tend to be solitary birds but a gathering is known as a 'parliament'. In Kuwait, the owl group members hope to enlighten the community about the value and benefits of owning owls as pets.

Most brought their owls from legal

traders in the UK, with their certificates. "The owl is listed in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). We buy them from farms in the UK when they are very young - only a few months old. The owl starts reproducing when it's older than three years. It can lay eggs once or twice a year - between two to 10 eggs each time depending on its kind. It's better to have a baby owl rather than an adult one so that it acclimatizes to the local environment," he said.

### Wild owls protected

Owls also live in the desert of Kuwait, but they are wild and cannot be domesticated. "There are about six species of owl in Kuwait. They are protected by the environment law that forbids hunting them. People should respect this law and refrain from hunting it, as they may seriously harm its reproduction. The owl has only one partner for its entire life, so if somebody kills one, its partner will stay lonely and will never reproduce," explained Anezi.

He also warned against hunting owls in the Kuwaiti natural environment, as owls maintain the environmental balance by

preying on around 1,500 mice every year. According to Anezi, an owl lives between 20 to 50 years and is an expensive bird. "There is no difference between the genders regarding their lifespan; but size-wise, the female is larger. There are about 250 types of owl around the world, and their prices range between KD 250 and KD 600. The most expensive kind is called 'milky' and costs around KD 1,000, but only lays two eggs every year," he pointed out.

"Membership in the group is open to any person who owns an owl. Around 20 new members will join the group after they receive their owls. The group participates in various events during the entire year, but during summer we only hold indoor events, as the owls can't stand Kuwait's heat," noted Anezi.

### Owls as pets

Keeping an owl as a pet is not expensive. "My owl costs me around KD 15 a month. It eats only one meal per day. As they are birds of prey, they only eat meat, but it can be frozen and doesn't have to be live prey, as most people think. I feed them chicks, and depending on the size of the owl, it

eats between two to five chicks daily. Besides the food, it needs nutrition, vitamins and shampoo, which are included in the budget," he said.

Taking care of the owl is also very simple. "The owl lives at home and doesn't need any special equipment. It only needs a stand, on which it perches and sleeps as well. I shower it once a week while standing on the stand and it dries by itself. All the tools and needs of the owl can be bought in shops that sell falcon needs," Anezi told Kuwait Times.

In the Arab world, people consider the owl to be a symbol of misfortune and an ominous bird, while in Europe it's the opposite, as they say an owl brings good luck.

"People here say this about the owl as it lives in abandoned places and makes strange sounds. People have a lack of information, as the owl is a very friendly bird that lives in harmony with pets and kids, and will never be dangerous," stressed Anezi. "We will soon contact the Guinness Book of World Records to register our group as the first with the largest number of members in the Middle East. Membership in our group is open and we welcome any owl owner to join us," he reiterated.





# ARAB POWER MINISTERS URGE COOPERATION

**CAIRO:** Arab power ministers yesterday called for bolstering cooperation among regional states in the energy, water and food sectors. The Arab Ministerial Electricity Council, in a statement at conclusion of its 12th session, urged relevant authorities in the Arab states to examine a draft strategy on renewable energy in these countries and report back in two months, pending final review at the executive bureau.

The council lauded cooperation with the International Organization of Renewable Energy and tentatively agreed on holding the second ministerial meeting in 2018. Earlier yesterday, Kuwaiti Minister of Oil, Electricity and Water Issam Abdulmohsen Al-Marzouq, who chaired the session, affirmed on its sidelines significance of the joint Arab project, the power grid. The joint Arab grid will "open new horizons for boosting greater inter-Arab eco-

nomic cooperation and boosting the economies at the national levels," he said. The common project had been launched in line with instructions by the top leaders during the 2009 Kuwait-hosted summit.

In his address to the session, Minister Al-Marzouq emphasized significance of technology transfer for development in Arab nations. Masterminding modern technology can be through cooperation with regional and international organizations and executing national overhaul schemes, said the minister in a statement as he chaired the 12th session of the Arab Ministerial Electricity Council. He called for dedicating attention to rationalizing power consumption and raising efficiency of the power installations, as part of the approach to upgrade the power sector in the Arab world.

Minister Al-Marzouq indicated that the Arab strategy for developing renewable ener-

gy (2010-2030) that had been adopted by the Arab leaders would be among the main topics of the session deliberations. A great deal accomplishments have made in the Arab electricity grid venture, he said, however the Kuwaiti official stopped short of elaborating. In 2016, Egypt and Saudi Arabia agreed on linking their electricity grid during 2017. The two countries had accomplished 14,000 megawatts in the electricity interconnection project, which primarily aims to boost the electricity-generating capacity of both countries.

The Arab power grid is projected to cost USD 1.5 billion and aims to exchange 3,000 megawatt through direct electrical lines. It includes construction of a 1,370 km link between Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The link will include a 25 km subsea cable, which will cross the Gulf of Aqaba. Also within framework of

the session, 14 Arab countries signed a MoU for establishing an Arab common market for electricity. The MoU was approved by the Council of the Arab League (Foreign Ministers) last September.

The document was signed by the UAE, Bahrain, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, Iraq, Oman, Qatar, the Comoros, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Yemen and Kuwait, on the sidelines of the session. The "high profile document" was signed by the Arab Ministers of Electricity or their representatives, Assistant Arab League's Secretary General for Economic Affairs, Dr Kamal Hassan Ali. It reiterates the political commitment to support the efforts for interconnecting the Arab electricity grids, crowning long years of hard work by technicians and experts, Ali added. The MoU takes effect once it is signed by seven Arab countries, he noted. — KUNA

## WITNESS TURNS CULPRIT AFTER COURT TURMOIL

**KUWAIT:** A citizen who went to a police station to testify as a witness, turned a culprit when she verbally insulted an officer and pushed another before leaving the station.

Police summoned the lady to hear her testimony in regards to a case between two persons. When she finished her testimony, a captain told her she must repeat what she said in front of the investigator. This angered her and she reportedly insulted him. As she was leaving, an officer entered the room, but she pushed him aside. The two lodged a complaint against her.

### Citizen duped of KD 5,000

A citizen accused a man of swindling her out of KD 5,000 under the pretext of 'garments trade.' The lady went to Fintas police station and complained against a citizen who convinced her to join him in a project to trade in women's garments. The man disappeared later after collecting the money from her. Police are investigating the case.

### Wanted criminal arrested

Taima police arrested a wanted citizen who was roaming the streets at night. When police checked his civil ID, it was found that he was wanted to serve a 10-year jail sentence in a kidnapping case. He was sent to concerned authorities.

### Man in drugs case

A citizen survived death from a cardiac arrest induced apparently by drug overdose at Jahra hospital. He was charged with use of drugs. The man was taken to hospital by his family and was admitted to the ICU where he was resuscitated. When his family was asked about what happened, they said it was due to drugs. He was charged with drugs use and detectives will question him once he regains consciousness.

### Woman, accomplices arrested

Ahmadi police arrested an Indian woman along with three of her accomplices who used a residence in Sabah Al-Ahmad area to make liquor. An undercover source told the police about the place and after completing legal procedures, the police raided the place. The woman and the trio were arrested. The police found 250 bottles which are kept ready for sale. They also seized drums and distillery equipment. The Indian and her three accomplices were taken to concerned authorities. — Al-Rai

## SPORADIC RAINS

**KUWAIT:** There is a chance for sporadic rain today in Kuwait due to the presence of a low-pressure wind in the country's atmosphere, said Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi, an official at the Kuwait Meteorological Department. Al-Qarawi said that the stable weather, witnessed throughout the week, would probably change during the weekend. The weather will be partially cloudy with southeastern winds at speeds of 15 to 38 kilometers per hour (kph). Lowest temperatures will be between 17-19 Degrees Celsius. Sea status will have slight to moderate waves at one to five feet during the evening.—KUNA



A health center in the old Shuaiba town



A cultural club in Shuaiba town in 1966

## AL-SHUAIBA TOWN - HISTORICAL AREA FONDLY REMEMBERED BY KUWAITIS

**KUWAIT:** Reminiscing about the past is a unique trait that human beings share as a specie and this process is especially true when it comes to places and areas people used to visit or live in the "good ol'days". The new generation of Kuwaitis perhaps have no prior knowledge on the existence of Al-Shuaiba town, but if one asked an elderly person, he or she might have a clue about the area, which existed prior to 1976.

The town - abandoned some 40 years ago due to proximity to oil installations - was amongst the chief areas in Al-Qsoor region, which includes Fahaheel, Mangaf, Fintas, Funaites, and Abu Hlaifa. According to researcher Sultan Al-Bahli in his book (Al-Shuaiba Town), people populated the area prior to the spread of Islam. The tribe of Banu Tamim have settled in the region during the era known as the age of Jahiliya (ignorance). Speaking about the modern era of the town, located around 48 kilometers south of Kuwaiti City, historian Adel Al-Sadoun told KUNA that Al-Shuaiba town was founded 1770.

Many famed Kuwaiti families, such as Al-Majdali, Al-Saqr, Al-Sallal, and others, called Al-Shuaiba town their "home", said Al-Sadoun who noted that the name of the area was derived from the waterways resulting from rainfall. Throughout the years, Shuaiba town was mentioned prominently in the writings of Arab and foreign travelers and officials between the 1800s and early 1900s. The most famous person to

dwelt in the town was Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah who is the son of late Amir and founder of the modern Kuwaiti State, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, also known as Mubarak Al-Kabeer (Mubarak the Great). The first chief of the town was Mohammad Al-Gassab whose name was mentioned in an official correspondence between

Sheikh Mubarak and Major-General Sir Percy Zachariah Cox, a British Indian Army officer and Colonial Office administrator in the Middle East. Before it was abandoned, the population of Al-Shuaiba town reached 10,000 people in 1960; however, locals started to leave town by the mid-1970s, leading to another story about a town lost in history. — KUNA

## FIRE SERVICE SEALS HOTEL

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Fire Service Directorate yesterday sealed a hotel in Salmiya apparently over fire safety concerns. Deputy Director General for Prevention Sector Affairs Brig Khalid Abdallah Fahad said that the hotel was closed at the instruction of Director General Lt General Khalid Al-Mikrad, who insisted that the buildings should be safe for people and that the law must be applicable to all.

### Terrorism 'main threat'

Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah returned home yesterday from Tunis after participating in the 34th meeting of the Arab Interior Ministers Council. "Terrorism is the main threat to Arab peoples, it must be confronted and its swamps drained" Sheikh Khaled said in Tunis. His remarks came during a speech

at the launch of the 34th meeting of Arab Interior Ministers' Council, where he also called for adopting a unified strategy to protect children in the Arab world from online and social media dangers.

### Passport office

Residency Affairs Department said the Capital Residency Affairs will shift its offices from Shuwaikh area to the old Hawally passports building from April 16 until the new building is ready for functioning.

### Mol workshop

The workshop on 'preparing security plans' which was held from April 2 to April 6 was concluded yesterday. 17 Interior ministry officers participated in the workshop. The closing ceremony was held under the patronage of Director General of Coordination of Command Operations to protect Internal Security Maj Gen Dr Mohammad Al-Daihani.



Photo

o f t h e d a y



**Aerial view of Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium is a multi-purpose stadium. It is used mostly for football matches and athletics. The stadium has a capacity of 60,000 seated spectators. The building is constructed in 4 levels, with 54 corporate boxes and parking lot with a 6,000 car capacity. —KUNA**

# PHILIPPINE AUTHORITIES ARREST KUWAITI TERROR SUSPECT, WIFE

## SECURITY FORCES FOIL TERROR PLOT

**MANILA:** Philippine authorities said yesterday they had foiled a possible terror attack after arresting a Kuwaiti man and his Syrian wife, both alleged members of the Islamic State (IS) group. Police nabbed Husayn Al-Dhafiri and Rahaf Zina at an upscale district of Manila following a tip-off

from the Kuwaiti authorities late last month, but the arrests were kept secret while Filipino authorities investigated further, officials said.

The pair had entered the country repeatedly in recent months as part of plans for a bombing operation either in the Philippines or Kuwait,

Justice Secretary Vitaliano Aguirre told reporters. Aguirre said Al-Dhafiri was an active IS member in the Middle East and said the United States authorities believed he could pose a threat to the national security of the Philippines. 'He is alleged to have been involved in explosives manufacturing and possibly operational planning against Kuwait,' Aguirre added.

He said Zina and Al Dhafiri married after her husband, a high-ranking IS commander, was killed in Syria. The Filipino official said Al-Dhafiri would be deported to Kuwait while Zina would be sent back to Qatar from where she entered the Philippines. 'Both of them will be properly received by the security forces of those countries,' he added.

The Kuwaiti embassy in Manila could not be contacted for comment. Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has previously warned that IS members might make their way into the Southeast Asian nation by infiltrating its Muslim communities, concentrated in the south of the largely Catholic country. The Philippines has been battling for years with Muslim extremist groups in the remote southern region, some of whom have since pledged allegiance to IS. Aguirre said he could not confirm if the two suspects had any contact with local extremists. — AFP



**MANILA:** Kuwaiti national Husayn Al-Dhafiri and Syrian national Rahaf Zina are presented at a press conference at the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in Manila yesterday. Philippine authorities said yesterday they had foiled a possible terror attack after arresting a Kuwaiti man and his Syrian wife, both alleged members of the Islamic State (IS) group. —AFP

# UK TO EXTRADITE KUWAITI FUGITIVE

**LONDON:** Fahad Al-Rajaan, the former head of Kuwait's Social Security Fund convicted in his home country of corruption and embezzling public money, has been arrested on behalf of the Kuwaiti authorities, London police said yesterday. Last year, Al-Rajaan was sentenced to a 10-year prison term in absentia and an international arrest warrant was issued. "Fahad Al-Rajaan, 68, a Kuwaiti national, appeared before Westminster Magistrates' Court on Wednesday, April 5, after being arrested on behalf of the authorities in Kuwait, where he is wanted in connection with allegations of fraud and theft," London police said in a statement.

The Westminster court handles extradition cases and Kuwait's Attorney General Dherar Al-Assoussi told Al-Qabas and Al-Jarida newspapers that Britain had agreed to a Kuwaiti government request to extradite Al-Rajaan. "He was arrested and he will be extradited once the procedures are completed," Al-Assoussi told Al-Qabas. Al-Rajaan faced accusations including embezzlement of public funds, betrayal of public trust and money laundering relating to when he was the head of Kuwait's Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS). Al-Assoussi said a Swiss judge had ordered in December 2014 that \$100 million in 15 bank accounts belonging to Al-Rajaan be frozen, out of \$390 million suspected to have been embezzled. Kuwait's government has signed an extradition treaty with the United Kingdom but the parliaments of both countries have yet to ratify it. "The extradition of Al-Rajaan will be based on a special agreement signed between Kuwait and Britain, and his arrest warrant there was kept secret so he wouldn't leave the country, and so we succeeded," Al-Assoussi said. —Reuters

## News

In brief

### 'Jupiter at opposition'

**KUWAIT:** Earth will lie in a position between the sun and Jupiter in an astronomical phenomenon called "Jupiter at opposition" which will allow the planet to appear brighter, Kuwaiti astronomer and historian Adel Al-Sadoun announced yesterday. Al-Sadoun added in his remarks that this phenomenon happens every 13 months, which means that it will take place again on May 7, 2018. During the course of the phenomenon, Jupiter will shine more brightly than any other star in the evening sky and it will be visible to the naked eye in the constellation Virgo, he said. Jupiter will be in its closest positions to the sun by April 8 at 666 million kilometers and it would be more shiny by midnight, he mentioned.

### KISR earns ISO certificate

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) has earned the ISO/17025 certificate for best laboratory tests. KISR said yesterday that the ISO recognition came following intensive efforts, culminated with establishment of a special laboratory to study persistent organic pollutants. Researchers at KISR had studied and analyzed samples of such pollutants, sent in by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The ISO/17025 certificate recognizes competence to carry out tests and/or calibrations, including sampling. It covers testing and calibration performed using standard methods, non-standard methods and laboratory-developed methods.

### Dangers of extremism

**TUNIS:** Further pan-Arab cooperation and coordination in fighting terrorism and holding an annual "week" to spread awareness against extremism threats were the main recommendations of 34th meeting of Arab Interior Ministers' Council. The meeting, which concluded earlier Wednesday, urged in its final communique the intensification of awareness programs on dangers of extremism and terrorism in the Arab world. The Council also endorsed bestowing Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia with Prince Naif Medal for Arab Security for the monarch's pioneering role in supporting Arab and Islamic causes, as well as efforts in preserving world peace and security. The Council also ratified strategies on combating narcotics and illegal drugs, combating terrorism, traffic safety, civil defense and intellectual security.



# Friday Times International

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2017

**For Gazans,  
exit permits  
can mean  
life or death**



**For Trump,  
the weight  
of world's  
problems sink in**



**India police  
arrest 3 for  
cow vigilante  
murder**



**IDLIB PROVINCE:** This Tuesday April 4, 2017, file photo, provided by the Syrian anti-government activist group Edlib Media Center, that is consistent with independent AP reporting, shows a man carrying a child following a suspected chemical attack, at a makeshift hospital in the town of Khan Sheikhoun. — AP

## RUSSIA, SYRIA HIT BACK AS PRESSURE BUILDS WORLD POWERS POINT FINGER AT SYRIAN GOVERNMENT

**BEIRUT:** Syria's regime and Russia hit back yesterday at accusations that Damascus was behind a deadly chemical weapons attack, as pressure built for international action over what Washington called an "affront to humanity". France said it was determined to pursue a UN Security Council resolution to investigate dozens of civilian deaths in a northwestern Syria town, which Turkey said it suspected were the result of exposure to nerve agent sarin.

At least 86 people were killed early on Tuesday in rebel-held Khan Sheikhoun, and dozens more have received treatment for convulsions, breathing problems and foaming at the mouth. World powers have pointed the finger at the government of Bashar Al-Assad, but Foreign Minister Walid Muallem repeated the government's denial yesterday.

"The Syrian army has not, did not and will not use this kind of weapons-not just against our own people, but even against the terrorists that attack our civilians with their mortar rounds," he said. Russia also stood by its longtime ally, with President Vladimir Putin warning against a rush to judgment. In a Kremlin

statement, Putin underlined "the unacceptability of making unfounded accusations against anyone before a thorough and impartial international investigation is carried out."

More than 30 people were transferred across the border into Turkey for treatment following the incident, and Ankara said a preliminary probe found "a link between these injuries and the use of chemical weapons." "According to the results of the initial analysis, the findings suggest the injured were exposed to a chemical substance (sarin)," the Turkish health ministry said in a statement.

### 'Stop this massacre'

After an emergency session of the UN Security Council on Wednesday, Western diplomats are expected to push for a vote as early as yesterday on a resolution demanding an investigation of the suspected attack. French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault said the resolution, presented by Britain, France and the United States, remained a priority.

"These crimes must not go unpunished," Ayrault told

CNEWS television. "It's difficult because up to now every time we have presented a resolution, there has been a veto by Russia and sometimes by China... but we must cooperate because we need to stop this massacre," he added. Geert Cappelaere, Middle East regional director at UNICEF, the United Nations agency on children's issues, said Thursday that at least 27 children were killed in the suspected attack.

At least 546 people were wounded, he said, adding that "casualty figures are expected to rise". If confirmed as an attack, it would be among the worst incidents of chemical weapons use in Syria's civil war, which has killed more than 320,000 people since it began in March 2011. It has also prompted an about-face from US President Donald Trump, who in 2013 urged then-president Barack Obama not to intervene against Assad after a major suspected chemical attack. Senior US officials had also recently suggested it was no longer a priority that Assad be removed from power. Trump described the alleged attack as an "affront to humanity" and warned it had changed his view of Assad. — AFP



## IRAQI KURDS TO 'RE-ENERGIZE' INDEPENDENCE REFERENDUM

**ERBIL:** Iraq's Kurds plan to hold a referendum on independence this year to press their case for "the best deal" on self-determination once Islamic State is defeated, a senior Kurdish official said. The Kurds already run their own autonomous region in northern Iraq and the official, Hoshiyar Zebari, indicated the expected 'yes' outcome in a vote wouldn't mean automatically declaring independence. But with Kurdish forces also controlling wider territory regained from Islamic State, the referendum plan adds to questions about Iraq's unity after the militants have been ousted from Mosul.

The two main Kurdish parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), agreed at a meeting on Sunday that a referendum should be held this year, Zebari, a senior member of the KDP leadership, told Reuters. "The idea of a referendum has been re-energised," Zebari, a former Iraqi foreign and finance minister, said in an interview in Erbil on Wednesday evening, commenting on the meeting held with the PUK's leadership.

### Deep divisions

The Kurds played a major role in the US-backed campaign to defeat Islamic State, the ultra-hardline Sunni Muslim group that overran about a third of Iraq nearly three years ago. The militants are now fighting off Iraqi forces in Mosul, their last major city stronghold in Iraq from where they declared a "caliphate" that also includes parts of Syria.

While the fall of Mosul would effectively end the "caliphate", it will not solve deep divisions over power, land and resources between Iraq's Shi'ite Arab majority, and the important Sunni Arab and Kurdish communities. The two rival Kurdish groups issued a joint statement on Sunday declaring support for the plan of holding a referendum, leaving its exact timing to an agreement with other, smaller Kurdish groups.

Zebari described the aim as "self-determination", leaving open the exact nature of any deal with Baghdad following the referendum when Kurds would be likely to vote strongly for independence. "It will give a strong mandate to the Kurdish leadership to engage in talks with Baghdad and the neighbors in order to get the best deal for Kurdish self-determination," he said.

Iraqi Kurdish independence has been historically opposed by Iraq and also its neighbors, Iran, Turkey and Syria, as they fear the contagion for their own Kurdish populations. Iraq's Kurds are the community to have advanced the most toward their long-held dream of independence. Iraq has been led by the Shi'ites since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, a Sunni, in 2003, following a US-led invasion. They run their own affairs in the north, through a Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), led by KDP leader Massoud Barzani. They have their own armed force, the Peshmerga, which prevented in 2014 Islamic State from capturing the oil region of Kirkuk, after the Iraqi army fled in the face of the militants.

### Historical claims

The Kurds have historical claims over Kirkuk, which is also inhabited by Turkmen and Arabs. Hardline Iranian-backed Iraqi Shi'ite militias have threatened to expel the Kurds by force from this region and other disputed areas. Kirkuk's Kurdish-led provincial council rejected this week a resolution by the Iraqi parliament in Baghdad to lower Kurdish flags raised since last month next to Iraqi flags over public buildings of the region.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan also warned the Kurds on Tuesday that failure to lower the Kurdish flags would damage their relations with Turkey. "We don't agree with the claim 'Kirkuk is for the Kurds' at all. Kirkuk is for the Turkmen, Arabs and Kurds, if they are there. Do not enter into a claim that it's yours or the price will be heavy. You will harm dialogue with Turkey," he said at a rally in the Black Sea province of Zonguldak.

The KRG government rejected the Iraqi and Turkish demands, arguing that the Kurds' role in defending Kirkuk against Islamic State justified the hoisting of their flag. "If it wasn't for the Peshmerga, there would be neither Iraq's flag in the city nor Kurdistan's," KRG Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani told reporters in Erbil on Wednesday. — Reuters



**MOSUL:** Displaced Iraqis, who fled the northern city of Mosul due to the government forces military operation to retake the city from Islamic State (IS) group fighters, wait to receive food aid at Al-Khazar camp on April 5, 2017 in the village of Hasan Sham. — AFP

# HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN MOSUL DEEPENS AS DISPLACEMENT PEAKS 15,000 PEOPLE FLEEING THEIR HOMES EVERY DAY

**HAMMAM AL-ALIL:** The fighting in west Mosul has forced up to 15,000 people to flee their homes every day recently, straining humanitarian resources and leaving many in very difficult conditions. At the Hammam Al-Alil camp for the displaced south of Mosul, hundreds of haggard-looking civilians spill out of buses escorted by the security forces all day long.

The camp is a screening site and a gateway for some who will then board other buses and taxis to look for accommodation in other camps or with relatives in "liberated" east Mosul and neighboring areas. But others, often among the most needy, stay at the camp and move into tents with relatives or neighbors, sometimes three or four families crammed into the same 10-metre by 4-metre tent.

"There are four families in this tent, about 30 people sleep in it," said Marwan Nayef, a 25-year-old from west Mosul, as a dozen children stood around him or peeped from behind the tent's tarpaulin door. "Sometimes, it's not big enough so the men go to sleep in a friend's tent. I'm currently sleeping in my brother's tent," he said. A few alleys down in the camp, whose population has soared to around 30,000, Shihra Hazem holds her 16-month-old hydrocephalic son in her arms. "He needs an operation, there's water in his head, but there is just no help available. I tried to take him to another camp but they wouldn't let us in," she said. According to the United Nations, at least 400,000 people have

been displaced since the Iraqi security forces launched a huge offensive against the Islamic State (IS) group's Mosul stronghold on October 17.

### Civilians increasingly exposed

The majority of those who had to flee their homes did so during the most recent phase of the operation, which started on February 19 in the half of the city that lies west of the Tigris river. In Hammam Al-Alil camp, massive queues of civilians form at midday to receive a helping of rice and sauce from a catering tent, many of them barefooted children who then sit on the gravel to devour their ration.

Some fetch food from outside the camp, others from an informal market that opened on the other side of the fence. One boy was reselling mats his family received in UN emergency kits to buy cheap chocolate-flavored wafers from the market. A woman carrying her daughter ran into neighbors from Mosul and told them of how she and her family survived an air strike that demolished their house.

"Daesh (IS) set up a machine gun position in front of our door so the security forces fired back... Luckily, we were all on the ground floor," said the woman, wearing a bright green dress. "Some of our neighbors tried to flee yesterday and the security forces shot at them because they thought they were with Daesh. This is happening a lot," she said. Most of the residents of east Mosul stayed home during the first phase of the

offensive but IS resistance has been fierce in and around the Old City in west Mosul and civilians appear more exposed than ever.

### Humanitarian funding

The security forces have been evacuating as many of them as possible but the UN says 400,000 remain trapped in the Old City. "What people tell us when they flee is of entire homes being destroyed, so we get anecdotal reports of quite a dramatic level of destruction," said Melany Markham, of the Norwegian Refugee Council.

In the worst such case so far since the Mosul offensive began nearly six months ago, dozens of civilians are believed to have been killed in an air strike conducted by the US-led coalition. The Iraqi security forces have nonetheless recently reiterated their call on Mosul residents to stay home, dropping thousands of leaflets to that effect. Markham said she was confident in the aid community's ability to adapt to even greater needs should the civilian exodus intensify in the coming weeks but warned that the humanitarian response also depended on funding.

During a visit to a camp southeast of Mosul last week, UN chief Antonio Guterres complained that the world's support for Mosul was woefully inadequate. "We don't have the resources that are necessary to support these people and we don't have the international solidarity that is needed," he told reporters. — AFP





GAZA CITY: A Palestinian girl suffering from cancer is seen at the Al-Rantisi children's hospital. — AFP

## FOR GAZANS, EXIT PERMITS CAN MEAN LIFE OR DEATH

### PROBLEM HAS CONCERNED GLOBAL HEALTH OFFICIALS

**GAZA CITY:** Fuad Skik has been waiting in vain since December for permission from Israel to leave the Gaza Strip for cancer treatments, illustrating a problem that has concerned global health officials. "At the end of 2016, I asked for an Israeli exit permit and I registered my wife to accompany me, but I still have not received a response," the 53-year-old said, adding that his cancer had since spread. Palestinian officials say the problem for those in situations similar to Skik's has recently become worse due to an increase in the number of those needing treatment and the slow process of getting permits.

For many, this means delays and for some a refusal means they can't even go. Israeli authorities say more permits are being granted than in the past and note that careful consideration must be given to each due to security risks. Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza have fought three wars since 2008, and Israel tightly controls who and what enters and exits the enclave of some two million people. It has maintained a blockade on the strip run by Islamist movement Hamas for 10 years.

