

Gemstones:  
Mystic or  
mythic?

6



In a shift, Qatar to  
offer permanent  
residency to some

9



La Liga rejects  
Neymar payment  
over PSG move

46



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# Kuwait Times Friday Times



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## GULF UNITY HAILED AS PEARL DIVERS RETURN

See Pages 4 & 5

## Local Spotlight

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
AMONG EXPATRIATES

By Muna Al-Fuzai

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**D**omestic violence between expat couples is an old problem. I have always spoken about its seriousness, but in vain. In these violent incidents, expatriate women usually find themselves alone without a bond or support from family or friends, and if any attempt of reconciliation fails, the threat of more aggressive acts will arise, which may lead to death. The dispute will send one party to the grave and the other to prison for life, and the children will be lost. This is not something that should only be painful news - we are facing a phenomenon that requires a solution, especially as Kuwait has a minority of citizens and majority of expatriates.

Earlier this week, an Egyptian man stabbed his Lebanese wife to death. Their children are now under state custody. The man was taken to the hospital, to be sent to jail later. The Hawally security directorate contacted the welfare center of the ministry of social affairs to accommodate the children, who suddenly found themselves on the street without their parents.

A security source said that after searching for potential relatives of any of the spouses, they found none in Kuwait. Therefore, the directorate had no choice but to send an official request to the social welfare center to host the children of the affected family. These poor children will never have the opportunity to see their mother again, and their father is in hospital under heavy guard.

The death of the mother means an end of an important party in the care of the children, while the father will be imprisoned for life, if not executed. The biggest losers are the children. Despite the state's possible care and shelter, the children need a family and not just a roof over their heads. Transferring them at the expense of the state to the most appropriate place and relatives is a must, whether in Lebanon to the mother's family or Egypt to the father's side. These children should not remain in the country's care home.

Although UN statistics indicate that violence against women is a global phenomenon that affects more than 70 percent of women, it remains a hidden phenomenon in Kuwait for social considerations that many people do not talk about. The United Nations has defined violence against women as "any act of violence which results in psychological, physical or sexual harm or suffering of women".

Violence is a problem that many women suffer from in the world, even in modern societies. Despite the existence of a number of laws that do justice to women and understand their claims, the Kuwaiti society does not seem to take into consideration the importance of establishing or updating the laws to protect women, whether citizens or expatriates, against domestic violence, or find mechanisms to deal with this phenomenon from a police and security aspect.

It is necessary to establish laws that have the power to combat violence, as it is not logical for a man to suddenly decide to kill his wife and mother of his children. This must be taken into account. Firmness in the application of laws is also needed, so that no excuses are made of the killer being a psychopath or insane or under physical pressure that led him to commit such a crime.

The media and the interior ministry must also try to run awareness campaigns to enlighten the public on how to control their anger and understand the seriousness of violence and its impact on children. Otherwise, we will lose more families and more young children. After all, we are living in a society with a multitude of cultures and nationalities, and any laxity in law enforcement will result in more crimes.

## PHOTO OF THE DAY



Panoramic view of the Sharq skyline at sunset. — KUNA

## IN MY VIEW

YOUR FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL:  
CHOOSING YOUR CLASSES

By Salman Al-Mutawa

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**S**o you go to your orientation and explore your new university campus abroad - it's a brave new world with exciting possibilities. However, one must be enrolled at the university before falling in love with the new campus and life abroad. You will be directed to an academic advisor, who will advise you on which classes you should enroll in based on your major. **DO NOT LISTEN TO YOUR ADVISOR.** Although your best interest is in the advisor's agenda, it is not a priority.

Academic advisors care most about the proper scheduling and distribution of students amongst different professors, not which classes you are most comfortable with. Keep in mind, the advisor sees hundreds of students in the short week before classes begin, so you are not special in any way. Yes, your parents did lie to you about that.

So what do you do? Google the school curriculum of your major and find which classes are freshman classes. Usually freshmen start with four classes, and each of these will have an abbreviated title. For example, Calculus I would be called MTH104. The first three letters are of the department, the last three digits are the level of the class and the specific code. Level 100 classes are for freshmen, 200 sophomore, etc. Keep in mind these numbers are loosely correlated with the difficulty of the class. A level 130 class is not more advanced than a 101 class. A level 300 class is generally more advanced than a level 100 class, but could be easier depending on two factors - the topic and professor.

Back to choosing your classes - ignore your ideological freshman tendencies to do the "right" thing and always shoot to have a seat at an easy A class. How do you know if a class is an easy A? There are two methods: One, type in your class code in the class search page of your university

and you should get a list of which professors teach that course. Example: "MTH104" yields Dr Hamad Bananapants and Dr Lauren Peach.

Now go to a website called [www.ratemyprofessorss.com](http://www.ratemyprofessorss.com) and type in their full names. You will then see reviews written by students about the professors. Most importantly, look at the Easiness and Clarity sections. An easy professor who is clear is always a good thing. The second method is asking older students about their experiences with the professors, and make sure you ask for any old notes or exam papers.

Remember, easy A does not mean you will not learn - it means that there is a high chance that a lot of the unnecessary topics covered in the course are touched upon, not focused on. It also guarantees a strong GPA for your first course, which is very important as a lower starting GPA is harder to bring back up. Sometimes, easy A courses are easy As because the professors do not teach properly but give easy exams. Only take these courses if they do not affect your major - an example would be an English writing class for an electric engineering major, or a history class for a business major.

Make sure the classes you choose do not overlap, then walk into your advisor's office and tell them that you would like to be in these classes. They may argue with you, but do not budge - remember, they care about quotas. If the advisors remain stubborn, tell them that it is your money that is paying for the classes, so you get to choose which ones you would like to be in. Only use this as a final argument. **DO NOT** tell them you chose these professors because they are easier. Armed with this information, you can be a beacon of light and can lead any uninformed individuals into the light of knowledge and easy A classes.

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# Pearl divers return to cheers

Minister hails show of Gulf unity during weeklong trip

By Faten Omar

**H**undreds of youth who spent a week at sea as part of Kuwait's annual pearl diving festival returned to their families yesterday. Chief guest Education Minister Mohammad Al-Fares, representing HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, congratulated the young sailors on their achievements during the closing ceremony of the 29th annual pearl diving festival at Kuwait Sea Sports Club (KSSC) in Salmiya. "I hope our young divers got what they worked for. The harvest of pearls has a huge symbolic meaning for the young divers," he said.

In addition to Kuwaitis, their counterparts from the Gulf (from Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Oman) also took part in the event. "This embodies the unity of purpose of Gulf nations. The festival's slogan 'One Gulf, one destiny' is in line with deep-rooted relations among Gulf nations,

and comes in support of His Highness the Amir's efforts in mending rifts," Farsi said. "Our young men from Gulf lived together for a week where they manage to cooperate to revive traditions of the sea as a one unit from all GCC countries," he added.

His remarks were made during a celebration of 'Yom Al-Qaffal', or 'day of closing' - which marks the end of the four-month-long traditional pre-oil discovery pearl diving season in Kuwait. A total of 13 dhows, carrying 200 pearl divers, anchored at the club to the applause and delight of awaiting families, in an event exuding national and local pride.

The KSSC has held the annual pearl diving trip for the last 29 years, and this traditional activity is performed by young sailors from Kuwait and other Gulf countries. Under the leadership of experienced sea captains, the young men embark on a weeklong sea voyage where they anchor off Khairan island and dive for pearls.



Chief guest Education Minister Mohammad Al-Fares receives the returning divers.





Returning pearl divers are welcomed by family and friends at Kuwait Sea Sports Club (KSSC) in Salmiya yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat





Gemstones are on display at a shop in Souq Mubarakiya.

# Gemstones: Mystic or mythic?

By Ben Garcia

**G**emstones are unique in every way. They are part of human history and tradition - people use these stones as ornaments, for healing or merely for decorative purposes. Some believe precious stones can be used for both physical and spiritual healing - from balancing the energies of the heart to producing soothing energies and awareness. Others believe gemstones have mystical powers, although in a country like Kuwait, such beliefs aren't accepted due to its Islamic faith.

Kuwait Times met a woman who's convinced of the mystical powers of precious stones. The woman, who did not want to be named, wears gem-studded bracelets and earrings almost every day, and finds them very powerful in terms of protection. She believes gemstones bring luck, good fortune and prosperity.

"I started using the stones as ornaments, but eventually a friend gave this beautiful bracelet to me, which I have been wearing since. Now I feel it gives luck - if you believe in luck. Then onwards, I looked for stones that are believed to give good fortune to people," she said. "I read and researched a lot about precious stones, and have been a collector since 2010. I do not collect just one type of stone, but all lucky stones, and store them at home," she told Kuwait Times.

## Mystical properties

The woman, in her late fifties, wears all types of stones that she has bought mainly from Europe and Asia. Some are gifts from friends. She believes that her precious stones are magical and can multiply her fortune and protect her. She also believes that the stones can heal.

The woman has cleansing rituals for all her stones, and has

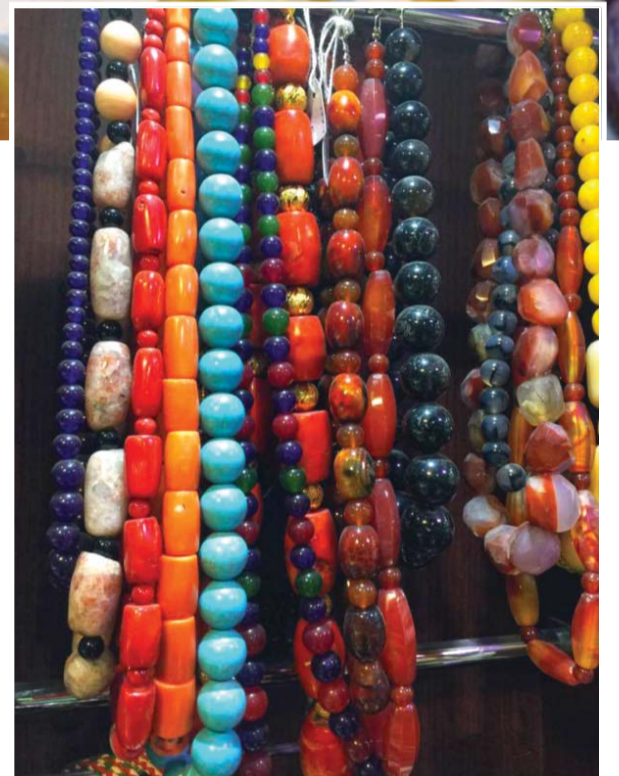


bought several types of stone cleansing contraptions to absorb "negative energy" from her stones. "After I wear the stones, the moment I get home, I put them in my magnetic stone cleansing device to eliminate negative energy that was absorbed while I was out," she said.

She believes that there are auspicious times to cleanse her stones. "The full moon is the best time to cleanse stones. Stones are natural elements that can be cleansed with natural moonlight. The power of the moon can cleanse the natural stones properly. When the moon is bright and powerful, it is the best time to cleanse the precious stones of negative energy. I know the effect of the stones to my body - if my stone catches negative energy, I can feel it right away and clean it with this absorbent machine," she said.

## Stone market

All types of precious stones can be bought in the heart of Kuwait City. Kuwait Times met Asrar Muhammad, 36, who runs Pure Stone in Mubarakiya near the Gold Market. Asrar is a Pakistani who specializes in selling precious stones. "After I



completed the contract of my old job as an auto-mechanic, I looked for something to make money. I heard about this gemstone shop, and since my grandparents used to sell precious stones back in Pakistan, I thought maybe I could venture in as well," he said.

"I visited the gemstone market in Mubarakiya, saw this shop and asked how much the rent was. The next thing I knew, I was the owner of this shop," Asrar recalled. "I started selling precious stones five years ago, and there's no looking back. Initially, I was not very optimistic about this type of business. I know that this is not like selling gold. But there are plenty of customers for precious stones - there's no need to look for them, they come and buy," he said.

Asrar said people in Kuwait buy gemstones mostly as ornaments. Sellers avoid talking about any mystical benefits or healing powers of the stones, as they are not allowed to discuss these things. "This is not encouraged here. We are not in a position to explain anything about the healing or lucky charms of these stones. In our store, if people ask for a specific birthstone, we sell it to them," he added.





Gemstones are on display at a shop in Souq Mubarakia.

# How birds survive the heat in Kuwait

Story and photos by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

A bird is looking left, right, up and down like a surveillance camera, observing the movements of a human who's carrying a large water bottle and seed bags. The bird knows that his human friend feeds and hydrates him every day, but he still fears to come closer to him until he empties all the bags on the ground and fills his basin with water. All his fellow birds then rush to the water and grains after the human drifts away.

Birds get the lion's share of people's love and care in Kuwait, if we compare them to stray dogs and street cats.

Expats and citizens alike, almost everyone is familiar with birds. You can see them throwing bread and rice or buying barley to feed them all year round, just like my grandmother, who used to buy rice to feed the birds. I still recall the scene of her praying, with her feathered friends surrounding her prayer rug in front of the door of her outer room. They used to watch her intently whenever she was late to feed them.

With temperatures above 50 degrees Celsius, it is difficult for birds to find food and drinking water. Not all are lucky – some fall dead from heat and thirst. While exploring the streets of Kuwait City, I followed flying pigeons to learn where I could find their food and drinking stations! I noticed

that they constantly fly in or near in the vicinity of feeding spots. These food and water spots can be found on the coastline, residential areas and the heart of the capital.

If there is a problem, it is the apathy of some people towards the cleanliness of the spaces allocated to pedestrians, like sidewalks. Food scraps are randomly thrown on the ground under the pretext of feeding birds. It doesn't cost much to buy cheap ceramic basins for this purpose. The watering and feeding of birds and animals is still random, and there are no special places dedicated for this. Some feeding spots are near waste bins. This lack of cleanliness is not absolved by showing mercy to animals!



## 'ZAAR': AN ANCIENT MYTH TO EXORCISE EVIL SPIRITS

**KUWAIT:** Zaar ceremonies are ancient folkloric rituals to exorcise evil spirits, using different types of music, mainly the art of "Samri". Zaar originated in Ethiopia by primitive tribes in the 19th century, moving on to Sudan, followed by Egypt, and then the rest of the Arab world. It was also introduced into the Gulf countries, where these rituals were performed for a short period of time, ending as society started developing and stopped believing in such myths.

Speaking to KUNA on the subject, researcher in Kuwaiti folklore Adel Al-Abdulgohni noted that Zaar ceremonies were performed using musical instruments such as daf and drums, followed by special dance moves using Samri art. The purpose of such rituals is to treat those believed to be pos-

sessed by evil spirits or cursed by a magic spell.

People would form a circle around the "sick" person, singing a bunch of songs as the possessed would dance hysterically to the point of exhaustion, said the researcher. Once he or she collapses on the floor, participants will pour water on his/her body and may also smear it with a black rooster's blood, allowing the evil spirit to exit the body, he added.

The Zaar group is headed by someone they call the 'Sheikh', who often carries a thick bamboo stick and strictly keeps order in the rituals, said Abulgohni. Meanwhile, he said the ground where the ceremony is performed on is considered a holy area and visitors are not allowed to enter wearing shoes. The sheikh gives those attending the cere-

mony the illusion that the evil spirit is a non-Muslim and would not exit the body unless the visitors sacrifice black sheep or poultry.

These sacrifices would later be taken and eaten by the Zaar group, he noted. The sheikh would also perform strange movements and ask the family of the possessed to provide certain items, claiming it is the demon's request in order exit the body, he said. The researcher explained that these ceremonies were mainly used for the benefit and earnings of the Zaar group. It also was a means of entertainment for attendees who enjoyed dancing to the sound of Samri rhythms and songs. The visitors also paid to help the group continue its performances. —KUNA

## THIEF LEADS POLICE TO 36 STOLEN CARS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Detectives solved the mystery of several vehicle theft cases recorded against unidentified persons, after their investigations led them to a 29-year-old bedoon, who used copied keys to open the cars. The suspect's house was placed under surveillance for three weeks, then he was arrested. He led them to 36 stolen cars.

### Shaman busted

Residency detectives arrested an Asian witchdoctor and charged him with practicing sorcery. Detectives learned he prepared sor-

cery materials to target sponsors of domestic workers, with claims that he was a spiritual healer and could treat psychological problems. He was arrested after an undercover officer was sent to him, and he was caught red-handed along with his assistants.

### Drug smuggler nabbed

The Drugs Control General Department arrested an Asian with 4 kg of heroin. Information was received about an Asian driver who smuggled illicit materials, and he was arrested in Nuwaiseeb after attempting to escape. The drugs were found in a fire extinguisher.



Items seized from an Asian sorcerer.



The drugs that were concealed in a fire extinguisher.

## HOT, STICKY WEATHER TO CONTINUE IN STATE

By Meshal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** Meteorologist Abdelaziz Al-Qarawi said Kuwait is witnessing high relative humidity in some areas, particularly coastal ones. He forecast hot weather today and northwesterly winds in coastal areas, while maximum temperatures will vary between 48-50 degrees Celsius.

### MP demands answers

MP Essa Al-Kandari said he sent a parliamentary question to Oil Minister Essam Al-

Marzouq about the reduction of incentives of workers in the oil sector. Kandari asked about studies with regards to the reduction of financial incentives and employment advantages based on which the CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Co presented initiatives and caused a mass dispute with workers that ended in a strike. He also asked whether the reduction initiative was presented to a legal entity or the fatwa and legislation department to discuss its legality before introducing it. Kandari also wanted to know the amount of actual losses from the oil workers' strike.



WASHINGTON: Kuwaiti Minister of Health Jamal Al-Harbi inaugurates a new extension of the Kuwait Health Office. —KUNA

## HARBI OPENS NEW EXTENSION OF HEALTH OFFICE IN WASHINGTON

**WASHINGTON:** Kuwait's Minister of Health Jamal Al-Harbi inaugurated yesterday a new extension of the Kuwait Health Office in Washington to improve services offered to Kuwaiti patients in the United States. In statements to KUNA on the sidelines of the inauguration ceremony, the minister said he wants to make sure that Kuwaiti patients are provided world-class healthcare abroad.

Harbi pointed out that he is keen on identifying and choosing the most reputable hos-

pitals for Kuwaiti patients sent to the United States. The ministry also wants to increase cooperation with prestigious medical institutions here to upgrade Kuwaiti hospitals, he noted. He thanked Kuwaiti Ambassador to Washington Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah and officials of the health office for their care and support provided to Kuwaiti patients during their treatment in the country. The inauguration ceremony was attended by Sheikh Salem and several embassy staff. —KUNA

## EDUCATION MINISTER HONORS PROMINENT KUWAIT SCIENTISTS

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Education Mohammad Abdulatif Al-Fares honored yesterday the Shagaya renewable energy project's team who bagged the first place among Kuwait's developing projects in 2017. Fares, who is also the chairman of the board of trustees at Kuwait's Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), told KUNA that the Shagaya Concentrating Solar Power (CSP) Project would achieve HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's call to meet 15 percent of power demand from renewables by 2030.

This project would help to contribute in economic and environmental projects that support Kuwait's development plan, recognizing KISR researchers' role in working on the renewable energy technology, Fares added. Moreover, he honored Hoda Al-Jabali from the Water Research Center (WRC) for receiving an international award in the civil engineering field and Abdullah Al-Matouq, also from WRC, for receiving an international award over water treatment. —KUNA



## LEBANON STRESSES ON DEALING WITH KUWAITI MEMO

**BEIRUT:** The Lebanese Cabinet yesterday emphasized necessity of tackling the content of a memo addressed by Kuwait to the government. Minister of Information Milhem Riachi, reading the Cabinet statement after a session, said President Michel Aoun and Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri touched on the Kuwaiti memorandum during the meeting.

The Cabinet has affirmed that Kuwait and Lebanon are bonded with a solid relationship and underscored the Kuwaiti aid given to the country. It stressed on necessity of tackling the content of the Kuwaiti memo and thrashing out relevant facts on the basis of mutual interests.

On July 22, Kuwait had delivered a memo of protest to the Lebanese government, urging it to assume its responsibilities towards irresponsible practices by Hezbollah, a component of the government. This came in a statement by Kuwait's Ambassador to Lebanon Abdelaal Al-Qenaai, in comment to what has been posted on social media regarding a cable sent by the Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry to Lebanon after a verdict by Kuwait's



**BEIRUT:** The Lebanese Cabinet in session. —KUNA

cassation court in relation to the "Abdaly terror cell".

The verdict affirmed involvement of Hezbollah in intelligence, coordination of meetings, payment of funds and provision of weapons and training on Lebanese territory with the aim of destroying the basic infrastructure of

Kuwait, the statement added. The ambassador said Kuwait called on the Lebanese government to take measures in order to deter such "heinous" practices by Hezbollah. He stressed Kuwait's keenness on maintaining and promoting distinguished brotherly relations with Lebanon.

In September 2015, the public prosecution indicted a number of individuals for acts that threatened national security and unity. The defendants were accused of providing intelligence to Iran and Hezbollah as well as housing weapons, ammunition and communication devices. —KUNA

## KUWAITI EMBASSY IN LONDON ISSUES ALERT AMID ACID ATTACKS

**LONDON:** Kuwait's embassy in the United Kingdom has called on its citizens to be vigilant in the wake of a terrifying wave of acid attacks. The embassy urged Kuwaiti nationals to stay away from dark and remote corners near major tourist attractions, where highly trained criminals operate, read a statement by the embassy yesterday.

It also advised Kuwaitis not to carry valuables in public and to dial 02075903400 in case of any emergencies. According to authorities, the number of acid attacks in London alone has shot up to 431 incidents over the past year, the equivalent to one every 20 hours. —KUNA

## KUWAIT DISPATCHES FIRST CRUDE SHIPMENT TO VIETNAM REFINERY

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait has dispatched first shipment of crude oil to its newly-built refinery in Vietnam, signaling imminent start of operations. Kuwait Petroleum International's (KPI) Vice President Ghanem Al-Otaibi said at a news conference yesterday that the first shipment of crude oil had been sent to the Kuwaiti-built Vietnam refinery, the cost of which stood at approximately \$9.2 billion.

The Nghi Son refinery is forecast to secure substantial proceeds for Kuwait, thus attaining some of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's strategic objectives - expanding investments abroad and finding secured outlets for Kuwaiti oil, said Otaibi, noting that the shipment dispatch signaled imminent launch of operations at the refinery. He lauded the Kuwaiti personnel who work at the project site, noting that the KPI faced some "challenges" such as secured operation of all the units with full capacity, adding that the company had already begun retail marketing of oil products in Vietnam.

Walid Al-Badr, the deputy managing director for marketing crude and petroleum derivatives, revealed that the first shipment, which headed yesterday to the Asian nation, included two million barrels of crude oil, adding that it was forecast to reach its destination by Aug 19. Another quantity of crude of the same volume would be sent to the refinery in Vietnam on Aug 11, he disclosed. —KUNA

## QATAR TO OFFER PERMANENT RESIDENCY TO SOME EXPATS

**DOHA:** Qatar, currently boycotted by four Arab states, on Wednesday created a new permanent residents status for certain groups of foreigners, including those who have worked for the benefit of the emirate. In a first for the Gulf, Qatar's cabinet ministers approved the measures, the official QNA press agency reported, in a move that will likely affect tens of thousands of resident foreigners. Under the new rules, children with a Qatari mother and a foreign father can benefit from the new status along with foreign residents who have "given service to Qatar" or have "skills that can benefit the country," the agency said.

A specially created interior ministry commission will decide individual cases, according to the Qatar News Agency. Those deemed eligible for the new status will be afforded the same access as Qataris to free public services, such as health and education. They will also receive preferable treatment for jobs in the administration and armed services as well as being able to own their own properties and exercise some commercial activities without the need for a Qatari partner.

While stopping short of offering Qatari nationality the new measures constitute a first for the Gulf. Naturalization is extremely rare in the region and the status of the millions of foreigners working in the Gulf is strictly limited. Oil-rich Qatar has a population of 2.4 million people, 90 percent of whom are



**DOHA:** In this Saturday, April 7, 2012 file photo, expat women and a man walk by the sea. —AP

foreigners, including many from Southeast Asia working in construction.

The move comes as Qatar languishes under a boycott imposed by regional kingpin Saudi Arabia as well as Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt. The four Arab states broke ties with Qatar on June 5, accusing the emirate of fostering Islamist extremist groups and of ties to Saudi archival Iran. Qatar has denied the allegations.

The four Gulf nations have closed their land and sea borders to Qatar and imposed economic and air traffic restrictions. Kuwait is leading mediation efforts in the crisis, the worst to grip the region since the 1981 creation of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council, which includes Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain and Qatar. The two other GCC members, Kuwait and Oman, have not joined the Qatar boycott. —AFP

## AMIRI DIWAN MOURNS SUAD AL-HUMAIDHI

**By A Saleh**

**KUWAIT:** The Amiri Diwan yesterday mourned the passing of Suad Hamad Saleh Al-Humaidhi, widow of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ali Al-Salem Al-Sabah. She was 78. A prominent Kuwaiti businesswoman, Humaidhi owned several commercial and residential complexes in Kuwait and abroad, including a hotel and resi-

dential tower in Beirut. Humaidhi was considered as the first Kuwaiti woman to get into business and investment in Kuwait, Arab countries and Europe. She started her professional career at Commercial Bank, which was established by her father. She worked there for 10 years, then chaired her father's establishments after his death. Her late husband Sheikh Jaber actively supported and encouraged her.

Friday Times

# International

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2017

**Iran says US breaching nuclear deal as Rouhani starts new term**



**Ex-PM Tusk testifies in Polish jet crash probe**



**Beleaguered Japan PM seeks new start with cabinet revamp**



**NEW JERSEY** In this file photo, President Donald Trump boards Air Force One at Morristown Municipal Airport, in Morristown, New Jersey, en route to Washington from Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, New Jersey.—AP

## ANGRY TRUMP SAYS RUSSIA TIES AT 'VERY DANGEROUS LOW'

### MOSCOW CALLS SANCTIONS A DECLARATION OF ECONOMIC WAR

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump said relations with Russia had hit an all-time and "very dangerous" low yesterday, putting the blame on Congress after he reluctantly approved sanctions against Moscow. After Moscow called the sanctions a declaration of "economic war" that had exposed the US president's weakness, an angry Trump lashed out at his own lawmakers who had overwhelmingly approved the measures.

"Our relationship with Russia is at an all-time & very dangerous low," Trump wrote on Twitter. "You can thank Congress, the same people that can't even give us HCare!" he added in reference to a recent defeat in the Senate on his health care reform plans. Trump's outburst came a day after he grudgingly signed off on the sanctions, calling the legislation "significantly flawed" and adding that some of its provisions were unconstitutional.

Trump's presidency has been overshadowed by allegations that his campaign team colluded with Moscow during last year's US presidential campaign in which he defeated Hillary Clinton. After meeting his Russian counterpart at a G20 summit in

Germany last month, Trump said he wanted to work more closely with Moscow on areas such as the conflict in Syria. But the legislation—which includes measures against North Korea and Iran greatly limits his room for maneuver and underlines the lack of trust from lawmakers, even though his own Republican Party controls both houses of Congress.

The sanctions target the Russian energy sector in particular, giving Washington the ability to sanction companies involved in developing Russian pipelines. It also places curbs on some Russian weapons exporters and constrains Trump's ability to waive the penalties.

#### Economic war

Moscow, which announced a series of retaliatory measures over the weekend, has painted the bill's passage in the Senate as a humiliation for Trump. Prime Minister Medvedev took to Facebook late Wednesday to say Trump's signing of the bill "ends hopes for improving our relations with the new US administration." "It is a declaration of a full-fledged economic war on

Russia," Medvedev wrote. "The Trump administration has shown its total weakness by handing over executive power to Congress in the most humiliating way."

Moscow has already ordered the US to slash staff at its diplomatic mission in Russia by 755 personnel in response. The Kremlin said Trump's formal approval did not "change anything" and no further retaliation was planned. The head of Russia's largest oil firm Rosneft—which has already been targeted by earlier US sanctions imposed over the Ukraine crisis—promised the company would try to avoid more pain.

#### Sanctions backfiring

"We will seek to work in such a way as to minimize the impact of the sanctions," Igor Sechin told Russian news agencies, adding that sanctions had "started backfiring" to damage American interests. Iran reacted angrily, saying the new sanctions against it "violated" its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, and warned it would respond "appropriately." The sanctions seek to penalize the Kremlin for allegedly meddling in the 2016 US presidential election and for

Russia's annexation of Crimea. Washington has already slapped several rounds of sanctions on Moscow over Ukraine since 2014, and in December then leader Barack Obama turfed 35 Russian diplomats out due to accusations of election interference. Trump had received the legislation at 1:53 pm on Friday, but waited until Wednesday to sign it. The delay had raised speculation that Trump might veto or try to somehow shelve the sanctions, which were approved in a 98-2 Senate vote. By signing it, he avoided the humiliating prospect of Congress overriding his veto.

US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said on Wednesday that he would meet with his Russian counterpart Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov over the weekend, but warned US-Russia ties could still get worse. A special prosecutor is investigating whether Trump advisers colluded with what US intelligence has concluded was an attempt by Russia to covertly support the real estate mogul's 2016 campaign. The US president, who often called for warmer ties with Moscow during the White House race, has furiously denied the charge.—AFP

## US WOMAN FACES UP TO 20 YEARS FOR BOYFRIEND'S SUICIDE

**NEW YORK:** A US woman risks being sent to prison for up to 20 years by a Massachusetts judge yesterday for encouraging her teenage boyfriend to follow on plans to kill himself while she was still a juvenile. Michelle Carter was convicted of involuntary manslaughter by Judge Lawrence Moniz on June 16 in a case considered to break new ground in a state that has no law against encouraging someone to commit suicide. Her boyfriend, Conrad Roy, 18, was found dead from carbon monoxide poisoning in his pickup truck in a parking lot in July 2014.

Carter, who was 17 years old at the time of his death, is due to return to a juvenile court in Taunton, south of

Boston yesterday for a sentencing hearing scheduled at 2:00pm (1800 GMT). US media says one of Roy's relatives is seeking the maximum 20 years, but that Carter's father will instead plead for probation. Carter and Roy exchanged hundreds of text messages in which the young woman repeatedly urged him to follow through on his plan to kill himself, conceal it from his parents and lie to his mother.

### 'She called no one'

Some legal experts had questioned whether Carter's actions were enough to secure a conviction under involuntary manslaughter. But Moniz said it was her instruction to Roy to get back into the

vehicle during a telephone call after he stepped out-and her failure to sound the alarm that was crucial to the conviction. The defense said Roy had been on a path to suicide "for years" and sought to minimize Carter's role, saying the pair were in a "long-term texting relationship" and had met in person only a handful of times.

The judge agreed that Roy "took significant action" toward ending his life, but said he broke that chain by getting out of his vehicle and pausing to tell someone what he was doing. He did the same thing during two previous attempts on his life-telling first a parent and then a friend who got him help. But it was different when he told

Carter, in July 2014. Prosecutors told the trial that the defendant stayed on the telephone listening to her boyfriend as he died in the truck.

"She called no one," Moniz said in June, despite knowing where Roy was and having his family's telephone numbers. "And finally, she did not issue a simple additional instruction: 'get out of the truck.'" The judge rejected a theory of involuntary intoxication raised by psychiatrist Peter Breggin, a defense witness who testified that Carter's own medication would have hindered her state of mind. "In reality, there are no winners," prosecuting attorney Katie Rayburn told reporters in June. "Two families have been torn apart and will be affected by this for years to come." —AFP



**MOSUL:** A picture shows damaged buildings in the old city in western Mosul.—AFP

## IRAQ FACES VAST CHALLENGES SECURING, REBUILDING MOSUL

**MOSUL:** With Mosul in ruins and nearly a million displaced, Iraq now faces the enormous task of restoring order and rebuilding its second city after driving out Islamic State group jihadists. After eight months of grueling fighting against IS, Iraqi forces are in control of Mosul. But the famed Old City has been reduced to rubble and the iconic leaning minaret of its Al-Nuri mosque, the image of which adorns the 10,000 dinar note, lies in ruins.

The ancient, crowded alleys have become a silent maze of stone and iron skeletons, marked by mountains of rubble, craters and burned-out cars emitting a putrid odor of decaying bodies. "The price of freedom is very high," said Omar Fadel, a municipality employee who returned a month ago to his neighborhood of old Sinaaya, close to the ruins of the Al-Nuri mosque. "We lost our houses, our money and above all, people, our loved ones."

Lise Grande, the United Nations' humanitarian coordinator for Iraq, said that Mosul represents "the biggest stabilization challenge the UN has ever faced—the scale, the complexity, the scope of it." Out of 54 residential quarters, "15 are destroyed, 23 moderately damaged, 16 lightly damaged," she said. In eight months of combat, 948,000 people fled their houses, far beyond the UN's most pessimistic predictions of 750,000 displaced. Like Fadel, some have already returned. But 320,000 are still living in camps and another 384,000 are staying with relatives or in mosques, living on humanitarian aid, according to the UN.

