



**3** Mol blocks some roads on Tuesday for GCC Summit



**6** Trump denies asking FBI to drop probe; obstruction seen



**22** Buy it with bitcoin in NY, but it's not cheap



**16** Silva goal extends City's winning run to 13 games



# Assembly passes new sports law with landslide majority

## Interior ministry scraps vehicle impoundment decision

### Amir meets GCC chief; Qatar emir to attend summit

DOHA: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Abdullah Al-Zayani. During the meeting, Zayani briefed HH the Amir on ongoing preparations for the 38th GCC Summit to be held in Kuwait on Dec 5-6.

Qatar's foreign minister said yesterday Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani is expected to attend the annual summit, despite a deep dispute within the group. "The ministerial meeting will be attended tomorrow, and (for) the summit, God willing, the Emir," Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said in a speech. He added that Qatar had not yet seen the summit agenda, but the current crisis would be discussed at the meeting. "It is important that the GCC system remains alive," said the



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Abdullah Al-Zayani at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA

minister. The emir received an invitation from Kuwait at the end of last month to attend the GCC summit.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah said yesterday that Kuwait has completed preparations for the hosting of the summit. During his attendance of the United Arab Emirates'

46th National Day celebrations at the country's embassy in Kuwait, he said "Kuwait will welcome GCC leaders on Tuesday and Wednesday". The rift between the six-nation GCC members Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE, on one side, and Qatar on the other had put this year's annual meeting in doubt.

Continued on Page 11

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly yesterday passed a new sports legislation with an overwhelming majority that the government and Assembly speaker said will pave the way for FIFA and the International Olympic Committee to lift Kuwait's two-year suspension from international sports. Forty-seven MPs, including resigned Cabinet ministers, voted for the law, three voted against and one lawmaker abstained.

Minister of Commerce and Industry and State Minister for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan told the Assembly that they had extensive meetings in Doha with the world's football governing body FIFA to study ways to end Kuwait's suspension. He said that FIFA informed them that Kuwait should scrap 13 existing laws that govern sports and replace them with the new law for the ban to be lifted. He said FIFA asked for the law to be passed before Dec 4.

Roudhan however said that the approval of the law does not guarantee an automatic end to Kuwait's suspension from international football, which began in Oct 2015 over alleged Kuwaiti government meddling in local sports. A ban was also imposed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and as a result, Kuwait was banned from participating in last year's Olympic Games.

Other major international sports federations slapped similar suspensions on the country, which barred the Kuwaiti football team from taking part in World Cup qualifying rounds.

Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said he hoped the new legislation, which was approved in the required two rounds, will end Kuwait's absence from international sports. The session however did not pass without tensions. Several lawmakers said they will grill Roudhan if the ban is not lifted following the approval of the legislation. A number of lawmakers said they doubt that the new law is sufficient to secure ending the suspension, because it does not respond to the international sports bodies' three conditions.

The world bodies have set out three conditions for accepting Kuwait back: It must issue a new sports law in line with international treaties, drop lawsuits it brought against the world governing bodies and reinstate its original sports committees. Roudhan however said that a FIFA delegation reviewed the draft law and said it was sufficient.

In another development, 12 lawmakers filed a request calling to hold a special session on Dec 10 to study the appeals court jail terms on 67 current and former MPs and activists for storming the Assembly six years ago.

Continued on Page 11

### Mattis in Kuwait

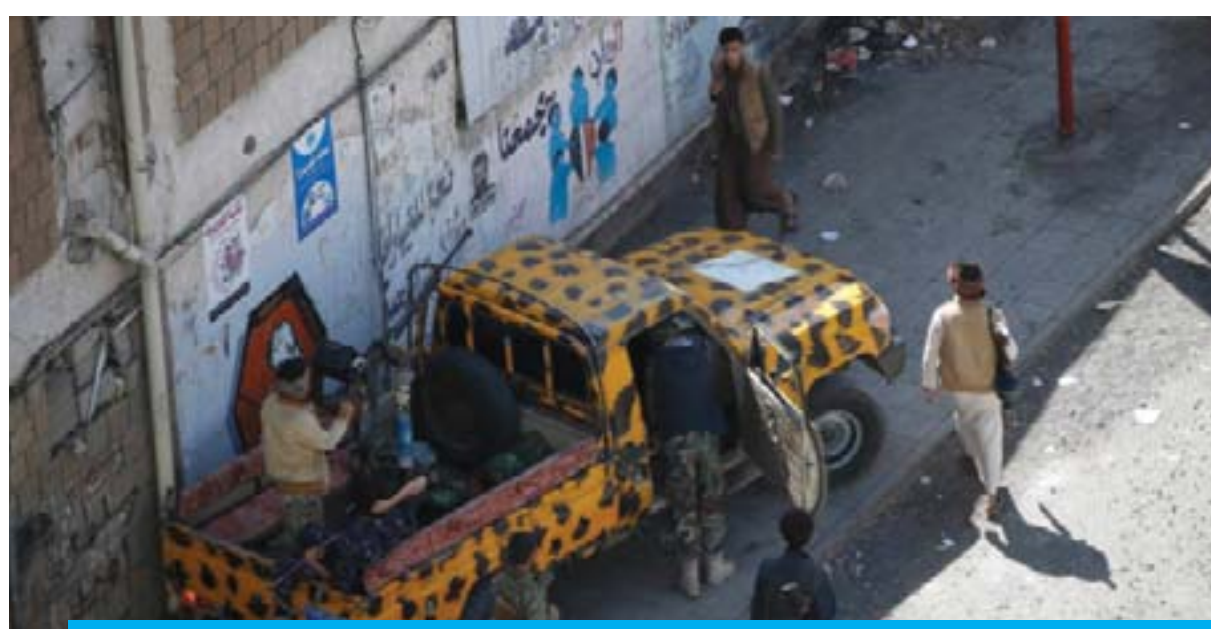


KUWAIT: US Secretary of Defense James Mattis arrived in Kuwait yesterday as part of a regional tour. The US secretary was welcomed by Chief of the Kuwaiti Army General Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Al-Khodhr, US Ambassador to Kuwait Lawrence Silverman and Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans Brig Mohammad Al-Kandari, the Ministry of Defense said in a press release. — KUNA

### UAE denies attack on nuclear plant; Coalition hits Sanaa amid 'street war'

ADEN: The United Arab Emirates yesterday denied a claim by Yemen's Houthi rebels that they fired a cruise missile toward an under-construction Emirati nuclear plant. The denial came as a Saudi-led coalition launched air strikes on Yemen's capital, Sanaa, local media said, lending support to former Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh after he signaled he was abandoning his support of the Iran-aligned Houthis - a shift that could pave the way to end three years of war. Meanwhile, gun battles forced shops and schools to close in Sanaa as residents warned the rebel alliance was collapsing into a "street war".

In a speech on Saturday, Saleh appeared to indicate the end of his loyalists' alliance with Houthi fighters. He said he was ready to turn a "new page" in ties with the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis, if it stopped attacks on Yemeni citizens and lifted a siege. Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya television said yesterday coalition aircraft pounded Houthi outposts in southern Sanaa overnight, but gave no details on casualties.



SANAA: Houthi fighters patrol a street in the Yemeni capital yesterday during clashes with supporters of Yemeni ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh. — AFP

The Houthis said the missile fired yesterday was directed towards the Al-Barakah nuclear power plant in Abu Dhabi, but provided no evidence of any attack. There were no reports of any missiles reaching Abu Dhabi. The country's crisis management authority said

the Al-Barakah plant was well protected and urged the public not to listen to rumors.

"The National Emergency Crisis and Disasters Management Authority denies claims by the coup

Continued on Page 11

### Whereabouts of Shafiq unknown after return home

CAIRO: The family of former Egyptian prime minister Ahmed Shafiq said yesterday it has lost contact with him since they say he was deported from the United Arab Emirates to Cairo days after announcing his intention to run for president next year. Shafiq, a former air force chief and government minister, has been seen by critics of President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi as a potential challenger to the former military commander who is widely expected to run for a second term next year.

Supporters see Sisi, who is allied with UAE and Saudi Arabia, as key for Egypt's stability. But critics say he has jailed hundreds of dissidents and eroded freedoms gained after the 2011 uprising that ousted former leader Hosni Mubarak. Details about what happened to Shafiq were unclear yesterday. He made his surprise announcement about running in the 2018 election from the United Arab Emirates, where he has been based with his family, on Wednesday.

Continued on Page 11

### Iran inaugurates Indian Ocean port

TEHRAN: Iran inaugurated a long-awaited new port at Chabahar in the southeast yesterday, which it is hoped will be a major new trade hub linking India and Africa with Central Asia. The first three shipments of Indian wheat to Afghanistan were unloaded in the morning, according to the Iranian ports organization. "Through this port, goods will be delivered to neighboring countries at cheaper prices and in a shorter time," President Hassan Rouhani said at the port, in a speech carried by the state broadcaster.

The project was first conceived in 2003 and has so far cost around \$1 billion, with India providing \$235 million of the financing as it seeks routes that bypass regional rival Pakistan. The port has been under construction for a decade by Khatam al-Anbia, the giant conglomerate owned by the elite Revolutionary Guards. It can accommodate giant ships up to a dry weight of 120,000 tonnes, with further stages of development due to expand the port over the next 14 years.

"Chabahar will soon become an important commercial hub for Iran," Transport Minister Abbas Akhoundi said at the ceremony. Iran has a broader vision of linking



CHABAHAR: Iranian President Hassan Rouhani inaugurates the first phase of Chabahar (Shahid Beheshti) Port in this southern Iranian coastal city yesterday. — AFP

the Indian Ocean port with a railway through Zahedan on the Pakistani border up to Mashhad in the northeast. But the project, aimed at facilitating trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia, has been slow to get off

the ground. Rouhani also underlined the importance of Chabahar as Iran's only port outside the Gulf, and therefore outside an area that is often the locus of tensions with the US Navy and Iran's regional rivals. — AFP



## Local

# Amir checks on preparations for 38th GCC Summit at Bayan Palace



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrives at Al-Tahrir Hall at Bayan Palace to check on preparations for 38th GCC summit. —Amiri Diwan photos



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah checks on preparations for 38th GCC summit at Al-Tahrir Hall at Bayan Palace.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is welcomed as he arrives to check on preparations for 38th GCC summit.



Al-Tahrir Hall at Bayan Palace.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah visited Al-Tahrir Hall at Bayan Palace yesterday to check on preparations for the 38th Session of the Supreme Council of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which takes place tomorrow and Wednesday.

During his tour, His Highness the Amir was accompanied by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Upon arrival, His Highness Sheikh Sabah was received by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs

Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and the Amiri Diwan Administrative and Financial Chief Abdulaziz Saud Ishaq. His Highness the Amir was also accompanied by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah,

Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and senior officials at the Amiri Diwan and His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan. —KUNA

## Six GCC summits held in Kuwait since 1981

KUWAIT: Leaders or their representatives will arrive in the State of Kuwait to partake in the 38th Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit tomorrow, in a step aimed at continuing the legacy of the grand meeting. The GCC Summit was held on 37 occasions since 1981 with the first one in Abu Dhabi, UAE, in May.

The second summit was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on November of 1981 while the third and fourth meetings were held in Manama, Bahrain, and Doha, Qatar, in 1982 and 1983 respectively. The fifth Gulf Summit was held in Kuwait in 1984 while the Omani capital Muscat hosted the sixth event in 1985.

From 1986-1989, the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth summits were held in Riyadh, Riyadh, Manama, Muscat respectively. In 1990, Doha hosted the 11th summit followed by Kuwait hosting the 12th summit, and Abu Dhabi hosting the 13th event in 1992. The 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th GCC Summits were held between 1993 and 1996 in Riyadh, Manama, Muscat and Doha. In 1997 and 1998, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi respectively hosted the 18th and 19th GCC Summits while in 1999 and 2000, the Saudi and Bahraini capitals, Riyadh and Manama respectively, hosted the 20th and 21st Summits.

From 2001 until 2016, the GCC capitals took turns in hosting the GCC Summits. The 2004 Manama-hosted 25th GCC summit was named after late Sheikh Zayed Al Nahayyan whereas the 26th summit in Abu Dhabi in 2005 was named after late Saudi King Fahd bin Abdulaziz.

The State of Kuwait will be hosting the 38th Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit tomorrow and Wednesday, continuing a long legacy of Gulf brotherhood and friendship. Since 1981, Kuwait hosted six summits out of the 37 gatherings held throughout the years. The GCC Summits main aim is to bolster cooperation amongst the members of the council on all possible levels. Kuwait hosted the summit on six occasions in 1984, 1991, 1997, 2003, 2009 and 2013. The summits resulted in several resolutions contributing to the development of cooperation and security among GCC members. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is honored during the 35th GCC Summit in Doha in 2014.



Gulf Cooperation Council leaders attend the 34th GCC Summit in Kuwait in 2013.



Leaders attend Kuwait's 30th GCC Summit held in 2009.



Leaders attend the 5th GCC Summit in Kuwait in 1984.



Local

## Kuwait FM, GCC chief discuss summit preparations



KUWAIT: Kuwait's First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with GCC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zayani. — KUNA

KUWAIT: Kuwait's First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah held talks with the visiting GCC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zayani on preparations for the ministerial meeting of the GCC's 38th Summit. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and Zayani, who met at Bayan Palace, discussed preparations for the summit that is hosted by Kuwait tomorrow and Wednesday, a foreign ministry statement said.

The meeting was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for the minister's office Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for Protocols Dhari Al-Ajran, Assistant Foreign Minister for the GCC Nasser Al-Muzayyen, Assistant Foreign Minister for Deputy Foreign Minister's office Ayham Al-Omar, and Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for minister's office Saleh Al-Loughani. Zayani was accompanied by his Assistants. — KUNA

## British Embassy organizes 'Water Scarcity' workshop

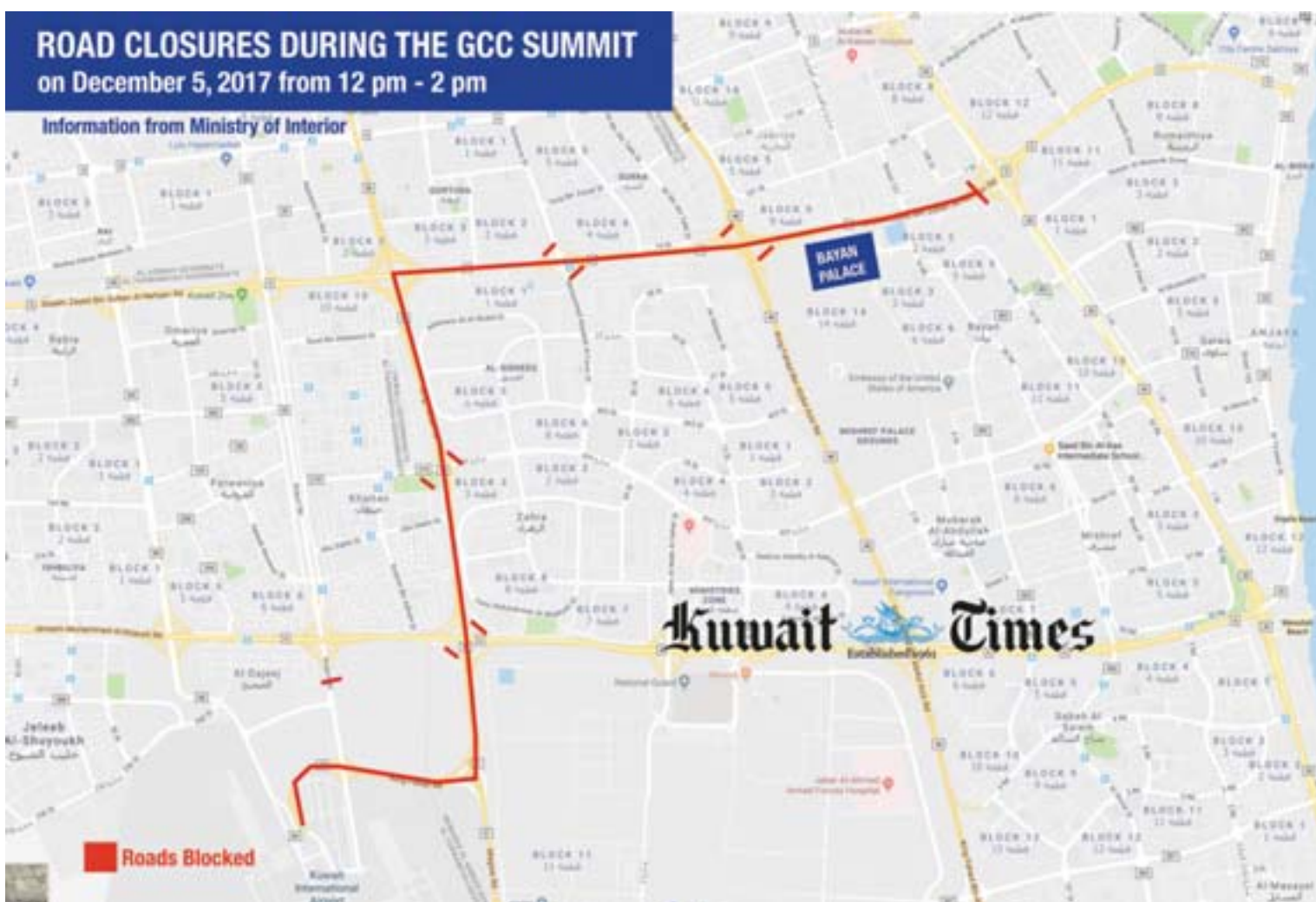
KUWAIT: The British Embassy in Kuwait is holding a jointly organized 'Water Scarcity - Conservation and Desalination' bilateral workshop between the British Embassy in Kuwait, the UK Science and Innovation Network and the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) today and tomorrow at KISR. The opening of the workshop will take place today morning under the auspices of the Director General of KISR Dr Samira Omar and attended by British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport. Water scarcity remains an area of concern for Kuwait and with a rapidly expanding population, these demands continue to escalate. Desalination has remained the primary source of fresh water in Kuwait; however, desalination is energy intensive and leads to additional environmental impacts. Therefore, Kuwait remains committed to seeking more efficient methods to produce clean water.

