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## A CHAT WITH YOUTUBE SENSATION ADAM SALEH

By Faten Omar

### Kuwait Times Exclusive Interview

If creativity were a person, it'd be manifested in YouTubers Adam Saleh and Slim Al-Baher. Kuwait Times had a chance to chat exclusively with the famous prankster Saleh and comedian Baher, to learn more about their recent visit to Kuwait City.

This reporter met Saleh and Al-Baher at a venue in Mirqab just after their third of four sold-out shows. Youthful, excited fans surrounded the two performers, snapping selfies, asking for autographs, talking and laughing. Saleh, a 23-year-old American YouTube personality, vlogger, actor and rapper from New York, (originally from Yemen) is the big draw. He commands more than 1.8 million viewers on YouTube and has 1.3 million followers on Instagram.

Known as a prankster, Saleh actually incorporates many positive messages into his show, including diversity, inclusion, respect for parents and Islam.

Saleh and comedian partner Baher started making videos in 2012 for their YouTube channel for fun when they were 18 years old. But the duo's pranks quickly went viral. Saleh's most popular videos on his online channel are 'Killer Clown Prank Gone Wrong' with 32,780,267 views, 'Street Boxing Match' with 12,378,412 views and 'Zombie Prank Gone Wrong' with

8,553,597 views. Visiting Kuwait, the duo performed a modern version of a variety show with a heart. For starters, Saleh performs with his niece Reema Saleh, vlogger of TrueStoryASA and his family also traveled with him to Kuwait. "The four-day show is a mixture of comedy, dancing and acting. Reema will also sing and dance. We interact with the audience and teach them a valuable lessons," Adam explained.

Adam told Kuwait Times that the audience attended from different ages "The children love Reema, and the elders love my pranks on my father." About Kuwait, Slim said, "Coming back to Kuwait was a dream come true to my father, he used to work in Kuwait 30 years ago." He was amazed by the hospitality and generosity of people of Kuwait.

### The prankster gets pranked

While here, Saleh got a taste of his own medicine. "Police officers stopped us and they asked for our passports which we did not have it with us that time. We were scared that our driver did something wrong. After that we discovered that it is a prank. And we fell for it."

Saleh is no stranger to abuses of authority. In

December 2016, he was kicked off a Delta Airlines Flight simply for speaking Arabic.

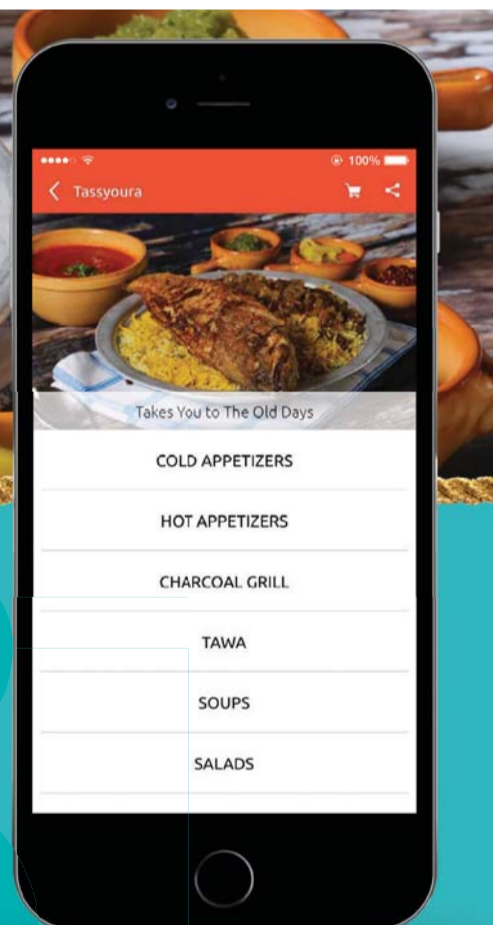
"I just asked Slim to move his bag, spoke with my mother on the phone because she had not seen me for a month. We always speak Arabic with each other but that time a woman decides that she felt "uncomfortable" with us speaking Arabic. I told her to relax and explained to her that I spoke Arabic because we just came from UAE but her husband started to insult us and telling us to leave the plane," Saleh said.

"Being kicked out because of our language made us feel scared and insecure because we did not do anything wrong. Although some passengers defended us but the media chose to interview the people who kicked us off instead," Saleh told the Kuwait Times.

Baher also noted that some US media make a point of making Muslims look bad to continue stirring fear in America. "They accused us that we did speak Arabic for a prank to scare people! We was not filming even on the plane and we usually use our professional camera." Tomorrow, Saleh and Baher head over to Dubai for another performance and its off for a North American tour that includes shows in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Orlando Area, Charlotte, Washington DC, New York, Montreal, Toronto, Dearborn, Chicago, Minneapolis, Dallas and Houston.



YouTube prankster Adam Saleh met with the Kuwait Times yesterday for an exclusive interview during his visit to Kuwait. — Photo by Joseph Shagra



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Photo of Kuwait City seen from Salmiya with the Green Island in the foreground. — Kuna

## KUWAIT'S DEVELOPMENT GOALS: LOOKING BENEATH THE SURFACE

By Sana Kalim

At times, it is not anger that motivates us. Sometimes it's just acknowledging how far we have come in terms of progress. And we have come quite far. Countries all over the globe have made a set of goals, coming up with a very ambitious list. The targets matter. The Sustainable Development Goals are for a better tomorrow, for everyone. And here they are in all their glory:

**1- No poverty:** Nobody anywhere should live in a way where survival is their only option day in and day out - and feel like they are only alive hoping for a day of freedom that never arrives.

Kuwait has a budget surplus of \$13 billion with \$52,197 being the GDP per capita (the amount of money per person in Kuwait), so poverty isn't an issue, right? However, 500,000 citizens live in rented houses. Moreover, 106,000 people have applied for a government-provided house and are still waiting. This refers to the 10th goal of Kuwait - inequality within citizens - as money hasn't been dispersed between each and every individual equally.

Most organizations such as WHO or UNICEF refer to Kuwait as having an insignificant amount of poverty. However, online blogs and Q&A websites suggest otherwise. Columnist Thaar Al-Rashidi has claimed that 90 percent of Kuwait's citizens are poverty-stricken, even with high salaries. He went on to say that the problem is that rents are too high, installment payments are too high and there are in general "soaring prices right under the government's nose and with its consensus". "In fact, we are experiencing intentional poverty on the last 15 days of each month!" he concluded. All in all, poverty depends on the individual you ask in Kuwait, or maybe we have all been spoiled by the wealth of Kuwait.

**2- Zero hunger:** No one shall wake up wondering whether or not they will have food today.

Just like money, Kuwait also has a surplus of food imports. Especially with the Amiri grant in 2011, it is clear that we have more than enough food! Thank God that we haven't had a hunger issue within Kuwait. Obesity levels within the country have been rising, proof being that Kuwait is the 4th 'fattest' country in the world! We know this because Kuwait has the

highest rate of stomach stapling surgeries, after which people still continue with their unhealthy diets - just at a lower amount. In a more positive light, there have been more walking paths built, and I have seen a lot more people playing during sporting events, which is very prideful to see!

**3- Access to good health and wellbeing:** We shall live in a world where no child dies of diseases we know how to cure, and healthcare is a lifelong right for everyone.

Continuing on from the second goal - the only major health issue within Kuwait is obesity, respiratory problems and a rising rate of mental health problems. According to a report from the European University Institute, more than four out of every 10 Kuwaitis are affected by obesity - the highest rate in the world. Another health problem is the degradation of the lungs. Respiratory problems come from a multitude of sources - from the dusty environment of Kuwait now with the addition of smoke particles, or just the population smoking a lot due to culture (shisha), habit or depression.

According to an article by Muna Al-Fuzai on the 'Health situation in Kuwait', she discusses a report by KUNA called 'Social Cohesion: National Pillar' and states: "It is certainly sad that in spite of massive spending on healthcare that exceeds KD 5 billion, a shortage of beds and tired facilities as well as many other obstacles are hindering the healthy development of the country." She goes on to state that the government spent around KD 17 billion during the 2015/16 fiscal year, so a clear increase in healthcare spending has been shown. Good job Kuwait, but keep on going!

**4- Quality education:** Where proper education provides us with a fulfilling life.

Quality education within Kuwait is quite remarkable in contrast to neighboring regions. As of 2006, 13 percent of all government expenditure had been used for quality education. The country houses some of the most remarkable university institutes in the world, and 94 percent of the population is educated, with efforts from the ministry to incorporate women into the system. It's all wonderful - however, what about people who have learning disabilities? What about expats whose children have learning disabilities?

**5- Gender Equality:** Where both men and women have an

equal opportunity to be safe, to live and be powerful. We cannot succeed when half the world is silent.

Stats from UNICEF indicate that on gender equality, Kuwait was ranked 105 in the world as of 2010, with continued support year after year to bring more women into the workforce, with over 80 percent women entering secondary school compared to over 77 percent of men. But we only have 45 percent of women entering the labor market, versus an overwhelming 83 percent of men, so where are our women? Our maternity leaves are 70 days long with 100 percent wages covered, which is one of the highest in the world. This may just be due to the tradition here in Kuwait, where mothers have to stay at home to take care of children, whilst men go out and work.

**6- Clean water and sanitation:** Where everyone can get clean water at home, at school and at work.

The population with access to safe water is around 99 percent and this has stayed consistent for the past 10 years. Moreover, sanitation is present to 100 percent of the population for the previous years - no improvement required here!

**7- Affordable and clean energy:** We live in a world where there is sustainable energy for everyone. There is heat, light and power for the whole world. Without destroying the planet.

Kuwait is on record for raising carbon dioxide emissions by over 34 percent from 2004 to 2013. According to the IEA, Kuwait was the 9th top exporter of oil in 2009. An aim for 2030 is to ensure that 15 percent of the country's consumption is from renewable energy resources such as solar or wind - to lead us away from harmful, non-renewable sources as agreed upon by an environmental council which included the Director General of Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) Samira Ahmad Omar and former Education Minister Bader Hamad Al-Essa in April 2016.

Here is where I stop, for the list has started to morph into a lengthy essay! In Kuwait, we have developed year after year at an astonishing rate - it's always helpful to look back at our growth as a nation to find points to improve upon. Let's make it happen!

Here are the specifics on the Global Goals:  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

OPEN LETTER

## DEAR MEN: IN HONOR OF DINA ALI



By Nejouad Al-Yagout

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When men in the world cannot coexist with women, we are left with tragic stories such as that of Dina Ali, who sought asylum in Australia but was turned back from the Philippines. I salute Dina for awakening to the horrors of a patriarchal system that thrives on subjugating women. But my heart is breaking at the thought that we are helpless when it comes to saving her. There must be a way. There must.

I say no to patriarchy! No. This is unacceptable. We can no longer inhabit a patriarchal matrix where men think they are superior to women, abuse women, veil women, treat women as property and monitor the whereabouts of women. It may have worked in the past, but the world is experiencing a mass awakening. And so, during our shift in consciousness, this is an

appeal to all men who disagree with the system in place to speak out, to assist us, to do something - anything - indicating support. So many of you support us, but we need you to make your voices louder. We need you to defend us in the public sphere.

This is no longer about women vs men - this is about human souls taking care of one another; especially, since, in many cases, women in this region are imprisoned or flogged or locked in rooms (at best) for speaking out. So we need you to defend us. Say something!

Men for Dina Ali. Men for women. All women. Everywhere.

We need you now more than ever.

Nejouad Al Yagout - Photo by Djinane Alsuwayeh

Local Spotlight

## TEACHERS, STOP BEATING!



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Two separate nasty school incidents took place recently. The first was a video showing a teacher beating and yelling at a schoolgirl. The second incident was the beating of a teacher at the hands of a mother of a student. Both incidents took place within a week at different locations. Video of the first incident was published on social media, showing the teacher hitting the student with a book and calling her an animal. The other incident was in the news later in the week.

Both crimes stirred public opinion. While everyone wondered about the causes of the attacks, many did not seem to raise the question over the reasons for the tense relationship between the two parties and the collapse of etiquette and respect among them. Is it right for a professor to hit the student in the event of an error or not being able to cope with his classmates? We all know that corporal punishment, in addition to its physical damages, has a bad psychological impact that can affect the student's performance. He/she would end up hating the subject itself. I am against beatings in schools or outside, whether by a teacher or a guardian.

It is not appropriate for a teacher to insult a student and physically attack them for any reason, and a parent should not attack their child's teacher due to dissatisfaction with their performance. Such incidents are shameful and disgraceful to all. Social media erupted in a heated debate after the first video went viral. Everyone called on the ministry of education to take legal action against the teacher. The investigation committee of the ministry of education decided to prevent the teacher from reporting to work, meaning she lost her job. The teacher who was attacked by the parent filed an official complaint with the police.

School kids are often severely beaten, especially in elementary grade, without a reason. I believe a wrong answer given by the student could be due to the professor himself and due to his failure to deliver the correct information. Since teachers are legally prohibited from beating students, cursing and yelling has become the norm, and the victims are students.

When teachers fail, they do not admit their failure, and the psychological tension they experience often drives them into a maddening rage, so they scream and hit the students as a way to release the pressure. This is insulting, so don't blame the students when they hate school and have bad morals. The teacher who insults his students must realize that his students are insulting him as well.

The recurrence of these crimes in and out of school, whether by teachers or others, is a clear evidence of a serious problem in the community, public behavior, educational system, school management and the decline of ethics between the two. I don't think these attacks will be the last, and unless we do something about it, we will keep seeing more and more of it.

IN MY VIEW

## THE NTH LANGUAGE



By Nawaf Al-Arbash

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From writing, to typewriting, to SMS and email, we have now settled for the use of graphic emojis, a visual language that requires no literacy, but merely the bliss of eyesight.

We all have a mother tongue, and some have the privilege of being able to speak a second language; others even three to four languages, and so on. Therefore, the nth language is a default language that many of us - commonly - are capable of, in addition to however many other languages we know. All existing languages in the world have their grammatical and punctuational engineering - the do's and don'ts - a complete deep infrastructure that only great linguists can explain more wisely than I.

Emotional icons (emoticons or emojis), embedding emotional messages in numerical figures or letter abbreviations, go way back in history (ancient Egypt and Rome), where they were used for different purposes - mostly expressing the emotion at the time of writing or dictating the text.

From writing, to typewriting, to SMS and email, we have now settled for the use of graphic emojis, a visual language that requires no literacy, but merely the bliss of eyesight. Or does it? Being a heavy "texter" since the good old Nokia days, I have grown quite a spidey-sense when it comes to reading into, or in between the lines, of a text message containing emojis. Trust me - they're not always what they seem to be!

It's quite ironic that throughout the centuries, a language has been developed that - ideally - should not require any competency to be used, yet the emotional

states of people pushes them to justify or intend using very clear characters to mean something totally different. You will run into some people that actually use the most classic smiley face of all time ":-)" as an indication of a bad attitude, or a sort of anger. Other people will "love" or "hate" using some icons, which ironically means people are having mixed emotions about the icons representing their emotions!

This has and will always cause some dilemmas in communication, because an electronic-text conversation can go from north to south because of a wrongly interpreted emoji. Words have started to become a pale wall, with emojis being the paint of that wall. Some will like the color, others will not, regardless of the content of the text itself.

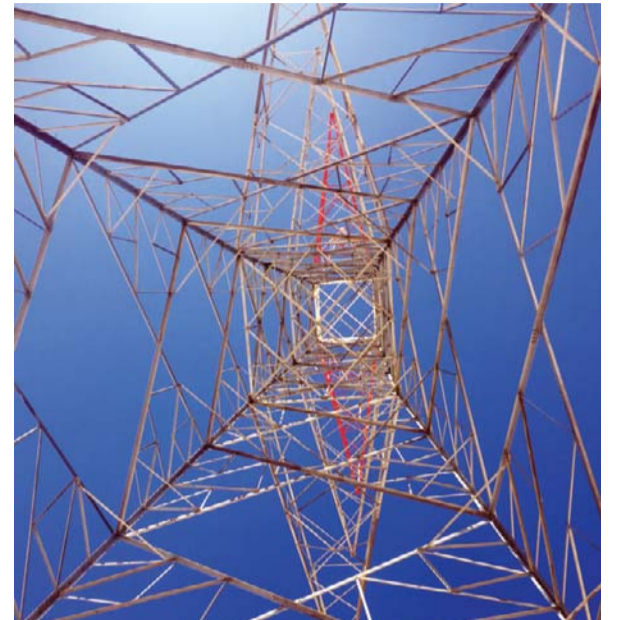
I once wrote a lengthy WhatsApp message explaining to a person that the actions they have done are not acceptable, and that we will be holding their payment until they take corrective action. I followed that text with an ":-)" icon, which to me meant: I am upset, and this is not OK, though the response I got was something along the lines of "I appreciate your sportsmanship about this issue".

Be careful of what emoticon you use, and who you are sending it to. One can send a message followed by an emoji that can be visually interpreted by the other person like: A clown attending a funeral! :D

PHOTO ESSAY

# Giant robots in the desert





#### Photos and story by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

**A**long the road leading to Wafra farms, gravel scatters from speeding cars and sand accumulates like rising, nude-colored clouds. Herds of goats and camels graze in the desert, behind makeshift mobile stalls selling animal feed and construction material. On the other side, water towers have been built to serve the new Sabah Al-Ahmad residential city, along with pylons to provide electricity to the area.

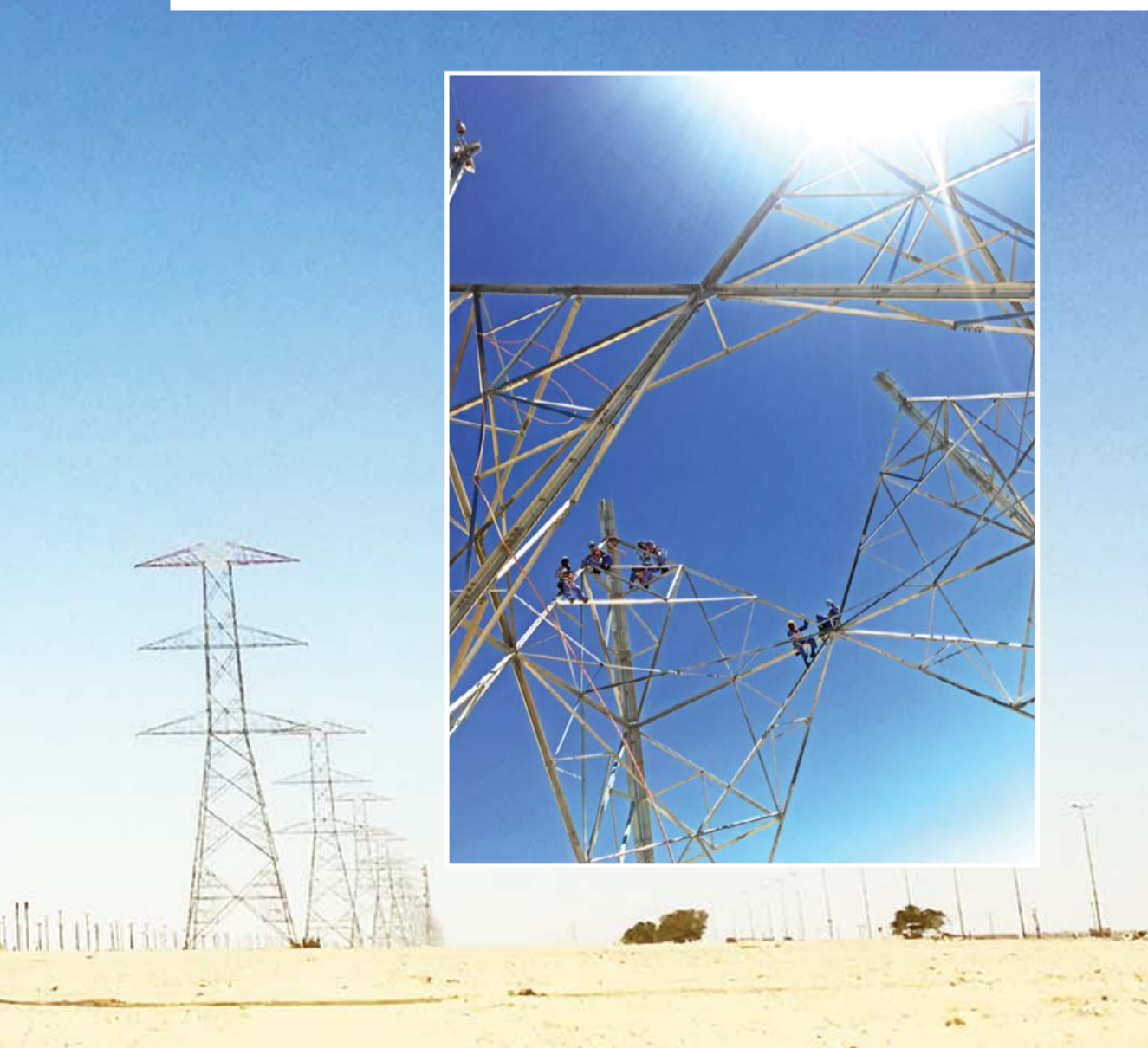
The installation of electricity pylons requires a high level of aerobic skills - workmen should be able to climb and dangle in the air like circus acrobats. But

sometimes, they need to work close to the road, which makes them susceptible to the flying gravel. In fact, this is what happened during my photo shoot. Due to a strong wind lash from a passing truck, my sunglasses were blown from my face, which made me realize that helmets alone are not enough for protection. Workmen have to cover their faces with scarves to shield them from flying debris.

This was the first time I witnessed a pylon installation process. Twelve to 14 men operate on each tower, which are constructed in phases. Initially, the solid concrete bases of the tower are built over two to three days. The construction period of each tower differs - however, the con-

tractors have to complete the entire project according to the deadline.

An American photographer visited Kuwait last year for the first time, and was my guest. On our way to her apartment, she was astounded by these electricity pylons that caught her eye. "They look like combat robots - I wish I had the time to photograph them!" she exclaimed. We neglect the value and the beauty of things around us and take them for granted. When was the last time you tried to look at the world with awe and an eye full of wonder?





KUWAIT: Italian Anti-Submarine Navy ship 'Carabiniere' is currently docked at the Shuwaikh Port. Guisepe Scognamiglio, the Italian Ambassador to Kuwait welcomed the crew at port and organized a tour at the area. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

# ITALY ANTI-SUBMARINE SHIP 'CARABINIERE' VISITS KUWAIT

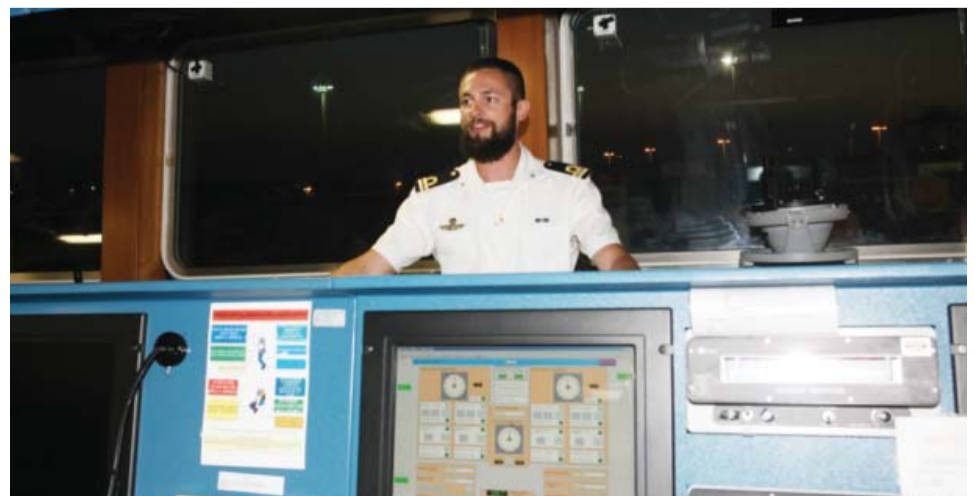
By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** An Italian anti-submarine navy ship 'Carabiniere' is currently docked at the country's premier port, Shuwaikh Port as part of its tour to the GCC and Southeast Asia regions as well as Australia. The 5-day goodwill visit is aimed at strengthening cooperation. Yesterday, the commander of the Navy Frigate Francesco Pagnotta organized a media tour and paraded various equipments including rescue rubber boats, several high-powered military equipments including anti-missile systems, torpedoes, choppers and other combat systems.

"The Carabiniere has cruised all over the world - but during the last four months we have visited countries like Australia, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, Pakistan and Oman. We left Italian waters around December 20 last year - and we shall conclude this mission by June. This ship was delivered to us in April 2015," the commander

said. "Our mission is to strengthen cooperation with some trans-regional allies and develop relations with potential partners. In addition, we also hope to strengthen naval diplomacy, maritime safety and surveillance," he added. Pagnotta has a degree in Maritime Sciences and Bachelors Degree in Electronic Engineering.

On Italy-Kuwait naval cooperation, he said, "we have no agreements signed so far, but in due time we will - hopefully. But to tell you frankly, we are working closely with local authorities especially with our counterparts," he said. Italian Ambassador to Kuwait Guisepe Scognamiglio said that the navy ship's mission is very important for his country to be able to showcase the excellence and the might of Italian warships and its latest technology. The deployment of the ship has been organized with the support of sponsors like Fincantieri, Leonardo, MBDA Italia, Electronica and Telespazio. This is the fourth of its kind.



# AL-BARRACK RELEASED TODAY?

By Jamie Etheridge

**KUWAIT:** Powerful opposition leader and ex MP Musallem Al-Barrack is scheduled to be released from prison today, following Friday prayers. Al-Barrack served two years in jail for comments deemed insulting and undermining the status of His Highness Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Unconfirmed reports suggest that his supporters would greet Al-Barrack's release with a rally march from the

Central Prison to Al-Andalus. The Interior Ministry issued no statement in regard to the ex-lawmaker's release and when asked, did not confirm nor deny any plans for the release.

But the US Embassy in Kuwait yesterday warned American citizens of possible "localized demonstrations" in Al-Andalous area, where Al-Barrack's home and headquarters are located. "Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and escalate into violence," the US notice advised,

warning its citizens to "avoid areas of demonstrations, and exercise caution if in the vicinity of any large gatherings, protests, or demonstrations." The fiery leader of the Popular Action Bloc served six consecutive terms in the Kuwait parliament (1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, 2009 and 2012) before his imprisonment. He remains a well-known and popular opposition figure. In the February 2012 polls, he made Kuwait history by receiving 30,118 votes, the highest figure ever for a parliamentary candidate.



Musallem Al-Barrack



## ACCIDENT KILLS ONE

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** An Arab expat was killed while two others were injured during a horrific car accident between two trucks on Kabd road near the vegetable market. Kabd firemen rushed to the scene and handed the injured persons to the paramedics.

### Expat hangs himself

An Indian expat hanged himself in Rawdhatain area. Qashaniya police are investigating the mystery surrounding his death.

### 'Recruitment courses'

Kuwait Fire Service Directorate held a ceremony to distribute 'Recruitment Courses' certificates for 2016/2017 training season under the patronage of Deputy Director General for Human Resources Development Sector Maj Gen Eng Khalid Al-Terkait. Maj General Al-Terkait welcomed the participants, companies and the trainers.

## KUWAIT SOUNDS ALARM BELL ON WATER SCARCITY

**MANAMA:** A member of the Kuwaiti parliament Hamdan Al-Azmi yesterday called for protecting water resources in the GCC and minimizing dependence on desalinated water. Waters in the Arabian Gulf have been contaminated due to excessive usage of fertilizers and pesticides, thus hiking treatment costs, the Kuwaiti MP said, speaking at a forum held by the Bahraini parliament on "concerns for water and food security in the GCC states." He called for the implementation of guidelines by the World Bank on employing modern irrigation technology, using salty water for irrigation and growing new plant species that need less water and rationalizing consumption. Moreover, GCC governments should adopt scientific research to find alternative resources, he suggested. NGOs and civil societies should be involved in the governments' approach for coping with water scarcity. Annual water consumption per capita in the GCC is estimated at 150 cubic meters, "putting the region below the line of water poverty," he opines. He mentioned another challenge at this level, population growth, fearing that the per capita share might drop to 50 cm by 2050. — KUNA

## MP ADASANI CRITICIZES GOVT ECONOMIC POLICY

### HUMAN RIGHTS PANEL TO ISSUE KUWAIT RIGHTS REPORT

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** MP Riyadh Al-Adasani yesterday strongly criticized the government economic policies especially its decision to borrow to finance the budget deficit resulting from low oil revenues. He said that the government has issued bonds in the international market worth \$8 billion and it is not clear how it intends to use them, adding that five public establishments have been holding profits worth KD 20 billion in cash without transferring them to public finances. He said that the government should have utilized part of the funds instead of issuing bonds, adding that the government intends to raise the borrowing ceiling to

around KD 20 billion shortly.

The lawmaker, who filed along with MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri to grill the Prime Minister rejected any attempt by the government to scrap the grilling or to debate it behind closed doors. He said the grilling is 100 percent constitutional as it deals with the premier responsibilities in supervising the state's public policies. Adasani said that hiking prices of essential commodities will not resolve the problem but will complicate it as it is not acceptable to tax the people to finance the budget deficit. He said that if lawmakers give the prime minister more time without grilling him, the level of corruption in the country will only increase. In the meantime, head of the

National Assembly Human Rights committee MP Adel Al-Damkhi said the panel has drawn the main framework for the annual report on human rights conditions in the country. He said the report will cover issues on public freedoms, the freedom of speech and expression, trafficking in persons and Kuwait's commitments for the UN human rights council. He said the report will also cover the rights of stateless people or Bedouns, the rights of workers, the conditions of prisons and detention centers, the rights of women and children and backing Kuwait for applying the death penalty. Damkhi said that it is not necessary that the report will be all positive as it will contain some positive aspects.

## EXTREMISM: GREATEST THREAT FACING GCC

**MANAMA:** Kuwait's Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri said the greatest threat facing the Gulf communities is the extremist ideology. "The GCC citizens are in dire need of guidance and enlightened thought and this is what the ministries of Awqaf (religious endowments) do," the minister said. Al-Jabri made the comments following the fourth meeting of the GCC Ministers of Awqaf and Islamic affairs.

The meeting focused on how to join forces against the threats of extremism and terrorism through correct religious discourse and sermons at mosques, he pointed out. Al-Jabri noted that the delegation of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs to the ministerial meeting suggested launching a regional mechanism for promotion of tolerance and moderation as a means of combating extremism. He highlighted the need to make con-

certed efforts to guide youth in the Gulf region and immunize them against extremism ideology.

### Peaceful settlement

In another development, Russia and Kuwait have emphasized the need of speeding up political and diplomatic settlement of the conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). This announcement came at the conclusion of the fourth round of the Kuwait-Russian political consultations between Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Suleiman Al-Jarallah and Russian Deputy Foreign Minister and Special Presidential Envoy for the Middle East and North Africa Mikhail Bogdanov.

The two sides mulled thoroughly the developments in MENA, particularly in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as well as the Gulf-Iranian ties, said Russian Foreign Ministry in a statement. Both Al-Jarallah and Bogdanov called for

addressing necessarily these conflicts through negotiations, with abidance by relevant international legal provisions, it said. The two officials also reiterated the need for firmly combating terrorism, the statement added.

They discussed matters related to the Kuwaiti-Russian developed relations, including the current and periodic contacts as part of the strategic dialogue between Russia and GCC states, according to the statement. Al-Jarallah and Bagdanov also touched upon steps aiming to enhance bilateral cooperation in the areas of energy and transportation as well as others issues of common concern. Assistant Foreign Minister for Europe Affairs Ambassador Waleed Al-Khubaizi, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Foreign Minister's Office Affairs Ambassador Ayham Al-Omar and Kuwait Ambassador to Russia Abdulaziz Al-Adwani attended the meeting. — Agencies



**KUWAIT:** The Amiri Diwan's Arabian Horse Center, also known as (Bait Al-Arab), plays a vital role in preserving breeds of Arab horses through hosting and organizing events that displayed the horses' beautiful and elegant frames. In this regard, the center will organize a special show soon for 14 horses born in 2016-17 season as part of the efforts to highlight the skills of Arabian horses. The center also plays a critical role in improving Kuwaiti horse trainers via hosting courses and workshops related to Arab horses' needs.— KUNA

# KUWAIT'S TRADE SURPLUS WITH JAPAN JUMPS 61.1%

## STOCKS DEEMED INACTIVE MAKE RIPPLES AT KUWAIT BOURSE

**TOKYO:** Kuwait's trade surplus with Japan sharply expanded by 61.1 percent from a year earlier to JPY 47.2 billion (\$434 million) in March, up for the third month in a row, led by continued brisk exports, the Japanese Finance Ministry said yesterday. Kuwaiti overall exports to Japan soared 28.8 percent year-on-year to JPY 60.1 billion (\$552 million) for the third consecutive month of expansion, the ministry said in a preliminary report. Imports from Japan fell 25.8 percent to JPY 12.8 billion (\$118 million), down for the seventh straight month. As a result, Kuwait maintained monthly black ink with Japan for nine years and two months, it said.