In recent days, the problem has been further complicated by Hamas also restricting exits for Gazans as it investigates the assassination of one of its officials, a killing it blames on Israel. The World Health Organization and others have pointed to the effect the Israeli blockade has had on medical crossings, a crucial issue for impoverished Gaza, which lacks proper medical equipment in many cases. Many patients seek treatment in Israel, and some in the occupied West Bank, the other Palestinian territory separated geographically from Gaza.

#### Slowed by security

Permission from Israeli authorities is required to cross, and the WHO has in particular highlighted the case of a 17-year-old who died in January while waiting. According to the WHO, more than 53 percent of nearly 3,000 patients who requested an exit permit in January were refused or did not receive a response.

The number was more than 61 percent for those meant to accompany them. The Israeli defense ministry unit that oversees such permits says more have been granted than in the past. According to its numbers, 22,380 patients and those accompanying them were provided permits in 2013, while 30,768 were granted in 2016.

The defense ministry unit, known as COGAT, also alleged there has been "an increase in attempts by Hamas to take advantage of Israeli assistance for terrorist aims," requiring careful scrutiny of applications. It is a difficult explanation to accept for those legitimately sick and required to wait. The Gaza Strip does not have the capacity for radiation therapy and lacks chemotherapy drugs.

For those reasons, some six out of 10 cancer patients in Gaza require treatment not available in the enclave, said Mahmoud Daher of the WHO. Further complicating the problem, cancer rates are seen as rising in the Gaza Strip. "Every year there are between 1,600 and 1,800 (cases detected), or 20 percent more than in past years," said Khaled Thabet, head of the oncology department at the Rantissi hospital, which treats patients from the northern Gaza Strip.

#### Teen dies waiting

In 2006, 8,000 Gazans required medical treatment outside the strip, while the number rose to 22,000 in 2016, he said, adding that only 60 percent were able to obtain a permit. The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR) says that it requested 1,040 refused applications in 2016 be re-examined, leading to 418 approvals. But in the case of 17-year-old Ahmed Shbair, it was already too late.

He died in January after failing to receive permission to exit for treatment for a congenital heart condition, said Mohammed Bseiso, a lawyer with the PCHR. His family made four requests for permits beginning in November, with he and his mother were interrogated by Israeli authorities, according to the WHO. Two of the requests were refused, while a third had not been given a response. He applied for a fourth time just before dying, the WHO said.

Some are seeking to provide medical services that Gazans would otherwise seek elsewhere. Tharwat Al-Helou recently opened the first private clinic in the Gaza Strip, with a plan of eventually having 90 beds. Such clinics could alleviate shortages in the strip, which has slightly more than one bed per 1,000 residents, said Abdellatif al-Hajj, who oversees hospitals for the Gazan authorities. As an example, the number is five to six times higher in Israel. But clinics will also face the difficulty of receiving Israeli permission to import equipment due to the country's concerns over "terrorist" activities. — AFP

## DRONE KILLS AL-QAEDA SUSPECTS IN YEMEN

**ADEN:** Drone strikes killed two suspected Al-Qaeda militants in southern Yemen including the nephew of a top commander, security officials said yesterday, as the US steps up its strikes against jihadists. Khattab Al-Wuhayshi, nephew of slain Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) leader Nasir al-Wuhayshi, was killed in an overnight strike on the town of Sawmaa in Baida province, a security official said on condition of anonymity.

Khattab al-Wuhayshi had been riding a motorbike through Baida, site of the first raid ordered by US President Donald Trump after he took office in January. AQAP chief Nasir Al-Wuhayshi, known as Abu Baseer, was killed in a US drone strike on Yemen in June 2015. A second overnight strike hit provincial AQAP official Ahmed Ali Saana, also on a motorbike, in Khabar Al-Muraqasha, a town in Abyan province, a local security official said. The Pentagon has confirmed more than 70 air strikes on Al-Qaeda targets in Yemen since February 28. Yemeni security officials have reported dozens of suspected jihadist fighters killed in the strikes on Abyan, Baida and the neighbouring province of Shabwa.

More than two years of civil war in Yemen between government forces and Shiite rebels who control the capital have created a power vacuum which Al-Qaeda has exploited to consolidate its presence. A January 29 commando raid against AQAP in Baida, the first operation ordered by Trump, resulted in the deaths of a US Navy SEAL and many civilians. The Pentagon has acknowledged civilians, including women and children, were killed in the botched Baida raid. Last month, Trump reportedly gave the Central Intelligence Agency new powers to authorize drone strikes against extremist targets in the Middle East independently of the Pentagon. — AFP

## ISRAELI SOLDIER KILLED IN CAR RAMMING ATTACK

**JERUSALEM:** A Palestinian man carried out a car-ramming next to a bus stop near a settlement in the occupied West Bank yesterday, killing an Israeli soldier and wounding another, officials said. The incident near the Israeli settlement of Ofra came ahead of the Jewish Passover holiday beginning on Monday, which has raised fears of an upsurge in violence.

The military named the dead soldier as Sergeant Elchai Teharlev, 20. A spokeswoman told AFP that the wounded man was also a soldier, but did not comment on his condition. The alleged attacker was arrested, an Israeli army statement said, without giving details about him. He was identified as Malek Hamed, 22, from the nearby West Bank town of Silwad, by official Palestinian news agency WAFA, which also said he had been shot and wounded.

Following the incident, a vehicle with Palestinian license plates, which had mounted the pavement, was seen surrounded by soldiers. The incident took place next to a bus stop outside Ofra, north of Ramallah. It was the first fatal attack on Israelis since January 8, when a Palestinian killed four soldiers in a Jerusalem truck-ramming attack.

A wave of violence that broke out in October 2015 has claimed the lives of 259 Palestinians, 41 Israelis, two Americans, one Jordanian, an Eritrean and a Sudanese, according to an AFP count. Most of the Palestinians killed were carrying out knife, gun or car-ramming attacks, according to Israeli authorities. Others were shot dead during protests or clashes, while some were killed in Israeli air strikes on the Gaza Strip. The violence has greatly subsided in recent months.

There are fears the week-long Passover holiday will lead to a fresh outbreak of violence, particularly if there is an increase in Jewish visitors to the flashpoint Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem. The site is holy to both Muslims and Jews, who refer to it as the Temple Mount. It is located in east Jerusalem, occupied by Israel in 1967 and later annexed, and is central to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Tensions regularly flare over the site, with Palestinians fearing Israel will seek to assert further control over it. Jews are allowed to visit the site but not pray there to avoid provoking tensions. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said repeatedly he has no intention of changing that status quo, though hardline members of his coalition push for Jewish prayer rights there. — AFP



# SOMALIA LEADER DECLARES COUNTRY A WAR ZONE

**MOGADISHU:** Somalia's new president yesterday declared the country a war zone and replaced its military and intelligence chiefs while instructing the army to prepare a new offensive against Al-Shabab extremists. The shakeup is an attempt to improve the worsening security situation as the Al-Qaeda-linked Al-Shabab steps up deadly bombings in the

capital since President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed was elected in February.

A car bomb blast on Wednesday at a Mogadishu restaurant killed at least seven people. The Somali-American president wore a military uniform as he declared the new offensive and offered young extremists a chance to surrender. 'We tell the

young, brainwashed Al-Shabab fighters that they have a 60-days deadline to lay down the arms with which they use to kill their people and come to us,' Mohamed said. 'We shall welcome them with open arms.' He said the government will focus on the security of the capital first, then the rest of the country. The changes come roughly a week after

the Trump administration approved greater US military authority to pursue Al-Shabab in Somalia, including more aggressive airstrikes as parts of southern Somalia will be considered areas of active hostilities. Yesterday's announcement is seen as an attempt by Mohamed to consolidate power in this long-chaotic horn of Africa nation. — AP











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# RUSSIA PROBES METRO BOMBER CONTACTS AS 1ST VICTIM BURIED

TARGETING SEVERAL CITIZENS OF CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS

**SAINT PETERSBURG:** Russia staged raids on suspected contacts of the Saint Petersburg metro bomber yesterday, as the jittery city laid to rest the first of the 13 people killed in the attack. Investigators said the raids targeted "several citizens of Central Asian republics, who had been in contact" with 22-year-old Akbarjon Djalilov, thought to be a Russian national born in Central Asian Kyrgyzstan.

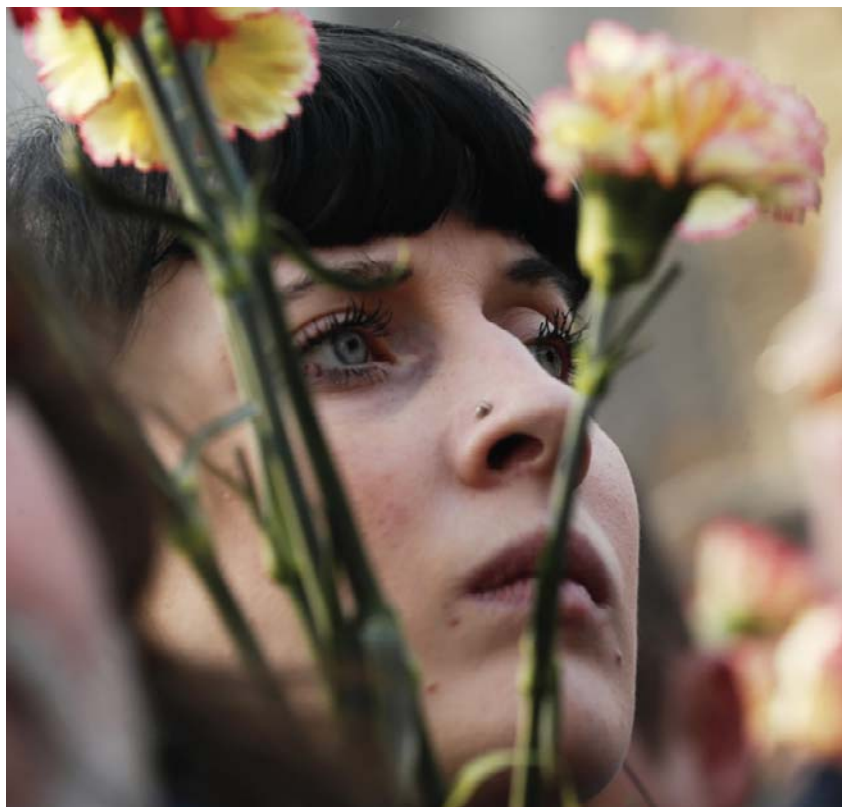
"Objects relevant to the investigation were found during the search of the apartment where these people lived," said the powerful Investigative Committee.

"They were all confiscated and sent for analysis." No one has yet claimed responsibility for the blast that tore through a subway carriage in Russia's second city on Monday. Djalilov's remains were found at the blast site and traces of his DNA were also discovered on a bag containing a bomb at another metro station that was successfully defused, investigators said.

Investigative Committee chief Alexander Bastrykin has ordered officials to look into any potential "links" between the alleged attacker and the Islamic State (IS) group. Jihadists from IS-including foreign fighters from the ex-Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus region-have repeatedly threatened an attack on Russian soil in revenge for Moscow's military backing of Syrian leader Bashar Al-Assad. And in a sign of a city on edge, the FSB security service told TASS news agency it had found and defused a "homemade explosive device" during a search in a Saint Petersburg apartment building. The authorities have not linked the discovery to Monday's bombing.

## First funeral

As the urgent probe into the attack continued, relatives and friends geared up to bury the victims as the country held a third day of official mourning. The first set to be laid to rest was 50-year-old



**MOSCOW: People hold flowers during a rally honoring the victims of St Petersburg's subway bombing just off Red Square. — AP**

dollmaker Irina Medyantseva, with mourners gathering in a town just outside Saint Petersburg for her funeral.

The attack has shaken the authorities and rattled Saint Petersburg just two months before it hosts the opening game of the Confederations Cup football tournament, a curtain raiser for the 2018 World Cup in the country. Russia suffered a wave of brutal attacks in the 1990s and 2000s blamed mainly on a rebellion in Chechnya that morphed from a separatist uprising into an Islamist insurgency.

The country's transport network-including the metro in Moscow-was hit repeatedly by suicide bombers leaving

scores dead. But there had been no attacks against a major city since blasts in the southern city of Volgograd in December 2013, weeks ahead of the Sochi Winter Olympic Games. IS, however, has struck at Russia abroad, claiming a bomb attack in October 2015 that blew a passenger jet packed with holidaymakers returning to Saint Petersburg out of the air over Egypt, killing all 224 people onboard. In an apparently unrelated event an explosive device injured a homeless man in the southern city of Rostov-on-Don. An officially sanctioned solidarity rally with Saint Petersburg and concert is set to be held Thursday evening by the Kremlin walls in Moscow. — AFP

# BRITAIN'S LABOR IN MAJOR TURMOIL OVER HITLER ROW

**LONDON:** Britain's main opposition Labor Party was in turmoil yesterday just weeks before local elections, after deciding not to expel a senior party member who made comments about Adolf Hitler and Zionism. Deputy leader Tom Watson said the "incomprehensible" decision by the party's National Executive Committee (NEC) not to throw out former London mayor Ken Livingstone brought "shame on us all".

More than 100 out of 229 Labour MPs signed a statement saying the decision was a betrayal of the party's values and was "not done in our name". Current Labour London Mayor Sadiq Khan added to growing calls Thursday for Livingstone's expulsion. And Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May weighed in, saying Labour had plunged to new lows. Labour had "revealed the depths to which it has now sunk, betraying the Jewish community in our country by letting Ken Livingstone off the hook", she said in a party campaign speech.

The disarray comes ahead of the May 4 local authority elections in Britain, with Labour trailing badly in the opinion polls. Livingstone, 71, was suspended in April last year after saying

on a radio show that when Hitler won power in Germany in the early 1930s, "his policy then was that Jews should be moved to Israel. He was supporting Zionism before he went mad and ended up killing six million Jews". On Tuesday, the NEC formally suspended him for two years backdated to last April, meaning he cannot stand in parliamentary or local authority elections-which he was not seeking to do. An unrepentant Livingstone, who was London's mayor from 2000 to 2008, insisted he had not brought the party into disrepute, which he said was the chief reason behind his suspension.

"Should someone be disciplined for stating a historical truth?" he asked. "You can't apologize for telling the truth." Livingstone said he believed the NEC decided to suspend him because they thought they could not win a threatened judicial review if they expelled him. Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis said Labour had failed Britain's Jews. "This was a chance for the Labour Party to show that it would not tolerate willful and unapologetic baiting of the Jewish community," he said. "The party has yet again failed to show that it is sufficiently serious about tackling the scourge of anti-Semitism." — AFP

# GAMBIANS BEGIN VOTING IN FIRST POST-JAMMEH POLL

**BAKAU:** Gambians voted yesterday in the first election since longtime leader Yahya Jammeh left power, with several parties vying to enter parliament after 22 years of effective one-party rule. Voting kicked off at 8am (0800 GMT) with dozens queuing beforehand at roadside polling stations, but participation appeared to have dropped by midday. More than 880,000 Gambians are eligible to vote and polls are open until 5pm.

"We just hope that the voter turnout increases," said Manneh Sallah, vice-chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), and EU observer Maria Arena, from Belgium, too told AFP that after a busy start "turnout is a little low." The first results are expected during the evening and a full set by late morning today. The poll is a key test for several former opposition parties that united to form a coalition in December to oust Jammeh from power and deliver flagbearer Adama Barrow to victory as the new president.

Internal tensions mean those parties are not running together in yesterday's legislative polls. As a result nine parties are in competition, including Jammeh's Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC) and the strongest traditional opposition force, the United Democratic Party (UDP).

## 'New government'

"Gambians are coming out to complete the establishment of a new government," said UDP leader Ousainou Darboe, who serves as foreign minister in Barrow's coalition cabinet. "I'm not worried about any party but I'm also not under-rating any party," he added. Posing a threat is the Gambia Democratic Congress (GDC), a youth-led party which did not join the governing coalition, and whose leader Mama Kandeh came third in last year's presidential poll. There is no formal opinion polling in the tiny west African nation, making it difficult to establish voting intentions, but the scarcity of APRC rallies which once dominated the campaign scene suggests voters are unlikely to give them the near-total majority seen in past elections. Anna Stelle, 69, a former APRC supporter, said she had switched to the GDC, along with many other former Jammeh followers.

"I voted GDC," she told AFP. "I will never vote for APRC again and the other is UDP, I am not comfortable with them," she added, calling the UDP "tribalist" troublemakers. There are 53 seats up for grabs in The Gambia's National Assembly, five more than in 2012. Five extra places are appointed by the president to give a total of 58 seats in the legislative chamber, which was long derided as a rubber stamp for Jammeh's executive orders. Alagie Bubacar Jallow, an unemployed hotel worker, said his town had long been ignored by the Jammeh regime because it was seen as an opposition stronghold. "We need things to be done in Bakau," he told AFP. "I'm voting for Assan Touray, UDP, but more for the candidate. He is loyal, ambitious and respectful of all the people. He can try and fight for the needs of the town."

## Roll of the marble

The African Union, regional bloc ECOWAS and the European Union have all sent observers to monitor voters casting their ballots in The Gambia's unique system, where marbles are dropped into coloured metal barrels representing different candidates. Chief EU observer Miroslav Poche told AFP that the IEC had shown its impartiality under pressure by standing up to Jammeh when he lost the vote last year and filed legal action against the body.

"The IEC has proved itself during the December 2016 presidential elections," he said, but added that the marble drum system was a "big challenge" for his technical support team. It is the first time the EU has sent a fully-fledged observer mission to The Gambia, and it has bankrolled the vote at a time when state coffers are almost empty. West African troops remain in The Gambia three months after Jammeh's departure, and will stay until Barrow is satisfied that security service reforms have removed rogue elements.

Experts say that while the result could go feasibly in any direction, the relative novelty of a truly democratic election might fail to produce the unified front required to carry out the comprehensive overhaul of the state promised by Barrow. "Given Jammeh's stranglehold over Gambian politics for the past 22 years, the country's opposition parties are inexperienced to the democratic process and relatively weak institutionally," said Joseph Siegle, director of research at the US-based Africa Center for Strategic Studies. — AFP



## DEMOCRATS IN TRUMP STATES PRESSURED FROM BOTH SIDES

**WASHINGTON:** It's a rare and momentous decision - one by one, seated at desks centuries old, senators will stand and cast their votes for a Supreme Court nominee. It's a difficult political call in the modern era, especially for the 10 Democrats facing tough re-election next year in states that President Donald Trump won.

"Resist" is the rallying cry for the Democratic Party's liberal base, and that applies to all Trump nominees, even Neil Gorsuch, a mild-mannered jurist who won unanimous Senate backing to the appellate court in 2006. Democratic voters have flooded lawmakers' offices with calls, protested outside state offices and tweeted vulgarities if senators even hint at being conciliatory with Trump and the GOP.

"I come from a state that no matter how I vote, 50 percent of the people are mad," says Missouri Sen Claire McCaskill, who will oppose Gorsuch. "So I'm kind of used to this. The only difference is that the ones who are happy are really happy."

Already in the minority, Democrats face tough political odds in next year's midterms, defending 25 seats for caucus members to the GOP's eight. The looming question for the 10 Democrats is whether a Supreme Court vote will still resonate with voters in 19 months or whether Trump's standing, the economy, jobs or health care would be a greater concern.

### Fired up

Trump won McCaskill's state by almost 20 percentage points and conservative groups are running ads against her. But liberals are also fired up. The January evening Gorsuch was nominated, McCaskill tweeted that there should be a hearing and vote on "ANY nominee" - a reference to last year's Republican blockade of former President Barack Obama's nominee for the same seat, Merrick Garland. She got more than 700 replies, some using curse words and threatening a primary.

Montana Sen Jon Tester also will oppose Gorsuch, even though his state similarly supported Trump by 20 points. Tester said he's concerned about how Gorsuch would rule on privacy issues and women's health, and whether he'd support working people over corporations. "I think that Montanans have always expected me to have a reason for why I voted, and I have plenty of them on Judge Gorsuch," Tester said.

Marlene Johnson, 65, of Helena, said she hopes Tester's opposition will hurt him politically. She is closely following the debate and called Gorsuch a decent person who is qualified to sit on the Supreme Court. She says Tester is "letting Montana down." Tester has never won more than 50 percent of the vote. But Republicans are lacking a strong challenger, with their best chance, former Montana Rep. Ryan Zinke, now serving as Trump's interior secretary.

Indiana Sen Joe Donnelly, North Dakota Sen. Heidi Heitkamp and West Virginia Sen Joe Manchin had a different calculus - they're all supporting Gorsuch. Trump won Indiana by 19 points, North Dakota by 36 points and West Virginia by 42 points. Still, some Democrats are angry. About 20 protesters marched to Donnelly's downtown Indianapolis office Tuesday, chanting: "No, no, Joe." North Dakota Democrat Dan Spiekermeier is more understanding of Heitkamp. The farmer said he's upset that Republicans did not allow a vote on Garland, but said "some people among the Democrats need to be centrists, so I think she made the right call."

### 'Liberal special interests'

In swing states where Trump had narrower victories, the decision may have been easier. Pennsylvania Sen Bob Casey, Florida Sen. Bill Nelson, Wisconsin Sen. Tammy Baldwin and Michigan Sen. Debbie Stabenow are all opposing Gorsuch. Trump won those states by a point or less. It's unclear if their eventual opponents will use the issue against them in 2018 - or if voters will even remember the Supreme Court fight. Florida Gov Rick Scott, viewed as a likely challenger to Nelson, has so far avoided any direct criticism, though he supports Gorsuch.—AP



**WASHINGTON:** US First Lady Melania Trump claps as US President Donald Trump pauses while speaking during a Wounded Warriors event in the East Room of the White House. — AFP

## FOR TRUMP, THE WEIGHT OF WORLD'S PROBLEMS SINK IN

### SYRIA'S CHEMICAL ATTACK SEEMS TO HAVE ALTERED VIEWS

**WASHINGTON:** For Donald Trump, the reality of the world's problems may be starting to sink in. Standing in the sunny White House Rose Garden, the president said Wednesday that the gruesome chemical weapons attack in Syria had changed his views on the quagmire of a conflict that he'd previously indicated he wanted to steer clear of. He mourned the deaths of the youngest victims - "innocent children, innocent babies" - and said brutality had "crossed a lot of lines for me." "It is now my responsibility," he declared. The president's words were far from a declaration that he intends to act, and he notably avoided discussing what retaliatory options he would be willing to consider. Ultimately, his rhetoric may well land among the litany of harsh condemnations of Syrian President Bashar Assad by Barack Obama and other world leaders that did little to quell the six-year civil war.

Yet Trump's willingness to accept that he now bears some responsibility for a far-away conflict marked a significant moment for an "America First" president who has vowed to focus narrowly on US interests. His comments also suggested a growing awareness that an American president - even an unconventional one like him - is looked to as defender of human rights and a barometer of when nations have violated international norms.

### Wreaking havoc

The bloodshed in Syria is just one of the intractable international problems piling up around Trump. North Korea appears intent on building up its nuclear program, despite vague threats from his

administration. The Islamic State group is still wreaking havoc in Iraq and Syria, while a Pentagon review of US strategy sits on his desk.

Trump conceded Wednesday that of all the world's problems, the Middle East is one area he would rather avoid. His decision to at least rhetorically take a measure of responsibility was all the more striking given his frequent shoveling of blame for problems big and small onto anyone but himself.

In public, he faults Obama for leaving him "a mess" and says his campaign opponent Hillary Clinton is behind the flood of revelations possibly linking his campaign to Russia. In private, he berates his staff for failing to fix the self-made crises that have battered the White House, including his pair of travel bans blocked by the courts and the failure to pass health care legislation.

Trump initially took the same blame-shifting approach in addressing the deadly attack in Syria. In a short written statement Tuesday, he said the carnage was "a consequence of the past administration's weakness and irresolution." In 2013, Obama pulled back from planned airstrikes against Syria following a chemical weapons attack, despite having declared that the deployment of deadly gases would cross a "red line" for him. Obama's decision was widely criticized in the U.S. and by Middle Eastern allies, and undermined later attempts to compel Assad to leave office.

"The regrettable failure to take military action in 2013 to prevent Assad's use of chemical weapons remains a blight on the Western world," said Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., the chairman of the Senate

Foreign Relations Committee.

### US resolve

Still, foreign policy officials within the Trump administration were irritated by the president's eagerness to focus on his predecessor in his first reaction. Some wanted him to focus more on condemning Assad and highlighting US resolve. Their objections did little to sway the president at the time. But just a day later, Trump appeared more willing to embrace the gravity of the situation and his new role in it.

His posture may well have been impacted by the fact that his remarks in the Rose Garden came after his meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah, whose country has borne the brunt of the refugee crisis spurred by the Syrian war. Jordan is among Washington's most important partners in the region and is significantly dependent on the United States. Abdullah, who worked closely with Obama, enthusiastically embraced Trump's condemnation of the chemical weapons attack. During a joint news conference, he said to Trump, "I believe under your leadership we will be able to unravel this very complicated situation."

Eliot Cohen, a Trump critic who served in the State Department under President George W. Bush, said that whether Trump intended to or not, he now has put himself in the same position as Obama, raising the stakes for action in Syria, perhaps without having thought out whether he plans to follow through. "The deep irony here is you may see a lot of the same failures that the Obama administration had, except delivered with a different style," Cohen said. — AP



## AFGHANISTAN DANGLES LITHIUM WEALTH TO WIN TRUMP SUPPORT

**KABUL:** The Afghan government is trying to grab the attention of President Donald Trump and gain greater US support by dangling its massive and untouched wealth of minerals, including lithium, the silvery metal used in mobile phone and computer batteries that is considered essential to modern life. But tapping into that wealth, which also includes coal, copper, rare earths and far more that estimates say could be worth from \$1 trillion to \$3 trillion, is likely a long way off.

Security has worsened in Afghanistan the past year, with Taliban insurgents seizing territory and inflicting increasing casualties on Afghan forces. The regions with the greatest lithium deposits, for example, are currently too dangerous to enter. So far, Trump's policy on Afghanistan remains unknown. He has said little about America's longest-running war, beyond saying on the campaign trail that he wishes the United States were not involved in Afghanistan.

Last month, the top US military commander called for an increase in American forces to help bring security, a call Kabul enthusiastically backed. But the White House has not said which direction it will go - toward beefing up the American role, drawing it down further or something else entirely. There are currently around 8,400 US troops in the country, involved in training Afghan forces and in counter-terrorism operations.

Kabul clearly hopes the promise of mineral wealth will entice Trump into making a greater commitment. "Afghanistan can be an appropriate place for US industry, and specifically the mining sector, to look at opportunities for investment" because so few potential deposits have been mined, said Mohammad Humayon Qayoumi, chief adviser to Afghan president on infrastructure, human capital and technology.

### Security situation

"Afghanistan has always been interested in the US investing in many areas, specifically the mining area. Within mining, there are some areas that are strategic materials such as lithium," Qayoumi told The Associated Press. President Ashraf Ghani spoke with Trump in December, and they discussed the mineral wealth. "There was a quite good matter of interest from President Trump's administration," Qayoumi said. The two leaders spoke again in February for the first time since the inauguration in talks that focused on the security situation.

A White House official said the US sees sustainable economic development as "essential" to Afghanistan's stability, including in the mining sector. He said the US will work with Afghan businessmen and officials on reforms that "enhance private sector development" and contribute to development. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with regulations. Mineral resources have been touted as potentially transformative for Afghanistan, a key to lifting it out of poverty and bringing major wealth for development. Interest was particularly spiked by a 2007 report by the US Geological Survey and the Afghan government that found the country's deposits of a wide variety of minerals were much larger than had been known from surveys decades earlier by the Soviets. The mountainous, land-locked nation has huge, largely untouched reserves of copper, iron ore, chromite, mercury, zinc, gems, including rubies and emeralds, as well as gold and silver. Particularly alluring is its lithium, crucial to laptop and cell-phone batteries. But getting those minerals out of the ground - and doing it in a way that actually benefits the country as a whole - has been elusive. The war has scared away investors. Also, corruption is rife, and many of the mines that do exist are controlled by local warlords who reap the profits. The Taliban are believed to earn millions from illegal mining.