### 'Can't hold the area'

Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared the city "liberated" on July 9, but the threat of violence has not disappeared. An unknown number of jihadists mingled with the flood of civilians fleeing the fighting. With few resources, "the local police can't, at this stage, hold the area," said Mohammed Ibrahim, a security official at the provincial council of Nineveh, of which Mosul is the capital. The job of securing the city might be entrusted to a "joint force" made up of Iraq's counterterrorism service, the federal police and the army, which led the battle, a US advisor to the federal police said. —AFP

## IRAN SAYS US BREACHING NUCLEAR DEAL AS ROUHANI STARTS NEW TERM PRESIDENT ROUHANI VOWS TO END IRAN'S ISOLATION

**TEHRAN:** Iran said yesterday that new US sanctions were a violation of its nuclear deal with world powers, piling pressure on President Hassan Rouhani as he starts his second term. Rouhani vowed to keep up his efforts to end Iran's isolation as he was sworn in by the Islamic republic's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei following his re-election in May. But the ceremony came less than 24 hours after US President Donald Trump confirmed fresh sanctions against Iran.

Tehran says the new measures violate its 2015 deal with world powers that eased sanctions in exchange for curbs on its nuclear program, an agreement which Trump has repeatedly threatened to tear up. "We believe that the nuclear deal has been violated and we will react appropriately," deputy foreign minister Abbas Araghchi said on state television. "We will certainly not fall into the trap of US policy and Trump, and our reaction will be very carefully considered."

The mounting crisis creates a difficult situation for Rouhani, a 68-year-old moderate who won a second four-year term largely thanks to his efforts to repair relations with the West. "We will never accept isolation," Rouhani said as he was sworn in front of top political and military officials. "The nuclear deal is a sign of Iran's goodwill on the international stage." Khamenei took a tougher line, saying Iran must not fall for Washington's "tricks".

"The enemy's hostility has made us more resistant," the supreme leader said. Iranian officials say they have prepared a 16-point document for how they will respond to the new sanctions, without giving details. The new parliament will also vote on a bill boosting financial support to the Revolutionary Guards and the country's missile program, which are targeted by the sanctions.

### Unfortunate timing

For Rouhani, who had hoped his second term would focus on rebuilding the stagnant economy, "it's unfortunate timing," said Ellie Geranmayeh, an Iran analyst with the European Council on Foreign Relations. "What will be



**TEHRAN:** In this picture released by official website of the office of the Iranian supreme leader, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, left, and President Hassan Rouhani greet at the official endorsement ceremony of President Rouhani in Tehran, Iran.—AP

absolutely critical is how the Europeans position themselves," she said. Britain, France and Germany—who signed the deal alongside Russia, China and the United States—remain firm backers of the agreement and are eagerly seeking to rebuild trade ties with Iran despite logistical problems caused by US sanctions.

French energy giant Total defied US pressure in July by signing a multi-billion-dollar gas deal with Iran. "What Iranians are banking on at the moment, maybe overestimating, is that Europe will safeguard and build on the deal, and make it too politically costly

for Trump to tear it up, or at least show Washington that if it walks away, it will be doing so alone," said Geranmayeh. But the Europeans do oppose Iran's recent missile tests, with the French foreign ministry stating yesterday that they "contradict" UN Resolution 2231 which oversees the nuclear deal, and "constitute a potential threat to stability and security in the region". They have been careful to avoid claims that Iran is "violating" any agreements, since the UN resolution only "urged" Iran to refrain from missile tests.

Everyone agrees that Iran has stuck

to its central commitments regarding its nuclear program—including, reluctantly, the Trump administration.

But with Iran gaining the upper hand across the Middle East, through support for proxies in Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, US lawmakers appear determined to ratchet up tensions. Meanwhile, Rouhani also faces challenges at home. Since the election, he has engaged in a war of words with the Revolutionary Guards over their outsized role in the economy—although they have since sought to bury the hatchet with a public show of unity.

Meanwhile, reformist allies are angry over news that he will unveil another all-male cabinet. Much of Rouhani's popularity has been built on his promise of greater civil liberties, including more rights for women, but Iran has still had only one female cabinet member since the 1979 revolution—ironically under hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. The government line-up is due to be officially unveiled on Saturday at a high-profile inauguration ceremony in parliament in the presence of foreign guests, including EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini.—AFP

## SWEDISH GOATS REVIVE YOUNG AFGHAN ASYLUM SEEKERS' PAST

**STOCKHOLM:** Hanif Mohammadi was surrounded by animals on his family's farm in rural Afghanistan when the Taliban killed his parents and forced him to flee. Now, the 17-year-old is an asylum seeker in Stockholm and doing what he does best: herding goats. Wearing running shoes, jeans and a light brown sweater with his pitch-black hair tied back, Mohammadi checks his smartphone just like any ordinary teen as he follows a flock of goats in the green meadows of Lidingo, an island in the inner archipelago of Stockholm.

"In Afghanistan, we had a lot of goats and sheep so when I came to Lidingo... I wanted to help out and learn a little Swedish," he says. He's been living in Sweden for a year and a half, anxiously waiting for his asylum request to be processed. Mohammadi, who is from Helmand province, a Taliban stronghold, said the insurgents killed his father after he refused to join them. His uncle helped him escape before he ended up in Sweden. "In Afghanistan, my life was really tough because I lost my parents... my family," he tells AFP.

Holding back his tears, Mohammadi says: "I received a phone call last summer saying (the Taliban) had killed my uncle too". Surrounded by goats under a bright blue sky in Lidingo, Mohammadi is far away from the violence in his nation, in a home away from home. And whenever he finds time off from school, Mohammadi joins his mammal friends. He pulls down a tree branch to help the goats nibble on the leaves as one of the animals puts its front hooves on his waist to stand on its hind legs. Mohammadi bursts into laughter.

### Keeping Sweden beautiful

Henrik Ponten is the chairman of a community called "Get2Gether" which humorously refers to "get" ("goat" in Swedish). With help from volunteers and asylum seekers, the community focuses on the conservation of an endangered Swedish goat species, whose milk is used to produce cheese at a factory in Lidingo. "(The boys) come out into society and create new contacts in Sweden," Ponten tells AFP. He says that herding helps asylum seekers

better integrate. "They're very competent and good at herding because they've done it before," he adds. "More importantly, they get to contribute to keeping Sweden beautiful."

Afghans constitute by far the highest number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in Sweden. While the asylum process can take more than a year on average, a majority of Afghan minors have their applications approved, according to the Swedish Migration Agency's 2016 figures. Around 1600 asylum applications by Afghan minors were submitted to the agency by the end of November 2016. Around 500 were rejected. In a security assessment published earlier this month, the agency deemed some regions in Afghanistan such as Panjshir, Bamiyan and Daikundi "less dangerous" despite "increasing violence" in the war-torn country.

### 'You'll get killed'

The migration agency said that not everyone from Afghanistan will "automatically receive protection in Sweden" despite "a gradual deterioration" in

security. Mohammad Ali Mohammadi, a 15-year-old asylum seeker, fled to Sweden from the Taleban stronghold province of Maidan Wardak. "There is a lot of fighting there, that's why I fled," Mohammadi tells AFP. "You'll get killed if you go there." He's been in Sweden for 18 months and while he waits to be granted a permanent residency to start a new life, herding is an opportunity to put his skills to use.

"I know how to take care of goats (because) I'm used to being around them," he says as he giggles at one of the bleating animals. Sweden, which in 2015 took in the largest number of refugees per capita in Europe, is a popular destination for young asylum seekers because of free education and health care. Hanif Mohammadi, who never went to school in Afghanistan, says he wants to continue his education in Sweden. "But I don't even know if I get to stay here or not," he adds. Mohammad Ali, who also attends school in Sweden, says he dreams about becoming a pilot. "But we'll see what will happen to me."—AFP



**PRETORIA:** Father of freed South African hostage Stephen McGown, Malcolm McGown, right, reacts as he holds hands with South African Foreign Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, during a press conference in Pretoria.—AFP

## S AFRICAN HELD HOSTAGE BY AL-QAEDA IN MALI FREED

**JOHANNESBURG:** A South African man snatched from his hotel and held hostage by Al-Qaeda in Mali since 2011 has been freed, his country's foreign minister said yesterday. Stephen McGown, 42, was grabbed from his accommodation in the historic trading city of Timbuktu in Mali's north along with Swede Johan Gustafsson and Dutchman Sjaak Rijke, both of whom were both subsequently released. McGown has returned to South Africa and has been reunited with his family, deputy director-general of diplomacy at the Foreign Ministry Clayton Monyela said. Gustafsson was released in June while Rijke was freed in April 2015 by French special forces.

Rijke's wife managed to escape during the jihadist assault on the popular tourist hotel, but a German who tried to resist the abduction was killed. Al-Qaeda's North African affiliate Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) had claimed responsibility for the kidnappings of the three men. "Our fellow South African... was released on 29 July 2017," Foreign Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane said. "We give him a warm welcome back home particularly that he lands home with a mother who has passed on during his incarceration. "He was just a tourist in Timbuktu. We are happy that he is a free man." McGown's mother Beverly died in May after a long illness.

Appalled at this kind of activity "Her anxiety over Stephen's fate and her longing to see her son finally took its toll," said chairman of the Gift of the Givers charity Imtiaz Sooliman at the time. The charity was previously involved in negotiating McGown's release. "We had seen the sadness in the mother's eye and watched how she patiently waited in dignified pain for the return of her son. We failed her-my heart bleeds for her," Sooliman told local media in May. Gift of the Givers reportedly dispatched a hostage negotiator to Mali to push for McGown's release in July 2015. The charity said in May 2017 it was giving up its negotiating efforts after hitting a "dead end".—AFP

## NETANYAHU: 'NO OTHER GOVT DID AS MUCH FOR SETTLEMENT'

### BEITAR ILLIT, Palestinian Territories:

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday that his government had done more than all its predecessors to boost Jewish settlement. He spoke as he laid the foundation stone for a new neighborhood in Beitar Illit, the Israeli-occupied West Bank's biggest settlement with a population of 50,000 ultra-Orthodox Jews. "No other government has done as much for settlement in the land of Israel as the government which I lead," he said, referring to the biblical Holy Land which many believers see as belonging to the Jews by divine right.

Settlements in the occupied West Bank and Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem are illegal under international law and are seen as one of the greatest obstacles to peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Netanyahu has said he still supports a two-state solution, but peace advocates say his actions show otherwise. His right-wing coalition government leans heavily on the support of settlement advocates. Israel occupied the Palestinian territories in 1967 in a move never recognized by the international community.

More than 600,000 Israelis now live in settlements alongside nearly three million Palestinians in the West Bank and east Jerusalem. In December, the United Nations Security Council declared all such settlements to be illegal after outgoing US president Barack Obama decided not to veto its resolution. Since US President Donald Trump came to power, however, Washington has remained largely quiet as Israel has announced thousands of new settlement homes. The new development in Beitar Illit will have more than 1,000 homes.

A senior Palestinian official on Tuesday said the White House's silence over settlement growth and its failure



**JERUSALEM:** Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gives a speech during a corner stone ceremony for a new neighborhood in the Beitar Illit settlement, which is the largest in the West Bank, located some ten kilometers south of Jerusalem.—AFP

to support the two-state solution encouraged "apartheid" Israeli policies. The criticism by the secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Saeb Erekat, came after the Palestinians had previously been careful not to antagonize the new US leader since his inauguration in January. The Jerusalem Post daily said it was the first time since the 2009 start of his current run in office that Netanyahu had taken part in a settlement stone-laying ceremony.

"We are working energetically for settlement in every part of the land," he said Wednesday. He also pledged to act

speedily to construct new homes for the roughly 40 families evicted from the wildcat outpost of Amona in February after Israel's supreme court ruled their homes had been built illegally on private Palestinian land.

The new development, named Amichai, will be the first government-sanctioned Jewish settlement built in the Palestinian territories in some 25 years. Construction in settlements in the West Bank increased by 70 percent in the 12 months to March, according to data from Israel's central bureau of statistics. The numbers do not include Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem.—AFP

# TRUCE IN SYRIA'S HOMS AFTER SAFE ZONE AGREED

## REBELS TO UNBLOCK ROAD RUNNING THROUGH SAFE ZONE

**BEIRUT:** A ceasefire between government forces and rebels went into effect in part of central Syria yesterday after Russia struck a deal with the opposition on a safe zone. The zone in northern parts of Homs province is the third to be established in Syria, which has been ravaged by six years of civil war that have left more than 300,000 people dead.

"From 1200 local time (0900 GMT), units of the moderate opposition and government forces will completely stop firing," Russian defense ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said. Konashenkov said Moscow and Syrian opposition groups had reached an agreement on the "operational details" of a "de-escalation zone" north of third city Homs at talks in Cairo on July 31. Moscow has been behind a push to pacify Syria since the start of this year, after tipping the conflict in favor of the regime with its game-changing military intervention in 2015.

Under a plan hammered out in May between Russia, Turkey and Iran at peace talks in Kazakhstan, four "de-escalation zones" were to be established across swathes of Syria. Last month, Moscow announced the establishment of the first two zones in southern Syria and in the rebel stronghold of Eastern Ghouta near Damascus. The zone in Homs province is expected to cover towns around Talbiseh, Al-Houla and Rastan. The fourth zone, in northwestern Idlib province, has yet to be established.

### No violations

Mustafa Khaled, an activist in Talbiseh, said that representatives of the towns were



**TALBISEH:** A man rides a motorcycle down a street past a damaged building in the central Syrian rebel-held town of Talbiseh, north of Homs. — AFP

consulted on the deal. "It is quiet. There have been no violations in the first hour of the agreement," Khaled said. "But word in the street is that people don't trust the regime or the Russians," he added. Al-Houla too was calm, resident Abbas Abu Osama said. "There had been escalating bombardment of the town with air planes and artillery. But we

haven't heard a single gunshot from the checkpoints around us today," he said.

There was no official announcement from Syria's armed forces, which had issued its own declarations of the ceasefires in the south and in Eastern Ghouta last month. According to the Russian defense ministry, Russian military police will set up two checkpoints and three

observation posts along the boundaries of the Homs zone today. Rebels have agreed to "unblock" part of a road running through the safe zone between Homs and the city of Hama further north, spokesman Konashenkov said.

A "Committee for National Justice" made up of rebels and local groups would help oversee the implementation of the plan, he added. Moscow has also deployed military police in the southern ceasefire zone, created after Russia struck a deal with the United States and Jordan last month. Under a second agreement sealed with rebels in July, Russian forces set up two checkpoints and four observation posts in the rebel enclave of Eastern Ghouta.

Negotiations on the Idlib zone have been complicated by conflicting interests between the international powers and by the presence of large numbers of fighters of former Al-Qaeda affiliate the Fateh al-Sham Front. Russia is planning a fresh round of talks in the Kazakh capital Astana in late August to thrash out more details of its peace plan. Both Russia and a US-led coalition have been carrying out bombing campaigns against areas of Syria still controlled by the Islamic State group that have exacted a mounting civilian toll.

Separate raids by Russia and the coalition left at least 40 civilians dead on Wednesday, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. Coalition strikes on IS's embattled bastion of Raqa left 26 civilians dead, the Britain-based watchdog said. Russian raids on an IS-controlled town in the eastern province of Deir Ezzor left 15 civilians, including five children dead, it added. — AFP

Kuwait Times

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# EX-PM TUSK TESTIFIES IN POLISH JET CRASH PROBE

## TUSK ACCUSED FOR LECH KACZYNSKI'S DEATH

**WARSAW:** EU President Donald Tusk yesterday testified in Warsaw as a witness in an investigation into the 2010 jet crash in Russia that killed Poland's then president and 95 others. Tusk, who was Poland's prime minister at the time of the crash, told reporters he "had no doubt" he was being targeted by his arch-rival in the current conservative populist government before questioning by Polish prosecutors. The ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski yesterday told the Catholic-nationalist Trwam TV station that Tusk "has plenty to fear", adding that the crash probe "is one thing, but there are others".

Kaczynski also unleashed an emotional diatribe in parliament two weeks ago, accusing Tusk's former liberal Civic Platform (PO) party of being responsible for the Smolensk crash that claimed the life of his twin brother, then president

Lech Kaczynski. "Don't wipe your treacherous mouths with my late brother's name. You destroyed him, you murdered him, you are scoundrels," Jaroslaw Kaczynski told PO deputies.

He has long insisted that the 2010 crash was no accident and accuses Tusk of "moral responsibility" for the death of his brother. Polish and Russian investigators found that pilot error, bad weather and poor air-traffic control were to blame for the accident. "What we heard in parliament from Jaroslaw Kaczynski in an outburst of rage and anger points unequivocally to the intentions behind this matter, so I have no doubts here," Tusk told reporters before testifying yesterday.

Grzegorz Schetyna, current head of Poland's Civic Platform (PO) opposition, told Polish media that "Tusk is today a political target for the PiS and the prosecutors who are openly fulfilling a political

order." "This is part of a series of measures targeting him (Tusk). Someone is really afraid of him," Schetyna said. Prosecutors have said Tusk was due to testify yesterday regarding "public officials who failed to comply with obligations" concerning crash victim autopsies.

Tusk already testified for eight hours in the Polish capital in April as a witness in an investigation of two former military counter-intelligence chiefs accused of overstepping their duties in the initial investigation of the crash. He was first summoned days after EU leaders gave him another term as president despite strong opposition from Poland. After taking power in late 2015, the PiS launched a fresh probe into the 2010 crash that also killed a number of senior Polish officials and a commission of enquiry it controls suggested in April that an explosion likely caused the aircraft to break up in the air. — AFP



**WARSAW:** President of the European Council and former Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk arrives to the prosecutor's office to testify as a witness in the investigation focusing on the 2010 plane crash that killed President Lech Kaczynski, in Warsaw. — AFP

## UK HAILS TUNIS HARD WORK ON SECURITY AFTER TERROR ATTACKS

**TUNIS:** Britain yesterday applauded Tunisia's "patient hard work" to boost security following the 2015 jihadist attacks that killed dozens of tourists, including 30 Britons at a beach resort. "We know that these days there can never be a situation when there is no risk at all but we are being very pleased to advise our citizens that returning to Tunis, returning to the resort areas, is something that we would like them to do," said Britain's junior foreign minister for the Middle East and North Africa, Alistair Burt, on a visit to Tunis.

Gunman Seifeddine Rezgui killed 38 people, including 30 British tourists and three Irish citizens, in a shooting spree in June 2015 at the Riu Imperial Marhaba hotel on Tunisia's Mediterranean coast in Sousse. The attack was claimed by the Islamic State group. "The United Kingdom is very conscious that following the tragic events of 2015, the change in the nature of our travel advice, which was necessary to protect all our citizens, has had a significant impact," he said.

"The reason our travel advice has been changed is

because of the patient hard work done by the Tunisian government and the security services to respond to the needs of those who visit this country for tourism or any other purpose." Burt told a news conference: "Hard work has been done in terms of aviation security, maritime security, response to terrorist attack, and the United Kingdom has worked in partnership with security officials here."

Britain's advisory against travel to Tunisia was lifted last week, although it continues to caution its nationals against visits to remote areas and near the borders with Libya and Algeria. A British inquest criticized the Tunisian police response to the massacre as "at best shambolic, at worst cowardly". Tunisia's economy is heavily dependent on tourism and authorities had repeatedly asked for the British travel advisory to be lifted. Before the beach attack, more than 400,000 British tourists visited Tunisia annually. But last year just 20,000 British visitors were recorded, official Tunisian figures show. — AFP



**HANOI:** Vietnam's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Le Thi Thu Hang takes questions during a press conference in Hanoi. — AFP

## LEXUS-DRIVING VIETNAMESE EXEC 'KIDNAPPED' IN BERLIN

**HANOI:** Portrayed by the Vietnamese government as a Lexus-driving tycoon who flaunted his wealth while costing the state millions of dollars, Trinh Xuan Thanh fled the country as he fell under the cross-hairs of a corruption crusade by communist authorities. But his year-long sanctuary overseas was brought to an abrupt end last month in dramatic circumstances that could be culled from a spy thriller. German media reported that Thanh, the former head of a state-linked construction firm, was bundled into a car on July 23 as he visited Tiergarten park in downtown Berlin by several armed Vietnamese security agents.

The alleged operation was unprecedented—even for an authoritarian country that closely tracks its critics at home and routinely throws them behind bars—and quickly triggered a diplomatic bust-up. Germany, one of Vietnam's largest European trading partners, on Wednesday decried the "scandalous violation" of its sovereignty, furiously dressing down the Vietnamese ambassador and booting out one of the country's spies. The official narrative from Vietnam is that Thanh, a former communist party member, turned himself into authorities in Hanoi on Monday to face corruption charges, including one that carries the death penalty.

Yesterday a spokeswoman for Vietnam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs called the German response to the matter "very regrettable". Observers say Thanh's downfall is a sharp warning by an increasingly strident ruling communist party to its enemies and the business-political elite. His slow-motion downfall began in 2013 at the end of his tenure as head of the powerful PetroVietnam Construction (PVC) — a subsidiary of the state oil giant. He was shuffled into several other official jobs, including as the deputy head of Hau Giang province, a powerful government position in the south.

But in May 2016 photographs emerged of his luxury Lexus tagged with government plates—a brazen violation of regulations on owning expensive cars while in office. Local media ran the photos, prompting public outrage in a country where the communist party has been stung by graft allegations and is waging an anti-corruption purge. Mismanagement charges followed, related to Thanh's time at PVC—he was accused of causing losses worth \$150 million. Additional accusations cascaded down, including an embezzlement charge related to real estate deals, which carries the death penalty. Two months after the photos were shared, Thanh quietly slipped out of the country.

### Jungle law

His escape turned him into Vietnam's most wanted man. "We are determined to catch Thanh. He cannot hide forever," communist party chief Nguyen Phu Trong said in state media in December. Thanh, an urban planning graduate, sought asylum in Germany, where he had spent a five-year stint working during the 1990s. The alleged operation to snatch him from the streets of a major European capital is an extraordinarily brazen and risky move by Vietnam and a dramatic escalation for the one-party state, which has waged an aggressive anti-corruption drive in recent years.

"It was very, very surprising because they think that Berlin is like Hanoi or any small city in Vietnam where they can exercise the law of the jungle," political observer and dissident Nguyen Quang A said. — AFP

## VENEZUELA ASSEMBLY DELAYED AS FRAUD PROBE LAUNCHED

**CARACAS:** Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro postponed by 24 hours the launch of a powerful new assembly, in the face of opposition protests and blistering claims of fraud. Attorney General Luisa Ortega, one of Maduro's biggest rivals, said she has opened an investigation into "scandalous" electoral fraud after the British technology firm contracted to handle the vote said Maduro had exaggerated the turnout. Maduro denied the accusations of trampling on democracy in Venezuela with Sunday's controversial election for an all-powerful "Constituent Assembly," dismissing them as a "reaction by the international enemy."

The firm, Smartmatic, said in a London news conference that the official figures from the election were "tampered with" to make turnout appear greater than it was. Ortega said the firm's assessment was just "one more element of the fraudulent, illegal and unconstitutional process" initiated by the socialist ruler. "We are facing an unprecedented, serious incident that represents a crime," Ortega said. The electoral authority itself criticized as a Maduro mouthpiece denied the vote-tampering allegation as "an irresponsible contention based on estimates with no grounding in the data."

The new 545-member body-whose members include Maduro's wife and son-will have sweeping powers to dissolve the opposition-majority congress, pass laws and write a new constitution. Despite months of violent protests and international condemnation, Maduro insists it is the solution to a drawn-out economic and political crisis gripping Venezuela. The assembly was originally due to start work Thursday, but Maduro postponed the launch to Friday in the face of opposition plans for massive protests. "It has been proposed that the installation of the National Constituent Assembly, instead of being held tomorrow, be organized in peace and calm, with all necessary protocol, on Friday at 11:00 am (1500 GMT)," he said.

He said the reason for the delay was that 35 newly elected members had not yet been officially declared by electoral authorities. Venezuela has been rocked by four months of clashes at anti-Maduro protests that have left more than 125 people dead. Sunday's vote brought the crisis to a boiling point, drawing international condemnation. The United States imposed direct sanctions on Maduro, calling him a "dictator," while the European Union joined the US, Mexico, Colombia and Argentina in saying it would not recognize the new assembly.

### At least one million votes

Smartmatic chief executive Antonio Mugica said the evidence of vote-tampering was glaring. "Based on the robustness of our system, we know, without any doubt, that the turnout... was manipulated," he said. "We estimate the difference between the actual participation and the one announced by authorities is at least one million votes." Venezuela's pro-government electoral authority had claimed more than eight million voters took part — 40 percent of the electorate. The opposition says turnout was closer to 3.5 million, mostly state employees fearful for their jobs.

Significantly, the opposition had held an unofficial referendum on July 16 in which it said 7.6 million Venezuelans voted against the new assembly—just under the level of support the government claimed on Sunday. — AFP



**CARACAS:** Handout picture released by the Venezuelan presidency showing President Nicolas Maduro, left, talking during a meeting with constitutionalists in Caracas. — AFP



**WASHINGTON:** White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders arrives to speak at the daily briefing at the White House in Washington. — AP

## NO LIE, SAYS SANDERS: TRUMP GOT PRAISE FROM MEXICO, SCOUTS

**WASHINGTON:** Fake news or fib? Two phone calls described by President Donald Trump that didn't actually happen represent the latest chapter in a long-running series of disputes revolving around the president's rocky relationship with facts. White House press secretary Sarah Sanders on Wednesday found herself explaining that compliments Trump had described receiving in phone calls from the Mexican president and the Boy Scouts did happen — just not on the phone.

"I wouldn't say it was a lie. That's a pretty bold accusation," she told reporters. "The conversations took place, they just simply didn't take place over a phone call. ... He had them in person." The noncalls weren't earth-shattering news. But they fit a pattern that also involves weightier issues and that has raised larger questions about Trump's credibility six months into his presidency. After Donald Trump Jr. put out a statement, later shown to be misleading, about his meeting with a Russian lawyer in 2016, the president's outside lawyer was categorical that the president had no role in drafting the statement.

But when The Washington Post later reported that the president had dictated the statement for his son, Sanders acknowledged that Trump had "weighed in" on his son's statement "as any father would based on the limited information that he had." Polls, history and other research leave open the question of how impressions of Trump's truthfulness affect his job approval, which hovers around a third of Americans. Trump won the presidential election despite having promoted false claims such as the notion that President Barack Obama was born outside the US (he was born in Hawaii) and that Hillary Clinton had started the rumor (she didn't).

The campaign featured another instance when Trump said someone told him something that the person then denied. Candidate Trump last summer claimed the NFL had complained to him that the presidential debate schedule competed with football games.

The NFL denied that. A Quinnipiac poll released Wednesday found that for all of the economic and other progress Trump claims, just 33 percent of Americans approve of the job he's doing, similar to the results of a survey conducted in June by the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Only 34 percent of the Quinnipiac poll respondents say that Trump is "honest." "We've been through so much of this,"

said Ethan Porter, an assistant professor of media and public affairs at George Washington University, who co-authored a study released last month into whether false information and corrections change people's attitudes toward candidates. In Trump's case, he said, "People probably learned to discount additional instances" of falsehoods, adding: "It's already baked in the cake where you sort of know what you're getting with Donald Trump at this point."

### Ultimate compliment

Sanders was responding to questions about a statement from the Mexican government denying what Trump described as a recent phone call with Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto. Trump said earlier this week that Pena Nieto had called him to praise his immigration policies.

"Even the president of Mexico called me. They said their southern border, very few people are coming because they know they're not going to get through our border, which is the ultimate compliment," Trump said Monday. Sanders said Trump had been "referencing a conversation that they had had at the G-20 summit where they specifically talked about the issues that he referenced."

Mexico's Foreign Relations Department said Pena Nieto remarked to Trump during a July 7 meeting at the G-20 summit in Germany that deportations of Mexicans from the United States had fallen 31 percent between January and June, as compared with 2016. Pena Nieto said 47 percent fewer Central American migrants had entered Mexico in that period. Meanwhile, the Boy Scouts denied Wednesday that the head of the youth organization called Trump to shower praise on his politically aggressive speech to its national jamboree in West Virginia.

President Randall Stephenson and Chief Scout Executive Mike Surbaugh later apologized to members of the scouting community who were offended by Trump's political rhetoric. Trump told The Wall Street Journal in an interview last week, "I got a call from the head of the Boy Scouts saying it was the greatest speech that was ever made to them, and they were very thankful." Politico published the transcript of the interview Tuesday. Sanders said the president was making reference to "multiple members of the Boy Scout leadership" who "congratulated him, praised him and offered quite powerful compliments following his speech." — AP

## INDIAN VILLAGES SPOOKED BY OUTBREAK OF BRAID CHOPPING

**NEW DELHI:** Police said yesterday they were investigating an outbreak of "braid chopping" that is spooking Indian villagers and has seen a woman murdered amid rumors of witchcraft. Since July, at least 55 women across five Indian states have reported waking to find their braids mysteriously lopped off, sparking intense speculation around the assaults.

Four new cases were reported on New Delhi's outskirts on Wednesday, just days after half a dozen similar cases

were reported in Gurgaon, south of the capital. "We heard her cries, and when we rushed she was lying on the floor unconscious," said Rohit Yadav, whose 55-year-old mother Monesh Devi fell victim in July in Delhi. "Her chopped off hair was lying next to her." The string of unexplained attacks has occurred in largely rural areas, where superstitious beliefs sparks hysteria and allegations of witchcraft. Some villages have held special prayer sessions to ward off evil spirits and begun

patrols to protect their women. None of the victims have been harmed in any physical way or robbed.

A 65-year-old woman murdered by a mob in Agra-home to the Taj Mahal-was later branded a witch and accused of using sorcery to slice braids, despite no cases being reported in the city. "She was beaten after they found her loitering in a nearby village. Someone accused her of being a witch and later linked her to the hair cutting incidents," Dinesh Chandra Dubey, Agra police chief, said.

Authorities in Delhi are treating the assaults as crimes but have no leads thus far, said Surinder Kumar, deputy commissioner of Delhi police, said.

However they have dismissed claims of witchcraft, leaning more towards the theory that mental illness or cases of copycat attacks could be behind the bizarre events. "Counselors said they could be suffering from disorders and could have done it themselves but our investigating are broad-based," Kumar said.—AFP

## TWO REBELS, TWO INDIAN SOLDIERS KILLED IN KASHMIR

### SCHOOLS, COLLEGES REMAIN SHUT AMID FEARS OF PROTESTS

**SRINAGAR:** Two Indian soldiers and two rebels were killed in armed clashes yesterday, officials said, in another day of bloodshed in Kashmir where tensions are high following the death of a prominent militant. The rebels were killed in Kulgam, south of the main city of

Srinagar in Kashmir, when they walked into an ambush laid by Indian soldiers. "It was a deliberate and swift operation," an army officer said. In a separate incident, two Indian troops were killed and another injured in a shootout with militants in Shopian district, the officer

said on condition of anonymity. The soldiers came under fire as they surrounded a house suspected of harboring militants, and were evacuated from the scene. It was not clear if the rebels inside evaded capture.

"Three soldiers were evacuated by air but two of them died before reaching a military hospital," a police officer said. The violence comes just days after Indian forces killed top militant commander Abu Dujana, who headed the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) group in Kashmir.

His death sparked protests and violent clashes across Kashmir, in which two civilians, including a teenage student, were killed. Schools and colleges remained shut yesterday amid fears of further protests against Indian rule. Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since the end of British colonial rule in 1947. Both claim the restive region in full. For decades rebel groups, including LeT, have fought 500,000 Indian soldiers deployed in the territory, demanding independence or a merger of the former Himalayan kingdom with Pakistan. The fighting and India's counterinsurgency campaign since 1989 has left tens of thousands, mostly civilians, dead.—AFP



**SRINAGAR:** Kashmiri villagers shout pro-Pakistani slogans as they hold a Pakistani flag during the funeral of Kashmiri rebel Suhail Ahmed, who was killed in an ambush by Indian government forces in Tantraypora, some 85 kilometers south of Srinagar, Kashmir.—AP

## BANGLADESH'S 'SULTAN OF SEX' DETAINED ON BLACKMAIL CHARGES

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh police have arrested a self-proclaimed "Sultan of Sex" accused of blackmailing dozens of women with intimate videos he filmed of their sexual encounters, an official said yesterday. Police raided Fuad bin Sultan's home Wednesday in the capital Dhaka where they seized a laptop, methamphetamine tablets and alleged pornographic videos. Sultan, an alleged male escort, would meet clients online and bring them back to his apartment for sex, said a spokesman for Bangladesh's elite police unit.

"He filmed those intimate moments and later blackmailed those victims, mostly married women, for money. We found nearly 150 individual victims' videos in his laptop," spokesman Ishtiaque Ahmed said. Sultan, a real estate agent by trade, also conducted a

"vulgar live streaming service wearing superhero masks on social media which attracted thousands of viewers", including minors, said Ahmed. "After we arrested him, Sultan admitted to having those extramarital relations and claimed himself as the Sultan of sexual intercourse," Ahmed said.