Middle East's trade surplus with Japan surged 85.7 percent to JPY 565.3 billion (\$5.2 billion) last month, with Japan-bound exports from the region jumping 45.5 percent from a year earlier. Crude oil, refined products, liquefied natural gas (LNG) and other natural resources, which accounted for 96.0 per-

cent of the region's total exports to Japan, grew 47.4 percent. The region's overall imports from Japan declined 2.6 percent, due to weaker demand for vehicle and machinery.

The world's third-biggest economy logged a global trade surplus of JPY 614.7 billion (\$5.6 billion) in March for the second straight month, as car parts to the US and China increased. Exports grew 12 percent from the year before, while imports rose 15.8 percent for the steepest increase since March 2014, with the value of crude oil surging 45.7 percent. Deficit with China, Japan's biggest trade partner, shrank 9.2 percent to 319.8 billion yen (\$2.9 billion). The trade data are measured on a customs-cleared basis before adjustment for seasonal factors.

### Kuwait bourse

Meanwhile, stocks deemed inactive proved dynamic in the passing week sessions' trades, coupled with specula-

tions covering stocks of most companies. The week's sessions witnessed pressure on 50-100 filis chips. Moreover, they were largely affected with companies' financial revelations for the year Q1. The banking sector turned bullish due to posting profits. Furthermore, the market was influenced with regional geopolitical factors, unsteady oil prices, fluctuating Gulf and international markets, thus affecting the indices, namely the benchmark which stood at 6,800 points. The final session was particularly jittery due to heavy pressure on the sectors. Boursa Kuwait, formerly known as Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE), ended yesterday's trades with mixed boards with the benchmark going up by 25.5 points to 6,813.5 points. The weighted and KSX 15 indices also went down by 0.05 and 3.49 points respectively. The value of trades was at KD 26.7 million with the volume reaching 286 million shares done through 5,754 deals. — Agencies

# DRUNK LAWYER, FRIEND ARRESTED

**KUWAIT:** A lawyer and her friend were found extremely drunk in Hawally area as a police patrol stopped their car. Both were arrested and sent to concerned authorities.

### Illegal entry

Nuwiseeb border outlet officers arrested a Pakistani expat for attempting to enter the country illegally. A customs source said security men spotted him as he was attempting to enter into country. He told investigators that another Pakistani hid him in his vehicle in exchange of SR3000.

### Filipina 'raped'

A Filipina was sent to the Forensic Department to determine her claims of being raped by a Kuwaiti. A security source said a 49-year-old Filipina lodged a complaint at Nugra police station stating that she was raped by a

Kuwaiti. The Deputy Prosecutor was informed and he ordered the case be registered as "Sex Without Consent".

### 28 sheep stole

The son of a ministry's undersecretary reported a theft to Qashaniya police station. He said the incident took place around 3:00 pm. He said unknown persons climbed over the fence of his father's farm in Abdaly, opened the door from inside and stole 28 sheep. Police are investigating.

### Murdered or suicide?

A high ranking source said investigators are still holding a female Pakistani expat and her husband's friend for questioning over the death of her husband. The two are suspected of having an illicit relationship. Authorities are trying to determine whether the deceased was murdered

or if he committed suicide as alleged. Police earlier, received a call about a man who was seen falling from a height. They later found the body of the Pakistani man and handed the body to the forensics.

### Maid's ordeal

The ordeal of the Ethiopian maid whose sponsor filmed her while falling from the window on the seventh floor seems not to end, as her lawyer Ghazi Al-Khudhari said her client has been moved from Mubarak Hospital to the police station where she is held on absconding charge - facing deportation. The lawyer has asked the Interior Ministry to send the maid to a housing center, until her condition is stabilized. The maid told the Public Prosecution that she was not attempting suicide but rather, she was trying to escape from the house. —Al Rai

## News

In brief

### Researcher wins award

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwaiti researcher Dr Sultan Al-Duweish has won Dr Abdullah Al-Naeem Award for serving history of the Arab peninsula for his study on ancient pottery civilizations. Al-Duweish said yesterday that his research was selected from among 20 ones on the region's history. The Kuwaiti researcher was honored in the first round of the award, organized by the Riyadh-based History and Archeology Society. In remarks to KUNA, he said that his research tackled "Al-Abeed pottery," the most ancient kind of pottery, excavated in the region. Some items had been located in Kuwait. The award has been created to honor Dr Al-Naeem, a famous Saudi historian.

### Laundering, terrorism

**KUWAIT:** Taking advantage of other countries experiences in fighting money laundering and financing of terrorism is one of the ways to overcome obstacles against development, said Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudan yesterday. During his speech at the opening of a workshop organized by Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Terrorist Department in cooperation with the US Department of the Treasury, Al-Roudan said the ministry has followed the best international ways to face this phenomenon by setting up specialized courses and awareness programs.

### Dusty weekend in Kuwait

**KUWAIT:** The weather during the weekend will be dusty due to the moderate and active winds, said the official at the Kuwait Meteorological Department Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi yesterday. Al-Qarawi said that the lowest temperature would reach around 23-26 Degrees Celsius during the evening while wind speed will be between 15-42 kilometers per hour (kph). As for the status of the sea, Al-Qarawi said that waves would be light to moderate at a height of two to six feet. Today's weather will be dusty due to the active northwest wind at speeds between 25 to 55 kph. The highest temperature will be between 34-36 Degrees Celsius, said Al-Qarawi. The status of sea will be moderate to high waves at heights of four to six feet, said the meteorologist. The lowest temperature today will be between 23-25 degrees. Al-Qarawi added that tomorrow would be relatively hot with a moderate to active northwest winds at speeds of 20 to 50 kph causing dust.

### Petroleum Media Forum

**ABU-DHABI:** Kuwaiti Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Isam Al-Marzouq said the Third GCC Petroleum Media Forum that kick-started on Wednesday will have positive impacts on the energy sector in the region. "The forum provides an important platform for strengthening the relations and communication among the oil and media sectors, and improving the professionalism of media people concerned with the energy sector," he said. "The panel discussions will provide the media people with a clear insight into the factors affecting the global oil industry, and the trends of prices, growth, and supply and demand," Al-Marzouq pointed out.





**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received the members of the Kuwait society for the quality of education at Seif Palace yesterday. During the meeting, His Highness the Prime Minister stressed the government's support to education via providing the necessary means to improve the level of educational outputs. His Highness Sheikh Jaber praised the efforts taken by civil society organizations to support the development efforts in all different areas. The meeting was attended by Assistance Undersecretary for Local Affairs at His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikh Khaled Al-Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah. — KUNA Photos

### 'SHABAK, DARAK, SHABAKAT AL-HAWA' - WAYS OF CATCHING FALCONS IN OLD KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** The falcon has always been a symbol of pride and courage during the olden days of Arabia and in Kuwait. Several methods were developed to catch this prized bird. Speaking to KUNA, folklore researcher Dr Adel Al-Abdulgahni said that catching falcons becomes very popular during the fall season with the three main methods of (Al-Shabak, Al-Darak, and Shabakat Al-Hawa) proving to be the most successful. As for Al-Shabak, a falcon hunter, referred to (Al-Gannas), would dig a big huge hole in the ground, which is covered by a net, said Dr Al-Abdulgahni, adding that bait would be set and hunters only need to be patient until a falcon gets trapped.

Dr Al-Abdulgahni also elaborated on Al-Darak, saying that this method involved unfeathering birds so that they lose the ability to fly. The bird will wear a special garment connected with thread and as soon as a falcon tries to get it, Al-Ghannas will have the chance to catch it, said the researcher. The third method involves the use of square-shaped nets at a height of two meters, said he, noting that a bait would be set on the net and the hunter only needs to wait for a while until a falcon was caught. After catching the falcon, Al-Gannas hands the bird to a falconer who begins training this bird of prey to become his aid in hunting down other birds. — KUNA



## KUWAIT DELEGATION'S MEETINGS AT WORLD BANK 'POSITIVE, PRODUCTIVE'

**WASHINGTON:** Discussions and meetings of the Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation, led by the National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim at the World Bank (WB) were positive and productive, Dean of the Executive Board and Executive Director at the WB Group Dr Merza Hasan affirmed yesterday. In an exclusive interview to KUNA, Dr Hasan said that the discussions focused on "the reform agenda and the economic challenges facing Kuwait due to the low oil prices." He added that during his talks, Al-Ghanim "valued the strategic relations between Kuwait and the World Bank."

Meanwhile, Dr Hasan noted that the WB gathered a good amount of knowledge on the Kuwaiti economy, the political environment, and the political economy. "Now we want to translate this deep knowledge into some program to overcome some of the challenges facing the Kuwaiti economy," he added. He indicated that the discussions also focused on "a couple of ways forward, how we can mitigate the issues and challenges facing the Kuwait economy, what kind of reform we need and how quickly should this reform be conducted," as well as "what more can the WB do for Kuwait in terms of bringing the best global experience to Kuwait."

Dr Hasan affirmed that they "agreed on the way forward and agreed that Kuwait needs reform as the challenges are big and also we need to overcome other economic issues," such as the deficit in the budget, the public sector, what is the role of the private sector and "how we can create a better environment for the private sector to grow." "We need to push the growth to make it bigger and also how to integrate it with the regional agenda," he said. He stressed the importance of the small medium-sized enterprises, saying it is "the way forward to create jobs for our youth and fulfill their hopes in order for their future career development."

He indicated the Bank "will provide several solutions for dealing with the subsidies and other economic aspects but we will leave the selection of these options for the Kuwait side," saying "they know their environment better." He said that "we want to be smart in where to invest in order to have the highest devel-

opmental impact and returns, in addition to how we can involve the private sector to improve quality and reduce costs."

He added "we are going to go (to Kuwait) with a vision and provide recommendations and see how we're going to operationalize it and then hopefully we see the best results." Dr Hasan affirmed that the Bank believes that how the issues are addressed should be "home-grown coming from Kuwait and we then build it up." As for the delegation's meeting with the World Bank President Jim Kim, Dr Hasan said it was "superb. It was open and frank," and that the meeting

went beyond its scheduled time, which reflects "how much rapport and trust" Al-Ghanim and the President have built between them.

Al-Ghanim took part in the Global Parliamentary Conference held in Washington from April 17 to 18, organized by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the WB. The Kuwaiti delegation, which included MPs Safa Al-Hashem, Salah Khorshid, Abdulwahab Al-Babtain and Thamer Al-Suwait also met with experts in the small and medium-sized enterprises and experts in the subsidies and energy from the WB. — KUNA

## DEVELOPING KUWAIT'S ISLANDS TO LURE FOREIGN INVESTORS: EXPERTS

**KUWAIT:** Experts and specialists taking part in a major economic forum held here agreed yesterday that developing the Kuwaiti islands would lure foreign investors and bolster the national economy. They also shared the view that the projects of developing the islands and the Silk City are likely to bring about a quantum development, economic and trade shift in Kuwait, as well as contributing to fulfilling His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's desire to create of the country a world's financial and trade hub.

The "Kuwaiti islands and the Silk City, dream and reality" forum is organized by the society of the Kuwait University teaching staff and the Chinese Embassy in Kuwait. Creating independent economic zones like Hong Kong is an effective method for attracting foreign investors and providing new jobs, head of the regional planning and development at the Chinese Comprehensive Development Institute said. He added that such zones will be subjected to special laws, and will contribute effectively to the GNP.

The goal of promoting the Kuwaiti islands and establishing independent economic zones is to develop a national investment-friendly environ-

ment to bolster the Kuwaiti economy, professor of law at the Kuwait University Dr Abdullah Al-Hayan told the forum. The proposed zones will be under state control but enjoying a special status, namely financial and administrative independence, apart from bureaucracy and centralization that drive investors away, Al-Hayan added. The Chinese Government supports the construction of these zones, deputy head of the industrial studies department at the Renmin (People's) University of China said. Hong Kong is a striking example, he added.

The economic and social systems in Hong Kong differ from those in the Mainland, he said, noting that the island enjoys more religious and personal freedoms, as well as free press and media. He said that China supported Hong Kong in various crises such as the financial mayhem of 2008, developing a partnership based on mutual interests. On his part, the head of the Arab studies department at China's Foreign Studies University said that the "One Belt, One Road" China launched in 2013 aims to build a new bridge for Eurasia and develop the economic corridors in Asia through capitalizing on transport routes as well as using industrial zones as basis for cooperation. — KUNA

# International

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2017

**Scared Syrian evacuees stuck at site of deadly bombing**



**Pakistan's top court orders PM be investigated for corruption**



**US VP Pence tours Indonesian mosque in outreach to Muslims**



**PYONGYANG:** In this photo, university students carry North Korean national flags and two bronze statues of the late leaders Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il during a military parade in Pyongyang, North Korea, to celebrate the 105th birth anniversary of Kim Il Sung, the country's late founder and grandfather of current ruler Kim Jong Un.—AP

## N KOREA WARNS OF SUPER-MIGHTY PREEMPTIVE STRIKE

**SEOUL:** North Korean state media warned the United States of a "super-mighty preemptive strike" after US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the United States was looking at ways to bring pressure to bear on North Korea over its nuclear program. US President Donald Trump has taken a hard line with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who has rebuffed admonitions from sole major ally China and proceeded with nuclear and missile programs in defiance of UN Security Council sanctions.

The Rodong Sinmun, the official newspaper of the North's ruling Workers' Party, did not mince its words. "In the case of our super-mighty preemptive strike being launched, it will completely and immediately wipe out not only US imperialists' invasion forces in South Korea and its surrounding areas but the US mainland and reduce them to ashes," it said.

Reclusive North Korea regularly threatens to destroy Japan, South Korea and the United States and has shown no let-up in its belligerence after a failed missile test on Sunday, a day after putting on a huge display of missiles at a parade in Pyongyang.

"We're reviewing all the status of North Korea, both in terms of state sponsorship of terrorism as well as the other ways in which we can bring pressure on the regime in Pyongyang to re-engage with us, but re-engage with us on a different footing than past talks have been held," Tillerson told reporters in Washington on Wednesday. US Vice President Mike Pence, on a tour of Asian allies, has said repeatedly an "era of strategic patience" with North Korea is over.

US House of Representatives Speaker Paul Ryan said during a visit to London the military

option must be part of the pressure brought to bear. "Allowing this dictator to have that kind of power is not something that civilised nations can allow to happen," he said in reference to Kim. Ryan said he was encouraged by the results of efforts to work with China to reduce tension, but that it was unacceptable North Korea might be able to strike allies with nuclear weapons. North and South Korea are technically still at war because their 1950-53 conflict ended in a truce, not a peace treaty.

### 'Max thunder'

South Korea's acting president, Hwang Kyo-ahn, at a meeting with top officials yesterday, repeatedly called for the military and security ministries to maintain vigilance. The defense ministry said US and South Korean air forces were conducting an annual training exercise,

codenamed Max Thunder, until April 28. North Korea routinely labels such exercises preparations for invasion. "We are conducting a practical and more intensive exercise than ever," South Korean pilot Lieutenant Colonel Lee Bum-chul told reporters. "Through this exercise, I am sure we can deter war and remove our enemy's intention to provoke us." South Korean presidential candidates clashed on Wednesday night in a debate over the planned deployment in South Korea of a US-supplied Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) anti-missile system, which has angered China.

Frontrunner Moon Jae-in was criticized for leaving his options open before the May 9 election. On Monday, Hwang and Pence reaffirmed their plans to go ahead with the THAAD, but the decision will be up to the next South Korean president.—Reuters

## S SUDAN WAR STRAINS UGANDA'S GENEROUS REFUGEE POLICY

**YUMBE, Uganda:** Ugandan motorbike taxi driver Sadiq Agotre grumbles as he waits for a rare client among thousands of South Sudanese refugees hoping to receive food rations in the outskirts of his town. "Business is not good. These people don't have money," he says, gazing out over a vast area that in only eight months has transformed from scrubland and trees to the world's biggest refugee settlement, Bidibidi, which houses more than 270,000 people.

Uganda has been praised for its warm welcome of refugees, but as civil war in neighboring South Sudan continues to push more than 2,000 people a day into the country, local communities and aid agencies are buckling under the strain. Many residents of Yumbe

district-population around 500,000 — are frustrated that the massive aid effort in their backyard has not translated into more jobs but instead has spread already scarce resources even thinner.

"This (the refugee crisis) has changed the town so much. It has caused a lot of stress, stress for jobs. The food prices have gone up and up. It's bad for our environment because they cut down the trees," said Nachal Dovelay, a shopkeeper in Yumbe town. Bidibidi opened in August last year to cope with a flood of people fleeing fighting when a peace deal between South Sudan's President Salva Kiir and his rival and former deputy Riek Machar collapsed, plunging the country back into a civil war that erupted in 2013.

In a matter of months it has overtaken Kenya's Dadaab-hosting mainly Somali refugees-as the world's biggest refugee camp. But the 250-square-kilometre settlement is only the tip of the iceberg. A total of 830,000 South Sudanese refugees have entered the country and the UN expects this figure will reach more than a million by mid-year.

The number of refugees in the East African nation-one of the world's poorest countries and the size of the United Kingdom-is comparable to the number of mostly Syrian refugees who fled to Europe at the height of the migrant crisis in 2015. "This emergency is like a tsunami, you know, very high speed," said Robert Baryamwesiga, the Ugandan government official in charge of running Bidibidi. —AFP

## PENTAGON CHIEF PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR EGYPT'S SISI

**CAIRO:** US Secretary of Defence Jim Mattis met Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi and top brass in Cairo yesterday, pledging support for the American ally on his first regional tour. The brief visit, with Mattis later setting off to Israel, came after Sisi hit it off with Trump during a White House meeting earlier this month. Sisi's visit marked a shift in relations after Trump's predecessor Barack Obama had given the Egyptian leader the cold shoulder for leading the military overthrow of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013.

Obama temporarily suspended military aid to Egypt following a bloody crackdown on Morsi's supporters. Trump, however, has set aside criticism of Sisi's human rights record while pledging to maintain support for the key US ally which receives an annual \$1.3 billion in military aid. The meeting "addressed aspects of military and security cooperation between the two countries and ways to further enhance them," the president's office said in a statement.

Sisi told Mattis he wanted to "strengthen the ongoing military cooperation between the two countries," it said. Mattis in turn "reiterated the US's commitment to reinvigorating these relations and broadening prospects for cooperation," it added. After meeting Sisi, Mattis held talks with Defence Minister Sedki Sobhi at his headquarters, where he was received with a marching band playing the US national anthem.

"We've always had an open relationship," he told Sobhi. After the meeting, Mattis participated in a wreath laying ceremony at Cairo's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He then prepared to fly on to Israel on the next leg of his tour, which started in Saudi Arabia. In Egypt, the talks touched on the military's counterinsurgency in the Sinai Peninsula, where an Islamic State group affiliate has killed hundreds of soldiers and policemen.

Mattis "affirmed Egypt's pivotal role in the Middle East and commended its counter-terrorism efforts," the president's office said. The insurgency in the Sinai took off after Morsi's ouster with the Islamic State group increasingly expanding its attacks to other parts of Egypt. It claimed two church bombings in the cities of Alexandria and Tanta on April 9 that killed 45 people, months after a deadly Cairo church bombing. —AFP



**CAIRO:** US Defense Secretary James Mattis, center left, and Egypt's Central Military Zone Commander General Ayman Abdelhamid Amer, center right, leave after Mattis placed a wreath at the memorial of the Unknown Soldier in Cairo. — AFP



**ALEPPO:** A medic gives gauze to a Syrian girl, from the government-held towns of Fuaa and Kafraya, which have been under a crippling siege for more than two years, suffering from a nosebleed at the rebel-held transit point of Rashidin outside the government-held second city of Aleppo as they wait for the resumption of the evacuation. — AFP

## SCARED SYRIAN EVACUEES STUCK AT SITE OF DEADLY BOMBING

### EVACUEES FORCED TO SPEND THE NIGHT IN BUSES

**RASHIDIN, Syria:** Hundreds of frightened Syrians being evacuated from besieged towns were stuck yesterday at a rebel-held transit point where more than 120 of their fellow townspeople were killed in a weekend bombing. The 3,000 evacuees left their homes in the government-controlled towns of Fuaa and Kafraya at dawn on Wednesday as part of a deal that is also seeing residents and fighters transported out of several rebel areas surrounded by government forces. The evacuations began last week but were delayed after Saturday's suicide car bombing, which saw 126 people killed, 68 of them children, at the transit point in Rashidin, west of Aleppo.

They resumed on Wednesday but evacuees were forced to spend the night in buses at the marshalling area following another delay. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the latest delay was the result of an 11th-hour rebel demand for the release of prisoners held by President Bashar al-Assad's government. "The convoys will not move until after the release of 750 prisoners-men and women-from regime prisons and their arrival in rebel-held areas," the British-based monitoring group said.

#### Guarded by armed rebels

Yesterday, an AFP correspondent saw the evacuees gathered together at the transit point, surrounded by armed rebels, as children played near the waiting buses. Umm Sanad, a 50-year-old woman from Fuaa, said they had overcome their fear

to join the evacuation. "We left because of the siege and the rockets. We left even though we were afraid after the attack," said Sanad, who evacuated along her teenage sons. The rebel fighters were keeping all other cars away from the area, except for a Red Crescent vehicle that was allowed to distribute aid.

Saturday's attack was one of the deadliest since the start of Syria's six-year civil war and was widely condemned for targeting civilians. No group has claimed responsibility for the bombing. The government blamed "terrorists"-a catch-all term for its opponents. The current evacuations mark the end of the first stage of a deal brokered by regime ally Iran and Qatar, a longtime supporter of rebel groups battling Assad's forces. Shiite-dominated Iran has repeatedly raised concerns for the mainly Shiite residents of Fuaa and Kafraya, who are surrounded by Sunni rebels and Islamists who control the surrounding Idlib province.

Under the agreement, residents and rebel fighters are being evacuated from the towns of Madaya, Zabadani, and other nearby oppositions-held areas close to Damascus. On Wednesday, 11 buses carrying around 300 people left Zabadani and two other rebel-held areas around Damascus. They were being held up yesterday at a staging point at Ramussa in government-held territory, the Observatory said. When the current phase of evacuations is complete, a total of 8,000 people should have left Fuaa and Kafraya in exchange for 2,500 civilians and rebels from opposition areas. — AFP

## IRAQ FORCES RETAKE MORE AREAS IN WEST MOSUL

**MOSUL:** Iraqi forces retook two more neighborhoods in west Mosul yesterday, tightening the noose around jihadists holed up in the Old City, commanders said. "The forces completed the liberation of Al-Thawra neighborhood," Sabah al-Noman, spokesman for the elite Counter-Terrorism Service, said. An officer with federal police forces also deployed in west Mosul confirmed that the neighborhood, which lies just west of the Old City, had been retaken from the Islamic State group.

The Joint Operations Command coordinating the fight against the jihadists nationwide said the Nasr neighborhood was also retaken yesterday. The head of Iraq's federal police, Raed Shakir Jawdat, also said in a statement that Iraqi forces had killed a senior IS operative, who had been in charge of chemical weapons for the group in Mosul, in a guided missile strike in the Zanjili neighborhood. A US official said on Wednesday that Iraqi forces working alongside US and

Australian military advisers had been targeted in an IS attack that used a low-level chemical agent in west Mosul. Major General Joseph Martin said nobody died as a result of the attack. Iraqi forces in mid-October last year launched a huge operation, their largest in years, to retake second city Mosul. They retook the side of the city that lies east of the Tigris river in January and launched a push on remaining IS fighters in western Mosul, which is more densely populated and has seen fierce fighting.

### Anbar push

On the west bank, Iraqi forces control southern neighborhoods and are slowly surrounding the Old City, whose narrow streets are expected to make federal operations very difficult. An estimated 400,000 civilians are believed to still be there, unwilling or unable to leave because any escape would be too dangerous or because the jihadists are using them as human shields. The loss of Mosul would be a death blow to the "caliphate" IS proclaimed after capturing the city in a massive offensive in June 2014.

According to an Iraqi military spokesman, the jihadists only control seven percent of Iraq, down from the 40 percent of the national territory over which they ruled three years ago. The only two other significant towns IS still holds are Hawija and Tal Afar. The jihadists also control territory in remote areas of western Iraq, near the Syrian border. Iraqi forces yesterday launched a fresh push against IS-held villages there, as part of a months-old operation to retake areas along the Euphrates in western Anbar province. A senior officer said the forces involved in the operation included the army, local tribal fighters and military advisers from the US-led coalition assisting Iraq in the anti-IS war.—AFP



**MOSUL:** An Iraqi special forces soldier fires at Islamic State militants as smoke from an airstrike billows from the site, in the Al-Tanek neighborhood of Mosul, Iraq.—AP



**ANKARA:** Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan delivers a speech as he receives the children attending the 39th TRT International Children's Festival at the presidential Complex in Ankara, yesterday.—AFP

## ERDOGAN REVIVES SPECTER OF DEATH PENALTY IN TURKEY

**ISTANBUL:** "What George, Hans or Helga say does not interest us!" roars Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "What counts for us is what Ayse, Murat, Mehmet, Hatice say! What Allah says!". This mantra-setting common European names against Turkish ones and finally invoking God-has become Erdogan's standard rhetoric to tell the European Union he does not care about their reaction if Turkey restores the death penalty.

But such a move would have immense ramifications—automatically drawing the curtain on the half-century drama that has been Turkey's bid to join the EU. Some analysts thought that Erdogan would drop his rhetoric on capital punishment, helpful for winning the support of nationalists, after the April 16 referendum on enhancing his powers. But with the referendum won, albeit by a narrow margin and the opposition claiming fraud, Erdogan has vigorously returned to the topic.

After proclaiming victory, Erdogan promised thousands of supporters chanting "Idam!" ("Execution!") that Turkey would hold a referendum on the issue if parliament failed to adopt it. European Parliament president Antonio Tajani wrote on Twitter that he was "very concerned" by Erdogan's comments, saying the reintroduction would be a "red line" for the European Union. German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said the move would be "synonymous with the end of (Turkey's) European dream".

### Here's the rope

Turkey abolished the death penalty in all circumstances in 2004 — two years after Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power—as a key pillar of its bid to join the EU. The EU states that abolishing the death penalty is an absolute pre-condition for membership. The Council of Europe, of which Turkey has been a member since 1950, makes abolition a condition for new members. While it was a previous coalition led by the Democratic Left Party that initiated the move to abolish the death penalty, Erdogan had in the

early years of his rule resisted nationalist pressure for it to be used.

This included the case of the jailed leader of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) Abdullah Ocalan, who was captured in 1999. He was sentenced to death but had his term commuted to life imprisonment. Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) leader Devlet Bahçeli at the time famously brandished a noose at a rally to challenge Erdogan to execute Ocalan. "Here is the rope! Hang him if you can," Bahçeli shouted, throwing the rope into the crowds.

But a decade later, Erdogan is publicly praising Bahçeli for his support for capital punishment and, to hisses and boos from the crowds, lambasting Republican People's Party (CHP) chief Kemal Kilicdaroglu for his opposition. Marc Pierini, a visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe and former EU ambassador to Turkey, said the narrowness of his victory means Erdogan will remain reliant on the MHP, which backed the

constitutional changes set out in the referendum. "Issues such as reintroducing the death penalty and politically disconnecting Turkey from the EU are key ingredients in the political narrative of both parties," he said.

### Bitter consequences

Supporters of the move in Turkey argue capital punishment needs to be restored in light of the July 15, 2016 failed coup that left 249 people dead. But the death penalty remains a sensitive issue in Turkey's coup-scarred history and many have no appetite to revive the painful memories of the past. Erdogan has himself often evoked the hanging of the prime minister Adnan Menderes—his political hero—along with two ministers after the 1960 military coup as an example of the bad old Turkey. More executions followed coups in 1971, including of student militant Deniz Gezmiş, and the 1980 coup when dozens were sent to the gallows.—AFP

## UN: ACCESS TO BESIEGED SYRIAN AREAS EVEN WORSE THIS YEAR

**BEIRUT:** Aid agencies have not been able to reach as many besieged Syrians this year as they did over the same period last year, the UN's chief humanitarian adviser for Syria said yesterday. Speaking to reporters in Geneva, Jan Egeland said the front lines have shifted but civilian suffering has "remained the same" in 2017. Of nearly 5 million Syrians living in besieged or hard-to-reach areas, agencies have only been able to reach 564,000 this year to date, he said.

He drew particular attention to the dire humanitarian situation in the opposition-held Eastern Ghouta suburbs of the capital, Damascus. About 400,000 Syrians are trapped inside the area, which is besieged by government forces. Aid agencies have been unable to reach Douma, the largest town inside the besieged area, in half a year. Shortages of food and other basic

goods have pushed prices "through the roof," said Egeland. "We get reports that there is no bread or wheat on the market at all."

Siege has been a pillar of the government's military strategy against its domestic opponents throughout the six-year-old civil war. By tightly restricting the delivery of food and medical relief, the government has secured the surrender of broad swathes of the opposition-held countryside around Damascus, as well as the former opposition enclaves in Aleppo and Homs, Syria's first and third largest cities, respectively. The Syrian government and rebels are allowing up to 30,000 people to leave besieged areas over the coming two months in a mutually agreed population transfer that critics say is redrawing the country's map along sectarian and political lines.—AP

# PEACE TRUMPS FEAR FOR VOTERS IN FRENCH TOWN WHERE PRIEST SLAIN

**SAINT-ETIENNE-DU-ROUVRAY:** In the working-class French town traumatized by last summer's jihadist murder of a priest, voters feel more in tune with radical left "peace" candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon than with anti-

immigrant firebrand Marine Le Pen. The first jihadist attack on a church anywhere in Europe came just 12 days after the Bastille Day truck massacre in Nice that claimed 86 lives, part of a relentless series of killings in

France over the past two years. Le Pen, head of the far-right National Front (FN) who is riding high in the polls ahead of the first round of the presidential election on Sunday, says her policies would best defend France against

such attacks. But Bernard Auvray, a 72-year-old pensioner who used to volunteer on social projects with murdered priest Father Jacques Hamel, 85, says he has no doubts about voting for Melenchon. —AFP



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## RUSSIAN, AMERICAN TWO-MAN CREW BLASTS OFF TO ISS

**BAIKONUR:** A Russian and an American blasted off from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan yesterday, the first two-person launch to the International Space Station in over a decade. The Soyuz MS-04 spacecraft carrying veteran Russian cosmonaut Fyodor Yurchikhin and NASA rookie Jack Fischer shot into the sky in bright conditions at 0713 GMT. Russian space agency Roscosmos said the launch had been successful and that the crew was expected to arrive at the ISS at 1323 GMT.

Manned launches to the ISS usually involve three crew members. But Russian space agency Roscosmos announced last year that in the near future only two cosmonauts would be on board the ISS rather than three as has been the case in recent times. The agency explained it is seeking to cut costs on supply missions prior to the installation of a new module to expand the Russian section of the orbital lab at the end of 2017 or in early 2018.

Another Russian-American duo, Yuri Malenchenko and Edward Lu, undertook the last two-man mission to the ISS, in April 2003. Yurchikhin and Fischer are set to complete a five-month mission at the station and should join three astronauts, including NASA's Peggy Whitson, on the orbital laboratory.

### Breaking records

In an emotional interview with NASA TV, Fischer, a 43-year-old former US air force pilot, said he would be "thinking about Dad" as he enters orbit. When dying from cancer, Fischer said, his father encouraged him to pursue his dream of becoming an astronaut. Yurchikhin, 58, has racked up 537 days in space over the course of four missions to the ISS, more than any US astronaut but some way short of the 879 days logged by record-holding compatriot Gennady Padalka.

Fischer and Yurchikhin will be on board the ISS to witness Whitson break the 534-day American record for cumulative days in space previously held by Jeff Williams. US President Donald Trump and daughter Ivanka Trump are expected to congratulate Whitson on her achievement in an Earth-to-space call on Monday, according to NASA. Whitson also became the first woman to take charge of the ISS twice, having inherited command of the lab for the first time from Yurchikhin in 2007.