During the workshop, experts from six British Universities (Aston, Bath, Birmingham, Cranfield, Oxford and Southampton) along with those from KISR, Ministry of Electricity and Water, Kuwait University and others will do presentations, which will cover sustainable water processing, water use efficiency/demand management, renewable and efficient energy systems as well as innovative desalination technologies as well as other related subjects.

In his speech, British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport thanked KISR for hosting the workshop and thanked the British Council and the UK Science and Innovation Network for their respective contributions to the workshop. He added: "I am sure that this workshop will provide a useful stage for a fascinating discussion on innovation around the area of water scarcity conservation and desalination drawing on the expert knowledge of both British and Kuwaiti experts with a view to possible cooperation on future collaborative research opportunities."

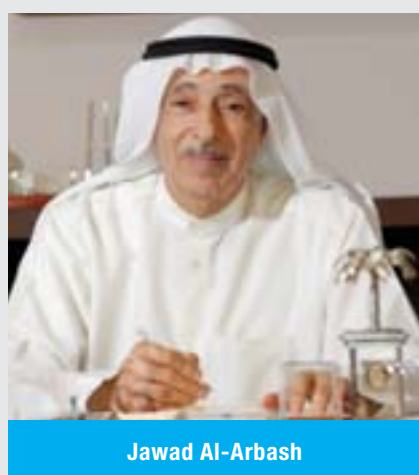
"UK and Kuwaiti researchers hold a long history of working together, while the UK government is committed to both research and supporting our key partners when it comes to areas of mutual interest and we look to build future on that relationship during the workshop."

# Interior Ministry blocks some roads tomorrow for GCC Summit



KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry announced yesterday that some roads will be blocked tomorrow due to the arrival of several delegations participating in the 38th Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) Summit. In a press statement, the ministry said that the airport road leading to the King Faisal highway, the Sheikh Zayed (fifth ring road), in addition to roads leading from and to the fifth ring road, the King Fahad highway, and the Fahaheel highway will all be blocked from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm tomorrow. The ministry asked citizens and expatriates to cooperate with the traffic police during the specified date and times. — KUNA

## Kuwait Agriculture Company joins Horeca 2018



Jawad Al-Arbash

KUWAIT: Preparations for the Horeca Kuwait 2018 exhibition are ongoing as companies continue to register to participate and take advantage of the opportunity to be part in an event that provides a golden opportunity for exchange of expertise that meet the local market's needs and future expansion plans' requirements.

In this regard, Kuwait Agriculture Company's Board Chairman Jawad Nasser Al-Arbash announced his company's intention to take part in the exhibition, and stressed that the company is the exclusive supplier for several famous international brands.

Arbash added that since its inception in 1968 as a poultry and restaurants producer, Kuwait Agriculture Company has been working on expanding its operations as a major importer and distributor of foodstuff, relying on its large fleet of readily available and fully equipped delivery trucks. He added that the company's continual success would not only increase its sales, but would also

enhance local investments and create more job opportunities for Kuwaiti graduates.

Further, Arbash stressed that Kuwait Agriculture Company has specialized sale sections to cover all commercial channels and provide quality products with reasonable prices. Finally, Arbash concluded by highlighting Kuwait Agriculture Company's participation in Horeca 2018, noting that it aims at enhancing its status and expanding its work through obtaining more international franchises.

The Horeca Kuwait 2018 exhibition is set to be organized by Leaders Group in collaboration with Hospitality Services Company at Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref from January 15-17, 2018.

## KD 10 million deal signed to renovate southern power plant

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq signed a deal worth KD 10 million (\$33 million) yesterday to refurbish units in the country's southern 'Al-Zour' power station. The contract entails complete renovations to the power plant, where all equipment and units will be upgraded to ensure maximal energy efficiency, read an official statement yesterday. The statement also put a 60-month timeframe on the contract. — KUNA

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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A kingfisher bird spotted in Al-Jahra Pools Nature Reserve. — KUNA

# Kuwait launches program for disabled people in Tanzania

## In time with the International Day of Disabled Persons

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait launched a program to aid disabled people and those with Albinism disease in Tanzania, at a cost of \$500,000 in time with the International Day of Disabled Persons which was marked yesterday.

The program will be executed within one year

in most Tanzanian cities including Zanzibar island, Kuwaiti Ambassador to Tanzania Jassim Al-Najim said in a statement yesterday. He added that the program is run in cooperation with NGOs and other international organizations working in Tanzania.

As part of the program's launch, Najim presented medical equipment including wheelchairs, crutches and hearing aid to Tanzania's Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office responsible for Policy, Parliamentary Affairs, Labour, Employment, Youth and the Disabled Jenista Mhagama. —KUNA



Kuwaiti Ambassador to Tanzania Jassim Al-Najim speaks during the inauguration ceremony.



Kuwaiti Ambassador to Tanzania Jassim Al-Najim and Tanzania's Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Jenista Mhagama check workshops.



Kuwaiti Ambassador to Tanzania Jassim Al-Najim and Tanzania's Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Jenista Mhagama deliver aid to a beneficiary.

## Kuwait's 2017 Arabian horse festival concludes

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait festival for the Arabian Horse 2017, sponsored by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, came to an end Saturday evening. The three-day festival, held at Bait Al-Arab (House of Arabs), featured more than 370 Arabian horses.

Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan, who attended the closing ceremony on behalf of His Highness the Crown Prince, told reporters the support of the political leadership of horse beauty contests contributed to the development of the sport. He said the competition was fierce and the fans contributed to the success of the festival.

The award ceremony honored the winning horses from different age category. —KUNA





Local

# Late payments risk stop of overseas treatment applications

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Ministry of Health (MOH) sources stressed that the ministry had not paid off the overseas medical treatment bills since last year and is waiting for the finance ministry's support to do so. Otherwise, it might become difficult to receive new patients or continue the treatment of current ones, the sources warned. MOH has requested for a meeting with the finance ministry to discuss the matter, which might be taken for further discussion at the cabinet if the situation goes on for over a month.

**Blood donors**

The central blood bank urges donors with blood type O negative to report to the bank due to a severe shortage in that specific blood type and the growing

demand for it in various hospitals.

**Brave decision**

National Assembly's Deputy Speaker Essa Al-Kandari praised the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah for suspending an earlier decision to impound vehicles for two months if drivers commit certain traffic violations, and handling the situation by referring the topic to Fatwa and Legislation Department to study its constitutionality. Kandari described the minister's decision as a brave one 'reflecting high respect for the law.'

**Restaurants violations**

Chairman and managing director of the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN) Essa Al-

Kandari stressed the need to take new measures to protect consumers' health, noting that inspectors abusing their judicial powers will be held accountable. Kandari also issued a directive to all inspection departments on gracing the owners of restaurants and various food stuff store and cafes a week to undo any violations prior to filing citations against them if they fail to meet the deadline.

**Budgets needed**

The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) recently circulated a directive to all government bodies planning to build extra constructions, urging them to provide the budgets needed for such projects. MPW stressed that no funds will be allocated for such projects from its budget over the coming years as its budget will be used to build and maintain rain drainage, sewers and

strategic projects' infrastructure. Informed sources added that these bodies will have to ask the finance ministry to fund their projects and include them within their budgets prior to asking MPW to execute them as 'the state's contractor.' MPW has demanded KD 536.7 million for its 2018-2019 budget to be spent on various projects including the new airport which needs at least KD 272.1 million.

**Security-related projects**

Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq said that Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) executed a number of security-related projects on its facilities including security gates, adding that KOC is keen on cooperating with the facilities security department of the interior ministry.

## No decision to suspend jail sentence

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** The court of cassation convened yesterday but gave no decision on requests made by lawyers to suspend the sentences passed on a number of current and former MPs as well as some citizens over charges of breaking into the National Assembly building. The case files had not arrived from the public prosecutor's office in time yesterday for the court to make its decision.

**Wedding halls**

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) yesterday launched an application that enables people to reserve wedding ceremonial halls through their smart phones. Assistant Undersecretary for Social Development Hassan Kathem said, noting that the application is available for download through the App Store. People will have access to view the halls, their locations and interior design prior to booking, Kathem added. Thirty wedding halls are available for reservation through the app, he explained, adding that the service will be available for Android users by the end of this year.

## 17 abandoned vehicles removed



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Municipality's Public Relations Department announced that it continues to receive public complaints and suggestions through its accounts on social media networks to refer them to relevant departments. In this regard, head of the capital municipality cleaning department Meshaal Al-Azmi said that a comprehensive plan was set to respond

and tend to such complaints. Meanwhile, cleaning supervisor Faihan Al-Mutairi said that Shuwaikh industrial area cleaning center had recently conducted an inspection campaign on abandoned vehicles that are used to store used furniture in open yards on Fridays, and stressed that the campaign resulted in removing 17 of them.

## Kuwait partakes in Vienna's annual int'l bazaar



**VIENNA:** Kuwait on Saturday participated in an annual international charity bazaar organized by UN women's society in Vienna, Austria. Some revenues of the event are allocated to charitable and humanitarian actions in the African Continent. The Kuwaiti pavilion attracted many visitors, as it includes distinguished items like traditional costumes, foodstuffs, Arabic coffee with its distinctive taste and souvenirs. Kuwait's participation in the annual bazaar comes within the framework of continued keenness by Kuwait's Ambassador to Austria and its Permanent Representative at International Organizations in Vienna, Sadeq Marafi, on contribution to backing various international forums and events organized in Austria, especially this Bazaar. The country's participation is also the culmination of its distinguished presence during the past years.

The Kuwaiti Embassy, in Vienna, made preparations for this event, thanks to efforts of all participants in organizing the pavilion in a manner that reflects the country's status and reputation. The pavilions of Arab countries partaking in the event offered several and varied products, including traditional industries, heritage clothing, antiques and other items. —KUNA

Legalese

## Residency renewal

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed



Obtaining a residency in Kuwait is sometimes a very complicated matter. I have been introduced through my line of work to many clients who are in limbo, stuck in Kuwait between one sponsor and another, and not being able to renew their residency or transfer it. I believe that people should be able to live in the country that they are sacrificing for with a feeling of stability and safety.

I have also been inside the Public Authority of Manpower and have realized how much more organized the place can be, maybe by having signs in multiple languages, online information on the process and maybe even staff who have been trained on the legal aspects as well on how to deal with employees from different cultures. With that said, the government has made many changes in the past weeks and I would like to share them with you, as I have received many questions from my readers regarding the changes.

**Online renewal**

**Question:** Is it true that I can now renew my visa online? Can you please clarify?

**Fajer:** The General Department for Residency Affairs did discuss their new project which would allow visa holders of articles 17, 18, 20 and 22 to renew their residencies online. Now there is no law or bylaw to specify the dynamics of such a move, but I am assuming that there would be one very soon once the project is launched. I am also expecting the renewals to still happen through the sponsor and not the employer. Therefore, at this time I cannot provide you with any further information.

**Question:** I do not want to work for my employer anymore and I want to transfer. Can I get a release from them even though I have not found a new job?

**Fajer:** I would always suggest to my clients that they find another job before they ask for a transfer, and this is because it is smart to always have a plan before you make a decision. Unless your work environment is not safe, I would wait it out and take all the right steps. With that said, you can get a release and some companies will give you a timeframe to find another job.

**Tourist visa**

**Question:** Can I work in Kuwait on a tourist visa?

**Fajer:** No, I receive this question very often and it does not make sense to me. In every country you will need the proper paperwork to work as an employee. The law being confusing is not an excuse. I see people all the time coming to me working as tourists or on dependent visas, and it is wrong. As a lawyer, I cannot and will not encourage this behavior, and just because you think everyone is getting away with it, does not mean that people will continue getting away with it. This kind of behavior will encourage the government rightfully to enforce deportation.

Should you have any questions or concerns, or you require a consultation, please email me at ask@fajerthelawyer.com.

## Qatar 'Ajyal' film festival presents six Kuwaiti short films

**DOHA:** The Qatari 'Ajyal' Film Festival presented six short films by Kuwaiti directors in a special 'Made in Kuwait' session to shine light on Kuwaiti cinematic visions. In a statement yesterday, film director at Doha Film Institute Sheikha Rawdha Al-Thani praised the Kuwaiti works; the outstanding output of a brilliant young generation of talented filmmakers.

The 'Made in Kuwait' session included six compelling short films that undoubtedly touched a chord with filmmakers and critics. The first film was 'Muneera' by Oscar Boyson; a cautionary tale that warns of paying attention to mysticism while ignoring the reality in front of us. It dreamily and seamlessly moves between Kuwait City and Venice, Italy. The second film was 'I Wasn't Cheating' by Mousaed Khaled; a morality tale that took the audience all back to those tense days of academic success.

Last Wednesday, The Qatari Ajyal: Arabic for 'Generations,' Film Festival honored the late iconic Kuwaiti actor Abdulhussain Abdulredha in recognition of his unforgettable body of work, which enriched Gulf arts.

The Festival, presented by the Doha Film Institute, has been designed to empower the region's youth and to inspire film enthusiasts of all ages in Qatar and the region. A total of 103 films from 43 countries were presented during the festival, including 20 feature films and 83 shorts that address issues ranging from women's empowerment to cultural resilience and the survival of traditional storytelling. —KUNA



Film director at Doha Film Institute Sheikha Rawdha Al-Thani

and explored the marvelous imagination of children. The last film was 'A Picture' by Dawood Shuail. It is about Abdullah, whose father gives him a new camera. However, while he is out and about taking shots, he inadvertently takes a picture of a crime in progress.

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# International

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2017



Body of missing girl found; mom's boyfriend charged

## Reza Zarrab, the star witness unnerving Ankara

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Page 8



WASHINGTON: Marine One with US President Donald Trump aboard departs at the White House in Washington, DC en route to Joint Base Andrews. Trump will deliver remarks at a Republican National Committee (RNC) holiday lunch in New York City. —AFP

# America First or America Alone?

## US abandons or threatens to quit international accords

WASHINGTON: Since President Donald Trump took office in January, the US has abandoned or threatened to quit several international accords under his "America First" policy. Trump's advisors insist the slogan does not imply any new isolationist stance, but a pattern of disengagement from multilateral commitments has emerged.

On Saturday, the Trump administration announced it was withdrawing the US from a United Nations pact to improve the handling of migrant and refugee situations, deeming it "inconsistent" with its policies. Richard Haass, former head of State Department policy under George W. Bush, has dubbed the Trump administration's pattern the "withdrawal doctrine." Here are some of the accords that Trump has abandoned or threatened:

### Withdrawal

The US mission to the United Nations announced Saturday that the United States was ending its participation in the Global Compact on Migration. In September 2016, the 193 members of the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a non-binding political declaration, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, pledging to uphold the rights of refugees, help them resettle and ensure they have access to education and jobs. The Global

Compact, based on the declaration, is due to be presented at the UN General Assembly next year.

But the US mission said the declaration "contains numerous provisions that are inconsistent with US immigration and refugee policies and the Trump Administration's immigration principles." Washington said in October it was pulling out of the UN's Paris-based culture and education body, UNESCO, accusing it of "anti-Israel bias." The withdrawal is to take effect at the end of next year, when the US will establish an "observer mission" to replace its UNESCO representation.

Trump announced in June that the US will withdraw from the 196-nation Paris agreement on climate change and seek to negotiate a new global deal.

Declaring he was "elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris," Trump complained that the accord

gives other countries an unfair advantage over US industry and destroys American jobs. The US pullout will not take effect before November 2020. Within days of taking office, Trump withdrew the United States from the Trans-Pacific

Partnership, which was billed as the world's biggest trade pact when signed in February 2016 with 11 other Asia-Pacific nations but not China. The US pullout killed the deal before it could even be implemented. Trump pledged to negotiate bilateral pacts that would be more favorable to his country.