"He said the ladies came to him willingly, knowing everything. "Pornography is illegal in Bangladesh, a conservative Muslim-majority nation of 160 million. Sultan has been charged under tough anti-pornography laws that could land him in prison for 10 years if he found guilty. Bangladeshi authorities last year blocked nearly 600 pornographic websites in a major morality drive. More than a third of Bangladesh's 160 million people have access to internet.—AFP



**NEW DELHI:** An Indian bird feed vendor holds an umbrella to protect herself from the sun as she sits on a footpath in New Delhi.—AFP



**HERAT:** Afghan protesters shout against the Islamic State group following a mosque attack that killed 33 people in Herat.—AFP

## FATHER OF AFGHAN ROBOTICS GIRL KILLED IN MOSQUE ATTACK

**HERAT:** The father of an Afghan girl who represented her country in a robotics competition in the United States died in this week's Herat mosque attack, her family said yesterday. Fifteen-year-old Fatema Qaderyan was part of the six-member team of Afghan teenage girls who won hearts across the globe when they competed in the international youth event in Washington DC last month. They made headlines after twice being denied American visas, and were only able to travel from war-torn Afghanistan for the FIRST Global Challenge following a late intervention by US President Donald Trump.

Qaderyan's older brother said that their father died in Tuesday night's suicide bomb attack on the Jawadya mosque which killed dozens and was claimed by the Islamic State group. "We are all devastated, Fatema hasn't eaten or spoken since the incident, and is in a state of shock. Today after she fainted several times, doctors started IV fluid therapy," Mohammad Reza said at the family home. The six girls are all from Herat, which lies close to the Iranian border in the west of Afghanistan.

Before they were granted US visas for the event, in which they competed against high school students from around the world, Qaderyan made an emotional plea for them to be allowed to travel. "We were not a terrorist group to go to America and scare people," she said. "We want to take the message of peace to America and convey that Afghanistan is not only the country of war, and there are girls who chase their dreams in robots and education," she added.

Thirty-three worshippers were killed, including children, and more than 60 others wounded, when two suicide bombers throwing grenades stormed the packed mosque where Shiites had gathered for prayers on Tuesday night. It was the latest deadly attack on the minority community in Afghanistan. IS has claimed responsibility for a series of attacks killing dozens of Shiites in Kabul over the past year, including twin explosions in July 2016 that ripped through crowds of Shiite Hazaras, killing at least 85 people and wounding more than 400.—AFP





A file photo taken on July 30, 2017 shows police walking past passengers as they patrol Sydney Airport. Major security gaps at Australian airports persist despite authorities' efforts to tighten screenings after thwarting an alleged terror plot to blow up a plane, the pilots' union has warned on August 2. —AFP

# TWO CHARGED OVER AUSTRALIA PLANE PLOT

## AIRPORT SECURITY TIGHTENS SCREENINGS

**SYDNEY:** Two men have been charged with terrorism offences after Australian police thwarted an alleged plot to blow up a plane, authorities said yesterday, as pilots warned of major airport security gaps despite efforts to tighten screenings. Four men were arrested in Sydney on Saturday accused of planning an attack using an improvised explosive device, prompting authorities to increase security at airports across the nation.

One of the four was released on Wednesday, while two others—aged 32 and 49—were each charged with two counts of “acts done in preparation for, or planning, a terrorist act”, Australian Federal Police said. They face maximum sentences of life imprisonment if found guilty and are due to appear in a Sydney court today. The charges came as pilots—who have to be screened alongside air crew, retail workers and passengers at airports—said similar requirements were not in place for ground staff, who are instead issued with security cards.

“Pilots and cabin crew are routinely screened along with passengers but a lot of ground staff can access aircraft on the tarmac without the same level of scrutiny,” Australian

Airline Pilots Association president Murray Butt said late Wednesday. “We believe it would enhance airport security if all airline staff who have access to aircraft, were screened to the same level as personnel entering through the terminal.” The concerns followed a report by Sydney’s Daily Telegraph citing sources who alleged that the plot involved using an unwitting passenger to carry a bomb onboard, with Etihad Airways confirming this week it was helping the investigation.

Aviation experts have also warned of loopholes, such as the use of private-sector security guards instead of government employees at airports, and no photo ID checks for passengers at domestic terminals. Butt said Australia needed to emulate the US requirement for photo ID checks for passengers, while a former Sydney Airport security chief said security databases should be linked to booking systems. “The scary thing is domestic airlines have no idea who is really on their aircraft,” Mike Carmody told The Australian Financial Review. “There is very little coordination. Unless you happen to be someone who really stands out, you are going to fly right through security.”

### No room for complacency

In response to calls for ID checks, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said yesterday airport security measures were “constantly under review”. He told reporters in Perth that the times passengers had been advised to arrive at airports would return to normal after being extended in response to the alleged plot which “has been disrupted and it has been contained”. Transport Minister Darren Chester defended the current safety measures, saying workers with access to large passenger planes must hold a security card only issued after thorough checks.

“We’ve endeavored to toughen up regulations around getting access to those cards, and making sure that people who have access to the airport environment are trusted,” he told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. “So it’s been recognized that there are issues around the world in relation to the threat provided by the so-called trusted insider... and we are taking measures to keep the Australian travelling public safe.” Police have until the weekend to hold the fourth man without charge after obtaining a court extension. —AFP

## CHINA UNMOVED AS TRUMP RAILS OVER NORTH KOREA

**BEIJING:** Finger-pointing over North Korea’s flourishing weapons program has pushed the world’s two biggest economies towards a high-stakes impasse, but observers warn that Trump-style outbursts are no way to get China to bend to the United States’ will. Washington and Beijing have long traded blame over the failure to rein in the North, but a breakthrough in missile technology has raised the specter of a strike by Pyongyang on American cities, escalating the rhetoric.

“I am very disappointed in China,” President Donald Trump tweeted after the North boasted last week that the entire mainland US was within range of its intercontinental ballistic missiles. “Our foolish past leaders have allowed them to make hundreds of billions of dollars a year in trade, yet they do NOTHING for us with North Korea, just talk.” China, North Korea’s main trade partner and ally, has repeatedly countered that it does not hold the key to the crisis and rejected Trump’s attempts to link the issue to the trade relationship.

While China’s restrained official responses have played the foil to Trump’s 140-character outbursts, state media has been less muted. “Trump is quite a personality,” said an opinion piece published by Xinhua state news agency Monday. “But emotional venting cannot become a guiding policy for solving the nuclear issue... and even less should (the US) stab China in the back.” US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson stepped in on Tuesday to warn that the relationship with China had reached “a pivot point”. “Can we work through those differences in a way without it leading to open conflict and find the solutions that are necessary to serve us both?” he asked in a briefing to reporters.

### Cards versus tweets

Trump has repeatedly urged China to use its economic sway over North Korea to curb the regime’s nuclear program, while Beijing insists dialogue is the only practical way forward. Tillerson has derided China and Russia as “economic enablers” that bear “unique and special responsibility” for the growing threat posed by the North. And US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley spurned a UN response to the latest ICBM launch in favor of bomber flights and missile defense system tests, saying the time for talk on North Korea was “over”.

Such admonishments will not change the way China operates, analysts say. “Trump might be brash and have an ‘in your face’ blunt style, but Beijing’s approach to Washington stays relatively the same,” Xu Guoqi, a Sino-US relations expert at the University of Hong Kong, said. “While Trump tweets his positions to the world, Beijing keeps its cards closer to its chest. (China) will never dance to Trump’s tune.” And with “today’s America weaker and more isolated in the world,” China has even less reason to respond, he said. —AFP

## CHINA HELPS US SEARCH FOR MISSING SAILOR IN S CHINA SEA

**BEIJING:** China said yesterday that it helped the United States search for an American sailor who fell into the South China Sea a rare cooperative gesture in the disputed waters. “The Chinese Liuzhou naval vessel, which performs combat preparation duties in nearby waters, carried out operational coordination with the US side in the spirit of humanitarianism and in accordance with the ‘Code for Unplanned Maritime Encounters,’” the Chinese defense ministry said in a statement.

The sailor went missing Tuesday during a joint US-Japanese drill in the South China Sea. Japan’s Maritime Self-Defense Force, the country’s navy, confirmed two of its vessels as well as helicopters have been taking part in the search. The two nations called off their routine joint operation to focus on the search, a Japanese navy spokesman said. The sailor’s name is being withheld while the search is ongoing and the exact location of the search was not disclosed.

Japanese and US naval forces have been holding drills in the contested South China Sea in the face of Beijing’s increasing assertiveness over its maritime claims in the region. Beijing has pursued claims on nearly the entire territory of the South China Sea by building military facilities and conducting naval exercises—despite partial counter-claims from nations such as the Philippines and Vietnam. China is also involved in a simmering territorial row with Tokyo over disputed islands in the East China Sea.—AFP

# BELEAGUERED JAPAN PM SEEKS NEW START WITH CABINET REVAMP

PUBLIC SUPPORT RATES PLUMMETS OVER POLITICAL TROUBLES

**TOKYO:** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe yesterday dumped arch-conservatives and embraced critical voices in a cabinet revamp he hopes will stem a decline in public support after a series of scandals and missteps. Political blueblood Abe, in office since late December 2012, has pushed a nationalist agenda alongside a massive

like to express deep regret and apologize to the public" for creating mistrust due to various scandals, a chastened Abe said at a televised press conference, bowing for several seconds. Abe, dressed in formal attire after attending a ceremony with his ministers at the Imperial Palace, said he carried out the cabinet changes to restore public confi-

a landmark 1993 apology as chief cabinet secretary over Japan's use of "comfort women"-a euphemism for sex slavery-in World War II.

## Real threat

The US-educated 54-year-old Kono is known as an independent-minded, anti-nuclear power advocate, in sharp contrast to Abe's support for atomic energy. Kono replaced Fumio Kishida, who served as top diplomat since Abe came to power more than four years ago and is often seen as a future prime minister. Kishida moved to a top post in the LDP. Meanwhile, Seiko Noda, 56, at one time hailed as Japan's most likely first female prime minister and who in 2015 tried to challenge Abe for the LDP leadership, was named internal affairs minister.

She replaced Sanae Takaichi, another close Abe ally with strongly nationalist views. Inada, the former defense minister, delighted conservatives during her tenure but drew domestic and international criticism in December when she prayed at a controversial war shrine in Tokyo. Returning defense chief Onodera, 57, held the post for nearly two years until September 2014, and has vowed to restore unity and confidence within the ministry. His appointment also comes amid rising tensions surrounding North Korea's missile development.

Pyongyang launched its latest missile late Friday, just hours after Japan moved to step up sanctions against it following its test in early July of an ICBM capable of reaching parts of the US. "It's the government's biggest responsibility to do our best to ensure the safety of the public against this serious and real threat," Abe said. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, the government's top spokesman, and Taro Aso, who serves as finance minister and deputy prime minister, were among officials who kept their posts. —AFP



**TOKYO:** Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe speaks during a press conference after he reshuffled his Cabinet at the prime minister's official residence in Tokyo. —AP

policy effort to end years of on-off deflation and rejuvenate the world's third-largest economy. But he has seen public support rates plummet in the past few months over an array of political troubles, including allegations of favoritism to a friend in a business deal which Abe strongly denies.

Abe's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) suffered a drubbing in local Tokyo elections last month, which analysts and newspapers blamed on an increasing "arrogance" on the part of the prime minister and his government. "I would

dence in his government.

"We will listen to the voices of the people and pursue politics together with them," Abe said. He reappointed former defense minister Itsunori Onodera after close ally and fellow nationalist Tomomi Inada resigned from the post last week following a scandal at the ministry over the handling of military documents. He also tapped a pair of lawmakers who have opposed some of his policies. New foreign minister Taro Kono is the son of a dovish top diplomat known for issuing



**BEIJING:** Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, right, shakes hands with Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu during their meeting at Diaoyutai State Guesthouse in Beijing. —AFP

## TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER PLEDGES TO 'ELIMINATE' ANTI-CHINA FORCES

**BEIJING:** Turkey's foreign minister vowed yesterday to "eliminate" anti-China forces from his country, signaling a shift in Ankara's stance towards Beijing's treatment of Muslim minorities. The two countries have sparred in the past over Beijing's treatment of the mostly Muslim Uighur minority in China's far western region of Xinjiang, who have cultural ties with Turkey and speak a Turkic language. "We treat China's security as our own security," Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu told reporters in Beijing during a joint press conference with his Chinese counterpart.

"We absolutely will not allow any activities opposing or aimed against China within Turkey or its territories, and we will take measures to eliminate any media reports aimed against China." Cavusoglu's remarks followed a meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in which both sides vowed to work together to combat terrorism. Beijing blames unrest in Xinjiang on Islamist separatists seeking independence for the region, while Turkey in the past repeatedly expressed concerns about Beijing's treatment of the minority-with Erdogan even accusing Beijing of "genocide" in the region.

But ties have warmed as Turkey has sought to pivot away from the West and toward Asia, seeing in China a wealth of economic possibilities. As part of China's expansive Belt and Road initiative, an economic corridor will be established between the two countries, as well as a high-speed rail linking the eastern and western regions of Turkey. "We greatly praise China for the work it has done so far to tackle the issues confronting Islamic countries," Cavusoglu said yesterday. —AFP

## BANGLADESH GRAFT HOTLINE GETS 75,000 CALLS IN 1ST WEEK

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh's new anti-graft hotline has been overwhelmed with tens of thousands of calls about acts of corruption in its first week, an official said yesterday. Hotline number 106 was launched last yesterday by state authorities in an effort to crack down on graft in Bangladesh, which has been listed by a global watchdog as one of the world's most corrupt nations. "Since July 27 around 75,000 people called our hotline," Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) spokesman Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya said.

The hotline is manned by just five government employees, with a substantial number of calls being forwarded to a voice-mail messaging system. Bhattacharya said most callers who got through had complaints that were beyond the agency's jurisdiction, including personal family disputes and dowry demands. The commission is empowered to investigate bribes in government offices and agencies, misappropriation of state assets or money, embezzlement of state funds, amassing of wealth through illegal means, money laundering and bank fraud.

More than 200 relevant complaints were forwarded to the ACC to investigate. Local English daily The New Age said most complaints were against land record offices, followed by utility services, state-run hospitals, government-run schools and railway and road transport authorities. —AFP

## TILLERSON TO RAISE US HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS IN PHILIPPINES

**MANILA:** The United States' top diplomat is expected to raise concerns about human rights in the Philippines when he visits Manila this week for Asia's biggest security forum, including during possible talks with President Rodrigo Duterte. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson will raise all relevant issues in the US alliance with the Philippines, including concerns about human rights, Acting US Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Susan Thornton said in Washington on Wednesday. She said a meeting with Duterte is being arranged.

Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs spokesman Robiespierre Bolivar said yesterday the Philippines is open about its rights record. "So definitely if Secretary Tillerson wishes

to raise that, the Philippines has always been open and committed to protecting human rights." Duterte, however, has lashed out at critics of his war on illegal drugs, which has left thousands of suspects dead in the past year. When then-US President Barack Obama raised concerns about the mounting death toll, Duterte told the president to "go to hell."

Thornton said Tillerson's trip to Manila will provide a chance for a robust bilateral program with the Philippines on the sidelines of the security meetings. She said there will be much to talk about, including a siege by Islamic State group-linked militants in the southern city of Marawi and growing threats of international terrorism. "But certainly, we

will be talking about governance, about human rights issues, and about how we can increase our economic and other kinds of people-to-people engagement with the Philippines," she added.

Duterte's spokesman, Ernesto Abella, said no announcement has been made of a meeting between Tillerson and Duterte. Human rights advocates have accused Duterte of unleashing "a human rights calamity" with his war on drugs. They say his recent threat to bomb tribal schools he accused of teaching students to become communist rebels could constitute war crimes, prompting Duterte to clarify that the schools would only be bombed when the buildings are empty. —AP

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2017

# Lifestyle

Friday Times

www.kuwaittimes.net



## With Qatar in crisis, 'Tamim the Glorious' rises as national emblem

A model walks down the runway wearing Agua Clara swimwear at a FUNKSHION fashion show during Swim Week in Miami Beach, Fla. — AP

## Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum opening Lynn exhibit

The Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum is opening an exhibit on the life and career of Hall of Famer Loretta Lynn in Nashville. "Loretta Lynn: Blue Kentucky Girl" opens Aug 25 and runs through Aug 5, 2018.

The museum said in a news release that highlights include Lynn's original handwritten manuscript for her 1970 hit, "Coal Miner's Daughter," the microphone used at her first recording session, some of her dresses, and the sewing machine she

used to make her stage clothes early in her career. The 85-year-old singer-songwriter suffered a stroke in May and is recovering at home following a stay at a rehabilitation center. She said in a statement from the museum she's excited about the exhibit displaying her more than 50 years in country music. — AP



In this file photo Loretta Lynn performs at the BBC Music Showcase at Stubb's during South By Southwest in Austin, Texas. — AP



In this file photo, The Furious Five, from left, Scorpio, Melle Mel, Kidd Creole and Rahiem appear in the press room at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony in New York. — AP

## 1980s rapper Kidd Creole arrested in fatal stabbing

One of the founding members of the 1980s hip hop group Grandmaster Flash and The Furious Five was arrested in New York in connection with the fatal stabbing of a homeless man, police said. Nathaniel Glover, 57, also known as The Kidd Creole, was arrested Wednesday night on murder charges. Information on his lawyer wasn't immediately available. The stabbing happened in midtown Manhattan shortly before midnight on Monday. Police said the 55-year-old victim was found with multiple stab wounds to his torso. It's not clear what sparked the stabbing.

Police described the victim, who lived in a shelter, as a level 2 sex offender. His identity has not yet been released. Video shows a handcuffed Glover, his gray hair pulled back into a tightly-wound pony tail, being escorted out of a police precinct Wednesday night. Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five is best known for their 1982 rap song, "The Message." The group was formed in the late 1970s in the Bronx. The group was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2007, the first rap act to be inducted into the hall. — AP

## Prosecutors: S Korean director investigated in abuse case

South Korean prosecutors are investigating award-winning film director Kim Ki-duk after an actress accused him of hitting her and trying to force her into shooting off-script sexual scenes while making a 2013 movie. An official from the Seoul Central District Prosecutors' Office yesterday said the director will be questioned but it hasn't been determined when. The identity of the actress was withheld. The prosecution official spoke on condition of anonymity because of office rules. In a statement released through his production company, Kim said he might have hit the actress while instructing her in acting, but said he has no "accurate memory" of the incident. He vaguely denied trying to force her into filming off-script scenes, saying there had been a "misunderstanding."



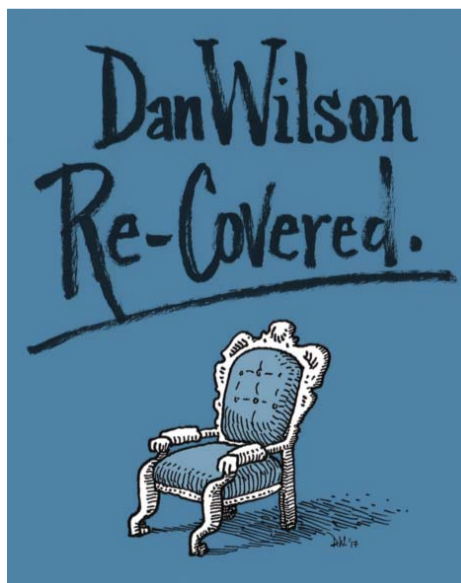
South Korean director Kim Ki-duk

Kim didn't answer repeated phone calls seeking comment before turning off his cellphone. Ahn Byung-ho, an official from the Federation of Korea Movie Workers' Union, said the actress dropped out from the filming after Kim allegedly abused her, and recently reported the case to the

union after suffering from "psychological pain" for years.

The movie, "Moebius," a dark and violent story about an estranged family, was released in 2013 after Kim finished filming with a different actress. In the statement, Kim said he either hit the actress while taking the place of her acting counterpart or slapped his own face while instructing her on how to act in a scene portraying a violent exchange between a male character and his wife.

"This is not an accurate memory because it was four years ago," Kim wrote. Kim won the top prize in the Venice Film Festival with his 2012 film "Pieta," a brutal mother-and-son tale of revenge and redemption. While his movies often garner critical acclaim, many moviegoers, especially women, consider them to be disturbing because of excessive violence and depictions of rape and castration. — AP



### Review

## Dan Wilson revisits his hits for Adele, John Legend

Dan Wilson helped write that tune? And that one, too? If you still read album credits or liner notes, you may find Wilson's name attached to some of your favorites songs. Formerly of Trip Shakespeare and Semisonic, the Minnesota-born Wilson has collaborated with an impressive array of musicians. On "Re-Covered," he performs his songs made famous by a dozen artists including Adele, John Legend, the Dixie Chicks, Chris Stapleton and Taylor Swift.

Adele's "Someone Like You" and the Dixie Chicks' "Not Ready To Make Nice," both Grammy winners, as well as LeAnn Rimes' "Borrowed,"

came with very personal stories. For Adele, it was the end of a relationship, while the Dixie Chicks sang about the controversy after Natalie Maines' critical comments of President George W. Bush in 2003. Rimes bared her feelings about her real-life affair with future husband Eddie Cibrian.

Wilson proves his empathy, especially on "Someone Like You" with backing from The Kronos Quartet, his versions conserve the originals' intimacy with time healing some of the wounds. Other highlights include "All Will Be Well" (The Gabe Dixon Band), "Landing" (brother and former bandmate Matt Wilson) and "Home"

(Dierks Bentley). Leaving the oldest song for last - the only one here Wilson wrote alone - the album ends with Semisonic's "Closing Time," its gentleness making it easier to see how it was meant to be about a baby's birth. Recorded mostly in a weeklong session co-hermed by Ryan Adams producer Mike Viola and backed by musicians like Elvis Costello drummer Pete Thomas, "Re-Covered" has sufficient flourishes to avoid sounding like a collection of demos and straightforward arrangements that let the songwriting stand on its own plentiful merits. — AP



Stan Lee and Chadwick Boseman speak at the Hollywood Foreign Press Association Grants Banquet at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. — AP photos



Kathryn Hahn and Kumail Nanjiani speak at the Hollywood Foreign Press Association Grants Banquet.



Patrick Stewart speaks on stage.

## Golden Globes group gives away \$2.8 million in show proceeds

As the host of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association's annual grants dinner, Chelsea Handler said she relished the chance to leave political talk aside for an evening of good news. "Let's celebrate the three things Donald Trump hates the most: Foreigners, the press and actually giving money to charity," Handler said Wednesday at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel, where more than a dozen film and TV stars helped the group behind the Golden Globe Awards share proceeds from the show with some 55 film schools and arts organizations.

Dustin Hoffman, Patrick Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Ava DuVernay, Elizabeth Moss, Chrissy Metz, Bob Odenkirk, Anthony Mackie and Mark Hamill were among the entertainers who appeared to discuss the various charities that benefit from HFPA grants. Stan Lee seemed to enjoy the spotlight, playfully going off-script as he appeared alongside "Black Panther" star Chadwick Boseman.

"I got news for you: I'm half deaf and half blind, so forgive whatever I say," the 94-year-old Marvel mastermind said as he took the stage. "Chad is gonna be my crutch, so be kind to him. I

need the guy." They accepted a grant on behalf of California Institute of the Arts and introduced a video about how the funds would support aspiring filmmakers there.

"The best thing about it is I'm going to get every single one of them to leave a space for a cameo for me," said Lee, who famously appears in every Marvel movie. "The Big Sick" star Kumail Nanjiani and "I Love Dick" star Kathryn Hahn bantered about mashing up their projects' titles before presenting grants to the Zimmer Children's Museum and the Los Angeles LGBT Center's young filmmaker's program.

"This is the worst segue of all time," Nanjiani said. "A bunch of penis jokes and then here's..." "Children," Hahn said, laughing. Hoffman announced a grant to the Film Foundation, Martin Scorsese's film restoration and preservation effort. Hoffman said HFPA has given more than \$5 million to the organization to date, financing the restoration of 90 films. Stewart, who presented a gift to Film Aid, which screens movies in refugee camps, said he was unaware of the HFPA's philanthropy until he was asked to appear Wednesday. The group has given more than \$30 million over the past 25 years.

"It is truly remarkable, and I commend it," Stewart said. Pattinson presented a \$200,000 donation to the Committee to Protect Journalists, which Meryl Streep mentioned in her Golden Globes acceptance speech earlier this year. Hamill announced a \$2 million endowment for University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, adding that his daughter Chelsea is a magna cum laude alumna.

Other beneficiaries of HFPA grants include Ghetto Film School, the Lollipop Theater Network, Global Girl Media, American Film Institute, Inner City Arts and the Sundance Institute. The celebrity presenters handed out \$2.8 million in grants during the hourlong ceremony; each onstage for less than two minutes. "That's what we call efficiency," Handler said. — AP



Aja Naomi King, left, and Anthony Mackie speak on stage.



Mark Hamill speaks on stage.



Bob Odenkirk and Alison Brie speak on stage.



Ava DuVernay speaks on stage.



Dustin Hoffman speaks on stage.



Armie Hammer, left, and Matt Bomer speaks on stage.



Female ex-inmates and volunteers recycling donated lipstick in Bangkok. — AFP photos



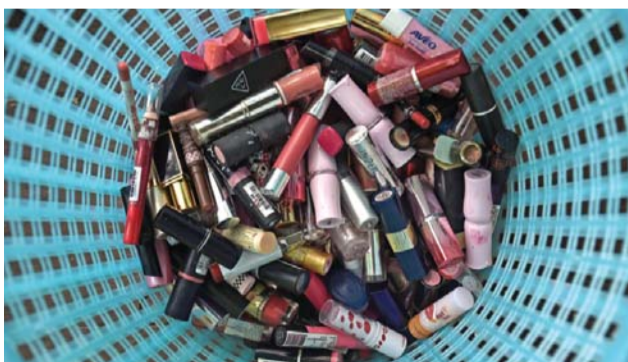
Prontip Mankong (left), a former political prisoner, melting lipstick as fellow ex-inmates and volunteers help recycle cosmetics.



Prontip Mankong, a former political prisoner, cutting off donated lipstick tubes to be melted down and recycled for current female inmates in Bangkok.



Prontip Mankong, a former political prisoner, melting donated lipstick over a stove.



Female ex-inmates and volunteers recycling donated lipstick in Bangkok.

## Beauty behind bars: Recycled lipstick for Thailand's inmates

'This money goes to the pockets of the influential inmates'

**D**esperate to brighten up the gloom of Thai prison life, Prontip Mankong and her fellow female inmates used to sneak food coloring from the kitchen and mix it with Vaseline to create a homemade lip gloss. After serving two years for violating Thailand's royal defamation law, the former political prisoner is now on the other side of the prison gate. But she is drawing on the same spirit of ingenuity to make recycled cosmetics for those still stuck in Thailand's notoriously bleak jails, which are bursting at the seams in a country with the highest female incarceration rate in the world.

"The lip gloss boosted our confidence and gave us a sense of self-expression in a place where freedom is limited," said Prontip Mankong, who was jailed for her role in a satirical play that authorities said mocked the royal family. On a recent Sunday, the 29-year-old and other female ex-cons spent the afternoon slicing off the tops of thousands of donated lipsticks and



Melted lipstick being poured into small plastic containers to be given to current female inmates.

grouping them into baskets by color.

The waxy chunks were boiled down over a stove into shimmering pink and magenta liquids, and then poured into small containers which will be donated to a women's prison after they cool. Of all the deprivations of prison life make-up may seem a minor one. Yet Prontip sees the donated cosmetics as a simple way to boost morale and free up cash for inmates, whose lives are just as governed by money as those on the outside. Inmates earn small incomes from jobs like cooking and making crafts, which they use to buy sanitary pads and other basic necessities from small convenience stores, where purchases are limited to around \$10 a day.

"Getting cosmetics was very difficult and expensive," she told AFP, explaining that some inmates would buy out all the beauty products from a small prison store and then jack up the price for other buyers. This type of black market economy permeates the prison yard, with cash via prison jobs and relatives the only way to secure other comforts like longer showers or pain medicine. "This money doesn't go to the prisons but goes to the pockets of the influential inmates," said Prontip, whose chipper attitude cracks when she starts recalling her own time behind bars.

### Thailand's prison problem

Thailand's exploding prison population stems from the kingdom's harsh anti-drug laws, where the possession of just a few methamphetamine pills is enough to land offenders a decade in jail. The kingdom jails more women per capita than any other nation, with more than 80 percent of its 39,000 female convicts in prison on drug-related offences, according to the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH). Successive Thai governments have done little to reform drug laws or tackle dire overcrowding in prisons. Many inmates sleep on hard linoleum floors in cells so cramped they have to rest on their sides or lay their limbs on top of one another.

Fluorescent lights are kept on throughout the night and dozens of prisoners have to share a single toilet in the back of the cell, with not even a curtain for privacy. In conditions like these, small comforts can go a long way. "Beauty can help," said Watinee Chaithirasakul, a fashion blogger who helped collect cosmetics for Prontip's project. "It's about helping them have a mentality that will allow them to live in that space." — AFP



Prontip Mankong, a former political prisoner, holding a container of recycled lipstick.



Qatari artist Ahmed Bin Majed Al-Maadheed stands next to his paintings of Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani titled 'Glorious Tamim' at a gallery in Doha.—AFP photos



Qatari artist Ahmed Bin Majed Al-Maadheed stands next to his painting of Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani titled 'Glorious Tamim' at a gallery in Doha.



## With Qatar in crisis, 'Tamim the Glorious' rises as national emblem

As Qatar finds itself at the center of a diplomatic storm, a young artist has shot to stardom with a sketch of the emir now the emblem of Qatari nationalism. In the capital Doha, Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani's face is everywhere, thanks to a silhouette of the ruler's profile and the slogan "Tamim Al-majd"—Arabic for "Tamim the Glorious"—on bumpers, shop windows, concrete walls and mobile phone cases. "I have no words to describe what I feel when I see my illustration everywhere," says Ahmed Al-Maadheed, who created his design hours after Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt cut ties with Qatar on June 5 for its alleged support for Islamist extremism and ties to Iran. Qatar has denied the allegations.

"It's a gift from God to have the honor to draw his majesty's portrait and have it become a symbol", Maadheed told AFP in Doha. Maadheed posted a portrait of the emir, sketched hastily in black and white immediately after Saudi Arabia and its allies announced the sanctions against Qatar, to his personal Twitter and Instagram accounts. The emir's profile, and the line "Tamim the Glorious" in intricate Arabic calligraphy, spread like wildfire in Qatar after a retweet by the emir's brother, finding its way into the streets as posters, stickers, flags and even jewelry.

The design also resurfaced as a graffiti stencil, frequently painted in black and accompanied by the red-and-white Qatari flag. The success of "Tamim the Glorious" propelled the then-unknown artist into the limelight overnight, and by the end of June he had exhibited his work at an annex of Qatar's art museum and one of Doha's top hotels. Nearly all the paintings sold that month. Maadheed's paintings are frequently patriotic, featuring portraits of the royal family and even Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan—an ally of Sheikh Tamim who has come to Qatar's aid with food supplies and military training in the Gulf crisis.

"I draw inspiration from my culture, from nature ... but also from well-known figures", Maadheed said. The emblem of the emir has since been translated to English for the country's sizeable expatriate community, who make up 80 percent of Qatar's 2.5 million population, and stickers and banners in English are now visible across the Qatari capital. Maadheed, who runs a small advertising agency by day, said he had been offered \$10 million (8.4 million euros) for the original Arabic design by a private party, but opted instead to gift it to Sheikh Tamim. "I'm thankful God gave me the chance to create this sort of work ... which expresses my love for the emir," Maadheed said. — AFP

## US tug of war over disputed relic from Lebanon

A tug of war has broken out over an ancient relic from Lebanon that New York's leading art museum suspects may have been stolen during the Lebanese civil war. Manhattan prosecutors have impounded the bull's head and are seeking to return it to Lebanon. But husband-and-wife art collectors from Colorado have filed their own lawsuit, seeking the relic be returned to them. Believed to be of Greek origin, the marble head dates back to around 360 BC and is 13 inches (33 centimeters) tall.

It is the second item from the Metropolitan Museum of Art to wind up in the hands of prosecutors in recent weeks. In late July, the Met also surrendered an ancient vase amid concerns that it might have been stolen from Italy. Lynda and William Beierwaltes

initially purchased the head in 1996 from a London dealer, who had bought it from an art dealer in Switzerland. According to The New York Times, they paid \$1 million for the artwork. But in 2010, the couple sold the head to a private collector in the United States, who loaned it to the Met, which put it on public display.

After a curator discovered it may have been stolen from government storage during Lebanon's civil war, the Museum said it took "immediate action" and handed over the head to the Manhattan district attorney's office. "We contacted the Lebanese government and the lender, we took the item off display, and we have been working with federal and state authorities," said Museum spokesman Kenneth Weine.

But when Lebanon demanded restitution, the Beierwaltes, who

rescinded the 2010 sale, filed a 20-page lawsuit in a US federal court against Lebanon's directorate of antiquities and the New York district attorney's office. "The Beierwaltes are bona fide purchasers with clean hands. By contrast, for more than 50 years, Lebanon has failed take any action domestically or internationally to report any theft of the bull's head," said their lawyer William Pearlstein. Pearlstein says there were no grounds under federal law for state prosecutors to seize the relic and that even if the head had been stolen, the statute of limitations under Lebanese law has expired. The district attorney's office declined to comment. — AFP

Cooking on a deadline:

# PANKO-CRUSTED FISH WITH TZATZIKI

By Katie Workman

Any flaky white fish would be perfect in this recipe. You just want a mild, moist fish, which then will be encased in a crunchy coating, and a base for the flavorful, creamy and crunchy sauce. Serve this up with some steamed or sauteed green beans to round out the plate.