She will return to earth in early September with both Fischer and Yurchikhin after NASA decided to extend her stay in space by three months. France's Thomas Pesquet and Oleg Novitsky of Roscosmos will be the next members of the ISS crew to return to Earth, with a landing scheduled for early June. Russia is currently the only country executing manned space flights to the ISS, despite its space industry having suffered a string of setbacks and launch failures in recent years. The ISS laboratory, a rare example of American and Russian international cooperation, has been orbiting Earth at about 28,000 kilometers per hour since 1998.—AFP



**KAZAKHSTAN:** Russia's Soyuz MS-04 spacecraft carrying Russian cosmonaut Fyodor Yurchikhin and NASA astronaut Jack David Fischer, members of the main crew of the 51/52 expedition to the International Space Station (ISS), blasts off to the ISS from the launch pad at the Russian-leased Baikonur cosmodrome yesterday.—AFP



**MOSCOW:** Chechen gay men who fled persecution in their home Russia's Muslim region of Chechnya due to his sexual-orientation, sits around a table in their flat in Moscow.—AFP

## FACING DEATH FOR BEING GAY, MEN FLEE RUSSIA'S CHECHNYA

### AUTHORITIES URGE FAMILIES TO KILL GAY MEN

**MOSCOW:** Ilya looks tired and drawn. After being beaten and tortured by men in military uniform in Russia's Chechnya region, he fled to Moscow but still fears for his life—because he is gay.

"In Chechnya, I had no choice but to lie or die," says the 20-year-old. He is now hiding out in a small house on the edge of Moscow with five other Chechen men after they escaped what they say is a brutal campaign against gay men by authorities in the Muslim region of Russia's North Caucasus.

All refused to give their real names for fear of someone recognizing them and tracking them down. "If any of my relatives realizes I'm gay, they won't hesitate a minute before killing me," another of the men, 28-year-old Nortcho, said. "And if they don't do it, they will get killed themselves for failing to uphold the family honor."

While casual homophobia is common in Russia, the problem is particularly acute in conservative Chechnya, where homosexuality is taboo and seen in many families as a moral failing that should be punished by death. In late March, the Novaya Gazeta liberal newspaper-known for critical reports on Ramzan Kadyrov, Chechnya's iron-fisted ruler for the last decade—published a shocking report that gay men had been rounded up.

The newspaper reported that the authorities had detained more than 100 gay men and urged their families to kill them to "wash clean their honor." It said at least two had been killed by relatives and a third died after being tortured. The accusations were taken all the more seriously since the security forces controlled by Kadyrov—a fierce loyalist of

President Vladimir Putin—have long been accused by rights activists of carrying out kidnappings and beatings of his opponents.

Asked to comment on the Novaya Gazeta report, Kadyrov's spokesman claimed that such punitive treatment of gay men in Chechnya was impossible since they "do not exist" in the region. Kadyrov on Wednesday denied that any homosexuals had been arrested, saying "provocative articles about Chechnya (have) reported so-called arrests." It's even embarrassing to talk about it. It's said there have been what are called arrests, murders, (newspapers) have even given the name" of one victim, he said. "But he is alive, in good health and is at home."

### 'I'm terrified'

The Moscow branch of a Russian NGO called the LGBT Network is helping Chechens to flee the region and receives "three or four requests for help each day," said the branch's leader Olga Baranova. Nearly 20 people at risk have already moved to Moscow, she said. While Ilya is now more than 1,800 kilometers from the Chechen capital of Grozny, he still jumps up every time a car drives close by the house, which is surrounded by a fence. "By helping me, the Network has handed me a reprieve—but they'll find me in the end," he says quietly.

In October he was taken into a field and beaten by three men in military uniform. A huge scar runs along the side of his jaw. "They filmed everything. They told me it would end up on social media unless I paid 200,000 rubles (\$3,650). I borrowed the money and paid it," he

said, speaking hoarsely. But after that he had to flee to Moscow anyway. "Some soldiers came to see my mother and told her I was gay," he said. "I'm terrified. I haven't been able to sleep since I left."

Another man who refused even to give an alias said he left Chechnya two weeks ago. He said he too has been unable to sleep since, haunted by the fear that his wife and his child will find out he is gay. In March he was held "in an unofficial prison" for a week, the man said. "There were other gay men in the cell. Some of them had been beaten up," he recalled. "When I was released, I realised that meant I should leave as swiftly as possible."

### Absolute tyranny

Reports of the abuses have drawn international condemnation, as activists have accused the authorities in Russia of turning a blind eye for fear of upsetting Kadyrov in a region where Moscow fought two bloody separatist wars. US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said Monday she was "disturbed" by the reports. Tanya Lokshina of Human Rights Watch said that in her view: "It will only take a call from the Kremlin to Kadyrov for the arrests to stop." Russia's Prosecutor-General's office formally opened an investigation on Monday but Russia's human rights ombudswoman Tatyana Moskalkova told TASS state news agency there had been no reports of such missing people to police, investigators or prosecutors. Lokshina of Human Rights Watch countered that "imagining people coming forward with information without getting any effective protection, any security guarantee, is just impossible."—AFP



**CARACAS:** A demonstrator is assisted by others as they run away from tear gas canisters thrown by the police during a rally against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, in Caracas. — AFP

## VENEZUELA OPPOSITION VOWS FRESH PROTESTS DESPITE DEATHS

### MADURO ACCUSED OF REPRESSING DEMONSTRATORS

**CARACAS:** Opponents of the Venezuelan government vowed fresh huge protests yesterday, upping the ante in their bid to oust President Nicolas Maduro after a day of deadly clashes in the oil-rich but beleaguered nation. A 17-year-old boy and a 23-year-old woman died after being shot Wednesday during massive protests, and a soldier outside Caracas was said to have been killed, bringing to eight the number of people killed this month in a mounting political crisis.

Riot police fired tear gas to force back stone-throwing demonstrators as hundreds of thousands of people fed up with food shortages and demanding elections joined protest marches in Caracas and several other cities. Thousands of Maduro's supporters held a counter-rally in central Caracas. The opposition has accused Maduro of letting state forces and gangs of armed thugs violently repress demonstrators as he resists opposition pressure for him to quit.

Some disturbances continued into the night, with reports of looted bakeries, supermarkets and food centers in western Caracas. Despite Wednesday's deadly violence, his opponents displayed their determination to ratchet up the pressure by calling for renewed protests yesterday. "Today there were millions of us," senior opposition leader Henrique Capriles told a news conference late Wednesday. "Tomorrow even more of us have to come out."

#### Shot in head

The 17-year-old was shot by gunmen on motorbikes who also threw tear gas canisters into a crowd of protesters, Amadeo Leiva, head of the Clinicas Caracas Hospital which treated him, said. The 23-year-old woman, Paola Ramirez, died after being shot in the head in the western city of San Cristobal, the state prosecution service said later in a statement. A pro-government politician and reservist, Diosdado Cabello, said on his television show that anti-Maduro activists had also "murdered" a soldier in San Antonio de los Altos, a town just south of Caracas, late Wednesday. Prosecutors confirmed the death. Authorities had previously reported five other people killed, including a boy of 13, in protests around the country earlier this month. The opposition leader of congress, Julio Borges, and Maduro's vice president, Tareck El Aissami, traded blame for Wednesday's deadly violence.

#### Hour of combat

Pressure on the leftist president has been mounting since 2014, as falling prices for Venezuela's crucial oil exports have aggravated an economic crisis. "I don't have any food in the

fridge," said protester Jean Tovar, 32, who held rocks in his hands ready to throw at military police in Caracas. "I have a two-year-old son to support and I am unemployed, and it is all Maduro's fault." Recent moves by Maduro to tighten his grip on power and ban Capriles from politics have escalated the country's political and economic crisis and sparked international cries of concern. They have galvanized the often divided opposition in the recent protests in their efforts to force Maduro from power.

"We have to end this dictatorship. We're fed up. We want elections to get Maduro out, because he's destroyed this country," said protester Ingrid Chacon, a 54-year-old secretary. The president in turn has urged his supporters, the military and civilian militias to defend the socialist "Bolivarian revolution" launched by his predecessor Hugo Chavez in 1999. "We are firmly with Maduro out of loyalty to our eternal commander" Chavez, said teacher Nancy Guzman, 50, demonstrating at Maduro's rally on Wednesday.

#### US concern

The center-right opposition has called for the military—a pillar of Maduro's power—to abandon him. But the defense minister, General Vladimir Padrino Lopez, has pledged the army's "unconditional loyalty" to Maduro, who has accused the opposition of inciting a "coup" backed by the United States. In Washington on Wednesday, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the United States is "concerned that the government of Maduro is violating its own constitution and not allowing the opposition to have their voices heard."

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez on Twitter said her country "rejects" Tillerson's statement, dubbing it "systematic interventionism." Two television channels, El Tiempo of Colombia and Todo Noticias of Argentina, said they were taken off the air in Venezuela during Wednesday's unrest.

#### Election talk

According to a survey by pollster Venobarometro, seven in 10 Venezuelans disapprove of Maduro, whose term does not end until 2019. Maduro said Wednesday he was willing to face his opponents at the ballot box. "I want to have elections soon... to seek a peaceful path so the Bolivian revolution can put the conspirators, murderers and interventionist right-wingers in their place," he told a rally of supporters in central Caracas. Regional elections due in December were indefinitely postponed and there is still no date for local polls due this year. The next presidential election is due in December 2018. —AFP

## AT LEAST 16 KILLED IN COLOMBIA FLOODS

**BOGOTA:** Flooding and mudslides in central Colombia have killed at least 16 people, government disaster relief authorities said Wednesday, causing alarm in a country still recovering from recent mudslides that killed hundreds. At least seven people are missing after torrential rains lashed the city of Manizales, government officials said, raising fears the death toll could soar as it did earlier this month in the southern city of Mocoa.

There, at least 323 people including more than 100 children were killed when heavy rain caused three mountain rivers to flood on March 31, hurling a tidal wave of mud and boulders into the city. Manizales "is literally cut off by rock slides, mudslides, floods," Mayor Jose Octavio Cardona told local radio stations. He said the city had been on alert after days of heavy rain, which turned to a torrential downpour overnight.

President Juan Manuel Santos suspended his official agenda to travel to the city, the capital of Caldas department which is, like Mocoa, a remote and difficult region to access. "This is a product of climate change," he told reporters, calling to "take care" of the environment to avoid such catastrophes. He said on Twitter he had ordered officials from the emergency agency and transport ministries to the city to assess the "grave situation." Emergency officials said eight neighborhoods had been hit by flooding or mudslides, including one where several homes were buried. Classes in Manizales—where some 400,000 people live—as well as water, electricity and gas services in affected neighborhoods were suspended as a precaution. —AFP



**COLOMBIA:** General view after mudslides in Manizales, Caldas department, Colombia. — AFP

## KENYA LEADER WARNS AGAINST VIOLENCE AS POLL FEVER HITS

**NAIROBI:** Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta warned yesterday against violence as election season gets into full swing, with chaotic party primaries already leading to bloody scuffles. East Africa's largest economy holds a general election on August 8, a decade after disputed poll results fuelled violence that left more than 1,100 dead and hundreds of thousands displaced. "As a party, we will not tolerate violence."

As president, I will also not tolerate violence and anybody who engages in acts of violence will be dealt with in accordance with the law, irrespective of who they are," Kenyatta told a press conference in Nairobi. Kenyatta, 55, is seeking a second term in office with his Jubilee Party and will again run alongside his deputy William Ruto. In Kenya, politics is hard-fought and victory decided in large part along ethnic lines, with political alliances mostly based on who can lure which votes from the "Big Five"—the main ethnic groups who can influence the outcome of the vote. The two men's alliance in 2013 brought together two ethnic groups who had clashed violently in 2007, Kenyatta's majority Kikuyu tribe and Ruto's Kalenjin. They also managed to win despite crimes against humanity charges at the International Criminal Court (ICC) over their role in the 2007 violence which were later dropped.

#### Big announcement

In a bid to unseat the powerful team, five opposition heavyweights have united in a coalition called NASA but have spent months agonizing over the winning combination of flag-bearers that will draw in the most votes from key tribes. At a large rally on Thursday opposition party leader Moses Wetangula said the "big announcement" would be made next Thursday, just over 100 days from voting—a fact the ruling party has used to paint the opposition as disorganized and rudderless. —AFP

## MYANMAR YET TO ASK UK TO ARREST MURDER SUSPECT

**YANGON:** A 26-year-old British man wanted for the murder of a compatriot in Myanmar is living freely in Scotland because the Southeast Asian nation has yet to request his arrest and extradition, according to UK authorities. The revelation raises fresh questions over Myanmar's lukewarm response to the death of Gary Ferguson, 47, whose battered body was found inside his Yangon apartment in November. Harris Binotti, is alleged to have killed Ferguson—a fellow teacher at an international school in Myanmar—after an argument.

Binotti fled Myanmar soon after Ferguson's death. But in the last week he was photographed by a British newspaper living openly in Scotland, prompting his victim's family to ask why he was not already in custody. Scottish prosecutors and police say they are yet to receive any extradition request from Myanmar, the investigating country. "Police Scotland has no authority to arrest anyone at this stage," Scotland's police

force said in a statement, adding it would "monitor any ongoing risk" Binotti might pose.

"The matter is being investigated by the Myanmar authorities and it is for them to comment on any extradition request," the Crown Office, Scotland's prosecution department, added. Binotti was only placed on Interpol's "Red Notice" wanted list in April, some five months after the murder. But Myanmar would still need to request UK authorities to make an arrest and extradite a process that would require them to submit some of the evidence against Binotti and make diplomatic representations. British police would also need assurances the death penalty was off the table as they are banned for helping with any capital punishment cases.

Police in Myanmar were unable to say what steps had been taken to pursue the suspect overseas. Britain and Myanmar do not share an extradition

treaty, however, individual cases can still be negotiated between the countries. Toe Myo, a police officer in Yangon's Kyauktada township where the murder took place, said his department had filed an arrest warrant that was sent to the national police in the capital Naypyidaw. "We collected as much information as we could about the case and sent it there," he told AFP. However police in Naypyidaw directed AFP's enquiries back to police in Yangon.

Myanmar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a government spokesman did not respond to requests for comment. A spokesperson for Britain's Foreign Office said London was "in contact with the Burmese authorities responsible for the investigation" but declined to say how far the discussion had progressed. Ferguson's relatives, who lobbied Myanmar for months to contact Interpol, have released anguished statements at their perceived lack of progress in the case. —AFP



**LAHORE:** Supporters of the ruling party Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) carry posters of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as they hold a rally after a Supreme Court verdict on the Panama Papers in Lahore. — AFP

## PAKISTAN'S TOP COURT ORDERS PM BE INVESTIGATED FOR CORRUPTION 'NO SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE TO OUST NAWAZ SHARIF'

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was given a reprieve yesterday when the Supreme Court ordered he be investigated for corruption, but ruled there was not yet sufficient evidence to oust him from power. Sharif and his children are accused of graft in the ongoing case which has captivated Pakistan and threatened to topple the prime minister after the Panama Papers leak last year linked the family to offshore businesses.

The Supreme Court issued a split ruling calling for a joint investigation team of anti-corruption officials along with the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Military Intelligence to probe the claims and issue a report within 60 days. "A thorough investigation is required," Justice Asif Saeed Khosa told the court, presenting the 540-page written judgment which opens with the epigraph that launches Mario Puzo's 1969 novel "The Godfather": "Behind every great fortune there is a crime".

Two of the five judges went further than the ruling, branding Sharif "dishonest" and saying he should be disqualified, but they were outnumbered. The court has disqualified leaders before, holding former prime minister Yousuf Raza Gilani in contempt in 2012 for refusing to re-open corruption investigations into then president Asif Ali Zardari, resulting in his disqualification.

Government supporters could be seen celebrating the judgment with sweets outside the court in Islamabad, where

around 1,500 police commandos and riot forces had been deployed ahead of the highly anticipated decision. "We will cooperate fully with the investigation, and seek to clear whatever doubts are left," defense minister Khawaja Asif said.

Pakistani cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan, whose Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party has spearheaded the push against Sharif, called on the prime minister to resign until the investigation is completed. "Whatever explanations they gave inside the Supreme Court about their source of income have been exposed as lies," Khan told reporters in the wake of the judgment yesterday. The continuing controversy could trouble Sharif's governing party ahead of general elections that must be held by the end of next year, and as security and the economy improve in the militancy-plagued country.

### PM weakened?

It erupted with the publication of 11.5 million secret documents from Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca last year which documented the offshore dealings of many of the world's rich and powerful. Among the global elite implicated were three of Sharif's four children—his daughter and presumptive political heir Maryam, and his sons Hasan and Hussein. At the heart of the matter is the legitimacy of the funds used by the Sharif family to purchase several high-end London properties via offshore companies. — AFP

## AUSTRALIA TOUGHENS UP CITIZENSHIP TEST

**SYDNEY:** Canberra yesterday unveiled plans to put "Australian values" at the heart of tougher requirements to gain citizenship, days after scrapping a visa program for temporary foreign workers. The moves came against a background of growing populist pressure and a resurgence of the anti-immigration One Nation party led by Pauline Hanson. "We're defined by commitment to common values, political values, the rule of law, democracy, freedom, mutual respect, equality for men and women," Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull told reporters.

"These fundamental values are what make us Australian. Our citizenship process should reflect that. "So today we are announcing changes to strengthen citizenship, to make for a stronger Australia, stronger citizenship, stronger citizens." The new requirements include competent English, belief in gender equality and a four-year qualification period.

Candidates for citizenship will be required to be permanent residents for four years against the current one-year period. They will also need to demonstrate a job record and how they have integrated into the local community. The current "civics" test for would-be Australians would be expanded to include issues such as domestic violence, Immigration Minister Peter Dutton said.

"We are entitled to say if you want to be a citizen of Australia, there are a few things that we want you to demonstrate that you share," Turnbull added. "Commitment to our values, allegiance to our country, competent English, being here for four years, integration, demonstrating that you have made that commitment, that this is not just an administrative process. "This is about allegiance and commitment to Australian values."

### What are Australian values?

Some 114,109 people sat the Australian citizenship test in 2014-15, with 112,474 passing it, according to the latest immigration figures. The test changes, like the visa announcement, were welcomed by Hanson, who has long pushed for tougher immigration rules. "Does anyone really imagine Malcolm Turnbull's new 'Australia first' #AustralianValues approach isn't because of One Nation pressure?" Hanson tweeted yesterday. —AFP



**SYDNEY:** People walk on a street in Sydney. — AFP



## IS LINKED ABU SAYYAF WITH US BOUNTY WANTS TO SURRENDER

**MANILA:** An elderly, one-armed leader of the Islamic State-linked Abu Sayyaf group has indicated via an emissary that he wants to surrender to the Philippine authorities and is tired of being on the run, an army general said yesterday. Brigadier-General Cirilito Sobejana, army commander on the Abu Sayyaf stronghold of Jolo island, said he has met an emissary who was seeking to negotiate the surrender of Radullan Sahiron, who is more than 70 years old and wanted by the United States for the kidnapping of Western tourists 17 years ago.

The Philippines has deployed nearly 10,000 soldiers on southern Jolo to try to wipe out Abu Sayyaf as its bloody campaign of piracy and kidnapping intensifies. "He is weak, he is tired and weary because they are moving from one place to another," Sobejana told reporters, adding the negotiations for his surrender were at an early stage. Abu Sayyaf was created with separatist aims but now engages mostly in banditry, and has proved to be a formidable opponent for the military.

It has been holding more than two dozen captives, most of them Vietnamese sailors, who are easy prey for militants equipped with small, fast boats. The group beheaded a Filipino last week and a German in February after ransom payment deadlines expired. Two Canadians suffered the same fate last year. Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte on Wednesday said he might have troops "invade" Jolo to "finish the game" following a thwarted attempt by Abu Sayyaf to kidnap tourists on a resort island last week. —Reuters



**JAKARTA:** Jakarta Governor Basuki 'Ahok' Tjahaja Purnama arrives for his court hearing in Jakarta, Indonesia. — AP

## JAKARTA'S CHRISTIAN GOVERNOR MAY ESCAPE JAIL, AFTER DEFEAT

**JAKARTA:** Jakarta's Christian governor may escape jail for alleged blasphemy after prosecutors yesterday recommended only probation, a day after he lost in a religiously charged run-off that damaged Indonesia's image as a bastion of tolerant Islam. The recommendation of two years probation in the trial of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, with a possible one-year jail term if he commits a crime during that period, was lighter than expected as he could have been sent to prison for several years.

The sentence demand for allegedly insulting Islam came after he was defeated Wednesday by Muslim challenger Anies Baswedan who was accused of pandering to hardliners to win votes in the race for the Jakarta governorship. After his victory, former government minister Baswedan celebrated with Islamic hardliners who helped organize mass protests in the capital against the governor by praying at a major mosque.

The blasphemy allegations and Purnama's subsequent poll loss have sparked fears that pluralistic traditions in the world's most populous Muslim country are under threat from the influence of hardliners, who pushed for the governor's prosecution. Chief prosecutor Ali Mukartono recommended that Purnama, known by his nickname Ahok, be found guilty of blasphemy and be given two years probation, with a possible one-year jail sentence. He said a light sentence was being recommended as Purnama had contributed to "advancing the city of Jakarta" and had acted politely during his trial.

### Hardline anger

"If within the two years, Ahok doesn't commit any new criminal act, like corruption, stealing... he will be free," his lawyer I Wayan Sudirta said. "If within those two years he does commit a crimi-

nal act, he has to serve the one-year jail sentence." A sentence recommendation is a normal step in an Indonesian court case, and is usually followed within weeks by a verdict.

The controversy began in September when Purnama, known for his outspoken style, outraged Muslims when he controversially quoted a passage from the Islamic holy text ahead of elections for the Jakarta governorship. He insinuated that his opponents had used a Koranic verse to trick people into voting against him. An edited version of his speech went viral online, sparking outrage far beyond Jakarta, where Purnama has ruled since his predecessor Joko Widodo became president in late 2014.

The governor apologized but Indonesia's highest clerical body

declared the remarks blasphemous and urged authorities to bring charges. Before the blasphemy controversy erupted, Purnama enjoyed a large opinion poll lead due to his determination to clean up traffic-clogged, polluted Jakarta. The trial started in December and dragged on for months, with both the prosecution and defense calling more than 40 witnesses.

Purnama's team has accused the prosecution of calling biased witnesses, saying that many were not even present when the alleged blasphemy took place. Critics want the country's blasphemy laws overhauled. The legislation was rarely used during the 32-year rule of strongman Suharto, but in recent years it has been exploited to persecute minorities, rights groups say. —AFP



**WENCHANG:** In this photo, a Long March 7 rocket carrying the Tianzhou 1 cargo spacecraft blasts off from the Wenchang Space Launch Center in Wenchang in southern China's Hainan Province, yesterday. — AP

## CHINA LAUNCHES FIRST CARGO SPACECRAFT TIANZHOU-1

**WENCHANG, China:** A Chinese rocket successfully sent the country's first cargo spacecraft, Tianzhou-1, into space from the southern island province of Hainan yesterday. Fuelled by liquid oxygen and kerosene, the Long March-7 Y2 carrier rocket blasted off from Hainan's Wenchang Space Launch Center at 7:41 pm (11:41 GMT). Hundreds of spectators who had been waiting to observe the launch since the afternoon cheered and clapped in the stands.

Journalists and local hobbyists with long-range zoom lenses snapped photos of the rocket as it made its swift ascent. Tianzhou-1, the first cargo spacecraft developed by China, is headed to dock with the orbiting Tiangong-2 space lab, which was launched last September. The cargo ship is a "crucial step" toward China's goal of completing its own crewed space station by 2022, according to the official Xinhua news agency. The tube-like craft measures 10.6 meters in length and can carry over six tons of cargo as well as satellites, Xinhua said.

It will also conduct experiments in space, including one on non-Newtonian gravitation, before falling back to Earth, Xinhua said. Beijing sees its multi-billion-dollar space program as a symbol of its rise and the Communist Party's success in turning around the fortunes of the once poverty-stricken nation. In 2011, the US Congress ruled that Chinese astronauts would not be allowed on the International Space Station because of national security concerns. —AFP

## ROMANIA INTENDS TO BUY PATRIOT MISSILES FROM US TO BOOST DEFENSES

**BUCHAREST:** NATO member Romania plans to buy Patriot missiles from US company Raytheon to help protect its airspace, a senior defense ministry official said yesterday. The plan will be a key part of the European Union country's plan to modernize its military, benefiting from a gradual increase in annual spending. The defense budget in Romania—a NATO member since 2004 and one of Washington's staunchest allies in eastern Europe along with Poland—was 1.7 percent of gross domestic product in 2016 and was set at 2.0 percent this year.

"The Patriot missile defense system is part of the multi-level air defense system of Romania's airspace. We're assessing all options to develop this (acquisition) program," General Nicolae-Ionel Ciuca, chief of General

Staff told reporters. "It is important to say the program will start this year." The missiles would be part of an integrated air defense system comprising six newly acquired F-16 fighter jets as Romania is bringing its forces up to NATO standards and retiring outdated communist-era MiGs.

The official would not elaborate on the size of the planned acquisition nor say how much money had been earmarked for it. Poland expects to sign a \$7.6 billion deal with Raytheon to buy eight Patriot missile defense systems by the end of this year, its Defense Minister Antoni Macierewicz said last month. Romania, a country of 20 million people, hosts a US Ballistic missile defense station and has contributed troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. —Reuters

## ANGER, CONFUSION AS JAPAN REVIVES MILITARISTIC EDICT

**TOKYO:** Japan's century-old imperial proclamation urging people to be willing to die for the emperor was consigned to history books until video surfaced showing children in an Osaka kindergarten enthusiastically reciting it. A cabinet decision allowing schools to teach the long-banished edict, which was used to promote militarism in the 1930s and 1940s, has delighted hardcore nationalists but left many Japanese scratching their heads. Others were horrified at the sight of youngsters chanting the archaic proclamation, even as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's wife, Akie, praised them during a visit to the school, run by a nationalist seeking to inculcate pupils with pre-war values. The once-revered Imperial Rescript on Education, issued in 1890, was abolished after Japan's World War II defeat at the hands of the US over concerns it had contributed to creating a militaristic culture.

It exhorted citizens to "offer yourselves courageously to the State" so as to "guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne". The edict "functioned as a mechanism to strike down people's individual rights," said Kenji Ishikawa, a law professor at Tokyo University. But Abe and his fellow conservatives have sought to stealthily bring it back into vogue, as part of a bid to revive traditional values that have lost their shine following the introduction of an American-penned pacifist constitution which renounces war and designates the emperor as a figurehead.

"Japan should not just be an economic power but a country respected and relied on in the world for its high ethical views and morality," hawkish defense minister Tomomi Inada said last week. Some constitutional scholars have expressed concern over the government's attempt to expose impressionable minds to a document with "fanatic and cult-like" leanings. Sota Kimura, a law professor at Tokyo Metropolitan University, said the revival appeared to be a sop to nationalists who "feel terribly humiliated about the post-war system imposed by the Allies." Members of Abe's cabinet, including Inada, have regularly sought to appease the government's conservative base with nationalist gestures, such as paying homage at the controversial Yasukuni Shrine where senior convicted war criminals are honored.

### Forced to bow

The edict was once considered so sacred that school principals who accidentally disrespected the document would commit suicide out of shame or fear of punishment, according to some accounts. A copy of it was kept in a special cabinet in schools where children were forced to bow before it. But the clumsily managed revival has left many Japanese confused over the 19th-century edict's relevance to their hectic 21st-century lives. Its archaic wording means most Japanese today have neither read it nor know how to interpret it. "I'm not really clear what it is," said Yoshiko Yamanaka, a 48-year-old mother of two, when asked about the document.

"It's got something to do with having to serve the state for the emperor, or something, right?" Others who are more familiar with its content say it has no place in a modern society where all citizens are deemed equal. "Its nonsense to bring it back now," said Kazushi Tamura, 54. "Some people say it contains some good moral values like respecting family, friends and parents... But all of them end up telling people to serve the emperor." —AFP



**TOKYO:** This picture shows people holding various placards as they protest against Japan's conservative Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during a rally to denounce his policies and call for his resignation, outside Shinjuku Station in Tokyo.—AFP



**JAKARTA:** US Vice President Mike Pence, left, is greeted by Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary General Lee Luong Minh shortly before a meeting with permanent representatives of the association at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta yesterday.—AFP

## US VP PENCE TOURS INDONESIAN MOSQUE IN OUTREACH TO MUSLIMS

PENCE: 'RELIGION UNIFIES, IT DOESN'T DIVIDE'

**JAKARTA:** US Vice President Mike Pence yesterday toured the biggest mosque in Muslim-majority Indonesia during a visit seen as a highly symbolic gesture from an administration that has been accused of stoking Islamophobia. After kicking off his stop in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country by praising its moderate Islam as "an inspiration", he visited Istiqlal Mosque, whose vast white dome towers over downtown Jakarta.

He slipped off his shoes before being guided around the mosque, which is also the biggest in Southeast Asia, accompanied by his wife and two daughters in headscarves, as well as Istiqlal's grand imam. His visit represents the most high-profile outreach to Muslims by the Donald Trump administration since the brash billionaire came to office and echoes a similar trip by Barack and Michelle Obama in 2010. Since becoming president almost 100 days ago, Trump has hosted leaders from majority-Muslim Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

But his administration has also tried to ban travelers from several Muslim-majority nations, citing concerns about terrorism—an effort currently being challenged in US courts. As a presidential candidate, Trump often appeared to flirt with the far right as he railed against "radical Islamic terrorism."

But Pence struck a starkly different tone during his visit to Indonesia, which

has often been praised as a successful Muslim democracy where most practice a moderate form of Islam and coexist peacefully with substantial religious minorities. "Indonesia's tradition of moderate Islam is frankly an inspiration to the world and we commend you and your people," he said after talks with President Joko Widodo at the presidential palace in Jakarta. "In your nation as in mine, religion unifies, it doesn't divide."

### Tolerant Islam under threat

Pence is currently on a tour of South Korea, Japan, Indonesia and Australia that is aimed at smoothing some of the rougher edges of Trump's rhetoric. In South Korea and Japan, Pence played down protectionist declarations of "America first" and reaffirmed US treaty commitments to the security of the two countries as tensions rise over Pyongyang's nuclear program.

After meeting with representatives of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations at the regional bloc's headquarters in Jakarta yesterday, Pence announced Trump would attend three summits in Asia in November, a further sign that his administration is seeking to reassure regional allies. He will attend the US-ASEAN and East Asia summits in the Philippines and a gathering of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation group in Vietnam.

At the mosque in Jakarta, Pence and his family also toured the cavernous

main prayer room—which was empty during his visit but fills up with tens of thousands of worshippers during key dates in the Muslim calendar—and admired the towering dome. A man showed the US leader how he beats a carved drum next to the courtyard, a local addition to the traditional call to prayer. Pence then held an interfaith dialogue behind closed doors with representatives of the Christian, Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu and Muslim faiths.

The vice president's upbeat tone about Indonesian Islam contrasts with growing concerns inside the country that the traditionally inclusive brand of the religion is under threat from hardliners and a trend towards conservatism. On Wednesday Jakarta's Christian governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama was defeated in a run-off election to lead the capital by a Muslim challenger who was accused of pandering to hardliners to win votes.

Purnama, known by his nickname Ahok, lost after his once-unassailable lead in opinion polls was dented when he was put on trial for blasphemy in a case criticized as politically motivated. After his talks with Widodo, Pence also said the US was committed to building a stronger defense partnership with Indonesia to combat terrorism, and guaranteeing freedom of navigation in the South China Sea, where Indonesian and Chinese vessels have recently clashed.—AFP

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2017

Friday Times

# Lifestyle

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Projections are seen on the Empire State Building, celebrating Harper's Bazaar magazine's 150th anniversary on April 19, 2017 in New York. — AFP

*Fashion icons light up NY's Empire State Building*

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Iranian-French conductor Pejman Memarzadeh leads Tehran Symphony Orchestra at Vahdat Hall in Tehran. — AFP photos

## French conductor leads Tehran orchestra in sign of growing ties

Growing cultural ties between Iran and Europe were on display on Wednesday night as a French-Iranian conductor became one of the first Westerners to lead the Tehran Symphony Orchestra since the revolution. Iran's efforts to rebuild ties with the West—most notably through a nuclear deal with world powers—have triggered a flood of tourists and trade delegations into the country. Cultural links are more sensitive but are slowly developing, and Wednesday night's performance of two pieces by Gabriel Faure were thought to be the first time the Tehran orchestra's choir has sung in French.