### Fueling the war

In 2016, anti-corruption watchdog Global Witness warned that the mining sector was fueling the war. It pointed to lapis lazuli - a blue stone found almost exclusively in Afghanistan - saying local strongmen, lawmakers and Taliban insurgents were all in a violent competition over control of the mines, earning \$20 million a year from illegal mining and in the process destabilizing northeastern Badakhshan province.

Integrity Watch Afghanistan said in a 2015 report that the great majority of more than 300 mining contracts awarded so far "may have been exploited by local strongmen under the protection of warlords." It examined five mines and estimated the government was losing tens of millions of dollars from those mines alone because of corruption that means taxes, rents and royalties are not collected.



**BANGKOK:** Thailand's King Vajiralongkorn (C) is escorted after paying respects to the monument of King Rama I after signing the military-backed constitution. — AFP

## THAI KING SIGNS A NEW JUNTA'S CONSTITUTION

### A FORM OF NEUTERED DEMOCRACY

**BANGKOK:** Thailand's king signed a new military-backed constitution yesterday that strengthens the army's hand in government and puts the country on the path to polls after three years of junta rule. The military says the charter-Thailand's twentieth since 1932 — will curb unrest in the politically-split kingdom and keep out corrupt lawmakers. But opponents say the new document means any polls, whose date keeps slipping, will only offer Thais a form of neutered democracy with a fully appointed senate and tough controls on elected politicians.

King Maha Vajiralongkorn, who ascended the throne following the October death of his revered father, signed the document in a televised ceremony in Bangkok on Thursday afternoon. In a solemn and ritual-laden affair, the 64-year-old king inked three copies of the charter, which were then stamped by white-clad officials and placed on gilded pillars before the monarch. An official then read the charter's preamble before an audience of political grandees and ambassadors gathered in the ornate throne hall.

"This constitution aims to fully rid the country of corruption, abuses of power and prevent corrupt politicians from taking office," the official read with junta chief Prayut Chan-O-Cha by his side. Vajiralongkorn surprised many earlier this year by ordering rewrites to parts of the constitution that deal with his powers—a move that delayed its

promulgation and the date for elections. The edits, revealed to the public for the first time yesterday, removed new powers that had been granted to the constitutional court to call a meeting in the event of a political crisis. The section now resembles its vaguely-worded predecessor in the previous 2007 charter, saying only that any unforeseen issues in the constitution should be handled in accordance with Thailand's traditions as a constitutional monarchy.

That clause was frequently cited by royalist political movements in the past to call for a palace intervention during bouts of unrest. Other edits relieved the king, who spends much of his time in Germany, of needing to appoint a regent whenever he travels abroad. The charter received popular approval in a referendum last August before the changes were made, although the poll's legitimacy was tainted by a junta ban on campaigning. The generals have severely curbed free speech since their power grab by outlawing all political activities, muzzling the press and detaining scores of critics.

### Back to the future?

Democracy has never fully taken root in Thailand, where the army has launched more than a dozen coups since the end of absolute monarchy in 1932. Over the past 10 years, an especially turbulent period dubbed "the lost decade", Thais have witnessed

repeated rounds of deadly protests, a string of short-lived governments and two military coups that deposed elected leaders.

Analysts say the new charter is aimed at blocking a political comeback from ousted premiers Thaksin and Yingluck Shinawatra, whose parties have won every poll since 2001. Their billionaire clan is popular among Thailand's rural and urban poor but hated by Bangkok's military-backed elite, who accuse the family of corruption, nepotism and damaging populist policies.

In addition to an appointed upper house, the new constitution bolsters the powers of the country's interventionist constitutional court and makes it easier to impeach a civilian leader. With royal approval secured, the junta's drafting committee will now draw up organic laws that critics fear could further hem-in political parties, who have been barred from organizing since the coup.

The junta has said elections will be held in mid-2018 but officials have shied from providing a firm date. They have also vowed to draw up a "20-year plan" for the country that any future government will be bound to follow. This week ousted Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra, who is entangled in a negligence trial since the coup that could see her jailed, said she hoped the charter would speed up the kingdom's return to democracy. — AFP



## STUDYING LAW HELPING SEX SLAVES FIND JUSTICE

**MUMBAI:** Ishika never thought that being sold by her parents to a brothel in Kolkata at the age of six would inspire her to pursue a career in one of the most prestigious professions - law. But after being rescued from sexual slavery, Ishika, now 24, has spent more than a decade trying to get justice against her traffickers. Despite the drawn-out case, she has not given up hope of seeing her abusers behind bars.

"I will become a lawyer and take up cases of trafficking victims and fight them effectively," said Ishika, one of nearly 20 sex trafficking survivors who will study law under a program launched by an anti-trafficking charity yesterday. "I was rescued 13 years ago but my case is still going on," Ishika, who asked to be identified only by her first name, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "I often feel I am the accused and not the victim. I do not want other trafficking victims to go through this."

### 'School for justice'

Of an estimated 20 million commercial sex workers in India, 16 million women and girls are victims of sex trafficking, according to campaigners. But fewer than two in five trafficking cases end in a conviction. The US State Department said in its 2016 Trafficking in Persons report that investigations, prosecutions and convictions for human trafficking were low in India even though the government has stepped up its law enforcement efforts. Free A Girl Movement said under its "School for Justice" program, young women who had been trafficked for sex as children would be guided through the college admission process and their education and other expenses provided for.

"It is a long-term program to empower sex trafficking survivors and help them become public prosecutors in the future so that they take up cases of child trafficking and child prostitution," said the charity's spokesman Francis Gracias. Campaigners say prosecutors representing rescued victims are often unable to connect with their plight or help them to sufficiently express themselves in court - which weakens the case and often results in acquittals.

"Rescued girls do not understand the legalities of the case such as what sections of the law were applied and why," said Tapoti Bhowmick of charity Sanlaap, which helps rescued girls like Ishika complete their school education. "They (rescued girls) can represent cases of trafficking better in court as they have themselves suffered the pain and trauma it causes," Bhowmick said. Ishika has already started studying English, mathematics and other subjects in preparation for the entrance exam to a law college, which she hopes will one day help her win her case. "The brothel madam and my trafficker have remained free all these years that I have spent at a shelter home. I want traffickers to fear law, and me," she said. —Reuters



**NEW DELHI:** In this photograph taken on April 4, 2017, an Indian devotee offers food to a cow during the Ram Navami festival at the Shri Ram Hanuman Vatika temple. —AFP

## INDIA POLICE ARREST 3 FOR COW VIGILANTE MURDER

**NEW DELHI:** Police said yesterday they have arrested three people for murder over the death of a Muslim man attacked while transporting cows in northern India, where vigilantes patrol the streets to protect the animal. Hindus consider sacred. Pehlu Khan, a 55-year-old farmer, died of his injuries on Monday after hundreds of vigilantes attacked his cattle trucks on a highway in Alwar in the state of Rajasthan.

Police are still trying to identify most of the 200 vigilantes who attacked Khan and injured six others as they transported dozens of cows into a neighboring state. Alwar police Chief Rahul Prakash said they arrested three late Wednesday after examining video footage shot by onlookers and broadcast by the media. "We saw the videos and identified at least five people who were at the spot. We called those five people to the police station and found that three of them were

directly involved in assault on the victims," Prakash told AFP.

Slaughtering cows is illegal in many Indian states and some also require a licence for transporting them across state borders. Prakash said police have registered a murder case against all three and have arrested 11 survivors of the attack, charging them under various sections of Rajasthan's cow protection law. Vigilante squads that roam India's highways inspecting livestock trucks for any trace of the animal have proliferated since the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power in 2014.

Rajasthan's BJP home minister Gulab Chand Kataria told reporters earlier that both sides were to blame for the incident tomorrow. Khan's death sparked outrage yesterday in India's upper house of parliament, where opposition lawmakers shouted slogans against Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's BJP government.

"(The) new vision for India that Narendra Modi ji is propagating... is a vision where only one idea will prevail," said Rahul Gandhi, vice president of the opposition Congress party. "Any other idea, anybody who doesn't listen to and agree with Narendra Modi, has no place in India," he told reporters outside parliament. At least 10 Muslim men have been killed in similar incidents across the country by Hindu mobs on suspicion of eating beef or smuggling cows in the last two years. In 2015 a Muslim man was lynched by his neighbors over rumors that he had slaughtered a cow. Police later said the meat was mutton. Last month a hotel manager was beaten by a mob and his restaurant sealed in Jaipur after Hindu vigilantes accused him of serving beef. Last year, Modi criticized the cow-protection vigilantes and urged a crackdown against groups using religion as a cover for committing crimes. —AFP

## CHINA PROTESTS TO INDIA OVER DALAI LAMA VISIT



**DIRANG:** Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, center in yellow robes, returns after teachings at the Thupsung Dhargyeling Monastery. —AP

**BEIJING:** China said yesterday that it has lodged an official protest with India over the visit of the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama to contested territory along the two countries' border. The Dalai Lama travelled to Arunachal Pradesh, parts of which Beijing claims as South Tibet, earlier this week for teachings at local monasteries.

"Inviting and approving the visit of the Dalai Lama to disputed areas between China and India has damaged our interests and China-India relations," foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular press briefing. Beijing claims that the religious leader is bent on splitting Tibet from China and has previously condemned the planned visit. "We oppose the visit

by the Dalai Lama to relevant areas and opposes the attempt by relevant countries to arrange a platform for the Dalai Lama to hold anti-China and separatist activities," Hua said, adding that China had "launched representations" over the visit with the Indian ambassador to China and with the country's foreign ministry. The Dalai Lama fled to India after a failed uprising in 1959 but is still deeply revered by many Tibetans.

Beijing says its troops "peacefully liberated" Tibet in 1951 and accuses the Nobel Peace laureate of seeking Tibetan independence through "spiritual terrorism". He says he merely wants greater autonomy for his homeland, where many accuse the central government of religious repression and eroding Tibetan culture. —AFP



## DUTERTE ORDERS TROOPS TO SOUTH CHINA SEA REEFS

**MANILA:** Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said yesterday he has ordered troops to deploy on unoccupied South China Sea islands, boosting the military presence on remote reefs claimed by Manila in a move that could provoke rival claimants including Beijing. "It looks like everybody is making a grab for the islands there, so we better live on those that are still vacant," he told reporters during a televised visit to a military camp on the western island of Palawan, near the disputed Spratly group.

China asserts sovereignty over almost all of the resource-rich South China Sea despite rival claims from Southeast Asian neighbors and has rapidly built reefs into artificial islands capable of hosting military planes. Duterte has previously sought to improve his nation's relations with Beijing by adopting a non-confrontational approach over their competing claims in the strategically vital waters. But the president appeared to alter his tone with his announcement yesterday, saying it was time to "erect structures there and raise the Philippine flag".

"I have ordered the armed forces to occupy all," Duterte said. "At least, let us get what is ours now and make a strong point there that it is ours," he said, adding Manila was claiming "nine or 10" Spratly islands, reefs and cays. The defense department later said that nine outcrops "are already in our possession" and occupied by marines, including Thitu island where the Philippine military maintains an airstrip.

Its statement suggested that Duterte's plan was to beef up contingents on the reefs. "The president wants facilities built such as barracks for the men, water (desalination) and sewage disposal systems, power generators, light houses, and shelters for fishermen," the defense department said.

### Race for possession

After China occupied Mischief Reef in the mid-1990s, the Philippines marooned a decrepit navy vessel atop nearby Second Thomas Shoal to assert Manila's territorial claim and has kept the rusting boat manned ever since. Duterte also said he could visit Thitu island on June 12 to mark Philippine Independence Day and raise the nation's flag there.

An official at the Chinese embassy in Manila seemed surprised when asked by AFP to comment on Duterte's declaration, but referred questions on the matter to the Chinese foreign ministry in Beijing. The Philippines under Duterte's predecessor Benigno Aquino actively challenged China's claim to control most of the South China Sea including taking the claim to a UN-backed tribunal, which ruled in its favor last year.

But the controversial Duterte, who took office last year on a promises to kill thousands of people in a drug war, reversed that policy as he sought billions of dollars worth of investments and grants from Beijing. China now controls several reefs in the South China Sea including Scarborough Shoal-which Beijing seized from the Manila in 2012 — and is just 230 kilometers from the main Philippine island of Luzon.

The two neighbors are scheduled to hold talks in China in May to tackle issues related to the sea row. Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have also sparred with Beijing over territory in the disputed waterway. US President Donald Trump's administration has so far taken a tough stance on China's claims in the South China Sea, insisting it will defend international interests there. Trump is set to sit down with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping later in the day to discuss a range of issues which will likely include tensions in the South China Sea. — AFP



**BEIJING:** Magazines featuring front pages of US President Donald Trump (L) and China's President Xi Jinping (R) are displayed at a news stand. — AFP

## TRUMP, XI LOOK TO NAVIGATE MINEFIELD IN FIRST SUMMIT

### LEADERS FACE A MAKE OR BREAK MOMENT

**PALM BEACH:** Donald Trump hosts Chinese President Xi Jinping at his sun-kissed Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida, a high-stakes first summit replete with pitfalls for both leaders. The stage is set for a carefully choreographed dinners with family and displays of bonhomie, but beneath the facade runs a wary, almost palpable, anxiety-as the men face a make or break moment.

Xi is arriving at the resort with a gift-basket of "tweetable deliverables", sources say, peace offerings on Trump's signature issues-trade and jobs-that he hopes will smooth over a relationship that began on shaky ground following disagreements over Taiwan. In return, he hopes to get assurances from Trump on American sales of arms to the island, as well as trade. But what Trump wants is less clear.

No one-neither diplomats nor aides-can be sure what will happen when the most powerful Chinese leader in a generation meets a mercurial American president who has been in office less than 100 days and is capable of unravelling the most carefully-laid plans with a single 140-character tweet. The stakes, both domestic and international, are high. Disagreements over approaches to North Korea or bilateral trade could, if mishandled, destabilize North East Asia or tank the global economy. On the domestic front, Xi is heading into a critical political meeting later this year. He needs to show that he can deal with the US leader as an equal and eliminate the potential for unwelcome surprises in the run-up to the event that could assure his power for years to come. He "cannot afford to lose face while China aspires to be the new centre of gravity for the

world order," China political analyst Willy Lam told AFP. Meanwhile, Trump—who is reeling from legislative defeats, low approval ratings and unrelenting scandals—desperately needs a win. He may not have much room to maneuver, however, with a country he has castigated for "stealing" American jobs and doing "little" to rein in North Korea's nuclear program. Even though the two leaders "want to project themselves as very forceful, very decisive and also getting the best for the benefit of their own countries, they are also anxious not to get into difficult negotiating positions," according to Lam.

### 'Win-win'

Amid such high stakes, Xi plans to offer "win-win" gifts calculated to make it easy for Trump to make concessions while burnishing his hard-charging, deal-making public persona. Top of the list, according to a source briefed on Xi's plans, will be a package of Chinese investments aimed at creating more than 700,000 American jobs-the number pledged to Trump by China's regional rival Japan, during Prime Minister Abe's February Mar-a-Lago visit.

There may also be offers to further open China's auto and agricultural markets, insiders say, and even some concessions on Chinese banks' transactions with North Korea, a vital financial lifeline for the country. He may also offer Chinese assistance in Trump's infrastructure renewal plan and a stake in China's newly established infrastructure bank.

In exchange, according to the source, Xi will ask Trump to delay planned weapons sales to Taiwan and loosen export restrictions on biotech and water

treatment sectors. Xi's main objective will not be establishing a relationship "for the next three or four years, but stable ties during the next three quarters" through China's 19th Party Congress, according to the source. Trump's position on the democratically-ruled Taiwan, which China considers a breakaway province, has been a major irritant in the Sino-US relationship since the billionaire politician accepted a protocol-breaking phone call from the Taiwanese president after his election victory. For Xi, an olive branch on Taiwan is a key objective, according to Shen Dengli, a US-China expert at Shanghai's Fudan University: "Expect just one thing: Taiwan."

### Diverging interests

On the US side, however, North Korea will likely be on the top of the agenda following a provocative missile launch Wednesday-barely 48 hours before the summit was due to start. The Trump White House worries Pyongyang is just months away from marrying nuclear and long-range missile technology and putting the west coast of the United States within striking distance. The tough-talking new president has repeatedly and very publicly indicated his openness to military action.

While Beijing has condemned the missile tests, it has hesitated to take dramatic action against Pyongyang, fearing that the country's collapse would generate a flood of refugees across its borders and leave the US military on its doorstep. But coming to an agreement on the issue will not be easy, according to Bonnie Glaser, a China expert at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). —AFP



Friday Times

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2017

# Lifestyle

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

Spanish dancer/  
choreographer Blanca Li  
performs a scene from her  
two woman show called  
'Goddesses & Demonesses'  
during a dress rehearsal  
before opening night at the  
City Center in  
New York. —AFP

**Spain's Blanca Li: Choreographer,  
woman of all trades, dreamer**





In this image released by Fox Searchlight Pictures, Chris Evans, left, and McKenna Grace appear in a scene from, "Gifted." — AP

### Review

## Math film 'Gifted' is less than the sum of its parts

There are several positive factors in the mixed equation that is "Gifted," starring Chris Evans and the appealing 10-year-old McKenna Grace: A brilliant and precocious yet sweetly empathetic young girl. A devoted and decidedly hunky father figure. And then there's math itself, presented not as a refuge for social misfits, but as an exciting and elegant pursuit. Unfortunately, a movie about mathematical formulas relies way too much on moviemaking formula, and the result is way less than the sum of its parts. Indeed, "Gifted," directed by Marc Webb, often feels like the incomplete shell of a movie, with the guts and connective tissue missing.

This is hardly the fault of the cast, which also features the welcome (but underused) presence of Octavia Spencer, and the estimable Scottish actress Lindsay Duncan. Rather, it seems due to the way-too-obvious dialogue and often unconvincing plot twists, not to mention a courtroom subplot that is, strangely, rarely interesting. We meet Frank (Evans) and 6-year-old Mary (Grace) as the two are readying for her first day of school. Until now, Frank, Mary's uncle who has been raising her since she was a baby, has home-schooled her, but that well has run dry. Mary, a child prodigy, is not excited for school, and one can see why: The children are asked simple addition questions, but Mary shows an ability to do complex multiplication in her head. Immediately, the teacher, Bonnie (Jenny Slate) knows she has a gifted child on her hands.

### Gifted children

Mary has a caring disposition and a sweet smile, but also a dry wit when bantering with Frank. When Mary's teacher approaches Frank after school that first day, the girl whispers: "Oh, it's my teacher. She probably wants to remind me what one plus one is." When the school principal suggests - almost orders - that Frank enroll Mary in a school for gifted children, Frank insists otherwise. He has some knowledge from his own family of what it's like to live as a prodigy, cut off from a normal social life. He wants Mary to have friends and playdates.

In marches Frank's mother, Evelyn (Duncan), a hard-edged Brit (and former mathematician herself) who has clear ideas of what she wants for Mary: A life of productivity, brilliance, academic fame. She brings Mary up to MIT, to show off the girl's mathematical brain. Most importantly, she sues Frank for custody. The first courtroom scene comes abruptly, with no real buildup. Then, the dialogue is so superficial that it just doesn't feel real. The same problem wends through all the courtroom scenes. As the plot unfolds, there's the occasional bright moment, usually thanks to Mary's wit (And McKenna's genuine screen presence). One of the most amusing moments comes when teacher Bonnie, against her judgment, falls into bed with Frank after an evening of drinking. Mary, who's supposed to be visiting neighbor Roberta (Spencer), sneaks into the apartment to grab something and runs right into Bonnie, who's clutching a sheet around her naked body. The young girl's knowing look - and especially her three-word response - is priceless.

More courtroom fighting comes, and once again, both plot and dialogue prove themselves overly simplistic and in some cases, simply not believable. This is especially true in a final twist that feels utterly tacked on, to miraculously tie up the plot's loose ends. — AP

## Spain's Blanca Li: Choreographer, woman of all trades, dreamer

Spanish dancer/choreographer Blanca Li (left) and Maria Alexandrova, principal dancer of Russia's Bolshoi Ballet, perform a scene from the two woman show called "Goddesses & Demoneses".



Blanca Li could not be busier: she is a dancer, film director and actress, and does choreography for stars like Beyonce and Daft Punk, and lots, lots more. There's opera, ad campaigns for Prada and Christian Louboutin, video, art installations. Then, the 53-year-old Spaniard has this other, minor goal: make the world a better place through the performing arts. "I am very, very inquisitive. I love to mix things. Everything inspires me. The more I see, the more I learn, the more inspiration I have," Li, who has lived in Paris since 1993, told AFP over the weekend.

"I would like to influence the world more. I want it to change, to improve," Li said minutes before taking to the stage of the New York City Center for the US opening of her dance performance, called "Goddesses and Demoneses." It is an impassioned tribute to the power of women. "Sometimes being an actress is a bit odd. You ask yourself a lot of questions about what you can do to improve the world you have around you and the people to whom you contribute something with your art," said Li, a diminutive, green-eyed native of Granada in Spain's Andalusia region. As she spoke, an assistant attached a long braid to her dark hair and fixed it in a bun. During the show, it will come loose and spill down her back, but also fling upwards, sideways and in every which direction, as if the hair, too, were dancing.

### 'Parity does not exist'

In "Goddesses and Demoneses", which debuted in Paris a little over a year ago, Li and Maria Alexandrova, the 38-year-old principal dancer at Russia's Bolshoi Ballet, bring to life the feminine archetypes of Greek mythology, from mothers to femmes fatales, at a time when Li says women's rights are eroding. "We women made great strides, and then it is as if everything came to a halt," said Li, who is married to French film producer Etienne Li. They have two children. "I wanted to talk about how beautiful it is to be a woman" these days, said Li. She started by studying flamenco, joined the Spanish national rhythmic gymnastics team, and at age 17 came to New York to study modern dance under Martha Graham.

Then she discovered hip hop, electronic music, and found inspiration in classical ballet. And ever since, she has been mix-

ing them all. "We live in societies in which women are still not respected the way they should be. Women are still very limited professionally and artistically," Li complained. "In France or Spain, parity does not exist. In most things men dominate, and it is not that women are dumber." Li said she finds it stunning that most major choreographers are men.

She said that, for instance, over the course of her 20-year career Alexandrova had never worked with a female choreographer, until now in this show, with Li. "In France, almost all dance studios are run by men. It is incredible, a country where it was almost always women who led the world of dance. And it is sort of like they have gotten rid of all of them."

### Outfits that dance

Li's daily concerns show up in her work, in her creations. In her upcoming show "Solstice" at the Chaillot National Theater in Paris, rehearsal for which begins in three weeks, Li will depict "the relationship between humanity and nature, how it has evolved over time, how our lives and the lives of those who come after us are going to change." And in another of her shows that is still touring, "Robot", dancers and small articulated machines share the stage in an ironic statement on where technology will lead us. Ever since Spanish designer Sybilla created the costume for one of her first ballets and then worked with Christian Lacroix at the Paris Opera, Li has made the fashion world dance. — AFP



Spanish dancer/choreographer Blanca Li performs a scene from her two woman show called "Goddesses & Demoneses" during a dress rehearsal before opening night at the City Center in New York. — AFP photos



Spanish dancer/choreographer Blanca Li performs a scene from her two woman show called "Goddesses & Demoneses".



A memorial fence at Prince's Paisley Park provides fans an opportunity to leave memorials in Chanhassen, Minn. —AP photos



# A Minneapolis-area Prince pilgrimage a year after his death



A replica of the Memorial Fence is shown at Prince's Paisley Park in Chanhassen, Minn which is open for public tours.

Prince's hometown of Minneapolis offers many places where fans can pay homage on the anniversary of his death, from his favorite record store to the humble house used in his Oscar-winning "Purple Rain" film. Paisley Park, his massive, gleaming white studio and performance complex, was turned into a museum soon after his death on April 21, 2016. A "celebration" planned there for April 20-23 with panel discussions, concerts and tours is mostly sold out. But don't worry, there's plenty more to see.

## Paisley Park

This is a must, even if it's just a drive-by to see the sprawling place rise up from the flatlands in Chanhassen, an easy 20-mile drive from downtown Minneapolis. Guided tours average 70 minutes and include rooms where Prince created some of his biggest hits. The museum is a work in progress, with a recently added room displaying costumes and other artifacts from his "Lovesexy" album and tour.

Optional add-ons include a VIP tour of extra rooms, a photo opportunity, Friday night dance party and Sunday brunch featuring some of his favorite foods. Much has been made of Prince's Paisley Park-shaped urn. It was moved from the main atrium at the family's request to a frosted high-walled fixture above a little kitchen where he sometimes watched TV. Photos and video are strictly prohibited on all tours.

## First Avenue & 7th St Entry

This downtown club in a former Greyhound bus depot remains a mecca for Prince fans and an indie rock hot spot. There are guided tours, though most were sold out ahead of the April 21st anniversary. A separate entrance and fee gets you inside the club where Prince played several times, including his first time in 1981 when it was called Sam's and in 1983 when he unveiled a longer version of his ballad "Purple Rain." That gig was recorded, including the mega-hit that became his signature

and other songs used in the film. Brick walls outside are adorned with painted, white stars for other artists who played there. Prince's star stands out in gold.

## Electric Fetus

Prince frequented the Electric Fetus record store. He visited just days before he died, on Record Store Day, April 16, tweeting: "FETUS, THANK 4 THE TUNES! ROCKED STEVIE'S TALKING BOOK ALL THE WAY HOME! #RecordStoreDay," to which Electric Fetus replied: "Thanks 4 coming in today and for supporting indie record stores year-round!" His final tweet, April 18, was another nod to Electric Fetus, promoting the written program for his "Piano & Microphone" tour. The tweet displayed the program's cover and said, simply: "electricfetus.com."

When the store opened in 1968, National Lampoon magazine singled it out for the worst name of a business. But it remains an indie mecca for audiophiles - including vinyl-lovers - and drew grieving fans when Prince died. — AP



A woman places flowers at a memorial at First Avenue in Minneapolis where pop super star Prince often performed.



A mural honoring the late Prince adorns a building in the Uptown area of Minneapolis.





In this picture a woman speaks with a couple of youngsters dressed as 'Zarramaches' a character from the traditional carnival of Casavieja, during a gathering of different villages' carnival masks and characters, in Casavieja, Spain. — AP photos



A man wears the traditional 'Tora' outfit used during the carnival while posing for a picture.

# Spanish parades feature bizarre costumes, masks



A reveler in a mask from the traditional La Vijanera de Silio carnival runs after picking a branch from a tree during a parade.

**B**ulls and tomatoes may be the key ingredients in Spain's most famous festivals, but masks and bizarre outfits are the showpieces in dozens of smaller town celebrations, many dating back to medieval times. These festivals, held in off-the-beaten path towns across central and northwestern Spain, most often coincide with festivities celebrating the advent of spring, mixing Carnival and bizarre pagan-like rituals with mock battles between good and evil. Town residents don horned and maned masks, multicolored conical hats, sheepskins and cowbells and parade through the narrow streets of their villages. Other participants pose as bears, wolves or devil-like characters brandishing sticks as they run about to entertain spectators.

The festivals' origins are for the most part vague and their titles—such as the "Cucurramachos" in Navalosa town or the "Zarramaches" in the village of Casavieja—are more often than not untranslatable. Casavieja's festival takes place on St Blaise's day, Feb 3, and celebrates tales of how shepherds living in the nearby mountains came down to the village on that day to be paid and began dressing oddly to entertain children.

The La Vijanera parade, held on the first Sunday of the year in the northern town of Silio, is a colorful a Carnival-type pageant symbolizing the expulsion of evil spirits and stars characters known as "Trapajones," dressed up in costumes made of wood, moss or corn cobs. And while the mask festivals may not attract the tens of thousands of party-goers like Pamplona's San Fermin bull-running fiesta or the Tomatina tomato battle, they are very popular and draw more tourists and media each year.