Tzatziki is one of the most classic Greek sauces, served with everything from pita (as a dip) to lamb to seafood. It's a refreshing mix of cucumber, garlic and yogurt, and then the options broaden. You can add any number of fresh herbs, such as dill, oregano, mint, parsley, even the fronds of fennel bulbs. You can swap out the garlic for shallots, or another member of the onion family. Olive oil is often added for a bit of richness, and there is usually some sort of acid, like

lemon juice or vinegar, to give it a little kick. I added some chopped fennel to this version because I love its anise-y flavor. The amount of garlic is fairly light; add more if you wish.

Different cultures have their own versions of cucumber yogurt sauce, and if you like tzatziki, it's worth digging in deeper. And if you like tzatziki as much as I do, you may want to make extra to serve up with pita chips the next day, or perhaps dollop it on a piece of grilled chicken or a chop. Leftover roasted meat thinly sliced and piled into a pita with tzatziki makes a great makeshift gyro. Tzatziki is best eaten within a day of making it, as the mixture can start to become watery from the cucumbers.



## PANKO-CRUSTED FISH WITH TZATZIKI

### Ingredients

Serves 4; start to finish: 45 minutes  
 1 small cucumber  
 1/2 cup minced fennel  
 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste  
 4 (6-ounce) fillets barramundi or halibut  
 Freshly ground pepper to taste  
 2 eggs, beaten  
 1 1/2 cups panko bread crumbs  
 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley  
 2 tablespoons olive oil  
 1 teaspoon chopped fresh mint  
 1 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano  
 2 teaspoons lemon juice  
 1/2 teaspoon finely minced garlic  
 1 1/2 cups plain Greek yogurt

### Preparation

Peel the cucumber. Slice in half lengthwise, and scrape out the seeds with a teaspoon. Grate the cucumber using the large holes on a box grater, or the grating blade in a food processor. Toss the cucumber with the fennel and salt, and place in a strainer over a bowl or in the sink.

Season the fish with salt and pepper. Place the egg and panko into two separate shallow bowls. Stir the parsley into the panko. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Dunk each fillet in the egg, so that it is well coated, then dredge each fillet in the panko mixture. Place the coated fillets in the hot oil and saute the fish for about 3 to 4 minutes on each side, until cooked through and golden brown. Transfer the fish to a paper towel-lined plate.

Use your hands to squeeze the cucumber mixture to press out any extra liquid, then place in a medium bowl. Add the mint, oregano, lemon juice, garlic and yogurt. Stir well, and add pepper and any additional salt as needed (remember the cucumbers and fennel were salted at the beginning). Serve the fish hot, with a spoonful of tzatziki on the side.—AP



# Blueberry pie:

## The perfect summer dessert

By Maulton

**H**ere's a ridiculously simple summer dessert - the happy marriage of blueberry pie and French toast with a little cinnamon sugar sprinkled on top. It's perfect not only for blueberry lovers, but also for those home cooks who consider themselves dessert-impaired.

For all of their wonderfulness, blueberries can be unpredictable, even in season. Some are sweet as candy. Others are tart enough to make your whole head pucker. Naturally, then, whenever you plan to make a recipe with blueberries, you have to start by tasting them. If the batch at hand is too sweet, ratchet up the acid in your recipe. If they're too tart, add more of the sweetener.

My favorite blueberry sweetener is maple syrup. The two go beautifully

together. But be sure that your maple syrup is robust. Until just a few years ago, the strongest-tasting maple syrup was labeled Grade B. But then the labeling system was changed. Now your eyes should be peeled for the words dark or robust on the label. In general, the darker the color, the stronger the flavor.

The filling is thickened with cornstarch, which has a tendency to clump up. Prevent clumping by carefully mixing the cornstarch into the berry-and-maple-syrup mixture at the start of the recipe, then give it a second vigorous stir two-thirds of the way through the baking period. One of this recipe's bonuses is its versatility. Evenings you can serve it hot, right out of the oven, topped with whipped cream or ice cream - and call it dessert. Mornings you can serve it cold, topped with yogurt - and call it breakfast. Either way, you'll find it delightful.



## BLUEBERRY PIE WITH CINNAMON FRENCH TOAST CRUST

### Ingredients

Start to finish: 1 hour, 15 minutes (30 active)

Servings: 6

4 cups blueberries  
 1/3 cup dark maple syrup  
 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice  
 2 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch  
 1/4 teaspoon table salt  
 2 large eggs, beaten lightly  
 1/3 cup whole milk  
 2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
 6 slices homemade-style white or whole-wheat bread, crusts discarded  
 1 tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

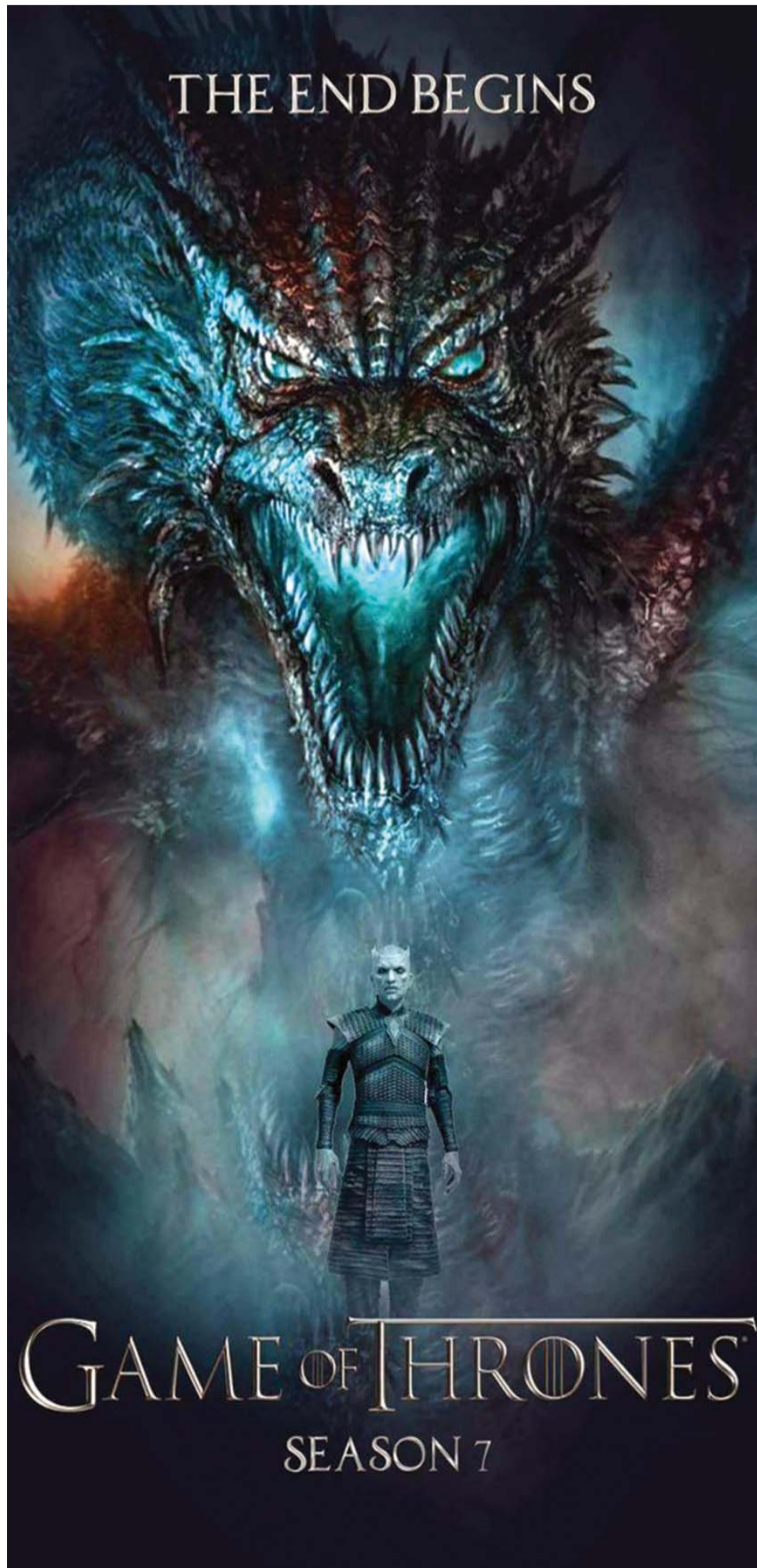
Vanilla ice cream or whipped cream for garnish

### Preparation

Preheat oven to 400 F. In a 9-inch deep-dish pie plate toss the blueberries with the maple syrup and the lemon juice. Combine the cornstarch and the salt in a small strainer and sift the mixture evenly over the blueberries. Stir the blueberries gently, using a rubber spatula until the cornstarch is dissolved and evenly distributed. Cover the pie plate with foil and bake the blueberries on the middle shelf of the oven for 20 minutes. Take the dish out of the oven, lift up the foil and stir the blueberries gently with the rubber spatula, scraping the bottom of the dish to mix everything well. Cover and bake another 10 minutes.

In a bowl combine the eggs, milk and vanilla. Cut the bread slices in half diagonally. In a small bowl combine the sugar and cinnamon. When the blueberries are done, remove the foil and working with one bread half at a time, dip the bread in the egg batter, until it is well moistened but not soggy, letting the excess batter drip off and then place the slice on top of the blueberries. Continue with the remaining slices and the remaining batter, arranging the slices in an overlapping decorative pattern. Sprinkle the cinnamon sugar evenly over the bread slices and bake the pie for 12 to 15 minutes or until the bread slices are golden brown. Serve right away topped either with the ice cream or the whipped cream.—AP

# A Conversation of Ice and Fire: Diving into the world of Game of Thrones



## Episode III

By Aakash and Vishal Bakaya

What better way to celebrate 'Game of Thrones', the world's biggest cultural phenomenon than sitting down and criticizing it with my brother. My elder brother Vishal and I are both mega fans of 'A Song of Ice and Fire' and we'll be taking a look at each episode this season and provide a run-down and re-cap of all the major and minor moments. Episode 3 'The Queen's Justice' was a major let-down on pretty much every front so prepare for an epic lambasting.

### General thoughts

**A:** I thought we'll do something different for part 3 and get right into the meat of the episode. Basically let's start of by giving our general opinion on the episode overall.

**V:** My main thoughts on the episode are that they attempted to focus on the right things but failed spectacularly. The first half was paced decently by fleshing out the important reunions of Jon and Dany, Cersei and the Sand Snakes along with Sansa and Bran. The scenes didn't feel too rushed like I thought they would. However they were still an utter failure because the quality of the writing just wasn't anywhere up to the mark. The ridiculousness of the second half just made things even worse. The pacing shoots to absurd speeds with plots being condensed and the laziness of the set-ups become overpowering especially when you look at Sam and Jorah in Oldtown. It felt like it was written under a strict deadline with little to no thought given to most of the scenes.

**A:** I also thought the dialogue was extremely weak. If I had to put my finger on what exactly is making these important reunions and conversations so empty is that they all feel so forced. It's obvious that the show runners are pushing these characters onto one and another and this has affected the show for the last few seasons. These problems are clearly on display once again in episode 3. The reunion of the Stark siblings was a highlight of the episode for me simply because the dialogue felt less on the nose, a bit more nuanced and it naturally drew me in. In comparison, King's Landing squandered any of the tension it might have had by making Cersei ramble for so long I forgot what she was talking about half way through.

**V:** I felt the entire scene was carried by Ellaria and Tyene's actors. It was only memorable because of how well they portrayed their desperation no matter how out of place it seemed for them.

**A:** The acting was fine but looking back, Cersei's overbearing monologue just ruins what was potentially a key point in both Dorne's and

### Cersei's arc.

**V:** It was similar to last season's finale but without any Gregor Clegane torture implications. Having him stand there like a useless tree infuriated me.

**A:** I was confused at how nonchalant Ellaria seemed to see a dead man standing right in front of her. Why would she not bring that up? It's weird how everyone has just grown to accept a man being risen from the dead.

### Dwarfs, bastards and broken things

**A:** Before getting into the other major issues with this episode, I wanted to focus our attention on Tyrion. As a fan from the very first season, Tyrion Lannister was the character that got me obsessed with the show. Even in terms of television history - Tyrion has already made his mark and will go down in the echelons of TV folklore. But the last few seasons have been far from kind to our lovable dwarf. The show has seemed to have lost all motivation for him; he has no drive and no real purpose except advising



Dany which seems like a role for much less important character. The consistency the writers once had when tackling Tyrion is gone. They were unable to adapt his arc from the books after he killed his father and the changes they've made are both predictable and meaningless.

**V:** I feel like they are faking another arc for him without acknowledging any of his growth or mistakes from the previous seasons. They



made him make foolish mistakes he never would have done before and instead of learning from them - he was rewarded by becoming Dany's Hand, a title he actually earned in the first season.

**A:** I completely agree. It feels repetitive of his earlier arcs but done way worse. The last few seasons never bothered giving us a memorable, stand-out scene with Tyrion which is a shame since at one point many of the show's most iconic moments revolved around him. He's become a shell of his former character.

**V:** Surprisingly it was this episode that showed a small spark of Tyrion's directness and intelligence. When Dany was consulting him about Jon and why she should let him mine for dragonglass, he gave her the obvious answer that helping Jon will only help their cause. He spoke straight and was upfront with her and at least they are utilising that aspect of him. Strangely enough, he also remembers the reason why some characters came to Dragonstone in the place.

**A:** (Laughs) the shoddy writing was all over the place there. The fact that Tyrion had to indirectly remind Jon that he came all the way here to acquire dragonglass was alarmingly stupid. That entire conversation was the perfect depiction of fan-service. It felt like they were pandering to the audience by giving them talking point that made no logical sense. Jon never needed to come here himself and just because he acknowledges his senseless actions - that doesn't magically make them make sense. The show gives this impression of being high-fantasy fiction but with dialogue like 'you look a lot better brooding than I do' makes it feel like the exact opposite.

**V:** It was definitely fan service but I also think

you can do it well. The last episode meeting between Arya and Nymeria was exactly that but it was more emotionally impactful in every way - and that scene was between a girl and a wolf! Here though, I feel like they are just insulting the intelligence of the audience.

#### Plot holes and conveniences

**A:** Rolling from your last point you made about the show's plot lines being insultingly illogical both in the world and for the audience. From having Euron's fleet sneaking up behind Greyworm at Casterly Rock to having Jorah recovering from his greyscale operation in less than half a day, it's coming to a point where you must raise your hand in protest. Look, we know the geography of Westeros and there are only so many times you can have entire armies' teleporting across the continent in a flash. We know Dragonstone is located right at the entrance of the bay leading up to King's Landing and having Euron go to and fro from the capital to anywhere else he wants is just ludicrous. You can do it once, you can even do it twice but the third time is the breaking point. The map of all the important locations is shown on the opening credit of every episode as well! For the show to continuously dismiss this is as you said - insulting.

**V:** It's more than just the teleportation devices. My grievances lie firstly with the King of the North coming with just Davos and two unknown individuals to a potentially life threatening location with no backup plan whatsoever. Then when we are lead to believe that the Tyrells are marshalling their forces for Daenerys yet when the battle begins they are left defenceless with only an old lady looking out of her balcony. The

show has built the Tyrells to be one of the most powerful houses of the region which won the battle of the Blackwater in the 2nd season and was main reason behind the inter-marriages of the proceeding ones. The same house gets demolished off-screen by some minor force outside their walls for no real reason. How and why were they valuable allies to Dany in the first place? It makes no sense. Finally the attack on Casterly Rock getting blindsided in broad daylight just takes these logical fallacies to the next face palming extreme.

**A:** There is no way the show can justify rushing the plot like this. The characters wouldn't be able to move around so effortlessly even if they had access to cars and roads.

**V:** Also can someone please explain how Jorah is perfectly fine so quickly?! He has his top layer of skin peeled off so what can the defence for this be - 'sorry we aren't catering to dermatologists'? From what we saw of the procedure, the recovery period would easily be much longer than a single afternoon, he's definitely not going to be standing without a single covering cloth at least.

**A:** It's infuriating that they are expecting us to either not think about these points or just happily accept it. Earlier I mentioned the Winterfell story-line being a highlight but the more I actually think at it, the dumber it gets.

**V:** Yeah like how Northern armourers are forging breastplates without leather. How did they need Sansa to tell them to make them warm - you are all living in almost sub-zero temperatures!

**A:** Making your characters sound smart by drastically reducing the IQ levels of everyone around them is a prime example of how lazy the writing has become. At the end of the day, I still believe we are so critical of the show cause the earlier seasons and the source material is of the highest quality, now it just reeks of mediocrity and wasted potential.

**V:** The amount of cliched TV tropes is getting out of hand and it's a thing we might bring up in the future. Now to just sum it up - the show has become 'my violence is better than your violence', nothing else seems to matter.

**A:** It's a shame that it actually sums up where the show is going quite well. You're watching who butts head the hardest without any consequence (until the very last episode) with no build up and zero dramatic tension. The epic action set pieces as fun as they are to watch should not be the sole talking points of the show.



Friday Times

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2017

# Travel



Horse trekking is a popular choice for day trips in the Alay Valley

**Exploring the Alay Valley**

## Central Asia's trekking utopia



29

Travel

Friday Times

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2017



Wild camping on the three-day Sary Oi and Ak Tor Pass trek.

***The Alay region of southern Kyrgyzstan is the kind of place mountain lovers dream about. Turquoise lakes fringed with yurts sit at the base of towering 7000m peaks, offering some of the world's most glorious mountain views at every turn. It is simply a stunning corner of Central Asia that is almost completely unknown, cheap to visit and ripe for exploration. What's the catch? There isn't one.***

**N**ot many trekkers head to Central Asia, fewer still visit Kyrgyzstan and, of those, only a handful continue as far south as the Alay Valley, a claw of land squeezed between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The region consists of two parallel mountain ranges, the Alay and Trans-Alay (spurs of the Tian Shan and Pamir ranges respectively), separated by the high-altitude Alay Valley.

This is the crossroads of high Asia, where roads lead south onto the Pamir plateau of Tajikistan, east over the Irkestham Pass to Kashgar in China's Xinjiang province, and north to the fertile silk-growing Fergana Valley of Uzbekistan. These routes funneled a major branch of the Silk Road; even Marco Polo passed nearby.

#### **Trekking the Alay**

The Alay today is primarily home to Kyrgyz herders who bring their cows, sheep, yaks and horses to fatten in the summer pastures, setting up yurt camps in the lush alpine valleys from June to September. Framing the pastures to the south, an unbroken chain of peaks rises sheer from the valley's wide plain. There are no foothills and no pesky approach treks, just massive, stunning views of some of the highest peaks outside the Himalaya.

Mountains, yurts, horses - so far so good, but what makes the Alay region really special is the network of Community Based Tourism (CBT) providers that offer no-hassle vehicle and horse hire, guides, homestays and even a network of herders' yurts. Set up to provide a source of income for communities bypassed by mainstream tourism, rates for these services offer excellent value because there are no middle men.



Hiker soaking in the majesty of Peak Lenin on a day hike from Tulpar Kol



Hiking the Alay Mountains near Kum Bel Pass

For visitors, yurts are the key that opens up the high valleys and their stunning scenery. With CBT's help, you can hike several routes in the Alay with little more than a daypack, offering all the convenience of Nepali-style tea-house trekking without the crowds. It's that rarest of travel alignments: world-class mountain scenery, easy accessibility and low cost.

We spent several weeks scouting the best trips in the Alay and the following are our favourites, ranging from a four-day trek to a series of day hikes done from a comfy yurt base at the foot of Peak Lenin. All offer epic scenery and adventure without the need for expedition-style planning. To arrange them, contact CBT in Osh or Sary Moghul a day or two in advance.

#### Jiptik Pass

The most interesting way to access the Alay Valley is on foot, crossing the Alay range over the 4180m Jiptik Pass. It's a relatively easy three-day trek and, in July and August, CBT runs yurt stays on either side of the pass, which means you don't need to drag a tent or stove over the pass (a definite advantage!). The trek starts in Kojokelen (where there are homestays) and follows an old Soviet-era road, now little more than a faded track, up into the high valleys. From the pass, there are epic views south to a 100km-wide swath of muscular 7000m Pamir peaks. As you descend

through lush valleys, you will invariably be invited by local herders for a cup of green tea and a dastarkhan (table cloth) filled with bowls of deliciously fresh yoghurt and thick kaimak (cream).

#### Tulpar Kol and Peak Lenin

There are few mountains in the world that combine Peak Lenin's jaw-dropping scale (7136m) with such ease of access. An hour-long jeep ride (US\$20) from the town of Sary Moghul drops you at a CBT yurt camp at Tulpar K'I, a 3500m-high lake at the base of the mountain, whose sheer 3km wall frames the horizon to the south. A 90-minute walk takes you to the foot of glaciers tumbling off the massive peak.

At the beginning and end of the season you can cross the stream near Tulpar Kol and hike past the climbers' base camp at Achik Tash up to astonishing views at Wild Onion Meadow (Lukovaya Polyana), though you need to double check with CBT whether permits are needed. Though it's regarded as one of the world's easiest 7000m summits, Peak Lenin is also infamous for one of climbing's worst disasters, when an avalanche killed 43 climbers in July 1990 (only one of the bodies was ever found).

Here's a tip: for an even quieter experience, make the 90-minute horse ride east to the Tuiuk yurtstay in the neighboring valley,

where equally fabulous day hikes await. Both sets of yurts provide dinner, breakfast, tea and a cosy bed of duvets for US\$15 per person.

#### Kosh Kol Lakes

The ramshackle village of Sary Moghul is the largest settlement in the Alay Valley and is home to several homestays and a CBT office. There are some fabulous day trips that can take you up to the high mountain lakes of the Alay range. The Besh Kol lakes just north of town are a beautiful chain of five tarns (mountain pools) and can also be accessed as part of a four-day trek back to Osh over the Sary Moghul Pass, but both the pass and lakes are often snowed in until mid-June. An alternative is the Dam Jailoo valley hike, which winds up through lush pastures (or jailoo) for three hours to a pair of high-altitude lakes known as the Kosh Kol (Double Lakes), at 4130m. The treeless, rolling valley feels like it could be lifted from Iceland or Greenland and offers great camping spots. CBT can arrange a day's jeep hire to the start of the trek for US\$45.

#### Sary Oi & the Ak Tor Pass

For a taste of nomadic life, CBT in Osh can arrange a fantastic three- or four-day walk through the alpine valleys an hour south of the city. The route takes you past herding camps selling fresh mare's milk, up a gentle ridge to the 3086m Kum Bel Pass and then

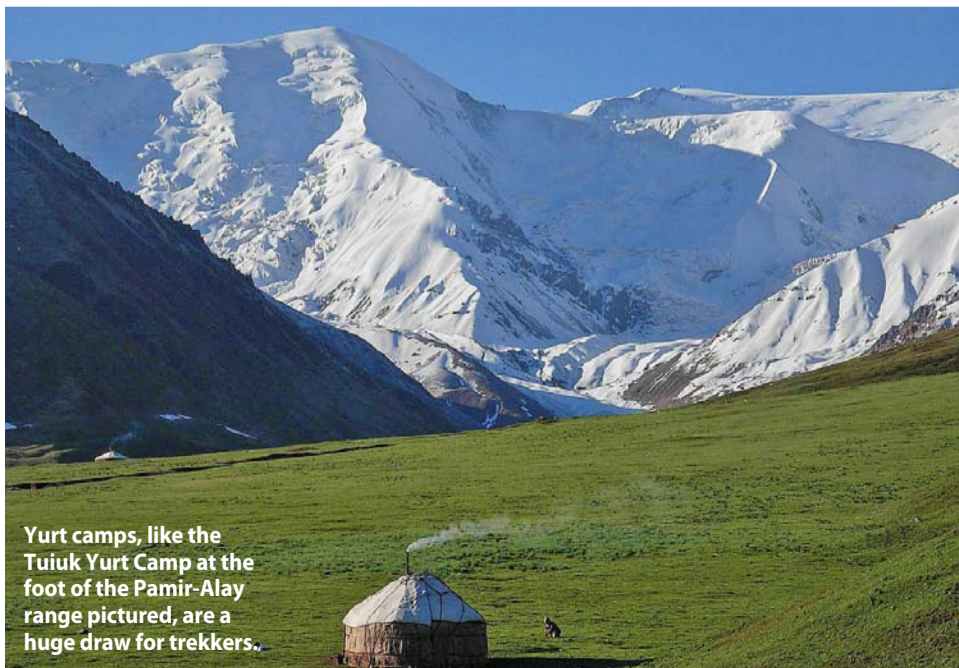
down to a CBT yurtstay in Sary Oi. From here, it's up the increasingly wild valley to a campsite nestled at the base of granite peaks.

The next day takes you up into the stunning mountain amphitheatre around the 3540m Ak Tor Pass, before descending to a final night's yurt camp just above the Murdash Valley. The scenery ranges from lush corduroy-green valleys dotted with white yurts and Kyrgyz herders to high alpine vistas of rock and ice. CBT can arrange yurtstays in Chyrchik, Sary Oi and Murdash and offers horse treks that stay only in yurts, though you'll need a tent and food for a night if you want to cross the Ak Tor Pass.

#### Make it happen

The Alay Valley is just a couple of hours' drive from Osh, Kyrgyzstan's second largest city, which has cheap daily flights from the capital Bishkek. The region can also be accessed from nearby Uzbekistan (a comfortable new train link connects Tashkent with Andijon just across the border); from China via the Irkeshtam Pass; and from Tajikistan's Pamir Highway. CBT has offices in Osh and Sary Moghul and can arrange homestays (US\$15 per night half board), horse hire (US\$15 per day) and trekking guides (US\$15 per day). Kyrgyzstan does not require a visa for most nationalities.

— (www.lonelyplanet.com)



Yurt camps, like the Tuiuk Yurt Camp at the foot of the Pamir-Alay range pictured, are a huge draw for trekkers.



A trailside snack: Non bread, green tea, kaimak (cream) and kurort (dried yoghurt balls).



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

In taking care of business, it is important to stay focused. There is a sense of emotional coolness or detachment at the personal level. It is ideas that count for you now, more than narrowly personal concerns-and you may have little tolerance for people who do not function at this level. You do not waste words today as communications tend to be short and to the point. Take time to be specific and ask for feedback so that you can be sure you were clear in your instructions to others. Take care of every last detail by proofing, or if possible, exchanging your work with someone else and proofing the other's work. Develop and use your critical faculties. You are determined to complete your tasks. This evening is an excellent time to relax by music.



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

Inventions, in particular in communications, perhaps by updating computers and electronics, may be a path of temptation to move into some type of new profession. There are clear perspectives into your present reality, making situations easier to understand. You are tolerant and accepting of differences and have good insights into problems. Independent, you like to promote and compromise and otherwise show your desire and abilities to understand others. You may be unconventional in matters of philosophy and religion-always finding new ways to get past the fluff. You must understand, however, that your insights into truth and the eternal make you a loner at times. You seek to understand situations by finding new ways to better conditions.



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

This is a time of good fortune when things open up in a very natural way for you. Opportunities are plenty and you may find yourself wanting and able to do almost anything. This is one of those days that everything blends together and results are the best they can be. Now . . . Here are some real opportunities to complete and work out difficulties and projects that require both long-term effort and a high degree of discipline. This is also a day that is good for most job-related events. You could represent or speak for your company at this time. Any personal matters you want to accomplish or business matters that need tending will also certainly end in positive ways. Tonight would be a good time to pal around with some of your friends-maybe sports.



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

You are in control of your day, especially when interacting with superiors. You may find that you enjoy your job or the responsibility it requires. It is ideas that count for you now, more than narrowly personal concerns. You are at your most practical when it comes to dealing and working with others. You know just what to do and can act without haste. Your ideal dream is a private one and heaven is as close as work and family. The romantic in you struggles against the frontier spirit that often moves you to action. You will continue to develop a knack for organizing things and people as a sense of ambition and practicality deepens. Work, achievement and ambition mean a lot to you now-show off your skills.



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

Your dreams and ideals are very important to you. You may be more focused on your goals now than ever before. You busy yourself putting those plans of yours to work. You will notice that you have become more focused in your work lately. This afternoon, when you show up early for a family get-together, they may be surprised as well as pleased that you broke free from your projects in order to be with them. You are intuitively learning your limits as well as implementing a balance in your life. There is time this evening for making a few special plans that will help you complete one or two of your goals. You may find yourself putting your whole heart into making your dreams and ideals a reality. Much can be accomplished without stress.



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

Saying or writing with style comes natural to you these days. New words to increase your vocabulary expertise can be a fun activity between you and a friend or co-worker. Your ability to discriminate real breakthroughs and spot new trends makes you able to work in areas that are at the very fringe of technology as well as psychology. You love all that is new and different and electronics, computers, communication-in fact, everything electrical is where your attention stays focused most of this day. There is a desire for variety this evening, particularly where it applies to romantic experience and artistic tastes. A sociable, congenial, slightly frivolous orientation sets in now. You will enjoy the interaction of friends tonight.



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

Your career could assume a much more determined and solid form. This is a real time to buckle down and firm up your career goals. Your own ambition and drive are strong. You are able to use good reasonable thinking and make good choices. You can get a faster push forward by taking the right kind of action; you are positive and attentive. By working at a steady pace you will make a lot of progress. This afternoon you may find yourself advising or guiding another. Your spontaneity and unpredictability make you interesting to a group gathering this evening. You are independent and the way you come across to others creates an opportunity to teach and guide. You find some time to enjoy some simple exercise before retiring tonight.



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

You may find that a particular project is just not your cup of tea this morning. You take your turn and may have the opportunity to suggest a rotation routine so that you are not always called on to do things you do not want to do every day. A good sport attitude may be all-important just now. Outwardly you are intense and passionate and this quality is so essential to your character that all else revolves around it. This is what makes you popular when your work or personal partners want to move forward and get things accomplished. This afternoon you and your neighbors may decide that this next weekend would be perfect for a cookout. A meeting will be productive and allow everyone to pick what to bring, whose house and the theme or fun activities to enjoy.



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

You are in tune with the practical issues in the workplace today. A firm sense of direction will help get you to your destination. This is a great time to be working in groups. You may be sought after as a guide or leader. You could be most persuasive with others and charismatic in speech and communication. You could come up with new solutions or inventions, and it is good that you are willing to listen to the ideas of others. It is ideas that count for you now, more than narrowly personal concerns. Family needs are important and there is no question about attending a family event this evening. Praise and support encourages a loved one to achieve the best. You are the cheerleader and the inspiration for your family and friends.



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

Be satisfied with the ordinary and usual for now. Novel ideas or insights could be more damaging than useful. There is hectic emotional energy prevailing, but it is only temporary. After the workday is over, you could be tempted to relieve stress by purchasing some items. There is a greater appreciation for things of value and the idea of value itself is in order. This could be a period of great material gain; it is certainly a time when material things have a great deal of importance for you. If you are on a budget, give yourself twenty-four hours before making your final purchase decision. You may be helpful to a friend or close relative this evening. You are able to find the real truth about a questionable situation.



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

Anyone who tries to get you to play with words is in for a big surprise. Your mind cuts right through all the window dressing and gets right down to the quick. Before anyone knows it, you have the heart of the matter out front for everyone to see. You would make a great investigator, either in scientific research or undercover work. It makes no difference. Your ability to get to the point is all but phenomenal. You can talk and put into words areas of the psychological that others would not touch. You have an urge to put out to sea and to somehow get past what separates and into that which unites or ties things together. Your drive to make dreams real keeps you working for your vision and goals. Consider volunteer work this week.



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

Your successful optimism is obvious and therefore, catching. You see positive results from your hard work today. Family, home, relatives and real estate play a big part in your life now. Perhaps you have been planning a move and someone calls with information on just the right home for you. You work to show off your skills and you enjoy the praise you receive. This time marks a change of direction for you, away from the material and glitter, toward inner needs and security. Your intuition is strong and can guide you accurately in making forecasts or decisions; allow this to work for you. You will find yourself more concerned with maintaining and strengthening your position, rather than pushing outward. These next few months are for friends.