Iranian-French conductor Pejman Memarzadeh leads Tehran Symphony Orchestra at Vahdat Hall.

It marks another step in conductor Pejman Memarzadeh's efforts to connect his Iranian birthplace and adopted home in France. "I've always been very interested in trying to bring these two civilizations, these two great countries, closer together," the 44-year-old told AFP. He was speaking ahead of the concert in the 750-seat Vahdat Hall, one of the best-equipped opera houses when it opened during the time of the shah in



Musicians of Tehran Symphony Orchestra perform at Vahdat Hall.

the 1960s, with only a slightly faded grandeur today.

The orchestra itself is celebrating its 80th anniversary, having lived through some dark days, particularly just after the 1979 revolution when much music—particularly Western—was banned. Neglected for many years, the orchestra has seen a revival under moderate President Hassan Rouhani, and while Western pop music is still frowned upon by Iran's conservative authorities, the classics are once again widely taught and practiced.

### 'Very much alive'

Memarzadeh, who left Iran as a young boy in the 1970s and founded the Orchestre de l'Alliance in France in the 1990s, said part of his mission was to draw attention to Iran's overlooked classical music heritage. "Iran is a very ancient civilization with a high level of traditional music in its roots, but people are probably less aware that like other highly cultured countries... classical music has been practiced here for a long time," he said. "There have been great artists, great conductors, great composers. The practice of classical

musical is very much alive in Iran." Shardad Rohani, musical director of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra, said one of Iran's great advantages was the continuing interest of young people in classical music.

"The average age of the orchestra is 25, and I'd say 80 percent of the audiences are young followers. In Europe, it's the opposite," Rohani told AFP. The talent is homegrown, with many studying at the conservatory across the road. "One positive thing about the Tehran Symphony Orchestra is they're all Iranians. They all studied here... and that shows that classical music is alive and well," he said. This is not Memarzadeh's first musical foray in Iran. In 2002, he led the first performance by a Western orchestra in Iran since the revolution, and last year returned to perform at historic sites including the ancient ruins at Persepolis. The nuclear deal signed with world powers in 2015 "has helped rebuild trust," he said. "Artistic, cultural and educational projects are very important because they help remind us of what unites us and what will help us build a better and more constructive future," he said. — AFP

## 'We want to be happy' - Iraqi violinist plays in Mosul as troops battle IS

Amid the bombed-out ruins of an ancient site revered by both Muslims and Christians in Mosul, Iraqi violinist Ameen Mukdad on Wednesday held a small concert in the city he was forced to flee by Islamic State militants. As Mukdad played scores he had composed in secret while living under the militants' austere rule, explosions and gunfire could be heard from Mosul's western districts where US-backed forces are still battling Islamic State for control. "This is a place for all, not just one sect. Daesh represents no religion but is an ideology that suppresses freedom," Mukdad told Reuters, using a derogatory name for the militants. "Everything about Daesh is wrong."

Mukdad, 28, fled Mosul after Islamic State fighters stormed his house and confiscated his instruments, deeming his music a violation of their hardline interpretation of Sunni Islam. Wednesday's hour-long concert marked his first return to the city that was overrun by Islamic State in 2014. Mukdad said he chose the Tomb of Jonas, or Mosque of the Prophet Younis, as the site is known by Muslims, to symbolize unity. "I want to take the opportunity to send a message to the world and send a strike against terrorism and all ideologies which restrict freedom that music is a beautiful thing," he said. "Everyone who opposes music is ugly."

### Defying IS

Mukdad advertised the concert venue and time on social media, a bold move in eastern Mosul at a time the militants still control the Old City across the Tigris river. Soldiers guarding the venue, which lies near the ancient Nineveh ruins, at first refused access after the boom of a nearby rocket rang out, saying they could not guarantee the public's safety. They later relented, and troops joined the applauding crowd.

"The performance was like a dream," said Tahany Saleh, who as a woman was forced by the militants to cease her university studies. "I wanted to come to give a message that war has not stopped life in Mosul," she said. "You can see all this damage but still we still want to be happy, we want to listen music." Under Islamic State rule, entertainment was banned. But in defiance of the militants, Mukdad continued to play at home alone or quietly with a dwindling circle of fellow musicians, closing windows to avoid detection.

"I stopped playing because I was too afraid but Ameen kept going," said Hakam Anas, one of his friends who founded a musical club with the violinist. "We tried persuading him that he could get easily killed, but he kept playing." One night the militants raided Mukdad's house, taking his instruments and vowing to punish him. He escaped to Baghdad where he still lives. In a sign of how nervous Mosul residents remain six months into the military operation to flush out Islamic State, just 20 people, mostly young men, attended the concert. "This is what we young people need," said Abdullah Thair. — Reuters



These undated photos provided by the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, show installations view of 'The Jazz Age: American Style in the 1920s.' — AP photos

# Jazz Age design shown in textiles, furniture and more

**A** multisensory blockbuster of a show at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum here invites visitors to explore Jazz Age design in all its glittering, decadent and innovative glory. Edgy furniture and tableware; textiles and wallpapers in rich oranges and teals; odes to the New York skyscraper - there's nothing quietly "decorative" in "The Jazz Age: American Style in the 1920s," which is on view in New York through Aug. 20 and then opens at the Cleveland Museum of Art on Sept 30. It runs there through Jan 14, 2018.

Visitors should check preconceptions about "Art Deco" at the door. That popular term for 1920s style was coined well after the era ended, says Sarah Coffin, a curator at the Cooper Hewitt, who co-curated the exhibit with Stephen Harrison, a curator at the Cleveland Museum of Art. It was co-organized by both museums. The pivotal era that linked a more traditionalist aesthetic before it to the Bauhaus and midcentury modern eras that came later was more aptly known in its own time as the Jazz Age.

woven by New Jersey's Edgewater Tapestry Looms) that were favored by traditionalists of the early 1920s. This was a period when early American design found new respect with the opening of the American Wing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the rise of interior design, led by pioneering women like Dorothy Draper and Nancy McClelland, who helped introduce new contexts for old wallpapers and fabrics.

This section, visible from many of the other galleries, then serves as a point of reference as the decade then lurches from traditionalist to decidedly forward-looking. "A New Look" reveals furniture and other design pieces of the early 1920s with a more modern sense of style. Works by cutting-edge French designers Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann, Edgar Brandt and Andre Mare reveal 18th century styles, particularly in furniture, revisited with a luxurious, sleek and modern sensibility. The pieces are paired with ceramics, textiles and wall coverings in bold, bright flora and fauna patterns, particularly in brash teals and oranges.

"Color is a big part of the picture," explains Coffin. Around the corner, "Bending the Rules" underlines the revolutionary social context behind increasingly innovative Jazz Age style. Women had earned the right to vote and many cast aside old social customs. Despite Prohibition, an array of glamorous cocktail shakers and glasses reveals rules being, very stylishly, bent.

"There's a lot more flash suddenly, and a movement away from subdued decorum," Coffin explains. "A Smaller World" reveals the huge impact of the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, in Paris. Many influential American designers flocked to see the new designs there after World War I. A selection of 400 objects from the exposition were sent on a tour of American museums in 1926, and US department stores held their own exhibits of imported modern design.

### 'Toward a Machine Age'

The new aesthetics, coupled with a fascination with industrial design and the powerful symbolism of American skyscrapers, led to skyscraper-inspired wall coverings and bookshelves, desks and even tableware. The exhibit reveals movement in the late 1920s toward more abstract designs, particularly in architec-



ture, which discovered open-plan interiors. This theme is explored through a gallery devoted to "Abstraction and Reinvention," highlighting the impact of art movements like Cubism on architecture, furniture and other home goods.

Finally, in "Toward a Machine Age," we are brought to the end of the '20s, when machines inspired much of American taste, including the arrival of bent chrome furniture,

combining sleek modern forms with mass production. The show ends in the early 1930s with numerous iterations of Charles Lindbergh's trans-Atlantic flight told in furniture upholstery, wallpaper and tableware. But the glitzy cocktail party seems to be over, with bold teals giving way to muted shades of sage, and now-mass-produced innovations made in cheaper iterations with the start of the Great Depression. — AP



Through over 400 works, many of them from private collections and never before displayed in public, this show reveals why. "Exploring the significant impact of European influences, the explosive growth of American cities, avant-garde artistic movements, new social mores and the role of technology, 'The Jazz Age' seeks to define the American spirit of the period," says Cooper Hewitt Director Caroline Baumann.

The show begins quietly with a relatively staid section on the "Persistence of Traditional Good Taste," focusing on the American colonial and Federalist designs in furniture and tableware (and a monumental tapestry





Customers looking at different kinds of insects at a stall in Sydney. — AFP photos



A signature cricket dish at a restaurant in Sydney.



Skye Blackburn, an entomologist and owner of Australia's largest insect supplier, the Edible Bug Shop, preparing crickets by the oven at her work place in Sydney.

# Bugs for dinner? New Aussie food trend has legs (and wings)

**W**ith a twist of lime and a dash of salt Sydney chef Nowshad Alam Rasel flavors a hot pan full of crickets, tossing them over a flaming stove. The savory snack, which would not be out of place at a Mexican cantina or a Bangkok street stall, is creeping onto menus at Australian boutique eateries such as El Topo, challenging the inhibitions of diners. "When they come for the first time, the customer very much wants to know what it is," says sous-chef Rasel, as he neatly plates up the fried critters, topped with slices of fresh chilli. Roasted cockroach, honey-flavored ants, mealworm and chocolate coated popcorn are now available to try and buy-and while the cuisine remains a novelty, there are signs it is growing in popularity.

Consumer attitude toward eating insects are usually split explains Skye Blackburn, owner of Australia's largest insect supplier, the Edible Bug Shop in Sydney. "The first kind of

people are completely grossed out and they really can't change their mind and they kind of just want to come and have a look and don't want to try it really," the entomologist says. "And then we get the second kind of people that really want to learn more and some of them will try edible insects and some of them won't, but they will go away and talk about insects and they'll spread the word about what they have seen that day," she adds.

High in protein, cheap to produce, and with a much lighter carbon footprint than meat or dairy farming, bugs are already part of the diet for more than two billion people worldwide, according to the United Nations. Advocates of increased consumption say it will help feed a bulging global population as land becomes scarce and climate change threatens conventional food supplies like fish.

## 'Love bugs'

Insects such as beetles, caterpillars, crickets and even spiders are common in diets across parts of Asia, Latin America and Africa, while Australia's Aborigines have eaten bush tucker including ants, moths and larvae for thousands of years. But they are a difficult sell in the Western world where people struggle to disassociate the nutritional value from the source, with most insects considered pests. "You have to name them something else," suggested one El Toro patron when asked about overcoming fears of eating insects in Australia. "We don't eat cow, we tend to eat steak and sausages," he says. Blackburn is leading the charge to change the perception of edible insects. She runs Australia's only commercial bug farm, supplying a growing number of restaurants across the country, breeding hundreds of kilograms of insects each week, including savory crickets, dehydrated ants, and even a "special" kind of roasted cockroach "that don't have any germs on them". Australia's trendy urban farmer's markets too are a popular spot for her produce, with inquisitive foodies sampling creations like mealworm and chocolate coated popcorn, and green tea and honey roasted black ants. "I'm going to go a big gob," says 53-year-old market goer Guy McEwan, putting a handful of a savory mix of mealworms, ants, crickets and popcorn into his mouth.

"It's great. I love em, I love bugs," he adds, likening the texture and flavor to crisps. Others at the crowded Saturday market in the hip Sydney suburb of Redfern are drawn to the novelty. "Sometimes when you move the packet it looks like they're alive," says Danny Stagnitta, 42, while giving his snack box a shake. Back at El Topo, while the bugs remain a hot item among Sydney's experimental diners, it may be some time yet before it becomes a staple in Australian homes. Nine-year-old diner Alexandria winces as she samples the fried crickets. She concludes: "It feels awkward and weird that you're eating an insect. You would normally eat meat." — AFP



Skye Blackburn, an entomologist and owner of Australia's largest insect supplier, the Edible Bug Shop, with crickets at her work place in Sydney.



A bowl full of fried crickets for sale at a market in Sydney.

## Documentary delves into life of music pioneer Clive Davis

Clive Davis celebrated his legacy with the debut of a documentary about his life, along with performances from artists he helped become icons, during the opening night of the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival. Davis, 85, said it was a dream come true to launch "Clive Davis: The Soundtrack of Our Lives" at Radio City Music Hall since he grew up in Brooklyn and didn't visit Manhattan until he was 13. The music mogul was all smiles at the multi-hour event Wednesday night, as performers like Aretha Franklin, Carly Simon, Barry Manilow and Earth, Wind & Fire took the stage to pay tribute to Davis.



Barry Manilow performs at the world premiere of "Clive Davis: The Soundtrack of Our Lives" at Radio City Music Hall, during the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival, Wednesday in New York. — AP

"All of them fresh from not performing at the inauguration," Robert De Niro, who co-founded the festival, said before the film began, earning laughs and handclaps from the audience. Jennifer Hudson left the stage to walk into the aisles to dance with the crowd as she sang Whitney Houston's "I Wanna Dance With Somebody." "Where is Clive at?" she yelled. Davis earned a loud cheer from the audi-

ence when he started dancing. When Franklin - who closed the show - sang "Natural Woman," she pointed to Davis and sang the lyrics, "He makes me feel." She also called her longtime collaborator a "chieftain" and "humanitarian."

Others shared the sentiment on-screen. "The Soundtrack of Our Lives," directed by Chris Perkel, gave a peek into Davis' personal and professional life. He lost his parents while he was an undergraduate at New York University, and later attended Harvard Law School. After working as a lawyer for Columbia Records, he was promoted to president in 1967, despite not desiring a career in music. "I had no inkling that music would be my passion of life," he said in an interview with The Associated Press on Tuesday from his office at the new Sony building in Manhattan. "I had no money after my parents died, so I went through school on scholarships. And I was going to be a lawyer." He said watching the documentary was somewhat hard, especially scenes with Houston, who died in 2012.

"It was very emotional to see artists that I worked with 20, 30, 40 years ago have the same vivid memories of how we interrelated and what we worked on and issues that arose," he said. "It certainly gives a very compelling picture of the relationship that I had with Whitney Houston and of course that's filled with emotional impact, and it really showed sides of Whitney that no one has ever seen before." Davis went on to become the world's most popular music executive, discovering talents such as Houston, Alicia Keys and Manilow and creating second acts for legends like Franklin and Santana. He even had a large role in shaping the careers of Bruce Springsteen, Janis Joplin and Billy Joel. —AP



Projections are seen on the Empire State Building, celebrating Harper's Bazaar magazine's 150th anniversary. — AFP

## Fashion icons light up NY's Empire State Building

New York's famed Empire State Building lit up with sky-high iconic fashion photographs after nightfall on Wednesday to celebrate the 150th anniversary of style magazine Harper's Bazaar. Beginning at 8:30pm (0030 GMT Thursday) and slated to run until midnight, the north side of the building flashed iconic shoots and cultural moments from the pages of Harper's into the New York skyline. Among reproductions of the glossy pages set to shine over Manhattan, and streamed live on the mag-

azine's Facebook page, was Barbadian superstar Rihanna sitting in the mouth of Jaws.

Since 1976 the Empire State Building has traditionally changed the color of its tower lights to celebrate or commemorate different occasions and organizations throughout the year. In 2012, they installed a new computer driven LED light system capable of displaying 16 million colors, which can change instantaneously. — AFP

## Prince's 1980s band hits the road for memorial tour

For members of Prince's 1980s backing band The Revolution, reuniting and hitting the road for a spring US tour is how they are coping with the "Purple Rain" pop superstar's unexpected death a year ago. "We're taking it to the people who are grieving like we are, and letting them have a little bit of relief," guitarist Wendy Melvoin, sitting on a couch with other members of the band during a break at their Minneapolis rehearsal space, said Wednesday. When Prince died of an accidental painkiller overdose, members of The Revolution were mourning at a Minneapolis hotel and made an impromptu video, promising to reunite for shows honoring their one-time flamboyant front man. After three sold-out shows at the fabled First Avenue nightclub (the setting of Prince's hit 1984 movie "Purple Rain") in September, The Revolution is back, preparing to kick off a tour today at Paisley Park in the Minneapolis suburb of Chanhassen on the anniversary of Prince's death.

The tour includes stops in Chicago, Washington, DC, New York, Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles and San Francisco before ending in Seattle on July 15. Melvoin is joined by bassist BrownMark, keyboardists Matt Fink and Lisa Coleman, and drummer Bobby Z. The reunited Revolution plans to play Prince's synthesizer-heavy 1980s music through his lauded 1987 double album "Sign o' the Times." "We have the ability now to give people a glimpse of what we experienced with him," BrownMark said. "And I think that's a powerful thing. I know it helped me heal."

While Prince had a reputation as a perfectionist, members of The Revolution remember the good times goofing in the studio. "We had fun. We had a lot of fun. Sometimes we would be rehearsing and we'd crack up, we'd just laugh for an hour, cracking jokes," BrownMark recalls. "We'd go play softball," keyboardist Fink said. "OK, we're not going to rehearse today, let's

go play softball." After years of recording and touring with The Revolution, Prince "did what any boss would do and just put it (the band) to bed," Bobby Z. said.

"That intense run we had, all those years, it was starting to come apart at the seams, with personalities and under that kind of pressure, just like human beings do, and he just kind of made a decision," the drummer said. "And he wanted to move on as basically a solo artist with a backing band, no disrespect. But this was a band he was a very critical member of." Whether The Revolution will continue beyond this tour is an open question. "We'd love to be able to see if there are some legs with this," Melvoin said. — AP



In this Jan 28, 1985 file photo, pop vocalist Prince holds up a hand as he and his band, The Revolution, accept the American Music Award for best single "When Doves Cry" in Los Angeles. — AP photos



Bassist BrownMark, left, answers a question as the original members of Prince's 1980's band, The Revolution, from second left, guitarist Wendy Melvoin, keyboarders Matt Fink and Lisa Coleman and drummer Bobby Z, look on during an interview.

# TOSS VEGGIES INTO HUMMUS, ROAST THEM AND ENJOY A TASTY CRUST

By Melissa D'arabian

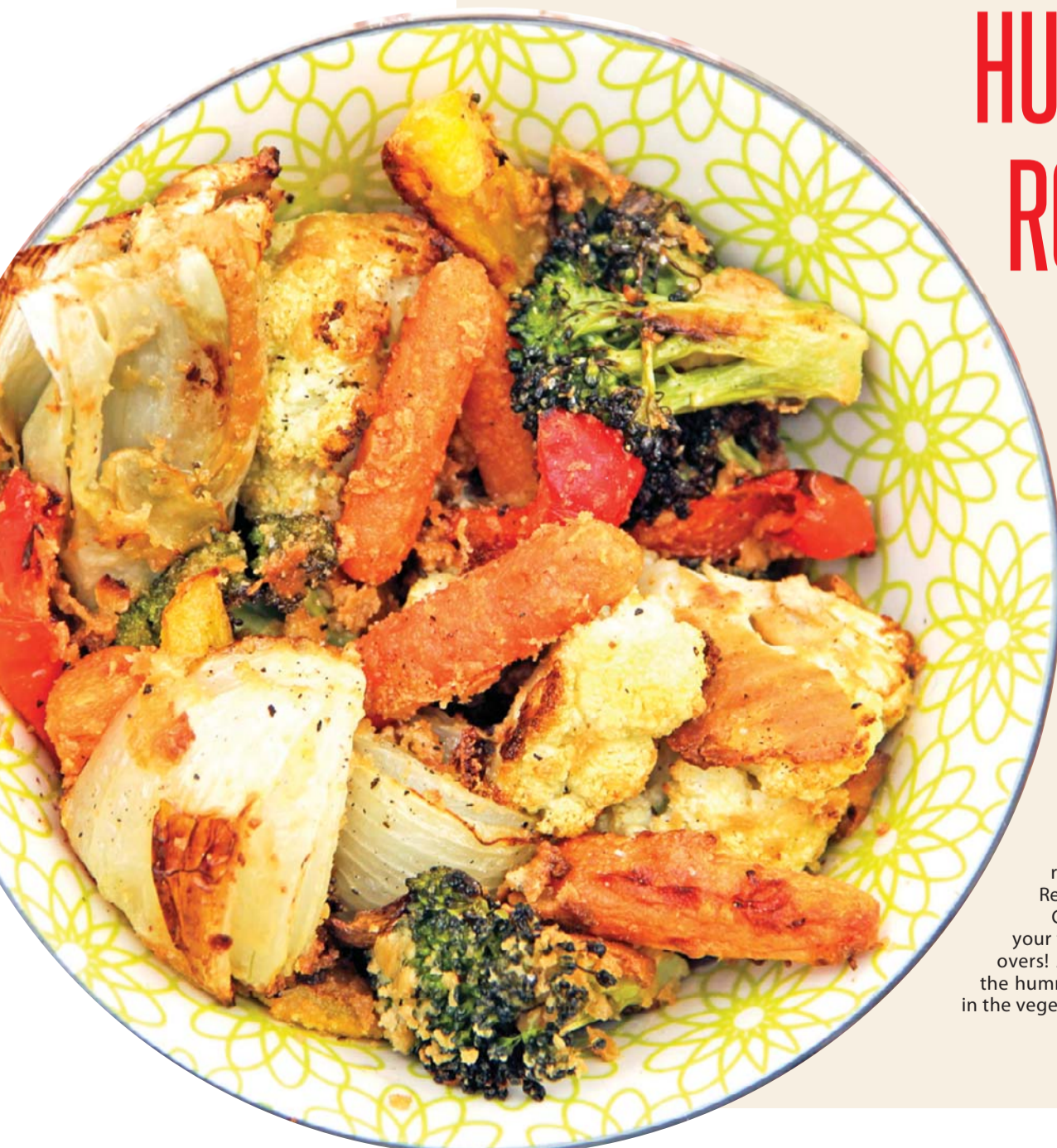
I remember being told in marketing class back in graduate school that the fastest growing food category in America was hummus. Hummus, our professor insisted to us disbelieving students, would soon be ubiquitous. I should have heeded his advice and leveraged that bit of 1991 foresight in some way.

Chances are that if you have been to any kind of gathering lately, you have partaken in a hummus and veggie platter. Stores are filled with endless varieties of premade hummus, and homemade recipes flood the internet. With protein and fiber-filled garbanzo beans leading the ingredient list, it's a filling dip that turns baby carrots and bell pepper slices into a worthy snack that will actually fill you up a bit.

Both kids and adults seem to like hummus, so it is equally comfortable at a cocktail hour as it is at a kids' soccer field. The problem is: You always have leftovers. At least we do. Usually, I serve a couple of varieties, along with a triple-sized stock of veggies, because you never really know if the crowd skews more broccoli than carrots, so having veg backup seems wise. After one of those occasions, I had the idea to toss the leftover veggies into the hummus and roast them. The hummus clung

to the veggies just enough to give it a caramelized and tasty crust, and with one recipe, two leftovers were used up to create a whole new side dish or appetizer: Hummus-Crusted Roasted Vegetables.

The key is to roast at high heat, and to preheat the baking sheet, which will accelerate the caramelization of the veggies. Usually, I just toss the vegetables with the hummus in a large bowl with my hands. But, I've also thinned out hummus with a few tablespoons of lemon juice or water to make a batter to coat the veggies more completely, like a hummus tempura. Either way works. Flavored hummus, like roasted garlic or red pepper, doesn't usually need a boost, but feel free to stir in extra garlic, herbs or spices (a spoonful of pesto is delish). Even plain hummus works great, and takes about a minute to put together. After baking, sprinkle on a pinch of salt and squeeze of lemon, and your hummus-crudite platter will have found new life.



## HUMMUS-CRUSTED ROASTED VEGGIES

### Ingredients

Start to finish: 30 minutes  
 Servings: 6 servings  
 1 cup baby carrots  
 1 cup broccoli florets  
 1 cup cauliflower florets  
 1 cup bell pepper slices (red or yellow preferred)  
 1 small onion or fennel bulb, peeled and quartered  
 1 cup prepared hummus  
 Garlic or spices, if desired (optional)  
 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt  
 Lemons for squeezing

### Preparation

Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper and place inside the oven. Preheat the oven to 425 F, with the sheet pan in the oven. In a large bowl, toss the vegetables with the hummus, (and any optional garlic or spices if using), using your hands to coat the veggies. Do not worry if the mixture is a little clumpy or uneven. Once the oven is hot, remove the sheet pan, and carefully lay out the coated vegetables on the tray. Return to the oven and roast for 10 minutes. Remove the vegetables from the oven, and quickly turn the vegetables over. Return the vegetables to the oven and roast until desired tenderness, about 10-15 more minutes. Remove from heat, sprinkle with salt and lemon juice, and serve.

Chef's note: Feel free to swap out vegetables for 4-5 cups of your favorites or a great way to use up hummus-crudite platter leftovers! Another version: stir enough lemon juice or water just until the hummus is smooth and creamy, like a thick batter, before tossing in the vegetables.



# Baked muffin frittatas are a quick and easy treat

By Elizabeth Karmel

I recently became obsessed with these little crustless quiches. They're more frittata but everyone who eats them likens them to quiche. However defined, they are quick and easy to prepare and can be filled with any of your favorite cheese, vegetable and/or meat combos.

Make sure that your vegetables are sauteed before filling the muffin tins, and any meat such as sausage and bacon is cooked. The short baking time will melt the cheese and set the eggs but not cook any of your add-ins. Since there is no crust to make, these are perfect egg bites for anyone who is watching their carbs or is gluten sensitive. But the real reason to make them is that they taste great.

These "egg muffins" are perfect for entertaining and any leftovers turn a grab-and-go breakfast into a treat. In fact, I sometimes make them just to have on hand for quick weekday breakfasts. My favorite version so far includes asparagus, mushrooms, cheddar cheese and brie as I've included in this recipe. I add pimentos and green onions for flavor and color and tend to keep them in the mix regardless of what other ingredients I choose. The great thing about baking these eggs in a muffin tin is that you can customize them for your guests. For example, you can add ham or some other meat to half of them for the meat lovers and keep half all veggies for the non-meat eaters in your group. They also offer instant portion control and are simple to serve - all you need do is bake, place in a basket or on a platter and serve. Plus, they are a sight to behold when they are baking. At the end of the baking time, they puff up like a souffle. As they cool, they do deflate a bit but that short thrill makes the eating all the more exciting.

## BAKED MUFFIN FRITTATAS WITH ASPARAGUS AND MUSHROOMS

### Servings: 12

Start to finish: 40 minutes

10 eggs  
1/4 cup cream  
1/2 teaspoon sea salt  
Pinch of nutmeg  
Butter or olive oil to coat pans  
1 cup asparagus, chopped  
1 heaping cup thinly sliced mushrooms  
2 tablespoons butter  
1/4 cup thinly sliced green onion  
1/4 cup chopped pimentos  
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese  
1/2 pound brie cheese, cut into 12 pieces

### Preparation

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Crack eggs into a liquid measuring cup. Whisk the eggs, cream, nutmeg and salt. Set aside. Melt butter in a saute pan and add asparagus and

mushrooms and cook for about 5 minutes or until beginning to soften but the asparagus is still bright green. Grease a 12-cup muffin pan with olive oil. Divide asparagus, mushrooms, green onion, and cheese between each muffin cup, then carefully pour egg mixture over tops until muffin tins are almost full (leave 1/4-inch space).

Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean. The egg muffins will look like a souffle when they come out of the oven, but they will fall after a few minutes. Let them rest in the muffin tin for a few minutes before using a rubber spatula to carefully remove each muffin. Place on a wire rack to cool for a couple of minutes to let the steam dissipate. Enjoy immediately or let cool and transfer to a re-sealable plastic bag. Refrigerate for up to three days. They can be eaten cold or reheated in a microwave. — AP



# Smothering the flames of 'hype culture'

By Aakash Bakaya

This week saw the release of the trailer of the latest 'Star Wars' extravaganza. Being the third film of the renewed franchise in three years, it was personally hard to build up much excitement. The title 'The Last Jedi' was revealed a few months ago and Luke Skywalker playing a crucial part was obvious after the ending of 'The Force Awakens'. So what was there to talk about? What was all the major excitement for? Apart from the usual space fights and blabbering on about 'The Force', it was a single line of dialogue. Like clockwork, the Internet worked itself into a manic frenzy, and to be frank all this hyping for hype's sake is becoming quite tiresome.

Before I get on with this, let me be clear about something. It's not about liking something, but about blindly throwing praise around while dismissing any sort of criticism. 'Star Wars' fans will froth in the mouth for even the tiniest

morsels of information and news. It's been like that for decades (one could argue they were the first to legitimize that excitement) and pointing this out is futile. This is targeted to not only mainstream fans of 'Star Wars', but other lucrative franchises as well.

Whether it is 'Star Wars' or the latest episode of 'Rick and Morty', general audiences are simply unable to stop and think about what they are consuming before screeching its praises or attempting to wipe it off the face of the earth. Not everything can be simply judged with a thumbs up or thumbs down icon. Like any art form, films and television are intricate and layered and if you're deeming everything you're watching as with either unanimous love or indisputable hate, then maybe a change in perspective is needed.



Probably the most hyped game of all-time 'No Man's Sky' was equally the most disappointing and lackluster game releases of the last 15 years.



**Remember when...**

Before the Internet, human beings were forced to watch movies and TV shows at the whims and fancies of television channels. If you missed the latest episode of 'Angel' at 9pm because you had to attend a family function, you had to piece together the pieces of the plot you missed in the next one. Desperate to watch a classic film on TMC? That's too bad, because it's only being shown at 2 AM and it's a school night. Back then you didn't have much of a choice in what you watched and in many ways, it was a kind of blessing.

**Burn the heretic!**

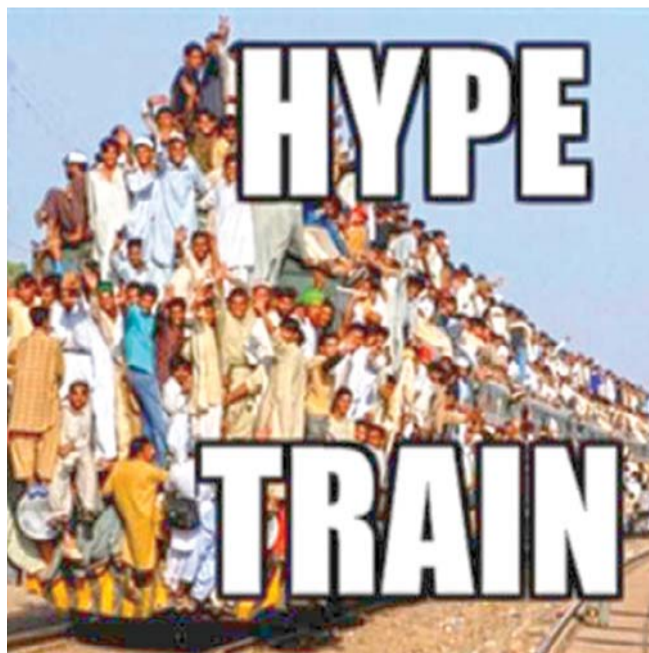
This extreme support and lack of any critical analysis tends to be more prevalent among fanbases of TV shows, and it's easy for me to point the blame at binge-watching. I'm already playing devil's advocate here, so let me further my advocacy - I hate binge-watching anything. I prefer watching an episode a day or even taking a couple of days off between episodes. It helps to keep any sort of excitement for the upcoming episode and allows me to at least take in and appreciate the plot and the characters at a slower pace.

well-shot and Luke's line about ending the Jedi was intriguing, but apart from this, it was just more 'Star Wars'. I was (mildly) excited as a fan but was subsequently let down because I can tell when a trailer misses the mark. That didn't stop the multitude of reaction videos and faux 30 minute 'breakdowns' of a two-minute trailer to start flooding newsfeeds. If everything 'Star Wars' is special, then nothing becomes special. Sometimes we need to moderate our expectations and set thrusters to average instead of light speed.

Binge-watching doesn't allow me to notice subtle flourishes of individual episodes and the constant dopamine rush of cliffhangers grows weary on me. It's just not possible to consume an entire season of a TV show and appreciate the finer details. Cliffhanger endings are easy to gush about, but themes, motives and arcs require you to actually think about what you're watching.