The towns also strive to promote the festivals to keep their cultural heritage alive. As part of this effort, each year one of the towns stages a special event to showcase a variety of the characters from the different festivals. This year's event, celebrated April 1 in Casavieja, featured the comical hairy bear and "Trapajon" straw figures of "La Vijanera" festival and the "Harramacho," savage-looking characters from the "Cucurramachos" fiesta. — AP



A man wearing a mask and dressed to represent 'El Hungaro' a traditional character from the La Vijanera de Silio carnival.





A man looks as 'Zarramacos' dong their cowbells in a representation of the traditional carnival of La Vijanera de Silio.



Revelers from San Pedro Bernardo village wearing the traditional 'Machurrero' mask and outfit rest and eat after a parade during a gathering of different villages' carnival masks and characters in the small village of Casavieja.



A man representing a wild bear runs through 'Zarramacos' ringing their cowbells in representation of the traditional carnival of La Vijanera de Silio.



A man dressed as a 'Harramacho' a traditional character from the Navalacruz carnival.

## Alan Jackson, Jerry Reed, Don Schlitz to join Hall of Fame

Country star Alan Jackson, actor-singer-guitarist Jerry Reed and songwriter Don Schlitz will be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame later this year. Their selection was announced Wednesday. Jackson, 58, from Newnan, Georgia, broke out in 1990 with his neo-traditional style of honky-tonk country music that earned him several multiplatinum records. His hit songs include "Chattahoochee," "She's Got the Rhythm (And I Got the Blues)" and "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)."

Jackson, with his signature white hat, said during the press conference that his dad's wooden radio inspired him to write "Chasin' That Neon Rainbow," one of his first singles. The radio is now in an exhibit at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, along with a pair of water skis he wore for the music video for "Chattahoochee." "I'll be in the Hall of Fame with Daddy Gene's radio and my water skis and some blue jeans with holes in them," Jackson said.

The singer-songwriter earned two Grammy Awards and was named entertainer of the year three times by the Country Music Association. Over the course of his 25-year career, he's the second most nominated artist in CMA history with 81 nominations and has had more than 30 No. 1 country hits. "This is about the last dream on the list, right here," Jackson said. Reed, from Atlanta, Georgia, became a popular country star in the 1960s with his fingerstyle

picking that earned him the nickname "Guitar Man." which became the title of one of his signature songs. His hits include Grammy-winning "When You're Hot, You're Hot" and "Amos Moses."

After regularly appearing on Glen Campbell's TV show, he started a successful career in Hollywood. He starred opposite Burt Reynolds in the "Smokey and the Bandit" films and appeared in Adam Sandler's "The Waterboy." He died in 2008 at 71. His daughters Seidina Hubbard and Lottie Zavala spoke on his behalf Wednesday. Schlitz, 64, from Durham, North Carolina, has written dozens of top country hits including "The Gambler," "On The Other Hand," "Forever and Ever, Amen," "The Greatest" and "When You Say Nothing At All."

His songs were cut by Kenny Rogers, Randy Travis, Mary Chapin Carpenter, The Judds, Tanya Tucker and more. He has won three CMA song of the year awards and two Grammy Awards, and has been inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame. "I will never be able to believe that I deserve this, unless I receive it as a representative of my family, my mentors, my collaborators, my promoters and my friends," Schlitz said. "That's the only way I can deal with this." — AP



Singer and songwriter Alan Jackson speaks after it was announced Wednesday in Nashville, Tenn., that he is one of the 2017 inductees into the Country Music Hall of Fame along with songwriter Don Schlitz and the late singer and songwriter Jerry Reed. — AP



# How to make a creamy white bean soup — without any cream

By Melissa D'Arabian

**W**hite bean soup with garlic is a classic comfort dish in the Mediterranean region. Usually, it's loaded with heavy cream, which also loads up the fat and calories. My version uses no cream at all, getting its body from adding extra garlic plus a lone starchy potato, and then blending most of the soup itself up into a luscious creamy consistency. (A few of the beans are reserved and added back in after blending for texture.)

What I love about this soup is that it takes under a half hour to make from start to finish, and I usually have the needed ingredients on hand - a couple of cans of beans, a potato, some herbs, stock and a little white wine, which I've been known to skip without catastrophe when I don't happen to have it on hand.

With white beans being so full of protein and fiber - 1 cup of beans has about 20 grams of protein and over 12 grams of fiber yet almost no fat - this meatless soup is filling without making you feel stuffed. Serve it with a green salad with a tart Dijon and lemon vinaigrette for a typical Sunday supper that my husband grew up eating in Provence. Or, serve a half portion as a first course, and you'll eat less at your main meal, which means you can stretch your meat budget in a sneaky and healthy way.

Or simply make this soup because it's super easy and comforting - easing us from cold weather to warmer weather perfectly. A final note: don't let the garlic quantities intimidate you. Boiling the garlic tames the flavor and you'll be left with a mellow, slightly sweet complement to the creamy beans.



## CREAMLESS WHITE BEAN AND GARLIC SOUP

### Ingredients

Start to finish: 30 minutes

Servings: 6

2 teaspoons olive oil  
1 small chopped onion, about 1 cup  
1 stalk celery, chopped, about 1/3 cup  
1 medium carrot, chopped, about 1/3 cup  
1/2 teaspoon smoked (or sweet) paprika  
20 medium cloves garlic, peeled  
1/4 cup dry white wine  
2 cups chicken or vegetable stock  
1 medium russet potato, peeled and cut into quarters  
2 cans white beans, drained and rinsed  
1 large sprig fresh rosemary  
1 large sprig fresh thyme  
1 bay leaf  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

### Preparation

Heat the oil in a large sauce pan and sweat the onion, celery and carrot over medium heat, stirring with a wooden spoon, about 5 minutes. Add the smoked paprika, garlic, salt and pepper and cook until fragrant, another 2 minutes. Deglaze the pan with the wine and stock and bring to a simmer. Add the potato, beans, herbs, bay leaf, and 2 cups of water. Bring the soup to a boil and let simmer, partially covered with a lid, over medium low heat until potato and garlic are very tender, about 15-20 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool a few minutes (add a couple of ice cubes to expedite cooling). Spoon out the herb stems and bay leaf and discard. Scoop out about a cup of beans and set aside. Use an immersion blender to blend the rest of the soup until creamy. Or, blend in a traditional blender, being very careful not to get burned - blend in batches and remove the lid centre, cover with a dishrag, to allow steam to escape. Add the reserved beans back to the blended soup, adjust for seasoning, and serve.

Cook's Note: Traditionally, the herbs are tied up with kitchen string or placed in a cheesecloth pouch, called a "bouquet garni." But fishing out the stems and allowing a few errant leaves to be blended up in the soup works quite fine for a quick week-night soup.)



# This strawberry season, make a dessert inspired by cannoli

By Sara Moulton

I developed this recipe to take advantage of strawberry season. Some of you are naturally scratching your head. "Strawberry season? Name a time of year that isn't strawberry season." And it certainly can feel that way. Strawberries are grown in all 50 states and, depending on the state, the season can be as short as a few weeks or as long as 11 months. But the heart of the strawberry season - the sweet spot of the year when you can count on finding juicy, delicious and locally grown strawberries at your supermarket or farmer's market - is April through June.

Now that the goodies are at hand, here are a few tips about how to buy and store them. Start by selecting the specimens that are unblemished and smooth and, most important, bright red from tip to tail. Then, pick one up and take a whiff. It should smell strongly of ... strawberries.

When you get the winners home, put a layer of them in a shallow bowl lined with paper towels. Cover and store the berries in the refrigerator and

try to eat them within a few days. (Local strawberries are more perishable than the commercial varieties.) Do not wash or hull the berries until right before you're ready to eat them. When the moment arrives, simply put the strawberries in a colander and run some cold water over them. Then lift them out and let them drain on paper towels.

What makes this recipe Italian? The filling used to stuff these berries is a twist on the mixture of ricotta cheese, candied orange and chocolate that's piped into cannoli. The difference is that I substituted Neufchatel for ricotta because it's tangier and more assertive and teams up better with the berries. This dessert is a simple and elegant way to end a meal now that spring has sprung - and it only takes 20 minutes to make. You can even prep the strawberries and stuffing ahead. But don't stuff them until the last minute. You don't want the sugar in the filling to make the berries soggy.



## ITALIAN STUFFED STRAWBERRIES

### Ingredients

Start to finish: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

1 pound strawberries

2 ounces Neufchatel or one-third less-fat cream cheese (about 1/4 cup), softened

1 teaspoon sugar

3/4 ounce bittersweet or semi-sweet chocolate, finely chopped

1 teaspoon grated orange zest

### Preparation

Cut each strawberry in half lengthwise through the cap. Arrange the strawberry halves, cut side up, on a serving plate. Trim a thin slice from the bottom if necessary to make each half sit evenly. Using a small spoon or melon baller, scoop out a hollow in the center of the cut side of each strawberry. Reserve the strawberry scraps for another use (or eat them). In a small bowl combine the cream cheese and sugar; stir in the chocolate and orange zest.

Divide the cream cheese mixture into the hollows in the strawberries and serve.

**Chef's Note:** You can prepare the strawberries and the filling several hours ahead of time but do not stuff the strawberries until right before serving. — AP



Introducing **MixTape:**

## FRIDAY TIME'S NEW WEEKLY ENTERTAINMENT COLUMN

By Aakash Bakaya

**L**ong time readers of this space may be familiar with the sporadic entertainment and pop-culture related pieces I've written here. Mainly, I've covered films and film-related topics but have also occasionally dabbled with television and gaming content. Sometimes I've left those pieces for our Lifestyle section on the weekly paper but now I want to finally settle down, re-stock and take on the daunting but fun task of managing my own weekly entertainment column.

This came about (as it usually does) from my own frustration. The many ideas I've had the last month or so never seemed to find their own voice. Annoyed with the stranglehold of formality and conformity - I wished to let loose and start something new, something bound by regularity but not adhered to a strict format. A weekly column on my journeys through pop-culture's lesser known (and at times forgotten) alleys seemed very exciting. 'MixTape' will be about a variety

of subjects from film reviews to television previews to comic-book look-backs. At times the subject matter might be obscure but most times it won't. Regardless, I hope you'll enjoy reading them as much as I'm going to like writing them.

Today's piece is about a topic I wanted to write about for a while now and it might not appeal to you but like the name implies - I'll try to mix up the content as much as I can.

a graphic novel by  
**CRAIG THOMPSON**



# Life, Kong and Hollywood's creative laziness

Let's revisit some movie magic from 1993. Two cars are stopped in front of an enormous cage. It's the dead of night and there's a storm raging outside which causes the power to suddenly go off. This is bad news for three reasons. Firstly, the cars are electric powered and run on rails so they are unable to move till the power returns. Secondly, the cage's electrified fences are powered off. Lastly, the cage is holding a T-Rex.

There are people in both the cars. The first car has a lawyer and two kids; the second has a Math professor and a paleontologist. The storm outside obscures their vision almost completely and the goat inside the cage has suddenly stopped bleeping. There's a slight rumble, the earth is literally shaking beneath their vehicles. One of the kids ask - "what happened to the goat?" when suddenly a piece of the goat slams onto the glass roof of the car. The kids scream, the lawyers runs out terrified and the Math professor wipes clear the vapor from his window and says 'I hate being right all the time'.

The camera cuts to a close-up of the no longer electrified fence snapping away and then pulls back to reveal the monster itself. The T-Rex looks around before slowly before taking its first tentative step outside the cage. The gigantic beast, sensing a new found freedom he hasn't felt for 65 million years lets out a thunderous roar that changed cinema forever.

If it wasn't clear, I am referring to the iconic T-Rex attack scene from Steven Spielberg's 'Jurassic Park'. No words come close to adequately describ-

ing the awe-inspiring scope of that 10 minute sequence. Yes, the special effects still hold up perfectly but it's the way Spielberg and all the actors including the kids sell the scene that's simply magnificent. It was a big burden to pretend you're being confronted and terrorized by a computer animation especially since the technology was so new but they pull it off flawlessly.

## Dull Island

Now take 'Kong: Skull Island' that released this March. CGI has advanced 25 years since ILM's dinosaurs but nobody seemed to have told the usually talented actors of this film. Let me describe a particular sequence to articulate my point. Half-way through the movie, the group's photographer Mason Weaver (played by OSCAR WINNER Brie Larson) wanders outside their encampment to investigate a wounded creature. As she nears it, she suddenly looks around to see the 50-foot tall King Kong standing over her.

Attentive viewers will wonder how a gigantic ape sneaked up on a photographer of all people in the middle of the day. Barring the logical failing, at least we are set for an intense scene. Kong confronts our female lead, one of cinema's most iconic pairings. But all that really happens is a brief (and boring) stare down before the gorilla just turns around and walks away. With no build-up and zero pay-off, the scene ends as quickly as it began. Riveting!

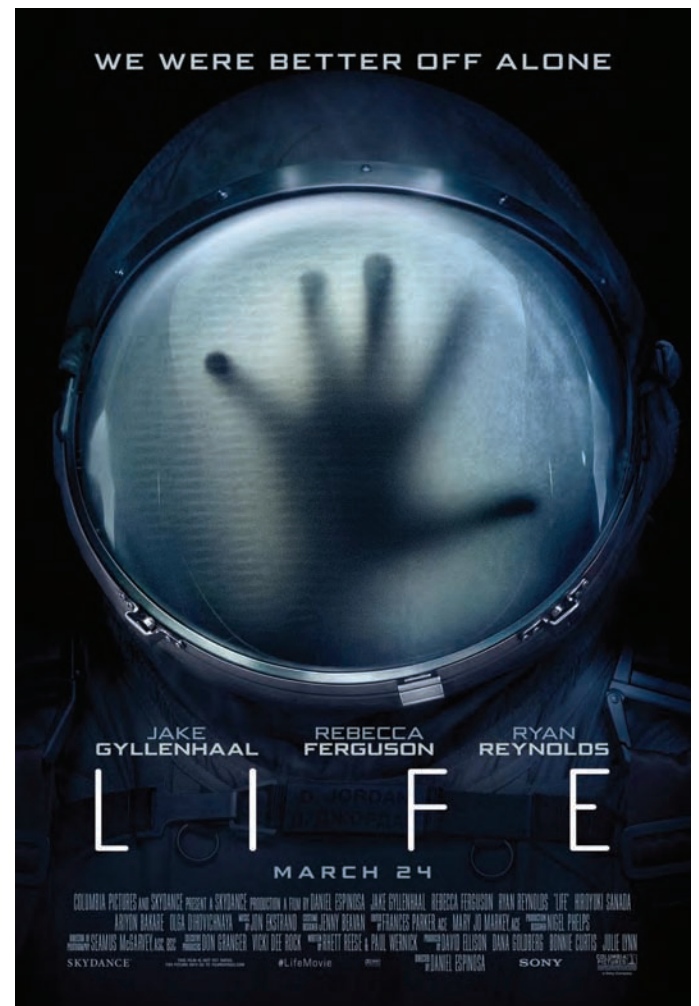
The film is filled with these empty scenes followed by a CGI spectacle involving Kong or one of the many uninspired island inhabitants followed by an empty scene followed by a CGI spectacle. The effects are great no doubt but if no one involved wants to sell it to the audience then the 'spectacle' falls flat. The film itself is more homage to 'Jurassic Park' and other jungle films more so than the original King Kong movies but whatever charms those films had are lost to pull our nostalgic heart-strings. The creature designs are extremely tired and boring with Kong himself being as generic as it gets. The 2005 remake by Peter Jackson at least put a lot of time to capture the human elements of this character (using motion capture) while here it's your standard CGI filler - sound and fury, signifying nothing.

## In space, nobody can hear you yawn

'Life' follows similar patterns of laziness both in its plot and the way it handles its characters. Here, a group of astronauts on the International Space Station get their hands on an Alien life-form from Mars which 'surprisingly' doesn't like being experimented on in a Petri dish. It eventually breaks out, evolves limbs and starts a killing spree that will even leave mass murderers asking - 'What's the point of all this killing again?'

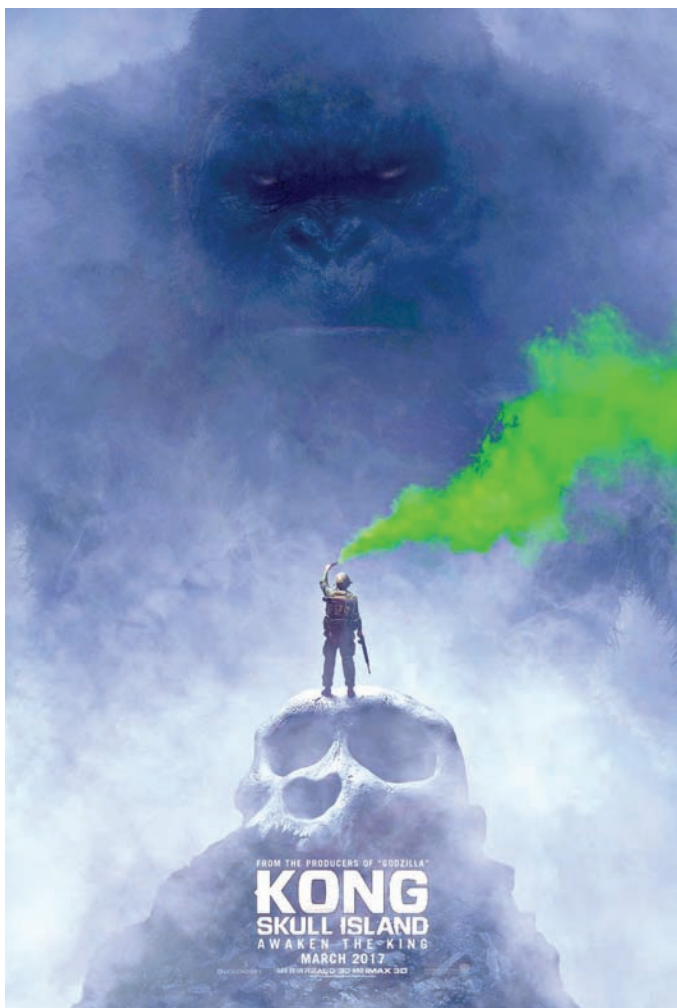
The plot also stretches the word 'original' screenplay as far as it could and it's a wonder Fox hasn't sued Sony for intellectual copyright yet. 'Life' follows so many similar beats of previous Sci-fi films primarily Ridley Scott's 'Alien', you won't be blamed for wondering if this is another attempted 'Alien' sequel/prequel by Fox. Luckily, the blatant Sony product placements dismiss all notions of that right from the start.

It starts off well with a nice little twist but after that, it refuses to do anything but the bare minimum. The creature design is stupidly lazy and at



times nonsensical. It adapts to any and all situations and shows better acting chops than the rest of the cast. I don't wish to spoil the look of the alien for you but to put it mildly - it looks like an octopus made of Play Doh. Once again, the actors are all distant and barely react to both the situation and the creature in any sort of realistic manner. But unlike 'Skull Island's large scenic open spaces, we are trapped in a claustrophobic space station that at times feels like it has a total of 4 rooms. The set budget on this one was definitely cut heavily.

I've gone for long enough about two films that frankly have very little to say. Both waste their talented cast and both under-utilize their special effects teams not in a visual but creative sense. Movie-making is a tremendously difficult ordeal and the artists behind these pre-summer blockbusters deserve either more time or more creative freedom. Mediocrity is often rewarded at the box-office and it's no different in these two cases. But after the titanic levels of disappointment from 2016's big-budgeted affairs, I've decided to be a little more harsh on Hollywood's attempts to appeal to every single demographic while appeasing none. Only a handful of films can match the brilliance of 'Jurassic Park' but hopefully instead of homages to the film, the industry starts borrowing a couple of lessons as well.





Friday Times

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2017

# Travel

## Seven sensational day trips from Naples







The Poseidon thermal park on Ischia

**One of the great attractions of a visit to Naples is the opportunity to explore the rich cultural and natural landscape of the surrounding Campania region. Seaside escapes, restless volcanoes, royal palaces and some of the most famous archaeological sites in the world; there is something for everyone, all within easy reach of the city.**

#### Trek up Mt Vesuvius and explore Pompeii

A morning hike up Mt Vesuvius, the volatile volcano that entombed the ancient Roman city of Pompeii in 79 AD, is classic Neapolitan adventure. The 30-minute ascent along a steep gravel path is suitable for most fitness levels. Peering inside the crater, you won't see any gurgling lava, but your efforts will be rewarded with stunning views across the Bay of Naples. Spend the rest of the day exploring the mammoth Unesco World Heritage Site of Pompeii. Don't miss the Forum, with its chilling Vesuvian view, the vibrantly restored Dionysus fresco at the Villa of the Mysteries, the co-ed Stabian baths, the 2nd-century BC House of the Faun and the ancient stone Amphitheatre.

**Lunch stop:** Just outside Pompeii's amphitheatre gate, StuzzicÙ by Lucius ([facebook.com/StuzzicU-by-Lucius](https://www.facebook.com/StuzzicU-by-Lucius)) serves freshly made Neapolitan dishes in a small, authentic setting.

#### Relax and rejuvenate on Ischia

A short boat ride from Naples is the bay's largest island - Ischia, a land of thermal waters. Saltwater and thermal pools, private beaches, massage, mud and beauty treatments and onsite restaurants... You'll find everything you need for a day of total relaxation at Castiglione, Negombo and Poseidon, Ischia's three thermal parks.

Alternatively, skip the beauty and wellness treatments in favour of a day at the Giardino Eden Beach Club ([giardinoedenischia.it](http://giardinoedenischia.it)). Reached by motor boat from Ischia Ponte, Giardino Eden's pools and views are postcard perfect. Reserve lunch at their Sea Restaurant upon arrival. The seafood is so fresh it's practical

wriggling off the plate. Leave enough time to visit Castello Aragonese and stroll along Ischia's main shopping street, Corso Vittoria Colonna, before catching the last ferry back to Naples.

#### Luxuriate in opulence at Reggia di Caserta

Spend the day in the lap of luxury at Reggia

di Caserta, Luigi Vanvitelli's sumptuous 1200-room palace built for a Bourbon king. A Unesco World Heritage Site, the palace's monumental staircase, Palatine chapel and lavishly appointed royal apartments, including a capacious collection of presepi (Neapolitan Christmas cribs), are open for visitors to enjoy. Outside, roam the palace's equally grandiose royal park. Follow

the 3km-long promenade with its water channels and fountains, by foot, bus, bike or horse-drawn carriage. At the top, visit the English Garden with its seductive Bath of Venus.

**Lunch stop:** Just a short walk from the palace, elegant Antica Hostaria Massa ([ristorantemassa.it](http://ristorantemassa.it)) serves elevated classics made from local produce.



The pretty resort of Sorrento, seen from the sea





Exploring Villa Poppaea at Oplontis

#### Spend a leisurely day in Sorrento

The sun-kissed town of Sorrento radiates old world charm. Meander the crisscrossing, cobble shopping alleys of the old town, flush with leather goods, ceramics, limoncello and the town's world-famous inlaid wood. Visit Chiesa di San Francesco with its charming cloister and breathe in the views from Villa Comunale park. An elevator here whisks you down to Marina Piccola and a smattering of beach clubs, or head to Piazza Vittoria and stroll down to Marina Grande's small fishing village. Don't forget to sample a spritz at Bar Fauno on Piazza Tasso before you leave.

**Lunch stop:** For Neapolitan pizza and southern Italian dishes served al fresco, head for La Basilica ([ristorantelabasilica.com](http://ristorantelabasilica.com)).

#### Ramble through ancient seaside villas

Wander three luxurious leisure villas built by wealthy Romans along the Campanian coastline. Start in the town of Torre Annunziata at Pompeii's one-time seaside suburb Oplontis. Villa Poppaea here is said to have belonged to Nero's wife, Sabina Poppaea. More than 20 rooms are open to wander; outside is a 61-metre-long swimming pool. Next, head south to Castellammare di Stabia and the cliffside Stabian Villas: Villa Arianna, with its rich frescoes, and the 11,000-square-meter Villa San Marco.

**Lunch stop:** Stop off at Piazzetta Milu ([piazzettamilu.it](http://piazzettamilu.it)) in Castellammare di Stabia, which has Michelin-starred cuisine, stylish decor and an eclectic wine list.

#### Surrender to the siren call of Capri

Capri is one of the most popular day trips from Naples. If you can suffer the hordes (or visit off-season), Naples' prettiest island will enchant. Float on the luminous azure waters of the uber-touristed Grotta Azzurra (the lines are worth it), then glide to the island's summit on

the Monte Solaro chairlift, where sublime panoramic views await. Visit Axel Munthe's eclectic Villa San Michele for more enchanting vistas or escape to Augustus' Gardens with views of the Faraglioni rocks.

**Lunch stop:** Ristorante da Gelsomina ([dagelsomina.com](http://dagelsomina.com)) in Anacapri serves homemade specialties like Ravioli Capresi on their panoramic terrace.

#### Venture to a volcanic land where few visitors go

Just west of Naples is the city's best-kept secret, the volcanic land known as the Campi Flegrei (meaning 'burning fields'). See bubbling mud pits and steaming fumaroles at the Solfatara Crater and wander the remarkably preserved underground passageways of the Flavian Amphitheatre. Visit Greek ruins at Cuma

or wander the remains of a Roman seaside resort at Baia. Start your day early enough and you might even be able to fit in snorkeling, a dive or a glass bottom boat ride at Baia's underwater archaeological area.

**Lunch stop:** Try the traditional, seafood-rich menu at lakefront Il Casale Bellavista ([ilcasalebellaavista.it](http://ilcasalebellaavista.it)) at Lago Averno.