**COUNTRY CODES**

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



00:45 Animal Cops Philadelphia  
01:40 Wildest Europe  
02:35 Tanked  
03:25 Wildest Islands  
04:15 The Vet Life  
05:02 Untamed China With Nigel Marvin  
05:49 Wildest Europe  
06:36 Call Of The Wildman  
07:00 Call Of The Wildman  
07:25 The Vet Life  
08:15 Wildest Europe  
09:10 Wildest Islands  
10:05 Tanked  
11:00 The Vet Life  
11:55 Animal Cops Phoenix  
12:50 Wildest Europe  
13:45 Untamed China With Nigel Marvin  
14:40 Wildest Islands  
15:35 Tanked  
16:30 Monster Hammerhead  
17:25 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory  
18:20 Wildest Africa  
19:15 Tanked  
20:10 The Vet Life  
21:05 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory  
22:00 Wildest Africa  
22:55 Wildest Islands  
23:50 Monster Hammerhead



00:25 EastEnders  
00:50 Holby City  
01:50 Father Brown  
02:35 Carters Get Rich  
03:00 Mum  
03:30 Uncle  
04:00 Pramface  
04:30 Death In Paradise  
05:30 EastEnders  
06:00 Holby City  
06:55 EastEnders  
07:20 Casualty  
08:15 The Musketeers  
09:10 The Musketeers  
10:05 The Musketeers  
11:00 EastEnders  
11:30 Holby City  
12:25 The Coroner  
13:15 Father Brown  
14:00 Father Brown  
14:50 EastEnders  
15:20 The Musketeers  
16:15 The Musketeers  
17:15 The Musketeers  
18:15 Casualty  
19:05 The Coroner  
20:00 Orphan Black  
20:45 Orphan Black  
21:30 Benidorm  
22:25 Carters Get Rich  
22:50 Uncle  
23:20 Mum  
23:50 The Coroner



00:00 The First 48  
01:00 Britain's Biggest Heists  
02:00 Homicide Hunter  
03:00 The First 48  
04:00 The First 48  
05:00 Britain's Biggest Heists  
06:00 It Takes A Killer  
06:30 It Takes A Killer  
07:00 It Takes A Killer  
07:30 It Takes A Killer  
08:00 The First 48  
09:00 Homicide Hunter  
14:00 The First 48  
15:00 Cold Case Files  
16:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
17:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
18:00 It Takes A Killer  
18:30 It Takes A Killer  
19:00 The First 48  
20:00 Homicide Hunter  
21:00 Cold Case Files  
22:00 Diabolical Women  
23:00 Escaping Evil: My Life In A Cul



00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
01:20 Weather Top Tens  
02:10 Engineering Volcanoes

03:00 Destroyed In Seconds  
03:25 Destroyed In Seconds  
03:50 Alaska Gold Diggers  
04:40 How It's Made  
05:05 How It's Made  
05:30 Dirty Jobs  
06:20 Mythbusters  
07:00 Doki  
07:25 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild  
07:50 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101  
08:40 How It's Made  
09:05 How It's Made  
09:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
10:20 Mythbusters  
11:10 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101  
12:00 Alaska Gold Diggers  
12:50 How It's Made  
13:15 How It's Made  
13:40 Dirty Jobs  
14:30 Doki  
14:55 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild  
15:20 Destroyed In Seconds  
15:45 Destroyed In Seconds  
16:10 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
17:00 Now That's Funny  
17:50 The Carbonaro Effect  
18:15 The Carbonaro Effect  
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 Now That's Funny  
22:00 The Carbonaro Effect  
22:25 The Carbonaro Effect  
22:50 Destroyed In Seconds  
23:15 Destroyed In Seconds  
23:40 Alaska Gold Diggers



00:05 Important Things With Demetri Martin  
00:30 The Half Hour  
00:55 Broad City  
01:20 Chappelle's Show  
02:10 Live At The Apollo  
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
03:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol  
04:15 Sweat Inc.  
05:05 Bondi Ink  
05:55 Hungry Investors  
06:50 Urban Tarzan  
07:15 Tattoo Disasters  
07:40 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol  
08:30 Framework  
09:20 Coaching Bad  
10:10 Catch A Contractor  
11:00 Lip Sync Battle  
13:05 Disaster Date  
13:30 Disaster Date  
13:55 I Live With Models  
14:20 The It Crowd  
14:45 The It Crowd  
15:10 Nathan For You  
15:35 Nathan For You  
16:00 The Jim Gaffigan Show  
16:30 Impractical Jokers  
18:35 Lip Sync Battle  
18:59 Ridiculousness Arabia  
19:25 Ridiculousness Arabia  
19:46 The It Crowd  
20:10 The It Crowd  
20:33 Important Things With Demetri Martin  
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
21:30 The President Show  
22:00 Live At The Apollo  
22:50 Kumail Nanjiani: Beta Male  
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:30 The 1980s: The Deadliest Decade  
01:20 Murder Comes To Town  
02:10 The Detectives Club: New Orleans  
03:00 Evil Online  
03:48 Obsession: Dark Desires  
04:36 Obsession: Dark Desires  
05:24 Obsession: Dark Desires  
06:12 Obsession: Dark Desires  
07:00 Swamp Murders  
07:50 Swamp Murders  
08:40 Swamp Murders  
09:30 Swamp Murders  
10:20 The Locator  
10:45 The Locator  
11:10 Evil Online

12:00 Obsession: Dark Desires  
15:20 The Locator  
15:45 The Locator  
16:10 Killer Confessions  
17:00 Blood Relatives  
20:20 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall  
21:10 Florida's Craziest Crimes  
22:00 Evil Lives Here  
22:50 Evil Stepmothers  
23:40 Is O.J. Innocent? The Missing Evidence



00:00 Hank Zipzer  
00:25 Alex & Co.  
00:45 The Hive  
00:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:30 Binny And The Ghost  
02:55 Hank Zipzer  
03:15 The Hive  
03:20 Hank Zipzer  
03:45 Alex & Co.  
04:10 Alex & Co.  
04:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
05:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
05:25 Binny And The Ghost  
05:45 The Hive  
05:50 The 7D  
06:00 Jessie  
06:25 Jessie  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 Lolirock  
07:20 Elena Of Avalor  
07:45 Bunk'd  
08:10 Stuck In The Middle  
08:35 Bizaardvark  
09:00 Austin & Ally  
09:25 Austin & Ally  
09:50 Good Luck Charlie  
10:15 Good Luck Charlie  
10:40 Alex & Co.  
11:05 Lolirock  
11:30 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
11:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
12:00 Welcome To The Ronks  
12:15 Hank Zipzer  
12:40 Dog With A Blog  
13:05 Star Darlings  
13:10 Good Luck Charlie  
13:35 Austin & Ally  
14:00 Jessie  
14:25 Lolirock  
14:50 The Zhuzhus  
15:15 Whisker Haven Tales With The Palace Pets  
15:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
15:45 Elena Of Avalor  
16:10 Liv And Maddie  
16:35 Monsters, Inc  
18:15 Welcome To The Ronks  
18:25 Alex & Co.  
18:50 Best Friends Whenever  
19:15 Star Darlings  
19:20 Liv And Maddie  
19:45 Mako Mermaids  
20:10 Jessie  
20:35 Cracked  
20:40 Bizaardvark  
21:05 Austin & Ally  
21:30 Stuck In The Middle  
21:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
22:00 Bunk'd  
22:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
22:50 Lolirock  
23:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



00:20 Wheeler Dealers  
01:05 Ocean Warriors  
01:50 How Do They Do It?  
02:12 How Do They Do It?  
02:35 Impossible Engineering  
03:20 Fast N' Loud  
04:05 Impossible Engineering  
04:50 Gold Rush  
05:35 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 Blowing Up History  
06:45 Strip The City  
07:30 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune

08:15 Deadliest Catch  
09:00 How Do They Do It?  
09:25 Kings Of The Wild  
10:10 The Wheel: Survival Games  
10:55 Aftershock: Disaster In Nepal  
11:40 Mega Trains  
12:25 How Do They Do It?  
12:47 Fast N' Loud  
13:32 Sacred Steel Bikes  
14:17 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre  
15:02 Street Outlaws: New Orleans  
20:10 How Do They Do It?  
20:35 How Do They Do It?  
21:00 Fast N' Loud  
21:50 Sacred Steel Bikes  
22:40 Street Outlaws: New Orleans  
23:30 Deadliest Catch  
Disney XD  
06:00 Milo Murphy's Law  
06:25 Disney11  
06:50 Mech-X4  
07:15 Right Now Kapow  
07:40 Gravity Falls  
08:05 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
08:10 K.C. Undercover  
08:35 Milo Murphy's Law  
09:00 Supa Strikas  
09:50 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
10:15 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
10:20 Kickin' It  
10:45 Kickin' It  
11:10 Future-Worm!  
11:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
12:30 Atomic Puppet  
12:55 K.C. Undercover  
13:20 Flashback Friday - Your Winner  
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
14:15 Flashback Friday - Your Winner  
15:05 Meet The Robinsons  
16:50 Disney11  
17:15 Mech-X4  
17:40 Milo Murphy's Law  
18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
18:10 Gravity Falls  
18:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
19:00 Supa Strikas  
19:25 Milo Murphy's Law  
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
19:55 K.C. Undercover  
20:20 Mech-X4  
20:45 Disney11  
21:10 Walk The Prank  
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
21:45 Lab Rats  
22:10 Lab Rats  
22:35 Phineas And Ferb  
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am



00:50 Famously Single  
01:50 E! News  
02:50 Celebrity Style Story  
03:20 Celebrity Style Story  
03:50 Botched  
04:40 Botched  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
07:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
08:00 E! News: Daily Pop  
08:55 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
09:55 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
10:50 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
11:45 Celebrity Style Story  
12:15 Rob & Chyna  
13:10 Rob & Chyna  
14:05 Rob & Chyna  
15:00 E! News: Daily Pop  
15:55 Botched  
16:45 Botched  
17:35 Botched  
18:30 Celebrity Style Story  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
21:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
22:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
23:00 Botched  
23:55 Botched



06:00 Milo Murphy's Law  
06:25 Disney11  
06:50 Mech-X4

07:15 Right Now Kapow  
07:40 Gravity Falls  
08:05 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
08:10 K.C. Undercover  
08:35 Milo Murphy's Law  
09:00 Supa Strikas  
09:25 Supa Strikas  
09:50 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
10:15 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
10:20 Kickin' It  
10:45 Kickin' It  
11:10 Future-Worm!  
11:35 Lab Rats  
12:00 Lab Rats  
12:30 Atomic Puppet  
12:55 K.C. Undercover  
13:20 The Suite Life On Deck  
13:45 The Suite Life On Deck  
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
14:15 The Suite Life On Deck  
14:40 The Suite Life On Deck  
15:05 Monsters, Inc  
16:35 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
16:50 Disney11  
17:15 Mech-X4  
18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
18:10 Gravity Falls  
18:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
19:00 Supa Strikas  
19:25 Milo Murphy's Law  
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
19:55 K.C. Undercover  
20:20 Mech-X4  
20:45 Disney11  
21:10 Walk The Prank  
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
21:45 Lab Rats  
22:10 Lab Rats  
22:35 Phineas And Ferb  
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am



00:05 Famously Single  
00:55 Famously Single  
01:50 E! News  
02:50 Celebrity Style Story  
03:20 Celebrity Style Story  
03:50 Botched  
04:40 Botched  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
07:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop  
09:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
10:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
11:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
12:00 E! News  
12:15 Rob & Chyna  
13:10 Rob & Chyna  
14:05 Rob & Chyna  
15:00 E! News  
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop  
16:15 Botched  
17:10 Botched  
18:05 Botched  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
21:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
22:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
23:00 E! News  
23:15 Botched



00:00 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers  
00:30 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers  
01:00 Private Chef  
01:30 Private Chef  
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
03:00 Man Fire Food  
03:30 Man Fire Food  
04:00 Chopped  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Barefoot Contessa  
06:30 Barefoot Contessa  
07:00 The Kitchen  
08:00 The Pioneer Woman  
08:30 The Pioneer Woman  
09:00 Siba's Table  
09:30 Siba's Table  
10:00 The Pioneer Woman  
10:30 The Pioneer Woman  
11:00 The Kitchen  
12:00 The Pioneer Woman  
12:30 The Pioneer Woman

13:00 Siba's Table  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
15:00 Chopped  
16:00 The Kitchen  
17:00 The Pioneer Woman  
18:00 Chopped  
19:00 Chopped Junior  
20:00 Luke Nguyen's United Kingdom  
21:00 Reza, Spice Prince Of Thailand  
21:30 Reza, Spice Prince Of Thailand  
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
23:00 Chopped



00:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:00 Coronation Street  
02:30 The Queen's Worst Year  
03:25 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
05:15 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...  
06:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
07:05 The Queen's Worst Year  
08:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
09:30 Catchphrase  
10:00 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...  
10:55 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
11:50 The Queen's Worst Year  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:15 Emmerdale  
13:45 Coronation Street  
14:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials  
15:10 Cameraman To The Queen  
16:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
16:55 Catchphrase  
17:50 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...  
18:45 Emmerdale  
19:15 Emmerdale  
19:45 Coronation Street  
20:10 Cameraman To The Queen  
21:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
21:55 Catchphrase  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Emmerdale  
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Ancient Discoveries  
01:00 Engineering An Empire  
02:00 Engineering An Empire  
02:50 Ancient Aliens  
03:40 Blood And Glory: The Civil War In Color  
04:30 Serial Killer Earth  
05:20 Ancient Discoveries  
06:10 The Universe  
07:00 Engineering An Empire  
08:00 Engineering An Empire  
09:00 Ancient Aliens  
10:00 Patton 360  
11:00 The Universe  
12:00 Ancient Discoveries  
13:00 Engineering An Empire  
14:00 Engineering An Empire  
15:00 Ancient Aliens  
16:00 Patton 360  
17:00 The Universe  
18:00 Ancient Discoveries  
19:00 Engineering An Empire  
20:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded  
21:00 Ancient Aliens  
22:00 The Lost Evidence  
23:00 Million Dollar Genius



00:20 Pirate Treasure Of The Knights Templar  
01:10 Lost Worlds  
02:00 Ax Men  
02:50 Storage Wars Miami  
03:15 American Pickers  
04:05 Pawn Stars  
04:30 Pawn Stars  
05:00 Mountain Men  
06:00 Hunting Hitler  
06:50 Time Team  
07:40 101 People Who Made The 20th Century  
08:30 Football: A Brief History By Alfie Allen  
09:20 Swamp People  
10:10 Ax Men  
11:00 American Pickers  
11:50 American Pickers  
12:40 Lost In Transmission



13:30 Pawn Stars  
15:10 Counting Cars  
15:35 Counting Cars  
16:00 Alone: Lost And Found  
16:50 The Curse Of Oak Island  
17:40 The Curse Of Oak Island  
18:30 Car Hunters  
18:55 Car Hunters  
19:20 Counting Cars  
19:45 Counting Cars  
20:10 Mountain Men  
21:00 American Pickers  
21:50 Pawn Stars  
22:15 Pawn Stars  
22:40 Forged In Fire  
23:30 101 People Who Made The 20th Century



00:15 Eat Street  
00:45 The Food Files  
01:10 Chasing Time  
01:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
02:35 Carnival Eats  
03:00 Carnival Eats  
03:30 Street Food Around The World  
03:55 Street Food Around The World  
04:25 Confucius Was A Foodie  
05:20 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation  
06:15 Dog Whisperer  
07:10 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
08:05 Carnival Eats  
08:30 Carnival Eats  
09:00 Street Food Around The World  
09:25 Street Food Around The World  
09:55 Confucius Was A Foodie  
10:50 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation  
11:45 Dog Whisperer  
12:40 Island Hunter  
13:35 Carnival Eats  
14:00 Carnival Eats  
14:30 One Man & His Campervan  
14:55 Wineroads  
15:25 Confucius Was A Foodie  
16:20 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation  
17:15 Dog Whisperer  
18:10 Chasing Time  
18:35 Chasing Time  
19:05 Confucius Was A Foodie  
20:00 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation  
21:00 Dog Whisperer  
22:00 Chasing Time  
22:25 Chasing Time  
22:55 Island Hunter  
23:50 Carnival Eats



00:10 Supercar Megabuild  
01:00 Big Fix Alaska  
02:00 Locked Up Abroad  
03:00 World's Most Extreme  
04:00 Supercar Megabuild  
05:00 Street Genius  
05:30 Street Genius  
06:00 Science Of Stupid Sports  
06:30 Science Of Stupid Sports  
07:00 Inside  
08:00 Years Of Living Dangerously  
09:00 Street Genius  
09:30 Street Genius  
10:00 Locked Up Abroad  
11:00 Breakout: Through The Wall  
12:00 Exploring Macau With Julian Davison  
13:00 No Man Left Behind  
14:00 Seconds From Disaster  
14:30 Seconds From Disaster  
15:00 Lockdown: Scam City  
16:00 Locked Up Abroad  
17:00 Prison Women Texas Hold Em'  
18:00 Undercover USA  
19:00 Primal Survivor  
20:00 Locked Up Abroad  
20:50 Prison Women Texas Hold Em'  
21:40 Undercover USA  
22:30 Primal Survivor  
23:20 Seconds From Disaster



00:20 Super Pride  
01:10 Spine Chillers: Scorpions  
02:00 Surviving The Serengeti  
02:50 Tiger Man  
03:45 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER  
04:40 Prehistoric Predators  
05:35 Surviving The Serengeti  
06:30 Tiger Man  
07:25 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER  
08:20 Prehistoric Predators

09:15 Maneater Manhunt  
10:10 Wild Dolphins  
11:05 1000 Days For The Planet  
12:00 Search For The Giant Octopus  
12:55 Incredible Fangs  
13:50 Tiger Man  
14:45 Animal Record Breakers  
15:40 Animals Gone Wild  
16:35 Snakes In The City  
17:30 Wild Congo (2017)  
18:25 New Wave Warriors  
19:20 Animal Record Breakers  
20:10 Animals Gone Wild  
21:00 Snakes In The City  
21:50 Wild Congo (2017)  
22:40 New Wave Warriors  
23:30 Search For The Giant Octopus



00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
00:36 Rabbids Invasion  
01:00 Rabbids Invasion  
01:24 Sanjay And Craig  
01:48 Sanjay And Craig  
02:12 Winx Club  
02:36 Winx Club  
03:00 Harvey Beaks  
03:24 Harvey Beaks  
03:48 The Loud House  
04:12 The Loud House  
04:36 Breadwinners  
05:00 Breadwinners  
05:24 Get Blake  
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
07:00 The Loud House  
07:24 Rabbids Invasion  
07:48 Get Blake  
08:12 Harvey Beaks  
08:36 Sanjay And Craig  
09:00 Rank The Prank  
09:24 Henry Danger  
09:48 100 Things To Do Before High School  
10:12 Game Shakers  
10:36 Regal Academy  
11:00 Rags  
12:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
13:00 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
13:24 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
13:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
14:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
14:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
15:00 Rank The Prank  
15:24 Rank The Prank  
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
16:36 The Loud House  
17:00 Regal Academy  
17:24 Winx Club  
17:48 Hunter Street  
18:12 Henry Danger  
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
19:00 School Of Rock  
19:24 Game Shakers  
19:48 The Thundermans  
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
21:00 The Loud House  
21:24 Sanjay And Craig  
21:48 Rabbids Invasion  
22:12 Breadwinners  
22:36 Harvey Beaks  
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants  
23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants  
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



00:02 Max & Ruby  
00:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
00:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
00:46 The Day Henry Met  
00:51 The Day Henry Met  
00:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
01:18 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
01:40 Zack & Quack  
02:02 Team Umizoomi  
02:24 Olive The Ostrich  
02:29 Olive The Ostrich  
02:34 Paw Patrol  
02:57 Little Charmers  
03:09 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
03:21 Dora The Explorer  
03:43 Max & Ruby  
04:05 Nella The Princess Knight  
04:28 Shimmer And Shine  
04:52 Dora And Friends  
05:15 Zack & Quack  
05:26 The Day Henry Met  
05:31 The Day Henry Met  
05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
06:00 Rusty Rivets  
06:12 Paw Patrol  
06:37 Dora The Explorer

07:00 Zack & Quack  
07:21 Bubble Guppies  
07:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
08:07 Paw Patrol  
08:30 Shimmer And Shine  
08:53 Nella The Princess Knight  
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 Shimmer And Shine  
11:38 Shimmer And Shine  
12:01 Max & Ruby  
12:25 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 Nella The Princess Knight  
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 Bubble Guppies  
19:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
20:07 Paw Patrol  
20:30 Shimmer And Shine  
20:53 Nella The Princess Knight  
21:15 The Day Henry Met  
21:22 Paw Patrol  
21:45 Rusty Rivets  
21:57 Bubble Guppies  
22:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies  
22:40 Zack & Quack  
22:52 Team Umizoomi  
23:15 Shimmer And Shine  
23:38 Shimmer And Shine



00:15 The Middle  
00:40 The Middle  
01:05 Baskets  
01:30 Baskets  
01:55 Better Things  
02:20 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
04:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
04:50 George Lopez  
05:15 Two And A Half Men  
05:40 American Housewife  
06:05 The Mick  
06:30 Mom  
06:55 Breaking In  
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
09:50 George Lopez  
10:15 Two And A Half Men  
10:40 Mom  
11:05 Breaking In  
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
12:20 Seinfeld  
12:45 Seinfeld  
13:10 The Middle  
13:35 The Middle  
14:00 George Lopez  
14:25 Wrecked  
14:50 Mom  
15:15 American Housewife  
15:40 The Mick  
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
17:00 Seinfeld  
17:30 Seinfeld  
18:00 The Middle  
18:30 The Middle  
19:00 Powerless  
19:30 Baby Daddy  
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
21:00 Seinfeld  
21:30 Seinfeld  
22:00 Baskets  
22:30 Baskets  
23:00 Better Things



00:40 Famous In Love  
01:30 Beyond  
02:20 Blindspot  
03:20 The Flash  
04:10 Once Upon A Time  
05:00 Good Morning America  
07:00 The View  
07:45 The Chew  
08:30 Famous In Love  
09:20 The Flash  
10:10 Once Upon A Time  
11:00 Blindspot  
11:45 The Night Shift  
12:30 The View  
13:15 The Chew  
14:00 Live Good Morning America  
16:00 Once Upon A Time  
17:00 The Flash  
18:00 Blindspot  
19:00 Time After Time  
20:00 The Fosters  
21:00 Secret City  
22:00 Feud  
23:00 Blood Drive  
23:50 Grimm



### ACTION

00:15 Skin Trade  
02:05 7500  
03:30 Judge Dredd  
05:15 Compadres  
07:00 King Arthur  
09:05 Harlock: Space Pirate  
11:00 Judge Dredd  
12:40 Rise Of The Legend  
14:55 King Arthur  
17:00 Beyond Redemption  
18:30 Star Wars: The Force Awakens  
20:50 Momentum  
22:30 The Dead Lands



### FAMILY

00:40 Pirates Of The Caribbean: Curse Of The Black Pearl  
03:10 Hotel Transylvania 2  
04:45 Mars Needs Moms  
06:20 Beethoven's Second  
07:55 Pirates Of The Caribbean: Curse Of The Black Pearl  
10:25 Home On The Range  
11:50 Hotel Transylvania 2  
13:25 The Wild  
15:00 The Incredibles  
17:00 Diary Of A Wimpy Kid: Rodrick Rules  
18:45 James And The Giant Peach  
20:10 Turbo: A Power Rangers Movie  
21:55 The Incredibles  
23:55 The Wild



00:00 Beyond  
01:00 Blindspot  
01:50 Grimm  
02:40 Famous In Love  
03:30 Beyond  
04:20 Blindspot  
05:20 The Flash  
06:10 Once Upon A Time  
07:00 Good Morning America  
09:00 The View  
09:45 The Chew  
10:30 Famous In Love  
11:20 The Flash  
12:10 Once Upon A Time  
13:00 Blindspot  
13:45 The Night Shift  
14:30 The View  
15:15 The Chew  
16:00 Live Good Morning America  
18:00 Once Upon A Time  
19:00 The Flash  
20:00 Blindspot  
21:00 Time After Time  
22:00 The Fosters  
23:00 Secret City



### COMEDY

00:00 Vacation  
01:40 Art School Confidential  
03:25 There's Always Woodstock  
05:05 Perfect Match  
06:35 Joe Somebody

08:15 Take Care  
10:00 Perfect Match  
11:35 Joe Somebody  
13:15 Junior  
15:10 The Grand Seduction  
17:05 The Duff  
18:50 Taxi  
20:30 Awful Nice  
22:15 Neighbors



### FESTIVAL

00:25 The Informant  
02:25 Still Alice  
04:10 The Manchurian Candidate  
06:20 5 Flights Up  
08:00 Pele: Birth Of A Legend  
09:55 Still Alice  
11:40 Land Of Mine  
13:30 We Are Many  
15:25 Brooklyn  
17:20 The Descendants  
19:20 The Assassination Of Jesse James  
22:00 And Justice For All



### KIDS

00:50 The Happy Cricket  
02:25 Lego DC: Justice League  
Gotham City Breakout  
03:50 Egon And Donci  
05:15 The Tigger Movie  
06:55 The Heart Of The Oak  
08:15 Legend Of The Sea  
09:35 The Swan Princess: Pirate Today, Princess Tomorrow  
11:05 Song Of The Sea  
12:40 The Happy Cricket  
14:15 Lego DC: Justice League  
Gotham City Breakout  
15:40 Pooh's Heffalump Halloween Movie  
16:50 The Swan Princess: Pirate Today, Princess Tomorrow  
18:20 Bamse And The City Of Thieves  
19:40 Micropolis  
21:15 Pooh's Heffalump Halloween Movie  
22:25 Legend Of The Sea  
23:45 Bamse And The City Of Thieves



02:15 Hudson Hawk  
04:10 The Lovely Bones  
06:30 Planes, Trains And Automobiles  
08:10 Hudson Hawk  
09:50 Eight Men Out  
11:50 Spectre  
14:20 The Blind Side  
16:30 The Walk  
18:35 Big Fish  
20:40 Lucy  
22:10 Primal Fear



00:30 How Do They Do It?  
00:55 Food Factory  
01:20 Food Factory USA  
01:45 Food Factory USA  
02:10 Sci-Trek  
03:00 Prototype This  
03:48 Mythbusters  
04:36 How Do They Do It?  
05:00 Food Factory  
05:24 Food Factory USA  
05:48 Food Factory USA  
06:12 Sci-Trek  
07:00 How Do They Do It?  
07:26 Prototype This  
08:14 Mythbusters  
09:02 Sci-Trek  
09:50 How Do They Do It?  
10:14 Food Factory  
10:38 Food Factory USA  
11:02 Food Factory USA  
11:26 Prototype This  
12:14 Mythbusters  
13:02 How Do They Do It?  
13:26 Food Factory  
13:50 Sci-Trek  
14:38 Prototype This  
15:26 Food Factory USA  
15:50 Food Factory USA  
16:14 Mythbusters  
17:02 Sci-Trek

17:50 Prototype This  
18:40 Mythbusters  
19:30 Mythbusters: The Search  
20:20 How Do They Do It?  
20:45 Food Factory  
21:10 Sci-Trek  
22:00 Mythbusters: The Search  
22:50 Prototype This  
23:40 Mythbusters



00:20 Oprah: Where Are They Now?  
01:05 Oprah: Where Are They Now?  
01:50 90 Day Fianc?: Happily Ever After?  
02:35 Oprah: Where Are They Now?  
03:20 Little People, Big World  
04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras  
04:50 Your Style In His Hands  
05:35 Say Yes To The Dress  
06:00 Little People, Big World  
06:45 Little People, Big World  
07:30 Little People, Big World  
08:15 Kate Plus 8  
09:00 Say Yes To The Dress  
09:25 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners  
10:10 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners  
10:55 Love At First Swipe  
11:17 Love At First Swipe  
11:40 Love, Lust Or Run  
12:02 Love, Lust Or Run  
12:25 Love, Lust Or Run  
12:47 Love At First Swipe  
13:10 Oprah: Where Are They Now?  
13:55 Oprah: Where Are They Now?  
14:40 Cake Boss  
15:02 Cake Boss  
15:25 Cake Boss  
15:47 Cake Boss  
16:10 Cake Boss  
16:35 Cake Boss  
17:00 Cake Boss  
17:25 Cake Boss  
17:50 Suddenly Rich  
18:50 Kate Plus 8  
19:40 Cake Boss  
20:10 Say Yes To The Dress  
20:35 Say Yes To The Dress  
21:00 Kate Plus 8  
21:50 Sister Wives  
22:40 My Giant Life  
23:30 Return To Amish



00:30 UFC Top 10  
01:00 UFC Main Event  
02:00 Spa Classic  
02:30 Bellator MMA Special  
03:10 MotoGP Highlights  
04:05 UFC Main Event  
05:00 FIA World Touring Car Championship Highlights  
05:25 FIA World Touring Car Championship Highlights  
05:50 Spa Classic  
06:20 Bellator MMA Special  
07:00 UFC Reloaded  
08:30 UFC Fight Replay  
09:00 One Weekly  
09:30 FIA World Touring Car Championship Highlights  
10:00 Live MotoGP  
13:00 Indy Lights Series  
14:00 Live MotoGP  
17:00 FIA World Touring Car Championship Highlights  
17:30 FIA World Touring Car Championship Highlights  
18:00 Indy Car Highlights  
19:00 Indy Lights Series  
20:00 UFC Now  
21:00 UFC Unleashed  
22:00 Legends Football League  
23:30 One Weekly



00:30 Red Bull Cliff Diving  
01:30 WWE Smackdown  
03:00 Night Of The Jumps  
04:00 WWE Wal3ooha  
04:30 Arena Esports  
05:00 Formula-E Championship Highlights  
06:00 Formula-E Championship Highlights  
07:00 Formula-E Street Racers  
07:30 Monster Jam  
08:30 Night Of The Jumps  
09:30 This Week In WWE  
10:00 WWE Wal3ooha  
10:30 Formula-E Street Racers

WORD SEARCH

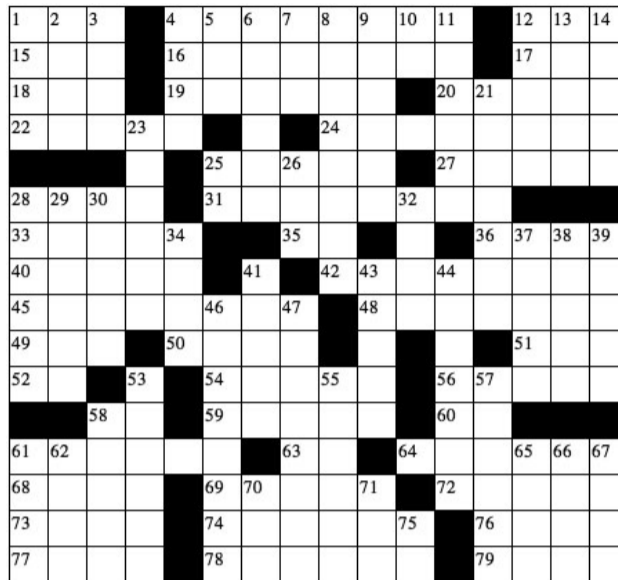
Movies: Science Fiction

Find and circle all of the Science Fiction movies that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional Science Fiction movie.

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

- |                |                  |                   |              |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| ALIEN          | FANTASTIC VOYAGE | ROBOCOP           | TERMINATOR   |
| BLADE RUNNER   | FLASH GORDON     | SCANNERS          | THE ABYSS    |
| BODY SNATCHERS | FLATLINERS       | SHIVERS           | THE FLY      |
| BRAZIL         | FORBIDDEN PLANET | SILENT RUNNING    | THE MATRIX   |
| COCOON         | FRANKENSTEIN     | SOLARIS           | THEY LIVE    |
| CONTACT        | GATTACA          | SOYLENT GREEN     | TOTAL RECALL |
| CUBE           | INDEPENDENCE DAY | SPIDER-MAN        | TRANCERS     |
| DARK CITY      | JURASSIC PARK    | STAR WARS         | TRON         |
| DEEP IMPACT    | LOGAN'S RUN      | STARGATE          | VIDEODROME   |
| DUNE           | MAD MAX          | STARMAN           | WESTWORLD    |
| EQUILIBRIUM    | METROPOLIS       | STARSHIP TROOPERS |              |

CROSSWORD 1677



ACROSS

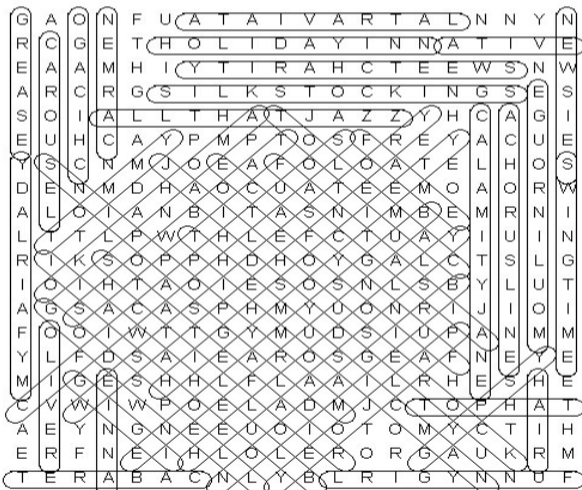
- A guided missile fired from shipboard against an airborne target.
- Of or relating to an economy, the system of production and management of material wealth.
- A conspicuous disparity or difference as between two figures.
- 100 pyas equal 1 kyat.
- The area of the states of North Carolina and South Carolina.
- A nucleic acid that transmits genetic information from DNA to the cytoplasm.
- The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
- Wanted intensely.
- A facial expression of contempt or scorn.
- A deep opening in the earth's surface.
- Capable of being supported by argument.
- An independent ruler or chieftain (especially in Africa or Arabia).
- A genus of Mustelidae.
- The part of a lock that is engaged or withdrawn with a key.
- Resembling a serpent in form.
- A colorless and odorless inert gas.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- Shaped and dried dough made from flour and water and sometimes egg.
- Having no fever.
- The Palestinian uprising (beginning in 1987) against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
- (zoology) Lacking a tail or taillike appendage.
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- Of or relating to near the ear.
- A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
- A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
- A ring-shaped surface generated by rotating a circle around an axis that does not intersect the circle.
- Informal or slang terms for mentally irregular.
- Make amends for.
- 16 ounces.
- The French-speaking capital of the province of Quebec.
- A small digital computer based on a microprocessor and designed to be used by one person at a time.
- Open again or anew.
- In or of the present month.
- (archaic) Of persons.
- A large gathering of people intended to arouse enthusiasm.
- An international organization created in 1949 by the North Atlantic Treaty for purposes of collective security.
- A South American river.
- Gather, as of as crops.
- Drought-tolerant herb grown for forage and for its seed which yield a gum used as a thickening agent or sizing material.
- A port city in southwestern Iran.
- (Irish) Mother of the Tuatha De Danann.