### Renegotiation

In October, Trump withdrew his support for the nuclear agreement signed in July 2015 by Iran and the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council: Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, plus Germany. The pact's fate is now in the hands of Congress, which may

decide to break it by imposing new US sanctions on Iran, and Trump has warned that he may unilaterally quit it at any time.

Trump has ordered a renegotiation of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Mexico and Canada, which he has called the worst trade deal ever signed. Talks began in August but Trump has threatened to pull out of the pact and negotiate bilateral deals if his country did not get a fairer shake by the end of this year. The US president wants reform of the United Nations "bureaucracy," accusing the world body of bad management. Washington is the largest financial contributor to the world body. US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley has stressed that Washington would continue evaluating its role in UN agencies.

### Criticism

On the campaign trail, Trump called the North Atlantic Treaty Organization "obsolete" before qualifying his remarks and demanding that members of the alliance increase their defense budgets. Once in office, Trump caused jitters among US partners by waiting almost six months before clearly stating his support for Article Five of the alliance's treaty, which states that an attack on one ally is an attack on all. —AFP



## Trump's 'withdrawal doctrine'

## Myanmar fumes as Pope uses the 'Rohingya' word

YANGON: Pope Francis's embrace of the Rohingya during a trip to Bangladesh has sparked some angry comment on social media in Myanmar, where just days earlier he chose not to publicly air their plight. On Friday, the head of the Catholic Church met a group of refugees from Myanmar's stateless Muslim minority in the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka. He referred to them as "Rohingya"—a term unacceptable to many in Myanmar where they are reviled as alleged "Bengali" illegal immigrants rather than as a distinct ethnic group.

During his public addresses on the previous leg of his trip in mainly Buddhist Myanmar, Francis did not refer to the group by name or directly allude to the crisis in Rakhine state, from where over 620,000 Rohingya have fled since August. His caution initially won applause from Myanmar's tiny Catholic minority—who feared a nationalist blowback—as well as from Buddhist hardliners, who are on the defensive after a global outcry about the treatment of the group. A deadly attack by Rohingya militants on police posts in late August sparked a ferocious crackdown in Rakhine by the Myanmar military, which the US and UN describe as ethnic cleansing.

As he arrived back at the Vatican, the pontiff said he had taken up the Rohingya cause in private in Myanmar,

also describing how he wept after meeting the group of refugees. "I wept: I tried to do it in a way that it couldn't be seen," he told reporters. "They wept too." The comments sparked a flurry of online anger in Myanmar, a country locked off from modern communications for five decades but which now has an active social media. "He is like a lizard whose colour has changed because of weather," said Facebook user Aung Soe Lin of the pope's strikingly different stances on the crisis.

"He should be a salesman or broker for using different words even though he is a religious leader," said another Facebook user called Soe Soe. Myanmar's Catholic church had advised Francis not to stray into the incendiary issue of the status of the Rohingya in Myanmar, in case he worsened tensions and endangered Christians. In his public addresses he treaded softly on the topic, urging unity, compassion and respect for all ethnic groups—but not naming the Rohingya. "The Pope is a holy person... but he said something here (in Myanmar) and he said different in other country," another Facebook user Ye Linn Maung posted.

"He should say the same things if he loves the truth." Others were more sanguine about Francis' choice of language once he had left Myanmar soil. Maung Thway Chun, chairman of an unofficial party of nationalists called the 135 Patriots Party, applauded the pope's decision not to name the them in Myanmar despite pressure from rights groups. "It means he respects Myanmar people," he said. "He even did not use the word many times in Bangladesh... I think he said it once, just to comfort human rights organizations." —AFP

## Trump shrugs off Flynn guilty plea

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has shrugged off the bombshell news that his former national security adviser pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI and will cooperate with a special prosecutor probing Russian election meddling. As the Russia probe overshadowed a major legislative win, the Senate's passing of landmark tax cuts, Trump again insisted he and his campaign had not colluded with Russia.

Trump also suggested he has been holding back something important regarding what he knew at the time of ex-security adviser Michael Flynn's firing. "I had to fire General Flynn because he lied to the Vice President and the FBI. He has pled guilty to those lies. It is a shame because his actions during the transition were lawful. There was nothing to hide!" Trump tweeted. The revelation changes the timeline of the drama in a potentially dangerous way for Trump.

At the time of Flynn's dismissal, the White House acknowledged only that he had lied to Vice President Mike Pence—not the FBI—about his discussions with Russian ambassador Sergey Kislyak over sanctions then-president Barack Obama slapped on Russia for meddling in the election. Trump's ties with Flynn have been under intense scrutiny since the president fired FBI director James Comey in May. Comey testified under oath before a Senate panel in June that a day after Flynn's firing, Trump asked him to drop an investigation into the former national security director.

### What Trump knew

Trump also repeated his denials of collusion with Moscow. "What has been shown is no collusion. There's been absolutely no collusion. So we're very happy," he told reporters as he left for a day trip to New York. Special prosecutor Robert Mueller's focus goes beyond possible collusion with Russia to shady business dealings



NEW YORK: This combo file photo shows President-elect Donald Trump (right) and ex-FBI Director James Comey. —AFP

and whether Trump himself tried to thwart the investigation. If Trump's latest statement on Twitter is accurate, it would mean that when he pressed Comey to drop the probe into Flynn, Trump already knew that Flynn had lied to Comey's agency.

A lingering part of the drama has been that after the White House learned through the Justice Department that Flynn lied to the White House about discussing sanctions with the Russian ambassador, Trump still waited 18 days to fire him. Trump fired Comey in May and said he had the Russia probe in mind when he did it. The move backfired and led the Justice Department to appoint Mueller as the special prosecutor. Trump's tweet about Flynn lying to both Pence and the FBI prompted Representative Adam Schiff of California, the top Democrat on the House Intelligence Committee, to pose some follow-up questions.

"If that is true, Mr. President, why did you wait so long to fire Flynn? Why did you fail to

act until his lies were publicly exposed? And why did you pressure Director Comey to 'let this go?'" he asked on Twitter.

Comey himself seemed to be addressing the latest developments in an Instagram message: "To paraphrase the Buddha—Three things cannot be long hidden: the sun; the moon; and the truth." The Washington Post reported late Saturday, citing two people familiar with the matter, that Trump's tweet had been written by the president's lawyer John Dowd. That calls into question what Trump knew about Flynn's lies, but also raises questions about the president's legal PR strategy.

The explosive new developments in the Russia probe have overshadowed the tax cuts approved Friday by the Senate in a step toward what would be Trump's first major legislative victory. In an early morning Twitter post, Trump said his Republican Party would now work with the House of Representatives, which has passed its own tax bill, to produce a common version. —AFP



International

# Nigeria puts fortress towns at the heart of new Boko Haram strategy

## Boko Haram still at large outside urban centres

**BAMA:** Nigeria's government has a plan for the northeast, torn apart by eight years of conflict with Boko Haram: displaced people will be housed in fortified garrison towns, ringed by farms, with the rest of the countryside effectively left to fend for itself. The vision for the state of Borno, ground zero for the war with the Islamist insurgency, is a stark admission of the reality in the northeast.

For two years, the military and government have said Boko Haram is all but defeated, and the remnants are being mopped up. But the military is largely unable to control territory beyond the cities and towns it has wrested back from Boko Haram. That means many of the nearly 2 million displaced people across the northeast cannot return to their homes in rural areas.



### Nigerian military unable to control the rural areas

Kashim Shettima, the governor of Borno state, said it was not possible for people to live in small villages. "There's beauty in numbers, there's security in numbers. So our target is to congregate all the people in five major urban settlements and provide them with means of livelihood, education, health care and of course security," he told Reuters. "It's a long term solution, certainly." The plan for the eastern part of the state, centered on the town of Bama, is intended as a pilot scheme to be rolled out in other parts of Borno if it is successful. Vigilantes, currently members of a group known as the Civilian Joint Task Force, will become agricultural rangers, the governor said. Aided by Nigerian security forces, they will aim to secure and patrol a five-km (three-mile) radius around each garrison town where people can farm.

#### Protection

Peter Lundberg, the United Nations Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria, who heads the organisation's response in the northeast, said the recon-

struction of Bama town, the second biggest in the state, was "logical". "People are very eager to go back if the conditions are right and if the conditions are safe, if the conditions are dignified, and of course it has to be voluntary," he told Reuters.

Sentiment amongst the displaced is mixed. Abubakar Goni, who lived outside Bama before fleeing to the Borno state capital Maiduguri, said he wants to return home, but if the town is safer he will agree to go there. "I will support it as long as I will have a place to farm. I am also happy to hear the government will give us protection on the farm because I learnt Boko Haram men are still around." Others, like Tijja Modu Alhaji, are wary of potential disputes between residents of the towns where people will be sent and the returnees.

"I don't want to stay in Bama because I will still be a stranger there, just as I am in Maiduguri now," he said. "I want to go home, not to somebody else's land." The governor's plan is still in its early stages. It involves bringing back thousands of people who fled the town of Bama and the surrounding area and sought refuge in camps in Maiduguri and elsewhere. They will eventually be housed in towns such as Bama, which was largely abandoned by its inhabitants when Boko Haram took it three years ago, but has since been recaptured by the military.

Many of Bama's buildings are still shells, windows smashed, doors ripped out and roofs gone. Telephone and electricity wires remain torn down, more than two years after the military evicted Boko Haram. It is not clear how the returnees will be housed. There are already 15,000 people in a crowded camp for displaced local residents set up by the military after it retook the town. The United Nations had planned to move them gradually to new shelters accommodating 30,000 people that have been erected in the town, but the military said it could not oversee two camps there at the same time, UN and military officials told Reuters.



**ADAMAWA:** People stand around dead bodies after a deadly attack by a suicide bomber at a mosque in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. — AP

#### New homes

The government has announced plans to build 3,000 homes in the Bama area. But there are concerns about how people sent to the town will manage, since many did not originally live there. "It's one thing to move people to Bama," said Lundberg.

"Unless the engine of the economy can restart, the risk is that people are moving back to places where they will become very dependent (on aid)." Aid workers said the demarcation between garrison towns and a lawless countryside means people have a choice: live in virtual quarantine, or return to their homes in the countryside, where Boko Haram roam, and be treated by security forces as potential insurgency sympathizers. "You're imprisoned, but you're safe," said one senior relief worker, speaking on

condition of anonymity. "If you prefer your own life you can do it on the outside."

Boko Haram's recent attacks, including a suicide bombing that killed at least 50 in a mosque in Adamawa state last week, are the "last kicks of a dying horse," Nigeria's Information Minister Lai Mohammed said last Sunday. But military and diplomatic officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said overstretched troops are unable to push Boko Haram out of non-urban areas. Much of Borno is not under the authorities' control and attacks are rife. On Saturday, suicide bombers killed at least 13 people in the town of Bui and injured 53 others. "Borno is not getting better at all. It may have even gotten worse," a diplomat said of the security situation outside urban areas. "There is no recovery and stabilization." —Reuters

## Reza Zarrab, the star witness unnerving Ankara

**NEW YORK:** It's a case that has captivated Turkey and rattled Ankara: Reza Zarrab has become the star witness in a New York trial over alleged subversion of US economic sanctions against Iran, implicating a former Turkish minister and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The Turkish-Iranian gold trader—who was arrested in March 2016 en route to a family trip to Miami—this week revealed in Manhattan federal court that he paid more than 50 million euros in bribes to former Turkish economy minister Zafer Caglayan between 2012 and 2013.

This allowed him to become a key intermediary of a complex but lucrative regional trade circuit that enabled Iran, via the Turkish public banking institution Halkbank, to inject billions of euros of hydrocarbon revenues into the international banking sector, all the while circumventing US sanctions prohibiting trade with Tehran. The 34-year-old Zarrab—who recently pleaded guilty to seven charges and is now being held at a secret FBI-guarded location—then implicated Erdogan.

In front of dozens of engrossed Turkish journalists, the elegant prisoner donning a black jacket and white shirt affirmed that Erdogan, then prime minister, had given "instructions" that two other public banks would participate in the multibillion-dollar gold-for-oil scheme. Speaking in Turkish via an interpreter, he implied Erdogan was fully aware of the circumvented sanctions, though the president insists he is not at fault. Just 28 years old when he entered the scheme, the flashy gold trader nicknamed "Mr Riza" has given three days of testimony pinning himself as the ringleader of a vast network of Iranian, Turkish and Emirati companies, mounted thanks to his business savvy and ample Turkish and Iranian government contacts.

#### Business acumen

Born in Iran and brought to Turkey as a child, Zarrab testified that he began working in the tea trade at just 16, before working for two years for a foreign exchange company his father owned in Dubai. He then launched his own business, with companies in construction, shipping and foreign



**ISTANBUL:** Detained Azerbaijani businessman Reza Zarrab (center) is surrounded by journalists as he arrives at a police center in Istanbul. — AFP

exchange. The idea of helping Tehran circumvent US sanctions came from a Turkish jeweler, who had begun converting Iranian money into gold and then trading it for foreign currency, thereby concealing the Iranian origin of the funds. In his bid to enter that business, Zarrab, a regular on Turkey's celebrity circuit known for his lavish lifestyle and pop star wife, used his high society rank to pull some strings.

He wrote a letter to Iran's then-president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, saying he wanted to help his "beloved homeland" in its "economic jihad" to loosen the grip of sanctions then strangling Tehran, citing his family's "half a century of experience in exchange and moving of currency." His sanctions-busting commerce really took off in 2012, when he did business with Halkbank and the Iranian bank Sarmayeh—with aid from Caglayan, then economy minister, helped along by bribes. His business—conducted with gold-filled suitcases transported to Dubai when US sanctions specifically targeted gold sales—thrived, via a fictitious trade of food and medicine.

#### 'Top exporter'

But the world Zarrab built came tumbling down

in December 2013, when he became a key figure in a Turkish corruption scandal in which he allegedly bribed four ministers including Caglayan to facilitate sanctions-busting trade and other deals. He was held for 70 days until prosecutors dropped all charges. Later that year, Zarrab received a "top exporter" award in the presence of Turkish government officials.

But that did not take into account the parallel investigation stateside. US authorities arrested Zarrab in March 2016 as he traveled with his superstar wife Ebru Gundes and their daughter to Miami for a Disney World holiday.

Caglayan and eight others were subsequently charged with carrying out hundreds of millions of dollars in transactions benefiting Iran and Iranian entities in violation of US sanctions. Zarrab for some time and hoped for his release, hiring top-flight lawyers including former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani. The case has angered Erdogan, who has urged Washington to free Zarrab and denounced the trial as a "political plot" hatched by his enemy Fethullah Gulen, the US-based Muslim cleric blamed by the Turkish government for last year's failed coup. —AFP

#### Huge challenge

Despite those commitments, commentators pointed to big practical problems, which begin with the need for African countries to respond rapidly to the need for travel documents so that evacuees can leave quickly. "Something has to be done for people in this situation, obviously, but from an operational and logistical point of view, the evacuations are very complicated," said Matthieu Tardis, a researcher at the French Institute of International Relations in Paris.

African diplomats warned that as long as the key issues of insecurity and poverty on their continent were not resolved the migration problem would remain. "You can have as many Frontex (EU border and coastguard agency) agents as you want," Algerian Foreign Minister Abdelkader Messahel told a Mediterranean dialogue meeting of African and EU states in Rome. "If you want no migrants, you have to target development, security" first, Messahel said. "I think we can do better" than what was being proposed in Abidjan, he said. Niger counterpart Ibrahim Yacoubou added that "without a durable solution the problem won't be resolved." —AFP

Libya, is being welcomed. "It is a step in the right direction," International Organization for Migration (IOM) Europe Director Eugenio Ambrosi told AFP by phone from Brussels.

"It is a little bit too much to think it will solve the slavery issue, but it would definitely mitigate (it) to some extent," Ambrosi said. He said the summit showed there was now "international watchdog pressure" that can be brought to bear on the criminal gangs but it must be "sustained." The drive was announced at a meeting on the summit sidelines organized by French President Emmanuel Macron.

Macron said the UN-backed Libyan government of Prime Minister Fayez Al-Sarraj had identified and granted access to the worst camps to enable the returns of people who want to go home. The Macron group has decided to work with a task force, involving sharing police and intelligence services to "dismantle the networks and their financing and detain traffickers," he said. They pledged to freeze the assets of identified traffickers. The AU will set up an investigative panel and the UN could take cases before the International Court of Justice.

## Thousands march in Tel Aviv against govt 'corruption'

**TEL AVIV:** Tens of thousands of people have protested in Tel Aviv against what they say is corruption within the government and the slow pace of investigations against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu is suspected of receiving luxury gifts from wealthy supporters and has also faced police questioning over a secret deal he allegedly sought for favorable coverage with the publisher of top-selling Israeli daily Yediot Aharonot. Protesters late

Saturday massed in a large boulevard of an upmarket neighborhood in the Israeli city, an AFP reporter said, shouting "Shame" and "Bibi go home", referring to the prime minister by his nickname.