— ([www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com))



The view towards Faraglioni rocks, Capri





Aries (March 21-April 19)

Traveling is in the forecast for you soon and that would make it the perfect opportunity to try out that foreign language you have been learning. Leading a tour or learning all about a business where you would need to speak a foreign language is also indicated this birth year. There may be a financial advancement with this energy. You are intent on doing a good job and anyone with your insight will be successful. You may find your mind a bit scattered and in need of focus throughout the day; however, with a written list to guide you, there will be no trouble with your work or in executing your goals. Sprinkled throughout the day are lovely chatty moments with friends, customers and family members, wishing you success.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

This is a good time to organize your time and your budget. Family members may not be as understanding if you say no to requests for funds after always having said yes. A fair warning that you are working out a new budget might be good information to share. You may be spending a great deal of time and effort to improve finances, principally through physical or manual activity. Over the short run, this is a good thing . . . Soon you will have an excellent budget plan that you and others in your family will adopt. Work is progressing well and the drive or ride home from work may bring about some new ideas for you to ponder. Time at home will be at a premium, so enjoy your family or friends. This evening is pleasant.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Long-term banking deals, real estate and business investments all look good now. Advice is easy to come by-you just have to pick and choose. Refinement and relationships-harmony and beauty are all keys to emotional satisfaction. Work seems to move along at a fair rate of speed and a friend or fellow co-worker uses your problem-solving ideas to solve a few problems of his or her own. You like to see people happy and you may try to help in keeping a balance today. You could find that you are appreciated or valued for your ability to get things done. This is a very lucky day for making plans or decisions and finding your way through just about any problem you may discover. You will find it beneficial to turn on your charm this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your everyday work transactions may seem more gratifying now. You like what you do and people like you. A sense of being at-one-with-the-universe may find you with a smile on your face most days. Helping others seems to be the trend for this day. This afternoon you may find yourself serving to guide someone younger than you in matters of importance. Teamwork is also accented and jealousy could interfere with the team choice. Any conflicts of this day will move past you as an artistic project consumes your attention. Setting up or decorating for a social or a party in your home keeps you busy this afternoon. Before the party starts or as soon as your job is completed, hold your loved one's hand and go for a quiet short walk to relax and reenergize.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may find yourself working solo today but this will not last for long. You love sharing your time, whether it is in work or play with others. You may find yourself being inspired by someone's speech. Contests, prizes, whatever the incentive, the basic push is to get people to achieve and the idea is compelling, whether in work, competition or in-the-home projects. You may think you have found a way to gain incentive for yourself and to help others gain incentive. You are successful at whatever you set out to do but the incentive games just make hard or tedious work tolerable. A friend or loved one may drop by this evening-you could enjoy some in-depth conversations. Close personal ties to other people are a focal point for you.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You could be most persuasive with others and if retail is your profession, you may receive rewards for your work very soon. This day is a natural for self-expression and accommodates your particular ideas. If you are called upon to lecture, you will need cue cards as the crowd may want to distract you with questions. You emit the essence of a creative and original individual. There is acute awareness without the sharp edges of someone that is overconfident. Adding a little humor to your lecture or speech might be a pleasant surprise to those who only see you when you are expressing your views on some product. You have the potential for great success. Today you work on balancing your time. Your goals in this regard will be most helpful.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Remodeling or redecorating could be the fun part of your day. Whether you are taking time away from work or this is your work, your creative, inventive mind can make this project innovative as well as sensible. You are not stuck with one idea and have an open mind to the future needs of the people for whom you may be remodeling or redecorating. You could be traveling for your career this afternoon or at least making plans in that direction. Create some wonderful smells in your home later today for a cozy homecoming to others in your family or among your friends. If you are not cooking, a little oil of ginger could be placed on a cloth over the heating or air vent. This will provide an attitude of fun. Other good smells may come to mind for you to create.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Your program today takes you into pleasant territories. Although your home life may be on your mind much of the day, it does not stop you from your work. You could be feeling a little more enthusiastic than usual because of some pending project in the workplace. You find yourself ambitious most of the workday. Weather permitting, you may want to walk for exercise during your noon break. Perhaps a co-worker friend will join you. You could have some new ideas on how to increase your finances. Be open to others this evening. Help the young ones in your family learn how to solve problems without becoming too emotional. You may find that your main squeeze is becoming more immersed in some charity work-consider joining him or her.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You are gaining in your professional reputation. Now is a good time for career growth. If you want to see progress, take advantage of the energies that are present today. Later today, consider identifying and marking valuables for safekeeping. This brings a feeling of ownership and control. This will also give you an idea of how you have been spending your money. Soon, the energies progress toward the need to spend money and you will make wise choices. You are entering a phase of emotional directness. An emotional beginning, a fresh start, perhaps the establishment of a new habit is present at this time. Make sure they are good new habits because they will set the tone for quite some time to come! Your words encourage others.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Today has much to do about money-how you feel about it and how you protect and use it. Taxes, investments and other financial ties or obligations grab your attention today. Put your mind to work and take care of any details that you may have-mental discipline should come easily. Problems that have previously been confounding should find an easy explanation. Your attitude to life and the way you live it is in the process of changing for the better. You are becoming more relaxed and less frustrated by outside circumstances. Sympathy and understanding are emotional qualities that take on greater importance. It's wisdom and not knowledge that counts. You may enjoy a good movie or book this evening.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Today is a great time to work with others in any sort of team effort. You are all decidedly independent of each other and have good progressive thoughts of your own. However, when working for one end result, the group you find yourself in today will make great strides in whatever is assigned. There has often been talk of individuals trading work assignments just so there is knowledge of the expectations and accomplishments that are experienced. This is also a very good idea when one person of the group sits in for another person in the group on vacation. Later today, take a little time to enjoy the ducks at the park or take a leisure walk through a garden. A friend from the past has found you and is looking forward to a visit.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You are feeling rested and ready to conquer the world. Progress is the name of the game in the workplace. You take pride in your work and it shows. There may be some recognition surrounding your work. Be quick to compliment your co-workers when you see things worthy of compliments. You will be pleased with the long-term effects. Continue to tie up unfinished work this afternoon. You can improve your relationships with co-workers by taking at least one day out of the week to communicate over the noon meal. Your generosity is commendable. Today, you teach others how to learn some technique to help solve technical problems. You may also help a charity or someone you know with a little money this evening.

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
Antiga	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	Nigar	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





00:20 Street Outlaws  
01:10 What On Earth?  
02:00 Treasure Quest: Snake Island  
02:50 The Wheel: Survival Games  
03:40 Fast N' Loud  
04:30 Storage Hunters  
05:00 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 Made By Destruction  
06:25 Made By Destruction  
06:50 You Have Been Warned  
07:40 Gold Rush  
08:30 What On Earth?  
09:20 Treasure Quest: Snake Island  
10:10 The Wheel: Survival Games  
11:00 Running Wild With Bear Grylls  
11:50 The Dark Side Of The Sun  
12:40 Running Wild With Bear Grylls  
13:30 Wheeler Dealers  
14:20 Diesel Brothers  
15:10 Harley And The Davidsons  
16:00 Alaskan Bush People  
16:50 Alaskan Bush People  
17:40 Alaskan Bush People  
18:30 Alaskan Bush People  
19:20 Alaskan Bush People  
21:00 Wheeler Dealers  
21:50 Diesel Brothers  
22:40 Harley And The Davidsons  
23:30 The Dark Side Of The Sun



00:00 The First 48  
01:00 The Jail: 60 Days In  
02:00 Homicide Hunter  
03:00 It Takes A Killer  
03:30 It Takes A Killer  
04:00 The First 48  
05:00 The Jail: 60 Days In  
06:00 My Crazy Ex  
07:00 My Crazy Ex  
08:00 Evil Up Close  
09:00 I Killed My BFF  
10:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
11:00 The First 48  
12:00 The First 48  
13:00 My Crazy Ex  
14:00 Evil Up Close  
15:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
16:00 I Killed My BFF  
17:00 The First 48  
18:00 The First 48  
19:00 Evil Up Close  
20:00 Britain's Biggest Heists  
21:00 Crimes That Shook Australia



00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
01:20 Strip The Cosmos  
02:10 NASA's Unexplained Files  
03:00 What Happened Next?  
03:25 What Happened Next?  
03:50 Ultimate Survival  
04:40 How It's Made  
05:05 How It's Made  
05:30 Dirty Jobs  
06:20 Mythbusters  
07:00 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild  
07:25 Awesome Adventures  
07:50 Bondi Vet  
08:40 How It's Made  
09:05 How It's Made  
09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
10:20 Mythbusters  
11:10 Bondi Vet  
12:00 Ultimate Survival  
12:50 How It's Made  
13:15 How It's Made  
13:40 Dirty Jobs  
14:30 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild  
14:55 Awesome Adventures  
15:20 Mythbusters  
16:10 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
17:00 Battle Bots  
17:50 Deception With Keith Barry  
18:40 Destroyed In Seconds  
19:05 Destroyed In Seconds  
19:30 How It's Made  
19:55 How It's Made  
20:20 Mythbusters  
21:10 Battle Bots  
22:00 Deception With Keith Barry  
22:50 Destroyed In Seconds  
23:15 Destroyed In Seconds



00:00 Binny And The Ghost  
00:25 Hank Zipzer  
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  
02:55 Hank Zipzer  
03:15 The Hive  
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
04:10 Hank Zipzer  
04:35 Binny And The Ghost  
05:25 Hank Zipzer  
05:45 The Hive  
05:50 The 7D  
06:00 Jessie  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 The Zhuzhus  
07:20 Elena Of Avalor  
07:45 Bizaardvark  
08:35 Stuck In The Middle  
09:25 Disney The Lodge  
09:50 Bunk'd  
10:15 Bunk'd  
10:40 Invisible Sister  
12:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
12:20 Jessie  
13:10 Austin & Ally  
14:00 Liv And Maddie  
14:50 Sunny Bunnies  
14:55 The Zhuzhus  
15:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
15:45 Elena Of Avalor

16:10 Liv And Maddie  
16:35 Descendants Wicked World  
16:40 High School Musical  
18:15 Welcome To The Ronks  
18:25 Alex & Co.  
18:50 Jessie  
19:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
19:20 Backstage  
19:45 Austin & Ally  
20:10 The Next Step  
20:35 Cracked  
20:40 Best Friends Whenever  
21:05 Girl Meets World  
21:40 That's So Raven  
21:55 Star Darlings  
22:00 Good Luck Charlie



00:00 Henry Hugglemonster  
00:15 Calimero  
00:30 Art Attack  
00:55 Jessie  
01:05 Loopdidoo  
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster  
01:35 Calimero  
01:50 Zou  
02:05 Art Attack  
02:30 The Hive  
02:40 Loopdidoo  
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:10 Art Attack  
03:35 Loopdidoo  
03:50 Calimero  
04:05 Art Attack  
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:45 Zou  
05:00 Art Attack  
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:45 Loopdidoo  
06:00 Zou

06:15 Calimero  
06:30 Loopdidoo  
06:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
07:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh  
07:25 Sofia The First  
07:50 The Lion Guard  
08:15 PJ Masks  
08:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
09:05 Goldie & Bear  
09:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons  
09:35 The Lion Guard  
10:00 Sofia The First  
10:30 Doc McStuffins  
10:55 Miles From Tomorrow  
11:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh  
11:50 Loopdidoo  
12:05 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
12:30 Gummi Bears  
12:55 Zou  
13:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
13:35 PJ Masks  
14:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh  
14:30 The Lion Guard  
15:00 Sofia The First  
15:30 Doc McStuffins  
15:55 Goldie & Bear  
16:20 Miles From Tomorrow  
16:50 PJ Masks  
17:15 Sofia The First  
17:40 Doc McStuffins  
18:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
18:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
19:00 The Lion Guard  
19:50 Doc McStuffins  
20:05 Goldie & Bear  
20:35 My Friends Tigger & Pooh  
21:00 Gummi Bears  
21:30 Miles From Tomorrow  
22:00 Doc McStuffins  
22:55 PJ Masks  
23:20 Henry Hugglemonster



06:00 Guardians Of The Galaxy  
06:25 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6  
06:50 Atomic Puppet  
07:15 Gravity Falls  
07:40 Supa Strikas  
08:05 Two More Eggs  
08:10 K.C. Undercover  
08:35 Milo Murphy's Law  
09:00 Walk The Prank  
09:25 Right Now Kapow  
09:50 Lab Rats  
10:15 Two More Eggs  
10:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
10:45 Mighty Med  
11:10 K.C. Undercover  
11:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
12:00 Zapped  
13:30 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
13:45 K.C. Undercover  
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
14:15 K.C. Undercover  
14:40 Lab Rats  
15:05 Lab Rats  
15:30 Supa Strikas  
15:55 Supa Strikas  
16:25 K.C. Undercover  
16:50 Walk The Prank  
17:15 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
17:40 Milo Murphy's Law  
18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
18:10 Gravity Falls  
18:35 Mighty Med  
19:00 Atomic Puppet  
19:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
19:55 K.C. Undercover  
20:20 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
20:45 Mighty Med  
21:10 Walk The Prank  
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
21:45 Marvel's Avengers Assemble  
22:10 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6  
22:35 Boyster



00:05 So Cosmo  
01:50 E! News  
02:50 Celebrity Style Story  
03:20 Celebrity Style Story  
03:50 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
06:55 E! News  
07:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
08:10 E! News  
09:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
12:00 E! News  
12:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
15:00 E! News  
15:15 So Cosmo  
17:05 Botched  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Mariah's World  
22:00 Mariah's World  
23:00 E! News



00:10 The Chase  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:30 Guess This House  
03:25 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans  
04:20 5 Star Family Reunion  
05:15 Come Date With Me Australia  
06:10 The Chase  
07:05 Guess This House  
08:00 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans  
09:00 5 Star Family Reunion  
10:00 Come Date With Me Australia  
10:55 The Chase  
11:50 Guess This House  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:45 Coronation Street  
14:15 The Chase

15:10 Guess This House  
16:00 It's Not Rocket Science  
16:55 Surprise Surprise  
17:50 Come Date With Me Australia  
18:45 Emmerdale  
19:45 Coronation Street  
20:10 Guess This House  
21:00 It's Not Rocket Science  
21:55 Surprise Surprise



00:15 Cool Spaces  
01:05 What's For Sale?  
01:30 Dog Whisperer  
02:20 World's Best Beaches  
03:10 Mega Food  
04:00 Street Food Around The World  
04:25 Street Food Around The World  
04:50 Lucky Chow  
05:20 The Wine Show  
06:15 One Man & His Campervan  
06:40 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia  
07:10 What's For Sale?  
07:35 Dog Whisperer  
08:30 World's Best Beaches  
09:25 Mega Food  
10:20 Street Food Around The World  
10:50 Street Food Around The World  
11:15 Lucky Chow  
11:45 One Man & His Campervan  
12:10 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia  
12:40 What's For Sale?  
13:05 Dog Whisperer  
14:00 World's Best Beaches  
14:55 The Game Chef  
15:25 Street Food Around The World  
15:50 Bondi Rescue Outback Adventure  
16:45 Lucky Chow  
17:15 Hotel India  
18:10 Taste Of The Tropic: Taiwan  
19:05 The Game Chef  
19:30 Street Food Around The World  
20:00 Bondi Rescue Outback Adventure  
20:55 Lucky Chow  
21:20 Hotel India  
22:10 Taste Of The Tropic: Taiwan  
23:00 What's For Sale?  
23:25 Dog Whisperer



00:20 Tiger's Revenge  
01:10 Built For The Kill  
02:00 Crocs Of Katuma  
02:50 Ultimate Animal Countdown  
03:45 Asia's Deadliest Snakes  
04:40 Man V. Monster  
05:35 Crocs Of Katuma  
06:30 Ultimate Animal Countdown  
07:25 Asia's Deadliest Snakes  
08:20 Man V. Monster  
09:15 Snakes In The City  
10:10 Nature's Greatest Talents  
11:05 World's Deadliest Killers  
12:00 Alien Crab  
12:55 Turf War- Lions And Hippos  
13:50 Animals Gone Wild  
Compilations  
14:45 Man V. Monster  
15:40 The Lady With 700 Cats  
16:35 Snakes In The City  
17:30 Wild Indochina  
18:25 World's Deadliest Killers  
19:20 Man V. Monster  
20:10 The Lady With 700 Cats  
21:00 Snakes In The City



00:10 Hitler's Death Army - Das Reich  
02:00 Locked Up Abroad  
03:00 Science Of Stupid  
03:30 Science Of Stupid  
04:00 Hitler's Death Army - Das Reich  
05:00 Street Genius  
05:30 Street Genius  
06:00 Genius By Stephen Hawking  
07:00 Crimes Against Nature  
08:00 Years Of Living Dangerously  
09:00 Street Genius



CASINO ROYALE ON OSN MOVIES HD



09:30 Street Genius  
10:00 Locked Up Abroad  
11:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware  
12:00 China's Ghost Army  
13:00 Parched  
14:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia  
14:30 Danger Decoded  
15:00 Scam City  
16:00 Locked Up Abroad  
17:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware  
18:00 Underworld, Inc.



00:02 Max & Ruby  
00:25 Wanda And The Alien  
00:35 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
00:45 The Day Henry Met  
00:50 The Day Henry Met  
00:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
01:18 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
01:41 Zack & Quack  
02:03 Team Umizoomi  
02:25 Olive The Ostrich  
02:30 Olive The Ostrich  
02:35 Paw Patrol  
02:58 Little Changers  
03:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
03:22 Dora The Explorer  
03:44 Max & Ruby  
04:08 Bubble Guppies  
04:31 Shimmer And Shine  
04:42 Shimmer And Shine  
04:54 Dora And Friends: Into The City!  
05:17 Zack & Quack  
05:27 The Day Henry Met  
05:32 The Day Henry Met  
05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
06:00 Rusty Rivets  
06:13 Paw Patrol  
06:37 Dora The Explorer  
07:00 Zack & Quack  
07:21 Dora And Friends  
07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
08:07 Paw Patrol  
08:30 Shimmer And Shine  
08:40 Shimmer And Shine  
08:53 Dora The Explorer  
09:15 The Day Henry Met  
09:22 Paw Patrol  
09:45 Rusty Rivets  
09:57 Bubble Guppies  
10:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies  
10:40 Zack & Quack  
10:52 Team Umizoomi  
11:15 Team Umizoomi  
11:38 Louie  
11:45 Louie  
11:53 Olive The Ostrich  
11:58 Olive The Ostrich  
12:03 Max & Ruby  
12:26 Wanda And The Alien  
12:35 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
12:46 The Day Henry Met  
12:51 The Day Henry Met  
12:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
13:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
13:41 Zack & Quack  
14:03 Team Umizoomi  
14:25 Olive The Ostrich  
14:30 Olive The Ostrich  
14:35 Paw Patrol  
14:58 Little Changers  
15:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
15:22 Dora The Explorer  
15:44 Max & Ruby  
16:07 Bubble Guppies  
16:31 Shimmer And Shine  
16:43 Shimmer And Shine  
16:54 Dora And Friends: Into The City!  
17:17 Zack & Quack  
17:29 The Day Henry Met  
17:34 The Day Henry Met  
17:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
18:00 Rusty Rivets  
18:13 Paw Patrol  
18:37 Dora The Explorer  
19:00 Zack & Quack  
19:21 Dora And Friends: Into The City!  
19:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
20:07 Paw Patrol  
20:30 Shimmer And Shine



KINGSGLAIVE: FINAL FANTASY XV ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD



ACTION

00:15 Universal Soldier: The Return  
02:00 The Gauntlet  
04:00 Kingsglave: Final Fantasy XV  
06:00 Seventh Son  
08:00 Tomorrow Never Dies  
10:00 Spooks: The Greater Good  
12:00 Six Days Seven Nights  
14:00 Seventh Son  
16:00 Ladder 49  
18:15 Pompeii  
20:15 Lucy  
22:00 Dead Drop



FAMILY

01:30 Pirates Of The Caribbean: Curse Of The Black Pearl  
04:00 The Last Flight Of Noah's Ark  
05:45 Herbie Fully Loaded  
07:45 Home On The Range  
09:00 Ratatouille  
11:00 Herbie Fully Loaded  
13:00 Up  
15:00 The Tigger Movie  
17:00 Hannah Montana Movie  
19:00 Eight Below  
21:00 White Fang  
23:00 The Tigger Movie



00:15 Indecent Proposal  
02:15 Casino Royale  
04:45 The Good Lie  
06:45 Jackie & Ryan  
08:30 Twister  
10:45 Casino Royale  
13:15 War Horse  
15:45 Invictus  
18:00 Quantum Of Solace  
20:00 Talladega Nights  
22:00 Ouija  
23:45 Down And Out In Beverly Hills



COMEDY

00:00 A Million Ways To Die In The West  
02:00 Norbit  
04:00 Perfect Match  
06:00 National Security  
08:00 Norbit  
10:00 Perfect Match  
12:00 National Security  
14:00 Barbershop 2: Back In Business  
16:00 You Again  
18:00 Ride



FESTIVAL

00:00 Cobain  
02:15 2001: A Space Odyssey  
04:45 I Believe In Miracles  
06:45 The Wave  
08:30 We Are Many  
10:30 2001: A Space Odyssey  
13:00 Wuthering Heights  
15:00 Seabiscuit  
17:30 The Help  
20:00 Never Let Me Go  
22:00 Venus In Fur



KIDS

01:00 Bee Movie  
02:45 Miffy The Movie  
04:15 Harriet The Spy  
06:00 Albert  
07:30 Worms  
09:00 Mune  
10:45 Bee Movie  
12:30 Miffy The Movie  
14:00 Rugrats Go Wild  
16:00 Mune  
18:00 Sawva  
20:00 When Marnie Was There  
21:45 Rugrats Go Wild  
23:15 Worms



00:30 How Do They Do It?  
00:55 Food Factory  
01:20 Food Factory USA  
01:45 Food Factory USA  
02:10 Eco-Tech  
03:00 Prototype This  
03:48 Mythbusters  
04:36 How Do They Do It?  
05:00 Food Factory  
05:24 Food Factory USA  
05:49 Food Factory USA  
06:12 Eco-Tech  
07:00 How Do They Do It?  
07:26 Prototype This  
08:14 Mythbusters  
09:02 Ways To Save The Planet  
09:50 How Do They Do It?  
10:14 Food Factory  
10:38 Strip The Cosmos  
11:26 Prototype This  
12:14 Mythbusters  
13:02 How Do They Do It?

13:26 Food Factory  
13:50 Ways To Save The Planet  
14:38 Prototype This  
15:26 Food Factory USA  
15:51 Food Factory USA  
16:14 Mythbusters  
17:02 Eco-Tech  
17:50 Prototype This  
18:40 Mythbusters  
19:30 Mythbusters  
20:20 How Do They Do It?  
20:45 Food Factory  
21:10 Eco-Tech  
22:00 Mythbusters  
22:50 Prototype This  
23:40 Mythbusters



00:20 Iyanla: Fix My Life  
01:10 90 Days To Wed  
02:00 My Big Fat Fabulous Life  
02:25 Say Yes To The Dress: Bridesmaids  
02:50 Love At First Swipe  
03:15 Cake Boss  
03:35 Iyanla: Fix My Life  
04:20 Little People, Big World  
04:45 Little People, Big World  
05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras  
06:00 Little People, Big World  
06:25 Little People, Big World  
06:50 Little People, Big World  
07:15 Little People, Big World  
07:40 Little People, Big World  
08:05 Little People, Big World  
08:30 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints  
09:20 Sister Wives  
10:10 Say Yes To The Dress: The Big Day  
11:00 Say Yes To The Dress: The Big Day  
11:50 Love At First Swipe  
12:15 Love At First Swipe  
12:40 Love At First Swipe  
13:05 Love At First Swipe  
13:30 Love At First Swipe  
13:55 Oprah: Where Are They Now?  
14:45 Iyanla: Fix My Life  
15:35 Cake Boss  
16:00 Cake Boss  
16:25 Cake Boss  
16:50 Cake Boss  
17:15 Cake Boss  
17:40 Save My Style  
18:05 Save My Style  
18:30 Little Miss Atlanta  
19:20 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints  
20:10 Sister Wives  
21:00 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints  
21:50 Sister Wives  
22:40 Too Ugly For Love?  
23:30 Return To Amish



00:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.  
01:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
02:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
02:50 Ancient Aliens  
03:40 Million Dollar Genius  
04:30 The Universe  
05:20 America: The Story Of The U.S.  
06:10 The Universe  
07:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
08:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
09:00 Ancient Aliens  
10:00 Million Dollar Genius  
11:00 The Universe  
12:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.  
13:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
14:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
15:00 Ancient Aliens

16:00 Million Dollar Genius  
17:00 The Universe  
18:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.



00:20 Lost Worlds  
01:10 Sean Bean On Waterloo  
02:00 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...  
02:50 Storage Wars  
03:15 American Pickers  
04:05 Pawn Stars  
05:00 Mountain Men  
06:00 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us  
06:50 Time Team  
07:40 Battle 360  
08:30 Ax Men  
09:20 Ice Road Truckers  
10:10 Aussie Pickers  
11:00 American Pickers  
11:50 Counting Cars  
12:15 Car Hunters  
12:40 Pawn Stars  
13:30 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American Hustle  
16:50 Football: A Brief History By Alfie Allen  
18:30 Shipping Wars  
19:20 Leepu And Pitbull  
20:10 Ice Road Truckers  
21:00 American Pickers



00:00 Tia Mowry At Home  
01:00 Dinner At Tiffani's  
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
03:00 Man Fire Food  
04:00 Chopped  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Barefoot Contessa  
07:00 The Kitchen  
08:00 The Pioneer Woman  
10:00 Siba's Table  
11:00 The Kitchen  
12:00 The Pioneer Woman  
13:00 Siba's Table  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
15:00 Chopped  
16:00 The Kitchen  
17:00 The Pioneer Woman  
18:00 Chopped  
19:00 Iron Chef America  
20:00 Ching's Amazing Asia  
21:00 Reza, Spice Prince Of Thailand  
21:30 Reza, Spice Prince Of Thailand

I BELIEVE IN MIRACLES



I BELIEVE IN MIRACLES ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL HD



Word Search Puzzles

Thanksgiving (U.S.)

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 26 letters spell a popular Thanksgiving Day event.

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

- ANNUAL  
AUTUMN  
CELEBRATION  
CORN  
CRANBERRY  
FAMILY  
FEAST  
FESTIVAL  
FOOD  
FOOTBALL  
FRIENDS  
GATHERING
- GRAVY  
HARVEST  
HOLIDAY  
LONG WEEKEND  
MASHED POTATOES  
MEAL  
NOVEMBER  
PARADE  
PILGRIMS  
PLYMOUTH  
PUMPKIN PIE
- RELATIVES  
REUNION  
SQUASH  
STUFFING  
SWEET POTATO  
THURSDAY  
TRADITION  
TRAVEL  
TURKEY  
WAMPANOAG  
YAMS

Yesterday's Solution

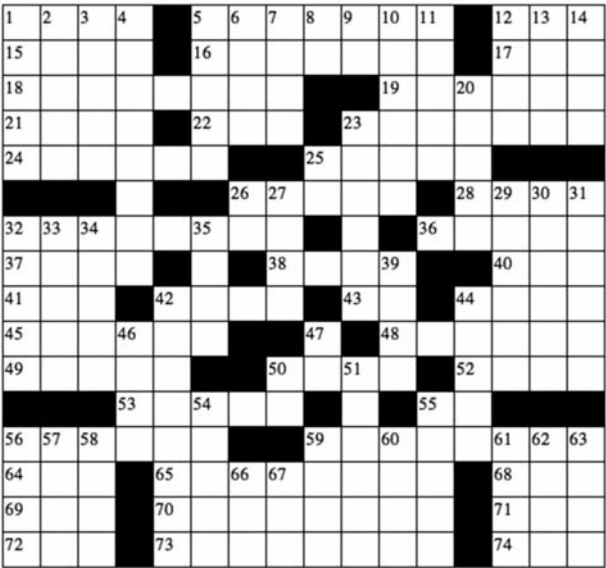
Surgery

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

- ANESTHESIA  
APPENDIX  
BIOPSY  
BLOOD  
BONE SAW  
BRAIN  
CALIPER  
CANNULA  
CATHETER  
CLAMPS  
COLON  
DILATORS  
DISTRATORS
- DRILL  
ENDOSCOPE  
FORCEPS  
GRASPERS  
HEART  
HEMOSTAT  
HOOK  
INCISION  
INJECTION  
IRRIGATION  
KIDNEY  
LANCET  
LIVER
- LUNGS  
MALLET  
NEEDLE  
OCCLUDERS  
PROBE  
RETRACTORS  
RIBS  
RULER  
SCALPEL  
SCISSORS  
SKIN  
SPECULA  
SPLEEN
- SPLINT  
SPONGE  
STAPLER  
SUCTION  
SURGEON  
SUTURE  
SYRINGE  
TISSUE  
TRACHEOTOME  
TRANSPLANT  
TREPINE  
TROCAR  
TWEEZERS

The hidden message is: THE LARGEST ORGAN OF THE HUMAN BODY IS SKIN

CROSSWORD 1571



ACROSS

1. A Loloish language.  
5. Telephone set with the mouthpiece and earpiece mounted on a single handle.  
12. An index of the cost of all goods and services to a typical consumer.  
15. A genus of European owls.  
16. Put into a proper or systematic order.  
17. A resource.  
18. A singer of folk songs.  
19. Render capable or able for some task.  
21. A less than average tide occurring at the first and third quarters of the moon.  
22. A light touch or stroke.  
24. With playful slyness or roguishness.  
28. A primeval personification of air and breath.  
32. Informing by words.  
36. Any North American shrubby perennial herb of the genus Heliopsis having large yellow daisylike flowers.  
37. (Greek mythology) Daughter of Zeus and Demeter.  
38. Of or relating to or characteristic of the Republic of Chad or its people or language.  
40. Water that has condensed on a cool surface overnight from water vapor in the air.  
41. American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).  
43. A state in midwestern United States.  
45. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.  
48. 1 species.  
49. A wall hanging of heavy handwoven fabric with pictorial designs.  
52. A jaunty rhythm in music.  
53. A form of Japanese poetry.  
56. Full of submerged reefs or sandbanks or shoals.  
64. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.  
65. (Brit) One who sells goods on the installment plan.  
68. A negative.  
69. A nucleic acid consisting of large molecules shaped like a double helix.  
70. A mountain peak in the Andes in Bolivia (21,201 feet high).