I remain conflicted on 'hype-culture' as a whole. I would love to be swept away in the teary-eyed excitement of a new release, but the last few seasons of beloved programs cough 'Game of Thrones' cough and the recent dismal summer movie seasons have left me cautious of getting my hopes up. Of course, there are many gems out there and finding them is always a pleasure. But when I come across videos like '20 Easter eggs you missed in the new Thor trailer' or publications claiming 'The Last Jedi' is destined to rekindle our love of the cinema, I'm glad I'm on the outside looking in.

Finally, let's get back to that new 'Star Wars' trailer. It was simply a hodge-podge of images stitched together over a voice narration you could have used for every single 'Star Wars' film ever made. No doubt, it was all pretty and



I wouldn't have discovered half of my favorite TV shows or movie directors if I hadn't turned to that channel when I did. My point is - by watching a wider variety of movies and shows, we allowed our own opinions to take form. Good, bad or average, whatever thoughts we had on a derided television show or a critically-praised film were at least our own. We didn't need to validate our opinions because we didn't know what the general consensus even was.

Internet communities and forums changed all that. We found likeminded people and shut out those who dissented. We called everyone who criticized our favorite shows 'trolls' and never took in what they were actually trying to say. Most damningly, we let 'hype culture' run wild, and once marketing agencies and advertisers caught on, it was already too late. They've managed to turn fans of franchises into vehement supporters equally ruthless as they are passionate in standing by their chosen 'fandoms', much like in sports. But at least sport fans are able to condemn their own teams when they underperform.



Friday Times

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2017

# Travel

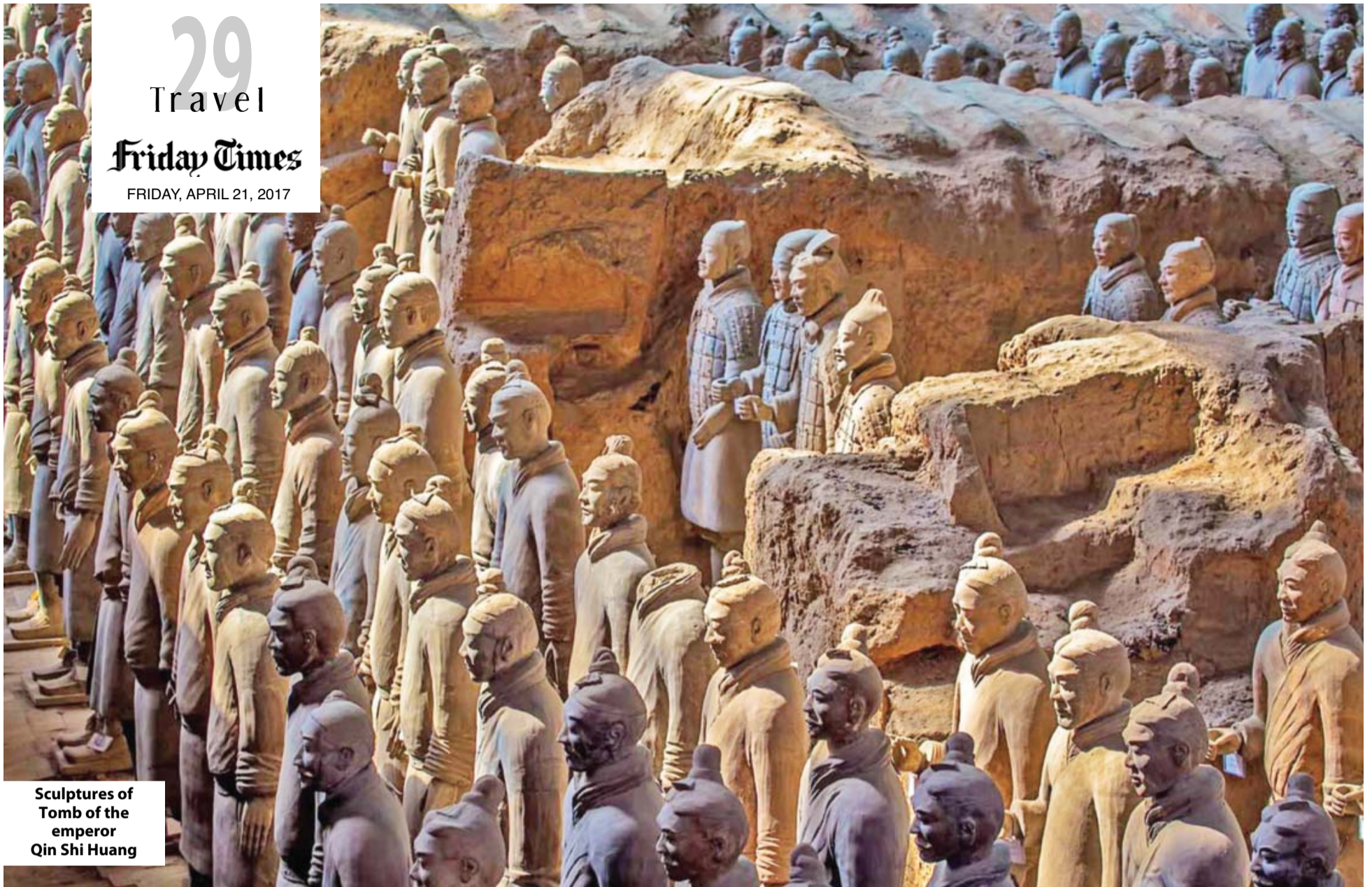


**Must-see sights on**

# China's Silk Road



Vineyards of the Casal de Arm-n winery overlook San Andr's village and its church near Ribadavia



Sculptures of  
Tomb of the  
emperor  
Qin Shi Huang

*The unmoving landscapes of the Silk Road have enchanted travelers for millennia. Sights along the route have lasted down through the ages, from a time when monks travelled these roads bringing Buddhism back from south Asia, and traders exchanged silk for goods and spices.*

Made up of a series of roads connecting Chinese capitals with south Asia, Europe and the Mediterranean, a voyage down the Silk Road remains one of China's most epic journeys. Travelling the length of this route today, with its flaming red mountains, towering sand dunes and alpine lakes, still offers a very real sense of what ancient traders experienced. And in 2014, UNESCO listed the entire 5000km Tian Shan Corridor as a World Heritage Site. Luckily, the Silk Road is ever-more accessible from the rest of China thanks to the opening of a new high-speed rail line through Xinjiang. This train will eventually connect the furthest reaches of China's northwestern province to Xi'an, Beijing and beyond. Here we explore a must-see list of its east-to-west sights.

#### Army of Terracotta Warriors

Painstakingly cast as guardians for Qin Shi Huang's first emperor of China's safe passage into the afterlife, the Army of Terracotta Warriors was discovered in 1974. Since then, thousands of warriors, archers and chariots have been unearthed and remain on display just outside the city of Xi'an in Shaanxi province. Xi'an is the first stop along an itinerary of the Silk Road from east to west and it was the capital of Chinese empires variously in ancient periods and its strategic north-central location on the Guangzhong Plain makes it a gateway from eastern China to the wild west. Today, Xi'an is a busy provincial capital home to numerous ethnic minorities, mainly Hui Muslims.

#### Labrang Monastery

One of the most important monasteries in the Yellow Hat sect of Tibetan Buddhism, Labrang Monastery in Xiahe was once home to 4000 monks and echoes of a time when Buddhism passed through this part of the world on its great journey through China, from south

Asia to the Far East. Today, Labrang Monastery is home to 1800 monks and its grand prayer halls and intricate yak-butter sculptures remain a draw for visitors and monks alike.

#### Mogao Grottoes

One of the most important Buddhist art sites in the world, the Mogao Grottoes near the oasis city of Dunhuang are what remain of a thriving ancient monastery usually dated to 366 AD. The caves were a repository of wall

paintings, scrolls, carvings and texts left by monks and nuns who passed through on their way to or from Buddhist sites in south Asia. Though many of the caves' most precious goods were looted in the early 20th century, they remain open for visitors to marvel at their intricate interior paintings.

#### Overhanging Great Wall & Jiayuguan Fort

The Great Wall is not one stretch of compiled stones, but an almost countless series of

small walls stretching from the Bohai Sea in northeastern China to a desert outpost along China's Silk Road: Jiayuguan. This, the westernmost end of the Great Wall once the last outpost of Chinese civilisation and marked the end of China and the beginning of everywhere else. Jiayuguan Fort's giant mud walls rise strikingly out of the desert. Nearby, the mud-brick Overhanging Great Wall ascends a steep length of desert mountainside with sweeping views of the dry valley below.



The end of the Great  
Wall at Jiayuguan



Crescent Lake and Singing Sands Dune

Jiayuguan itself makes for an interesting stopover to explore its selection of Han, Hui Muslim and Uighur cultures and foods, which can be enjoyed at the Jingtie and Fuqiang night markets.

#### Singing Sands Dune and Crescent Lake

Dunhuang has the feel of an outpost town thanks to its incredible location at the literal edge of the harsh Taklamakan Desert. In addition to being a jumping off point to visit the Mogao Grottoes, Dunhuang is also home to the incredible Crescent Lake. This half-moon shaped pond sits at the bottom of a giant sand dune and, according to local lore, possesses special magic as the lake itself has never been covered over with sand despite the local winds that give rise to its towering dune, Singing Sands Dune. Ascending to the top of the dune, only to peer out over an endless sea of sand further west, really gives a sense of

the size and scale of this desert and the length of the Silk Road.

#### Jiaohe Ruins

The origins of the ruined city of Jiaohe have been traced to as early as 108 BC, when it was known as Yarkhoto. It was an important Silk Road stopover in the desert between the Tian Shan mountains and the oasis of Dunhuang. Today you can explore the archaeological remains of Jiaohe, with its mud walls and crumbling buildings atop a steep embankment overlooking the confluence of two rivers. It's an easy 10km taxi or bike ride along a paved road from Turpan, another Silk Road oasis town now known for its wine production.

#### Emin Minaret

No trip along the Silk Road would be complete without viewing the rising spire of China's tallest minaret, Emin Minaret

near Turpan. Built in the 1770s to honor a local general, the minaret's intricate floral designs and bowling-pin shape formed from dried mud make it stand out among the Silk Road sites.

#### Flaming Mountains

The romantic name of these eroded sandstone hills do them perfect justice. The Flaming Mountains have been the subject of many artistic expressions, including in the classic Ming-dynasty novel *Journey to the West*, and they provided an otherworldly backdrop for the 2002 Jet Li epic film *Hero*. The hills extend for a whopping 100km across the Turpan Depression - the hottest, driest place in China and the lowest point in Central Asia (154m below sea level) - and reach 800m high.

#### Tian Chi Lake

Heaven Lake, as it is known in English, is a

perfect disc of blue water surrounded on all sides by the gaping Tian Shan mountains. Bogda Feng, the highest peak in the range, looms 5445m above the lake. Boats zip visitors across the lake and local Uighur families offer their yurt tents for overnight stays, but the buzz can't detract from the overwhelming vastness of the scenery here.

#### Kashgar's Grand Sunday Bazaar

Kashgar is the last major urban centre along the Silk Road before it weaves its way up over the Tian Shan mountains and into Central Asia. The city's Grand Bazaar has been operating for more than two centuries. It is an intoxicating maze: smells of spices, animals and musty textiles mix with traditional Uighur muqam melodies and the sounds of vendors beckoning buyers to consider their carved wooden boxes and intricately beaded sandals. ([www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com))



Tianchi Lake



**Aries (March 21-April 19)**

Joint projects will run smoothly. Working with others in a business or family matter will go well. Romance is strongly indicated all month when a fulfilling relationship begins or intensifies. New means of self-expression and communication are possible. You may find yourself changing your appearance and moving toward the unique and less traditional styles. You may find that both your personal growth and your career may depend upon how you can handle a bit of sensitive psychological material coming up now. You will benefit from following a line of investigation before coming up with solutions. You have a strong drive to integrate and simplify matters. You want something more imaginative and less ordinary these days.



**Taurus (April 20-May 20)**

Because your nature is to avoid disputes and arguments at all cost, when you are pushed into solving problems, you can sometimes solve them so quickly that people return to you over and over again to once more solve the dispute or the problem. Now that you know you leave such a good impression, it may be a good time to let people know that you have confidence in their ability to solve difficulties or mysteries and they must take that responsibility upon themselves. You juggle many projects this afternoon and are quite pleased to see that business is improving month by month. There are several things to celebrate today. Your good works bring you special attention on this special day. Work friends have good wishes.



**Gemini (May 21-June 20)**

It is time to consider what you want to accomplish. Look around you today and see if this is where you want to be five years from now. Begin to list the things that make your heart happy and find ways to move in the direction of your dreams. Educational projects require much study and may also involve travel. This travel may create the need to look around for another vehicle that is a bit more economical to run than your present one. Fresh insight comes to you through broadcasting, publishing or advertising-giving you a whole new perspective. All that is personal, sensitive and secret will come storming out of the closet. Let it flow and let it go. Moving forward is just part of the cycle you have begun.



**Cancer (June 21-July 22)**

This is a delightfully romantic and social time. Your support system and those who give you nourishment become more secure. You are able to dispense with some of the frustrations in your life now by labeling them unnecessary. Things are happening and your career or professional path depends on your own ambition-which is quite strong. Good fortune and plain old luck surround you now. It is easy for you to make correct decisions, find the right path and move forward where career and success are concerned. Life's problems seem manageable and easy to solve. Reserve, self-confidence and self-reliance will be your best attitudes as you end this month. Enjoy a fun activity with friends this evening.



**Leo (July 23-August 22)**

This is a better time to sell than to buy. This applies to material things, but extends to social and romantic relationships as well. Now is the time you will make the effort to improve the channels of understanding. Stay open to the ideas and feelings of others. There is a need for new information with fresh opinions and ideas in order to help cultivate and fine-tune your own goals. This could be the time to clear up any misunderstandings. You are ready for the meaningful and the permanent. A home show or boat show or some form of gaining home repair or garden improvement ideas is just where you want to be this evening, and with a group of friends, it will be easier to walk away without too many purchases. Take your camera.



**Virgo (August 23-September 22)**

Taking time to enjoy this fine April day may have you smiling and taking on a more relaxed and positive attitude for the workday ahead. There is an opportunity to make some small changes in your routine. These changes will have big effects later on down the road: make the right choice and it rebounds to your benefit; the wrong one or no choice at all, does you no favors. Your work moves along quickly today. Important financial decisions require information from your mate, if you are married. Of course, any large purchase should be done together. Social relationships are a special focus this evening. Animated discussions are stimulating. New insights regarding food, types of storage and new recipes are also enjoyed. You have discovered some new recipes.



**Libra (September 23-October 22)**

A regular workday is appreciated. No highs or lows to ruffle any feathers, so to speak. A clothing or retail store may hold your interest at the noon break and you might consider what it would be like to own your own store. You would actually do very well in a retail business of your own and should consider this possibility. As you think about a store of your own, think about the location. You are full of fun-loving tricks today. You enjoy the opportunity to laugh and have fun with your friends. This month you have successfully worked hard on some positive personal changes. There are major changes in your life that will break up the rigid past and challenge you to put the pieces together into a more practical pattern for living in the present.



**Scorpio (October 23-November 21)**

A particular project or money opportunity may be placed on hold this morning. This is good-it gives you time to think through your options. A little thinking outside the box, so to speak, is where you can be more imaginative and creative. New concepts and putting aside the old ways of the past, open doors to your fame. Tradition may have been good for your parents, but you may not be so sure the tight expectations are where you want to put your energies just now. This is a time when you also enjoy good family relations in a more relaxed atmosphere than before. Your financial position may have improved because of a family member. These finances are best tucked away for the senior years; you are and will be most appreciative.



**Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)**

You may find this to be a quiet day-everything seems to run smoothly. Working with the flow of energies now should be easy to accomplish. Cooperation with others is important in order to obtain positive results for the whole group. A disciplined approach to work, health and others of life's essential routines is especially important to you. Later this afternoon there could be group meetings with a neighborhood crime watch or community organization. The planning that is scheduled will go easily. This is an excellent time to involve you in some social activities. There are also some wonderful networking opportunities. Asking if something is good for you may be the question you need to ask yourself. This may pertain to vacation plans or health issues.



**Capricorn (December 22-January 19)**

There could be some differences of opinion this morning. This is the fun part of your morning and may only concern an article from the newspaper. Taking the difference of opinion with a light attitude may be something you want to refer to later when at work there may be a conflict that might not be as easily dismissed. State your opinion and then remove yourself from the situation as quickly as possible. You have a good attitude that carries through from this morning; others may hear what you have to say better than you know. This weekend is having better possibilities all the time and may be the topic of discussion at a pool, golf or card game this evening . . . A neighbor wants to be included in the group.



**Aquarius (January 20- February 18)**

Through the end of the summer, you may find that you won't have to work quite as hard to move forward in your professional life as you have in the past. You may find yourself attending trade shows, serving on committees when you are not in the office. Getting the facts and making sure that people get your message straight can make all the difference in the world-and any shortcomings in these areas can raise hurdles and cause problems. Nice manners and polite people are high on your list of people with whom you enjoy socializing. Today you may insert a few lessons for the young people in your family. All people appreciate the time it takes for someone to stop and be polite and share feelings of being special.



**Pisces (February 19-March 20)**

There will be several planetary changes occurring now that will encourage your attitude to change with regard to work and the mental anxieties surrounding your profession. You may prefer to look for work that has more rewards mentally than monetarily. The pressure you have been feeling to earn more money will be eased now. A little part-time job is a possibility for you and may be a fun adventure. There will be an attitude of personal accomplishment instead of allowing others to pressure you to conform. Being an independent contractor is more appealing now. This is a long-time process and you will not want to change overnight, but the inner push will be noticeable. Avoiding these changes could cause stress on your physical body.

**COUNTRY CODES**

Afghanistan	0093	Kuwait	00965
Albania	00355	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Algeria	00213	Laos	00856
Andorra	00376	Latvia	00371
Angola	00244	Lebanon	00961
Anguilla	001264	Liberia	00231
Antigua	001268	Libya	00218
Argentina	0054	Lithuania	00370
Armenia	00374	Luxembourg	00352
Australia	0061	Macau	00853
Austria	0043	Macedonia	00389
Bahamas	001242	Madagascar	00261
Bahrain	00973	Majorca	0034
Bangladesh	00880	Malawi	00265
Barbados	001246	Malaysia	0060
Belarus	00375	Maldives	00960
Belgium	0032	Mali	00223
Belize	00501	Malta	00356
Benin	00229	Marshall Islands	00692
Bermuda	001441	Martinique	00596
Bhutan	00975	Mauritania	00222
Bolivia	00591	Mauritius	00230
Bosnia	00387	Mayotte	00269
Botswana	00267	Mexico	0052
Brazil	0055	Micronesia	00691
Brunei	00673	Moldova	00373
Bulgaria	00359	Monaco	00377
Burkina	00226	Mongolia	00976
Burundi	00257	Montserrat	001664
Cambodia	00855	Morocco	00212
Cameroon	00237	Mozambique	00258
Canada	001	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Cape Verde	00238	Namibia	00264
Cayman Islands	001345	Nepal	00977
Central African Republic	00236	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Chad	00235	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Chile	0056	New Caledonia	00687
China	0086	New Zealand	0064
Colombia	0057	Nicaragua	00505
Comoros	00269	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?  
05:30 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 World's Top 5  
06:50 You Have Been Warned  
07:40 Gold Rush: Parker's Trail  
08:30 What On Earth?  
09:20 Idris Elba: No Limits  
10:10 The Wheel: Survival Games  
11:00 Running Wild With Bear Grylls  
11:50 Snaketacular  
12:40 Supertruckers  
13:30 Wheeler Dealers  
14:20 Diesel Brothers  
15:10 Harley And The Davidsons  
16:00 The Wheel: Survival Games  
16:50 The Wheel: Survival Games  
17:40 The Wheel: Survival Games  
18:30 The Wheel: Survival Games  
19:20 The Wheel: Survival Games  
20:10 The Wheel: Survival Games  
21:00 Wheeler Dealers  
21:50 Diesel Brothers  
22:40 Harley And The Davidsons  
23:30 Supertruckers



00:00 The First 48  
01:00 The Jail: 60 Days In  
02:00 Homicide Hunter  
03:00 Cold Case Files  
04:00 The First 48  
05:00 The Jail: 60 Days In  
06:00 My Crazy Ex  
08:00 Evil Up Close  
09:00 It Takes A Killer  
10:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
11:00 The First 48  
13:00 My Crazy Ex  
14:00 Evil Up Close  
15:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
16:00 It Takes A Killer  
17:00 The First 48  
19:00 Evil Up Close  
20:00 Gangs Of Britain With Gary And Martin Kemp  
21:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
22:00 Crime Stories  
23:00 I Killed My BFF



00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
01:20 Strip The Cosmos  
02:10 Raging Nature  
03:00 Destroyed In Seconds  
03:25 Destroyed In Seconds  
03:50 Beyond Survival With Les Stroud  
04:40 How It's Made  
05:05 How It's Made  
05:30 Dirty Jobs  
06:20 Mythbusters  
07:00 Doki  
07:25 Kids vs Film  
07:50 My Cat From Hell  
08:40 How It's Made  
09:05 How It's Made  
09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
10:20 Mythbusters  
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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



00:00 Binny And The Ghost  
00:25 Hank Zipzer  
00:45 The Hive  
00:50 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  
06:25 Jessie  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 The Zhuzhus  
07:20 Elena Of Avalor  
07:45 Bunk'd  
08:10 Stuck In The Middle  
08:35 Bizaardvark  
09:00 Shake It Up  
09:50 That's So Raven  
10:40 Sonny With A Chance  
11:30 Good Luck Charlie  
11:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
12:00 Welcome To The Ronks  
12:15 Gravity Falls  
12:40 Hank Zipzer  
13:05 Star Darlings  
13:10 Austin & Ally  
13:35 Jessie  
14:00 Bunk'd  
14:25 Kirby Buckets  
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 3: Senior Year  
18:35 Welcome To The Ronks  
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 Disney The Lodge  
21:05 Girl Meets World  
21:30 That's So Raven  
21:55 Star Darlings  
22:00 Good Luck Charlie  
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:10 Hank Zipzer  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:00 Henry Hugglemonster  
00:15 Calimero  
00:30 Art Attack  
00:55 Zou  
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 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
12:15 Gummi Bears  
12:40 Miles From Tomorrow  
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  
19:25 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  
22:25 Doc McStuffins  
22:55 PJ Masks  
23:20 Henry Hugglemonster  
23:35 The Hive  
23:45 Loopdidoo



06:00 Gravity Falls  
06:25 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
06:50 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
07:15 Milo Murphy's Law  
07:25 The 7D  
07:40 Supa Strikas  
08:05 Two More Eggs  
08:10 K.C. Undercover  
08:35 Counterfeit Cat  
09:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
09:50 Future-Worm!  
10:15 Two More Eggs  
10:20 Pair Of Kings  
10:45 Pair Of Kings  
11:10 Danger Mouse  
11:35 Supa Strikas  
12:00 Supa Strikas  
12:30 Gravity Falls  
12:55 Annedroids  
13:20 Kickin' It  
13:45 Kickin' It  
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
14:15 Kickin' It  
14:40 Kickin' It  
15:05 Meet The Robinsons  
16:35 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
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: Ultron Revolution  
22:10 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6  
22:35 Boyster  
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am  
KSA

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  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Emmerdale



00:15 Access 360 World Heritage  
01:05 What's For Sale?  
01:30 Dog Whisperer  
02:20 World's Best Beaches  
03:10 Street Food Around The World  
03:35 My Dubai  
04:00 Andy And Ben Eat Australia  
04:25 Andy And Ben Eat Australia  
04:50 Lucky Chow  
05:20 Hotel India  
06:15 Living Free With Kimi Werner  
07:10 What's For Sale?  
07:35 Dog Whisperer  
08:30 World's Best Beaches  
09:25 Street Food Around The World  
09:55 My Dubai  
10:20 Andy And Ben Eat Australia  
10:50 Andy And Ben Eat Australia  
11:15 Lucky Chow  
11:45 Hotel India  
12:40 What's For Sale?  
13:05 Dog Whisperer  
14:00 World's Best Beaches  
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15:50 Andy And Ben Eat Australia  
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16:45 Lucky Chow  
17:15 Hotel India  
18:10 Living Free With Kimi Werner  
19:05 Street Food Around The World  
19:30 My Dubai  
20:00 Andy And Ben Eat Australia  
20:25 Andy And Ben Eat Australia  
20:55 Lucky Chow  
21:20 Hotel India  
22:10 Living Free With Kimi Werner  
23:00 What's For Sale?  
23:25 Dog Whisperer



00:05 Mariah's World  
01:50 E! News  
02:50 Celebrity Style Story  
03:50 WAGs  
04:40 WAGs  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 Just Jillian  
06:55 E! News  
07:10 Just Jillian  
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 Botched  
16:10 Botched  
17:05 Botched  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 So Cosmo  
21:00 So Cosmo  
22:00 So Cosmo  
23:00 E! News  
23:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



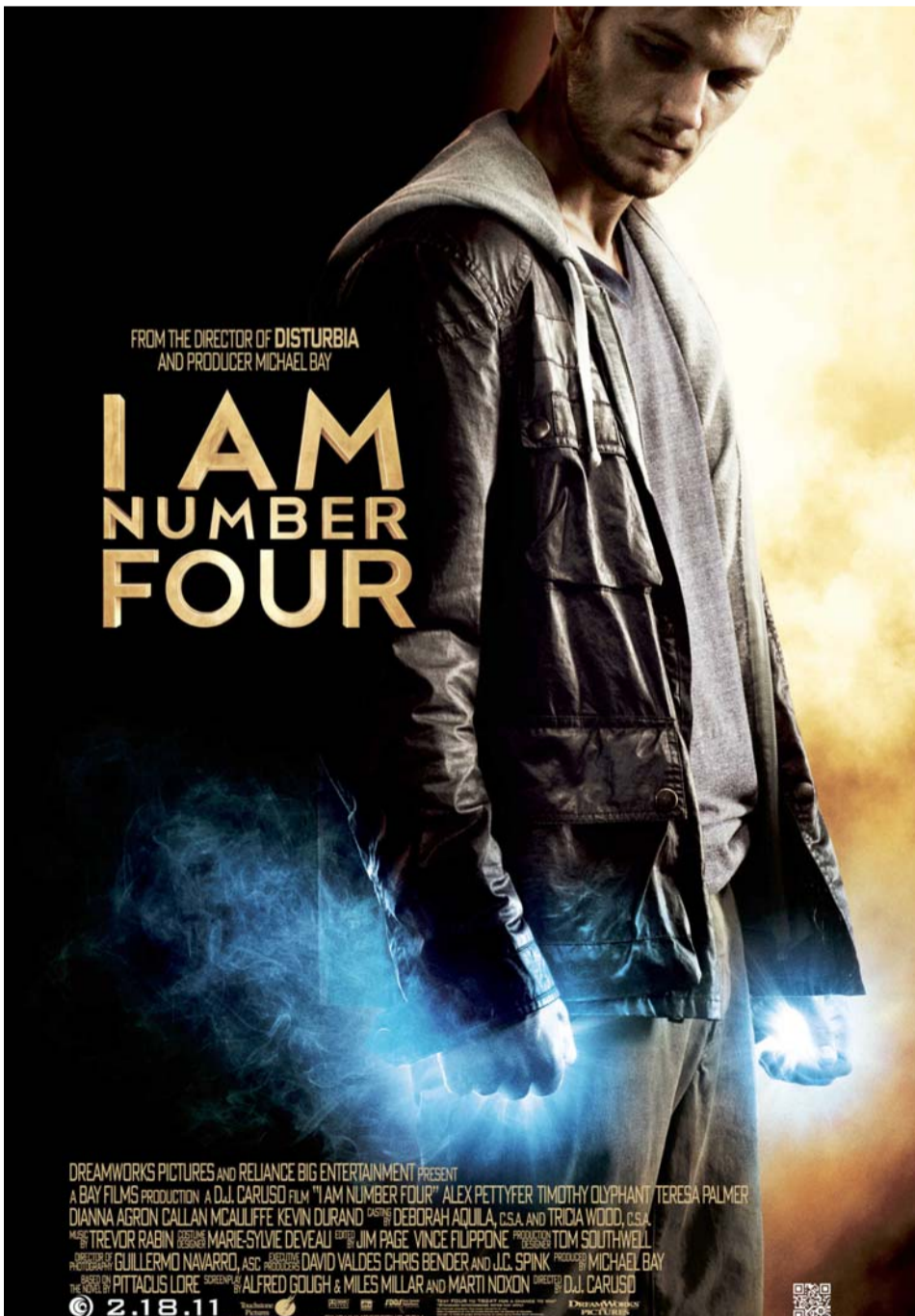
00:20 Hyena Coast  
01:10 I, Predator  
02:00 Revenge Of The Lioness  
02:50 Animals Gone Wild  
03:45 Man V. Monster  
04:40 Vacations Gone Wild  
05:35 Revenge Of The Lioness  
06:30 Animals Gone Wild  
07:25 Man V. Monster  
08:20 Vacations Gone Wild  
09:15 Animal Fight Club  
10:10 The Desert Sea  
11:05 World's Deadliest: Jaws & Sins  
12:00 Mega Hammerhead  
12:55 Game Of Lions  
13:50 Animals Gone Wild  
14:45 Man vs Octopus  
15:40 Killer Hornets  
16:35 Animal Fight Club  
17:30 The Desert Sea  
18:25 Man vs Octopus  
19:20 I, Predator  
20:10 Killer Hornets  
21:00 Animal Fight Club  
21:50 The Desert Sea  
22:40 Man vs Octopus  
23:30 Mega Hammerhead



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



00:10 Origins: The Journey Of Humankind  
01:00 Inside  
02:00 Locked Up Abroad  
03:00 Science Of Stupid  
04:00 Origins: The Journey Of Humankind  
05:00 Street Genius  
06:00 Parched  
07:00 Locked Up Abroad  
08:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia  
08:30 Danger Decoded  
09:00 Street Genius  
09:30 Street Genius



I AM NUMBER FOUR ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD



FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2017

10:00 The Story Of God With Morgan Freeman  
11:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware  
12:00 Inside: China's Biggest Gala  
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.  
19:00 Gender Revolution: A Journey With Katie Couric



00:03 Max & Ruby  
00:26 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
00:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
00:47 The Day Henry Met  
00:52 The Day Henry Met  
00:58 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
01:20 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
01:42 Zack & Quack  
02:04 Team Umizoomi  
02:26 Olive The Ostrich  
02:31 Olive The Ostrich  
02:36 Paw Patrol  
02:59 Little Charmers  
03:11 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
03:22 Dora The Explorer  
03:45 Max & Ruby  
04:07 Bubble Guppies  
04:31 Shimmer And Shine  
04:54 Dora And Friends  
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: Into The City!  
07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
08:07 Paw Patrol  
08:30 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 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
12:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
12:47 The Day Henry Met  
12:52 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 Charmers  
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  
16:54 Dora And Friends  
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  
20:53 Dora The Explorer  
21:15 The Day Henry Met  
21:22 Paw Patrol  
21:45 Rusty Rivets  
22:00 Paw Patrol  
22:23 Paw Patrol  
22:47 Paw Patrol



THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY PART I SUN OSN MOVIES HD



01:30 Die Another Day  
03:45 Big Game  
05:30 Ladder 49  
07:30 Harlock: Space Pirate  
09:30 Die Another Day  
12:00 Kingsglave: Final Fantasy XV  
14:00 Ladder 49  
16:00 I Am Number Four  
18:00 Real Steel  
20:15 Dracula Untold  
22:00 Hitman: Agent 47  
23:45 REC 3 Genesis



01:15 Pirates Of The Caribbean 2: Dead Man's Chest  
03:45 Return To Oz  
05:45 Diary Of A Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules  
07:45 Mickey's Twice Upon A Christmas  
09:00 Brother Bear  
11:00 Diary Of A Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules  
13:00 Ice Age  
15:00 Peter Pan  
17:00 High School Musical 3: Senior Year  
19:00 Underdog  
21:00 The Incredible Adventures Of Professor Branestawm  
22:00 Peter Pan



00:00 Medicine Man  
01:45 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part I  
04:15 Miracle  
06:45 Raising Helen  
08:45 Coraline  
10:30 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part I  
12:45 Gridiron Gang  
15:00 The Horse Whisperer  
18:00 Pitch Perfect 2  
20:00 Pretty Woman