DOWN

- A detailed description of design criteria for a piece of work.
- An Indian nursemaid who looks after children.
- God of death.
- Electronic warfare undertaken to insure effective friendly use of the electro-magnetic spectrum in spite of the enemy's use of electronic warfare.
- 4-wheeled motor vehicle.
- An authoritative person who divines the future.
- The month following October and preceding December.
- Or family Polypodiaceae.
- The vein in the center of a leaf.
- Not out.
- Marked by blithe unconcern.
- Small compact-bodied almost completely aquatic bird that builds floating nests.
- Administer an oil or ointment to.
- A manicurist who trims the fingernails.
- (Sumerian and Akkadian) A demon personifying death.
- The female or generative principle.
- A bachelor's degree in religion.
- A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
- (Sumerian) Consort of Dumuzi (Tammuz).
- Follower of Rastafarianism.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- A port in western Israel on the Mediterranean.
- Or relating to or caused by tides.
- Fear resulting from the awareness of danger.
- The act of relaying something.
- A person of subnormal intelligence.
- Not in accordance with the fact or reality or actuality.
- An obnoxious and foolish and loquacious talker.
- A language spoken by the Atakapa people of the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
- Coelenterate genus of order Madreporaria, including staghorn corals.
- Someone who owes money.
- Having removed clothing.
- On a ship, train, plane or other vehicle.
- Protective outer layer of seeds of flowering plants.
- Relatively small fast-moving sloth.
- Humble request for help.
- A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
- Monotypic genus of palms of Australasia.
- A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
- A nucleic acid consisting of large molecules shaped like a double helix.
- An associate degree in nursing.

Yesterday's Solution

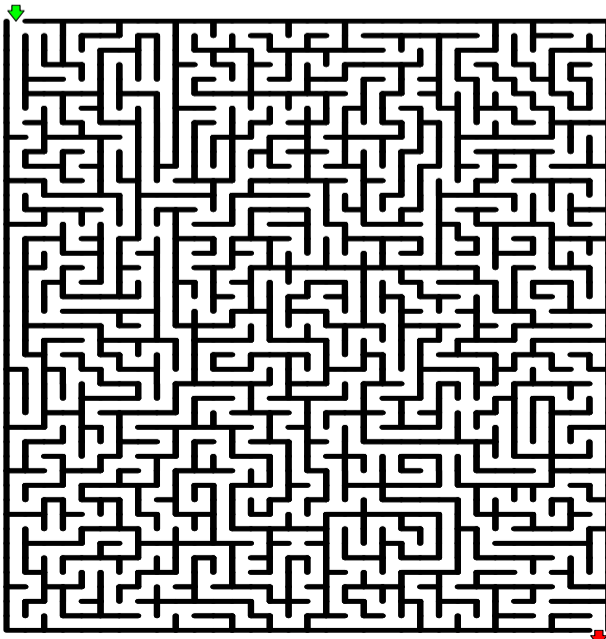
Movies: Musicals



- |               |            |                |                 |
|---------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| A CHORUS LINE | CHICAGO    | HELLO, DOLLY!  | PAL JOEY        |
| ALL THAT JAZZ | EVITA      | HIGH SOCIETY   | SHOW BOAT       |
| ANNIE         | FAME       | HOLIDAY INN    | SILK STOCKINGS  |
| BLUE HAWAII   | FANTASIA   | JAILHOUSE ROCK | SOUTH PACIFIC   |
| BRIGADOON     | FUNNY FACE | LA TRAVIATA    | STATE FAIR      |
| BUGSY MALONE  | FUNNY GIRL | MARY POPPINS   | SWEET CHARITY   |
| CABARET       | GIGI       | MOULIN ROUGE   | SWING TIME      |
| CALAMITY JANE | GODSPELL   | MY FAIR LADY   | THE MUSIC MAN   |
| CAMELOT       | GREASE     | NEWSIES        | TOMMY           |
| CARMEN        | GYPSY      | OKLAHOMA!      | TOP HAT         |
| CAROUSEL      | HAIR       | OLIVER!        | WEST SIDE STORY |

The hidden movie is: A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM

CHALLENGING MAZE



Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

## CAMBODIA JAILS AUSTRALIAN NURSE OVER SURROGACY CLINIC

**PHNOM PENH:** An Australian nurse who managed a surrogacy clinic in Cambodia that matched foreign couples with local women was sentenced to 18 months in prison yesterday, as authorities in the impoverished kingdom tackle the “rent-a-womb” businesses. Tammy Davis-Charles, 49, has been in custody since her arrest in November last year, weeks after Cambodia abruptly banned commercial surrogacy.

Authorities moved to shut down the trade, which critics say exploits poor women, after a similar ban in Thailand pushed the shadowy industry across its borders. Davis-Charles is accused of moving from Thailand to take advantage of the surrogacy boom in Cambodia, which lacked regulations at the time and quickly mopped up demand from foreign couples, mostly from Australia.

Police said her clinic charged would-be parents up to \$50,000, while Cambodian surrogates received around \$10,000 each—a vast sum in a nation where the average annual income is around \$1,200. Davis-Charles, who advertised surrogacy services online, was accused of bringing more than 23 Cambodian women into the trade for 18 Australian and five American couples. “Tammy Davis-Charles was an intermediary between intended parents and Cambodian surrogate mothers,” Judge Sor Lina said delivering the ruling. The Melbourne native was also convicted of falsifying documents. “The court sentences Tammy Davis-Charles to one-and-a-half-years in jail,” the judge added. Two Cambodian colleagues were convicted of the same charges and also jailed for 18 months.

### Pushed underground

In her defence statement in July, Davis-Charles broke down in tears in front of the court appealing for mercy from the bench, saying she had already “lost everything” during her six months in custody. During the trial she denied recruiting the surrogates, saying her role was limited to providing medical care.

Davis-Charles had twins through a Thai surrogate before going into “the surrogacy business full-time... to help people everyday,” according to her post on the website of her Bangkok-registered company. Surrogacy agencies started sprouting up in Cambodia in 2015 after neighbouring Thailand shut down the trade following a series of scandals, including tussles over custody. —AFP

## ACTIVISTS SOUND THE ALARM OVER RUSSIA’S WHALE TRADE

**MOSCOW:** A young beluga whale looks down as it is winched in a net onto the deck of a rusty Russian ship moored at a far-eastern port. “Don’t forget us, bitch!” shouts one of its captors onboard the ship as the animal is deposited next to three more belugas and rows of other sea mammals such as seals.

The grim footage aired in a recent Russian documentary—shines a spotlight on a murky and poorly regulated trade in marine mammals that has made the country the biggest supplier of some species to aquariums across the globe. Activists documented squalid conditions and dead beluga whales being hastily buried as traders exploited loopholes in legislation to turn a lucrative profit. “We started making a film about aquariums, but I couldn’t imagine such a huge business behind them, a huge corrupt system,” said Gayane Petrosyan, who directed the film “Born Free” that premiered earlier this year. While many countries around the world are phasing out the use dolphins for entertainment, China’s industry is expanding and Russian animals are its star performers. “The animals are treated as a commodity,” Petrosyan said.

### Loopholes

Officially Russia has exported 91 live marine mammals—including seals, whales and dolphins—since the beginning of 2016, 84 of which went to China, according to available customs figures. Each year, the government permits traders to catch about 10 orcas and 150 beluga whales for zoos and oceanariums, said Dmitry Glazov, deputy chairman of Russia’s Marine Mammal Council of scientists.

Permits for orcas, which fetch at least a million dollars each, are especially in demand. While these numbers may sound low, activists believe the true figure is higher as fishermen abuse quotas meant to cover animals captured for educa-



This file photo taken on July 31, 2009 shows then Russia’s Prime Minister Vladimir Putin feeding a Beluga whale named Dasha during his visit to Chkalov island, some 700 kms northeast of the city of Khabarovsk. —AFP

tional or scientific purposes to export them commercially. “If you catch an orca for education and cultural purposes in Russia and then sell it to China for those purposes, that’s against the law,” said lawyer Maxim Krupsky, who helps scientists opposing the trade.

### Population fears

While neither orcas or belugas are listed as globally endangered animals, Russian scientists say that the lack of oversight in the trade and recent research means they are left in the dark over the numbers remaining in their waters. “For many marine mammal species, it’s not even clear how many animals there are, there have been no studies since the Soviet times,” academic Glazov

said. A rough headcount in 2010 suggested there are two separate populations of beluga whales in the Russian Far East, and it would be sustainable to only catch 15 annually from each group, he said. In reality, hunters focus on one group in the Sea of Okhotsk, north of Japan, grabbing as many as 80 animals in a single season and especially going after the juvenile females most important for the population’s reproduction. And as the animals are caught for “education” rather than commercial purposes, the government is not even getting any money in taxes from their sales, Glazov added. Glazov said that the controversy resulted in an unofficial halt on live catch in 2016, but this year the government has allowed it again. —AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem  
 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 (03/08/2017 TO 09/08/2017)

<b>SHARQIA-1</b>		THE DARK TOWER	10:30 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	2:15 PM
DUNKIRK	1:00 PM	THE DARK TOWER	12:45 AM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	4:45 PM
DUNKIRK	3:15 PM			ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	7:15 PM
BABY DRIVER	5:30 PM	<b>MARINA-1</b>		ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	9:45 PM
FIRST KILL	7:50 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	11:35 AM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	12:15 AM
DUNKIRK	9:55 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	2:25 PM		
FIRST KILL	12:15 AM	SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	5:10 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.2</b>	
		WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	7:45 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	11:40 AM
		ATOMIC BLONDE	10:30 PM	DUNKIRK	1:30 PM
		BABY DRIVER	12:45 AM	DESPICABLE ME 3	3:45 PM
				DUNKIRK	5:45 PM
<b>SHARQIA-2</b>		<b>MARINA-2</b>		DUNKIRK	8:00 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	12:15 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	11:30 AM	BABY DRIVER	10:15 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	2:45 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	2:00 PM	BABY DRIVER	12:30 AM
DUNKIRK	5:15 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	4:30 PM		
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	7:30 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	7:00 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.3</b>	
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	10:00 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	9:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	12:00 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	12:30 AM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	12:05 AM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	2:45 PM
				THE DARK TOWER	5:30 PM
<b>SHARQIA-3</b>		<b>MARINA-3</b>		WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	7:45 PM
THE DARK TOWER	12:00 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	11:40 AM	THE DARK TOWER	10:45 PM
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	2:00 PM	DUNKIRK	1:30 PM	THE DARK TOWER	12:45 AM
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	2:00 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	3:45 PM		
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	5:00 PM	DUNKIRK	5:45 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.4</b>	
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	7:45 PM	DUNKIRK	8:00 PM	FIRST KILL	1:00 PM
THE DARK TOWER	10:45 PM	THE DARK TOWER	10:15 PM	SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	3:15 PM
THE DARK TOWER	12:45 AM	THE DARK TOWER	12:30 AM	FIRST KILL	6:00 PM
				ATOMIC BLONDE	8:15 PM
<b>MUHALAB-1</b>		<b>AVENUES-1</b>		FIRST KILL	10:30 PM
THE DARK TOWER	11:30 AM	FIRST KILL	11:30 AM	FIRST KILL	1:00 AM
DUNKIRK	1:30 PM	THE BIG SICK	1:35 PM		
DUNKIRK	3:45 PM	THE BIG SICK	4:00 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-1</b>	
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	6:00 PM	THE BIG SICK	6:30 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	12:00 PM
THE DARK TOWER	9:00 PM	FIRST KILL	9:00 PM	DUNKIRK	2:30 PM
THE DARK TOWER	11:00 PM	FIRST KILL	11:05 PM	DUNKIRK	4:45 PM
THE DARK TOWER	1:00 AM	FIRST KILL	1:10 AM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	7:00 PM
				ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	9:20 PM
<b>MUHALAB-2</b>		<b>AVENUES-2</b>		ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	11:45 PM
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	12:15 PM	DUNKIRK	12:30 PM		
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	3:00 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES -3D-4DX	2:45 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-2</b>	
DUNKIRK	5:45 PM	DUNKIRK -2D-4DX	5:30 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	11:45 AM
FIRST KILL	8:00 PM	THE DARK TOWER-2D-4DX	7:45 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	1:45 PM
BABY DRIVER	10:15 PM	DUNKIRK -2D-4DX	9:45 PM	CARS 3	3:45 PM
FIRST KILL	12:30 AM	THE DARK TOWER-2D-4DX	12:05 AM	DESPICABLE ME 3	6:00 PM
				THE DARK TOWER	8:00 PM
<b>MUHALAB-3</b>		<b>AVENUES-3</b>		THE DARK TOWER	10:15 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	11:35 AM	DUNKIRK	11:55 AM	THE DARK TOWER	12:15 AM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	1:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	2:15 PM		
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	1:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	5:00 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-3</b>	
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	4:30 PM	DUNKIRK	8:15 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	12:15 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	7:00 PM	DUNKIRK	10:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	3:15 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	9:30 PM	DUNKIRK	12:45 AM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	6:00 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	12:05 AM	DUNKIRK		DUNKIRK	9:00 PM
				WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	11:15 PM
<b>FANAR-1</b>		<b>360°- 1</b>			
DESPICABLE ME 3	1:35 PM	DUNKIRK	12:45 PM	<b>PLAZA</b>	
FIRST KILL	1:00 PM	DESPICABLE ME 3	1:35 PM	MUBARAKAN -Hindi	3:45 PM
FIRST KILL	5:45 PM	DUNKIRK	3:30 PM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	3:45 PM
ATOMIC BLONDE	8:00 PM	DUNKIRK	8:00 PM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	6:45 PM
FIRST KILL	10:45 PM	DUNKIRK	10:15 PM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	9:45 PM
FIRST KILL	1:00 AM	DUNKIRK	8:15 PM		
		DUNKIRK	10:30 PM	<b>LAILA</b>	
<b>FANAR-2</b>		DUNKIRK	12:40 AM	DUNKIRK	3:15 PM
DUNKIRK	11:45 AM			WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	5:30 PM
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	2:00 PM	<b>360°- 2</b>		ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	8:15 PM
BABY DRIVER	4:45 PM	CARS 3	12:00 PM	THE DARK TOWER	10:45 PM
WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	7:00 PM	DESPICABLE ME	2:15 PM		
DUNKIRK	9:45 PM	CARS 3	4:15 PM	<b>AJIAL.1</b>	
BABY DRIVER	12:05 AM	DESPICABLE ME	6:40 PM	MUBARAKAN -Hindi	3:30 PM
		ATOMIC BLONDE	8:35 PM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	3:30 PM
<b>FANAR-3</b>		ATOMIC BLONDE	10:45 PM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	6:30 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	12:30 PM	ATOMIC BLONDE	1:00 AM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	9:30 PM
MUBARAKAN -Hindi	2:30 PM	<b>360°- 3</b>			
MUBARAKAN -Hindi	5:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	1:10 PM	<b>AJIAL.2</b>	
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	11:30 AM	TISBAH ALA KHAIR	1:40 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	3:45 PM
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	2:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	4:05 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	6:00 PM
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	5:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	7:00 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	8:15 PM
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	8:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	9:50 PM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	10:30 PM
JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	11:30 PM	WAR FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES	12:50 AM		
		<b>360°- 4</b>		<b>AJIAL.3</b>	
<b>FANAR-4</b>		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	11:55 AM	FIRST KILL	5:00 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	12:00 PM	BABY DRIVER	1:55 PM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	5:00 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	2:40 PM	TISBAH ALA KHAIR	4:20 PM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	8:00 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	5:00 PM	BABY DRIVER	6:25 PM	FIRST KILL	11:00 PM
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	7:30 PM	TISBAH ALA KHAIR	8:40 PM		
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	10:00 PM	BOYKA: UNDISPUTED	10:35 PM	<b>AJIAL</b>	
ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	12:30 AM	BABY DRIVER	12:55 AM	GOUTHAM NANDA - Telugu	4:00 PM
				JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	4:00 PM
<b>FANAR-5</b>		<b>AL-KOUT.1</b>		JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	7:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM	ANTAR IBN IBN IBN SHADAD -Arabic	11:30 AM	JAB HARRY MET SEJAL -Hindi	10:00 PM
DUNKIRK	1:30 PM				
DUNKIRK	3:45 PM				
DUNKIRK	6:00 PM				
THE DARK TOWER	8:15 PM				

### CHANGE OF NAME

Habib Ali Rajabali S/O Rajabali Kadarali, holder of Indian Passport No. H8468522 & Civil ID No. 259080500277, has change my name from Habib Ali Rajabali to Habib Ali Pathan, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by name of Habib Ali Pathan. (C 5334) 3-8-2017

### SITUATION WANTED

A B.E. graduate in electronics & communications & further master's in embedded system & instrumentation. A year of experience in layout & design engineering at Linde AG, Germany. For any possible vacancy & detailed resume please contact: 94081644, shettyswathi07@gmail.com (C 5336) 3-8-2017

### LOST

I, Neenu Ali, holder of Indian Passport No: H3127852, have lost my passport since June 20th, around Kuwait City area, if found please contact: 25618357. (C 5335) 3-8-2017

### PRAYER TIMINGS

**Fajr:** 03:42  
**Shorook:** 05:10  
**Duhr:** 11:54  
**Asr:** 15:30  
**Maghrib:** 18:37  
**Isha:** 20:02

## 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, AUGUST 4, 2017

## US JOBLESS CLAIMS, LAYOFFS FALL AS LABOR MARKET TIGHTENS

Page 40



Tesla fending off worker complaints on pay, safety

Page 41



JAKARTA: The sun sets behind a crane at a building construction site in Jakarta yesterday.—AFP

## BREXIT-WARY BOE CUTS GROWTH FORECAST

### BANK LEAVES RATES ON HOLD; STERLING FALLS, SHARES RISE

**LONDON:** The Bank of England kept interest rates at a record low again yesterday and seeing Brexit weighing on the economy, cut its forecasts for growth and wages. The gloomier outlook for the next two years further reduced speculation in financial markets that the BoE might be nearing its first rate hike in a decade. Governor Mark Carney nonetheless sought to keep alive the possibility of one next year. He said uncertainty about Brexit-in particular lower investment by companies-meant the economy could not grow as fast as before without pushing up inflation. So, just a small improvement in growth could bring forward a rate hike. "The speed limit, if you will, of the economy has slowed," he told reporters. "That ... could have consequences for monetary policy, depending on the evolution of demand." But investors saw no sign that the BoE was in a hurry to raise rates, a stark contrast to the outcome of its last meeting in June when markets thought a hike might be imminent.

The pound hit a nine-month low against the euro and fell by more than a cent against the US dollar. Shares rose and British government bond prices jumped. Central banks around the world have struggled to wean their economies off the stimulus of rock-bottom interest rates, largely because of weak wage growth for workers. The BoE faces the extra challenge of Britain's leaving the European Union, and its uncertain impact on Britain's economy. The Bank said it now expects the economy to grow by 1.7 percent this year,

down from its May forecast of 1.9 percent. It also shaved its growth forecast for next year to 1.6 percent from 1.7 percent, but kept 2019 at 1.8 percent.

#### Grim outlook

The BoE's rate-setters voted 6-2 to keep Bank Rate at 0.25 percent, in line with forecasts in a Reuters poll



**LONDON: Bank of England Governor Mark Carney addresses the media during a press conference. —AP**

of economists. That was more clear cut than an unexpectedly close 5-3 vote at the Monetary Policy Committee's meeting in June. Since then one of the dissenters, Kristin Forbes, has left the central bank. Michael Saunders and Ian McCafferty voted again for

a 25 basis point rate rise. But BoE Chief Economist Andy Haldane, who said in June that he was likely to back a rate hike in the second half of this year, stayed with the majority. The Bank said it might raise borrowing costs a bit more than investors expect over the next three years and suggested that a first hike might come within a year.

But US bank Citi said the BoE was probably more worried about the risks of a disorderly Brexit than it appeared yesterday. "Brexit downside risks are larger than the MPC can formally acknowledge, which keeps the bar for a pre-2019 rate hike high, in our view," analysts at the bank said in a note to clients. Citi said a smooth exit from the EU was still the most likely outcome, so the BoE would probably raise rates from late 2019, taking them to 2 percent by the end of 2021. The Bank kept its asset purchase programs unchanged yesterday.

#### Surveys

It also said a bank lending scheme would end as on schedule in February 2018. BOE DILEMMA The split on the MPC over what to do with interest rates highlights the challenge facing the central bank. On the one hand, Britain avoided a recession after the shock referendum decision in June 2016 to leave the EU, inflation is running above the BoE's 2 percent target, and unemployment is at a four-decade low. At the same time, data has shown the economy had its

slowest growth since 2012 in the first half of this year, inflation unexpectedly eased back in June and wage growth is weak.

A series of surveys of Britain's manufacturing, construction and services sectors published this week suggested the economy remained in a low gear in July. Furthermore, Brexit talks between London and Brussels have made little progress, raising concerns that a messy departure from the bloc in 2019 could hammer the economy. In response to the painfully slow rises this year, the Bank cut its forecasts for wage growth in 2018 and 2019 to 3 and 3.25 percent, down by half a percent for each year. It blamed the downgrade on Britain's stubbornly weak productivity and in part on the Brexit uncertainty.

The BoE lowered by only a fraction its forecasts for inflation which it now saw at just under 2.6 percent in a year's time after peaking at around 3 percent in October. British inflation in June stood at 2.6 percent and the BoE's latest forecasts see it remaining above its 2 percent target throughout its three-year forecast period. Helping to offset the squeeze on household spending power, exports were seen growing a bit more strongly than in the BoE's May forecasts. But investment was likely to be weaker than previously expected in 2018 and 2019. Carney said investment levels in 2020 were set to be 20 percentage points below a BoE forecast before the Brexit vote. —Reuters

## ZAMBIA'S KWACHA TO FIRM ON DOLLAR INFLOWS, KENYAN SHILLING STEADY

**LUSAKA:** The Zambian kwacha is expected to firm next week on increasing hard currency inflows, while the Kenyan shilling is likely to remain steady as the central bank intervenes to smooth out price volatility.

### ZAMBIA

The Zambian kwacha is likely to firm versus the dollar next week due to increasing hard currency supply ahead of an expected cut of the benchmark lending rate by the nation's central bank.

At 0751 GMT yesterday, commercial banks quoted the currency of Africa's second largest copper producer at 9.0100 per dollar from a close of 8.8100 a week ago. "Consensus is building that the monetary policy rate will be cut next week. A cut will boost asset values and create demand for the local unit," the Zambian branch of South Africa's First National Bank (FNB) said in a note. On May 17, Zambia's central bank cut its benchmark lending rate by 150 basis point to 12.5 percent and is due to announce a new policy rate yesterday next week.

### KENYA

The Kenyan shilling is expected to hold steady against the dollar in the coming week with central bank intervention likely to smooth out price volatility ahead of general elections on Tuesday, traders said. At 0817 GMT, commercial banks quoted the shilling at 103.80/104.00 per dollar, the same as last Thursday's close. "Although we expected some capital flight ahead of elections, that is not happening... the regulator has just enough to cushion the shilling," said a trader from a commercial bank.

### UGANDA

The Ugandan shilling is forecast to trade in a stable range, though with a weakening bias as dollar demand from manufacturing and energy players exert moderate pressure. At 0932 GMT, commercial banks quoted the shilling at 3,610/3,620, weaker than last Thursday's close of 3,595/3,605.

A trader at a leading commercial

bank said demand from manufacturing and energy importers was expected to remain elevated over the coming week. The local currency would oscillate between 3,605-3,625 against the greenback, he said.

### NIGERIA

Nigerian naira is seen stable in the coming week as the central bank sustains its intervention in foreign exchange market. The local currency is quoted at 365 to the dollar on the black market on Thursday, unchanged from last week's level while the currency issue stuck at 305.90 to the dollar on the official interbank market.

"The market has been quiet for sometime now because of the increased dollar supply from the central bank and offshore investors and it will remain stable in the near term," Nigerian central bank has been intervening in the forex market since February in a bid to ease pressure on the local currency.

### GHANA

The cedi is expected to remain stable next week on regular central bank dollar sales to balance interbank demand analysts said. The local unit was trading at 4.3854 to the dollar by mid-day on Thursday, up from 4.4050 a week ago. "We expect the currency to maintain its current stability on flows from the central bank as investor confidence in the economy gradually returns," Chris Fiagbe, a currency analyst said.

### TANZANIA

The Tanzanian shilling's outlook remains stable in the near term, helped by dollar inflows from tourism and agriculture sectors and subdued dollar demand from importers. Yesterday, commercial banks quoted the shilling at 2,234/2,244 to the dollar, unchanged from a week ago. "Demand for dollars is being matched by supply at the moment, so the outlook for next week is that of continued stability," said a trader in one of Tanzania's largest banks. —Reuters



**CARY:** Employees assist a customer with a computer at Best Buy in Cary, NC. Yesterday, the Institute for Supply Management, a trade group of purchasing managers, issues its index of non-manufacturing activity for July. —AP

## US FACTORY ORDERS ROSE IN JUNE ON AIRCRAFT DEMAND

**WASHINGTON:** Orders at US factories increased in June as demand surged for aircraft. The Commerce Department said yesterday that factory orders increased 3 percent in June, a solid rebound after declining in May and April. But the gains largely came from a massive 131 percent jump in orders for civilian aircraft, a category that can be volatile on a monthly basis.

U.S. manufacturing has been recovering from a slowdown in late 2015 caused by lower energy prices and a strong dollar that made American products more expensive overseas. Factories have responded with a relatively slight upturn in hiring. Manufacturers added a modest average of 8,833 jobs during the first six months of this year. Excluding the transportation sector that includes aircraft, factory orders slipped 0.2 percent in June.

Demand fell for computers and electronic products, while primary metals, machinery and motor vehicles eked out gains. Other manufacturing indicators point to continued but cautious growth. The Institute for Supply Management said Tuesday that its index of factory activity fell 1.5 points to 56.3 in July. Still, any reading above 50 signals that manufacturers are expanding. Separately, the Federal Reserve said that factory production advanced 0.2 percent in June and 1.2 percent over the past 12 months.

### US services firms

US services firms grew last month at the slowest pace since August 2016. The Institute for Supply Management says its services index slipped in July to 53.9 from June's 57.4. It was the lowest reading since the index registered 51.7 in August 2016. Still, anything above 50 signals growth, and American services companies are on a 91-month winning streak. — AP

# RUSSIA GAS PIPELINES TO GO AHEAD DESPITE SANCTIONS

## KREMLIN KEEN TO PROFIT FROM EUROPEAN MARKET

**MOSCOW/BRUSSELS:** New US sanctions will make it harder for Russia to build two gas export pipelines to Europe but the projects are unlikely to be stopped. US President Donald Trump has reluctantly signed into law further sanctions on Russia but some of the measures are discretionary and most White House watchers believe he will not take action against Russia's energy infrastructure. This would allow Gazprom's two big pipeline projects to go ahead, although at a higher price and with some delays. The Kremlin, dependent on oil and gas revenues, sees the pipelines to Germany and Turkey - Nord Stream 2 and TurkStream - as crucial to increasing its market share in Europe.

It also fears that Western partners - needed to develop the deepwater, shale and Arctic gas deposits that will fill the pipelines - will be scared off by sanctions. Gazprom warned investors last month that the sanctions "may result in delays, or otherwise impair or prevent the completion of the projects by the group." With all that in mind, the Russian gas giant is taking steps to reduce the impact of sanctions. It has accelerated pipe-laying by Swiss contractor Allseas Group under the Black Sea for TurkStream - even though there is no final agreement on where the pipeline will make landfall in Turkey. It is also hurriedly building a second TurkStream line to export gas to Europe.

"The construction of the second line is underway just in case the sanctions hit," a senior Gazprom source told Reuters. A spokesman for Allseas said 100 km of the 900-km first line have been built since June 23 and preparatory work is underway for the second line.

### The Ukrainian connection

The biggest cost of any delays to the new lines could come from increased

transit fees paid to Ukraine, the route by which Russian gas has traditionally reached Europe. Nord Stream 2 and TurkStream bypass Ukraine, but if they are brought into use late, Gazprom will have to continue using the Ukrainian route and may have to pay more for the privilege.

The European Union, fearing sanctions will hurt oil and gas projects on which it depends, said it was ready to retaliate unless it obtained U.S. guarantees that European firms would not be targeted. Five Western firms that have invested in Nord Stream 2 - Wintershall and Uniper of Germany, Austria's OMV, Anglo-Dutch Shell, and France's Engie - say it is too early to judge the impact of sanctions. For now, they are standing by their pledge of up to 950 million euros (\$1.13 billion) each to finance the 1,225 km (760 mile) Nord Stream 2.

Despite Trump's desire to promote US liquefied natural gas exports to Europe that would compete with the Russian gas, he said he did not want the sanctions to get in the way of efforts to resolve the conflict in Ukraine. EU officials, industry sources and experts therefore doubt that Trump will use what he regards as "significantly flawed" sanctions to punish Moscow. "Their approach is going to be strictly by the letter of the law: what do they have to do," Richard Nephew, a former US deputy chief of sanctions now with Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy.

### Risk premium

The sanctions law is however expected to hamper Gazprom's efforts to raise money. "The price of any project automatically increases," said Tatiana Mitrova, director of the Skolkovo Energy Center. "Gazprom's relationships with partners, subcontractors, and equip-

ment and service providers are severely complicated," she said. "They will all ask for a risk premium." Gazprom will have to take on the additional cost itself, depend on Russian state banks, or seek money at higher rates from Asian lenders, financial analysts said.

"This, however, does not mean that Nord Stream 2 won't be built," said Katja Yafimova of the Oxford Energy Institute. Industry sources say the loans from Western partners for Nord Stream 2 are already at above market rates to reflect the political risk of partnering with Russia in a project that has also faced opposition in Europe.

The added uncertainty ups the stakes further. "It's like reading tea leaves," one source with knowledge of the European side of the Nord Stream 2 financing structure told Reuters. While big players may be able to stomach the risk, analysts say the smaller contractors on which Gazprom depends to build the pipelines may get spooked. "Not all partners can afford to see things through with Gazprom," said Valery Nesterov, an analyst at Moscow-based Sberbank CIB.

A spokesman for Nord Stream 2 said more than 200 non-Russian companies from 17 countries, most of them European, are building the pipeline. Most of the big contracts for steel, port logistics and construction have already been concluded. By forcing the pace of construction, Gazprom may have gained enough time to build the new pipelines but longer-term projects will take a hit. "Unless Trump takes a really sharp turn, it is highly unlikely that companies that are supplying pipeline goods are going to be punished in the next year or so," Nephew said.

"A lot of companies are now thinking: 'I've got maybe 12, maybe 18 months in which I can do some stuff but after that maybe I won't.'" — Reuters

## HONG KONG'S TYCOON LI CAUTIOUS AS PROFITS RISE

**HONG KONG:** Hong Kong tycoon Li Ka-shing's flagship CK Hutchison yesterday saw profits up seven percent in the first half of 2017, boosted by its European telecoms operations. The billionaire, who turned 89 on Saturday, said he was "cautiously optimistic" about his company's future, as an upturn in major economies was weighed by geopolitical risks and renewed uncertainty over commodity prices.

Europe's economic recovery helped Li, who announced last week that his conglomerate and its property arm agreed to buy German energy management firm Ista International GmbH for \$5.3 billion. CK Hutchison Holdings continues to count Europe as a significant income source, with its joint Italian telecom venture Wind Tre being a main contributor to its growth for the reported period, the firm said in a statement yesterday. Net profit for the company rose to HK\$15.9 billion (\$2 billion) in the first six months of 2017, compared with HK\$14.9 billion for the same period a year earlier.

But that fell short of the HK\$16.2 billion average estimate in a survey of

three analysts by Bloomberg. Li said first half growth was adversely affected by currency changes, especially with the British pound. Looking ahead, he said China's One Belt, One Road initiative—a massive network of ports, railways, roads and industrial parks in Asia, Europe and Africa—would provide new opportunities.

"With its close economic connectivity and geographical proximity to the mainland, as well as its advanced economic development and diversity, Hong Kong is in a unique position to benefit from potential growth opportunities ahead," Li said in a statement. Li offloaded major property investments in China after investing heavily there in the 1990s, in a move seen as a quest for stability for the tycoon's vast empire and a sign of diminishing confidence in the region. Analysts called him a maverick at the time, but his moves irked Chinese critics.