DOWN

1. A genus of Lamnidae.  
2. Flexible twig of a willow tree.  
3. Ions are accelerated along a linear path by voltage differences on electrodes along the path.  
4. Used especially of lower plants.  
5. Having rugged physical strength.  
6. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).  
7. Agency of the United States government charged with mediating disputes between management and labor.  
8. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.  
9. A silvery malleable metallic element that resists corrosion.  
10. Small genus of dioecious tropical aquatic plants.  
11. A narrow headband or strip of ribbon worn as a headband.  
12. 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.  
13. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.  
14. In the Roman calendar.  
20. Large antelope with lightly spiraled horns of desert regions of North Africa.  
23. A Japanese cheer of enthusiasm or triumph.  
25. The 13th letter of the Greek alphabet.  
26. The syllable naming the fourth (subdominant) note of the diatonic scale in solmization.  
27. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.  
29. Aristocratic Italian family of powerful merchants and bankers who ruled Florence in the 15th century.  
30. A strikingly beautiful woman.  
31. In accord with the most fashionable ideas or style.  
33. Having a pair of equal and opposite charges.  
34. Earlier in time.  
35. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.  
39. Small European freshwater fish with a slender bluish-green body.  
42. Of or relating to or containing basalt.  
44. A boneless steak cut from the tenderloin of beef.  
46. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.  
47. A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.  
50. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.  
51. Elected Vice President in Roosevelt's 4th term.  
54. City in Sudan.  
55. An irrational but irresistible motive for a belief or action.  
57. The (prehensile) extremity of the superior limb.  
58. Toward the mouth or oral region.  
59. (classical architecture) A molding for a cornice.  
60. (the feminine of raja) A Hindu princess or the wife of a raja.  
61. A ruler of the Inca Empire (or a member of his family).  
62. Characteristic of false pride.  
63. An unfledged or nestling hawk.  
66. An advanced law degree.  
67. Fleshy folds of tissue as those surrounding the mouth.

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

Yesterday's Solution

B	P	S		A	N	A	L	E	C	T	S		B	B	L		
E	E	L		S	Y	N	E	C	H	I	A		I	R	E		
A	B	A		P	L	E	U	R	A		N	O	R	I	A		
N	A	V	A	H	O			U	N	B	A	R	R	E	D		
			M	A	N	D	E		C	L	A	M					
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# DESERT IN CHILE COMBED FOR CLUES TO LIFE ON MARS

DESERT IN NORTHERN CHILE IS HOT, DUSTY AND EXTREMELY DRY

**ESTACION YUNGAY, Chile:** Chile's Atacama desert may seem to contain little besides red-grey rocks and sand-but scientists are busy searching here for clues to life in a place it much resembles: Mars. This desert in northern Chile, like the red planet, is hot, dusty and extremely dry.

Yet life exists here: tiny algae and bacteria that have evolved to survive in the parched earth on little more than sunlight. If they have done it here, then why not on Mars, 225 million kilometers (140 million miles) away? "If life existed there, it would probably be very similar to life here," says biologist Cristina Dorador from the nearby University of Antofagasta. "We do not know if that is the case, because we do not have any evidence," she adds, as she breaks up bits of rock salt in an area of the desert known as Yungay Station.

"But if we manage to understand how these micro-organisms live, how they obtain moisture and how they adapt to these conditions, then probably very soon, when we have more information about life forms on other planets, we will have something here on Earth to compare it with."

## Scratching the surface

Dorador will analyze the fragments in a mobile laboratory which she drives around the desert in search of tiny life forms. She is one of dozens of scientists from various countries working on different Mars-related projects in the Atacama desert.



Chilean biologists Cristina Dorador and Jonathan Garcia search for rock samples to analyze them in Yungay, Atacama desert, some 80 kilometers south of Antofagasta, Chile. — AFP

Separately, US space agency NASA in February carried out its second phase of practice-drilling for samples in the earth of Atacama with specially designed rovers. "If life exists or ever existed on Mars, the planet's surface dryness and extensive (sunlight) radiation exposure would likely drive it underground," NASA said in a report. "That makes locations like the Atacama good places to practice looking for life on Mars." If fossil life on Mars resembled Atacama, it could shed light on our own origins. "Studying Mars may help understand how life started on Earth," says Christian

Nitschelm, a French astronomer at Antofagasta University.

## Curiosity

Space agencies and science fiction writers alike have long been fascinated by Mars-one of the closest planets to Earth. The Soviet Union and United States started aiming probes there in the 1960s. For the past four years NASA has had a robot, Curiosity, on the planet searching for life. It has sent back photographs of the planet's surface whose grey rocks look much like those of Atacama. — AFP

## GLOBAL TOBACCO DEATH TOLL STILL CLIMBING

**PARIS:** The percentage of men and women who use tobacco every day has dropped in most nations since 1990, but the total number of smokers and tobacco-related deaths has increased, a consortium of researchers reported yesterday. Mortality could rise even further as major tobacco companies aggressively target new markets, especially in the developing world, they warned in a major study, published in the medical journal *The Lancet*.

One in four men and one in 20 women smoked daily in 2015, according to the Global Burden of Diseases report, compiled by hundreds of scientists.

That was a significant drop compared to 25 years earlier, when one in three men, and one in 12 women, lit up every day. But the number of deaths attributed to tobacco-which topped 6.4 million in 2015 — went up by 4.7 percent over the same period due to the expanding world population, the report found. "Sadly, all those deaths were preventable," senior author Emmanuela Gakidou from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington told AFP.

"The deaths of all the people who will die next year and the year after that, and so on, are also preventable." More than 930 million people smoked daily in 2015, compared to 870 million in 1990 — a seven percent jump.

Smoking causes one in ten deaths worldwide, half of them in just four countries: China, India, the United States and Russia. Together with Indonesia, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Japan, Brazil, and Germany, they account for fully two-thirds of global tobacco use. "Smoking remains the second largest risk factor for early death and disability" after high blood pressure, Gakidou said.

## 'Lives for profit'

Some countries have seen sharp reductions in smoking driven by some combination of higher taxes, education campaigns, package warnings and programmes to help people kick the nicotine habit. Brazil was among the leaders over the 25-year period examined, with the percentage of daily smokers dropping from 29 to 12 percent among men, and from 19 to eight percent among women. —AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times  
THE SATURDAY EDITION OF THE KUWAIT TIMES

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## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (06/04/2017 TO 12/04/2017)

<b>SHARQIA-1</b>		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	6:15 PM		
AFTERMATH	12:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	8:15 PM	<b>360°-2</b>	
AFTERMATH	2:00 PM	AFTERMATH	10:15 PM	SALT AND FIRE	1:30 PM
EAT LOCAL	4:00 PM	AFTERMATH	12:15 AM	EAT LOCAL	3:30 PM
AFTERMATH	6:00 PM			SALT AND FIRE	5:45 PM
EAT LOCAL	8:00 PM	<b>FANAR-5</b>		EAT LOCAL	8:00 PM
AFTERMATH	10:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	1:00 PM	SALT AND FIRE	10:00 PM
EAT LOCAL	12:05 AM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	3:00 PM	EAT LOCAL	12:15 AM
		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	5:00 PM		
<b>SHARQIA-2</b>		SAFRA 5 NJOOM	7:00 PM	<b>360°-3</b>	
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	11:30 AM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	9:00 PM	GET OUT	11:45 AM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	1:30 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	11:00 PM	GET OUT	2:15 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	3:30 PM	EAT LOCAL	1:00 AM	GET OUT	4:30 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	5:30 PM			GET OUT	6:45 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	7:30 PM	<b>MARINA-1</b>		GET OUT	9:00 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	9:30 PM	AFTERMATH	12:00 PM	GET OUT	11:15 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	11:30 PM	AFTERMATH	2:00 PM		
		AFTERMATH	4:00 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.1</b>	
<b>SHARQIA-3</b>		MAHBAS (SOLITAIRE)	6:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	11:30 AM
GOING IN STYLE	12:45 PM	MAHBAS (SOLITAIRE)	8:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	1:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	2:45 PM	AFTERMATH	10:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	3:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	4:45 PM	AFTERMATH	12:05 AM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	5:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	6:45 PM			SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	7:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	8:45 PM	<b>MARINA-2</b>		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	9:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	10:45 PM	GOING IN STYLE	12:15 PM	AFTERMATH	11:30 PM
AFTERMATH	12:45 AM	GOING IN STYLE	2:15 PM		
		GOING IN STYLE	4:15 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.2</b>	
<b>MUHALAB-1</b>		GOING IN STYLE	6:15 PM	GOING IN STYLE	12:00 PM
AFTERMATH	11:45 AM	GOING IN STYLE	8:15 PM	GOING IN STYLE	2:00 PM
AFTERMATH	1:45 PM	GOING IN STYLE	10:15 PM	GOING IN STYLE	4:00 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	3:45 PM	GOING IN STYLE	12:15 AM	GOING IN STYLE	6:00 PM
AFTERMATH	6:30 PM			GOING IN STYLE	8:00 PM
AFTERMATH	8:30 PM	<b>MARINA-3</b>		GOING IN STYLE	10:00 PM
AFTERMATH	10:30 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	11:45 AM	GOING IN STYLE	12:05 AM
AFTERMATH	12:30 AM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	1:45 PM		
		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	3:45 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.3</b>	
<b>MUHALAB-2</b>		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	5:45 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	12:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	1:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	7:45 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	2:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	3:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	9:45 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	4:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM	GET OUT	11:45 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	6:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	7:00 PM			SAFRA 5 NJOOM	8:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	9:00 PM	<b>AVENUES-1</b>		SAFRA 5 NJOOM	10:30 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	11:00 PM	COLLIDE	11:30 AM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	12:30 AM
		AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	1:30 PM		
<b>MUHALAB-3</b>		COLLIDE	3:45 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.4</b>	
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	12:00 PM	AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	5:45 PM	AFTERMATH	1:00 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	2:00 PM	AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	8:00 PM	EAT LOCAL	3:00 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	4:00 PM	AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	10:15 PM	AFTERMATH	5:00 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	6:00 PM	AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	12:30 AM	EAT LOCAL	7:00 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	8:00 PM			AFTERMATH	9:00 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	10:00 PM	<b>AVENUES-2</b>		EAT LOCAL	11:00 PM
GOING IN STYLE	12:05 AM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND -3D-4DX	11:45 AM	EAT LOCAL	1:00 AM
		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE -3D-4DX	2:15 PM		
<b>FANAR-1</b>		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE -3D-4DX	4:15 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-1</b>	
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	1:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE -3D-4DX	6:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	1:00 PM
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	1:30 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE -3D-4DX	8:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	3:00 PM
FRI		KONG: SKULL ISLAND -3D-4DX	10:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	5:00 PM
GET OUT	3:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND -3D-4DX	12:45 AM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	7:00 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	5:45 PM			SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	9:00 PM
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	8:15 PM	<b>AVENUES-3</b>		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	11:00 PM
GET OUT	10:30 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	12:15 PM		
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	12:30 AM	GET OUT	2:30 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-2</b>	
		SAFRA 5 NJOOM	4:45 PM	GOING IN STYLE	12:45 PM
<b>FANAR-2</b>		SAFRA 5 NJOOM	7:00 PM	GOING IN STYLE	2:45 PM
GOING IN STYLE	11:45 AM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	9:15 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	4:45 PM
GOING IN STYLE	1:45 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	11:30 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	7:15 PM
GOING IN STYLE	3:45 PM			AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic	9:15 PM
GOING IN STYLE	5:45 PM	<b>AVENUES-4</b>		SAFRA 5 NJOOM	11:30 PM
GOING IN STYLE	7:45 PM	GOING IN STYLE	11:45 AM		
GOING IN STYLE	9:45 PM	GOING IN STYLE	1:45 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-3</b>	
GOING IN STYLE	11:45 PM	GOING IN STYLE	4:00 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	12:00 PM
		GOING IN STYLE	6:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	2:00 PM
<b>FANAR-3</b>		GOING IN STYLE	8:30 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	4:00 PM
AFTERMATH	12:00 PM	Special Show "SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE"		SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	6:00 PM
AFTERMATH	2:00 PM	8:30 PM		GOING IN STYLE	8:00 PM
AFTERMATH	4:00 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	10:45 PM	GOING IN STYLE	10:00 PM
EAT LOCAL	6:00 PM	AFTERMATH	1:15 AM	GOING IN STYLE	12:05 AM
AFTERMATH	8:00 PM				
EAT LOCAL	10:00 PM	<b>360°-1</b>		<b>PLAZA</b>	
EAT LOCAL	12:05 AM	GOING IN STYLE	12:30 PM	TAKE OFF- Malayalam	3:45 PM
		GOING IN STYLE	2:45 PM	TAKE OFF- Malayalam	6:30 PM
<b>FANAR-4</b>		GOING IN STYLE	5:00 PM	TAKE OFF- Malayalam	9:30 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	12:15 PM	GOING IN STYLE	7:15 PM	KAATRU VELIYIDAI -Tamil	9:30 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	2:15 PM	GOING IN STYLE	9:30 PM		
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	4:15 PM	GOING IN STYLE	11:45 PM		

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### PRAYER TIMINGS

**Fajr: 04:10**  
**Shorook 05:31**  
**Duhr: 11:50**  
**Asr: 15:23**  
**Maghrib: 18:10**  
**Isha: 19:28**





# BUSINESS

Friday Times

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2017



India's central bank holds rates at 6.25%

## US WEEKLY JOBLESS CLAIMS POST DROP

Page 39

Page 40



RIYADH: British Prime Minister Theresa May (center right) attends a meeting with Xavier Roleta (center left), CEO of the London Stock Exchange and with Sarah Al-Suhaimi (centre), chairman of the Saudi Stock Exchange (Tadawul) at the exchange in the capital Riyadh yesterday. — AFP

## DEVELOPING ASIA TO FUEL GLOBAL GROWTH: ADB BANK SEES UNCERTAINTIES EMERGING FROM US, EUROPE

**HONG KONG:** Developing Asian countries will drive the world economy in the next two years, the Asian Development Bank said yesterday, but it warned of uncertainties from the United States and Europe.

Its flagship Asian Development Outlook said India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam will be behind an expected 5.7 percent increase in Asia-Pacific gross domestic product, with China's expansion seen moderating. "Developing Asia continues to drive the global economy even as the region adjusts to a more consumption-driven economy in the People's Republic of China," ADB's chief economist, Yasuyuki Sawada, said in a statement published yesterday.

With China's economy seen slowing to 6.5 percent growth in 2017 and then 6.2 percent in 2018, regional expansion is tipped to come in slightly weaker than the 5.8 percent seen last year. Chinese growth is at its weakest levels in a quarter of a century, hit by a drop in global demand for its goods but also as its leaders try to transform it from an economy driven by trade and state investment to one supported by domestic demand. "The recent upswing in the real estate sector and heavy industries will not last," ADB analyst Jurgen Conrad said at a Beijing news conference yesterday.

"It doesn't fit nicely in the rebalancing of the Chinese economy," Conrad added that a crucial challenge will be ensuring that investments are "truly productive" in a country where the state is responsible for a third of total investments. While there is a solid foundation for growth, ADB Country Director for China Ben Bingham said, "the process of moving people from rural poverty to urban middle-class is far from complete."

The Manila-based regional bank also warned that the uncertain outlook in the United States and Europe threw up risks. As the US economy continues to strengthen, expectations are for the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates further this year—having already been lifted twice since December.

Higher Fed borrowing costs tend to hit emerging economies as it means investors withdraw their cash to seek better and safer returns in the US.

"Rising consumer and business confidence and a declining unemployment rate have fuelled US growth, but uncertainty over future economic policies may test confidence," the ADB said. There are also lingering worries about US President Donald Trump's warnings to revise global trade deals, fuelling speculation he could spark a trade war.

### 'Short-term shocks'

The bank also said that while the eurozone was also strengthening, any potential growth was clouded by the uncertainty of Britain's decision to leave the European Union. But

Sawada added: "While uncertain policy changes in advanced economies do pose a risk to the outlook, we feel that most economies are well positioned to weather potential short-term shocks." — AFP



HONG KONG: A woman displays a cardboard advertisement outside a shopping mall in Hong Kong yesterday. Asia's developing economies will see steady growth this year and the next, though the evolving policies of US President Donald Trump's administration are a major uncertainty, the Asian Development Bank said in a report yesterday. — AP



# HOW AUSTERITY TURNED OFF THE LIGHTS IN GREECE

HOUSEHOLDS, SMALL BUSINESSES OWE MORE THAN HALF

**ATHENS:** Kostas Argyros's unpaid electricity bills are piling up, among a mountain of debt owed to Greece's biggest power utility. His family owe 850 euros to the Public Power Corporation (PPC), a tiny fraction of the state-controlled firm's 2.6 billion euros (\$2.8 billion) in unpaid bills.

Argyros picks up only occasional work as an odd-job man. "When you only work once a week, what will you pay first?" said the 35-year-old, who lives in a tiny apartment in an Athens suburb with his unemployed wife and four small children. The Argyros family are emblematic of deepening poverty in Greece following seven years of austerity demanded by the country's international creditors. They burn wood to heat their home in winter, food is cooked on a small gas stove, and hot water is scarce.

The only evening light is the blue glare of a TV screen, for fear of racking up more debt. Five-watt lightbulbs provide a dim glow and Argyros worries about the effect on their eyesight.

More than 40 percent of Greeks are behind on their utility bills, higher than anywhere else in Europe. People in poor neighbourhoods are also increasingly turning to energy fraud, meaning that the problem for PPC is much higher than the mountain of unpaid bills suggests.

Power theft is costing PPC around 500-600 million euros a year in lost income, an industry official said, requesting anonymity because he was not authorized to divulge the numbers.

PPC declined to comment on the figure. Public disclosures by the Hellenic Electricity Distribution Network Operator HEDNO, which checks meters, show that

verified cases of theft climbed to 10,600 last year, up from 8,880 in 2013 and 4,470 in 2012. Authorities believe theft is far higher than the cases verified by HEDNO, another official said, declining to be named.

Households in the country are equipped with analogue meters, which are easy to hack. One of the most common tricks is using magnets, which slow down the rotating coils to show less consumption than the real amount, a HEDNO official said. Some websites even offer consumers tips and tricks on power fraud.

## Burden of arrears

For households who have had their electricity cut off, a group of activists calling themselves the "I Won't Pay" movement have taken it upon themselves to reconnect the supply. The group says it has done hundreds this year. PPC, which has a 90 percent share of the retail market and 60 percent of the wholesale market, is supposed to reduce this dominance to less than 50 percent by 2020 under Greece's third, 86 billion euro bailout deal.

The lenders also want PPC to sell some of its assets, but the company is toiling under the debt of unpaid bills, a problem opposition lawmakers say will force a fire-sale.

In little over a year from June 2015, overdue bills to the 51-percent state-owned firm grew by nearly a billion euros to 2.6 billion, Chief Executive Manolis Panagiotakis told lawmakers in March. Analysts estimate PPC's cash reserves have shrunk to about 300 million euros, forcing it to secure a 200 million euro bank loan to repay a bond due in May.

The tangle has left it with little leeway for new investments or to fund a switch to cleaner forms of energy from coal to improve environmental standards. "It is often said that PPC is undergoing the most critical phase of its history," Panagiotakis told lawmakers. "I will not argue with that." He declined a Reuters request for an interview.

The burden of arrears for PPC is now "so big that some worry it will not be able to lift it for much longer", said energy expert Constantinos Filis. The apartment building where the Argyros family live is a testament to that. Many tenants struggle even to pay the 25 euro annual fee to light communal areas such as staircases.

## Ground zero

PPC has tried to recoup unpaid bills with phased repayment schemes. A total of 625,000 customers owing a total of 1.3 billion euros had signed up to the scheme by January. The Argyros family have also entered the scheme with the help of Theofilos, a local charity, which also contributes towards their monthly bills. Meanwhile, PPC's provisions for bad debt remain high. The schemes drove the figure down to 453 million euros in the nine months to September last year from 690 million a year earlier. Analysts expect PPC to swing back to a profit of between 63-109 million euros in 2016, with provisions of below 600 million euros. Filis, the energy expert, said the more things stayed the same, the closer PPC was to "ground zero" and he drew comparisons with the Greek state's brushes with near bankruptcy during the debt crisis. — Reuters



**TROYES:** Kids clothing is displayed at the factory of French clothing brand Petit Bateau, in Troyes, yesterday. — AFP

## BP CUTS CEO'S PAY PACKAGE AFTER SHAREHOLDER BACKLASH

**LONDON:** BP has cut Chief Executive Bob Dudley's pay package by 40 percent to \$11.6 million, the latest British bluechip company to rein in executive pay after a wave of shareholder revolts. The oil company has reduced Dudley's payout and introduced changes from this year that will lower executives' performance incentives. The cuts come after around 60 percent of shareholders opposed BP's pay policy at last year's annual general meeting. Executive pay has come under growing scrutiny in Britain after a string of corporate scandals, such as the collapse of store chain BHS, which has fuelled mistrust of the high levels of pay awarded to company bosses.

BP's pay policy changes, which will apply for the coming three years, include lowering Dudley's maximum long-term payout to five times salary from seven times and cutting bonus payments by a quarter. "I have consulted widely with shareholders and listened to and sought to act on their concerns, and have been sensitive to developments in the society in which we work," Ann Dowling, chair of BP's remuneration committee, said in the company's annual report published on Thursday. BP's shareholders will be able to decide whether to approve the new remuneration policy in a binding vote at this year's annual general meeting scheduled for May 17 in London. Even after a cut of nearly \$8 million, Dudley's pay remains well above that of rival European oil companies. Shell's Ben van Beurden was awarded an 8.263 million euro (\$8.8 million) pay package for 2016, a 60 percent jump year on year, while Total's Patrick Pouyanne took home 3.8 million euros last year. — Reuters



**HEBEI:** A woman sitting in front of a closed real estate agency in Rongcheng county in China's Hebei province. China's plan to develop an economic backwater outside Beijing into a city three times the size of New York has sparked a real estate speculation frenzy among out-of-town home buyers. — AFP

## 'TWITTER LITE' AIMS AT EMERGING MARKETS

**WASHINGTON:** Twitter yesterday unveiled a low-data usage version of the social network, which aims to bring in users in emerging markets and areas with slow or expensive mobile networks.

The California group unveiled Twitter Lite, "making Twitter more accessible to millions of people," said product manager Patrick Traugher. "Twitter Lite is a great way for many people in emerging markets across Asia Pacific, Latin America and Africa to experience Twitter for the first time on their mobile devices." Traugher said the new mobile service can be accessed via web browser, and offers quick loading on slower connections, while taking little space on mobile phones. The move comes with Twitter struggling to boost user growth and engagement to keep up with faster-growing social networks, and move toward profitability.

At the end of 2016, Twitter had some 319 million monthly active users, up just four percent from a year earlier. Twitter made a push for users in India with the launch of the new service and a partnership with Vodafone at the start of the T20 cricket season. "We are thrilled to partner with Vodafone in India to provide live cricket updates via a specially curated Twitter timeline to their smartphone customers as the T20 cricket season kicks off," said Twitter's Arvinder Gujral in a blog post. "Cricket is one of the most talked about topics in India with over 10.6 million Tweets about the Indian Premier League (IPL) during last year's season. — AFP



## US WEEKLY JOBLESS CLAIMS POST DROP

**WASHINGTON:** New applications for US unemployment benefits recorded their biggest drop in nearly two years last week, pointing to a further tightening in the labor market. Initial claims for state unemployment benefits declined 25,000 to a seasonally adjusted 234,000 for the week ended April 1, the Labor Department said yesterday. The drop was the largest since the week ending April 25, 2015.

The prior week's data was revised to show 1,000 more applications received than previously reported. Claims have now been below 300,000, a threshold associated with a healthy labor market for 109 straight weeks. That is the longest stretch since 1970 when the labor market was smaller. The labor market is currently near full employment.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast first-time applications for jobless benefits falling to 250,000 last week. A Labor Department analyst said there were no special factors influencing last week's claims data. Claims for Louisiana were estimated. The four-week moving average of claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, fell 4,500 to 250,000 last week.

The dollar extended gains versus the euro and the yen on the data. US government bond yields rose. Last week's claims data has no bearing on March's employment report, which is scheduled for release today. Claims rose during the survey week for March's nonfarm payrolls, suggesting some moderation in the pace of job growth after two straight months of

employment gain in excess of 230,000. Also pointing to some pullback in job gains, global outplacement consultancy Challenger, Gray & Christmas, reported yesterday that U.S.-based employers announced 43,310 job cuts in March, up 17 percent from February. Most of the layoffs were in retail, telecommunications and education sectors.

A survey on Wednesday showed a measure of services sector employment slipping in March, but remaining at a level consistent with growing payrolls. Another report, however, showed private payrolls surged by 263,000 jobs in March. According to a Reuters survey of economists, nonfarm payrolls likely increased by 180,000 jobs last month after rising 235,000 in February. — Reuters

## STIMULUS EFFORTS STILL NEEDED AMID RISKS IN EUROZONE: ECB

**FRANKFURT:** European Central Bank head Mario Draghi insisted yesterday that the bank's stimulus efforts were still needed, while acknowledging that the risks to the economy across the 19-country eurozone appear to have diminished. "The recovery is progressing and now may be gaining momentum," Draghi said in a speech. He added that the chances that the upswing would be unexpectedly derailed appear to have dwindled and that the balance of risks "seems to be shifting upward."

However, he cautioned that much of the improvement depended on the ECB's monetary stimulus efforts and that it was "too soon to declare success." Draghi's stance on keeping stimulus in place contrasts with that of the US Federal Reserve, which has already started withdrawing monetary stimulus by raising benchmark interest rates off their lows near zero. Minutes of the Fed's last meeting, released Wednesday, showed officials were considering reducing their large bond holdings sooner than expected, a step that could eventually mean higher market interest rates. The Fed can do that because the US economic recovery is farther along and unemployment has fallen to lower levels than in Europe.

The ECB has previously said it intends to continue pushing newly printed money into the eurozone economy through bond purchases at least through the end of the year. It has also kept its key interest rate benchmark at a record low of zero. A raft of recent economic data has stoked speculation that the ECB might start withdrawing its stimulus efforts earlier than planned. Surveys suggest that the eurozone may have grown as much as 0.6 percent in the first quarter from the previous three-month period, while official figures have shown inflation rising sharply from near zero to 1.5 percent in March, which is closer to the bank's goal of just under 2 percent. Unemployment has also fallen but remains high at 9.5 percent, with sharp differences between member countries. — AP



BEIJING: A delivery worker rides his tricycle in Beijing yesterday. — AFP

## WITH LEAKS AND VACANCIES, US FED ON SHAKY GROUND TRUMP GOVT POISED TO FILL EMPTY SEATS

**WASHINGTON:** Tuesday's sudden resignation of a US central bank policy maker finds the Federal Reserve on shakier ground, with the Trump administration poised to reshape it by filling several empty seats. Jeffrey Lacker, president of the Richmond Federal Reserve Bank, announced he was resigning immediately for his role in the 2012 leak of confidential information on monetary policy which became the subject of an inquiry by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Lacker's fall came at the tail end of years of controversy that erupted after the economic research firm Medley Global Advisors learned the contents of a Fed meeting before they were released to the public.

### 'I should have declined'

The former Richmond Fed president, 61, apologized for his missteps, saying that he had continued to speak to an analyst even after she revealed she was in possession of highly valuable information concerning future Fed moves on economic stimulus. "Due to the highly

confidential and sensitive nature of this information, I should have declined to comment and perhaps have ended the phone call," Lacker said in announcing his resignation, saying it had not been his intention to confirm the leak.

Lacker, whose term was due to expire in 2020, also admitted that he had failed to come clean about his role in the leak for more than two years. The Fed veteran had previously announced he would step down in October. His abrupt exit saps the Fed's credibility at a time when it faces intense criticism in Congress. According to Barclays chief US economist Michael Gapen, Lacker's undoing presaged "a significant loss of Fed credibility which will give ammunition to those who think Fed decisions need greater scrutiny."