00:00 The Starving Games  
02:00 Crazy On The Outside  
04:00 Under The Tuscan Sun  
06:00 Norbit  
08:00 Crazy On The Outside  
10:00 Under The Tuscan Sun  
12:00 Norbit  
14:00 Taxi  
16:00 With This Ring

18:00 Confessions Of A Shopaholic  
20:00 The Hot Chick  
22:00 Spy



00:00 Boys Don't Cry  
02:00 Oliver's Deal  
04:00 The Blind Side  
06:15 Walking On Sunshine  
08:00 Gone With The Bullets  
10:00 The Girl  
11:45 The Blind Side  
14:00 Of Mice And Men  
16:00 The Wave  
17:45 Frankie And Johnny  
19:45 The Assassination Of Jesse James  
22:30 Born To Be Blue



01:00 Sawva  
02:45 Bamse And The City Of Thieves  
04:15 Egon And Donci  
06:00 The Adventures Of Rocky And Bullwinkle  
07:45 Albert  
09:15 The Wild Thornberrys Movie  
10:45 Sawva  
12:30 Bamse And The City Of Thieves  
14:00 Bee Movie  
16:00 The Wild Thornberrys Movie  
18:00 The Boxcar Children  
20:00 Thumbelina  
21:45 Bee Movie  
23:30 Albert



00:30 How Do They Do It?  
00:55 Food Factory  
01:20 Home Factory  
01:45 Home Factory  
02:10 Ecopolis  
03:00 Prototype This  
03:48 Mythbusters  
04:36 How Do They Do It?  
05:00 Food Factory  
05:24 Home Factory  
05:48 Home Factory  
06:12 Ecopolis  
07:00 How Do They Do It?  
07:26 Prototype This  
08:14 Mythbusters  
09:02 Ecopolis  
09:50 How Do They Do It?  
10:14 Food Factory  
10:38 Home Factory

11:02 Home Factory  
11:26 Prototype This  
12:14 Mythbusters  
13:02 How Do They Do It?  
13:26 Food Factory  
13:50 Ecopolis  
14:38 Prototype This  
15:26 Home Factory  
15:50 Home Factory  
16:14 Mythbusters  
17:02 Ecopolis  
18:40 Mythbusters  
19:30 Mythbusters  
20:20 How Do They Do It?  
20:45 Food Factory  
21:10 Invisible Worlds  
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, Lust Or Run  
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 Outdaughered: 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, Lust Or Run  
12:15 Love, Lust Or Run  
12:40 Love, Lust Or Run  
13:05 Love, Lust Or Run  
13:30 Love, Lust Or Run  
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 Promzillas  
19:20 Outdaughered: Busby Quints  
20:10 Sister Wives  
21:00 Outdaughered: Busby Quints  
21:50 Sister Wives  
22:40 My Extreme Excess Skin



00:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.  
01:00 Ancient Discoveries  
02:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
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 Ancient Discoveries  
08:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
09:00 Ancient Aliens  
10:00 Million Dollar Genius  
11:00 The Universe  
12:00 Ancient Top 10  
13:00 Ancient Top 10  
14:00 Ancient Top 10  
15:00 Ancient Top 10  
16:00 Ancient Top 10  
17:00 Ancient Top 10

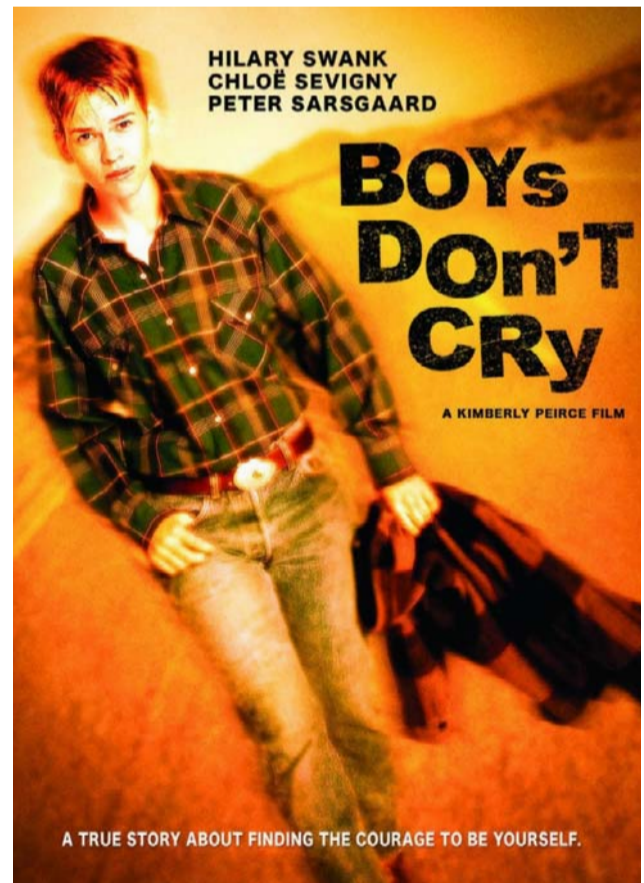
18:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.  
19:00 Ancient Discoveries  
20:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
21:00 Ancient Aliens  
22:00 Smartest Guy In The Room  
22:30 Smartest Guy In The Room  
23:00 The Universe



00:20 Lost Worlds  
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 Lost Worlds  
06:50 Time Team  
07:40 Battle 360  
08:30 Ax Men  
09:20 Ice Road Truckers  
10:10 Swamp People  
11:00 American Pickers  
11:50 Big Easy Motors  
12:40 Pawn Stars  
13:30 Forged In Fire  
18:30 Shipping Wars  
18:55 Shipping Wars  
19:20 Leepu And Pitbull  
20:10 Ice Road Truckers  
21:00 American Pickers  
21:50 Ozzy & Jack's World Detour  
22:40 Forged In Fire  
23:30 The Curse Of Oak Island



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  
09:00 Cooking For Real  
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 Cooking For Real  
18:00 Chopped  
19:00 Chopped Junior  
20:00 Ching's Amazing Asia  
21:00 Reza, Spice Prince Of Thailand  
21:30 Reza Spice Prince Of Vietnam  
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives



BOYS DON'T CRY ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL HD

## Word Search Puzzles

### Washing a Car

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 13 letters spell something that you wash off of a car.

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

- |              |               |             |            |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|------------|
| BRUSH        | FENDERS       | PREPARATION | TIRES      |
| BUCKETS      | FRONT         | REAR        | TOP        |
| CHAMOIS      | GARDEN HOSE   | RINSE       | TOWELS     |
| CHROME       | GLASS         | ROOF        | VEHICLE    |
| CLEAN        | GRIME         | SCRUB       | WASH       |
| DEAD BUGS    | HEADLIGHTS    | SIDES       | WATER      |
| DIRT         | HOOD          | SOAP        | WAX        |
| DOOR HANDLES | HUBCAPS       | SPONGE      | WHEELS     |
| DOORS        | LICENSE PLATE | SQUEEGEE    | WINDOWS    |
| DRIVEWAY     | MIRRORS       | SUDS        | WINDSHIELD |
| DRY OFF      | MUD           | TAIL LIGHTS |            |

## Yesterday's Solution

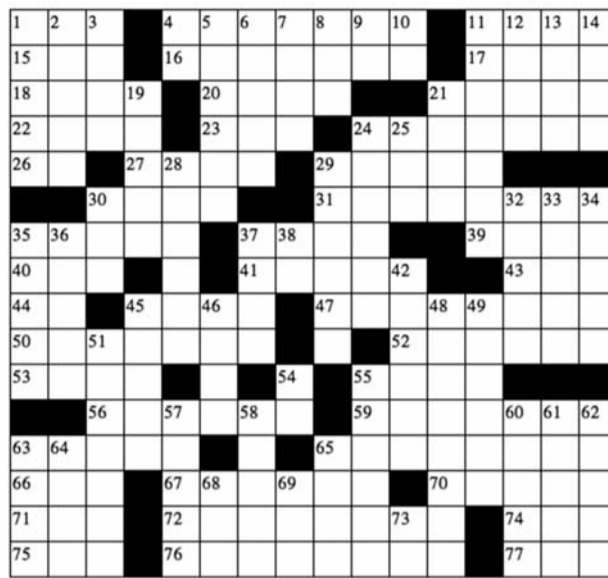
### Volleyball

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

- |            |            |           |               |
|------------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| APPROACH   | FOOTWORK   | QUICK HIT | SKY BALL      |
| ASSIST     | FORMATIONS | RALLY     | SLIDE         |
| ATTACK     | FOUL       | REFEREE   | SPIKING       |
| BLOCKING   | GAME       | ROTATION  | SPORT         |
| BUMP       | HITTER     | SAVE      | SUBSTITUTION  |
| CAPTAIN    | KILL       | SCORE     | TANDEM        |
| COACH      | KNEE PADS  | SERVE     | TEAMS         |
| COURT      | LIBERO     | SETS      | TOPSPIN       |
| DEFENCE    | MATCH      | SETTER    | TRAJECTORY    |
| DOUBLE HIT | OFFENCE    | SHANK     | VERTICAL JUMP |
| DUMP       | PASS       | SHOT      | WEAK SIDE     |
| FAULT      | PLAYERS    | SIDELINES | WIPE          |
| FLOATER    | POINTS     | SIDE OUT  |               |

The hidden message is: VOLLEYBALL WAS ORIGINALLY CALLED MINTONETTE

## CROSSWORD 1585



### ACROSS

- An honorary degree in science.
- Provided with something intended to increase its beauty or distinction.
- Cut down with an ax.
- A unit of surface area equal to 100 square meters.
- A movement back from an impact.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- Lacking or deprive of the sense of hearing wholly or in part.
- A notable achievement.
- A blind god.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- An organization of independent states to promote international peace and security.
- United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
- The largest city and former capital of Turkey.
- An embarrassing mistake.
- Other than what is under consideration or implied.
- Relating to or containing the azo radical.
- (geology) Before the appearance of life.
- A hotel providing overnight lodging for travelers.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- Carrying weapons.
- A festival featuring African-American culture.
- A shoe consisting of a sole fastened by straps to the foot.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- Any of various plants of the genus *Althaea*.
- Inflammation of the uvea of the eye.
- Small genus of hairy herbs with yellow flowers.
- American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
- Of or like a cecum.
- A narrow headband or strip of ribbon worn as a headband.
- Support resembling the rib of an animal.
- Eurasian plant apple-scented foliage and white-rayed flowers and feathery leaves used medicinally.
- A male human offspring.
- The cry made by sheep.
- Robber flies.
- Either extremity of something that has length.

### DOWN

- (Hinduism) An ascetic holy man.
- (Greek mythology) The brother of Jocasta and uncle of Antigone who became king of Thebes after the fall of Oedipus.
- No longer having or seeming to have or expecting to have life.
- A colorless and odorless inert gas.
- Mar or spoil the appearance of.
- A religious belief of African origin involving witchcraft and sorcery.
- A deep prolonged loud noise.
- Usually large hard-shelled seed.
- Half the width of an em.
- A doctor's degree in religion.
- Scottish geneticist (son of John Haldane) who contributed to the development of population genetics.
- Small ornamental ladies' bag for small articles.
- Telephone line (Wide Area Telephone Service).
- A recurring sleep state during which rapid eye movements do not occur and dreaming does not occur.
- The basic monetary unit in many countries.
- A tax on employees and employers that is used to fund the Social Security system.
- Middle-distance iron.
- A legal document codifying the result of deliberations of a committee or society or legislative body.
- United States cartoonist whose comic strip included the beagle Snoopy (1922-2000).
- Prevent deliberately (as by making a will) from inheriting.
- A member of the Siouan people inhabiting the valleys of the Platte and Missouri rivers in Nebraska.
- Unable to see.
- Widely distributed lichens usually having a grayish or yellow pendulous freely branched thallus.
- United States tennis player (born in Czechoslovakia) who won several singles championships.
- United States conductor (born in Japan in 1935).
- (Greek mythology) Goddess of the earth and mother of Cronus and the Titans in ancient mythology.
- The azimuth of a celestial body is the angle between the vertical plane containing it and the plane of the meridian.
- Any of several plants of the genus *Manihot* having fleshy roots yielding a nutritious starch.
- Administer an oil or ointment to.
- (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
- The inventor to whom a patent is issued.
- (sports) Not offside.
- Brazilian tree with handsomely marked wood.
- An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
- Greek geometer (3rd century BC).
- Genus of tropical plants with creeping rootstocks and small umbellate flowers.
- Fragrant resin obtain from trees of the family Burseraceae and used as incense.
- In or of a state of physical or nervous tension.
- The craniometric point that is the most prominent point at the back of the head (at the occipital protuberance).
- A support or foundation.
- English essayist (1775-1834).
- The language of the nomadic Lapp people in northern Scandinavia and the Kola Peninsula.
- An associate degree in applied science.
- A pass between mountain peaks.
- A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.

## Daily SuDoku

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

## Yesterday's Solution

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

## Yesterday's Solution

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

# FACEBOOK OUT TO READ YOUR MIND

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Facebook wants to read your mind. At least, when it comes to what you'd like to say or type. The social network giant, at its annual developers conference, unveiled Wednesday projects aimed at allowing users to use their minds to type messages or their skin to hear words. "Speech is essentially a compression algorithm, and a lousy one at that," Facebook executive and former DARPA director Regina Dugan told a packed audience at the Silicon Valley event. "That is why we love great writers and poets, because they are just a little bit better at compressing the fullness of a thought into words. What if we could type directly from our brain into a computer?"

The project grew from being an idea six months ago to being the focus of a team of more than 60 scientists, engineers, and system integrators, according to Dugan, who heads a Building 8 team devoted to coming up with innovative hardware for the social network's mission of connecting the world. "We are just getting started," Dugan said. "We have a goal of creating a system capable of typing 100 words-per-minute straight from your brain."

### Cutting out implants

Video played during her presentation showed a woman with an advanced neurodegenerative disease using her mind to move a cursor on a computer screen, slowly typing words. Such brain-computer interface technology currently involves implanting electrodes, but Facebook wants to use optical imaging to eliminate the need to surgically intrude on brains, according to Dugan. Facebook is looking at creating "silent-speech interfaces" based on sensors



**CALIFORNIA:** Conference workers speak in front of a demo booth at Facebook's annual F8 developer conference in San Jose, Calif. —AP

that could be worn, and made in quantity. "We are not talking about decoding your random thoughts; that is more than many of us want to know," Dugan quipped. "We are talking about thoughts you want to share. Words you have decided to send to the speech center of the brain."

Such technology could let people fire off text messages or emails by thinking, instead of needing to interrupt what they are doing to use smartphone touchscreens, for example. It would also have

the potential to capture concepts and semantics associated with words people are thinking, making language differences irrelevant by enabling sharing of what is in mind, Dugan said. "Unlike other approaches, ours will be focused on developing a noninvasive system that could one day become a speech prosthetic for people with communication disorders or a new means for input to AR," Dugan said in a post on her Facebook page, referring to augmented reality. "Even something as

simple as a 'yes/no' brain click, or a 'brain mouse' would be transformative."

### Feeling words

The Building 8 group is also working on sensors that let people "hear" through their skin, with what they feel being converted into words in a variation on how the ear turns vibrations into comprehensible sounds. "Our brains have the ability to construct language from components," Dugan said. — AFP

CLINIC  
PAGE



Kuwait Times  
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem  
د. فهد علي المخيزيم  
Consultant Pediatrician استشاري أطفال  
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

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



## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (20/04/2017 TO 26/04/2017)

<b>SHARQIA-1</b>		<b>MARINA-1</b>		<b>FAST &amp; FURIOUS 8</b>	2:15 PM
GHOST IN THE SHELL	1:15 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	1:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	5:00 PM
THE BOSS BABY	1:30 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	1:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:00 PM
GHOST IN THE SHELL	3:30 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	3:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:45 PM
GHOST IN THE SHELL	5:45 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	5:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:30 AM
UNFORGETTABLE	8:00 PM	COLOSSAL	7:45 PM		
GHOST IN THE SHELL	10:15 PM	COLOSSAL	10:00 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.2</b>	
UNFORGETTABLE	12:30 AM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	12:15 AM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	1:00 PM
				BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	3:15 PM
<b>SHARQIA-2</b>		<b>MARINA-2</b>		BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	5:30 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	1:00 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	7:45 PM
THE BOSS BABY	3:15 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	1:30 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	10:00 PM
THE BOSS BABY	5:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	3:45 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	12:15 AM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	6:30 PM		
FAST & FURIOUS 8	10:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:15 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.3</b>	
FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:45 AM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:05 AM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	11:45 AM
				GHOST IN THE SHELL	2:00 PM
<b>SHARQIA-3</b>		<b>MARINA-3</b>		THE BOSS BABY	4:15 PM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	12:15 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	11:45 AM	THE BOSS BABY	6:15 PM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	2:30 PM	THE BOSS BABY	2:00 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	8:15 PM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	5:00 PM	THE BOSS BABY	4:00 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	10:30 PM
THE BOSS BABY	7:30 PM	THE BOSS BABY	6:00 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	12:45 AM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	9:30 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	8:00 PM		
FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:45 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	10:15 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.4</b>	
		GHOST IN THE SHELL	12:30 AM	COLOSSAL	12:30 PM
<b>MUHALAB-1</b>		<b>AVENUES-1</b>		COLOSSAL	2:45 PM
GHOST IN THE SHELL	12:45 PM	UNFORGETTABLE	12:00 PM	UNFORGETTABLE	5:00 PM
GHOST IN THE SHELL	3:00 PM	UNFORGETTABLE	2:15 PM	COLOSSAL	7:15 PM
GHOST IN THE SHELL	5:15 PM	UNFORGETTABLE	4:30 PM	COLOSSAL	9:30 PM
GHOST IN THE SHELL	7:30 PM	SAFRA 5 NJOOM	6:45 PM	UNFORGETTABLE	11:45 PM
UNFORGETTABLE	9:45 PM	UNFORGETTABLE	9:00 PM		
GHOST IN THE SHELL	12:05 AM	UNFORGETTABLE	11:15 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-1</b>	
				FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:15 PM
<b>MUHALAB-2</b>		<b>AVENUES-2</b>		THE BOSS BABY	3:00 PM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	1:15 PM	THE BOSS BABY -3D-4DX	11:45 AM	THE BOSS BABY -3D	5:00 PM
THE BOSS BABY	1:30 PM	THE BOSS BABY -3D-4DX	2:00 PM	THE BOSS BABY	7:00 PM
COLOSSAL	3:30 PM	THE BOSS BABY -3D-4DX	4:15 PM	THE BOSS BABY	9:00 PM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	5:45 PM	THE BOSS BABY -3D-4DX	6:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:00 PM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	8:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8-2D-4DX	9:15 PM		
COLOSSAL	10:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8-2D-4DX	12:05 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-2</b>	
COLOSSAL	12:30 AM			BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	11:45 AM
		<b>AVENUES-3</b>		FAST & FURIOUS 8	2:00 PM
<b>MUHALAB-3</b>		COLOSSAL	1:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	4:45 PM
THE BOSS BABY	12:45 PM	COLOSSAL	3:15 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	7:30 PM
THE BOSS BABY	2:45 PM	COLOSSAL	5:30 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	9:45 PM
THE BOSS BABY	4:45 PM	COLOSSAL	7:45 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:05 AM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	6:45 PM	COLOSSAL	10:00 PM		
FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:30 PM	COLOSSAL	12:15 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-3</b>	
FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:15 AM			GHOST IN THE SHELL	11:30 AM
		<b>AVENUES-4</b>		THE BOSS BABY	1:45 PM
<b>FANAR-1</b>		FAST & FURIOUS 8	1:30 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE- Arabic	4:00 PM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	12:45 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	4:15 PM	SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	6:00 PM
MINE	3:00 PM	Special Show "THE BOSS BABY"	4:45 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	8:00 PM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	5:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:00 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	10:15 PM
MINE	7:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:45 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	12:30 AM
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	10:00 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:30 AM		
BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	12:15 AM			<b>PLAZA</b>	
		<b>360°-1</b>		NOOR - Hindi	3:30 PM
<b>FANAR-2</b>		THE BOSS BABY	11:30 AM	THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam	6:30 PM
THE BOSS BABY	11:30 AM	THE BOSS BABY -3D	1:45 PM	NOOR - Hindi	9:30 PM
THE BOSS BABY	1:30 PM	THE BOSS BABY	4:00 PM		
THE BOSS BABY	3:30 PM	THE BOSS BABY -3D	6:15 PM	<b>LAILA</b>	
THE BOSS BABY	5:30 PM	THE BOSS BABY	8:30 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	4:00 PM
UNFORGETTABLE	9:30 PM	THE BOSS BABY	10:45 PM	THE BOSS BABY	6:15 PM
Real Madrid Vs Barcelona - Live Game	9:45 PM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	1:00 AM	GHOST IN THE SHELL	8:15 PM
UNFORGETTABLE	12:05 AM			FAST & FURIOUS 8	10:30 PM
		<b>360°-2</b>			
<b>FANAR-3</b>		COLOSSAL	12:15 PM	<b>AJIAL.1</b>	
COLOSSAL	11:30 AM	COLOSSAL	2:30 PM	NOOR - Hindi	3:30 PM
SMURFS: THE LOST VILLAGE	1:45 PM	COLOSSAL	4:45 PM	NOOR - Hindi	6:45 PM
COLOSSAL	3:45 PM	COLOSSAL	7:00 PM	NOOR - Hindi	9:45 PM
COLOSSAL	6:00 PM	COLOSSAL	9:15 PM		
COLOSSAL	8:15 PM	COLOSSAL	11:30 PM	<b>AJIAL.2</b>	
COLOSSAL	10:30 PM			THE BOSS BABY	3:45 PM
COLOSSAL	12:45 AM	<b>360°-3</b>		THE BOSS BABY	5:45 PM
		BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	1:15 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:45 PM
<b>FANAR-4</b>		BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	3:30 PM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	10:30 PM
THE BOSS BABY	11:30 AM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	5:45 PM		
FAST & FURIOUS 8	1:30 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	8:00 PM	<b>AJIAL.3</b>	
FAST & FURIOUS 8	4:15 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	10:15 PM	THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam	3:30 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	7:00 PM	BISTERI RAJEL - Arabic	12:30 AM	RAAJAKUMARA -Kannada	6:30 PM
FAST & FURIOUS 8	9:45 PM			THE GREAT FATHER- Malayalam	9:30 PM
Real Madrid Vs Barcelona - Live Game	9:45 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.1</b>			
FAST & FURIOUS 8	12:30 AM	FAST & FURIOUS 8	11:30 AM	<b>AJIAL.4</b>	
				BAAHUBALI: THE BEGINNING	3:45 PM
				BAAHUBALI: THE BEGINNING	7:00 PM
				GHOST IN THE SHELL	10:15 PM

## HEAVY DUTY DRIVERS REQUIRED

**Drivers** capable of driving Forklifts and Trailers. Must have valid Kuwaiti heavy duty driving license . Speak English, Hindi or Arabic must .

Candidates having 3 - 5 years GCC experience more preferable. Persons who are residing near Mangaf, Fahaheel, Mahaboula, Abuhalfia are preferable.

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Ph: +965 23725423

Email : alsoberie@kuwaitchemicalhouse.com

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, Chengal Rashid Khan S/o Abdul Rahim, Rangrej holder of Indian Passport No. M5457594 & Civil ID No. 274040205076, has changed my name Abdul Rashid, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents.

I, Sangaraju Subramanyam s/o Subbaraju, holder of Indian Passport No.

J7175997 and Civil ID No. 283010802296 has changed my name to Surapu Raju Subramanyam hereinafter in all my dealings and documents.

### ACCOMMODATION

Room available in C-A/C flat for Asian couple/ Family/Working Ladies in Khaitian Airport Road. Just one minute to all routes bus stop. Tel: 51614467. (C 5298) 18-4-2017

## Hospitals

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

## Clinics

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

# Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2017



Beyond China, carmakers seek new drivers of growth

US WEEKLY JOBLESS CLAIMS UP

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ABU DHABI: The energy ministers of Qatar (left) Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Sada, UAE's Suhail Al-Mazrouei (C) and Saudi Arabia's Khaled Al-Falih, attend the 3rd GCC Petroleum Media Forum yesterday in Abu Dhabi. — AFP

## SAUDI, KUWAIT SIGNAL EXTENSION OF OIL CUTS AL-MARZOUQ: NOTICEABLE INCREASE IN COMPLIANCE FROM NON-OPEC

**ABU DHABI:** Leading Gulf oil producers Saudi Arabia and Kuwait gave the clearest signal yet that OPEC plans to extend into the second half of the year a deal with non-OPEC producers to curb oil supplies. Consensus is growing among oil producers that their supply restraint agreement should be extended after its initial six-month term, but there is as yet no agreement, Saudi Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih said yesterday.

"There is consensus building but it's not done yet," he told reporters on the sidelines of a conference in the United Arab Emirates. Asked about non-OPEC producer Russia, Falih replied: "We are talking to all countries. We have not reached an agreement for sure, but the consensus is building."

Kuwait's Oil Minister Essam Al-Marzouq, at the same event, said he expected to see an extension of the agreement. "We have a noticeable increase in compliance from non-OPEC, which shows the importance of extending the agreement," Marzouq said.

"Russia is on board preliminarily ... Compliance from Russia is very good. Everyone will continue on the same level," he said. If OPEC and non-OPEC oil producers decide to extend their six-month agreement, the cuts may become less deep as

oil demand is expected to be stronger for seasonal reasons in the second half of 2017, Marzouq said.

He said OPEC would extend the deal if there was consensus among non-OPEC producers, and that producers were always looking for more non-OPEC members to join the agreement.

### OPEC membership

One African country has expressed interest in joining, Marzouq said, without identifying it. OPEC is keen that non-OPEC play its part in reducing world inventories to support a price rise that has stalled near \$55 a barrel. Crude is up from lows last year below \$30.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) meets on May 25 to discuss extending supply curbs with non-OPEC countries that total 1.8 million barrels daily, two-thirds of that from OPEC. Falih said there was "an initial agreement" that the oil cuts may need extending to drain high global inventories. He said talks were ongoing.

"Our target is the level of inventories. This is the main indicator for the success of the initiative," Falih said. While inventories held at sea and in producer countries have dropped,

they remain stubbornly high in consumer regions, particularly in Asia and the United States.

The International Energy Agency said last week that inventories in industrialized countries were still 10 percent above the five-year average, a key gauge for OPEC. Omani Oil and Gas Minister Mohammad bin Hamad Al-Rumhy said a "quite high" number of producers favored extending the supply restraint agreement.

"The number of countries that are supporting the extension I think would be quite high, percentage-wise," Rumhy told reporters. However, Iraq may seek to be exempt and ask to boost its own output, the leader of the nation's Shi'ite ruling coalition Ammar Al-Hakim told Reuters.

Speaking in Cairo, Hakim cautioned that Baghdad could ask to be exempted from taking part in the supply curbs as the nation needed its oil income to fight Islamic State.

"Given these sensitive circumstances, it is the right of Iraq to hope for an exemption by the other OPEC member states and have an opportunity to increase its production," Hakim, an influential cleric, said in an interview late on Wednesday. "But we are with the principle of reducing the overall OPEC supply to lift prices." — Reuters

## IMF MAY EXTEND A SMALL BAILOUT AMOUNT FOR GREECE

**ATHENS:** The International Monetary Fund may finance Greece's current bailout program with a small amount for one year, the country's government spokesman said yesterday, adding that the issue was under discussion between Athens and its creditors. Greece's current bailout, its third since the debt crisis broke out seven years ago, ends in 2018. The second review of its progress on reforms has dragged on for months, mainly due to a rift between the EU and the IMF over its fiscal targets.

"What is under discussion is a small IMF funding program, which will last for one year and end at the same time with the ESM (European Stability Mechanism) program, in August 2018," Dimitris Tzanakopoulos told reporters.

Greece wants to conclude the review as soon as possible to receive bailout loans to pay off debt maturing in July. The review will also help the country qualify for inclusion in the European Central Bank's quantitative easing program, which would help its return to bond markets before its program ends. Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras faces national elections in 2019. But the review talks have dragged on and the IMF has not yet decided whether to join the latest bailout. The fund's participation is seen as a condition for Germany to unlock new funds to Greece. Athens hopes to discuss the fund's participation, its post-bailout fiscal path and the prospect of further debt relief at the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund's spring Meetings in Washington this week.

Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos is expected to meet the IMF's Chief Christine Lagarde and German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble today. EU and IMF mission chiefs will return to Athens on April 25, Tzanakopoulos said, to finalize a set of reforms Greece agreed to adopt to convince the IMF to participate with funds in its current bailout.

However, the EU Commission said yesterday that there was no date yet for the mission chiefs' return to Athens. It is unlikely that the bailout review will be wrapped up before May 22, when euro zone finance ministers are set to meet in Brussels to discuss the Greek issue, the spokesman said. "I don't think it is possible to make it, to conclude the bailout review before May 22," Tzanakopoulos said. — Reuters



**MIAMI:** This file photo taken on March 09, 2017 shows a Now Hiring sign in Miami, Florida. New claims for US jobless benefits rose slightly in mid-April but the total number of people seeking unemployment insurance hit a 17-year low, the Labor Department reported yesterday. — AFP

## US WEEKLY JOBLESS CLAIMS UP; CONTINUING CLAIMS FALL

### FOUR-WEEK AVERAGE OF CLAIM FALLS 4,250

**WASHINGTON:** New applications for US jobless benefits rose slightly more than expected last week, but a drop in the number of Americans on unemployment rolls to a 17-year low suggested the labor market continues to tighten.

Other data yesterday showed factory activity in the mid-Atlantic region slowed in April amid a pullback in new orders and shipments. But factories hired more workers and increased working hours, underscoring the labor market's strength.

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits increased 10,000 to a seasonally adjusted 244,000 for the week ended April 15, the Labor Department said yesterday. The increase followed three straight weeks of declines.

Claims have now been below 300,000, a threshold associated with a healthy labor market, for 111 straight weeks. That is the longest such stretch since 1970, when the labor market was smaller. The labor market is close to full employment, with the unemployment

rate at a near 10-year low of 4.5 percent. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast first-time applications for jobless benefits rising to 242,000 last week.

The rise in applications likely is linked to volatility around this time of the year due to the different timings of spring and Easter holidays, which often throws off the model the government uses to smooth the data of seasonal fluctuations. The four-week moving average of claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, fell 4,250 to 243,000 last week.

US financial markets were little moved by the data. In a separate report, the Philadelphia Federal Reserve said its index for current manufacturing activity fell to a reading of 22.0 this month from 32.8 in March. The index has been positive for nine consecutive months and remains at a relatively high reading.

Firms reported an increase in manufacturing employment and work hours this month. The current employment

index improved 2 points, its fifth consecutive positive reading. The claims data covered the survey week for April nonfarm payrolls. Claims declined 17,000 between the March and April survey periods, suggesting that job growth likely picked up this month. Nonfarm payrolls increased by 98,000 jobs in March, the fewest since May 2016.

An acceleration in employment growth would confirm that March's moderation was weather-driven and underscore the economy's strong fundamentals despite indications that growth slowed to below a 1.0 percent annualized rate in the first quarter. Yesterday's claims report also showed the number of people still receiving benefits after an initial week of aid decreased 49,000 to 1.98 million in the week ended April 8. That was the lowest reading since April 2000. The four-week moving average of the so-called continuing claims fell 2,000 to 2.02 million, the lowest reading since June 2000. — Reuters

## HEDGE FUNDS CONFIDENCE IN OPEC STARTS TO FRAY

**LONDON:** OPEC and some of the most important hedge funds active in commodities reached an understanding on oil market rebalancing during informal briefings held in the second half of 2016. OPEC committed to implement credible production cuts and reduce global crude stocks while hedge funds responded by establishing bullish long positions in both flat prices and calendar spreads.

OPEC effectively underwrote the fund managers' bullish positions by providing the oil market with detail about output levels and public messaging about high levels of compliance. In return, the funds delivered an early payoff for OPEC through higher oil prices and a shift from contango to backwardation that should have helped drain excess crude stocks.

The understanding was initially successful between December 2016 and February 2017, with reports of strong compliance from OPEC, spot prices rising \$10 per barrel and calendar spreads moving from contango to flat or, albeit briefly, backwardation. But the understanding started to unravel with the calendar spreads collapsing after Feb 21 and flat prices dropping from March 8. The sharp reversal in both spreads and flat prices inflicted substantial losses on many bullish hedge funds in February and March. The correction came amid growing doubts about whether OPEC was really cutting oil supplies to the market by as much as anticipated.