The rally—dubbed "the march of shame"—was organized by the leaders of weekly protests which have taken place outside the home of Attorney General Avishai Mandelblit over the past few months. "Bibi and his government are destroying the country. There's been enough corruption," said demonstrator Michal, a Tel Aviv resident who preferred not to give his full name. Opposition leader Isaac Herzog expressed solidarity with the protesters, writing on Facebook that "the frustration ... stems from a feeling of injustice, revulsion against corruption and the moral objection to a law made to measure for one person". —AFP

### Three Shows - One Venue

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## EU, AU react to horrific abuse of migrants in Libya

**GRAND-BASSAM:** European and African leaders have set themselves a tall order to stamp out horrific abuse of African migrants in Libya, where thousands are suffering in a vast, lawless territory. On Thursday, a summit of the African Union and European Union (EU) set a goal of immediately repatriating 3,800 migrants languishing in a camp near Tripoli. Hundreds of thousands more—400,000 to 700,000, according to AU Commission head Moussa Faki Mahamat—remain stranded.

But experts point to a daunting array of hurdles, from extracting migrants in perilous situations to giving them incentives to stay put once back home. Even so, the summit's commitment, initiated by outrage over a CNN television report on black Africans being sold as slaves in



## International

# As Brexit deal takes shape, Juncker meets lawmakers

## Discussions 'still fluid' as deadline looms

**BRUSSELS:** The European Commission added to mounting confidence in Brussels that it is set for a Brexit deal with London when it scheduled talks with EU lawmakers ahead of a crunch meeting today with Theresa May. However, EU officials and diplomats cautioned yesterday that it was still unclear that a deal would be struck with the British prime minister when she meets the EU executive. Two hours before they sit down for lunch with May in Brussels, Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and his Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier will brief Guy Verhofstadt and his European Parliament Brexit team, an official said.

Verhofstadt and his colleagues wrote to the EU negotiators last week to sound an alarm at what they said were "stalled" talks on EU demands that the rights of EU citizens in Britain be guaranteed directly by the European Court of Justice after Britain leaves the European Union. They also voiced concern about Northern Ireland. Parliament must ratify any treaty on Britain's withdrawal from the European Union before Brexit in March 2019 in order to create the smooth transition period May wants, and so it will be vital to both sides to keep the legislators on board.

Senior EU officials and diplomats said work was continuing yesterday. One person close to the discussions said the situation was "delicate". Verhofstadt, a former Belgian prime minister and strong critic of Brexit, declined to comment. "It's still quite fluid," said a second person who is involved. "Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed." The EU wants outline accords on three critical divorce terms before it will open negotiations on the transition and a future free trade pact that would follow. May's lunch on Monday is a deadline for the EU to have her final offers before EU leaders consider

whether to agree at a Dec 15 summit to launch Phase 2. Britain and the EU aim to sign a joint declaration setting out progress toward final deals which the Commission, as the EU executive, would say was "sufficient" for opening trade talks. EU officials say terms have been agreed for a financial settlement long resisted by headline supporters of Brexit. The Irish prime minister said on Saturday that would essentially cover all the 60 billion euros the EU had demanded. On the second key issue of a deal to avoid a "hard border" on land between Britain and the EU across the island of Ireland, diplomats say the joint document will set out rules for reaching a border deal aimed at avoiding disruption to peace in the north but leaving open many of the details.

### Let EU court oversee rights, MPs urge UK

#### Citizens' rights

The third issue, of citizens' rights, has long seemed the least problematic, but the European Parliament's concerns last week were a reminder of how far the insistence on the ECJ having the final say in whether London was respecting the withdrawal treaty conflicts with British demands to be free of EU courts. It was not immediately clear what compromise, if any, has been found. EU governments had also been pressing London to give better terms to EU expatriates on bringing in future family members and on moving social welfare benefits across borders.

One suggestion in Brussels has been to limit clearly any ECJ involvement as a last resort and clearly only available to those EU citizens who choose to go on living in Britain before Brexit, not to any who arrive later. There are 3 million of them today. Looking to show sceptical pro-Brexit allies that she has secured something in five months of negotiation that seem set to end with London broadly accepting the EU's original terms, May has insisted that Brussels make a simulta-



**BERLIN:** The EU's chief negotiator for Brexit Michel Barnier sits before addressing guests at the Berlin Security Conference in Berlin. —AFP

neous and reciprocal commitment to transition and trade talks if she accepts a deal.

That seems set to be the case with the joint declaration. "Everyone knows we have to honour politically what the Brits have accepted on money," a senior EU diplomat said. "So on Monday they will sign this document." If all goes to the plan, 27 EU leaders would give the official green light on

Dec 15, a day after May has joined them for a routine summit on other EU business. The deliberately vague concept of "sufficient progress" gives the political leaders the option to leave plenty of room for future negotiation. The key thing for many in Brussels is that it should mark the establishment of trust that both sides are willing to work for a separation that is not too disruptive.—Reuters

### News in brief

#### 13 die as boat crashes

**SEOUL:** Thirteen people were killed and two were missing after a fishing boat collided with a tanker off South Korea's west coast and capsized yesterday, the country's coastguard said. The Seonchang-1 fishing boat was carrying 20 passengers on a fishing tour as well as two sailors when it crashed with the 336-tonne fuel tanker at around 6 am at sea near the port city of Incheon. Thirteen people were found dead or died after being sent to hospitals. Seven others were being treated at hospitals while two—including the captain of the boat—remained missing, according to the coastguard. No casualties or injuries were reported among those on board the tanker. TV footage showed the fishing boat sinking beneath churning waves while rescue divers searched around the deck, part of which was still visible above the water. All of the passengers were wearing life jackets but many appeared to have suffered hypothermia, Seoul's Yonhap news agency said.

#### Suicide blast kills six

**JALALABAD:** At least six people were killed when a suicide bomber drove a motorcycle into a crowd at a political rally in the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad yesterday, police said. The crowd had gathered in a sports stadium for a demonstration in support for President Ashraf Ghani, said Nangarhar province's police spokesman Hazrat Hussain Mashriqiwal. "Six people including a woman and a child have been killed and 13 more injured, all of them civilians," he said. The toll was confirmed by the provincial governor's spokesman as well as a local health director, who said some of the wounded were in a serious condition. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, but Nangarhar province is considered a hotbed for the Islamic State (IS) group, which emerged in Afghanistan in late 2015. The Taliban also have an active presence in parts of the province.

#### 'Anti-authoritarian' march

**HONG KONG:** Around 1,000 people marched through Hong Kong yesterday, led by some of the city's high-profile democracy campaigners including Joshua Wong, in what they billed an "anti-authoritarian" protest. Activists say Hong Kong is at risk of losing its rights and liberties in the face of growing Chinese pressure on the semi-autonomous city. The jailing of campaigners following court hearings, and fears that Hong Kong will introduce an anti-subversion law, are among the key concerns in the pro-democracy camp. Wong, 21, was jailed in August over his role in the Umbrella Movement mass pro-democracy protests of 2014 and is on bail pending an appeal. He will be sentenced on another protest-related charge Thursday, which could mean more jail time. "No one likes to serve a prison sentence, (but) if it can mobilize more people to care about justice and democracy in Hong Kong, I think it's valuable and I will pay this price," Wong said.

#### North Korea celebrates

**SEOUL:** North Korea held mass celebrations for its latest successful long-range missile test, Pyongyang's state media said, with a propaganda-filled display of fireworks and dancing in public squares. The ruling Workers Party official daily Rodong Simnun covered its front page with color photographs showing thousands of tightly packed soldiers and people applauding in Pyongyang's Kim Il-Sung square, which was decorated with large portraits of the North's late leaders. "We heartily celebrate the successful test launch of the Hwasong-15 which showed Chosun (North Korea)'s power and greatness to the whole world", read one banner held up by the crowd, referring to the missile.

## Link found between Utah suicides, lost device privileges

**SALT LAKE CITY:** Researchers studying a spike in teen suicides in Utah found that 18 of the 150 youngsters who took their own lives in a five-year period had recently lost privileges to use their electronic devices such as phones, tablets and gaming systems, according to a US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report made public Thursday. The report was released after the agency earlier this month issued findings showing an increase in suicide rates among teens across the US over the 2010-2015 period that occurred at the same time social media use surged.

Teen suicides had declined in the two previous decades. The reports stop short of blaming electronics and social media for the rise in suicides, but say the findings beg for more research on the topic. The findings add to a growing body of research that raise serious questions about whether young people who spend many hours on social media are more at risk for relationship problems, said Michael Friedrichs, a Utah state epidemiologist who was among those who spoke at a Thursday news conference in Salt Lake City.

More than half - 55 percent - of the Utah suicides from 2011-2015 had experienced a recent crisis, most of which were family or dating relationships, the report found. "A social media connection or a phone connection is not a substitute for a real connection," said Michael Friedrichs, a Utah state epidemiologist. "People need to go outside. . . There is a lack of connectness that is not satisfied by being tethered to a gadget." Utah requested the federal investigation to get more in-depth research done after the rate of suicides among youth 10-17 more than doubled from 2011-2015. The peak of 44 youth suicides in 2015 marked an all-time high - and was more than double the yearly average from the previous two decades, state figures said.

The 2015 rate - 11.1 youth suicides per 100,000 - was also more than double the national rate. The rate has decreased slightly in 2016-2017, but remains much higher than ever recorded previously, state data said. The federal

## Under Trump's shadow, Tillerson heads for Europe

**WASHINGTON:** US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson embarks this week on a diplomatic mission to shore up alliances in Europe and their defenses against Russian aggression and subversion. But as he prepares to set off today for Brussels, Vienna and Paris, his authority to speak for Washington has been called into question by a rift with President Donald Trump. Anonymous leaks from the White House suggest the top diplomat could be replaced within weeks and-even while denying this-Trump reminded him: "I call the final shots."

Tillerson has dismissed as "laughable" reports that Trump's closest aides want him to resign, but rumors will inevitably dog him when he sits down with his European peers. His trip is structured around ministerial conferences of the NATO allies in Brussels and the 57-member Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in Vienna. But the most closely watched encounter will be a meeting with his Russian counterpart, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, on the sidelines of the OSCE talks late in the week.

At NATO, alliance partners will want to hear how America can help defend them against the newly global threat of North Korea's long-range nuclear missiles. Tillerson gave a major speech on European policy in Washington on Tuesday to preview his agenda ahead of the trip-and he did not mince words about Russia. He will tell his NATO Western allies that they must stand shoulder-to-shoulder to oppose "the enemies that threaten our security and oppose our way of life," while Russia must be



**UTAH:** Michael Friedrichs, Bureau of Health Promotion Epidemiologist, Utah Department of Health, speaks to reporters during a news conference in Salt Lake City. —AP

researchers did not find a single factor driving the increase, but found that mental health issues seem to be a common factor with 35 percent of the victims diagnosed with some kind of mental health issue and 31 percent depressed when they died, the report found. The report found that nearly 8 in 10 who killed themselves from 2011-2015 were men.

The Utah report doesn't break down why each of 18 victims lost their electronic devices, but said it was a combination of punishment by parents or the devices breaking. Too much technology and social can also deprive kids of sleep, create unhealthy social comparisons and extend bullying from schools to the cyber world, said Kimberly Myers, the state's suicide prevention coordinator, a position created four years ago as a result of the rising rates. The investigators sought to get more information about a possible risk group: LGBT teens.

They were able to determine the sexual orientation of fewer than one-third of the victims. Among those 40, researchers concluded six of them were gay, lesbian or bisexual. In Utah, where as many of two-thirds of the state's 3 million residents are members of the Mormon church, LGBT youth have struggled to find acceptance. That has led LGBT advocacy groups to assert in recent years that the rise in suicides could be linked to these teens' struggles. The federal investigation backed up a finding by state officials that a small fraction of suicide victims were definitely gay or lesbian.—AP

brought to reverse its intervention in eastern Ukraine through relentless sanctions pressure.

#### 'Best friend'

"Any resolution to the war that does not entail a fully independent, sovereign, territorially-whole Ukraine is unacceptable," Tillerson declared. "Our trans-Atlantic unity is meant to convey to the Russian government that we will not stand by this flagrant violation of international norms," he said. But for this warning to be credible, Tillerson must be seen as speaking for the whole US government and the president, who has shown no enthusiasm for sanctions against Russia.

Trump—who in 2013 suggested he become Russian leader Vladimir Putin's "best friend"—opposed a law passed this year by Congress that could impose new sanctions from January, over Russia's Ukraine intervention and alleged interference in the US presidential election. The White House has even attempted to play down the conclusion of US intelligence that Russia deployed hackers and propagandists to assist in Trump's election win. But since that victory, the Trump administration's other major players—Tillerson and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis—have taken a tougher line.

#### Russian-backed rebels

Relations with Russia are at a low after tit-for-tat closures of diplomatic missions, although both sides seem to want to cooperate to stabilize Syria. Despite the enmity, progress may be made this week in agreeing terms for a United Nations mission in Ukraine. Putin has suggested Blue Helmet troops deploy to protect the unarmed OSCE monitors struggling to oversee the shaky ceasefire between Kiev's forces and Russian-backed rebels. Western powers would like to see the force have a broader mandate. Germany's Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel met Tillerson in Washington on Thursday, and afterwards told reporters that they found themselves in agreement on the crisis.—AFP

## Body of missing girl found; mom's boyfriend charged

**JACKSONVILLE:** The body of a missing 3-year-old North Carolina girl was found in a creek less than a day after her mother's boyfriend was charged with hiding her body after knowing she didn't die of natural causes, authorities said. Investigators continue to stay tight-lipped about what happened to Mariah Woods. But they left little doubt Earl Kimrey knew how she died and was trying to cover it up. He was charged late Friday with concealing of death.

"It was too late to save Mariah the moment the 911 call came in," FBI agent Stanley Meador said of the call the girl's mother made Monday to report her missing. "The arrest warrants are public record and the records speak for themselves. We will not discuss any details related to the homicide investigation." Kimrey removed the girl's body from the place where she died and knew her death was not natural, according to those arrest warrants. Sixteen hours after announcing Kimrey's arrest, Onslow County Sheriff Hans Miller said the girl's body was found by dive teams around 5:30 pm Saturday.

The body was in a creek in Pender County about 25 miles (40 kilometers) from the home Mariah shared with Kimrey in Jacksonville, FBI spokeswoman Shelley Lynch said in a statement with few other details. The medical examiner still needs to identify the body, but investigators are confident it is Mariah, Lynch said. Miller refused to release other details at a news conference.

Mariah's mother said she last saw her daughter when she put her to bed Sunday night. Kristy Woods made tearful pleas for her daughter's return. "This is my world, this is my angel," she said. Kimrey, 32, is also charged with obstruction of justice, second-degree burglary, felony larceny and possession of stolen property. Prosecutors are reviewing whether additional charges should be filed.

The statement did not indicate whether Kimrey had a lawyer or if anyone else could also be charged. Mariah's father, who has been involved in a custody dispute with her mother, has criticized her version of events. "Someone just walked right up in there, grabbed the 3-year-old out of the bed and she didn't cry, she didn't scream?" Woods told WCTI-TV in New Bern earlier in the week. "Nobody heard anything? Four people in the house, two adults and two kids someone just comes up and snatches the baby and walks out?"—AP



This image released by the FBI shows the seeking information poster for Mariah Woods. —AP



International

# N Koreans face Mongolia exit as UN sanctions bite

## Mongolia severely curbing trade with Pyongyang

**ULAANBAATAR:** North Koreans have toiled and slept at construction sites in Mongolia, they have operated cashmere sewing machines, and their acupuncture skills are highly prized in one of the few democracies employing them. But the nearly 1,200 North Koreans living in the country wedged between Russia and China must now pack their bags as Mongolia enforces tough United Nations sanctions severely curbing trade with Pyongyang.

The UN estimated in September that 100,000 North Koreans work abroad and send some \$500 million in wages back to the authoritarian regime each year. But the UN Security Council ordered nations to stop providing guest worker permits to North Koreans after Pyongyang detonated its most powerful nuclear bomb. The US is now pushing for more sanctions after the regime tested another intercontinental ballistic missile in late November.

North Koreans have to leave Mongolia by the end of the year as their one-year work authorisations will not be renewed, the labour ministry said. "Private entities will not be able to offer new contracts due to the UN resolution. Mongolia has been following every part of the resolution," Shijeekhuugiin Odonbaatar, a Mongolian foreign ministry official, told AFP. The number of North Koreans working in Mongolia has dropped every year since peaking at 2,123 in 2013. There were 1,190 North Koreans employed in the vast country of three million people as of November—often under murky work and living conditions. Most of the North Koreans who work abroad are in China and Russia, but they have also been found elsewhere in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Across the world, they work 12-hour to 16-hour days, with only one or two days off per month. The North Korean government takes between 70 and 90 percent of their monthly wages, which range from \$300 to \$1,000, according to the US State Department. But their days abroad are numbered.