The Medley Global leak was a source of tension with lawmakers who insisted on an investigation. It may also provide fodder for those calling for the Fed to be audited, as recent draft legislation introduced last week demands. In such a setting, according to Gapen, any misstep by the central bank in the leak matter

"means the likelihood of legislative action that reduces the Fed's independence increases." As for monetary policy, removing Lacker from the picture will not immediately affect the balance of views on the Fed's Federal Open Market Committee, which sets interest rates.

Lacker had not been a voting FOMC member this year. A search for his replacement was already under way. When he participated in committee meetings, Lacker, who had served as Richmond Fed president since 2004, sided with the "hawks," those who want to tighten rates and emphasize the risk of inflation after years of easy money in the post-financial crisis era.

### Dodd-Frank in the crosshairs

The Fed on Wednesday also lost another highly important member with the departure of Governor Daniel Tarullo, the Fed's architect of post-financial crisis banking regulation, an area currently in the crosshairs of the Trump administration, which wants to revise the Dodd-Frank reform law. — AFP

## EUROPEAN MARKETS MOSTLY FOLLOW FALLS IN US, ASIA

**LONDON:** European markets largely followed the US and Asia in turning lower yesterday, as investors were spooked by Federal Reserve minutes showing it is mulling plans to tighten monetary policy by sucking cash out of the financial system. London stocks fell back 0.4 percent and Frankfurt 0.3 percent in morning trading, with US President Donald Trump's potentially fractious meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping also playing on investors' minds.

However, Paris bucked the trend with the CAC 40 climbing 0.2 percent. US central bank policymakers are considering unwinding the \$4.5 trillion-worth of Treasury bills and other assets it has on its books. At the moment, the Fed reinvests principal payments it receives from its bond holdings back into the market-maintaining the size of its portfolio and the amount of money in the system.

Winding back on reinvestments would take money out of the financial system. "European markets are trading lower... after minutes indicated that the Fed might pursue a more aggressive path in reducing their enormous balance sheet," explained trader Markus Huber from City of London Markets. — AFP





**AMRITSAR:** Indian laborers pick golden marguerite, or yellow chamomile, flowers in a field on the outskirts of Amritsar yesterday. Laborers earn some 200 INR per day for eight hours picking flowers. — AFP

# INDIA'S CENTRAL BANK HOLDS RATES AT 6.25%

## INFLATIONARY PRESSURES FROM TAX REFORM CITED

**MUMBAI:** India's central bank held interest rates yesterday, in line with analysts' expectations, citing inflationary pressures from an imminent tax reform and the possibility of a poor monsoon.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said the benchmark repo rate—the level at which it

lends to commercial banks—would remain at 6.25 percent. It was the third consecutive monetary policy committee (MPC) meeting in India's financial capital Mumbai where rates have been left unchanged. RBI governor Urjit Patel said a new national goods and services tax (GST)

due to be introduced on July 1 could push inflation up, while a weak monsoon could lead to a poor harvest and a rise in food prices.

"(There is) the uncertainty surrounding the outcome of the south west monsoon in view of the rising probability of an El Nino event around July-August, and its implications for food inflation," Patel said in the statement. "Another upside risk arises from the one-off effects of the GST," he added, referring to the new tax which will transform India's economy into a common market. The RBI forecast inflation for the first half of fiscal year 2017-18 to be 4.5 percent, rising to 5 percent for the second half. It has a target of keeping inflation around four percent. All 52 economists surveyed by Bloomberg News had predicted that the rate would remain unchanged, largely because of an excess of liquidity in the banking system following a high-profile cash ban.

The government's shock decision to remove high-denomination currency notes from circulation in November saw consumers rush to deposit their old bills before they became worthless. Large amounts of deposited cash can lead to a rise in inflation if banks start using the money to increase lending. Low interest rates fuel consumer spending, which also causes an uptick in inflation.

The RBI raised the reverse repo rate, the level at which commercial banks lend money to the central bank, by 25 basis points. The increase will encourage banks to lend more to the RBI, thereby helping to mop up their excess liquidity. "Our endeavor is to remain draining out liquidity," Patel told reporters, adding that the MPC had "unanimously" agreed to hold the main rate. The central bank last cut the interest rate in October when it was reduced by 25 basis points to 6.25 percent, the lowest level since November 2010, and analysts don't expect a rush towards another snip. — AFP

## BREXIT PUTS BRITAIN IN FARM QUOTA QUANDARY

**GENEVA/BRUSSELS:** Brexit has created an administrative and diplomatic minefield for Britain by triggering a reworking of its relations in the most contentious area of international trade-agriculture. To stand on its own after it leaves the European Union, Britain needs a document setting out its own commitments at the World Trade Organization, the bedrock of global trade. Britain's membership terms are currently included in EU's, so it needs to disentangle itself, with less than two years on the clock.

While Britain can simply replicate the EU's tariffs, the copy-and-paste method does not work for agriculture, where EU imports are limited by 128 "quotas", often allocated to particular suppliers. Imports of goods such as meat, cereals, fruit, milk, wine and vegetables that are not covered by a quota are subject to a much higher import tariff.

Unless Britain agrees what share of each EU quota it will take, and what tariffs apply for some 2,000 agricultural products, businesses will be flying blind. It is all supposed to be done within the two years of Brexit negotiations. Without an agreement, Britain would be in uncharted waters and might have to unilaterally announce

its plans, at the risk of angering farm lobbies at home or abroad.

Suppliers will want the current EU quotas to be shared out between Britain and the other 27 EU nations, and some may see it as a chance to increase the size of their market.

Brazil, for example, might want to sell Britain more sugar, Thailand more rice and Switzerland more chocolate. The EU itself may also seek to cut its own quotas to reflect Britain's leaving.

"It's going to have to be in place, not the day before Brexit but a year before Brexit because exporters and importers will want to know when they're entering contracts," said Alan Matthews, emeritus professor of European agriculture at Trinity College, Dublin.

Under WTO rules, nobody can stop Britain putting forward new membership terms, but diplomats say the quotas represent a pressure point for squeezing out concessions. If they felt Britain had damaged their interests, they could respond with a trade dispute and potential sanctions. Indonesia has already tabled a formal question to ask how the quotas will be handled, prompting China, Russia, the United States and Argentina to signal their interest too. — Reuters

## AS BREXIT BITES, RYANAIR TO PIVOT GROWTH AWAY FROM UK FOR NEXT 2 YEARS

**LONDON:** Ryanair, Europe's largest airline by passenger numbers, plans to pivot its growth away from Britain over the next two years as it fears the lack of clarity over Brexit will cause major travel disruption and hit demand. Airlines such as Ryanair and rival easyJet have urged the British government to put aviation at the front of the queue when negotiating its EU exit because they need to finalise their 2019 summer schedules in the first half of next year.

Ryanair has warned more stridently than peers of the dangers of neglecting aviation in the negotiations, saying that there may be no flights between the UK and Europe for a period of time if a special aviation deal is not agreed. Without a deal, it is unclear what rules would govern airlines with significant British and EU business after Brexit. The uncertainty is pushing Ryanair to look outside Britain to grow the network by adding new routes and flights.

"Ryanair is pivoting its growth away from the UK," Finance Director Neil Sorahan told reporters in London, adding that the airline had planned to grow by about 15 percent in the UK last year but had instead posted growth of about 6 percent. He said that Brexit will "inevitably" lead to a slowdown in growth in the UK and Europe, and added that, unless the government can provide greater certainty as to how airlines will be able to operate in the future, growth may slow more sharply as the end of the two-year divorce process approaches.

"The clock is ticking," Sorahan said. "Every day that goes past is another day that we still don't know where we're going." The EU's chief negotiator has set a target of agreeing a Brexit deal with Britain by October 2018 through diplomats on both sides admit they face years arduous talks.

Airlines based in the EU have the right to fly to, from and within any country in the bloc thanks to the single aviation market created in the 1990s, meaning Britain has just two years to renegotiate access or come up with an alternative system.

Failure to agree a new deal could mean airlines having to rely on older, more restrictive bilateral ties between Britain and the other 27 individual EU member states, which would not allow for airlines like easyJet to fly between two EU countries.

### Extreme turbulence

Luton-based easyJet has been one of the hardest hit by the vote, with its shares down by a third due to its exposure to the British consumer and its role flying between the remaining 27-member states which make up 30-40 percent of its business.

It has said it is close to applying for a license to set up an operating company within the EU to protect its intra-EU flights. Dublin-based Ryanair would not be able to fly intra-UK routes without an agreement or a UK operating base. Sorahan said that the airline had not yet decided whether it would try to secure a British air operating license, and could instead cut its flights within Britain, which only account for around 2 percent of its business. He said a decision would be made over the next 12 months. Chief Marketing Officer Kenny Jacobs said that Ryanair had been disappointed that British Prime Minister Theresa May did not mention the aviation sector in her letter triggering formal Brexit negotiations last week.

"If we had seen in Theresa May's letter a specific reference to Open Skies, that would've been good," Jacobs said, adding that a sector by sector approach to negotiations would help.

May has held back from detailing her priorities for individual sectors, saying little more than she wants the closest possible economic ties with the bloc when Britain departs.

That has frustrated some sectors, such as financial services, which hoped to sway the government into prioritizing their concerns above others to get early certainty. — Reuters



# LINDOR LIFTS INDIANS OVER RANGERS

**ARLINGTON:** Francisco Lindor smashed a ninth-inning grand slam to lift the Cleveland Indians past the Texas Rangers 9-6 on Wednesday night. Lindor recorded the first two-homer game of his career and drove in a career-high five runs. The win gave the Indians their first 3-0 start since 1998. Texas is 0-3 for the first time since 2007 and 0-3 at home for the first time since 1991 after getting swept in the series. Cole Hamels allowed four runs (three earned) in six innings after starting the game with three perfect frames for the Rangers. Danny Salazar struck out nine but gave up five runs (four earned) in 5 2/3 innings for the Indians.

## Dodgers 3, Padres 1

Yasiel Puig homered and Rich Hill threw five strong innings as Los Angeles beat San Diego. The Dodgers got an RBI double from Adrian Gonzalez to go with an unearned run as they rebounded from being blanked by the Padres in the previous game. Hill surrendered one run on two hits and three walks, with five strikeouts. Trevor Cahill, in his Padres debut, worked 5 2/3 innings, allowing three runs (two unearned) on five hits. He walked three with seven strikeouts. It was Cahill's second start in his last 51 outings.

## Diamondbacks 8, Giants 6

Pinch hitter Jeremy Hazelbaker sent Matt Moore's final pitch of the game into the right field corner to break a sixth-inning tie, and Arizona went on to defeat San Francisco. Moore pitched 5 1/3 innings, allowing six runs (three earned) and eight hits. He struck out three and walked two in the losing effort for the Giants. Taijuan Walker pitched six innings, allowing four runs and seven hits. He struck out seven and walked one for the Diamondbacks.

## Angels 5, Athletics 0

Los Angeles defeated Oakland but got a scare when Garrett Richards had to leave the game with right biceps cramping in the bottom of the fifth inning. Richards blanked the A's on three hits over 4 2/3 innings in his first start since May 1 last season, which ended early for him because of a partially torn ulnar collateral ligament in his right elbow. Kole Calhoun went 3-for-5 and scored a run for the Angels, who beat the A's for the second straight time after losing to them on Opening Day.

## Red Sox 3, Pirates 0 (12 innings)

Sandy Leon hit a walk-off three-run homer with one out in the 12th inning as Boston beat Pittsburgh in Chris Sale's Red Sox debut at Fenway Park. Leon launched an 0-1 fastball off Pirates reliever Anthony Bastardo into the Green Monster seats in left field. It was his first career game-winning RBI. Sale threw seven scoreless innings for Boston, and Pittsburgh's Jameson Taillon tossed seven shutout innings, too.

## Twins 9, Royals 1

Miguel Sano hit a three-run triple, and Eduardo Escobar added a three-run homer in a six-run seventh inning as Minnesota cruised past Kansas City. Jason Castro walked a career-high four times for the Twins, who opened the season 2-0 for the first time since 2007. Ian Kennedy walked five batters, leading to three runs. He gave up five hits and recorded five strikeouts in five innings for the Royals.

## Nationals 6, Marlins 4

Matt Wieters had three hits and drove in two runs, Bryce Harper added two hits and two RBIs, and Washington beat Miami. Nationals starter Tanner Roark allowed two runs in the

first inning before bouncing back. He gave up just the two runs through six innings. The losing pitcher was Dan Straily, who gave up five earned runs in 3 1/3 innings for the Marlins.

## Orioles 3, Blue Jays 1

Adam Jones and Chris Davis both homered, and starter Dylan Bundy threw seven solid innings as Baltimore scored a victory over Toronto, completing the sweep of a two-game series. Jones (two-run shot) and Davis (solo) each hit their first homers of the season, both off Blue Jays starter J.A. Happ. Bundy allowed one run on four hits in a career-best seven innings.

## Reds 2, Phillies 0

Joey Votto homered and Brandon Finnegan allowed one hit through seven innings, lifting Cincinnati over Philadelphia. Finnegan, 23, is among the centerpieces of a Reds' rebuild, and he was outstanding Wednesday, retiring the final 19 batters he faced and striking out nine. Raisel Iglesias earned the save.

## Rays 4, Yankees 1

Tampa Bay got a strong outing from Alex Cobb and enough offense early to pull out a win over New York at Tropicana Field, taking two of three games in the opening series of the season. Cobb, making his way back from 2015 Tommy John surgery, held the Yankees to four hits in 5 2/3 innings, striking out four and continuing his strong personal success against the Yankees. Corey Dickerson led off the first with a home run and added an RBI single in the second, with No 9 hitter Derek Norris bringing in the other runs with a two-out single in the second for the Rays.

## Braves 3, Mets 1 (12 innings)

Matt Kemp hit a bases-loaded, two-run double with two outs in the top of the 12th inning, lifting Atlanta over New York. Kemp collected two doubles and a walk before getting the tiebreaking hit off Rafael Montero. Kemp put the Braves in front one pitch after the Mets opted to intentionally walk Freddie Freeman. Four Braves relievers combined on six scoreless innings after Bartolo Colon allowed one run and two hits in a crisp six innings.

## Astros 5, Mariners 3 (13 innings)

George Springer blasted a 3-2 pitch into the front row of the Crawford Boxes in the 13th inning for a three-run, walk-off home run as Houston defeated Seattle. The Astros are off to their first 3-0 start since the 2001 season. Kyle Seager gave Seattle a lead with a bases-loaded walk in the tip of the 13th, but Chase De Jong, the ninth Mariners pitcher of the night, couldn't hold the advantage in his major league debut.

## Brewers 6, Rockies 1

Jonathan Villar, Eric Thames and Travis Shaw all hit their first home runs of the season and Wily Peralta threw five shutout innings as Milwaukee claimed its first victory of the season, beating Colorado at Miller Park. Peralta scattered three hits and a walk. Tyler Chatwood worked six innings, allowing four runs on seven hits and a walk while striking out five for the Rockies. Mark Reynolds had two hits for Colorado. Cubs at Cardinals, ppd. The game between Chicago and St Louis at Busch Stadium was postponed due to the threat of severe weather. The teams tried again yesterday. Tigers at White Sox, ppd. The game between Detroit and Chicago was called due to rainy weather approximately four hours before the scheduled first pitch. A makeup game was played yesterday.—Reuters



**WASHINGTON:** New York Rangers right wing Michael Grabner (40), of Austria, battles for the puck against Washington Capitals defenseman Matt Niskanen (2) during the first period of an NHL hockey game on Wednesday, April 5, 2017. — AP

## GOMEZ STREAK ENDS; WOLFSBURG COMES UP SHORT IN BUNDESLIGA

**BERLIN:** Mario Gomez's remarkable run of scoring in every Bundesliga game under Wolfsburg coach Andries Jonker finally ended Wednesday in a 1-0 defeat at home to Freiburg. Florian Niederlechner scored late to lift Freiburg to seventh and leave Wolfsburg, Bundesliga champion in 2009 and Champions League quarterfinalist last year, teetering just a point above the relegation zone. Gomez missed a number of chances as both he and Jonker, Wolfsburg's third coach of the season after Valerien Ismael and Dieter Hecking were sacked, couldn't prevent their first defeat together.

Wolfsburg had been on a four-game unbeaten run since Jonker took over. Gomez scored in all his previous nine games under Jonker, including five for Bayern Munich where Jonker was interim coach in 2011. He took his tally to 15 goals in nine games under the Dutch coach with a seven-minute hat trick against Bayer Leverkusen at the weekend, but his luck ran out against Freiburg. "We can't just rely on Mario," Wolfsburg midfielder Christian Traesch said.

## Mainz 2, Leipzig 3

Mainz was better in the first half, winning challenges, closing down space, forcing the initiative and creating good chances, but the home side was left to rue its missed opportunities when Leipzig scored right after the break. Emil Forsberg sent Bernardo's cross back in with his heel and Marcel Sabitzer was there to head it in. Timo Werner made it 2-0 with a header from Forsberg's corner minutes later. Jairo Samperio pulled one back with a penalty and Levin Oztunali went

close too before Mainz substitute Yoshinori Muto struck the post. Then Naby Keita killed any hopes of a comeback with less than 10 minutes remaining when he controlled the ball with his chest in the center circle and set off past seven Mainz players to score after a one-two with Yussuf Poulsen. Jean-Philippe Gbamin was sent off late for Mainz, before Muto scored in injury time for an exciting finale. Only goal difference keeps Mainz out of the relegation zone, while Leipzig consolidated second place, 10 points behind Bayern Munich, which slipped to its second defeat of the season on Tuesday. "Now we can go with confidence into the rest of the season's games," said Leipzig captain Willi Orban, whose side enjoys a four-point cushion over Hoffenheim in the last automatic Champions League qualification place.

## Augsburg 2, Ingolstadt 3

Ingolstadt gave itself a lifeline in the fight against relegation with a victory that left Augsburg in deep trouble. First half goals from Sonny Kittel and Almog Cohen for Ingolstadt earned the home side whistles from fans at the break, and things got worse in the second half when Cohen claimed his second goal of the night. Paul Verhaegh pulled one back with a penalty and Halil Altintop scored late, but Ingolstadt held for what could be a vital win. The visitors remained second from bottom, but closed the gap on Augsburg in the relegation play-off place to just four points. Augsburg is winless in five games, while Ingolstadt recorded its second successive victory over a relegation rival.



# WARRIORS CLINCH NBA'S BEST RECORD AGAIN

**PHOENIX:** Stephen Curry scored 42 points as the Golden State Warriors held off the Phoenix Suns 120-111 for their season-high 13th straight win, clinching the best record in the NBA for the third straight season. Curry scored 23 in the first quarter when the Warriors blew open a 41-18 lead, but the Suns rallied with a 34-17 second quarter and made a game of it from there. With Draymond Green and Andre Iguodala resting and Kevin Durant one game away from returning from injury, the Warriors still won.

Meanwhile, Devin Booker scored 21, Tyler Ulis 20 and Jared Dudley matched his season high with 19 for the Suns, who tied a franchise record with their 13th straight loss. Alan Williams scored 16 and grabbed a career-best 17 rebounds for Phoenix. Golden State became the first team have the NBA's best record for three consecutive seasons since the Boston Celtics did it in 1983-84, '84-'85 and '85-'86. The Warriors, Boston - multiple times - and Philadelphia are the only franchises in NBA history to achieve that feat. The Warriors also are the first team to win at least 65 games in three straight seasons.

## CAVALIERS 114, CELTICS 91

LeBron James had 36 points, 10 rebounds and six assists as the Cleveland Cavaliers ran past the Boston Celtics to move back into first place in the NBA's Eastern Conference. The teams had identical records entering their final regular-season matchup, but Cleveland (51-27) now has a one-game lead over Boston (50-28) with only four games to play. Cleveland also holds the tiebreaker with the Celtics for the top seed, if needed. Kyrie Irving added 19 points and five assists. The Cavaliers played without starting center Tristan Thompson, who was out with a sprained right thumb. But they performed without him, surging at the start of the second quarter and taking as much as a 29-point lead in the third. They also outrebounded Boston 51-38. Isaiah Thomas led the Celtics with 26 points.

## THUNDER 103, GRIZZLIES 100

Russell Westbrook fell a rebound short of an historic triple-double but scored 45 points, including a late 3-pointer that helped seal Oklahoma City's victory over Memphis. Westbrook's 3-pointer - his eighth in the game - with 14 seconds left and two free throws in the final second gave the Thunder their second win in a row. Oklahoma City solidified its hold on the Western Conference's sixth seed, holding a 3 1/2-game lead over the Grizzlies. Westbrook had 10 assists and nine rebounds, leaving him tied with Oscar Robertson's 55-year-old record for triple-doubles in a season with 41. Victor Oladipo scored 15 points, and Doug McDermott and Enes Kanter added 10 apiece. Marc Gasol led Memphis with 23 points, and Zach Randolph had 20 points and nine rebounds.

## HEAT 112, HORNETS 99

Goran Dragic scored 33 points and Miami made 21 3-pointers



**PHOENIX:** Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry and Phoenix Suns forward Derrick Jones Jr (right) battle for a loose ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game on Wednesday, April 5, 2017. — AP

to beat Charlotte and pull back into a tie for eighth place in the Eastern Conference. James Johnson shot 6 of 7 from 3-point range and had 26 points, and Hassan Whiteside had a strong second half and finished with 13 points and 20 rebounds. Nic Batum led Charlotte with 24 points, and All-Star Kemba Walker had 18 points on 6-of-17 shooting. The 10th-place Hornets dropped 2 1/2 games behind the Heat and Indiana with three games remaining.

## RAPTORS 105, PISTONS 102

Kyle Lowry had 27 points and 10 assists in his return from a wrist injury to help Toronto rally to beat Detroit. Back in the lineup after missing 18 games, Lowry helped the Raptors overcome a 20-point first-half deficit. Toronto moved a half-

game ahead of Washington for third place in the East. Jonas Valanciunas had 11 of his 19 points in the fourth quarter for Detroit. The Pistons dropped to 11th in the conference, three games behind Miami, Chicago and Indiana with four games to play.

## ROCKETS 110, NUGGETS 104

James Harden scored 31 points as Houston beat Denver to secure the third seed in the Western Conference. The Nuggets cut the lead to two points on a layup by Nikola Jokic with 1:20 remaining. A 3-pointer by Harden a few seconds later pushed the lead to 106-101 and brought the crowd to its feet. Harden added two free throws after that for the last of 15 straight points he scored for Houston in the second half of the fourth quarter. Danilo Gallinari had had 23 points for the Nuggets. They are in ninth place and fighting for the last playoff spot in the West.

## LAKERS 102, SPURS 95

Tyler Ennis had 19 points in place of injured starter D'Angelo Russell and the Los Angeles Lakers never trailed against San Antonio. The Lakers led by as many as 26 points in snapping an eight-game skid against the Spurs. Making his first start of the season, Ennis had six assists and only one turnover to help Los Angeles end San Antonio's three-game winning streak. Russell missed the game after experiencing soreness in his knee during shootaround. Davis Bertans and Tony Parker led the Spurs with 14 points each.

## CLIPPERS 112, MAVERICKS 101

Blake Griffin scored 32 points and the Los Angeles Clippers led all the way in beating the Dallas Mavericks to move within a half-game of the idle Utah Jazz for the No. 4 playoff seed in the West. JJ Redick added 25 points and DeAndre Jordan had 20 rebounds in the Clippers' fourth straight victory and eighth in 10 games. Chris Paul had 22 points and 11 assists. Harrison Barnes led the Mavs with 15 points despite five fouls. They've lost six of seven with four games left in their season. Dirk Nowitzki was held to nine points - under his 14.4 average - a night after the 38-year-old forward sat out the Mavs' loss at Sacramento with a sore Achilles tendon. — AP

# CAPITALS THUMP RANGERS TO SEAL HOME ADVANTAGE

**NEW YORK:** Evgeny Kuznetsov had a goal and an assist, Braden Holtby made 24 saves and the Washington Capitals defeated the New York Rangers 2-0 on Wednesday night to clinch their second straight Presidents' Trophy. The Capitals (54-18-8), winners of the Metropolitan Division, secured the top seed in the Eastern Conference and will have home-ice advantage throughout the playoffs. Kuznetsov and Alex Ovechkin assisted on Justin Williams' power-play goal that made it 1-0 in the second period. Then at 5:42 of the third, Kuznetsov took a pass from Marcus Johansson on a two-on-one and fired over Henrik Lundqvist's right pad for his 19th goal of the season. Holtby earned his ninth shutout of the season. Closing with a flourish, the Capitals are 10-1-1 in their last 12 games.

## SABRES 2, CANADIENS 1

Rasmus Ristolainen and Tyler Ennis scored to lead the

Buffalo Sabres to a 2-1 win over the Montreal Canadiens on Wednesday night. Robin Lehner made 31 saves for the Sabres, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Tomas Plekanec scored for Montreal, which had a five-game winning streak come to an end. Carey Price made 28 saves. The Canadiens (46-25-9) previously wrapped up the Atlantic Division title, while the Sabres (33-35-12) were already eliminated from playoff contention.

Ristolainen opened the scoring 6:01 into the game on a shot through traffic from the point. It was his sixth goal of the season. Ennis made it 2-0 with 8:25 remaining in the second. With several players battling to regain the puck in the slot after a shot by Evander Kane, Ennis scooped the puck into the net for his fifth goal of the season. Plekanec got the Canadiens on the board 54 seconds into the third period. Alexander Radulov fed Plekanec to set up a breakaway, and Plekanec's hard deke to his backhand fooled Lehner for Plekanec's 10th goal of the season. — Reuters



ITALIAN CUP

## HIGUAIN TAKES JUVE TO FINAL DESPITE DEFEAT

**ROME:** Juventus striker Gonzalo Higuain scored twice to send former club Napoli crashing out of the Italian Cup semi-finals on a night of bitter emotions on Wednesday. Napoli won the second leg 3-2 but it was little consolation after they had been soundly beaten 3-1 in the first match in Turin as Juventus moved into a final against Lazio.

Whistled and jeered throughout the 1-1 Serie A draw at the same San Paolo ground at the weekend, Argentine star Higuain responded in deadly fashion on Wednesday against the club he controversially quit in the summer. When he opened the scoring in the 32nd minute with a right foot shot, Higuain couldn't disguise his anger at his treatment, running to celebrate in front of the VIP box and Napoli president Aurelio De Laurentiis. Higuain made a gesture to the box, indicating that the Napoli chief was to blame for his departure.

Marek Hamsik leveled for Napoli after 53 minutes before Higuain netted his second just five minutes later from a cross by Juan Cuadrado. Substitute Dries Mertens equalized again for Napoli before Lorenzo Insigne added the winner on the night for the home team even though it proved in vain. The aggregate win gave Juventus a place in the Italian Cup final for the third successive year and on course for a Serie A and Champions League sweep. Next week, Massimiliano Allegri's team face Barcelona in the quarter-finals of Europe's premier club tournament. — AFP



**MADRID:** Real Madrid's Marco Asensio vies for the ball with Leganes' Martin Mantovani (right) during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Leganes and Real Madrid at the Butarque stadium on Wednesday, April 5, 2017. — AP

# REAL REMAIN TOP; BEAT LEGANES 4-2

**BARCELONA:** Real Madrid beat Leganes 4-2 on Wednesday despite resting key players including Cristiano Ronaldo and Gareth Bale as goals from Alvaro Morata and James Rodriguez helped them stay top of La Liga after Barcelona cruised to a 3-0 win over Sevilla. Rodriguez set them on the way to victory with an early goal before Morata scored twice in five minutes to put Real 3-0 up. But Leganes scored twice in quick succession through Gabriel Appelt Pires and Luciano to cut the deficit to 3-2 at halftime.