Global stocks of crude and refined products showed little sign of drawing down during the first three months of 2017. Bullish fund managers have pushed the time horizon for expected stock drawdowns back to the second half of the year. OPEC has come under pressure to reconfirm the faith of hedge fund bulls with an early commitment to extend current output cuts beyond June. Saudi and other senior OPEC ministers have been edging towards an extension commitment in recent days.

But there are lingering doubts about whether OPEC can deliver real market tightening during the second half of 2017.

Calendar spreads have been falling along the curve with weakness extending from the prompt June-July (M7-N7) spread all the way through to December-January (Z7-F8). US crude imports from OPEC members Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Venezuela have remained steady or increased since the start of the year, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

And reported global crude and products inventories have remained stubbornly high, according to data compiled by the International Energy Agency.

It is possible that global crude stocks could be falling already as previously invisible stocks are repositioned and become more visible to the market. There is some evidence that unreported crude stocks held by producer countries, in floating storage, and in tank farms in the Caribbean and South Africa are being drawn towards the major refining centres.

As crude is drawn towards the United States, Rotterdam and Singapore, it is captured in published statistics. But reported stocks need to start falling soon if hedge fund managers' confidence in rebalancing is to be maintained. OPEC messaging about high levels of compliance has lost much of its effectiveness and is no longer enough to justify a bullish position in crude. Reported stock changes now matter more for oil prices and calendar spreads than compliance assessments by OPEC's secondary sources. OPEC's credibility is on the line: stocks need to show a significant draw during the second and third quarters or many hedge funds are likely to give up on the bullish narrative prevailing since late 2016. —Reuters

## UK TO SELL GREEN INVESTMENT BANK TO MACQUARIE FOR \$3BN

**LONDON:** The British government said it will sell the Green Investment Bank (GIB) to a consortium led by Macquarie Bank in a deal worth 2.3 billion pounds (\$3 billion), which critics said failed to guarantee its future. The Australian bank's purchase of GIB, which backs green projects with public funds, had been expected since a court rejected the claim of a rival bidder earlier this month, but it has been vehemently opposed by environmental groups and some UK lawmakers.

They say Macquarie will strip the bank of its assets, potentially diluting its purpose of investing in green projects. The government set up GIB in 2012 as a commercial venture to spur private investment in green projects. It has invested more than 2 billion pounds in projects such as offshore wind farms and waste management.

The deal comprises a 1.7 billion pound price tag and approximately 600 million pounds in funding commitments for existing GIB projects. The government has provided 1.5 billion pounds since 2012, meaning that the transaction price at the date of signing represents a 160 million pound premium on total government funding. The government decided to sell a majority stake in 2015, saying that would give the bank more freedom to borrow, free it from state aid restrictions and allow it to attract more capital.

### Environmentally toxic

The consortium's structure - comprising Macquarie Group, Macquarie European Infrastructure Fund 5 and Universities Superannuation Scheme - includes a "special share" arrangement whereby GIB's mandate would be safeguarded by five independent trustees, Macquarie said. Macquarie pledged yesterday to invest 3 billion pounds in green energy projects over the next three years. There were no guarantees on GIB's headcount as part of the deal but Macquarie said it would continue to operate from offices in London and Edinburgh, managing more than 4 billion pounds of green infrastructure assets and projects. —Reuters

## WORLD MARKETS DIVERGE EYEING FRENCH ELECTION

**LONDON:** Eurozone stock markets rose yesterday as investors zoned in on the upcoming French presidential election, while London fell further as the pound rose against the dollar.

Around 1015 GMT, London's benchmark FTSE 100 index was down 0.1 percent compared with the close on Wednesday. Frankfurt's DAX 30 index gained 0.2 percent and the Paris CAC 40 won 0.9 percent. "The FTSE is weakening once more... as the pound continues its ascent in the wake of (British Prime Minister) Theresa May's decision to call a snap election," said Joshua Mahony, market analyst at IG trading group.

Eyes are on also the first round vote in the French presidential elections this weekend, with a four-way race making it tough to call on who will go into the run-off. There are fears a win for far-right leader Marine Le Pen, riding a wave of populism, could see the collapse of the eurozone after she said she would withdraw France from the currency bloc.

"World stock markets may be rangebound ahead of the first round of the French presidential election on Sunday, but the euro has hit a three-week high against the US dollar," said Mahony.

Asian markets steadied yesterday following broad losses the previous two days but they struggled to maintain early momentum as analysts warned caution was prevailing on geopolitical worries and fading hopes for US President Donald Trump's stimulus drive.

Energy firms were among the main laggards, tracking losses in their US counterparts, after a surprise jump in US petroleum inventories sent oil prices skidding almost four percent Wednesday.

Hong Kong added one percent, Sydney put on 0.3 percent by the close, Seoul jumped 0.5 percent and Singapore firmed 0.1 percent. But Tokyo ended marginally lower, while Shanghai was also flat. Wellington and Taipei slipped. — AFP

## EUROZONE ECONOMIC GROWTH STEADY BUT MODEST: STUDY

POLITICAL STATUS QUO COULD HELP SUSTAIN GROWTH

**FRANKFURT:** Eurozone economic growth will be steady but modest over the coming year, but that will depend partly on independent candidate Emmanuel Macron winning the French presidency next month, a Reuters poll of economists showed.

The results suggest forecasters, like investors and traders, appear unrattled by political uncertainty as France prepares for a presidential election in which far right and anti-European Union leader Marine Le Pen is polling strongly, although no major survey sees her winning.

France is the EU's second biggest economy so turmoil there would weigh on the wider bloc. "A win by the populist Marine Le Pen in the second round could result in a prolonged period of uncertainty as she attempts to negotiate better terms for France remaining in the EU," said Beata Caranci, chief economist at TD Securities.

"This outcome would undoubtedly increase volatility in global financial markets, particularly in European equities, bonds, and currencies." A separate poll of foreign exchange strategists earlier this month showed the euro falling about 5 percent to near 15-year lows and close to parity against the dollar in the immediate aftermath of a Le Pen win the vote.

Still, the latest poll of over 80 economists showed predictions for eurozone growth and inflation have barely budged over the last two years of monthly Reuters surveys. "Our macro views involve assumptions on not just policy but also politics, especially in Europe. For example, underlying our growth forecasts is the view that European elections will not lead to governments that try to take their countries out of the euro area," noted Ajay Rajadhyaksha, head of macro research at Barclays.

When asked which candidate for the presidency would be best for French economic growth, 30 of 51 respondents said Emmanuel Macron, 19 said François Fillon and the remaining two economists said both. But none chose Marine Le Pen.

### Steady as she goes

Economic growth in the eurozone is expected to be steady at 0.4 percent in each quarter through the third quarter of next year, unchanged from last month's poll. Median consensus for annual GDP growth for this year was 1.7 percent and for next it was 1.6 percent, in line with the International Monetary Fund's latest projections.

But inflation is forecast to remain below the European Central Bank's target of close to but under 2 percent until at least 2019. The highest call was for inflation to average 2.1 percent this year.

Those decent-yet-uninspiring predictions come despite surprisingly strong business confidence surveys and hints of a pick up in price pressures since the start of the year.

But with the inflation outlook still tepid, economists unanimously said the ECB would stand pat at its monetary policy meeting on April 27. The central bank is expected to keep its interest rates on hold through to until at least the fourth quarter of 2018. While the ECB is expected to remain on the sidelines through this year, when asked on the next likely move, a majority of economists said it would extend its asset purchases program beyond December 2017 with a cut to the monthly spend, currently at 60 billion euros per month.

The next top pick was for the ECB to announce a taper to its asset purchase program with an intention to wind it down completely. "The first step in the ECB's exit strategy is likely to be tapering and not hiking policy rates," said Kristian Toedtman, economist at DekaBank.

"The ECB wants to withdraw stimulus only very slowly. At the same time, it seems not inclined to extend the universe of assets that it can buy. Therefore, the most consistent way to normalize monetary policy would be to phase out QE." — Reuters



**ALWAR:** In this photograph taken on April 15, 2017, Indian farmers separate husk from harvested wheat grains by using a harvester machine in a field on the outskirts of Alwar in the western state of Rajasthan. — AFP



**TOKYO:** In this March 24, 2017, photo, a worker stands at a seaside construction site with the pier of a container terminal in the background in Tokyo. Japan reports its exports rose a faster-than-expected 12 percent in March, while imports jumped nearly 16 percent from a year earlier. — AP

## TRADE PROTECTIONISM THREATENS ECONOMY'S BROAD-BASED UPTURN

GAINS IN MANUFACTURING AND TRADE LEAD TO UPTURN: POLL

**LONDON:** The global economy is in a broad-based upturn with core inflation at last on the rise, according to a majority of economists polled by Reuters, but the worldwide gains remain under threat from trade protectionism.

Those findings come as the semi-annual gathering of finance officials from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Group of 20 major economies kicks off in Washington, where the case against protectionist trade policies is expected to be a major theme. Recent optimism on the global economy found in the Reuters poll is based on manufacturing and trade gains in some major economies and is in line with the IMF's upgraded projections in its latest quarterly World Economic Outlook. "For the first time in five years, all the major economies seem to be growing in sync," noted Ajay Rajadhyaksha, head of macro research at Barclays.

"The global trade recession is over, fears of deflation have faded even as inflation pressures seem muted and the worst fears on global trade—such as the US immediately imposing tariffs on major trading partners—have not come to pass." The Reuters polls of over 500 economists across Asia, Europe and the Americas, however, suggested that concern remains about trade nationalism. But on the economy as a whole, it revealed upgrades, or no change to growth forecasts compared with previous months, as well as a slightly stronger inflation outlook across most countries.

Global growth is forecast to rise to 3.4 percent this year, followed by 3.5 percent next-back above the pace it was expanding at before the financial crisis struck almost a decade ago. While the latest consensus was slightly lower than the IMF's projection of 3.5 percent global growth in 2017, the range of forecasts in the poll pointed to a slightly more optimistic outlook this time around, with higher highs.

Global trade is on track to expand 2.4 percent this year after growing at the slowest pace since the financial crisis, just 1.3 percent, in 2016, according to the World Trade Organization.

### Plenty of risks

WTO director-general Roberto Azevedo said last week there was "deep uncertainty" about economic and policy developments, particularly in the United States and clarity was needed on U.S. President Donald Trump's "America First" trade policies. Similar concerns were voiced by an overwhelming majority of economists who answered an additional question in the Reuters poll, suggesting broad agreement among economists on the need to resist protectionism. While US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said such warnings were "rubbish," because the United States was less protectionist than its trading partners, Trump has made reducing trade deficits a key focus of his economic agenda to try to grow US manufacturing jobs. — AFP

## JAPAN RESISTS US PRESSURE FOR BILATERAL TRADE DEAL

**NEW YORK:** Japan has less room to compromise with the United States under a bilateral trade deal than under a multilateral agreement like the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), its deputy prime minister said, taking a swipe at US attempts to directly pressure Tokyo into opening up heavily-protected markets like agriculture.

Taro Aso, who heads Japan for a newly-created bilateral economic dialogue with the United States, said that under TPP, Japan was able to accede to more US demands as it could make up for the losses through agreements with other countries. "In a bilateral deal, you can't do that. You can't get back what you lose from a compromise with the United States," Aso said in a seminar at Columbia University on Wednesday.

Aso's comments underscore Japan's hopes of avoiding a bilateral free-trade agreement (FTA) with the United States after US President Donald Trump abandoned the 12-nation TPP backed by his predecessor Barack Obama and Japanese premier Shinzo Abe. Tokyo fears a two-way agreement would expose it to stronger US pressure to open up politically-sensitive markets like agriculture and beef.

After the first round of talks in Tokyo on Tuesday, Japan and the United States remained at logger-heads on how to frame the bilateral economic dialogue. The Trump administration has signaled its intention to use the dialogue to push for a two-way trade deal, while Japan wants to broaden the agenda to add less-thorny issues like infrastructure investment.

Vice President Mike Pence, who headed the US delegation, said his administration hopes the bilateral dialogue could lead to future negotiations on a FTA.

### Tax hike underway

On domestic policy, Aso, who is also Japan's finance minister, said budding signs of recovery in the economy and private consumption are paving the way for Japan to proceed with a twice-delayed sales tax hike now scheduled for October 2019. He also warned that there was no quick fix for the country's tattered finances, shrugging off the chance the central bank would resort to "helicopter money" - or direct underwriting of public debt to fund government spending.

Aso said he was aware of proposals by some academics for radical steps to spur growth, such as having the Bank of Japan directly underwrite government spending or intentionally creating sharp inflation to pay off public debt without raising tax. "In reality, there are various problems to such ideas. For one, it would undermine the BOJ's independence and market confidence over monetary policy," Aso said.

Given Japan's huge public debt, any signs the government is abandoning efforts on fiscal discipline could also invite a bust in the country's finances or runaway inflation that would have a detrimental effect on the public. "We can't allow that to happen....There's no quick fix," Aso said. The only way to solve the problem would be to raise tax, cut spending and take steps to revive the economy, he added.

"The economy is likely to do well ahead of the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2020, so it will be easier to raise the sales tax," said Aso, who visited New York ahead of this week's meeting of the Group of 20 finance leaders' gathering in Washington, Dc. Japan has twice delayed the second promised tax hike after the first increase in April 2014 tipped the world's third-biggest economy into a recession. — Reuters

## CORRUPTION ROW THREATENS BRAZIL'S ECONOMIC REFORMS

**BRASILIA:** Efforts by Brazil's embattled government to push through unpopular austerity reforms face ever greater headwinds after the eruption of a corruption scandal weakening President Michel Temer. Temer is staking his legacy on passage of the reforms, which center on changing the costly pension system to increase the retirement age to 65 for men and 62 for women from today's 60 for men and 55 for women.

Temer has rock-bottom public approval ratings but he has been able to rely on a friendly Congress since legislators impeached leftist president Dilma Rousseff last year, automatically raising Temer, her

conservative vice president, to the top job. Since the Supreme Court's decision last week to open corruption probes on some 100 politicians, including a third of Temer's cabinet and many of his allies in Congress, the president's position has deteriorated further. He already faces widespread anger from voters over the austerity reforms, which also include liberalizing labor laws and an already-approved 20-year federal spending freeze.

Temer says market reforms are needed after more than a decade of leftist rule as the only way to lift Brazil from its worst recession in history. But on Tuesday, angry police

union members stormed the entrance of the lower house of Congress, scuffling with congressional police, to demand that police be allowed to retire earlier. Pressure is also coming from legislators themselves.

In a rare show of defiance to Temer, the lower house on Tuesday refused to fast-track the labor-law reforms. It then reversed this decision Wednesday after a rowdy debate marked by the kind of insults and shouting matches common last year during Rousseff's impeachment. "Brazilian society has not bought into these reforms," said Sylvio Costa, founder of the political news website Congresso em Foco.

### Temer's legacy

Temer has warned that unless Brazil imposes drastic discipline on its out-of-control budget the country faces bankruptcy. And he says that his short presidency—he will be replaced in an October 2018 election—is focused on this legacy, rather than short-term goals. "My government will not get anything out of this: I have a year and eight months left in government. This is for the future," he said on SBT television last weekend. However, the politicians Temer relies on may be concentrating on their own reelection chances. In addition to the presidential poll, voting will take place for the entire lower house of Congress and two thirds of the Senate. — AFP



## GM HALTS OPERATIONS IN VENEZUELA AFTER FACTORY IS SEIZED

**DETROIT:** General Motors has stopped doing business in Venezuela after authorities took control of its only factory there in what GM called an illegal judicial seizure of its assets.

The plant was confiscated on Wednesday as anti-government protesters clashed with authorities in a country that is roiling in economic troubles such as food shortages and triple-digit inflation.

The Detroit automaker said in a statement yesterday that other assets such as vehicles were taken from the plant, causing irreparable damage to the company. GM says the plant was taken in disregard of its right to due process. The company says it will defend itself legally and that it's confident that justice eventually will prevail.

GM has about 2,700 workers in the troubled country, where it's been the market leader for over 35 years. It also has 79 dealers that employ 3,900 people, and its parts suppliers make up more than half of Venezuela's auto parts market, the company said. If the government permits it, workers will get separation benefits "arising from the termination of employment relationships due to causes beyond the parties' control," the GM statement said.

Dealers will continue to service vehicles and provide parts, the company said. GM's Venezuelan operations have been a drag on earnings for several years. In the second quarter of 2015, the company took a \$720 million charge for currency devaluation and asset valuation write-downs as the economy faltered. South American operations, which include Venezuela, account for a relatively small portion of GM's earnings and sales. Last year the company lost \$400 million before taxes in South America, but as a whole the company made a pretax profit of \$12.5 billion. GM sold just over 583,000 vehicles in the region last year, but that was only about 6 percent of its total sales.

In its 2016 fourth-quarter earnings release, the company said that its South America region "remains challenged from macro-economic and political standpoints." — AP

## OECD CHIEF CALLS FOR 'PLAYING OFFENSE' ON TRADE

**WASHINGTON:** In another in the growing chorus of warnings against a rise in protectionism, the head of the OECD said Wednesday governments should defend free trade by making their economies more, not less, inclusive. "It is time to move from playing defense on trade to playing offense," Angel Gurría, secretary-general of the 35-member Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, said in an address.

His remarks delivered in Minnesota came as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank prepare to kick off their semi-annual meetings in Washington this week, where defending open trade and multilateral cooperation feature as key themes.

With anti-free trade views on display in France's presidential elections, Britain's 2016 vote to leave the European Union, and President Donald Trump's populist vows to erect retaliatory trade barriers, officials at major international financial institutions have expressed increasing dismay at rising protectionism. Despite improving world economic growth, and the gains won through globalization and trade, IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde last week warned of a "sword of protectionism" looming over the global economy.

In remarks delivered at the Economic Club of Minnesota, where he accepted an award for championing trade integration, Gurría acknowledged that many still face hardship in the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis. "Globalization is not working well for everyone. We must do more to deliver greater wellbeing," he said. He called for more training in skills, job promotion and infrastructure investments to help economies cope with some of the adjustments brought by free trade.

But Gurría he warned that imposing tariffs would be "a shot in the foot." "It will put your small and medium-sized business out of business and encourage large businesses to send more jobs overseas," Gurría said. "We must not back away from what we know is right - a free, fair, open, rules based, inclusive trading system that works better for more people." — AFP



SHANGHAI: A McLaren car is displayed during the second day of the 17th Shanghai International Automobile Industry Exhibition in Shanghai yesterday. — AFP

# BEYOND CHINA, CARMAKERS SEEK NEW DRIVERS OF GROWTH

## SHANGHAI AUTO SHOW RAISES NEW CHALLENGES

**SHANGHAI:** Southeast Asia's potential beckons as global automakers look beyond China's massive market to extend their sales boom in the region, but executives say they face a struggle to match the explosive Chinese growth. Chinese passenger-car sales have quadrupled over the past 10 years to 24.38 million last year, having become the world's biggest market in 2009.

But with Chinese economic growth moderating, one question being asked at the Shanghai Auto Show is: where in Asia can carmakers look for the next boom? "There is a challenge to seek growth where the growth is. You look at countries that are less equipped and are in the process of growth or acceleration," said Marc Boilard, industry analyst at the firm Oliver Wyman.

Southeast Asia's potential remains significant, with more than 600 million people, solid economic growth and just 2.1 million passenger vehicles sold last year in the 10-country Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). But carmakers say issues such as import taxes, regional dominance by Japanese manufacturers and lagging infrastructure work against broad-based growth.

ASEAN "is a market that is closed, where import taxes are very high", making it necessary to invest in local manufacturing, said Carlos Tavares, chairman of France's PSA, which produces Peugeot and Citroen.

Indonesia has 250 million people, but US automaker Ford pulled out last year in the face of Japanese firms' more than 90 percent market share, said David Schoch, CEO of Ford China.

"When I sit back and look at it, and think about electrification, smart mobility, and where the industry is going ... where are you going to place your bet?" Schoch said. Ford has announced plans to double down on China, where electric-vehicle and SUV sales continue to

surge. "Although Indonesia represents a fairly large market and is growing, again, we couldn't see a way forward that we could be successful there," Schoch said.

Vietnam holds potential with more than 90 million people and less than 30 vehicles per 1,000, compared with China's 120 and 800 in the United States. "The only downside, however, is that these markets have been dominated by the Japanese for a very long time," said François Jaumain of PwC Autofacts.

Japanese carmakers account for 71 percent of sales in Thailand and 59 percent in Vietnam, according to PwC. PSA, whose China sales plunged 16 percent last year, plans to target five percent of

Vietnam's passenger-car volume, which reached just 158,000 last year.

It also is pursuing a strategic partnership with Proton, the struggling national carmaker of Malaysia, where half a million cars were sold last year.

Infrastructure development, which helped facilitate China's private-car boom, has not kept up in Southeast Asia. Sebastien Amichi of consultancy Roland Berger said: "We've been talking a long time about the 'new dragons', which have had difficulty taking off. "When we take these countries together, Southeast Asia could be a good growth area, if the infrastructure and banking networks are set up effectively." — AFP



SHANGHAI: An Audi e-tron Sportback Concept car is displayed during the second day of the 17th Shanghai International Automobile Industry Exhibition in Shanghai yesterday. — AFP

# SUZUKI'S HOMER NOT ENOUGH AS MIAMI LOSE

**SEATTLE:** Miami's Ichiro Suzuki hit his first home run on the road in nearly four years but it came in a 10-5 loss to the Mariners. The 43-year-old Suzuki homered off Evan Marshall in possibly his final at-bat at Safeco Field, where he anchored right field and the top of Seattle's batting order for 111/2 seasons. Rookie Mitch Haniger extended his hitting streak to 13 games with three hits and four RBIs to help Seattle win for the fifth time in six games. A night after breaking up a potential no-hitter with a ninth-inning double, Haniger scored in the first inning, had a two-run single in the second and clanged a two-run double off the wall in deep center field in the fourth. Kyle Seager also drove in four runs and was on base four times as the Mariners went 6-3 on their only homestand of April. Felix Hernandez (2-1) allowed four runs and 12 hits in 6 1/3 innings. Miami's Edinson Volquez (0-2) barely made it through three innings, giving up four runs, five hits and four walks.

## CUBS 7, BREWERS 4

Addison Russell hit a three-run homer off Neftali Feliz (0-2) that capped a four-run ninth inning. Chicago trailed 4-1 before Willson Contreras' RBI single in the sixth, Carlos Torres, and Russell's run-scoring single cut the deficit to one run in the eighth. Kris Bryant's RBI single tied the score. Wade Davis (2-0) worked around a walk in the ninth.

## ROYALS 2, GIANTS 0

Jason Vargas (3-0) scattered four hits over seven innings with nine strikeouts and no walks, and Kansas City finally scored off Madison Bumgarner. Joakim Soria pitched a perfect eighth in relief of Vargas, and Kelvin Herrera worked around a leadoff walk in the ninth for his third save. Bumgarner (0-3) matched Vargas pitch for pitch until the fifth, when Paulo Orlando managed a one-out single. Orlando stole second, took third on a groundout and went home when Mike Moustakas delivered a base hit. That ended Bumgarner's streak of 18 scoreless innings against the Royals, dating to the 2014 World Series opener. Salvador Perez added an RBI single off George Kontos in the eighth.

## CARDINALS 2, PIRATES 1

Dexter Fowler hit his first two home runs for St. Louis, which completed a three-game sweep - all by 2-1 scores. The Cardinals are 6-9, winning their opener and losing nine of 11 before the sweep. Fowler had three of the Cardinals' eight hits, including homers in the third and fifth off Gerrit Cole (1-2). Josh Bell had tied the score with a fourth-inning homer against Michael Wacha (2-1). Trevor Rosenthal struck out Jordy Mercer and Jose Osuna with a man on for his first save this season.

## NATIONALS 14, BRAVES 4

Bryce Harper had two homers, including a grand slam, among four hits and the Nationals overwhelmed Julio Teheran and the Braves. Harper drove in five runs. His third-inning grand slam just cleared the reach of leaping Braves center fielder Ender Inciarte. Harper's seven career homers off Teheran are his most against any pitcher. Ryan Zimmerman added an eighth-inning grand slam off Ian Krol, sending some Braves fans for the exits at new SunTrust Park. The Nationals had 20 hits. Washington's Joe Ross (1-0) allowed three runs on six hits in seven innings in his 2017 debut. Teheran (1-1) allowed seven runs on seven hits in four innings.

## ATHLETICS 9, RANGERS 1

Khris Davis hit his seventh home run of the season, Yonder Alonso and Chad Pinder also



**SEATTLE:** Seattle Mariners' Mitch Haniger, right, slides in safely to second base as Miami Marlins shortstop Miguel Rojas waits for the ball in the first inning of a baseball game. — AP

went deep. Josh Phegley hit a two-run double in a four-run first that gave a quick lead to Jesse Hahn (1-1), who allowed one run and two hits over six innings, struck out four and walked four. Davis hit a two-run homer in the fifth, his third home run in six games. Martin Perez (1-2) gave up four runs and seven hits in 3 2/3 innings.

## YANKEES 9, WHITE SOX 1

Aaron Judge hit a 448-foot homer, Masahiro Tanaka (2-1) pitched seven innings of one-run ball and New York completed its first stretch at Yankee Stadium this season 8-1, its most wins in a homestand since going 9-1 from July 17-26, 2009. Judge followed Starlin Castro's three-run shot in the fifth for the Yankees' first back-to-back homers of the season. Chase Headley and Aaron Hicks also went deep to give New York a season high four home runs. Dylan Covey (0-1) got knocked around in his second major league start, allowing eight runs, 10 hits and three homers over five innings.

## BLUE JAYS 3, RED SOX 0

Francisco Liriano (1-1) allowed four hits in 5 1/3 innings and combined with three relievers combined on a six-hitter. Kevin Pillar had three hits for the second straight game and stole two bases as the Blue Jays won for the third time this season and improved to 2-6 on their homestand. Toronto scored three unearned runs in the second against AL Cy Young Award winner Rick Porcello (1-2) after errors by third baseman Pablo Sandoval and first baseman Mitch Moreland. Darwin Barney hit a two-run single and scored on Ezequiel Carrera's single. Roberto Osuna finished for his first save.

## ORIOLES 2, REDS 0

Ubaldo Jimenez (1-0) held the Reds to a pair of singles in the second inning and four walks overall in 7 2/3 innings to overcome a dominating performance by rookie Amir Garrett (2-1), who struck out 12 in seven innings. Jonathan Schoop singled home a run in the second, and Manny Machado hit a sac-

rifice fly in the fifth. Brad Brach pitched the ninth for his first save, completing the Orioles' first shutout this season.

## METS 5, PHILLIES 4

Jay Bruce homered twice and drove in five runs, including a tiebreaking shot in the eighth as New York ended its four-game losing streak. New York trailed 2-0 with two outs in the sixth before Bruce lined a three-run homer off frustrated starter Vince Velasquez. Philadelphia pulled even in the eighth, but Yoenis Cespedes singled leading off the bottom half and Bruce connected again, this time against Edubray Ramos (0-2). Hansel Robles (3-0) struck out his only batter, and Addison Reed earned his fourth save. Reed allowed a sacrifice fly to pinch-hitter Daniel Nava after Freddy Galvis tripled, then struck out Cesar Hernandez to end it.

## ASTROS 5, ANGELS 1

Dallas Keuchel threw seven solid innings, Josh Reddick finished a single shy of the cycle and the Astros beat the Angels. Keuchel (3-0) allowed one run on eight hits with seven strikeouts. The left-hander has allowed one run or fewer in all four of his starts, going seven innings in each outing. Reddick tripled in the first and scored on a Jose Altuve single, doubled in the sixth and scored on an Evan Gattis single and hit a two-run homer to right in the seventh that went over Cameron Maybin's outstretched glove and fell in the first row. Reddick struck out in the third. JC Ramirez (2-2) allowed three runs on six hits with a career-high nine strikeouts in 5 1/3 innings. The right-hander improved from his first career start Friday against Kansas City where he was tagged for five runs in five innings.

## RAYS 8, TIGERS 7

A throwing error by Jose Iglesias allowed two runs to score in the ninth inning as Tampa Bay rallied to beat Detroit. The Tigers shortstop stumbled while trying to turn what would have been a game-ending double play, instead his error cost Detroit the victory. Kevin

Kiermaier opened the ninth with a walk. He advanced to third on Evan Longoria's double. Francisco Rodriguez (1-1) intentionally walked Brad Miller to load the bases. One out later, the closer got Logan Morrison to ground to second base and Iglesias couldn't complete the double play, as he stumbled making the turn. He was hurt on the play and was on the field for a few minutes before walking off under his own power. Austin Pruitt (1-0) got his first major league win in relief.

## PADRES 1, DIAMONDBACKS 0

Jhoulys Chacin pitched eight scoreless innings and Erick Aybar hit a homer to lift the Padres to a win over the Diamondbacks. Aybar, who had pitched to a batter the night before, pulled Zack Greinke's 82 mph slider just fair down the right-field line in the eighth inning for the game's lone run. The first homer of the year from Aybar made a winner out Chacin (2-2). Chacin was masterful as he gave up just three hits. He walked two and struck out five. Brandon Maurer worked the ninth inning for his second save as the Padres snapped a five-game losing streak. AJ Pollack singled in the ninth, stole second and reached third with two outs. But Jake Lamb struck out. Greinke (1-2) and Chacin were locked in a duel over the first seven innings as neither team placed a runner in scoring position.

## DODGERS 4, ROCKIES 2

Clayton Kershaw struck out a season-high 10 in seven innings to lead the Dodgers over the Rockies. Kershaw (3-1) allowed two runs on five hits. He walked just one and was done after 97 pitches. It was the 52nd time in his career that Kershaw has struck out 10 or more, and the Dodgers are 41-11 in those games. Kenley Jansen got his fourth save of the season. It was his second four-out save of the homestand. Kershaw avenged an early season loss at Coors Field. The left-hander gave up three home runs in six innings on April 8. Left-hander Tyler Anderson (1-3) went five innings for the Rockies, allowing four runs - two earned - while striking out five and walking one. —AP

## RETIRING DUO MISBAH, KHAN LEAD PAKISTAN AGAINST WI

**KINGSTON:** West Indies and Pakistan get a three-Test series underway today at Sabina Park in Jamaica with both teams struggling in the midst of challenging transition periods. Despite victories in both the T20 and One-Day International series earlier in the tour, the tourists have shaped up as a far more vulnerable outfit in the traditional format of the game. The home side, who remain mired in the lower reaches of the international rankings, look set to make further alterations to their line-up in the quest for a consistent winning formula.

Pakistan topped the Test rankings last September following their drawn series in England. But a slump of six consecutive defeats, ironically initiated by the West Indies in Sharjah five-and-a-half months ago at the end of an otherwise disastrous campaign for the

Caribbean team, has seen them slip to fifth and increased public pressure on Misbah ul Haq to step down as captain. After much speculation Misbah has announced that this series will be his last before retiring from the international game.

And only last week fellow veteran Younis Khan, Pakistan's most prolific run-scorer in Test history, also revealed that the West Indies tour will be his last in national colors. Khan goes into the match needing just 23 more runs to become the first Pakistani to amass 10,000 runs in Tests, and while the milestone will be of immense personal significance, of even greater concern to the visiting team is completing their first-ever Test series triumph in the West Indies by the time the final Test concludes in Dominica in mid-May.

### Intriguing affair

Sabina Park's 50th Test since the first was staged in 1930 against England is likely to be an intriguing affair given Pakistan's less than flattering display in their lone warm-up match ahead of the series where they were outplayed in a drawn three-day fixture by a West Indies Board President's XI in the western Jamaican town of Trelawny. Three of the representative team who starred with the bat against the tourists - Kieran Powell and the uncapped pair of Vishaul Singh and Shimron Hetmyer - were named in the West Indies squad of 13 for the opening Test although it is anticipated that Hetmyer, captain of the victorious team at last year's Under-19 World Cup in Bangladesh, and fast-medium bowler Miguel Cummins will be omitted from the final eleven. — AFP

## MISBAH: REDEEMER FROM SCANDAL TO SUPREMACY

**KARACHI:** Misbah-ul-Haq defied critics and his advancing age to take Pakistan from the depths of a major spot-fixing scandal to the world's number one Test team, becoming their most successful captain along the way. The 42-year-old, who will retire at the end of the West Indies Test series starting Friday, completed Pakistan's climb to the top of the rankings with a hard-fought draw in England in 2016, exorcising the ghosts of the tainted visit six years earlier.