His relations with China have since appeared to warm up again, as he dismissed calls for an independent Hong Kong and shared a prolonged handshake with Chinese President Xi Jinping—



**HONG KONG:** People walk into Cheung Kong Center, headquarters of CK Hutchinson Holdings, in the Central district of Hong Kong yesterday. CK Hutchinson will release their half-year results later in the day. —AFP

a gesture typically seen as symbolic when Xi visited Hong Kong last month. Yesterday's statement made no mention of Li's retirement, playing down

reports in June that he might step down and hand over his company to his son and deputy chairman Victor Li before he turns 90. —AFP

## WALL ST OPENS FLAT AS TECH RALLY ENDS, EURO STOCKS SLIP

**NEW YORK:** US stocks opened little changed yesterday, with the Dow barely above 22,000, a milestone it breached a day earlier on the back of Apple's strong quarterly results. However, a rally in tech stocks stalled following recent strong gains that have made the sector the strongest performer in 2017. The S&P tech index is up 23 percent this year. Apple, Alphabet, Facebook and Amazon were all lower in early trading. The Dow has risen 11.4 percent and the S&P is up 10.6 percent in 2017, helped by a strong earnings season, even as Wall Street loses confidence that President Donald Trump will be able to legislate his pro-growth agenda this year.

"Equities continue to trend higher, largely on the heels of favorable second-quarter earnings releases," said Terry Sandven, chief equity strategist at US Bank Wealth Management. "At present, equities are in an earnings-driven market and earnings are surprising to the upside, providing valuation support for stocks at or near all-time highs." The S&P 500 is trading at around 18 times earnings estimates for the next 12 months, well above its long-term average of 15 times. At the same time, earnings of S&P 500 companies are now expected to have climbed 11.4 percent in the second quarter, up from an 8 percent rise estimated at the start of the month, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S.

At 9:38 am ET (1338 GMT), the Dow Jones Industrial Average was down 10.97 points, or 0.05 percent, at 22,005.27, the S&P 500 was down 3.68 points, or 0.14 percent, at 2,473.89. The Nasdaq Composite was down 4.12 points, or 0.06 percent, at 6,358.53. Ten of the 11 major S&P sectors were lower, with the real estate index's 0.44 percent fall leading the decliners.

Investors are also keeping an eye on the economic data for clues on the health of the economy ahead of the keenly awaited monthly payrolls data today. Shares of Tesla jumped 7.20 percent after the luxury electric car maker said its quarterly revenue more than doubled. Aetna rose 3.59 percent and Regeneron 1.52 percent after the healthcare companies posted strong quarterly reports.

### Euro shares upbeat

Upbeat economic news helped push European stock markets higher yesterday, while stronger-than-expected data in Britain drove sterling to an 11-month high ahead of a Bank of England monetary policy decision.

European equity markets gave up early falls to nudge into positive territory, with stock markets in Italy and France 0.2-0.3 percent higher. Britain's blue-chip FTSE was also marginally higher, although Germany's main stock index was a touch lower. —Reuters

## DOW BULL SESSION: WHAT DOES 22,000 POINTS MEAN ANYWAY?

### THE BLUE CHIP INDEX RISES TO LATEST MILESTONE

**NEW YORK:** You could say the Dow cruised to 22,000: The blue chip index rose to its latest milestone without much excitement or drama as aerospace giant Boeing and a few other companies did most of the work.

Stocks have spent the last five months gradually moving higher, without many big gains or losses. They've drawn strength from rising US corporate profits and continued growth in the economy, along with recoveries in Europe and other regions. And investors still believe that if the global economy or the market ran into serious trouble, central banks would step in to help, as they did after the 2008-09 global crisis. That's created a very calm stock market. Given the peace and quiet in the markets, it's fitting that a small move - 52 points, all of them essentially from Apple - brought the Dow to its newest milestone.

### How did we get here?

Boeing, McDonald's and health insurer UnitedHealth have contributed more than 700 points out of the 1,000 the Dow has gained since March 1, when the index topped 21,000 points for the first time. Strong earnings have helped all three companies, with Boeing making huge gains after its second-quarter report in late July. It's had a far better year than any other Dow component, and is now the highest-priced stock on the index. Meanwhile Goldman Sachs and IBM, which helped lead the Dow's surge in late 2016 and early 2017, have come crashing back to earth. They're the worst performers on the index this year.

### What's a 1,000-point Dow move in 2017?

Not what it used to be. As the index goes higher and higher, each round-number milestone represents a smaller move. When the Dow rocketed from 10,000 points to 11,000 points in early 1999, it was a 10-percent leap. The move from 21,000



**NEW YORK:** A screen above the floor of the New York Stock Exchange shows the closing number for the Dow Jones industrial average on Wednesday. —AP

to 22,000 translates to a gain of just 4.8 percent.

Microsoft at more than \$550 billion to about \$90 billion for Goldman.

### The Dow? Is that still a thing?

Charles Dow's index is more than 120 years old, and experts and market-watchers constantly debate how well it represents the market. With only 30 companies, the Dow reflects much less of the economy than the Standard & Poor's 500 index or the Russell 1500, which professionals pay more attention to. And while this is more technical, Dow points are based on dollars of stock price instead of the relative sizes of companies. So a 1-percent move for an expensive stock like Boeing or Goldman Sachs, both priced well above \$200 per share, will move the Dow more than Microsoft, worth around \$70 per share, or General Electric, at \$25 per share, even though investors value

### Do I need a thermometer to tell me it's warm?

The Dow is famous enough to be recognized by a lot of people, and that's a kind of relevance. And for all the arguments about the most precise market indicators, the Dow and S&P 500 have performed about the same this year. As of Wednesday, the Dow is up 11.4 percent for the year and the S&P 500 is up 10.7 percent. Kate Warne, an investment strategist for Edward Jones, compares the Dow to the weather forecast taken at a local airport: It doesn't tell you the exact temperature at your house, but it gives you a general idea of what the weather is. "If you watch the Dow, you're not too far off," she says. —AP

## GERMAN-UK BOND YIELD SPREAD NARROWS AS BOE BACKS OFF HIKE

**LONDON:** The premium investors demand to hold British bonds over German equivalents fell near one-year lows yesterday after the Bank of England trimmed its growth forecasts and edged away from raising interest rates.

Faced with uncertainty about the impact of Brexit on the world's fifth-biggest economy, the BoE trimmed its growth expectations for this year and next as rate-setters voted 6-2 to keep the Bank rate at a record low of 0.25 percent. This was down from a split of 5-3 at the last meeting in June, the closest it has come to raising rates in a decade. But Governor Mark Carney and his top officials reiterated that they might raise borrowing costs by a bit more than investors expect over the next three years, possibly within a year.

British bond yields fell sharply after the decision

but eurozone markets were little changed as investors remain wary of the possibility that the European Central Bank may make changes to its aggressive stimulus.

The yield on Germany's 10-year bond remains almost double levels seen before ECB President Mario Draghi floated that idea in a speech on June 27.

"The tightening is a knee jerk reaction. The low level of long-term yields in Britain is the market saying they don't believe there is a substantial risk of the BoE successfully tightening monetary policy," Mizuho strategist Peter Chatwell said.

After rising slightly earlier yesterday, Germany's 10-year yield was trading flat at 0.49 percent. It remains within touching distance of an 18-month high of 0.55 percent hit in mid-July, and double lev-

els seen early on June 27. British equivalents, meanwhile, fell as much as 4 bps to 1.19 percent.

The gap between the two benchmarks tightened to 70 basis points yesterday, heading back towards 65 basis points reached in mid-July which was the narrowest in nearly 11 months. For its part, the US Federal Reserve may in the coming months announce steps to trim its massive balance sheet.

San Francisco Fed President John Williams said on Wednesday that the US economy will likely be strong enough for such a move in September. At the auctions, France sold over 6 billion euros of bonds while Spain sold over 4 billion euros of bonds. Analysts said these debt sales had contributed to the earlier rise in eurozone yields as investors sold outstanding bonds to make room in their portfolios for the new supply. —Reuters

## US JOBLESS CLAIMS, LAYOFFS FALL AS LABOR MARKET TIGHTENS

### FOUR-WEEK AVERAGE OF CLAIMS FALLS TO TWO-MONTH LOW

**WASHINGTON:** The number of Americans filing for unemployment benefits fell last week, pointing to a tightening labor market that likely keeps the Federal Reserve on course to announce plans next month to start reducing its massive bond portfolio. Labor market strength was also underscored by another report yesterday showing US-based employers in July announced the fewest job cuts in eight months.

"The labor market remains tight as a drum even if it is not throwing off the sparks of higher wages and more infla-

tion," said Chris Rupkey, chief economist at MUFG in New York. "The Fed can continue mopping up the stimulus provided to fight the financial crisis and recession."

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits decreased 5,000 to a seasonally adjusted 240,000 for the week ended July 29, the Labor Department said. Economists had forecast claims falling to 242,000.

Claims have now been below 300,000, a threshold associated with a healthy labor market, for 126 straight weeks. That is the longest such stretch since 1970, when the labor market was smaller. The labor market is near full employment, with the jobless rate at 4.4 percent.

Economists believe that labor market tightness will encourage the Fed to announce a plan to start offloading its \$4.2 trillion portfolio of Treasury bonds and mortgage-backed securities in September.

The US central bank is, however, expected to delay raising interest rates until December because of low inflation. The Fed has raised rates twice this year. The US dollar fell to a session low against the yen after yesterday's data

"While retailers are cutting the most jobs this year, those companies are also announcing the most hiring," said John Challenger, chief executive officer of Challenger, Gray & Christmas. "New retail jobs could be going to places like fulfillment and distribution centers."

Retailers have accounted for 245,616 of the 556,493 new jobs that have been announced so far this year, according to Challenger tracking. Online retail giant Amazon plans to hire about 50,000 workers this month at its warehouses and sorting centers. Applications for unemployment benefits shot up at the beginning of the July, with economists blaming the jump on automakers who shut down assembly lines for annual retooling.

Some manufacturers like General Motors extended their summer shutdowns to manage excess inventory from declining sales, likely throwing off the model used by the government to strip out seasonal fluctuations from the data. A Labor Department official said there were no special factors influencing the claims data and that no states had been estimated. The four-week moving average of claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it irons out week-to-week volatility, fell 2,500 to 241,750 last week, the lowest level since May.

The claims data has no bearing on July's employment report, which is scheduled to be released on Friday, as it falls outside the survey period.

According to a Reuters survey of economists, nonfarm payrolls probably increased by 183,000 jobs last month after surging by 222,000 in June. The unemployment rate is seen falling one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.3 percent. Thursday's claims report also showed the number of people still receiving benefits after an initial week of aid rose by 3,000 to 1.97 million in the week ended July 22. The so-called continuing claims have now been below the 2 million mark for 16 straight weeks, pointing to diminishing labor market slack. The four-week moving average of continuing claims edged up 750 to 1.96 million, remaining below the 2 million mark for the 14th consecutive week. —Reuters

**Layoffs decline**  
In a separate report yesterday, global outplacement consultancy Challenger, Gray & Christmas said US-based employers announced 28,307 job cuts last month, down 9 percent from June and the fewest number since November 2016.

Retailers planned to cut 3,862 jobs in July. They were closely followed by the health care products and services sector where employers planned 3,634 layoffs.



**In this April 10, 2017, photo, a FedEx envelope is placed into a dropbox in North Andover, Massachusetts. —AP**

## FEDEX, IN ONLINE PIVOT, BACKS AWAY FROM HOLIDAY SURCHARGES

**MEMPHIS, Tenn:** FedEx will forego special charges for most packages shipped during the chaotic holiday season this year as it squares off against rival UPS in a fight for a larger share of the millions of items now bought online.

The announcement yesterday comes two months after UPS announced new surcharges that will effect shipments near Black Friday and the holidays. United Parcel Service Inc said that it would add 27 cents for residential deliveries from Nov. 19 to Dec. 2 and Dec. 17-23. It will add a fee of between 81 and 97 cents to overnight, second- or third-day deliveries for residential deliveries Dec 17. There are other charges for oversized packages. In addition, UPS will charge a peak surcharge on some international air-shipping routes. FedEx said yesterday that it will only charge extra for packages that need additional handling, are unauthorized or are oversized. —AP

## AN ABOUT-FACE AFTER NINE YEARS: CZECHS LIFT RATES

**PRAGUE:** Czech policymakers delivered their first interest rate hike since 2008 yesterday, stepping ahead of European Union peers to launch the bloc's first tightening cycle in more than five years. Reflecting global rate-setters' desire to move away from post-financial crisis ultra-loose monetary policy, the Czech National Bank (CNB) board voted unanimously to lift its key two-week repo rate by 20 basis points to 0.25 percent. The rise—the first major hike in the EU since Poland last lifted rates in 2012 — came faster than most had originally expected when the Czechs took an initial step to normalizing policy in April by abandoning a long-held cap on the crown currency.

It also comes as the European Central Bank remains locked into its ultra-loose policy of buying bonds from markets, a factor that many analysts had thought would hold the Czechs' hand for the time being to keep pressure off the crown currency. Governor Jiri Rusnok, however, said domestic factors led the decision. —Reuters



**ATLANTA:** In this March 3, 2016 file photo, Georgia Department of Labor services specialist Louis Holliday (right) helps a woman with a job search on a computer at an unemployment office in Atlanta. —AP

while prices of US government debt rose. US stock index futures were trading marginally higher.

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Claims have now been below 300,000, a threshold associated with a healthy labor market, for 126 straight weeks. That is the longest such stretch since 1970, when the labor market was



## GERMANY'S SIEMENS REMAINS CONFIDENT AS BIG ORDERS FALL

**FRANKFURT AM MAIN:** German industrial conglomerate Siemens confirmed its full-year forecast yesterday, after a third quarter that saw revenues and profits increase even as large orders fell.

The group reported a 7.0-percent increase in net profit to almost 1.5 billion euros (\$1.8 billion) in the third quarter of its financial year between April and June, beating analysts' forecasts of around 1.3 billion euros. Revenues at Siemens, whose products range from wind turbines to trains to medical equipment, grew by 8.0 percent to reach 21.4 billion euros.

But the group reported a 6.0-percent fall in overall orders, mainly driven by fewer large contracts for its power

and gas and wind power units. Nevertheless, "we're headed for a record year," chief executive Joe Kaeser told journalists in a telephone conference. Siemens said yesterday that the Kaeser, who has restructured the Munich-based group after years of growth into extremely disparate areas, had had his contract extended until 2021 by the supervisory board. It pointed to "global energy trends" sapping demand for its gas turbines and related products, and to "volatility" in orders for offshore wind turbines to explain the drop in orders.

But other business areas reported big increases in orders, especially the train-manufacturing mobility division and the digital factory unit, which

makes high-tech equipment for production lines.

The group highlighted the train business' 111-percent leap in new contracts compared with April-June last year, as rumors grow that it will merge the unit with Canadian competitor Bombardier's rail division. Meanwhile, Siemens also announced yesterday that the long-awaited stock market flotation of its Healthineers medical equipment unit—one of its most profitable—will come in mid-2018.

With its diagnostic and imaging machines, the division hopes to become a world leader in medical equipment by 2025. Kaeser recognized that "not everything is perfect at Siemens," acknowledging the com-

pany's crisis over gas turbine deliveries to Crimea.

In late July, the company said it would stop some business with Russia after finding out that four turbines destined for a power plant in the south of the country instead ended up in Crimea-subject to European Union sanctions following its annexation by Russia in 2014.

"What happened is unacceptable, but we can't look at a whole country with suspicion," Kaeser said of the turbine scandal. Looking ahead to the full year, Siemens confirmed its previous forecast for "modest growth" in revenue and earnings per share of between 7.20 and 7.70 euros, up from 6.74 euros in 2016. —AFP



**NEW YORK:** In this March 15, 2016 file photo, specialist Ronnie Howard works under the Avon logo on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Avon's CEO, Sheri McCoy, will be stepping down in March 2018, as the struggling beauty company continues to work on turning around its business. —AP

## AVON CEO MCCOY WILL LEAVE THE COMPANY

**LONDON:** Avon's CEO will leave the company in March as the struggling beauty products maker continues a turnaround campaign. Sheri McCoy has led the company for five years and sits on the board, but there has been some external pressure from activist investors for a change in leadership.

Avon said yesterday that it has hired an executive search firm to help find McCoy's successor.

"The platform is in place for a new CEO to continue accelerating the pace of change and take Avon to sustainable profitable growth," McCoy said in a company release. Barrington Capital Group had been pushing for significant action at Avon since 2015, when it sent a letter saying that, "significant, immediate changes in leadership and strategic direction are needed."

In March 2016 Avon announced that it was cutting 2,500 jobs and moving its headquarters from New York to the UK. Avon Products Inc. launched a three-year transformation plan last year and so far it has sold its North American business to private investment firm Cerberus Capital Management and realized \$180 million in cost savings. But those efforts have been arduous.

The company yesterday said it had swung to a loss of \$45.5 million in the second quarter. It had an adjusted loss of 3 cents per share on revenue of \$1.4 billion. Analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research predicted earnings of 6 cents per share on revenue of \$1.44 billion. Shares fell slightly in premarket trading. —AP

## TESLA FENDING OFF WORKER COMPLAINTS ON PAY, SAFETY

### DEMAND FOR ELECTRIC CARS SPEEDING, REVENUE RISING

**DETROIT:** Tesla said Wednesday that demand for its electric cars was speeding along and revenue rising, as the upstart automaker strived to rev production while keeping workers happy.

Money taken in by Tesla's automotive unit leapt to \$2.3 billion in the quarter that ended June 30, more than 90 percent greater than the amount taken in during the same period last year, the California-based company said in an earnings release. Tesla, which has yet to report a profit, logged a loss of \$336 million attributable to shareholders, which was in line with expectations.

Overall revenue at Tesla, which also owns green energy company SolarCity, climbed \$2.8 billion from \$1.3 billion in the same quarter last year, according to the earnings report. Tesla is pushing hard to ramp production of electric cars, with the first batch of Model 3 sedans aimed at the broader market delivered to buyers at the end of last week. "Welcome to production hell," Musk quipped to an enthusiastic crowd of workers at a Model 3 delivery event at the Tesla plant in the Northern California city of Fremont.

"That is where we are for at least six months." An average of more than 1,800 net reservations for Model 3 cars are being added daily, and orders for pricier S and X models rose in July, according to the company. Tesla reported that it made 25,708 vehicles in the second quarter of this year, some 40 percent more cars than it built in the same period a year ago. Meanwhile, Tesla is trying to fend off escalating worker complaints about pay and safety at its factory, where a move to unionize is gaining steam.

In a letter to Tesla's independent board members, workers requested access to the automaker's safety plan as well as clarity on compensation and a promise of no retaliation against employees as they try to form a union. The United Auto Workers is in the process of trying to unionize the 10,000 Tesla workers at the Fremont plant, alleging the company has a poor safety record—a charge it vehemently denies.

"We're tired of suffering preventable



**CORTE MADERA, California:** People enter a Tesla showroom on Wednesday in Corte Madera, California. Tesla reported second-quarter earnings on Wednesday after the closing bell. —AFP

injury after preventable injury. It impacts morale, it slows down production and it's of course traumatizing," said Michael Catura, a Tesla production worker who signed the letter. Musk has used Twitter to criticize the union drive and denied the charges that working conditions at the Fremont facility are unsafe.

A Tesla spokesperson pointed to a company blog from May that argued its safety record is improving. The automaker did not provide additional comment. That blog accused the UAW of conducting a misleading campaign, and said despite a small number of incidents, the plant has a better safety record than the industry average.

### Gripes about pay

Tesla has acknowledged its employees had to work large amounts of overtime in the early days, but that also is improving and the average work week is now 42 hours. "Tesla's safety record is much better than industry average, but it is not enough. Our goal is to have as

close to zero injuries as humanly possible and to become the safest factory in the auto industry," the company said in the blog. But so far, Tesla has not responded to worker complaints about pay. Starting pay for production associates in the Fremont facility is \$18 an hour, far below the national average for auto workers of \$25.58 and even farther below the living wage in Alameda County, California, where the average wage is \$28.10, according to the letter sent by workers.

In addition, the letter said the paths to promotion are unclear. "Many of us have worked for years with the vague promise of a raise, with nothing to show for it," said Richard Ortiz, who works in the paint shop. "We have no idea what the criteria is to move forward, and no idea of what defines success. We've raised these issues repeatedly, and have gotten no response." Workers, who are currently attempting to unionize the facility, also asked the company not to retaliate against those who speak out. —AFP

# FLOWERS' 2-RUN HR LIFTS BRAVES TO WIN

**ATLANTA:** Pinch-hitter Tyler Flowers connected for a tiebreaking, two-run homer in the eighth inning as the Atlanta Braves stopped the Dodgers' nine-game winning streak with a 5-3 victory on Wednesday night. Flowers' shot off Pedro Baez (3-2) helped Atlanta stop the Dodgers' major league-record streak of 53 straight wins when leading at any point of a game. The Dodgers were ahead 1-0 and 3-2. The last time the Dodgers lost after leading in a game was May 15, when they were up 1-0 before losing 8-4 at San Francisco. Rex Brothers (2-2) pitched 1 1/3 scoreless innings for Atlanta, which had lost six in a row. Arodys Vizcaino, who has taken the closer's role from Jim Johnson, pitched a perfect ninth for his third save. Cody Bellinger hit his 30th homer for the NL West-leading Dodgers.

## RAYS 3, ASTROS 0

Rookie Austin Pruitt and three relievers combined on a five-hitter and Tampa Bay handed Houston ace Dallas Keuchel his first loss of the season. Logan Morrison hit his 28th home run. He also connected Tuesday night, snapping his season-long 12-game homerless streak. The AL West-leading Astros, whose powerful offense has taken a hit with All-Stars Carlos Correa and George Springer on the disabled list, went 0 for 9 with runners in scoring position and were shut out for the second time in a week. Pruitt (6-2), who grew up in suburban Houston and attended the University of Houston, allowed five hits in a career-high 6 1/3 innings. Alex Colome got his 32nd save. Keuchel (9-1) allowed seven hits and three runs over five innings in his second start since missing almost two months with a pinched nerve in his neck. The lefty ace was better than he was in his previous start, when he lasted just three innings and gave up three runs at Detroit.

## DIAMONDBACKS 3, CUBS 0

Zack Godley pitched three-hit ball over six scoreless innings, Jake Lamb drove in all the runs and Arizona beat Chicago. The loss was just the fourth in 18 games since the All-Star break for the NL Central-leading Cubs. The defending champions got shut down by Godley after pouring on a season-high 16 runs in Tuesday's romp. Lamb hit a two-run double against Jake Arrieta (10-8) in the sixth and an RBI double off Justin Wilson in the eighth. Godley (5-4) was every bit as stingy after tossing seven scoreless innings in a win at St. Louis last week. Fernando Rodney got his 23rd save in 28 chances.

## TIGERS 2, YANKEES 0

Jordan Zimmermann pitched seven sharp innings, Justin Upton hit an early RBI double on the 10th anniversary of his major league debut and Detroit downed New York in a game that included 4 hours, 37 minutes of rain delays. Zimmermann (7-8) allowed six hits, walked none and struck out six. Scheduled to begin at 1:05 p.m., the game started 1 hour, 26 minutes late. Rain resumed in the seventh and a downpour that caused flash flood warnings halted play at the start of the eighth. Only a few hundred fans from the original crowd of 43,379 remained when play resumed after a 3:11 wait. Shane Greene pitched a perfect ninth for his second save in two days. Masahiro Tanaka (8-10) dropped to 0-6 in day games this year. Yankees reliever Dellin Betances struck out the side in the eighth on just nine pitches.

## CARDINALS 5, BREWERS 4

Yadier Molina hit two solo home runs, Luke Weaver pitched into the seventh inning and



**ATLANTA:** Atlanta Braves' Freddie Freeman, right, is tagged out at home by Los Angeles Dodgers catcher Yasmani Grandal during the seventh inning. —AP

St. Louis held off Milwaukee. Weaver (1-1) allowed five hits, including Eric Thames' 25th home run. Trevor Rosenthal got four outs for his seventh save. Molina homered in the fourth and then connected off Brent Suter (2-2) in the sixth for his 12th of the season and fourth career multihomer game.

## ORIOLES 6, ROYALS 0

Jeremy Hellickson threw seven outstanding innings in his Orioles debut, Caleb Joseph homered and Baltimore beat Kansas City to complete a three-game sweep. Playing in his second game with Baltimore, Tim Beckham doubled, tripled and drove in two runs. The Orioles' five-game winning streak is their longest since early May, and they now stand just 21 1/2 games behind Kansas City for the second AL wild-card slot. The Royals had won 10 of 11 before coming up flat at Camden Yards, scoring only three runs in 27 innings. They showed their frustration in the ninth inning, when Mike Moustakas was tossed after complaining about a third-strike call and manager Ned Yost was ejected for joining the argument. Hellickson (1-0) was obtained Saturday from Philadelphia. He gave up five hits. Baltimore went up 3-0 in the second inning against Jason Vargas (13-5) when Beckham hit an RBI double and Joseph homered.

## METS 10, ROCKIES 5

Curtis Granderson hit a tiebreaking, three-run homer in the sixth inning, and New York erased a five-run deficit to beat Colorado. Jay Bruce hit his 29th homer and Asdrubal Cabrera had three hits for the Mets, who snapped a three-game losing streak. Yoenis Cespedes added an RBI double and played solid defense in left field. Amed Rosario tripled for his second hit in his second game in the majors. Chasen Bradford (1-0) pitched two hitless innings. Tyler Chatwood (6-12) gave up eight runs in 5 1/3 innings.

## MARLINS 7, NATIONALS 0

Vance Worley pitched seven innings and faced the minimum number of batters to earn his first victory since May 2016, helping Miami

beat Washington. Worley (1-2) allowed only two hits, and both baserunners were erased on double play grounders hit by Bryce Harper. Worley lowered his ERA from 6.42 to 5.31 while facing the highest-scoring team in the National League.

Dee Gordon tripled, singled twice, scored three times, drove in a run, stole two bases and made an acrobatic defensive play at second base. He extended his hitting streak to 13 games, matching his career high. Teammates Christian Yelich and Derek Dietrich hit two-run homers. Right fielder Giancarlo Stanton leaped at the wall to rob Brian Goodwin of a home run for the final out to preserve a four-hit shutout. AJ Cole (1-1), recalled from Triple-A to make his second start of the year, allowed five runs in six innings.

## REDS 5, PIRATES 2

Rookie Jesse Winker homered for the second straight game, hitting a tiebreaking drive in the seventh inning off newly acquired Pittsburgh reliever Joaquin Benoit that led Cincinnati. Adam Duvall homered and drove in three runs for the Reds. The Pirates have lost eight of 10 following a six-game winning streak. Winker hit a solo shot over the right-field wall with one out in the seventh to give Cincinnati a 3-2 lead. Benoit (1-5) took over to begin the seventh after being traded from Philadelphia to the Pirates on Monday. Michael Lorenzen (6-2) won in relief and Raisel Iglesias closed for his 18th save.

## TWINS 5, PADRES 2

Ervin Santana threw a four-hitter for his major league-best fifth complete game and hit a two-run single to lead Minnesota over San Diego. The Twins won for just the second time in nine games. They went 2-6 on a trip through Los Angeles, Oakland and San Diego. Joe Mauer had a double and single to tie Tony Oliva for third on Minnesota's career hit list with 1,917. Santana (12-7) retired his first 10 batters. He struck out nine and walked one in his 21st career complete game. The Twins jumped on Luis Perdomo (5-6) for four runs on four hits and two walks in the second.

## RANGERS 5, MARINERS 1

Joey Gallo hit another impressively long home run, Andrew Cashner won his third straight start and Texas beat Seattle to snap a four-game losing streak. Delino DeShields and Elvis Andrus also homered for the Rangers, who wrapped up a 3-6 homestand during which Adrian Beltre joined the 3,000-hit club and ace pitcher Yu Darvish was traded away. Mariners lefty Ariel Miranda (7-5) struck out five without a walk in 5 2/3 innings. But he allowed all three homers as Seattle's four-game winning streak ended. Cashner (7-8) gave up one run over six innings to match a career best with his third straight win.

## BLUE JAYS 5, WHITE SOX 1

JA Happ struck out a season-high 10 in seven innings, matching his longest start of the season, as Toronto topped Chicago. Happ (4-8) gave up a run and six hits while walking one to get his first win since July 4. Justin Smoak extended his hitting streak to nine games and reached base three times for the Blue Jays, who won two of three in a matchup of last-place teams. Steve Pearce and Josh Donaldson added solo home runs. Roberto Osuna entered with two on and nobody out in the ninth inning, and set down three straight batters to earn his 27th save. Derek Holland (5-11) gave up two runs and five hits with four walks in six innings.

## ATHLETICS 6, GIANTS 1

Ryon Healy hit his 20th home run to end a monthlong power drought, rookie Daniel Gossett pitched seven impressive innings and Oakland beat San Francisco. Jed Lowrie doubled twice and scored, Matt Chapman added two hits and an RBI and Chad Pinder singled twice and made a sparkling defensive play in left field to help the A's win on the opener of their five-game road trip. Gossett (3-6) pitched three-hit ball, allowing one run. He struck out five and walked two. Healy, starting at first base in place of All-Star Yonder Alonso because of the pitching matchup, had gone a career-high 24 games without homering before his two-out, two-run drive off Matt Moore (3-11). —AP

## MONFILS DUMPED, ZVEREV FOILS AUSSIE UPSET BID

**WASHINGTON:** Eighth-ranked Alexander Zverev and 10th-ranked Milos Raonic foiled upset bids Wednesday at the ATP and WTA Citi Open but 200th-ranked Indian qualifier Yuki Bhambri stunned defending champion Gael Monfils. Zverev, a 20-year-old German playing his first hard-court match in four months, rallied to edge Australia's 75th-ranked Jordan Thompson 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/5).

"I'm just happy to be through and happy to get the win," Zverev said. Canada's Raonic, hoping to end an 18-month ATP title drought, blasted 26 aces in defeating France's Nicolas Mahut 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (10/8) on the Washington hardcourts where he won

in 2014. "This is a chance to really get things going the right way," Raonic said. "It's the leadoff to having a chance to turn things around. This year, I haven't had that good a season."

France's Monfils, ranked 22nd, was humbled after stumbling from the start as Bhambri won 6-3, 4-6, 7-5. "I played very bad. It wasn't a good match," Monfils said. "I'm disappointed. It's tough to talk about it because it was really bad. I love this tournament. To come here and play a poor match like that, it's very tough." Bhambri connected on 72 percent of first serves in the opening set, winning 16 of 18 points on his first serve, and lifted his level in the third set, taking of 20-of-23 first

serve points. "Definitely one of the biggest wins of my career," Bhambri said. "I hung in there and fought my way through. It gives me a lot of confidence going into my next match." Next up for Bhambri is Argentina's Guido Pella, who ousted Bhambri's Davis Cup teammate Ramkumar Ramanathan in round one. "I'm absolutely going to ask him for some advice," Bhambri said.

### Kyrgios retires again

Zverev will seek his 100th career ATP match victory Thursday against 106th-ranked American Teyssandgren, who advanced 6-3, 3-0 when Aussie 10th seed Nick Kyrgios retired and was booed off the court

with what was described as a right shoulder injury. It was Kyrgios's first match since he retired from his Wimbledon opener last month with a hip injury. Thompson, who upset Britain's top-ranked Andy Murray in the first round at Queen's, was poised to dump Zverev as well, taking the first set and grabbing a 5-4 edge in the deciding tie-breaker.

But the 23-year-old Aussie netted a backhand, then hit his only double fault of the match and swatted a forehand into the net to hand Zverev the victory after two hours and 11 minutes. "I tried to stay calm, stay composed and focused on me," Zverev said. "He's playing very well right now." — AFP

## RAMS DL EASLEY TO MISS SEASON

**IRVINE:** A stalwart defensive line has been the Rams' biggest strength in recent years, and they returned to Los Angeles last season with a starting quartet reminiscent of their hallowed Fearsome Foursome of the 1960s. The Rams' foundation is being severely tested after just a few workouts in their second season back home.

Defensive lineman Dominique Easley will miss the season with a torn knee ligament, the team learned Wednesday. His absence left the Rams with just one healthy projected starter for their fifth practice at UC Irvine. All-Pro lineman Aaron Donald still hasn't reported to camp while locked in contract negotiations with the club. Nose tackle Michael Brockers is healthy, but the Rams' line is in upheaval during a time when it should be honing new defensive coordinator Wade Phillips' 3-4 scheme.

"It's kind of sad," Brockers said. "You see Dominique go down, and Aaron isn't here, and you miss those guys' character and the atmosphere they bring." Easley's right knee buckled without contact while he chased a ball-carrier Tuesday, ending yet another season for the gifted but oft-injured lineman. Brockers said he couldn't watch film of the play on which Easley was hurt. "It's tough," Brockers said. "We work so hard. We push each other every day. You're missing a guy like that, that drives you and drives competitiveness in you, brings it out of you. You hate to lose that."

### Expected to step up

Easley also tore ligaments in both knees during college at Florida. He was the Patriots' first-round pick in 2014, but his two seasons in New England both ended early due to injuries, including a knee problem in his rookie year. After the Patriots let him go, Easley signed with the Rams last year and had a solid season with 35 tackles and 3 1/2 sacks. He was expected to step up in prominence this season as a starter.