Some 150 North Koreans have left Angola. In Qatar, the contracts of some 650 construction workers will expire next year. Poland, where as many as 500 have laboured, will not renew work permits.

The head of a Russian parliamentary delegation visiting North Korea this week said "everything" must be done to allow those who have already received work permits to finish their jobs in Russia, where an expert estimates around 30,000 live.

### Cold basements

In Mongolia, construction companies have hired North Koreans for their reputation for working long hours without complaint. They live in toolsheds of construction sites or in the basements of apartment projects. They never take time off or even leave the construction sites as they are not allowed to wander in the city on their own. In September, a 27-year-old North Korean worker died after falling from an apartment in a residential complex under construction in Ulaanbaatar. At the fenced-off site, AFP journalists saw three toolsheds with a clothes line strung between them. The workers angrily refused to talk to the reporters and tried to grab their cameras.

A South Korean Christian activist who has sought to help North Koreans said he wished that Mongolians would do more for those who work in poor conditions. "In winter most of them live in the basement of the building that they are building. There is no heating in that unfinished building," he said, speaking on condition of anonymity. "Unfortunately, it is too risky for South Koreans to help those workers directly. I used to help some of construction workers in the past, through one man. But one day, that man just disappeared. I never saw him again."

### Begging to stay

Conditions at Mongolia's garment factories have also faced scrutiny. But more than 100 North Koreans left Gobi Cashmere, Mongolia's biggest cashmere factory, after their contracts ended in August. "We hired North Koreans because of a lack of Mongolians skilled in operating garment machines," the company's lawyer, Tsogtbayariin Tsaschiker said.

"The South Korean press publishes false stories that the companies pay North Koreans with shirts, not money. We paid them exactly the same salary as we pay our



**ULAANBAATAR:** North Koreans work at a construction site in the capital Ulaanbaatar. Nearly 1,200 North Koreans living in the country wedged between Russia and China must now pack their bags as Mongolia enforces tough United Nations sanctions severely curbing trade with Pyongyang.— AFP

Mongolian workers and they work eight hours like the Mongolian workers. They used to receive their salary through Mongolian banks." North Koreans are also renowned for their skills in traditional Korean medicine, including acupuncture and chiropractic care. The facilities send their salaries to the North Korean embassy, which then pays the staff. The embassy declined to comment.

The acupuncturists and chiropractors have better conditions than the construction workers as their food

and apartments are provided by the clinics. Sunjidmaa Mitiya, chief doctor at Sky, a private traditional medicine hospital, said her two North Korean employees attract many customers. "Patients always have high satisfaction with their treatment and more patients come to our clinic thanks to the good results see by other clients," Mitiya said. "They work from their heart, and they are happy to work in Mongolia," she said. "The previous doctor... begged the clinic to hire him again after his contract ended."—AFP



100,000 North Koreans work abroad: UN

## Afghan provinces submit to lure of opium poppies

**MAZAR-I-SHARIF:** New motorbikes roared through villages in Afghanistan's Balkh province this summer—markers of growing wealth, observers say, as poppy cultivation leapt by nearly five times in a region that once was an opium-free zone. Since the end of the Taliban regime, which outlawed the drug before making it their primary source of funding for their insurgency, Afghanistan has become the world's largest opium producer.

With 9,000 tons harvested in 2017, production has almost doubled in a year and is a vital source of revenue in the countryside, according to the annual report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The surge is down to several factors, it explains, such as the improvement of yields and the spread of crops across Afghanistan including, significantly, in the north.

"North is the new battleground for counter-narcotics—Balkh is a major defeat as two years ago it was a poppy free province," admits a Western counter-narcotics consultant in Kabul. The presence of opium poppies in Balkh illustrates the failure of anti-drugs policies that the US has spent more than \$8 billion on since 2002. Only 10 out of 34 Afghan provinces are now poppy-free, according to the UNODC report.

Cultivation is booming in areas where previously the crop barely grew, such as the northern provinces of Jowzjan and Balkh, which had the most spectacular growth rates of 2017: up 691 percent and 481 percent respectively. This spring Balkh and its capital, Mazar-i-Sharif, saw pink poppy flowers bloom in even the smallest plots of land. "From the governor's office you could see poppy fields," a local observer told AFP on condition of anonymity, showing the photos on his smartphone. The new motorcycles, he says, are signs of the good fortune the poppies have brought. "After this, it's not easy to get back to growing wheat."



**BALKH PROVINCE:** An Afghan laborer works in a poppy field on the outskirts of Mazar-i-Sharif.—AFP

### 'Vital lifeline'

The northern harvest was such that workers had to be brought in by their hundreds from the southern provinces of Kandahar and poppy powerhouse Helmand, Afghan and Western sources said. At the provincial agriculture department, manager Zabiullah Zubeen confirms the crop was so abundant it drove prices down from 7,000 afghanis (\$106) per kilogram to 3,000 (\$45) in the spring. Despite this, a 27-year-old farmer said with a smile that he was able to afford a second wife with his prodigious crop. "Now everybody grows poppies there... They can't benefit that much with watermelon, or wheat." Brookings Institution researcher Vanda Felbab-Brown also points to the lack of economic alternatives in the countryside, with opium providing a "vital lifeline".

"There is simply nothing in Afghanistan that produces more jobs than the opium poppy economy, or could do so in the foreseeable future," she said. The farmer sells his product to what he describes as "a local businessman" who has contacts on the other side of the Uzbek border, roughly 60 kilometers from Mazar. Dressed in a long cream shirt, a shawl around his sunburnt neck, he comes from Chintal district in western Balkh, which he says is completely under Taliban control.—AFP

## Cambodia PM stamps brand on kingdom

**ANGKOR:** Thousands of orange-clad monks joined Cambodian Premier Hun Sen yesterday for a prayer ceremony by the famed Angkor temple, lauding "political stability" after the main opposition party was dissolved, an act that has cemented the strongman's grip on power. Hun Sen has ruled Cambodia since 1985, making him one of the world's longest-serving leaders, an accolade earned through a mix of cold political strategy, deft public relations and repression.

His rule appears virtually assured after a court early this month disbanded the main opposition party ahead of next year's elections. As dawn rose over the tiered stone domes of Angkor Wat, Hun Sen joined prayers with

5,000 Buddhist monks, in a ceremony touted as celebrating peace and stability at the symbolic heart of Khmer power. Graceful apsara dancers, fingers curled in the traditional art, went through their moves as thousands gathered for the event at the vast Angkor complex—the centerpiece of the Khmer empire which draws back to the 9th century.

Hun Sen, who has cast himself as a figure of stability in a country ravaged by the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime, was front and centre of a morning of careful choreography. Kneeling, hands clasped in prayer, he received blessings from monks who sang Buddhist mantras and scattered flower petals. "We live with peace under the prime minister's rule," Prum Seab, 49, who was among the crowd told AFP. "I am happy."

Tourism minister Thong Khon warmed to the theme. "We hold this ceremony for continuous prosperity... we pray for continued peace and stability," he said, swatting away the question of a political crisis in the

country. "We have no crisis, but there are politicians who are having a crisis themselves," he said. Analysts had predicted a strong challenge to Hun Sen at next year's election, after the youth vote in 2013 took the opposition Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) to its best ever electoral result. But Hun Sen has rallied in the intervening years, boosting his public profile through Facebook, while systematically using the kingdom's pliant courts to hack away at the CNRP as well as critics in civil society and the media.

Cambodia's main opposition party was finally dissolved this month over accusations it conspired with the United States in a treason plot. The case was blasted by Washington as baseless, while rights groups said it has hastened the country's descent into a de facto one-party state. Hun Sen has turned up the anti-American rhetoric to justify the unprecedented crackdown which has included shuttering critical media with trumped-up tax charges or arresting journalists on allegations of spying.—AFP

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## Militia chief arrest 'dangerous moment' for Sudan's Darfur

By arresting Darfur's powerful militia chief Musa Hilal, Khartoum has tightened its control over Sudan's strife-torn region but analysts say it might open a new chapter of violence. Hilal, a former aide to President Omar al-Bashir, was arrested last week by Sudan's counter-insurgency forces near his hometown of Mustariaha in North Darfur state after fierce clashes that left several dead. "This is a dangerous moment actually," Magnus Taylor, Sudan analyst with the think-tank International Crisis Group, told AFP. "By taking out Musa Hilal, they have pitched two different Darfuri Arab tribes against each other."

Hilal, a powerful leader of the Mahamid tribe, was captured by a unit of the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) led by members of another Arab tribe, Darfur's biggest, the Rezeigat. "This is the start of intra-fighting, this is only the beginning," said Ahmed Adam, a research associate at London University. "No doubt, Hilal's arrest will impact the security and stability of Darfur."

During the initial years of the Darfur conflict that erupted in 2003, Arab militias fought alongside government forces against the region's black African rebels. Hilal then led the government-allied Arab Janjaweed militia, notorious gunmen on horseback who swept through Darfur marauding villagers and fighting rebels who had taken up arms against Khartoum's Arab-dominated government, accusing it of economic and political marginalization. The United Nations says hundreds of thousands of people have been killed and another 2.5 million displaced in the conflict. The RSF has also been used to crush rebels in a brutal counter-insurgency launched by Bashir.

### 'Inter-Arab violence'

A joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force was deployed in 2007 to bring stability to Darfur - a vast region in western Sudan the size of France. "The previous dynamic in Darfur was militia versus Darfur rebel groups violence," Taylor said. "Now the most dangerous element is inter-Arab militia violence." Hilal is subject to a United Nations travel ban and on a list of individuals sanctioned for "human rights atrocities" during the early years of the conflict.

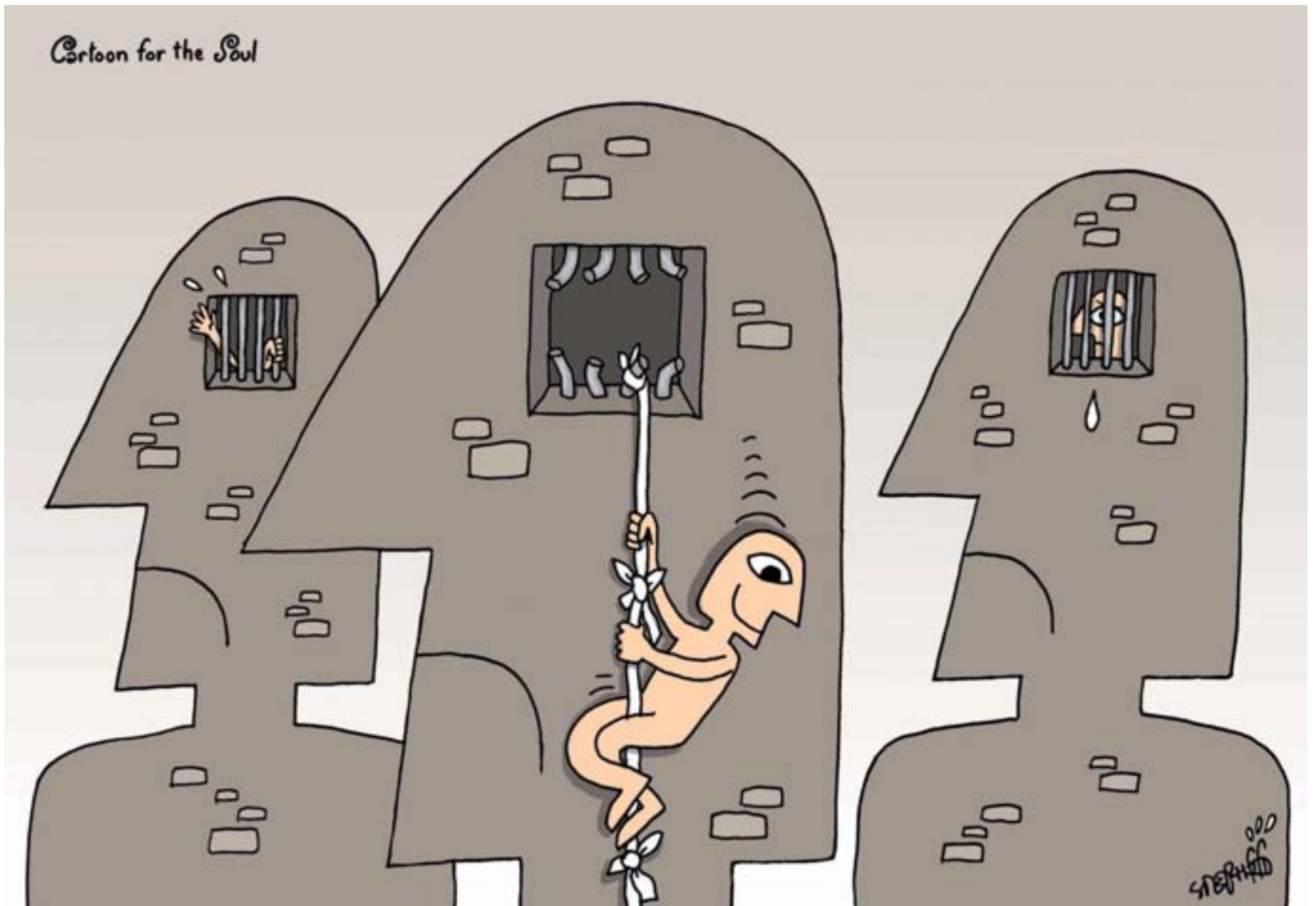
Bashir himself is accused by The Hague-based International Criminal Court of genocide and war crimes related to the conflict, charges he denies. Khartoum's use of scorched-earth tactics against ethnic minority rebels had also been a key factor for Washington to maintain a trade embargo against Sudan imposed in 1997. Washington lifted the embargo on Oct 12, noting an overall fall in violence in Darfur since last year.

Khartoum now insists that the conflict has ended, and it has even launched a campaign to disarm militias operating there. Analysts say the disarmament campaign is primarily aimed at weakening Hilal who according to a UN report controls several gold mines in Darfur - after a rift with Khartoum. "It is mainly about containing or liquidating Musa Hilal, as well as targeting other black communities and the internally displaced persons," said Adam, adding that Khartoum had armed these militias in the first place. "Musa Hilal was created by Bashir to carry out his counter-insurgency in Darfur... but recently he had become politically ambitious. "Thus, there is no love story between the two men."

### Reduced UN forces

Up to 10,000 pro-government fighters led by RSF were mobilized to nab Hilal, who himself commands about 3,000 militiamen, sources said. With his arrest, Khartoum is sending a signal to the international community that it is "in control" of Darfur, said Taylor. "Hilal was the big one they wanted to take out. He was seen as becoming this over-mighty figure," he said. Although the overall violence has fallen in Darfur, a permanent peace deal between Khartoum and rebels has proved elusive.

With the fall in bloodshed, the UN-African Union peacekeeping mission, known as UNAMID, is now being downsized. But Hilal's arrest at a time when UN peacekeepers are scaling back has the potential to unravel much of the gains achieved in Darfur, a European diplomat said. "This is quite troubling... Musa Hilal is a very important sheikh who has tribal influence," he told AFP on condition of anonymity. "This could trigger a lot of things, a lot of bad things, and UNAMID won't be able to stop everything." —AFP



## Alabama Senate race goes off the rails

Shouting matches and threats. A feud with a late-night television host. Standing ovations and standoffs with the media. Long stretches without campaigning. Republican Roy Moore's supposedly smooth ride to the US Senate has become an off-color demolition derby since he was hit with decades-old allegations of sexual misconduct involving teenagers. Moore has made limited public appearances, leading to Democrat Doug Jones, who held a flurry of events over the weekend, to mock Moore for hiding.

"We're on the campaign trail meeting all of you and meeting folks here as no one knows where Roy Moore is," Jones said Friday to a crowd of reporters interviewing him. Moore made three campaign stops last week. Adoring audiences in little country churches still welcome the Bible-toting Moore. But the campaign also has been punctuated by tense moments and odd exchanges, including an online spat with late night television host Jimmy Kimmel.

The Rev Jeremy Ragland was taken aback by the furor after he invited Moore to speak at a "God and Country" service held Thursday night in the gym at tiny Bryan Baptist Church in rural Walker County northwest of Birmingham. Ragland said he received death threats and lewd suggestions about his own children before the event, prompting a show of security that included uniformed constables, a burly doorman and plainclothes bodyguards. "I'm just a rural preacher," an exasperated Ragland said afterward. "When you've got people threatening to kill you, saying your children should be molested, what are you going to do?"

Moore's campaign has been on the defensive since The Washington Post reported claims that he assaulted a young woman and tried to date other teen girls in the 1970s and 1980s. Moore was likely to win easily before the story, but the fallout has given Jones a shot in Republican-controlled Alabama.