Derided for his cautious batting in the semi-final loss to India in the 2011 World Cup, and forced to retire early from the Twenty20 format, a more sensitive soul may have retreated into early retirement. Not so for Misbah, who started out in street cricket, weathered early trials and disappointments and has survived to become the oldest current Test player.

Born in the city of Mianwali in the central province of Punjab, he was advised by his father, a disgruntled ex-hockey star, to put aside thoughts of being a sportsman and pursue his studies. His father's untimely death briefly changed young Misbah's priorities, and he reluctantly agreed to a job at a textiles company-but never showed up for work. "It was a tough decision," Misbah recalled to AFP. "I had to fight with circumstances and finally made my mark in cricket grounds."

In order to overcome a lack of opportunities in his hometown, he regularly commuted by train to bigger cities where he laid the foundations of his career, first in street tournaments featuring tennis balls bound in electric tape, and later at domestic level. His international career started with the tour of New Zealand in 2001, but he failed to make an impression and was duly dropped in an era dominated by middle-order heavyweights Inzamam-ul-Haq, Mohammed Yousuf and Younis Khan. But he forced himself back into contention with strong domestic performances and was a surprise pick for the inaugural World Twenty20 in 2007, where at the age of 33 he was Pakistan's find of the tournament, bringing them tantalizingly close to victory over arch-rivals India with a knock of 43 in the final. — AFP



Misbah Ul-Haq



Younis Khan

## 'UNIQUE' YOUNIS EYES FINAL TEST MILESTONE

**KARACHI:** When Younis Khan hangs up his bat at the end of Pakistan's tour of the West Indies, it will likely be with a final Test milestone against his name. Younis is just 23 runs away from becoming the first Pakistan player to score 10,000 Test runs. With the first of three Tests against the West Indies beginning on Friday in Kingston, Jamaica, few would bet against him marking his swansong with a final foray into the record books.

Since his debut in 2000 against Sri Lanka, he proved his ability to adapt to different conditions by scoring centuries in every Test playing nation, including double hundreds in India and England. His batting average of 53.06 is the highest by any Pakistani who has played 10 Tests or more. But for all Younis's record-breaking individual achievements, former team-mate and fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar said his former captain should be remembered for his selfless personality and team ethic.

"To me Younis should be renamed 'Unique' Khan for his selflessness and honesty towards Pakistan cricket and the team," said Shoaib, who retired in 2011. Renowned as a fighter at the crease, Younis often produced his greatest performances with his back against the wall. Of his 34 tons, an all-time Test record five have been scored in the fourth innings.

His 2005 match-winning 267 and 84 not out against India in Bangalore came after a string of low scores saw him battling to avoid being dropped. Younis's greatest achievement as captain was winning the 2009 world Twenty20 championship in England. And yet that came just weeks after Pakistan cricket had been thrown into disarray by the gun attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore, an incident which means the national side still plays their home matches in the UAE. Younis said he wanted to be remembered as a team player.

"When I am retired and when I am not in the dressing room, I want youngsters to remember me as a role model," he said. "I want them to remember me as a player and batsman who always played for his country." Hailing from Mardan in the north-west Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Younis's career was molded in Karachi. Younis scored a hundred in his first Test against Sri Lanka at Rawalpindi in 2000 and went on to record 33 more, with a triple ton and three double hundreds. His most recent was a typical unbeaten 175 ground out over more than seven hours as Pakistan crawled to 315 against Australia in Sydney in January. His Test best 313 against Sri Lanka in Karachi in 2009 is the third highest individual score for Pakistan behind Hanif Mohammad's 337 and Inzamam-ul-Haq's 329. — AFP



**TORONTO:** Giannis Antetokounmpo #34 of the Milwaukee Bucks drives against DeMarre Carroll #5 of the Toronto Raptors in the first half of Game Two of the Eastern Conference Quarterfinals during the 2017 NBA Playoffs at Air Canada Centre. — AFP

## PLAYOFF BERTH PROVIDES A GLIMPSE AT BUCKS' FUTURE

**MILWAUKEE:** Steel beams and giant cranes tower over a lot next to the Bradley Center, a busy construction site that will turn into the next home of the Milwaukee Bucks. A new downtown arena offers the most visible sign of progress for a franchise in transition. From the emergence of Giannis Antetokounmpo as an NBA All-Star to a return to the playoffs, this has been an important season for the Bucks. They return home on Thursday to host the Toronto Raptors in Game 3 of a first-round series tied at 1-1.

"In a very real sense, we're in the process of fulfilling the commitment we made ... building the arena and building in downtown Milwaukee," co-owner Wes Edens said. "Every time you go out there, you can see the arena rising before your eyes." Edens was part of an ownership group that bought the franchise from former US Sen. Herb Kohl in 2014. The goals seemed lofty back then: turning a 15-win team back into a winner while also building a new arena that would keep the Bucks in town. While the road to reaching both targets hasn't always been smooth, the Bucks are brimming with optimism.

On the court, Antetokounmpo blossomed into the team's first All-Star since 2004, and first All-Star starter since 1986. He's now in the top 10 of NBA jersey sales, the first Bucks player on that list since Gary Payton's brief tenure with the team in 2003. A 6-foot-11 forward with freakish athleticism, Antetokounmpo is a triple-double threat every night. "His length is unbelievable," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said. "He plays so hard, the kid plays so hard. He has a heart as big as this table."

A first-round draft pick in 2013, the 22-year-old Antetokounmpo is part of a young group for the Bucks at similar points in their development, including fifth-year forward-guard Khris Middleton and third-year forward Jabari Parker. Middleton returned from a hamstring injury that sidelined him for the season's first 50 games on Feb. 8, the same night that Parker was lost with a season-ending left knee injury.

The Bucks still made the playoffs and finished above .500 for the first time since 2009-

10 on the strength of tougher defense and winning close games in a 14-victory March. "One of the things that I've learned is that no one feels sorry for you. At one point (we were) 22-30 and struggling," Edens said. "It starts with the very high play of Giannis. ... Khris came back and he's such a good basketball player, you see him down the stretch being so effective. "Look at the record in close games, were much better down the stretch. More broadly, the team is a very deep team," Edens added.

### 'OWN THE FUTURE'

After the new ownership group took over, the Bucks began using the slogan "Own the Future." They've tweaked that slogan on a highway billboard in recent days to read "Come See the Future," a nod to the playoffs and the arena project. "We have a two- to four-year plan to be an extremely successful, sustainable NBA franchise," team President Peter Feigin said. "You tell the promise and then you deliver on it." The \$524 million project is expected to be completed before the 2018-19 season. A public financing plan covered \$250 million toward construction, with current and former team owners having committed \$250 million and expected to cover any cost overruns.

The Bucks are scheduled to move into a new 60,000 square-foot practice facility across the street from the new arena this summer, what the team says will be a state-of-the-art space that will be among the best in the league. It promises to be a big upgrade over the current facility just outside Milwaukee. The new downtown project would be the centerpiece of a multi-purpose entertainment district on what was 30 acres of mostly vacant land or parking lots. The goal is to turn the area into "a vibrant neighborhood activated by sports, entertainment, residential and office uses," the team has said. A playoff berth for the Bucks allows the rest of the NBA to also get a glimpse of the team's future. "It means a lot for the franchise and the city of Milwaukee," Middleton said. "We've come a long way." — AP

## WARRIORS CUT DOWN BLAZERS, WESTBROOK RUNS OUT OF GAS

**WASHINGTON:** The Golden State Warriors clamped down on defense as they cruised to a 110-81 victory over the Portland Trail Blazers, taking a 2-0 lead in their first-round playoff series. Playing without injured star Kevin Durant, Golden State held Portland to just 12 points in the third quarter Wednesday to post their 11th straight home win over the Trail Blazers in a rematch of last year's Western Conference semi-final series. Durant missed the game with a calf strain.

"You got to be aggressive. Tonight we didn't really get it going and we had some dry spots but we won the game with our defense," said Warriors star Stephen Curry. "We asserted ourselves in first quarter that set the tone for the game." Curry had 19 points and Klay Thompson added 16 as the Warriors won easily despite scoring 11 fewer points than in their 121-109 win in the opening game of the series. JaVale McGee said they miss not having Durant in the lineup but they also know how to adjust when he is not there.

"We have confidence. We have had to play without KD for a lot of games earlier so we are used to it. But we need KD. We need his scoring," said McGee, who came off the bench to score 15 points. The teams will travel to Portland for the next two meetings in the best-of-seven series, with the Warriors taking their lead into game three tomorrow.

### HISTORIC NIGHT FALLS SHORT

Elsewhere, Eric Gordon and Lou Williams caught fire in the fourth quarter as the Houston Rockets rallied for a 115-111 playoff win over the Oklahoma City Thunder, who lost despite another historic 50-point night by Russell Westbrook. The Rockets erased a 15-point deficit to take a 2-0 lead after game two of their Western Conference series.

Westbrook delivered a triple-double of 51 points, 13 assists and 10 rebounds but couldn't get the ball to drop when it counted. He shot a dismal four of 18 in the fourth quarter. His scoring total was the highest for

a postseason triple-double in NBA history. Despite the historic night, Westbrook failed to find his teammates with passes as he appeared to run out of steam in the final quarter. He missed 14 shots in the fourth, the most misses in any quarter in the last 20 NBA playoffs. "I wasn't tired," Westbrook said. "I don't care about the (personal stats). We lost." "It's not like it is going to be a surprise to anybody. We know what we have to do," said Rockets coach Mike D'Antoni of stopping Westbrook.

Gordon gave the Rockets their first lead with his three-pointer at the 8:07 mark of the fourth quarter at 96-94. Gordon delivered another clutch basket with 1:48 remaining, drilling a 28-footer off a James Harden pass to extend the lead to eight. Harden finished with 35 points and eight assists and was a perfect 18 for 18 from the free-throw line. Game three is today in Oklahoma City.

### WHISTLE HAPPY REFS

In Washington, Bradley Beal scored 16 of his 31 points in the final quarter as the Washington Wizards seized a 2-0 lead in their first-round series with a 109-101 win. John Wall delivered a team high 32 points as he and Beal tallied 20 of the Wizards' final 21 points in a penalty filled contest. Game three is in Atlanta tomorrow as the Wizards have won five in a row over the Hawks. Paul Millsap had 27 points and 10 rebounds for the Hawks. Dennis Schroder scored 23 points and Tim Hardaway had 19. Atlanta committed 18 turnovers.

After game one, Millsap made a point of calling out what he considered overly aggressive play from the Wizards: "They were playing MMA," he said. In game two, the teams were whistled for 55 fouls and took a combined 71 free throws. Atlanta was 33 of 38 and Washington finished 24 of 33. Washington's Marcin Gortat easily controlled the head-to-head matchup as Dwight Howard's struggles in the playoffs continued. Hawks center Howard had just six points and seven rebounds. — AFP



**OAKLAND:** Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry (30) scores against the Portland Trail Blazers during the first half in Game 2 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series. — AP



Kuwait National hockey team.

# ASIA ICE HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP BEGINS TOMORROW IN KUWAIT

By Abdellatif Sharaa + Kuna

**KUWAIT:** The Chairman of the Board of Kuwait Winter Games Club Fuhaid Al-Ajmi said Asia Ice Hockey Championship 2017 set to begin tomorrow in Kuwait will see the hoisting of Kuwait's flag in this continental sports event. Al-Ajmi, who also heads the organizing committee said the tournament is being held under the direct supervision by the International Ice Hockey Federation (IHF) and not under the International Olympic Committee.

Al-Ajmi said the tournament will be held under the patronage of Commerce and Industry Minister, Acting Minister for

Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Roudhan and will continue until April 25th with the participation of Oman, India and Macao in addition to host country Kuwait. Al-Ajmi appreciated the limitless support from minister Al-Roudhan for the tournament and his aid in removing all and any obstacles to ensure its success and promote the game amongst Kuwait's youth.

Meanwhile participating teams will complete their preparations before the start of the tournament. Deputy Chairman of the Board of KWSG Khalid Al-Mutairi lauded the role of Public Authority for Sports which worked to ensure the tournament proceeds as smoothly as possible

and have Kuwait's flag hoisted for the first time since the sports activities were placed under suspension. He said PAS kept in touch with HOC in order to be informed about all requirements and worked "with us to keep everything in place. He said Kuwait organized the previous tournament and not only won it but kept the fans happy as well. We hope to see fans return to the stands to back their team to keep the cup in Kuwait. Al-Ajmi said Kuwait Ice Hockey National team held a training camp in Abu Dhabi during which the team played several matches, and preparations continued when they returned.



KIH Chairman  
Fuhaid Al-Ajmi



Khalid Al-Mutairi -  
Media committee



MONACO: Britain's Andy Murray reacts after being defeated by Spain's Albert Ramos-Vinolas at the end of their Monte-Carlo ATP Masters Series tennis tournament. — AFP

## WORLD NUMBER ONE MURRAY CRASHES OUT OF MONTE CARLO

**MONTE CARLO:** Andy Murray surrendered a 4-0 lead in the decisive third set on his way to defeat at the Monte Carlo Masters yesterday as the world number one's 2017 season hit another setback. Murray suffered a shock third-round loss to Spain's 15th seed Albert Ramos-Vinolas 2-6, 6-2, 7-5 in more than two and a half hours. Ramos-Vinolas toppled the Scottish top seed on his second match point to progress to the quarter-finals on the Monaco clay for the first time at the French Open warm-up event.

Murray, a three-time Monte Carlo semi-finalist, raced away with the first set, before Ramos-Vinolas found his feet to level the score, then neutralized a 4-0 Murray lead in the third set. Ramos-Vinolas then edged ahead, with Murray saving a match

point in the final game but the reigning Wimbledon and Olympic champion missed on a drop shot to hand a shock win to his opponent.

Murray had returned from a month out with an elbow injury to launch his clay court season with a gruelling 7-5, 7-5 defeat of Gilles Muller in Wednesday's second round tie. The 29-year-old was making his first ATP appearance since a second-round loss to Vasek Pospisil at Indian Wells on March 12. His quest for a first Monte Carlo title goes on, one of only two Masters 1000 events he has never won. Victory for Vinolas-Ramos marked the first time the 29-year-old from Barcelona, who reached last year's French Open quarter-finals, had got the better of a world number one. —AFP

## RELENTLESS MONACO DREAM ON AFTER REACHING SEMIS

**MONACO:** A brilliant Monaco side that has taken Europe by storm will not relent in their bid for glory after beating Borussia Dortmund to reach the Champions League semi-finals, promised coach Leonardo Jardim. The team from the Mediterranean principality were too good for their German opponents in Wednesday's quarter-final second leg, winning 3-1 at the Stade Louis II to advance 6-3 on aggregate.

"We have won nothing, but we have made history," declared Portuguese coach Jardim after the game, as his side extended a run that began in the third qualifying round against Fenerbahce last July, nine months ago. Teenage sensation Kylian Mbappe, skipper Radamel Falcao and substitute Valere Germain got their goals with Marco Reus netting for Dortmund on a memorable night for the hosts.

The last team to come through two qualifying rounds to reach the semi-finals of the Champions League was Dynamo Kiev in 1999, although the format was different in those days. Nobody expected Monaco-conquerors of Pep Guardiola's Manchester City in the last round-to get this far but they have done it playing a superb brand of football that has yielded 141 goals so far this season.

Now they are preparing for their first semi-final appearance since 2004 as they join Juventus, Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid in the draw. None of those teams will fancy playing Monaco, who for all Paris Saint-Germain's efforts in recent years will be the first French representative in the last four since Lyon in 2010. "We have taken France into the semi-finals. We want to go out and enjoy it but all four sides are capable of winning the competition," warned Jardim, whose team was visited by Prince Albert in the dressing room afterwards.

Monaco are not just fighting for glory in Europe—they are also top of the French league and in the French Cup semi-finals, but fatigue is their biggest foe now. "It's not easy to play in Europe and try to win the league. We are the team that has played the most games in Europe, so it's tough," added a coach who has been linked to Arsenal in the British media. "Maybe if we had lost in the last 16 we would be fresher now, but we won't ask our players to change their mentality. We just need to recover well." A crunch game at Lyon awaits in the league at the weekend as they look to keep going on all fronts. "If I have to choose, it's normal to prefer to win the Champions League, but maybe our chances of winning it are slimmer than winning the league. We will give everything in both," added the coach.

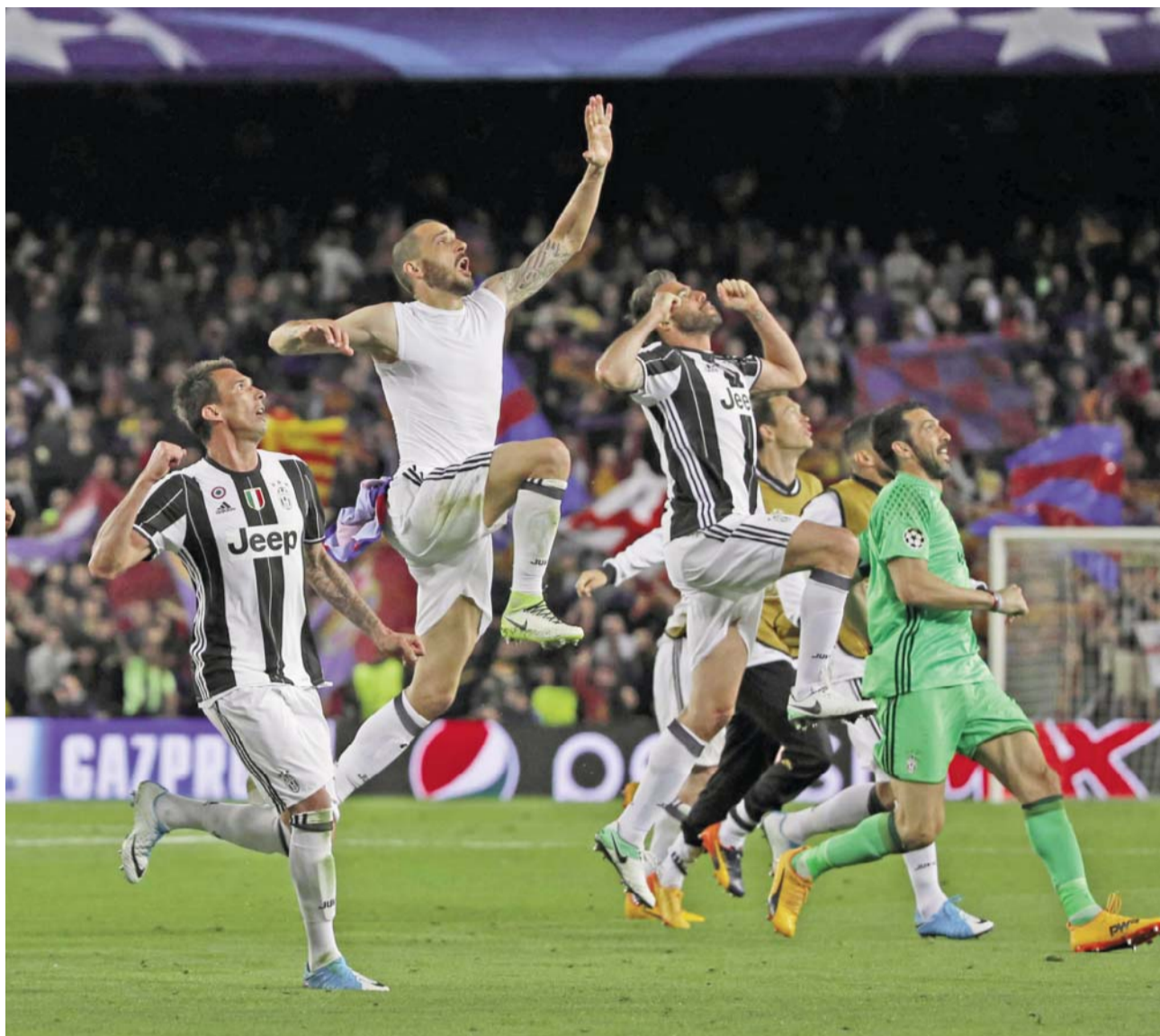
### Tough for Dortmund

For Dortmund, elimination was hard to take but the tie was overshadowed by the bomb attack on their team bus en route to last week's first leg which left Marc Bartra with a broken wrist. Bartra was there to support his teammates in Monaco but it was another difficult night as their bus was delayed in leaving for the ground, held up by police for security reasons.

"It was the worst thing that could happen a week after the attack—everyone was on the bus ready to go but we were not allowed to," said Coach Thomas Tuchel. The kick-off was delayed by five minutes but Dortmund's concentration was again affected. "It's only eight days after the terrible attack so we shouldn't lend too much significance to the team's performance," added Tuchel, who was taking charge of Dortmund for the 100th time. — AFP



**MONACO:** Monaco's Colombian forward Radamel Falcao celebrates after scoring a header during the UEFA Champions League 2nd leg quarter-final football match AS Monaco v BVB Borussia Dortmund on April 19, 2017 at the Louis II stadium. — AFP



**BARCELONA:** Juventus players celebrate winning after the UEFA Champions League quarter-final second leg football match FC Barcelona vs Juventus at the Camp Nou stadium. — AFP

## 'UNBEATABLE' JUVE HAILED AS EURO DREAM TAKING SHAPE

**MILAN:** "Unbeatable" Juventus can finally hand goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon an elusive Champions League title after making five-time winners Barcelona "cry" on their way to a spectacular Champions League semi-final exit on Wednesday. Those were the headlines splashed across the front pages a day after rock-solid Juventus followed their impressive 3-0 first-leg win over the Spanish giants with a defensive masterclass that held Barca to a frustrating scoreless draw at the Camp Nou.

As Juve celebrated a 3-0 aggregate win at a stunned but appreciative Nou Camp, Barcelona—who beat Juventus on their way to triumph in 2015 — crashed out of the competition after seeing stars Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar fail to find the net over 180 underwhelming minutes. "Fly Juve Fly" was the front page headline on Italy's biggest-selling sports daily La Gazzetta dello Sport, which included a vignette showing teary-eyed Barca star Neymar being comforted by former club defender Dani Alves.

Corriere dello Sport used the same dramatic picture of Alves and Neymar to fully illustrate the Brazilian starlet's disappointment. "You made them cry," screamed Corriere's headline, while for Turin-based Tuttosport Juventus are simply "Unbeatable". Even Barcelona,

outdone by Paulo Dybala's impressive brace and Giorgio Chiellini's 55th minute header in Turin last week, had to agree. "Compliments to @Juventusfc for reaching the semi-final," the Catalan club wrote on its official Twitter page. To which Juventus replied: "Thank @FCBarcelona, it's an honor to beat such a great opponent." Juve go into today's semi-final draw along with Real Madrid, Monaco and Atletico Madrid—all of whom have faced Massimiliano Allegri's men in recent European campaigns.

### Impenetrable

For Barca defender Gerard Pique, though, the Italians showed enough over the two legs to merit another tilt at the trophy they last won in 1996 with a 4-2 penalties victory over Ajax. "Over the two legs, they were better than us so they deserve to go through to the semi-finals. I think they can win the Champions League this season," said Pique. Gazzetta dello Sport suggested Juve's virtually "impenetrable defense" should also give 39-year-old club legend Buffon the chance to add a trophy from Europe's premier club competition to his long list of titles and accolades.

"It's your year. With a defense like this you can lift the trophy," said an inside-page headline. Currently on their way to a record sixth consecutive Serie A title

and a third successive league and Cup double, Juve can also target an unprecedented club treble—last achieved by an Italian club by Inter Milan under Jose Mourinho in 2010. "Henceforth, there's no doubt: there's a smell of the treble in the air," wrote Gazzetta columnist Alessandro De Calo.

While Allegri applauded the achievement of keeping a clean sheet against Barca, he believes there's more to come. "It's almost unheard of for Barcelona to fail to score over two legs. But the lads need to realize they can do even better. We are slowly improving," Allegri told Mediaset Premium. "I'm satisfied with what we're achieving but the onus is not on maintaining current form. Instead, we should aim to improve it."

After Real Madrid overcame Bayern Munich 4-2 on Tuesday to send the Bundesliga giants packing, Juve fans were celebrating. The Germans have stopped Juve in their tracks twice in recent seasons, at the quarter-final stage in 2013 then again in the last 16 last year. But after seeing his Juve side oust both Monaco, in the quarters, and Real, in the semis, on their way to a 3-1 final defeat by Barcelona in 2015, Allegri should be wary of Atletico. Runners-up to Real Madrid last year, the Spaniards have beaten Juve once and held them to a draw on their previous two meetings. — AFP

## KLOPP RULES OUT JOE HART MOVE

**LONDON:** Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp has ruled out a swoop for exiled Manchester City goalkeeper Joe Hart. Hart is currently on loan with Serie A side Torino after being banished by City manager Pep Guardiola. He could return to the Premier League next season, but it is unlikely he will play for City again and Liverpool have been linked with a deal for the 30-year-old England international.

Klopp's keepers have been a constant problem this season after first-choice Simon Mignolet struggled and was replaced by Loris Karius, who also failed to shine. But Mignolet has improved since returning to the line-up and, in the

last two matches against Stoke and West Bromwich Albion, the Belgian has been particularly impressive. With that in mind, Klopp is adamant he has no plans to make a move for Hart.

"Extra competition? You ask about goalkeepers but even though you don't say the name is it about Joe Hart?" Klopp said yesterday when asked whether he was considering his goalkeeping options. "We don't usually talk about these sort of things but in this particular case I think we can. "He is a fantastic goalkeeper, the goalkeeper of the English national team, the highest quality, but we have highest-quality goalkeepers.

"It is not for us in this moment and hopefully not for us in the future, not because of Joe, but we already have two strong goalkeepers. "Danny Ward is at Huddersfield and playing a brilliant season. He is our player so we will bring him back next year so there is competition. "The situation with our goalkeepers is really good. I understand the question but I cannot give the answer probably a few people want."

Klopp, whose third-placed side host Crystal Palace on Sunday, has more pressing issues, with midfielder Lucas Leiva and centre-backs Joel Matip and Ragnar Klavan unable to train this week. The German also

admitted Reds captain Jordan Henderson is still struggling to return from the foot problem which has sidelined him since early February. Asked whether Henderson's campaign could be over, Klopp added: "I don't know, we will see.

"At this moment he cannot really train so we have to wait for this, that was the plan from the beginning. "We are in intense talks with different medical departments but we have to wait. He is already not patient any more. "He looks really healthy but he cannot play football and that is the situation at the moment. If something changes we can talk about it." — AFP

## FA CUP WON'T DECIDE MY FATE, SAYS WENGER

**LONDON:** Arsene Wenger has slammed suggestions Arsenal's FA Cup fate will have an impact when he decides his Gunners future. Wenger's side face Manchester City in the FA Cup semi-finals at Wembley on Sunday with the Gunners boss yet to reveal if he will extend his 21-year stay with the north London club.

With Wenger enduring constant calls for his resignation from furious Arsenal fans, it has been claimed a limp exit from the FA Cup might convince the Frenchman to quit when his contract expires at the end of the season. The north Londoners have once again failed to mount a challenge for the Premier League title and suffered an embarrassing Champions League last 16 thrashing by Bayern Munich.

With Wenger's record of qualifying for the Champions League for the last 19 years under severe threat this season, lifting the FA Cup might be the only way to salvage a wretched campaign. But, asked yesterday if winning the Cup for a seventh time would have a bearing on his future, Wenger said: "It doesn't play any part in that.

"The FA Cup is a very important game for me because it's the next game and because it's an opportunity, as I just told you, to win a

trophy this season. So of course we are all fully focused on that. My future is Sunday. "What I expect when you go into a semi-final is to go to the final. I think somebody told me that I had played 10 semi-finals in the FA Cup, so that means it's a great experience and it's always something special.

"I remember my first one, we just spoke about it, when we played at Villa Park against Wolves. That's the day when I realized how big the club is, how much it means to our supporters. "It is a special experience and, for us, I think we are focused, highly motivated. "Maybe not at the maximum of our confidence because we had recently some disappointing results, but that is a good opportunity to show we are ready for a fight and how much we want to go to the final. "Because it's maybe our only opportunity to get a trophy this season."

Even if they win the Cup, failure to qualify for the Champions League qualification would taint any Wembley celebrations. But Wenger insists Arsenal, currently seven points adrift of the top four, are not in a position where they have to start prioritizing the FA Cup over the league yet. "You don't think about it like that because we don't have to

make a choice," he said. "We are not in a position where you can make a choice, do we choose this or do we choose that? The next

game is the semi-final of the FA Cup, so we have to give absolutely everything to go to the final." — AFP



**MIDDLESBROUGH:** Arsenal fans hold "Wenger Out" banners in reference to Arsenal's French manager Arsene Wenger during the English Premier League football match between Middlesbrough and Arsenal at Riverside Stadium in Middlesbrough, northeast England on April 17, 2017. — AFP



### Ooredoo Sponsored Mubarak Al-Kabeer Horse Riding Competition At the Kuwait Hunting and Equestrian Club



Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, proudly sponsored the second round of competitions organized by the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Equestrian Club, which took place in the Kuwait Hunting and Equestrian Club on Tuesday evening. The sponsorship comes to reiterate Ooredoo Kuwait's commitment to enriching the experience of various sectors of the community, based on the company's core values of caring, connecting and challenging.

The winner of the first place was the stallion Al Faisal, of the Ghayyam Stable, who took home the Ooredoo Trophy. The owner of the stable, Nahar

Al-Ghayyam, received the trophy from Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub, who represented Ooredoo at the event. The event saw the participation of 35 stallions, including 7 local grade horses, competing to win the 1000m race.

Ooredoo said in a press statement that its participation underscores its pride in sponsoring an event with such popular interest. Ooredoo works according to a year-round plan aiming to enrich the experience of youth of various interests, involving participation from both private and public sector entities.

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## MOTHERHOOD 'NO OBSTACLE' FOR SERENA

MELBOURNE: Motherhood may do little to slow Serena Williams's pursuit of grand slam success but more hungry opponents, if they emerge, could yet deny her the all-time singles record, the woman who holds that distinction said. Australian great Margaret Court won 24 grand slam singles titles, one ahead of American Williams, who confirmed she was pregnant on Wednesday and will sit out the rest of the season. Court, 74, who straddled the sport's amateur and professional eras, was also the first mother to win a major as a professional. She took three of those titles in 1973, the year after giving birth to her first child Daniel. But she rejoined the tour at 31 while Williams would be 36 if she came back as planned in 2018, a difference Court thought might play a role.

"Coming back after Daniel I had one of my best years ... (but) I was quite a few years younger (than Serena)," Court told Reuters in an interview on Thursday. "And I think you've got to know physically what you can do and how you can do it. You put the baby first and that to me was everything at the time. But we're all different." The only other mothers to win slams in the Open era are Court's compatriot Evonne Goolagong and Belgian Kim Clijsters who were both 26 when they came back. "I don't know (if Serena can win another) ... It will depend whether she still feels like doing it. It'll depend on her," Court said. "It depends who's coming through, too."

On that point, Court felt women's tennis could still be at Williams's mercy, given no players had emerged to provide a sustained challenge to the American's dominance. "There's not the depth in the women's game like there is in the men's. It's not good for women's tennis which is a shame," she said. "It's like they have one win and they think 'well, that's it.' They're made. It's a bit sad in many ways. "It was more open in my years with Billie Jean King, (Martina) Navratilova and (Chris) Evert-Lloyd."

Williams's "20 weeks" caption in a social media post on Wednesday suggested she was two months' pregnant when she won her 23rd grand slam at this year's Australian Open. Court was also well into her term with Daniel when she lost the 1971 Wimbledon final to Goolagong. But she had no idea. "Our first child was with me on the centre court. My coordination, my timing was all out and I thought: 'what's wrong with me?' "Balls were dropping in and I was letting them go. Nobody knew. I went to the doctor and then I found out."

Court promptly stopped playing and was initially unsure if she would return. But after giving birth, the former world number one's mind was made up and she began jogging around a park near her house with a pram to get fit. Court and her husband Barry juggled baby Daniel alone, and he was often wailing in the grandstands during matches. — Reuters



NEW YORK: This file photo taken on September 8, 2016 shows Serena Williams of the US reacting after winning a point against Karolina Pliskova of Czech Republic during their 2016 US Open Women's Singles semifinal match at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center. — AFP

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