"It's really unfortunate because of what he meant to our team on the field and in the locker room," coach Sean McVay said. "He has a great presence. Always had a good smile on his face, great disposition and demeanor. He'll be missed, but we'll put our arm around him and support him." Robert Quinn, a starting end last season, is playing a hybrid outside linebacker role in Phillips' new defense. He is healthy, along with new outside linebacker Connor Barwin. Los Angeles' depth on the defensive line also took a hit with the offseason trade of William Hayes to Miami, but the Rams have options. Ethan Westbrooks is a capable veteran, while Louis Trinca-Pasat, rookie Tanzel Smart, Mike Purcell and Matt Longacre will have to step up. McVay praised the development of Westbrooks and Trinca-Pasat, who got extra work Wednesday. "It's crazy what happened to (Easley)," said Smart, a sixth-round pick from Tulane. "I hope he has a full recovery, but I'm ready to do whatever. (The Rams) took a chance on me in the draft, and I've got to pay them back for believing in me." — AFP



**SOUTHPORT:** Jordan Spieth of the United States, with his caddie Michael Greller, lines up a putt on the 9th green during the third round of the British Open Golf Championship, at Royal Birkdale. — AP

## THE GRAND SLAM AHEAD, SPIETH GOES FOR HAT-TRICK

**AKRON, Ohio:** Jordan Spieth will get his first crack at the career Grand Slam next week at the PGA Championship. For now, he goes after a hat-trick. With so much attention on Spieth's victory in the British Open and the prospect of the 24-year-old Texan becoming the youngest player to have all four majors, it's easy to overlook that he hasn't lost a tournament in six weeks.

OK, he's only played twice since then, but he won them both. His playoff victory in the Travelers Championship was famous for his bunker shot and body bump with his caddie. And then at Royal Birkdale, he won with a bogey from the driving range, a near ace and a 50-foot eagle putt. Next up is the Bridgestone Invitational in a busy week for golf.

This will be the third time Spieth has a shot at three straight victories. He won the Australian Open and Hero World Challenge at the end of 2014 (and tied for seventh in the Phoenix Open to start the next year). He won the US Open and John Deere Classic in 2015, only to miss a playoff at the British Open by one shot.

The Bridgestone Invitational won't be easy. It's a 7,400-yard course that plays to a par 70. Three of the last four champions are Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy and Dustin Johnson. Spieth tied for third last year, but only because he closed with a 67 to make up ground late in the tournament. The rest of the PGA Tour that isn't eligible for the World Golf Championship are in the high altitude of Reno, Nevada, for the Barracuda Championship. The best women in the world are in Scotland for the Ricoh Women's British Open at Kingsbarns. And the biggest star is at the Web.com Tour event in California. That would be Stephen Curry, playing on a sponsor's exemption.

### BRIDGESTONE INVITATIONAL

Two players are claiming to be the defending champion at Firestone. McIlroy won in 2014, two weeks after he won the British Open, by overcoming Sergio Garcia in the final round. McIlroy missed the following year when he injured his ankle playing soccer, and he didn't play last year because the

Bridgestone Invitational was opposite the French Open during a crammed summer built around the Olympics. Johnson is the real defending champion, two weeks after he won the US Open, and it was a familiar tale. He trailed Jason Day only for the Australian to crumble in the trees and water down the stretch. Johnson posed Wednesday with all four World Golf Championships trophies. He is the only player with a Grand Slam of WGCs. For now, that will have to do. Spieth, meanwhile, has never won a WGC event. It won't be long before some wag refers to him as the best to have never won a World Golf Championship.

### WOMEN'S BRITISH OPEN

So Yeon Ryu is the only player with multiple victories on the LPGA Tour this year, and the No. 1 player in women's golf has a chance to deliver a sweep of British majors. Not for her, but for her coach. She works with Cameron McCormick, the same Australian coach who has been teaching Jordan Spieth since he was 12. — AP

## CAPTAIN ROOT HAS FAITH IN 'LEVEL-HEADED' JENNINGS

**MANCHESTER:** England captain Joe Root believes Keaton Jennings's calm approach will stand him in good stead as he battles to come through a tricky period in his fledgling Test career. The opener made a century on his England debut against India at Mumbai in December. But his subsequent nine Test innings have yielded just one fifty.

Jennings has found life particularly tough during the ongoing Test series at home to his native South Africa, with two ducks in six innings. But he heads into Friday's fourth Test at Old Trafford having made a morale-boosting 48 in difficult conditions during the second innings of England's 239-run win over South Africa at The Oval that left the hosts 2-1 up with one to play.

It was a timely knock with the 25-year-old under pressure for his place ahead of England's Ashes tour of Australia. But at the very least the son of Ray Jennings, South Africa's isolation

era wicket-keeper and later a caretaker national coach, appears to have retained his place at Old Trafford. "He's a very level-headed guy, he's got a very strong character and throughout he's been very much the same in the way he's approached his training and in each game as well," Root said of Jennings at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

"It's great to see someone so light of experience be very mature and go about it in the right way," added Root of Jennings, qualified for England through his mother and via residence. "The way he played in that second innings was extremely great to see, I'm pleased that he's been able to get a score and hopefully that'll lead into some more runs this week."

Johannesburg-born and raised Jennings is averaging just a touch over 15 against the Proteas, with his technique coming under severe analysis

from several pundits. "It's tough, and that's why it's called Test cricket, it can be a very hard thing to break into," said Root. "You come from county cricket where there's not a huge amount of exposure to the media and external scrutiny-and you have to get your head around it pretty quickly," the star batsman added. "It is a test of character, it's a test of skill."

### 'World-class' Philander

Part of that test this series has been facing bowlers of the calibre of accurate seamer Vernon Philander, whom the Proteas hope will be fully fit after he was laid low with a mystery stomach illness at The Oval. "He's a world-class bowler and puts the ball in good areas," said Root of Philander. "Throughout this series there have been surfaces that have been more bowler-friendly and he obviously poses a big threat to us and we don't take

him lightly. "We will make sure we do our homework on him if you like and we are fully prepared for all the challenges the whole attack brings. "I think it's wrong to single out individuals-you know on any given day any one of those guys can put in good performances." Heavy rain in Manchester had made assessing pitch conditions difficult, with heat lamps used to dry sections of the outfield.

But Root, one match away from victory in his first series as England captain, said: "There's been a lot of chat about the weather around, but most importantly all we need to focus on is making sure we look to win this game." But the bad weather meant Root felt unable to reveal if England would stick with the same XI. "It (the wicket) was under-prepared and a lot can change in the next 24 hours, so we'll make a judgment on the side tomorrow (Friday)." — AFP



**COLOMBO:** India's Cheteshwar Pujara watches the ball after playing a shot during their second cricket test match against Sri Lanka. — AP

## PUJARA, RAHANE CENTURIES PUT INDIA IN DRIVER'S SEAT

**COLOMBO:** Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane hit centuries as India took opening day honours on 344-3 at stumps against Sri Lanka in the second Test yesterday. Pujara (128) and Rahane (103) put on an unbeaten 211-run partnership for the fourth wicket to thwart Sri Lankan bowlers who struck two crucial blows in the afternoon session in Colombo.

The in-form Pujara registered his 13th Test century in his landmark 50th game as Rahane fired his ninth Test hundred. The visitors, who lead the three-match series 1-0, wobbled slightly when Lokesh Rahul went for 57 and skipper Virat Kohli followed for 13 soon after lunch. Rahul, who scored his eighth Test fifty on his return from a viral fever, was run out in a mix-up with Pujara. Veteran left-arm spinner Rangana Herath sent Kohli trudging back to the pavilion with a tossed-up delivery that got the edge of the captain's bat and went to slip. Pujara and Rahane ground out the runs to deny Dinesh Chandimal's side any more wickets during the day. Pujara, who scored 153 in the first innings of the opening Test, hit 10 fours and a six at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground.

Rahane also tackled the spinners with aplomb, using his feet to great effect during his 168-ball stay at the crease so far. In the morning session, off-spinner Dilruwan Perera had Shikhar Dhawan trapped lbw for 35 after the tourists elected to bat first. Debutant left-arm spinner Malinda Pushpakumara was still searching for his first Test scalp. The hosts need at least a draw to stay alive in the series. —AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**COLOMBO:** Scoreboard at the close of play on the opening day of the second Test between Sri Lanka and India in Colombo yesterday.

#### India 1st innings

S. Dhawan lbw b Perera	35
L. Rahul run out (Chandimal/Dickwella)	57
C. Pujara not out	128
V. Kohli c Mathews b Herath	13
A. Rahane not out	103
Extras (b4, nb1, lb3)	8
Total (3 wickets; 90 overs)	344

**To bat:** H. Pandya, W. Saha, R. Ashwin, R. Jadeja, U. Yadav, M. Shami

**Bowling:** Pradeep 17.4-2-63-0, Herath 24-3-83-1, Karunaratne 3-0-10-0, Perera 18-2-68-1, Pushpakumara 19.2-0-82-0, De Silva 8-0-31-0.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-56 (Dhawan), 2-109 (Rahul), 3-133 (Kohli)  
Sri Lanka: D. Chandimal, U. Tharanga, D. Karunaratne, K. Mendis, A. Mathews, D. de Silva, N. Dickwella, D. Perera, R. Herath, M. Pushpakumara, N. Pradeep.

## AUSTRALIA PAY WAR ENDS, ENSURING TOURS, ASHES

**MELBOURNE:** Australia's bruising and protracted cricket pay dispute was finally resolved yesterday with players and management agreeing on a new "in-principle" deal, ensuring upcoming series against Bangladesh, India and England can go ahead. The players appeared to be the winners in the five-year agreement, worth an estimated Aus\$500 million (US\$396 million), as they retained the revenue-sharing model they had been fighting for—with women cricketers also included for the first time. The bad-tempered stand-off had been rumbling for months, rattling the game and badly straining the players' relationship with governing body Cricket Australia.

Some 230 cricketers had been unemployed since the end of June when their contracts expired, putting this month's Test tour to Bangladesh under serious threat. "Today's agreement is the result of sensible compromises by both parties," said CA chief James Sutherland, adding that the "core issues" had been worked out. He said the five-year deal would "restore much certainty to the game of cricket".

### 'Challenging process'

"It will allow all players-state and international players-to be contracted immediately and it will also allow the all-important tour of Bangladesh to proceed as planned." Captain Steve Smith welcomed the deal on Twitter, adding: "It's been a long and challenging process and it's great that we can now get on with playing the game that we all love. "I'm excited that we can all start working together again to continue to grow our great game."

At the heart of the dispute had been the divisive issue of revenue-sharing. CA wanted to scrap the model that has governed players' salaries since their first memorandum of understanding was brokered 20 years ago. Players have been paid a percentage of gross revenue for the past two decades, and they argued that changing the system would make them employees rather than partners with incentives to grow the game. — AFP



**MELBOURNE:** Cricket Australia CEO James Sutherland (L) and Australian Cricketers' Association CEO Alistair Nicholson attend a press conference. —AFP

## NOT SO JOLLY HOCKEY STICKS FOR NORTH KOREAN SPORTS

**PYONGYANG:** When North Korea's ice hockey team arrived in Auckland for an international tournament carrying battered wooden sticks, organizers stepped in to provide high-tech carbon fibre equipment. But they had to hand them back before going home-taking them would have violated United Nations sanctions. Exports of luxury goods to the North are prohibited as part of United Nations sanctions over its banned nuclear and ballistic missile programs, in a move intended to hit Pyongyang's elites.

But North Korea-which last week carried out its second successful test of an intercontinental ballistic missile that analysts say could reach much of the mainland United States-remains bullish about its sporting potential. Sports ministry official Jong Kwang-Rim was in Auckland for the April tournament and protested over the hockey sticks, to no

avail. He blamed the debacle on "hostile US forces"-Pyongyang always attributes United Nations actions against it to Washington's doing-and said North Korea could not be cowed.

Its weapons achievements, he said, "show how great our people is and more importantly, how we have the greatest leader". The decision on the hockey sticks stemmed from a UN Security Council resolution passed in March last year that expanded the definition of banned luxury goods to include in "recreational sports equipment". "They were not allowed to take the sticks out of New Zealand," NZ Ice Hockey Federation general secretary Jonathan Albright, who was also the tournament director, told AFP.

Albright said he understood authorities also seized chocolate and apples from the North Koreans before they

departed, adding teams were told not to swap badges or pennants with them because they would be confiscated too. "I know it's a little thing, a little pin, but apparently the security or customs officials at the airport were quite strict and vigilant." But Jong remained defiant, insisting: "Even though the US sanctions tried to challenge us, we were able to develop our sports sector. "Recently, the development of our nuclear power and the launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile raised us to a higher position in the world," he added. "We will also dominate the US in the sports sector in the next few years."

### 1966 and all that

For most of its existence, North Korea has had a limited presence on the global sporting stage. Perhaps its biggest success was in 1966, when its footballers

beat Italy to reach the World Cup quarter-finals-a run featured in the documentary "The Game of Their Lives". Its women's football side is strong, winning the Women's Asian Cup three times and currently ranked 10th in the world.

At the Rio Olympics North Korea took home two golds, in weightlifting and gymnastics-and when two gymnasts from North and South posed together for a selfie, it became a viral sensation. Pyongyang has sought to raise its sporting profile in recent years, hosting a Women's Asian Cup qualifying group in April. Jong was speaking at a table tennis gymnasium in the capital, where many of the country's top players were training for this week's Pyongyang Open. But apart from a couple of Iranians, all the players at the Challenge-ranked International Table Tennis Federation event were from North Korea. —AFP



**LONDON:** This file photo taken on July 09, 2017 shows Britain's Mo Farah winning the men's 3000m during the IAAF Diamond League Anniversary Games athletics meeting at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park stadium. —AFP

## MO FARAH BIDS FOR FINAL DOUBLE GOLDEN FANFARE

**LONDON:** Mo Farah will like another athletics superstar Usain Bolt brings the curtain down on his track career at the world championships with hopes of a final double golden flourish. The 34-year-old Somalia-born Briton-who will switch his focus to road running-can capture his 10th successive world or Olympic title in the 10000 meters today. Then he hopes to bow out in style on the track in London where he achieved his first Olympic double in 2012 with the 5000m on Saturday week.

That will bring to an end a six year spell where like Bolt in the sprints Farah has dominated. He broke up the previous hegemony of the Kenyans and Ethiopians, lifting his exploits up above those of legends such as Paavo Nurmi, Lasse Viren, Emil Zatopek, Haile Gebrselassie and Kenenisa Bekele. However whilst many question how will the sport cope without Bolt and his engaging showmanship-lightning bolt and all-perhaps unfairly the same has not been said about the vacuum that Farah will leave in his wake.

Despite his achievements-Olympic (2012/16) and world doubles (2013/15) at 5000m and 10000m-the British public have been left largely unmoved. Only once, in 2011, has he reached the top three in the popular vote for the prestigious BBC Sports Personality of the Year poll. It prompted British triathlon star Alistair Brownlee to decry the glaring omission for an athlete whose exploits were recognized by Queen Elizabeth II who bestowed a knighthood on him.

"It's really sad, because for me he is the perfect British story," Brownlee told The Guardian in December last year after Farah finished only fourth in the poll. "It's what we should be about: a person who comes to Britain as a young man, as a refugee, and an ex-schoolteacher (Alan Watkinson) identifies something that he's brilliant at and he represents Britain as the best in the world. "I think that's a fantastic British story."

Whilst Brownlee put it down to Farah perhaps not being considered British he came from war-torn Somalia via Djibouti with his mother (Amran) and two of his five siblings aged eight to England to join their father Muktar-doping claims made about his US-based coach Alberto Salazar, since proved to be false, may have had an impact. — AFP

# BOLT WANTS TO GO OUT 'UNBEATABLE'

**LONDON:** Usain Bolt is confident he can produce one more magical Midas touch when he seeks to defend his 100m title at the IAAF World Championships. In eight individual finals at the past four worlds (as well as in four 4x100m relay finals, Bolt has only suffered one hiccup: when he false started in the 100m final in Daegu in 2011.

Eleven world titles to go along with eight Olympic golds: Bolt has the experience of dealing with multi-round big-event racing. It would be a brave person to bet against the 30-year-old Jamaican, no matter how sluggish, relatively speaking, his season has been so far. He has had only three outings, all over 100m, and only once dipped under the 10-second barrier, in Monaco last month (9.95sec).

"If I show up at a championships, I'm fully confident," Bolt maintained. "My coach (Glen Mills) is confident and I'm ready to go. I'm fully confident, 100 percent." Whilst labelling himself "for some reason, the underdog," Bolt fired out a warning shot at potential rivals by saying he wanted to bring the curtain down on his individual exploits as a sprinter who was "unbeatable, unstoppable." Bolt suffered a rare defeat in the 100m by two-time doping cheat Justin Gatlin at the Rome Diamond League meet in 2013, losing out by a hundredth of a second. The multi-medalled American, now 35, will be in the field in the British capital and a nailed-down contender for a podium place.

### Bolt, Gatlin's nemesis

Gatlin, the 2004 Olympic 100m gold medallist and 2005 world champion before serving a ban between 2006-10, won silvers behind Bolt in Beijing in 2015 and Moscow two years previously, and last year became the oldest man to win a 100m Olympic medal when he took silver in Rio, also behind his Jamaican nemesis.



**LONDON:** Jamaican athlete Usain Bolt celebrates after a press conference ahead of the World Athletics championships. — AP

Bolt's teammate Yohan Blake, world 100m champion in 2011 after the false start, and Gatlin's compatriot Christian Coleman, who has the season's fastest time of 9.82sec, should be in the running. Bolt's path to victory was given a boost Wednesday when Canadian sprinter Andre De Grasse withdrew from the Worlds with a hamstring injury he suffered in training. De Grasse was a medal threat in the 100m and 200m.

South African Akani Simbine and Frenchman Jimmy Vicaut all have a realistic chance of bagging a medal should they safely negotiate heats and keep enough in reserve from today's heats for Saturday's semi-final and final. "I love competition, I thrive on

competition and I want people to run fast to push me," warned Bolt, who set the current world record of 9.58sec when he won world gold in Berlin in 2009, his winning times in the last two championships being 9.79 and 9.77 respectively.

"I'm the underdog, for some reason," Bolt said. "That's what I keep reading. That's what my team keeps telling me... I've got to prove myself once more. "My last race was 9.95, which shows I'm going in the right direction. The two rounds (of heats and semi-finals) always help me. I'm always going forward. "At a championships it's about who keeps their nerve. I've been here before. It's time to go. It's 'go' time." — AFP

## NEYMAR'S BARCELONA HIGH AND LOW POINTS

**BARCELONA:** Neymar's anticipated world record transfer move to Paris Saint-Germain will bring to an end an epic four-year spell at Barcelona. AFP Sports look at the 25-year-old's best and worst moments in a Barca shirt.

### HIGHS

#### Champions League winner

In their first season together Neymar, Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez combined to be an unstoppable force as Barca sealed only the club's second ever treble of La Liga, Champions League and Copa del Rey in 2014/15. Neymar had a huge impact on Barca's Champions League run as he scored three times against PSG and Bayern Munich in the quarter and semi-finals respectively before netting in the final against Juventus to finish as joint top scorer in the competition with Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

#### No Messi, no problem

One argument backing Neymar's decision to leave Barca on top of reportedly tripling his wages is to move out of Messi's shadow and compete to become the first Ballon d'Or winner outside of Messi and Ronaldo for a decade. Whilst Neymar has blossomed playing alongside Messi, arguably his best spell for

Barca came in a rare prolonged absence for the Argentine with knee ligament damage in the Autumn of 2015. Neymar and Suarez stepped up to the mark with the former scoring 11 times in nine matches without Messi, capped off with a virtuoso performance as Barca thrashed Real Madrid 4-0 in their own backyard at the Santiago Bernabeu.

### PSG miracle

PSG's audacious move gains a small measure of revenge on Barca for producing the biggest Champions League comeback of all time back in March from 4-0 down after a first leg hammering in Paris to win 6-1 at the Camp Nou with Neymar at the heart of the action. Neymar scored a stunning free-kick and from the penalty spot before teeing up Sergi Roberto for a 95th minute winner as Barca struck three times in the final seven minutes to take his tally to seven goals and three assists in six games against the French giants.

### LOWS

#### Up in court

The murky transfer which brought Neymar to Barca in the first place in 2013 has overshadowed his entire stay in Spain with two separate legal cases

launched into the deal. Barca settled the first case with the Spanish tax authorities over a 40 million euro payment made to a company owned by Neymar's family.

But another case brought by investment company DIS who feel they were cheated out of their fair share of the transfer fee as they owned 40 percent of his sports rights is still ongoing. Neymar was called to give evidence in a preliminary hearing on the DIS case in February 2016 and will be called to testify again when the trial takes place.

### Malaga meltdown

By Barca's high standards, last season was a disappointing one as they missed out on the La Liga title to Madrid and, despite their PSG heroics, crashed out at the quarter-finals of the Champions League to Juventus. Barca lost out on the title by just three points and were made to pay for a costly 2-0 defeat at Malaga in April caused in part by a loss of temper from Neymar. His one and only red card in a Barca shirt was particularly avoidable as his first booking was for holding up play as he tied his boots, reportedly to garner attention for his sponsor Nike. —AFP

## SPANISH LEAGUE STALL NEYMAR'S PSG MOVE

**BARCELONA:** Spain's football league refused to accept a 222 million euro (\$260 million) cheque yesterday in a new twist to Neymar's 'transfer of the century' from Barcelona to Paris Saint-Germain. Representatives of the 25-year-old Brazilian were turned away from the Madrid headquarters of La Liga after their payment to meet Barcelona's buyout clause was refused by officials who have accused the French club of breaching transfer rules.

"We can confirm that the legal representatives of the player attended La Liga to pay the clause and this has been rejected," a spokesperson told AFP. The move may delay Neymar's transfer but is unlikely to derail it, according to experts. However, the player, initially expected in Paris later Thursday, is now due to arrive a day later, according to airport sources in the French capital. The transfer dominated front pages across the world with many commentators aghast at the rampant inflation in football transfer fees with Neymar's new mark more than doubling the previous record set by Manchester United's capture of Paul Pogba last



**BERLIN:** This file photo taken on June 6, 2015 at the Olympic Stadium in Berlin shows then Barcelona's Brazilian forward Neymar da Silva Santos Junior celebrating after the UEFA Champions League Final football match between Juventus and FC Barcelona. —AFP

year. However, in the French capital there is huge excitement at PSG's Qatari-backed project landing a star name to finally make them feared among European football's elite.

"Neymar to PSG - the transfer of the century", splashed Le Parisien's front page with the first five pages devoted to his impending arrival. "Neymar could be wearing the parisian shirt from this week," added Le Parisien with a possible presentation to take place at PSG's Ligue 1 opener at home to Amiens on Saturday. French President Emmanuel Macron added to the anticipation, saying the move was "good news."

### Financial Fair play

The mood was understandably more somber in Spain. Madrid-based sports daily AS ran with "pay and go" alongside a smiling Neymar, whilst Marca described the move as "the signing that changes the history of football. In Barcelona, attention turned to who the Catalans can sign to replace Neymar in the month before the transfer window closes with Liverpool's Philippe Coutinho and Borussia Dortmund's Ousmane Dembele both linked.

There was also skepticism at the role played by PSG's owners Oryx Qatar Sports Investments (QSI) at a time of political crisis for the oil rich state emirate which has been boycotted by its Gulf neighbors in recent months and will play host to the World Cup in 2022. Spanish newspaper El Mundo described the move as a "state signing." Whilst coaches, including Manchester United manager Jose Mourinho, have lamented that the move could cause even greater inflation in transfer fees and player wages, France's Budget Minister claimed to be "delighted" Neymar will earn a reported 30 million euros after tax. "If in fact Neymar does come to a French club, the budget minister will be delighted at the tax that he will be able to pay in France," Darmanin told France Inter radio. PSG's finances will come under heavy scrutiny in the years to come with both La Liga and Barcelona threatening to report the French giants to European football's governing body for breaches of financial fair play regulations (FFP). Clubs can be sanctioned by UEFA for making a loss of more than 30 million euros over a three-year period. According to reports Neymar underwent a medical in Porto on Wednesday after saying his goodbyes to his Barcelona teammates before returning to the Catalan capital late on Wednesday night. Once the hype over the astronomical figures involved subsides, Neymar must deliver on the pitch to make PSG's dreams of lifting the Champions League for the first time and his own ambition of winning the Ballon d'Or come true.

By leaving Barca, Neymar is stepping out from under the shadow of five-time World Player of the Year Lionel Messi to try and prove himself as the world's best. "It was a huge pleasure having shared all those years with you, my friend @neymarjr," Messi posted on Instagram alongside a montage displaying some of the pair's finest moments together on Wednesday. —AFP



**PARIS:** PSG President Nasser Al-Khelaifi, left, greets French President Emmanuel Macron as they attend a charity holiday program event. —AP

## QATAR HITS BACK RIVALS WITH NEYMAR SOFT POWER PLAY

**DUBAI:** With the anticipated transfer of football phenomenon Neymar to Paris Saint-Germain, Qatar is hitting back at its Gulf rivals with a high-profile soft power play. Paris Saint-Germain-owned by sanctions-hit Qatar is poised to sign Brazilian forward Neymar from Barcelona for a world-record transfer fee of 220 million euros (\$256.54 million), more than doubling the previous record.

"The announcement of Neymar's transfer to PSG was piloted among the high ranks in Qatar as a sort of communications strategy that would overshadow the debate around all other considerations, namely terrorism," said Mathieu Guidere, an expert in the geopolitics of the Arab world. "For days now, nobody has mentioned the negative-it's all about the Neymar transfer."

The transfer comes as Qatar faces its worst political crisis in decades, with Saudi Arabia leading a four-state bloc that suspended all ties with Doha last month over accusations the emirate had close ties to Islamist extremist groups and Saudi Arabia's regional rival Iran. Qatar has denied the allegations, arguing that the sanctions aim to bring gas-rich emirate to its knees. —AFP

# CELTIC BOOK PLAY-OFF PLACE

**PARIS:** Celtic took a step closer to the Champions League group stages by grinding out a 1-0 win over Rosenborg in the second leg of their qualifying third-round tie in Norway on Wednesday. After being held to a frustrating 0-0 first-leg draw in Glasgow last week, Celtic had to wait 69 minutes to finally take the lead, when James Forrest crashed home from the edge of the box to send them into the play-off round.

Like in the first match at Parkhead, Celtic had most of the ball in the opening period but struggled to create clear-cut chances. Visiting goalkeeper Craig Gordon was first called into action after quarter of an hour, as he made a comfortable save from Milan Jevtovic. The pressure from Celtic almost paid off midway through the first half, as centre-back Erik Sviatchenko saw his header cleared off the line by former Arsenal striker Nicklas Bendtner, before having to hobble off injured.

Winger Forrest was the next to go close, but he was denied by Andre Hansen in the Rosenborg goal. The hosts' first good opportunity came just after the restart, as Yann-Erik de Lanlay raced onto Bendtner's pass before firing narrowly wide. But Brendan Rodgers' men broke the deadlock after 159 minutes of the tie, as Forrest hammered in a strike off the underside of the crossbar after being picked out by Scott Sinclair, to leave Rosenborg needing to score twice because of the away goals rule.

The Scotland international almost completed a brace late on, and although he failed to round keeper Hansen, Celtic comfortably closed out the game. "It's a pressure game—you are coming to a team who are the champions of their country with a great history like Rosenborg," said Rodgers. "You can see the players are maturing, to play in a pressure game like that and pass like we did."

Elsewhere, Nice youngster Vincent Marcel came off the bench to snatch the French side a 2-2 draw in Amsterdam and an away-goals victory over Ajax. After a 1-1 first-leg draw, the visitors forged ahead through Arnaud Souquet's early opener. Four-time European champions Ajax looked to have done enough as goals from Donny van de Beek and Davinson Sanchez inspired a comeback, but midfielder Marcel, 20, picked the perfect time to score his first goal for Nice with 11 minutes to play.

Earlier on Wednesday, Togolese striker Emmanuel Adebayor scored his first European goal for Istanbul Basaksehir from Gael Clichy's pass, as last season's Turkish Super Lig runners-up saw off Club Brugge 2-0 on the night and 5-3 on aggregate. The draw for the play-off round takes place in Nyon on Friday, when the likes of Sevilla, Napoli and Liverpool enter the competition. —AFP

## JARDIM BACKS MBAPPE TO FOCUS ON TITLE DEFENSE

**PARIS:** Monaco head coach Leonardo Jardim is confident that Kylian Mbappe will be focused for the start of his side's Ligue 1 title defence at Toulouse today, despite being linked with a big-money move to Real Madrid.

The principality side stunned Paris Saint-Germain last season to claim their first French championship in 17 years, although PSG have flexed their muscles in the transfer window and look set to sign Neymar for a world-record 222 million euros (\$260m) from Barcelona. Monaco's successes of last season, when they also reached the Champions League semi-finals, were built with a young team, including the 18-year-old Mbappe.

But they will kick off the new campaign with an already-depleted squad after the departures of Bernardo Silva and Benjamin Mendy to Manchester City and midfielder Tiemoue Bakayoko to Chelsea, while forward Valere Germain decided to switch to domestic rivals Marseille. But Mbappe, who scored 15 Ligue 1 goals and six goals in as many Champions League knockout games last term as he burst onto the scene, is still a Monaco player, and Jardim doesn't think he was affected by transfer speculation during a difficult pre-season.

"Mbappe didn't score during pre-season, but he's been working very hard," he told the club website on Wednesday. "You can only do your talking on the pitch. A high-level player does not need motivation." Polish centre-back Kamil Glik was one of the players who joined a year ago to sign new contracts in the close-season, along with French international full-back Djibril Sidibe, who has been ruled out of the season-opener against Toulouse with a knee problem.

"Mbappe is the same as two-three months ago, I see no difference," said Glik. "We will try to do as well as last season. We are the champions, we have to have great ambition. The players who have arrived can do as well as the ones who left." Monaco have stuck to their policy of buying potential stars at a young age. They moved to replace the outgoing Bakayoko with Belgian international midfielder Yuri Tielemans, and he impressed in last Saturday's 2-1 defeat to PSG in the French Champions' Trophy.

On Wednesday, they also secured the signing of 21-year-old striker Adama Diakhaby from Rennes. "This is my fourth season, we work with the players we have," added Jardim. "My goal is to help the players progress, to play well and to have good results." The club sold little last year, this year there have been more departures. But each year the most important are the players who stay.

"The club believes in my work to make the project grow. The results support this strategy. It was a dream season last year, but to think that we will do the same is to not understand football." PSG will start their bid to win back the title with a home game against newly-promoted Amiens on Saturday, when Neymar's Brazil team-mate Dani Alves is likely to make his French top-flight debut.

Sunday's clash between Lille and Nantes will see two new head coaches go head-to-head at the Stade Pierre-Mauroy. Lille boss Marcelo Bielsa has made 13 close-season signings as he looks to revitalise the 2011 champions, while Claudio Ranieri will make his bow in charge of Nantes, only 15 months after guiding Leicester City to their shock English Premier League triumph. —AFP

# REAL MADRID TOPS MLS ALL-STARS IN SHOOTOUT

**CHICAGO:** Marcelo scored on the decisive penalty kick as La Liga and Champions League title holders Real Madrid took a shootout victory Wednesday over the Major League Soccer All-Stars. Real Madrid played to a 1-1 draw in regulation time in the MLS All-Star Game before taking the shootout 4-2 before a sellout crowd of 61,000 at Soldier Field, the home stadium of the NFL's Chicago Bears.

Borja Mayoral opened the scoring in the 59th minute for Real Madrid, which controlled possession of the ball throughout the contest. Mayoral found open space in front of the goal before taking a short pass. His well-timed shot deflected off the leg of a diving defender and into the back of the net for the Spanish giants, who were playing without superstar Cristiano Ronaldo.

Dom Dwyer, an England-born member of the US national team, equalized for the MLS squad in the 87th minute with a header from in close. Dwyer was in the right place for the rebound after Dax McCarty's header off a corner kick bounced off the post, winning a foot race with Real Madrid's 19-year-old goalkeeper Luca Zidane, who entered late in the second half.

"It was important to go back with a win but now we are looking forward to the UEFA Super Cup," said Mayoral, who was named player of the match. Real Madrid will now return to Europe to meet Manchester United in the UEFA Super Cup in Macedonia on August 8, then take on Barcelona in the two-legged Spanish Super Cup on August 13 and 16 before opening the La Liga season on August 20.

### Squad rotation

Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane rotated his squad liberally during the contest. The stars made their appearances but he also inserted several youngsters and fringe players who are trying to make the club. At times when the stars were on the field it was a hum-



**CHICAGO:** Mateo Kovacic #16 of Real Madrid moves past Diego Valeri #9 of the MLS All-Stars during the 2017 MLS All-Star Game at Soldier Field. —AFP

bling affair for the MLS. Left back Greg Garza had to leave the game in the first half with a possible separated shoulder that will cost him some time with Atlanta United.

"What an amazing experience! It was an honor to share the field with such great players!" tweeted MLS forward David Villa. The All-Star match marks the end of a four-match, 11-day pre-season US tour for Real Madrid that included a 3-2 loss to rival Barcelona in a Clasico matchup at Miami on Sunday. Real Madrid also drew

Manchester United before falling in penalties to the English side in San Francisco on July 23 and lost to Manchester City in Los Angeles on July 26.

Real Madrid has captured back-to-back Champions League titles and a record 33 La Liga championships. Ronaldo, the reigning FIFA player of the year and the world's highest-paid athlete at a reported \$93 million per year, was ordered before a Spanish court on Monday to answer to tax fraud charges. Ronaldo denies the allegations. —AFP

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**Spanish league stalls Neymar's PSG move**

See Page 46

**NEYMAR JR**

**11**

RESPECT