## Sex cases put spotlight on sex addiction, but is it real?

Is sex addiction a true addiction, a crime, or a made-up condition used by misbehaving VIPs to deflect blame or repair tarnished images? A tide of high-profile sexual misconduct accusations against celebrities, politicians and media members has raised these questions - and sowed confusion. Sex addiction is not an officially recognized psychiatric diagnosis, though even those who doubt it's a true addiction acknowledge that compulsive sexual behavior can upend lives.

Either way, there is an important distinction, sometimes blurred, between a mental condition and a crime. Some men who have been accused of assault or other sexual crimes have sought treatment for sex addiction or other unspecified conditions. But compulsive behavior is very different from a crime, and the vast majority of people who suffer from sexually compulsive behavior do not harass or assault others.

There's "an extremely fine line between addict and offender" and sometimes the two overlap, said psychologist Leah Claire Bennett of Pine Grove Behavioral Health & Addiction Services, a rehab center that offers sex addiction treatment in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Despite pressure from some therapists, sex addiction was not included in the most recent edition of the manual that psychiatrists use to diagnose mental illness. "The reason is very simple," said Dr. Charles O'Brien, a University of Pennsylvania psychiatry professor involved in the manual's 2013 update. There is no rigorous scientific proof that compulsive sexual behavior affects the brain in the same ways that have been shown with addiction to drugs or alcohol, he said. "There's an overuse of the word 'addiction,'" O'Brien said. "There are many treatment programs. That doesn't make it a disorder."

Still, some skeptics don't dispute that compulsive sexual behavior can become a serious problem. The issue for some is whether it amounts to mental illness, or whether it might result from a different psychiatric condition, such as obsessive-compulsive disorder. Robert Weiss, a California-based sex addiction therapist, said the condition involves unrestrained compulsive sexual behavior without regard to consequences. Sometimes that leads to illegal behavior.

The International Institute for Trauma and Addiction

The Post quoted a Donald Trump-supporting Republican claiming Moore pursued her when she was 14 and he was 32, and that he eventually stripped down to his underwear and touched her. Another woman held a news conference in New York to claim Moore groped her also, and other women said Moore pursued them for dates while they were still in high school.

After days out of the public spotlight, Moore returned to campaigning with dodge-and-jab tactics. He has avoided reporters while speaking to enthusiastic audiences in



### Moore campaign has been on the defensive

evangelical churches as he tries to rally his base. Appearing at Magnolia Springs Baptist Church in Theodore, located near Mobile in southwest Alabama, the former judge known for his intense opposition to same-sex marriage blamed his political enemies for the allegations.

"They've done everything. When I say they, who are they? They're liberals. They don't want conservative values. They're the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender. They're socialists who want to change our way of life, putting man above God and that government is our God. They're the

Professionals says sex addiction affects from 2 percent to 5 percent of the general population but that only 10 percent of those with this addiction engage in criminal sexual behavior. Most patients and sex offenders are men. Some treatment programs won't admit patients accused of rape and other violent sex crimes, referring them to centers or therapists who specialize in treating sex offenders.

### Therapy

Addiction treatment at Pine Grove, The Meadows in Arizona and other high-profile residential rehab centers can cost tens of thousands of dollars. Despite country club-like settings, there's nothing cushy or indulgent about sex addiction therapy, Weiss said. Pine Grove requires daylong sessions including group therapy daily for up to three months. Some centers use 12-step programs similar to Alcoholics Anonymous, but they don't require swearing off sex for good. Some use brain "retraining" exercises, or sharing stories about bad behavior with a roomful of strangers. Some centers use equine therapy. Weiss says that interacting with horses can help patients recognize problems sometimes associated with sex addiction, including overly aggressive, controlling behavior. The New York Post published a photograph last year that it said showed former New York Congressman Anthony Weiner riding a horse as part of treatment at a Tennessee sex addiction rehab center. Weiner was sentenced in September for sexting with a teenager. He said at the time that he was undergoing therapy and had been "a very sick man for a very long time."

Weiss and other therapists say sex addicts are never cured, but they can learn to manage their behavior and avoid triggers, including avoiding jobs and circumstances that could lead to a repeat of problem behavior. L J Schwartz, a former real estate adviser in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, says a nearly 30-year addiction to sex almost ruined his life. Schwartz says his addiction included having sex with strangers at adult bookstores or masturbating there while watching porn nearly every chance he got; working as a stripper and phone sex. He was never arrested but says his behavior endangered his job and marriage. "There's no pleasure derived from sex addiction; it's pain," Schwartz said. He says a 12-step program helped him resist his compulsions and he now works as a recovery coach for other patients.

### Evidence

But hard evidence that treatment works is lacking. "There's not a lot of data," Bennett acknowledged. "We have a lot of anecdotal evidence. We can see the change in people," she said. She said Pine Grove plans a long-term study to measure the benefits. Whether treatment can repair tarnished images is uncertain. "The accusations levied against Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, Louis C K and others for sexual assault, harassment and abuse have created righteous outrage and concerns

Washington establishment who simply wants to keep their job," Moore said.

### 'Christian values'

Moore - whose speeches typically include long, memorized recitations of scripture and quotes from early America patriots - got into an uncharacteristic Twitter spat with Kimmel after "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" regular Tony Barbieri crashed the event in Theodore. After a heckler interrupted Moore and was hustled out by security, Barbieri jumped up in front of the pulpit where Moore stood. "That's a man's man," Barbieri shouted. "Does that look like the face of a child molester?"

That led to the social media knockdown between Moore and the comedian. Moore's campaign wrote: "@jimmykimmel If you want to mock our Christian values, come down here to Alabama and do it man to man." "Sounds great Roy - let me know when you get some Christian values and I'll be there!" Kimmel replied.

A crew from Fox News - the TV channel of choice for many Republicans - were shoved by two event organizers when they tried to film Moore entering a building before a rally in rural Henagar, in northeastern Alabama. Elsewhere, Moore has dodged the media by having security block access or using unexpected exits.

In yet another odd scene, about 20 pastors and activists in Birmingham took turns praising Moore for his decades of support for conservative causes. Afterward, speakers yelled down journalists and one grabbed a videographer's camera as reporters attempted to ask questions. Moore spoke briefly during the event but refused to take questions. Longtime Moore aide Dean Young chided reporters for even trying to question the candidate during an appearance on the steps of Alabama's Capitol. "This Jerry Springer stuff is over," she said. Not yet it isn't. Election day is Dec 12. —AP



In this June 11, 2017 photo, Kevin Spacey arrives at the 71st annual Tony Awards at Radio City Music Hall in New York. —AP

that 'sex addiction treatment' is being used to excuse their offensive behavior," the addiction professionals institute said in a recent statement. Whether any of these men have a diagnosed mental condition has not been publicized. A representative for Weinstein confirmed that he is receiving treatment and has been taking his recovery and sessions seriously. But the representative declined to specify Weinstein's condition or the treatment he is receiving for it. A former publicist for Spacey said he also is seeking unspecified treatment.

Bennett said some people do use sex addiction as an excuse, "but that's not who we're treating here at Pine Grove. These peoples' lives are in shambles. They've been traumatized throughout their lives. They have huge psychological wounds and are using very maladaptive ways of coping." Actor David Duchovny voluntarily sought rehab for sex addiction in 2008 while starring on Showtime's "Californication". Married to actress Tea Leoni at the time, he had been dogged by cheating rumors. His career never stalled. He returned to "Californication" for the remainder of its run and has continued to appear in high-profile roles.

When sex addiction may have contributed to criminal behavior, a trip to rehab could bolster a defense attorney's argument that the accused person has changed, said Samuel Pillsbury, a professor at Loyola School of Law in Los Angeles. But it's a less effective strategy for violent crimes, he said. "It's very difficult for me to imagine a prosecutor deciding, 'Oh, he's in rehab, I'll drop the charges or I'll reduce the charges significantly,'" Pillsbury said. "But it could have an effect on sentencing." —AP



News

## Palestinians rally leaders on Trump Jerusalem move

RAMALLAH: Palestinian leaders were seeking yesterday to rally diplomatic support to persuade US President Donald Trump not to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital after suggestions that he planned to do so. Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas was holding a series of phone calls with world leaders to "explain the dangers of any decision to move the embassy to Jerusalem or recognize (Jerusalem) as Israel's capital", Abbas' diplomatic adviser Majdi Al-Khalidi told AFP.

His calls so far have included those to Arab leaders, French President Emmanuel Macron and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Erdogan told Abbas that an independent Palestinian state must have east Jerusalem as its capital, Turkish state-run Anadolu news agency reported. Abbas was also said to be seeking meetings of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League to discuss the issue.

Saeb Erekat, secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and Palestinian Authority intelligence head Majed Farraj were making contacts in Washington, Khalidi said. He said Abbas was warning "of the consequences of taking such a decision that will threaten the political process and peacemaking efforts". Erekat said in a statement yesterday that such recognition would "promote international anarchy and disrespect for global institutions", while the United States would "be disqualifying itself to play any role in any initiative towards achieving a just and lasting peace".

Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip, called Saturday for a new "intifada" if Washington recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel or moves its embassy to the disputed city. Trump is set to decide by today whether to move the American embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a decision that would upturn long-standing policy and be at odds with other world powers.

Since 1995, it has been US law that Washington's embassy in Israel must be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, in line with Israeli government wishes. But

every six months since the law was passed, a succession of US presidents has signed a waiver to hold off on a switch which would enrage Palestinians and their Arab supporters. Trump has signed the waiver once after vowing to Jewish-American supporters that he would be the president to finally make the switch permanent.

The next deadline comes today, and some reports in Washington suggest that Trump is planning a speech on the issue next week before Vice President Mike Pence heads to Jerusalem. The White House has described reports that he may refuse to sign the waiver as premature - but sources told AFP they expect Trump to formally declare Jerusalem Israel's capital. Israel occupied east Jerusalem and the West Bank in the 1967 Six-Day War. It later annexed east Jerusalem in a move never recognized by the international community.

Israel claims the entire city as its undivided capital, while the Palestinians want the eastern sector as the capital of their future state. The traditional US position has been that Jerusalem's future status must be negotiated by the two sides. Trump's administration has been seeking ways to restart long-stalled peace efforts between the Israelis and the Palestinians. There have been warnings that recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital or moving the embassy there outside of negotiations would severely harm remaining chances for a two-state solution to the conflict.

### Jordan in diplomatic offensive

Jordan has also begun consultations on convening an emergency meeting of the Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, a senior Jordanian source said. Jordan, the current president of the Arab summit, would invite members of the two bodies to convene if the recognition is extended, to "discuss ways of dealing with the consequences of such a decision that raised alarm and concern", the senior Jordanian diplomatic source told Reuters.

"It could ultimately hamper all efforts to get the peace process moving and would certainly be provocative to Arab and Muslim countries and Muslim communities across the West," said the source, asking not to be named. "No issue can move Arabs and Muslims in the same potent way as Jerusalem does." King Abdullah's Hashemite dynasty is the custodian of the Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem, making Amman sensitive to any changes of status of the disputed city.— Agencies

army commander he led the military's overthrow in 2013 of former president Mohamed Morsi of the now banned Muslim Brotherhood. Earlier this year, he brushed off widespread public criticism and ratified an agreement that cedes sovereignty over two uninhabited Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia.

Shafiq, who narrowly lost a 2012 presidential bid against Morsi, joined several other lower-profile candidates who have also said they will run, though some say they believe they have no chance against Sisi. Egyptian pro-government media and talk shows, which had immediately come out against Shafiq over his bid, criticized the former air force commander again yesterday. State-owned newspapers published a story calling Shafiq calling "the fleeing air marshal" and said his lawyer had made deals with outlets sympathetic to the banned Muslim Brotherhood to help with Shafiq's campaign. They provided no evidence.

Two private lawyers filed legal complaints against Shafiq with the public prosecutor in Egypt because an announcement linked to his election bid had been broadcast on Qatari-based Al Jazeera. Egypt has long accused the broadcaster of being a mouthpiece of the Brotherhood, which it denies. One Egyptian judicial source said on Saturday Shafiq did not face any criminal cases in Egypt. He was acquitted, or had charges dropped, in several cases in the past, including for corruption.

Sisi has yet to announce his own intentions for the election, saying he would follow the will of the people after presenting his achievements in the next two months. His supporters dismiss criticism over rights abuses and say any measures are needed for security in the face of an Islamist insurgency that has killed hundreds of police and soldiers in the last four years. But his government is struggling to crush the insurgency in the North Sinai region and has also enacted painful austerity reforms over the last year to revive the economy which critics say have eroded his popularity. — Reuters

## Assembly passes new sports ...

Continued from Page 1

The lawmakers want to debate the consequences of the rulings. A number of MPs also submitted another request to hold a second special session to approve draft laws to scrap hikes in prices of petrol and electricity. It was not immediately known if the two sessions will be held.

Separately, the interior ministry has rescinded a

decision to impound vehicles found in violation of traffic regulations, pending amendments to traffic laws soon. The decision has been made to ensure stringent road safety standards through a comprehensive traffic law, read a statement issued by the ministry yesterday. The ministry had previously drafted a law where motorists had their vehicles impounded for not wearing a helmet, a seatbelt or using their mobile phones while driving. As per the new decision, these measures have now been rendered null and void.

Deputy speaker Essa Al-Kandari confirmed that the interior minister ordered the suspension of the seizure of vehicles for traffic offenses, and asked the government's legal department to study if the measure is in line with the constitution.

## Amir meets GCC chief...

Continued from Page 1

There was no immediate comment from other Gulf nations on the Qatari announcement. The dispute, which

erupted in June, revolves around allegations by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt that Qatar supports terrorism, a charge Doha denies.

The four countries have severed diplomatic, trade and travel links with Doha, in a move Qatar says is inflicting collective punishment on its people but its opponents call a legitimate response to its policies. Qatar says the four countries are trying to force Doha to fall in line with their own foreign policy.— Agencies

## UAE denies attack on nuclear plant...

Continued from Page 1

trumpets in Yemen that they fired a missile towards the airspace of the United Arab Emirates," the department said in a statement carried by state news agency WAM. It said the nuclear power project was "fortified and sturdy against all possibilities. And enjoys all measures of nuclear safety and security that such grand projects require".

The Houthis had said Abu Dhabi, a member of the Saudi-led coalition fighting against them since 2015, was a target for their missiles. The Barakah project, which is being built by Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO), is expected to be completed and become operational in 2018, the UAE energy minister has said. It is the second time this year the Houthis have said they have fired missiles towards the UAE. A few months ago, they said they had "successfully" test-fired a missile towards Abu Dhabi, but there were no reports of any rockets being intercepted by or falling in the UAE.

Senior Houthi official Deif-Allah Al-Shami told AP that the missile fired toward Abu Dhabi was a "message to the United Arab Emirates for its political and financial support to Saleh". He said that the UAE has hosted members of Saleh's family, including his son who was an ambassador to the UAE and believed to be residing here during the conflict. Shami also said the rocket attack was a message that "we will continue to target every nation that participated in the aggression against Yemen".

Saleh's announcement on Saturday was welcomed by the Saudi-led coalition, which has been backed by the United States and other Western powers. The coalition, which includes the UAE, is trying to help Yemen's internationally recognized President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi back to power, but it has struggled to advance against Houthi-Saleh forces. A split between Saleh's armed allies and the Houthis could tip the balance of power.

Army units loyal to Saleh have been clashing with Houthi fighters in the past five days, adding a new layer to an already complex situation in Yemen. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash appeared to back Saleh's side in remarks on his official Twitter page. "The events in Sanaa are murky, but its national uprising needs support ... to protect the Arabian Peninsula from Iranian expansion," he said.

Residents in Sanaa reported yesterday that the Houthis appeared to be clawing back some territory lost to Saleh over the previous four days, and Houthi tanks were deployed amid heavy gun battles in the city's central Political District. The area is a stronghold of Saleh's loyalists under the command of his nephew Tareq, an influential army general. The fighting has cut off the airport road, prompting the United Nations to try to evacuate at least 140 aid workers from Sanaa, according to UN and other aid officials. The UN was awaiting approval from the Saudi-led coalition, they said.

Residents earlier said Houthi fighters seized the television studios of Yemen Today, a news channel owned by Saleh, after clashes that damaged the building. Residents said 20 employees were trapped inside. Meanwhile, Saleh loyalists cut off a number of streets in central Sanaa and deployed heavily in anticipation of Houthi attacks, as security sources said clashes this week had left some 60 dead across the capital and at its international airport. Saleh loyalists renewed a bid to seize control of Al-Jarraf district, a stronghold of the Houthis, who fortified their positions with dozens of vehicles mounted with machineguns, witnesses said.

They said the Houthis had brought reinforcements from their northern strongholds and deployed them in the south of the capital. The Houthis seized the home of rebel interior minister Mohammed Abdullah Al-Waqsi, who is close to Saleh, killing three of his bodyguards and detaining others, Saleh sources said. And Houthi rebels killed Mohammed Al-Zarka, a tribal leader close to Saleh, in Omran just north of the capital and members of his family, the same sources said.