An own goal by Leganes defender Martin Mantovani just after the break stretched Real's lead and they kept the hosts at arm's length for the remainder of game. The win saw Real recapture top spot from Barcelona, who had provisionally led the standings after beating Sevilla with two goals from Lionel Messi after the opener from Luis Suarez. "It was a bit of a strange game," said Real coach Zinedine Zidane. "We started very well and scored three goals and then we got ourselves into trouble by conceding those two goals. In the end we controlled the second half better by getting the extra goal and we got the three points."

The Frenchman cursed his side for switching off in the first half and briefly allowing Leganes back into the game. "We can't afford to keep doing it, conceding twice (in four minutes) is a big deal. That's why we always need to be looking to improve. It's the great thing about football, you never know what's going to happen." Real's exciting youngster Marco Asensio created the first goal, robbing a Leganes player around the halfway line to embark on a bursting run past three more players before squaring the ball for James to tap in from close range.

### Morata double

Morata got the first of his two goals

three minutes later by arriving at the far post to glance the ball in as Leganes failed to clear a corner and then ran onto a pass from Mateo Kovacic to produce a sweeping finish high into the net in the 23rd. The visitors killed the game in the 48th, having let their guard down in conceding twice, when Leganes' Mantovani swatted the ball into his own net while trying to defend a free-kick.

Real top the table with 71 points, two clear of Barca, and have a game in hand on their arch-rivals as they bid for a first title since 2012. Sevilla, who had Vitolo sent off for a second booking in the 91st minute, are fourth on 58 points. Barca striker Suarez crashed home an emphatic overhead kick in the 25th minute after

a surging run by Messi then teed up the Argentine to knock in the second three minutes later. Messi produced an instinctive volley for Barca's third goal in the 33rd, piling more pain on a Sevilla side who had serious title ambitions just over a month ago but have fallen apart and failed to win in their last six games in all competitions.

The Argentine had also rattled the bar from outside the box early in the game and his brace took his tally to 29 goals in 30 games against Sevilla in all competitions. Messi also leads the Liga scoring charts with 27 goals ahead of Suarez on 24. "It was the first-half performance we had dreamed of," said Barca coach Luis Enrique. — Reuters

## NEWCASTLE TO RETURN TO EPL

**LONDON:** Newcastle returned to the top of the Championship and moved a step closer to an immediate return to the Premier League with a controversial 1-0 victory against Burton Albion on Wednesday. Newcastle thought they had opened the scoring when Matt Ritchie converted a penalty but referee Keith Stroud blew his whistle having spotted an apparent encroachment before the spot kick was taken.

In bizarre circumstances, however, he disallowed the goal rather than order a re-take as the law dictates much to the bewilderment of Newcastle and manager Rafa Benitez. Ritchie finally did open the scoring with a thumping strike in the 68th minute to seal the win. Minutes after the final whistle the Professional Game Match Officials Limited

(PGMOL) - the group which officiates all Premier League, English Football League and Football Association matches-said an apologetic Stroud had "mis-applied" the rule.

"The referee Keith Stroud awarded Newcastle a penalty in the 29th minute. As Matt Ritchie took the kick Dwight Gayle encroached in the penalty area," the PGMOL said in a statement. "An indirect free kick was awarded to Burton but the laws of the game state the penalty should have been re-taken. Unfortunately the referee has mis-applied the law. Keith and his team are understandably upset at the lapse in concentration and apologize for the mistake." Benitez was incensed on the sideline immediately after the incident and exchanged animated words with the fourth official after the final whistle. — Reuters

French Roundup

## LYON BLANK METZ 3-0

**PARIS:** Striker Alexandre Lacazette's 24th league goal of the season helped Lyon win 3-0 at Metz on Wednesday, his team's first away victory of the year. Midfielders Jordan Ferri and Corentin Tolisso - who made his France debut last week - capped Lyon's win with late goals. Fourth-place Lyon's last league success on its travels was a 3-1 win at leader Monaco in December. Last weekend, Lacazette missed a penalty in a 1-1 draw at Rennes. He found his range this time, however, latching onto a fine threaded pass from midfielder Lucas Tousart and finishing confidently in the 59th minute to help Lyon secure a first away win since beating Monaco in December.

Only Edinson Cavani, with 27 league goals, has scored more than Lacazette in what is expected to be his final season in France. Several big European clubs are reported to be interested in signing the 25-year-old center forward, who is rated at more than 50 million euros (\$53 million). Lacazette is closing in on his career best mark of 27 league goals - set two seasons ago - and needs four more to reach 100.

Despite the win, Lyon remains 13 points behind third-place Nice in the quest for a place in the Champions League qualifying rounds. "We have to make sure we hold onto fourth place and keep hoping until the end," Lyon coach Bruno Genesio said. "We play Nice on the last day and even if it seems very difficult (to catch Nice), you never know in football." Lyon's best shot at qualifying for the Champions League is by winning the Europa League, which guarantees a place in Europe's elite competition. Lyon faces Turkish club Besiktas in the first leg of the quarterfinals next week.

Lyon's match against Metz was originally scheduled for the 16th round of matches in early December. But it was suspended after 30 minutes when Metz fans threw numerous firecrackers onto the pitch and Lyon goalkeeper Anthony Lopes was briefly hospitalized with hearing loss. Wednesday's game was behind closed doors as a punishment from the French league, meaning there were no fans allowed inside the Saint-Symphorien stadium. "It's sad to play a match without any fans," Genesio said. "I hope we don't have to play in these conditions again." — AP

### French Cup

Winger Hatem Ben Arfa proved a point to manager Unai Emery with two goals and an assist as Paris Saint-Germain cruised into the French Cup semifinals with a 4-0 win away to third-division Avranches. Last week, Ben Arfa posted a video on social networks expressing his frustration at having limited chances at PSG since joining from Nice after netting 17 league goals last season. "I don't accept my situation," Ben Arfa said on the video, although now he may be thinking differently. — AFP



# BRAZIL TOP FIFA RANKINGS FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 2010

**ZURICH:** Brazil surged to the top of the FIFA world rankings for the first time in seven years yesterday, made all the sweeter as they usurped great rivals Argentina. It caps a terrific week for Neymar and Brazil-last week they became the first country to qualify for the 2018 World Cup in Russia, their latest step on the road to redemption after the embarrassment

and heartache of their World Cup failure on home soil in 2014. Tite's side won 4-1 in Uruguay and 3-0 at home to Paraguay to secure their place in Russia-they have won their last eight qualifiers, scoring 24 goals in the process, and their last nine games including friendlies. Brazil were dumped off top spot after their elimination from the 2010 World

Cup in South Africa in the quarter-finals.

The five-time World Cup winners dominated the world rankings throughout the last two decades but slumped to a record low of 22nd in 2013. Their new surge is in contrast to Argentina and Neymar's Barcelona team-mate Lionel Messi, whose country are in danger of missing out on next year's World Cup. They will not be

able to call on their star man for three of their four remaining qualification matches because of suspension. Third in the newly released rankings are world champions Germany, followed by Chile and Colombia in a South American-dominated top five. Switzerland enter the top 10, up to ninth, with former number ones Spain clinging on in 10th.—AFP

## SOUTHAMPTON OVERTURN PALACE

**LONDON:** Maya Yoshida and James Ward-Prowse scored within a minute of each other in the closing stages to hand Southampton their first home win since January as they came from behind to beat Crystal Palace 3-1 on Wednesday. Both tucked chances away from close range as Southampton finally reaped reward after creating a myriad second-half chances. Defeat for the visitors ended their run of four successive wins, which included victory at leaders Chelsea on Saturday, and saw Palace stay 16th, just three points above the drop zone. Christian Benteke opened the scoring in the 31st minute but, shortly after having a penalty appeal turned down, Southampton equalised when Nathan Redmond finished in the bottom left-hand corner at the end of Steven Davis's delivery. Southampton, whose last success at St Mary's Stadium came against champions Leicester on Jan. 22, saw Ward-Prowse and Shane Long go close as they dominated the second half, despite Palace hitting the crossbar with a hook shot from Martin Kelly in the 65th minute. Japan international Yoshida stole in at the back post to put Southampton ahead in 84th minute after Redmond's trickery and pace set up the chance and then Dusan Tadic delivered an inch-perfect pass less than 60 seconds later for Ward-Prowse to seal the victory.—Reuters

	Southampton	3
	Crystal Palace	1

## THISTLE PROVE THORN AS CELTIC PARTY FALLS FLAT

**GLASGOW:** Newly-crowned champions Celtic dropped points for only the third time this season as they were held to a 1-1 draw by Partick Thistle at Parkhead. The much-changed Glasgow giants, who claimed their sixth Scottish Premiership in a row with a 5-0 hammering of Hearts on Sunday, took a 50th minute lead through Sunday's hat-trick hero Scott Sinclair. Thistle then stunned the home support when Ade Azeez grabbed a 64th minute equalizer. Sinclair missed a chance to win it when his penalty was saved as Thistle held on for a result which tightens their grip on sixth spot and extends their unbeaten run to seven games. Celtic manager Brendan Rodgers had no complaints about the draw.

"We were playing against probably the next best form team in the league along with Aberdeen, so we knew it was always going to be a difficult game for us," Rodgers said. "I felt 1-1 was probably a fair result even though in the first half we had great control." Thistle manager Alan Archibald was delighted after his side took their first point at Celtic Park since 1994. "It looked a long way away in the first half. It was probably our worst performance here in terms of ball retention," Archibald said. "It was much better in the second half. We're not there yet but it's in our own hands." After clinching the championship, it was no surprise that Rodgers rested five key players for the match. However, a few eyebrows were raised at Archibald's decision to make five changes to a side that had gone six games unbeaten. The changes did little to dampen the mood of the Celtic fans packed into Parkhead who were in a celebratory mood, but despite strolling through the game the Hoops did little to get the party going in the initial stages. Eboue Kouassi looked keen to impress on his first start since joining the Hoops in January. However, the 19-year-old was wildly off-target with a strike from distance after he broke forward from the half-way line.—AFP



**LONDON:** Arsenal's Danny Welbeck (left) heads the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and West Ham at the Emirates stadium in London on Wednesday, April 5, 2017. —AP

## ARSENAL REVIVE TOP-FOUR CHALLENGE

	Arsenal	3
	West Ham	0

**LONDON:** Arsenal re-ignited their stuttering top-four challenge, climbing above Manchester United into fifth place, with a 3-0 home victory over West Ham United in the Premier League on Wednesday. Rumors of a fan protest were well founded with many empty seats visible at The Emirates Stadium during an otherwise uneventful first hour which yielded few chances before Mesut Ozil curled in a 58th-minute opener. Theo Walcott doubled the Gunners'

advantage, finishing a slick passing move with a close-range finish 10 minutes later, before Olivier Giroud came off the bench and scored a sublime third to seal his side's second win in seven games.

"We come out of a difficult period and our confidence goes quickly and comes back slowly," Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger told the BBC. "We are in the final sprint in the Premier League and consistency will be very important. We have a little handicap on the points front. We have fewer possibilities to drop points." Arsenal have 54 points from 29 games-four behind Manchester City, who have played a game more, in fourth. West Ham, who suffered a fifth straight loss, are 15th with 33 from 31 and are just five points above third-bottom Swansea City, who they host on

Saturday, and the drop zone.

The Hammers manager Slaven Bilic was given the support of the club's board this week after a poor run of form - which now stretches to five league defeats in a row-that has dragged his side into the midst of the relegation battle. "Of course we are (in a relegation battle). We don't have to hide it," the Croat told the BBC. "It's not being negative, it's being realistic. I told the players to forget today-we have big games ahead of us. It's a massive game against Swansea on Saturday. We are in a fight to keep our Premier League status. We have to start winning games. "To get that confidence back is the key point. One win will change everything for us. Because three points at this stage of the season are massive," he added.— Reuters



# TOTTENHAM STUN SWANSEA



**SWANSEA:** Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino praised his team's "big character" in scoring three late goals to beat Swansea 3-1 and keep alive their Premier League title hopes on Wednesday. Goals in the final 10 minutes from Dele Alli, Son Heung-Min and Christian Eriksen kept them seven points behind leaders Chelsea-

who beat Manchester City 2-1 on Wednesday-but they are now the only realistic challenger.

Swansea had looked to be on course to gain three crucial points towards preserving their elite status having led from the 11th minute courtesy of a rare goal from Wayne Routledge. "We won because we kept going and showed great faith, belief and spirit," said Pochettino. "It was a very difficult game for us. We always knew it would be. "We had control of the game and we showed patience. In the we got the victory our performance deserved. "In the last 15 or 20 minutes we pushed them deeper and deeper. But the most important thing is that we never gave up.

"To create that winning mentality is about showing big character. But you need time to achieve that." The Argentinean said the players

showed they had learned from the painful experiences last season when they were the closest challengers to Leicester but lost their way towards the end of the campaign. "It is true that we needed to learn from last season," said the former Espanyol and Southampton manager. "That was one of the good things from today. Maybe last season, we wouldn't have won that game from that position. But we have got the three points because we believed.

"There were times when in my mind, I thought it was going to be tough to win the game. However, when you are on the bench, you must have confidence and trust in your players. "Yes, it was a massive moment when Son scored. The fact that we had turned things around was huge for us. It was unbelievable. In

that moment, we realized how fantastic the three points was going to be. "I believe that we can win every game that we play between now and the end of the season and then we will see."

For his Swansea counterpart Paul Clement it was a bitter pill to swallow as their defeat sees them slip into the bottom three, two points off Hull, who are now fourth from bottom after a 4-2 home victory over Middlesbrough on Wednesday. "It's a result that is very tough to take for me, the players and the fans," said Clement. "The fact that we came out of the game with nothing, is pretty heartbreaking, to be honest. "Moving on, I think we all need to be encouraged by our performance for a lot of that game. We now need to go again and learn from this." — AFP

## KLOPP 'NEARLY VOMITS'



**LIVERPOOL:** Jurgen Klopp said he felt like being sick after Liverpool conceded a damaging late equalizer in their 2-2 draw against Bournemouth. Klopp's side looked set for a crucial victory in their chase for Champions League football on Wednesday, having recovered from Benik Afobe's early goal to lead 2-1 through finishes from Philippe Coutinho and Divock Origi. It was a sign third placed Liverpool could still find goals in the absence of injured top scorer Sadio Mane.

But there was a setback for Klopp as Coutinho, who was sick in the dressing room at half-time, had to come off with 25 minutes to go. And the manager said that he felt ill himself after Joshua King scored for Bournemouth with three minutes to go at Anfield. Klopp said: "We had to change Phil because he felt sick at half-time. He said he feels better now, so that is good, but it was clear when he made a signal that we had to make a change.

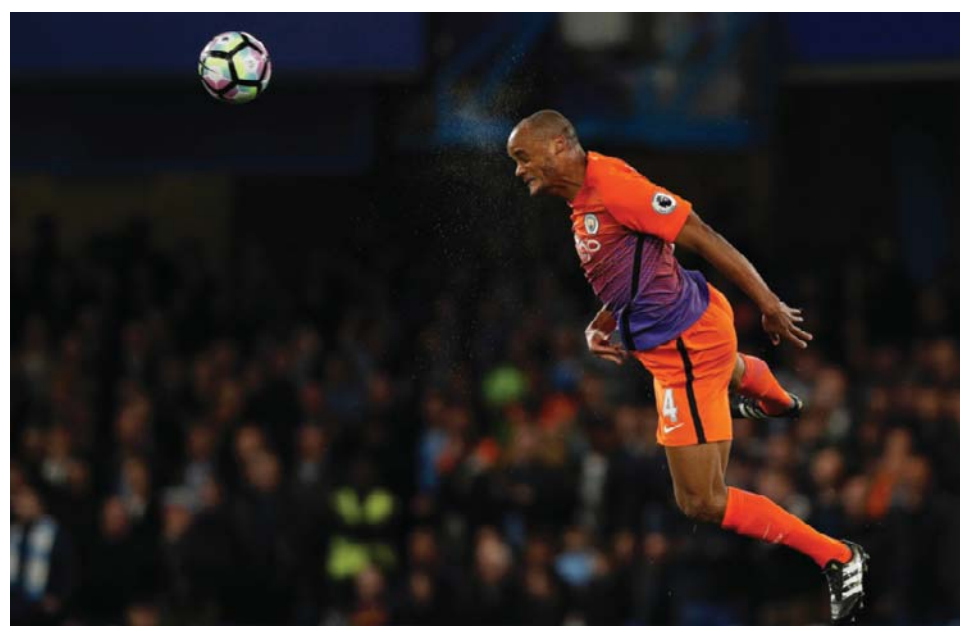
"There's no joy when you have to take off your best player. He played really well. "We could have closed the game in one moment,

but we didn't, we left it open, "Then they scored from the second ball after a set-piece and it made me nearly vomit. "We have to recover. It's one point more than before. It's not what we wanted but we could have been worse. We have lost already games like this this season and today we didn't so maybe that is a positive. "We have to take it. It is my responsibility all of this, I have to be more clear but we will find a solution. Our set-pieces tonight I thought were really good."

### Defensive errors

Liverpool have made a habit of committing defensive errors this season and did so again, as Georginio Wijnaldum's under-hit back pass allowed Afobe to give Bournemouth a seventh-minute lead. Klopp insisted that he took responsibility for any mistakes his players make, adding: "When my son does something that is not right, probably I have some part of the responsibility. I should have explained better. "The bad things are my responsibility, the good things are the responsibility of the players. I think that is a good deal because I have the age to get it."

Bournemouth's point extended their unbeaten run to five matches, and they look increasingly likely to survive in the Premier League. Eddie Howe's side have recovered well from a poor run that brought them just two points from their first seven league matches of 2017. Howe was particularly pleased with the midfield displays of Harry Arter and Jack Wilshere in frustrating Liverpool.—AFP



**BRUSSELS:** Belgium's football national team new head coach Roberto Martinez gives a press conference yesterday at the KBVB-URBSFA Belgian football union headquarters. — AFP

## CONTE SETS CHELSEA 18-POINT TITLE TARGET



**LONDON:** Chelsea will require 18 more points to win the Premier League title, manager Antonio Conte told his players after their 2-1 victory over Manchester City at Stamford Bridge. Chelsea's lead was cut to seven points after they lost 2-1 at home to Crystal Palace at the weekend, but they preserved their advantage over Tottenham Hotspur by seeing off City. Spurs will end the season on 89 points if they win their last eight games and Conte says his side must win six of their remaining fixtures-which would take them to 90 points-to be sure of the title.

"I like to say only the winners write history," he said. "I have intelligent players. When there is the possibility to send some message, I think these players don't need this message. "They know very well the situation. The only message I send them is that we must think Tottenham could win eight games. "For this reason, we must be focused and try to win six games. If we can do this, we will win the title. Otherwise it will be a good season, but not a great season."

With Tottenham having come from behind to win 3-1 at Swansea City, Chelsea's lead would have been cut to four points if they had lost to Manchester City. They took a 10th-minute lead when Eden Hazard scored via a deflection off his Belgium team-mate Vincent Kompany, who made his first City start since January. A loose kick by home goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois-another Belgium international-enabled Sergio Aguero to level for City in the 26th minute. But Fernandinho's trip on Pedro gave Hazard a chance to restore Chelsea's lead from the spot 10 minutes before half-time, which he took at the second attempt after Willy Caballero saved his penalty.

Hazard has now scored 13 goals in all competitions and Conte said: "He's an important player. He's growing in his mentality and I think he's playing a really good season." Chelsea became the first team to secure home-and-away wins in the same season against a side managed by Pep Guardiola, who has lost six games in a league campaign for the first time in his coaching career.

### City '1,000 miles better'

City remain fourth, 14 points below Chelsea, and with Arsenal and Manchester United hot on their heels-both four points back with a game in hand-Guardiola knows they face a scrap for a top-four finish. "Today the Premier League has gone," Guardiola said. "We have to think about the last seven, eight games left to get in the Champions League." —AFP

## HULL LIMP OUT OF RELEGATION ZONE



**HULL:** Hull gave its Premier League survival hopes a lift and pushed Middlesbrough closer to the drop with a 4-2 victory in a pulsating game between two relegation-threatened teams on Wednesday. Hull recovered from conceding in the fifth minute

to pick up its fifth victory in six unbeaten home games since coach Marco Silva was hired in early January. It's a record at KCOM Stadium that could keep Silva's team up, with the win seeing Hull climb out of the relegation zone at Swansea's expense. Swansea conceded three late goals to lose 3-1 to Tottenham on Wednesday. After Alvaro Negredo's opener, Lazar Markovic, Oumar Niasse and Abel Hernandez replied for Hull to leave the hosts 3-1 up by the 33rd. Maarten de Roon pulled a goal back for Middlesbrough in first-half stoppage time but Harry Maguire's header from a free kick in the 70th restored Hull's two-goal cushion. Middlesbrough stayed next to last, seven points adrift of safety. — AP





Sebastien Ogier (FRA) performs during the FIA World Rally Championship 2017 in Bastia, France yesterday.

## WRC ON RED BULL TV: RALLY FRANCE TOUR DE CORSE

HOLD ON TIGHT, DAKAR STAR CYRIL DESPRES IS ABOUT TO TAKE YOU ON A RIDE YOU WON'T FORGET!

**F**ive-time Dakar winner Cyril Despres from France is Red Bull TV's guest reporter on the fourth round of the World Rally Championship: the legendary Tour de Corse in Corsica, which is the first pure Tarmac event of the season, nicknamed 'the Rally of 10,000 Corners'. That is because of the endless series of hairpin bends on the stunning mountain stages, through some of the most breath-taking scenery on the calendar. The cars are low to the ground in asphalt specification, hugging

the narrow roads to conquer the mountains overlooking the Mediterranean at speeds you will not believe.

It is something of a contrast to the vast and arid deserts that Cyril is best known for. The Frenchman dominated the epic Dakar Rally on motorbikes, before switching to cars three years ago as part of Peugeot's 'Dream Team'. He is now teammates with the most successful rally driver in history – Sebastien Loeb – and finished just behind the nine-time champion on the podi-

um of this year's Dakar Rally in January after nearly 10,000 kilometres of competition. Cyril also tested a World Rally Car last year, showing plenty of pace even when there was no sand to be seen.

Therefore, it is clear that he knows a bit about the World Rally Championship too. The 43-year-old is a frequent visitor to Corsica on holiday, where he loves to ride bikes both with and without engines through the incredible landscapes. He knows the place off by heart –



The five time winner of the Dakar Rally on 2 wheels, now 4 wheel driver with Team Peugeot Total is confirmed as RBTV guest reporter for the Tour de Corse.



Sebastien Loeb the most successful rally driver in history.



just check out his restaurant tips – making this adventurous Frenchman your perfect guide to his home rally. Watch it all on Red Bull TV.

**Cyril Despres: Five-time winner of the Dakar Rally!**

**Name:** Cyril Despres

**Date of Birth:** January 24 1974

**Nationality:** French

**Machine:** KTM 450 Rally

**Debut:** 2000 Dakar (Senegal) to Cairo (Egypt). Finished 16th

**Best Dakar:** Four-time champion (2005, 2007, 2010, 2012)

Unlike many of the Dakar champions that have come before him, Cyril didn't grow up in a family with an established love of motorsport. Cyril's inspiration came instead from watching a friend riding in motocross competitions.

Once Cyril caught the biking bug, he soon set his sights on the ultimate challenge, the Dakar Rally. Through sheer determination, Cyril got himself to the start line of the first Dakar of the new millennium. An impressive 16th place finish



Cyril Despres (FRA) of Team Peugeot TOTAL seen after stage 11 of Rally Dakar 2017 from San Juan to Rio Cuarto, Argentina on January 13, 2017.



Cyril Despres (FRA) of team Peugeot TOTAL is seen during the Rally Dakar 2017 technical verification in Asuncion.

saw him rewarded with a contract to race for BMW.

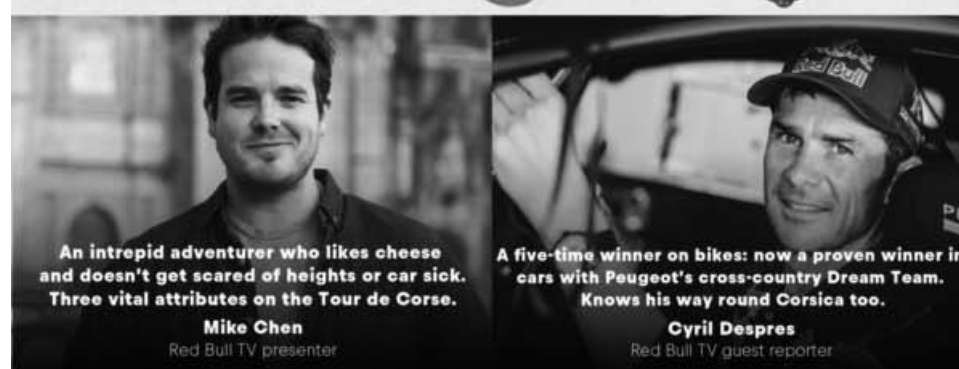
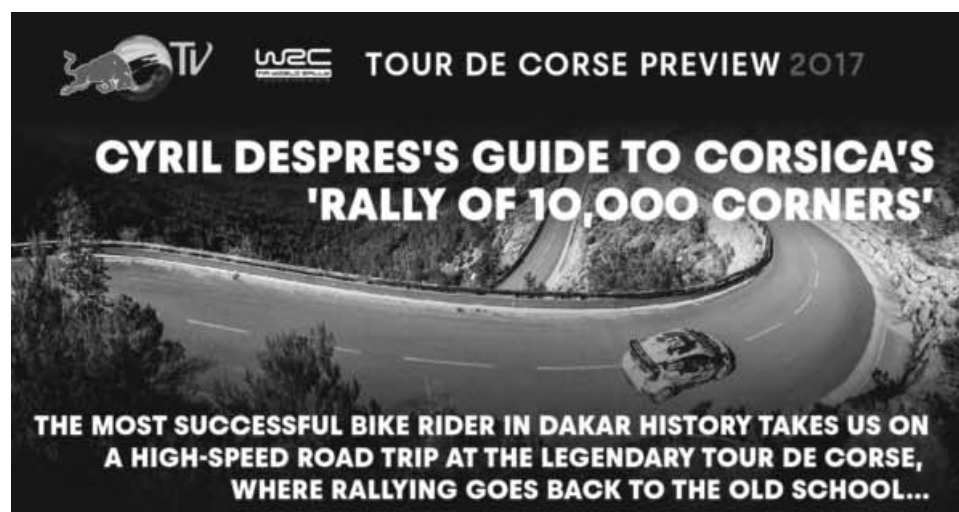
Cyril enhanced his reputation as a star of the future in the next few editions of the Dakar as he started to win stages and got himself onto the podium. In 2005, now riding with KTM, Cyril won his first Dakar Rally. The fact Cyril only won two stages on the route between Barcelona and Dakar demonstrates the Frenchman's intuitive knowledge of the tactical side of the race.

In 2007 Cyril won the last Dakar Rally to be staged in Africa and he also tasted success in South America with his 2010 title. Cyril's natural charisma sees race fans get behind him wherever he goes in the world.

2012 got off to a perfect start for Cyril as he claimed his fourth Dakar Rally crown. However, the majority of remaining months of the year were spent recovering from a series of injuries until he got back on his bike in October to win his fourth Rallye du Maroc. The victory proved to all his competitors' one thing, Cyril is back and he means business.



Red Bull TV Host Mike Chen



BROADCAST SCHEDULE		
HIGHLIGHT SHOW (30min)	Friday 7 April	22:00 local time (CEST)
LIVE COVERAGE (90min)	Saturday 8 April	15:50 (CEST)
HIGHLIGHT SHOW (30min)	Saturday 8 April	22:00 (CEST)
HIGHLIGHT SHOW (30min)	Sunday 9 April	22:00 (CEST)

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FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2017

MADRID: Real Madrid's James Rodriguez (top) vies for the ball with Leganes' Martin Mantovani during a Spanish La Liga soccer match between Leganes and Real Madrid at the Butarque stadium in Madrid on Wednesday, April 5, 2017. — AP

# REAL REMAIN TOP; BEAT LEGANES 4-2