The education ministry cancelled classes yesterday, normally the start of the school week, and witnesses said some bodies of those killed in previous clashes this week were still lying in the streets. Iyad Al-Othmani, 33, said he had not left his house for three days because of the clashes. Mohammed Abdullah, a private sector employee, said his street had been cut off by militiamen and he was staying home to avoid checkpoints. "Sanaa is becoming like a ghost town. There is a street war and people are holed up in their houses," said an activist who works with the International Organisation for Migration in Sanaa. "If the confrontation continues, many families will be cut off" and stranded in their homes, he warned.

In Tehran, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi called for calm and restraint. "All internal disputes should be resolved through dialogue to block the grounds for any abuse by the enemies of the Yemeni nation," he said, according to a statement on the ministry's website.—Agencies

## Whereabouts of Shafiq unknown...

Continued from Page 1

Shafiq's family said he was taken from their home on Saturday and flown by private plane back to Cairo. A Reuters witness said Egyptian authorities escorted him in a convoy from the airport. "We know nothing about him since he left home yesterday," Shafiq's daughter May told Reuters. "If he was deported he should have been able to go home by now, not just disappear. We consider him kidnapped."

The family and lawyer said they planned to file complaints with the prosecutor's office around Shafiq's whereabouts. "I call on the Egyptian authorities... to allow me to meet him to check on him and confirm his arrival to Egypt," lawyer Dina Adly Hussein said in a statement on her Facebook page. UAE authorities confirmed he left the Emirates without giving any details about why. Egypt's foreign ministry said it was not responsible for the case. An official source at the interior ministry said: "We do not know anything about Shafiq. We did not arrest him and we did not receive any requests from the prosecution to arrest him or bring him back."

Shafiq's abrupt departure from UAE came weeks after Lebanese officials accused Saudi Arabia of meddling in its affairs by forcing Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri to resign by holding him against his will. Saudi Arabia denied those charges but the case prompted a political crisis in Lebanon and pushed the country back into center stage of a regional power struggle between Riyadh with its Sunni Gulf allies and Iran.

Sisi has won support from Gulf states, presenting himself as a bulwark against Islamist militants since as



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## Sports

# First sporting shooting championship concludes

## All facilities will be made available to form a national team



By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** The first sporting shooting championship was held at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic shooting complex in which a large number of shooters participated in this exciting sport.

The closing ceremony was held in the presence of the president of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Eng Duaij Khalaf Al-Otaibi, Kuwait Shooting Sport

Club Assistant Treasurer Adnan Al-Ibrahim, KSSC Board member Eng Hussam Al-Roumi and a large number of fans. Eng Duaij Al-Otaibi thanked all participants in the event, adding that the sporting events will continue as it received special interest from Kuwait Shooting Sport Club board members to attract Kuwaiti youth who are interested in such sport. He added that all the necessary facilities will be made available to form a national team that competes internationally just like the

teams competing in the Olympic events.

Al-Otaibi concluded by thanking all those who are involved in the organization of the event.

Meanwhile, Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations Secretary General Obaid Al-Osaimi acknowledged the efforts exerted by the board of directors to develop the sport of shooting. He said the first championship was characterized by friendly competition, adding that this championship will be followed by others to attract

Kuwaiti youth to the sport of our forefathers at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex.

He said the sporting shooting follows the rules of the International Sporting Shooting Federation (ITTASCO), and KSSC is in the process of forming a team that participates at the international level.

Results are as follows: First place went to Saud Al-Rasheedi, second was Mohammad Al-Daihani and third Saad Al-Mutairi.



## Rosenqvist inherits Formula E win after Abt disqualified

**HONG KONG:** Germany's Daniel Abt was disqualified from today's Hong Kong Formula E race after a post-race inspection ended his victory celebrations and handed the win to Swedish rival Felix Rosenqvist.

Audi Sport said they intended to appeal, with the matter set to go before the governing FIA's international tribunal. The Audi driver had taken the chequered flag on his 25th birthday after long-time leader Edoardo Mortara spun late in the second race of the season. But an inspection of his car revealed that the FIA security stickers on the inverters and motors did not correspond with those declared on the car's technical passport.

The breach of technical and sporting regulations meant Abt lost his first victory and the overall lead in the all-electric series. Saturday's race winner Sam Bird now heads the drivers' standings for DS Virgin Racing, with 35 points, two clear of French racer Jean-Eric Vergne. Audi said the issue was apparently an administrative mistake that gave them no advantage on the racetrack. "Daniel drove fantastically on both days and absolutely deserves this victory," said Allan McNish, principal of Team Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler.

"We want the opportunity to be able to clarify all details, that's why we've announced the intent to appeal." Former F1 driver and Le Mans 24 Hours winner McNish was in his first weekend as a Team Principal, heading up Audi's Formula E involvement as a full works team. "That we had a strong race performance on both days is a positive," said Head of Audi Motorsport Dieter Gass. "But it goes without saying that we had a somewhat different idea of Sunday night." Rosenqvist's victory was the second of his Formula E career. The Mahindra driver had spun out of the lead from pole at the first corner but recovered to second place after Mortara then spun his Venturi car with less than three laps left. New Zealand's Mitch Evans was promoted to third to give Jaguar their first podium finish in the all-electric series they joined last year.—Reuters

## Geisenberger wins her third World Cup race of the season

**ALTENBERG:** Natalie Geisenberger's third win of the season led a German medal sweep at a World Cup women's luge race yesterday. Geisenberger set a track record in her second run of the two-run competition to clinch the win. Tatjana Huefner was second, Dajana Eitberger was third, and they were the only women who finished within a half-second of Geisenberger.

Geisenberger led Huefner by the slimmest of margins after the first heat, 0.002 seconds. But a flawless second run kept Geisenberger in the top spot, and she finished 0.157 seconds ahead of Huefner in 1 minute, 44.241 seconds. In the overall standings, Geisenberger has now opened up a 70-point lead over Huefner. Geisenberger is bidding for her sixth consecutive World Cup title: she's one of three women with five crowns, joined by Huefner and fellow German star Silke Kraushaar. Canada's Alex Gough was the top North American finisher, getting fourth. For the U.S., Summer Britcher was seventh, Erin Hamlin ninth and Emily Sweeney 11th. Geisenberger got her second medal of the day and 107th of her World Cup career later Sunday in the team relay, when Germany set another track record on the way to the gold.—AP

## Shiffrin bags first downhill win

**LAKE LOUISE:** Mikaela Shiffrin bagged the first downhill win of her career here Saturday—but said she remains unlikely to chase a gold medal in the discipline at next year's Olympics. The 22-year-old American star—the undisputed queen of slalom and reigning champion in the overall World Cup rankings—won after clocking 1min 27.55sec.

Germany's Viktoria Rebensburg was second with a time of 1:27.68, while Switzerland's Michelle Gisin was third in 1:27.72. Shiffrin's compatriot Lindsey Vonn, who had suffered a heavy fall in Friday's first race, finished tied for 12th in 1:28.48. The day belonged to Shiffrin, who was competing in only the fourth World Cup downhill race of a career which until now has focused on the technical disciplines of slalom and giant slalom.

Shiffrin had signalled she was ready to make a strong challenge in the downhill this weekend after clinching her first podium with a third place on Friday. However, the American said she didn't expect her success this weekend to change her focus at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, in February, where she is likely to skip the downhill.

"It's not a 100% no, but skiing in five events is a probably a little bit ambitious," she said. "My priority is still slalom and GS, then combined, then super-G, then downhill ... long story short, probably no."

The race was delayed twice by power outages that knocked out the resort's ski-lifts. That forced competitors to be hauled to the top of the run via a snow tractor and prompted officials to shorten the course—something Shiffrin acknowledged worked to her benefit.

"Shortening the distance was definitely an advantage toward me, because on the top section I am not as good there, but from where we started, it's fairly techni-

## Cotto bows out of boxing with loss to Ali

**NEW YORK:** Puerto Rico's Miguel Cotto goes out a warrior, but not a winner, after dropping a unanimous 12-round decision Saturday to Sadam Ali in a world title fight he vowed would be his last. Before adoring fans at Madison Square Garden, the 37-year-old Cotto just didn't have enough against his 29-year-old opponent. Ali seized the World Boxing Organization light middleweight world title the Puerto Rican won in August with an undisputed decision over Japan's Yoshihiro Kamegai.

After a back-and-forth battle that saw both fighters hurt, Ali got the nod from all three judges by scores of 115-113, 115-113 and 116-112. Ali rocked Cotto with a right in the second, but the Puerto Rican veteran held on and gained the upper hand in the middle rounds, doing damage with his left hook and catching Ali with a punishing right to the head in the sixth. "I had him hurt here and there," Ali said. "But I didn't want to get over myself and get caught with a shot. He has tremendous power." Cotto continued to apply pressure in the seventh, but said that "something happened" to his left biceps in the round.

"I don't want to make excuses," he said. "Sadam won the fight." As the younger fighter's speed and stamina began to tell, Cotto took some hard shots in the eighth. After a close ninth, Ali was in control in the 10th. "I knew I had to do something, or he would have dug in," said Ali, who improved to 26-1 with 14 knockouts. "By the 11th round, I thought the fight was close." Cotto fell to 41-6 with 33 wins inside the distance. A six-time world champion in four different weight divisions, Cotto vowed he would stick by his decision to retire. "It is," he said, when asked if the bout had been his



LAKE LOUISE: Mikaela Shiffrin of the US celebrates her first place finish during the FIS Ski World Cup Women's Downhill in Lake Louise, Alberta. — AFP

cal. I felt very good about that yesterday," she said. "I took even more risks today, it paid off."

"I had also very good light and for some of the girls it was pretty dark," Shiffrin added. "I definitely know I was lucky today and yesterday, but I skied well. I took some risks, it was really fun." But Shiffrin said she doesn't know just how many more downhills she'll contest this season as she aims to maintain her dominance in the technical events. "Lake Louise was a very good opportunity, because I know the track," she said. While

she'll "play it by ear" in considering more downhills her immediate plan was clear. "I have to get back to technical training," she said after notching the 33rd World Cup win of her career and the second of the season following her triumph at the Killington slalom last weekend. Shiffrin, the three-time world champion and 2014 Olympic slalom champion now leads the overall World Cup standings with 465 points following her fifth podium in six races. She leads Rebensburg by 149 points in the standings. — AFP



NEW YORK: Sadaam Ali punches Miguel Cotto during their Junior Middleweight bout at Madison Square Garden in New York City. — AFP

last. "I want to be happy in my home and enjoy my family." It was Cotto's 10th fight at the famed Manhattan arena. His only prior defeat there was to American Austin Trout in 2012. The rapturous welcome he received upon entering the ring was repeated as he departed in defeat. "Thank you for supporting me at every opportunity," Cotto told his fans. "I'm so glad to call Madison Square Garden my home." In his 17-year pro career, Cotto defeated a host of marquee fighters,

including Zab Judah, Paulie Malignaggi, Shane Mosley, Antonio Margarito and Ricardo Mayorga.

He was also beaten once by Margarito, while his other defeats came at the hands of American Floyd Mayweather, Filipino legend Manny Pacquiao and Saul "Canelo" Alvarez. "I want to thank Team Cotto for giving me this opportunity," Ali said. "They really didn't have to. They could have taken an easier fight." — AFP



Sports

# Marsh, Paine repay Australia's selectors with key partnership

Paine's return at the age of 32 was even more extraordinary

**ADELAIDE:** Shaun Marsh and Tim Paine repaid the faith shown in them by Australia's selectors and silenced their critics at least for a while as they combined for a key partnership in the second Ashes Test against England yesterday.

The duo's recall for the first two Tests of the series was greeted with reactions ranging from bemusement to outright abuse, with former Test spinner Stuart MacGill dubbing the selectors "morons masquerading as mentors".

The selection panel, however, may be forgiven for feeling a sense of vindication after Marsh scored an unbeaten 126, while Paine chipped in with a timely 57. "I haven't thought about all the incidental noise about my selection for the team," said Marsh.

"Six months ago I wasn't sure whether I'd be back here. I'd always dreamt of getting back in. I've just tried to come in and feel nice and relaxed. I've felt good about my game the last three or four months."

Marsh and Paine came together with the match delicately balanced with Australia on 209 for five in their first innings on the second day at Adelaide Oval. They combined for an 85-run partnership that turned the match, perhaps decisively, in the home team's favour.

They were aided by a little luck and some astute decision-making—both players were given out leg before wicket to James Anderson before having the decision overturned on review. Marsh was more measured than Paine for much of the day before cutting loose and notching up his fifth Test century, and his first against England.

The left-hander scored a century on debut in 2011 but later missed two years while overcoming a serious back injury. He had averaged a touch over 36 in his previous 24 tests,



**ADELAIDE:** Australia's Shaun Marsh, center, pulls the ball against England during the second day of their Ashes test match in Adelaide, yesterday. — AP

a mundane return for a specialist batsman.

Paine's return at the age of 32 was even more extraordinary. The wicketkeeper-batsman from Tasmania had suffered a broken right index finger in 2010 that required multiple surgeries and helped keep him out of the test team for seven years.

He could not even make his state team at the start of this season, but looked every bit a

Test player yesterday despite twice being struck on the same finger.

Paine received treatment during a drinks break but carried on batting and duly took his place behind the stumps when Australia took to the field to bowl. "He was brilliant today, it was hard work this morning with the new ball," said Marsh. "He got hit on the finger but he's fine." — Reuters



## SCOREBOARD

**ADELAIDE, Australia:** Scoreboard at the close on day two in the second Ashes Test between Australia and England in Adelaide yesterday:

Australia first innings (overnight 209-4)		England first innings	
C. Bancroft run out (Woakes)	10	A. Cook not out	11
D. Warner c Bairstow b Woakes	47	M. Stoneman lbw b Starc	18
U. Khawaja c Vince b Anderson	53	J. Vince not out	0
S. Smith b Overton	40	Extras 0	
P. Handscomb lbw b Broad	36	Total (1 wicket: 9.1 overs)	29
S. Marsh not out	126	Fall of wickets: 1-29 (Stoneman)	
T. Paine c Moeen b Overton	57	To bat: J. Root, D. Malan, M. Ali, J. Bairstow, C. Woakes, S. Broad, C. Overton, J. Anderson.	
M. Starc c Anderson b Broad	6	Bowling: Starc 5-1-13-1, Hazlewood 4-2-16-0, Cummins 0.1-0-0-0.	
P. Cummins c Malan b Overton	44		
N. Lyon not out	10		
Extras (b6, lb6, w1)	13		
Total (8 wickets dec: 149 overs)	442		
Fall of wickets: 1-33 (Bancroft), 2-86 (Warner), 3-139 (Khawaja), 4-161 (Smith), 5-209 (Handscomb), 6-294 (Paine), 7-311 (Starc), 8-410 (Cummins)			

## Brathwaite leads West Indies battle for survival

**WELLINGTON:** Kraigg Brathwaite was eyeing his seventh century as he led the West Indies survival effort after Tom Blundell's debut ton put New Zealand in a seemingly unbeatable position in the first Test in Wellington yesterday.

Brathwaite was unbeaten on 79 as the tourists reached 214 for two at stumps on day three. Shai Hope was not out 21. After trailing by 386 on the first innings, they still requiring a further 172 runs to make New Zealand bat again. The target appeared monumental, but Brathwaite has the memory of the West Indies' last tour of New Zealand to know it is not impossible. In the first Test on the 2013 tour they were 396 in arrears when forced to follow on. A Marlon Samuels double century took them to 507 in their second innings on the fifth day and New Zealand ran out of time chasing a target of 112 to win. Brathwaite, who was on that tour but not required for that Test, played confidently against the New Zealand attack. He featured in a 72-run partnership with Kieran Powell (40) for the first wicket, a 94-run stand with Shimron Hetmyer (66) for the second wicket and has added a further 48 with Hope.

### EXPENSIVE WAGNER

Hetmyer, only 20 and playing just

his fourth Test, easily bettered his previous best 25 against Pakistan seven months ago. Matt Henry, who toiled without success in the West Indies first innings, took both wickets while first innings destroyer Neil Wagner proved expensive with none for 89.

After 19 wickets fell on the first two days of the Test, there were only two on day three as the wicket browned off from the green cover on day one when the West Indies were rolled for 134 in their first innings. However there were signs in the final hour that the wicket was starting to take turn which would put more focus on spinners for the remainder of the game. New Zealand resumed the day at 447-9 and added 73 runs before declaring shortly before lunch with Blundell celebrating his call up to the New Zealand Test team with an unbeaten 107 on debut.

He took 10 off the opening over of the day by Miguel Cummins and continued to pile on the pressure for another 21.4 overs while Boult staunchly defied his tail-end status to hold up the other end.

The number 11 batsman faced 60 balls to be not out 18, although he was dropped when Blundell was on 99. When Blundell was on 82, the West Indies unsuccessfully reviewed a rejected lbw appeal after a Jason Holder ball flicked off the pads for four byes. But other than that the 27-year-old's 180-ball innings, which included 13 fours and one six, was near chanceless. He faced nine scoreless deliveries on 99 before an inside edge off Roston Chase went past square leg for two and he then marked the milestone with a six two balls later before New Zealand declared. — AFP

## Sri Lanka reaches 131-3 vs India amid pollution drama

**NEW DELHI:** Angelo Mathews and Dinesh Chandimal put on 56 runs for the fourth wicket as Sri Lanka reached 131-3 at stumps on day two of the third Test against India in Delhi yesterday. Earlier, India declared its first innings on 536-7 with Virat Kohli (243) scoring his sixth double hundred. The Sri Lankan players had earlier complained about the air pollution in Delhi with play stopping three times in the middle session before the Indian declaration.

At stumps, Mathews was batting on 57 while Chandimal was unbeaten on 25. The visitors trail by another 405 runs. After tea, Sri Lanka needed to rebuild from 18-2. Dilruwan Perera (42) played an important hand as he stabilized the innings. He put on 61 runs with Mathews for the fourth wicket.

Mathews was lucky to survive at the wicket when he was given two lives immediately after the tea break. First, Shikhar Dhawan dropped him when on 4 not out at second slip off Mohammed Shami (1-30). Then, Virat Kohli dropped him while he was on 6 not out at second slip off Ishant Sharma (1-44) this time. Ravindra Jadeja (1-24) got the breakthrough as he trapped Perera lbw via DRS. Mathews and Chandimal then came together and batted out the session before bad light stopped play on an eventful day. Mathews reached his 29th test half-century off 72 balls.

Earlier, Sri Lankan fielders protested the level of air pollution prevalent in Delhi, forcing three stoppages of play. Between these stoppages Virat Kohli was dismissed for his highest test score of 243. Only six overs were possible after lunch before Sri Lanka pacer Lahiru Gamage (2-95) asked for medical attention owing to breathlessness. Play was halted for 20 minutes. Four overs later, Suranga Lakmal (0-80) also walked off with the same complaint. Play was halted again for 11 minutes as Sri Lankan skipper Dinesh Chandimal was involved in an animated discussion with umpires Nigel Llong and Joel Wilson.

Support staff from both teams walked on to the field at different times and took the opportunity to discuss the situation with the umpires. For Sri Lanka, team manager Asanka Gurusinha and coach Nic Pothas came onto the field while Indian coach Ravi Shastri also joined in.

"In most conditions you want to play cricket. We just wanted some clarity on condition and safety of players. Lakmal and Gamage were vomiting in dressing room. The umpires were very clear about playing on and they did a good job," said Sri Lankan coach Nic Pothas after the day's play.

"This was an abnormal situation. They did not have any prior medical conditions and yesterday evening too they were fine. The captain wanted to speak to me because at one stage we only had ten players on the



**NEW DELHI:** Indian batsman and team captain Virat Kohli plays a shot during the second day of the third Test cricket match between India and Sri Lanka at the Feroz Shah Kotla Cricket Stadium in New Delhi. — AFP

## SCOREBOARD

**NEW DELHI:** Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the third and final Test between India and Sri Lanka in New Delhi yesterday:

India 1st innings (overnight 371-4)		Sri Lanka 1st innings	
M. Vijay st Dickwella b Sandakan	155	D. Karunaratne c Saha b Shami	0
S. Dhawan c Lakmal b Perera	23	D. Perera lbw b Jadeja	42
C. Pujara c Samarawickrama b Gamage	23	D. de Silva lbw b I. Sharma	1
V. Kohli lbw b Sandakan	243	A. Mathews not out	57
A. Rahane st Dickwella b Sandakan	1	D. Chandimal not out	25
R. Sharma c Dickwella b Sandakan	65	Extras (nb1, penalty 5)	6
R. Ashwin c Perera b Gamage	4	Total (3 wickets: 44.3 overs)	131
W. Saha not out	9	Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Karunaratne), 2-14 (De Silva), 3-75 (Perera)	
R. Jadeja not out	5	Still to bat: S. Samarawickrama, R. Silva, N. Dickwella, S. Lakmal, L. Sandakan, L. Gamage	
Extras (lb1, nb7)	8	Bowling: Shami 11-3-30-1 (nb1), Sharma 10-4-44-1, Perera 31.1-0-145-1, Sandakan 33.5-1-167-4 (nb7), Jadeja 14.3-6-24-1, Ashwin 9-3-28-0.	
Total (7 wickets dec: 127.5 overs)	536		
Fall of wickets: 1-42 (Dhawan), 2-78 (Pujara), 3-361 (Vijay), 4-365 (Rahane), 5-500 (Sharma), 6-519 (Ashwin), 7-523 (Kohli)			
Did not bat: I. Sharma, M. Shami			
Bowling: Lakmal 21.2-2-80-0, Gamage 25.3-7-95-2, Perera 31.1-0-145-1, Sandakan 33.5-1-167-4 (nb7),			

field. The umpires were very clear but there aren't many rules written on pollution," he added.

Indian bowling coach Bharat Arun disagreed with the assessment. "Sri Lankan players cannot protest about stoppage of play. The umpires alone have that power. (Coach) Ravi Shastri went on to the field to tell the umpires that there is no reason to stop the game and to please carry on," he said.

In the morning session, Kohli and Rohit Sharma (65) extended their fifth wicket partnership to 135 runs. After reaching 213 in Nagpur, Kohli scored his second consecutive double hundred off 238 balls. In doing so, he overtook Brian Lara as the Test skipper with the most double hundreds to his name. The former West Indies' cricketer scored five as

captain. At the other end, Sharma scored his 8th Test half-century off 88 balls but was caught behind just before lunch for 65. India reached 500 in the 118th over. After the pollution protest disruptions, Sri Lanka got the big dismissal of Kohli, who was trapped lbw by Lakshan Sandakan (4-167). He went past his previous best of 235 against England at Mumbai last November. Overall, he faced 287 balls and hit 25 fours over 430 minutes.

"Sri Lanka's protests perhaps did break Kohli's rhythm. He batted for nearly two days and didn't need to wear any masks. We are focused on winning this game," said Arun. India leads the three-match series 1-0 after winning in Nagpur by an innings and 239 runs. The first Test in Kolkata was drawn. — AP

## SCOREBOARD

**WELLINGTON:** Scoreboard at stumps on day three of the first Test between New Zealand and the West Indies in Wellington yesterday:

West Indies first innings 134 (K. Powell 42; Wagner 7-39)		New Zealand first innings (overnight 447-9)	
T. Latham c Roach b Holder	37	J. Latham c Roach b Holder	37
J. Raval c Dowrich b Roach	42	J. Raval c Dowrich b Roach	42
K. Williamson c Hope b Roach	1	K. Williamson c Hope b Roach	1
R. Taylor lbw Roach	93	R. Taylor lbw Roach	93
H. Nicholls c Gabriel b Cummins	67	H. Nicholls c Gabriel b Cummins	67
M. Santner b Cummins	17	M. Santner b Cummins	17
C. de Grandhomme c Powell b Chase	105	C. de Grandhomme c Powell b Chase	105
T. Blundell not out	107	T. Blundell not out	107
N. Wagner b Chase	3	N. Wagner b Chase	3
M. Henry c Dowrich b Gabriel	4	M. Henry c Dowrich b Gabriel	4
T. Boult not out	18	T. Boult not out	18
Extras (b4, lb6, w1 nb15)	26	Extras (b4, lb6, w1 nb15)	26
Total (9 wickets: 148.4 overs)	520	Total (9 wickets: 148.4 overs)	520
Fall of wickets: 1-65 (Latham), 2-68 (Williamson), 3-109 (Raval), 4-236 (Taylor), 5-		Fall of wickets: 1-65 (Latham), 2-68 (Williamson), 3-109 (Raval), 4-236 (Taylor), 5-	
272 (Nicholls), 6-281 (Santner), 7-429 (de Grandhomme), 8-437 (Wagner), 9-442 (Henry)		272 (Nicholls), 6-281 (Santner), 7-429 (de Grandhomme), 8-437 (Wagner), 9-442 (Henry)	
Bowling: Gabriel 29-4-90-1 (9nb), Roach 22-6-85-3, Cummins 27-7-92-2 (4nb), Holder 34-8-102-1 (1w, 2nb), Chase 28-4-95-2, Brathwaite 8.4-0-46-0.		Bowling: Gabriel 29-4-90-1 (9nb), Roach 22-6-85-3, Cummins 27-7-92-2 (4nb), Holder 34-8-102-1 (1w, 2nb), Chase 28-4-95-2, Brathwaite 8.4-0-46-0.	
<b>West Indies second innings</b>		<b>West Indies second innings</b>	
K. Brathwaite not out	79	K. Brathwaite not out	79
K. Powell c and b Henry	40	K. Powell c and b Henry	40
S. Hetmyer c Raval b Henry	66	S. Hetmyer c Raval b Henry	66
S. Hope not out	21	S. Hope not out	21
Extras: (lb3, w5)	8	Extras: (lb3, w5)	8
Total: (for 2 wickets: 66 overs)	214	Total: (for 2 wickets: 66 overs)	214
Fall of wickets: 1-72 (Powell), 2-166 (Hetmyer)		Fall of wickets: 1-72 (Powell), 2-166 (Hetmyer)	
Bowling: Boult 15-3-47-0, Henry 15-4-33-2, de Grandhomme 10-2-24-0, Wagner 15-0-89-0 (1w), Santner 10-3-18-0, Williamson 1-1-0-0-0.		Bowling: Boult 15-3-47-0, Henry 15-4-33-2, de Grandhomme 10-2-24-0, Wagner 15-0-89-0 (1w), Santner 10-3-18-0, Williamson 1-1-0-0-0.	



## Sports

# Tyler Johnson has two goals, Lightning beat Sharks 5-2

## Oilers take big lead, hold on for 7-5 win over Flames

**TAMPA:** Tyler Johnson scored twice in the third period to snap a 15-game drought and the Tampa Bay Lightning beat the San Jose Sharks 5-2 Saturday night. Nikita Kucherov had two goals and Cory Conacher also scored for the Lightning, who had lost four of six. Andrei Vasilevskiy made 25 saves. Kucherov had one of Tampa Bay's four goals, his 19th, in the third. He entered without a goal over his previous six games. After Johnson had an in-close backhand power-play goal 1:39 into the third, the center made it 3-1 at 5:49 on a rebound goal after Martin Jones made a nifty save during Victor Hedman's breakaway. Barclay Goodrow and Justin Braun had goals for San Jose, and Jones stopped 38 shots in his return after missing two games with a lower-body injury.

### CANADIENS 10, RED WINGS 1

Paul Byron got his first career hat trick, Alex Galchenyuk had a career-best four assists and Montreal beat slumping Detroit for its fifth straight win. Nicolas Deslauriers, Jacob de la Rose and Daniel Carr each scored for the first time this season, and Charles Hudon, Brendan Gallagher, Jordie Benn and Andrew Shaw also scored. Montreal was coming off a 6-3 win against Detroit on Thursday night. Carey Price made 22 saves and is 5-0 since returning last week from a 10-game absence for a lower-body injury. Luke Glendening scored for the Red Wings, who have lost seven straight, their longest skid since November of 2013.

### OILERS 7, FLAMES 5

Patrick Maroon scored early in the third period to give Edmonton a five-goal lead, and the Oilers held on to beat Calgary. Jesse Puljujarvi had two goals in the first period, and Juhar Khaira, Mark Letestu, Milan Lucic and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins also scored for Edmonton, which led 6-1 after Maroon's goal 1:29 into the third. Sam Bennett scored twice, and Micheal Ferland and Johnny Gaudreau once each to pull the Flames to 6-5 with 7:40 remaining. Mikael Frolik had a short-handed goal in the first for Calgary. Nugent-Hopkins sealed the Oilers' sixth straight win against the Flames with just more than a minute left. Laurent Brossoit made 29 saves for Edmonton. Mike Smith stopped 22 shots for Calgary through two periods before giving way to David Rittich, who stopped four of the six shots he faced in the third.

### HURRICANES 3, PANTHERS 2, OT

Noah Hanifin scored with 2 seconds left in overtime, and Carolina beat Florida in a brawl-filled contest. Elias Lindholm and Jeff Skinner scored Carolina's regulation goals, while Nick Bjugstad and Aleksander Barkov tallied for Florida. Carolina goalie Cam Ward had 37 saves, while James Reimer stopped 44. Lindholm set up the winner by intercepting Aaron Ekblad's slow clear attempt and passing to Hanifin as he skated through the slot. Reimer stopped Hanifin's initial shot but couldn't get to the rebound.

### CAPITALS 4, BLUE JACKETS 3

Alex Ovechkin scored his 218th power-play goal and Washington continued its dominance of Sergei Bobrovsky in a victory over Metropolitan Division-leading Columbus. Brett Connolly, Alex Chiasson and Evgeny Kuznetsov also scored for the Capitals, who have won five of seven. Braden Holtby stopped 32 of 35 shots, including

16 in the third period of a matchup between the past two Vezina Trophy-winning goaltenders. Bobrovsky allowed four goals on 23 shots, losing for the 12th time in 18 games against Washington. Artemi Panarin, Matt Calvert and Zach Werenski scored for the Blue Jackets, who looked worn down toward the end of the second half of back-to-back games but made it interesting late.

### WILD 2, BLUES 1, OT

Matt Dumba scored 39 seconds into overtime to give Minnesota a victory over St. Louis. Dumba started the winning rush by picking up a loose puck in his own end. After entering the defensive zone, he fed the puck across the slot to Charlie Coyle, who feathered a return pass that Dumba chipped past goalie Jake Allen for his second goal this season. Allen made 24 saves for St. Louis, while Minnesota's Devan Dubnyk stopped 41 of 42 shots. Former Wild head coach Mike Yeo brought his Blues back to Minnesota for the first time since St. Louis eliminated the Wild in five games in the first round of the playoffs last spring. The Blues beat the Wild 6-3 a week ago in their first meeting this season in St. Louis.

### PREDATORS 3, DUCKS 2, SO

Kevin Fiala and Kyle Turris scored in the shootout to lead Nashville over Anaheim. Adam Henrique got his first goal since being traded to Anaheim on Thursday, and Cam Fowler also scored for the Ducks. Fiala and Calle Jarnkrok scored for Nashville. Nashville's Pekka Rinne and Anaheim's Ryan Miller each made 33 saves.

### STARS 3, BLACKHAWKS 2, SO

Alexander Radulov and Tyler Seguin scored in the shootout to lift Dallas over Chicago. Radulov, who also scored the game's first goal, and Seguin both skated across Anton Forsberg and put in short shots from the left side. Ben Bishop stopped shots by Jonathan Toews and Patrick Kane with his pads. Bishop made 33 saves. Radek Faksa scored his fifth goal in the last three games for Dallas, which has won four in a row. Cody Franson and Brandon Saad each had a goal for Chicago.

### PENGUINS 5, SABRES 1

Evgeni Malkin and Sidney Crosby had a goal and an assist apiece, and Pittsburgh won its season-best fourth straight game. Phil Kessel kept pace with Crosby for the team lead with his 12th goal. Patric Hornqvist and Carl Hagelin also scored for the Penguins, who are 14-0-1 in their last 15 games against the Sabres, including an eight-game home winning streak. Jason Pominville scored his seventh of the season and the Sabres' first goal since Nov. 24 against Edmonton. The Sabres had been shut out in their previous three games.

### BRUINS 3, FLYERS 0

Tuukka Rask made 28 saves to help Boston beat Philadelphia, sending the Flyers to a club record-tying 10th straight loss. Brad Marchand and David Pastrnak each had a goal and an assist for the Bruins, who have won six of seven. Ryan Spooner also scored. Philadelphia was shut out for the third time during its slide and sixth time this season. It's the first 10-game losing streak for the franchise since Feb. 6-23, 2008. Wayne Simmonds tried to get the Flyers going by winning a first-period fight with



**MONTREAL:** Charles Hudon #54 of the Montreal Canadiens skates against Tomas Tatar #21 of the Detroit Red Wings during the NHL game at the Bell Centre in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The Montreal Canadiens defeated the Detroit Red Wings 10-1. — AFP

## NHL results/standings

Edmonton 7, Calgary 5; Dallas 3, Chicago 2 (SO); Arizona 5, New Jersey 0; Nashville 3, Anaheim 2 (SO); Carolina 3, Florida 2 (OT); Vancouver 2, Toronto 1; Montreal 10, Detroit 1; Tampa Bay 5, San Jose 2; Pittsburgh 5, Buffalo 1; Washington 4, Columbus 3; Minnesota 2, St. Louis 1 (OT); Boston 3, Philadelphia 0.

Western Conference						Eastern Conference						
Central Division			Pacific Division			Atlantic Division			Metropolitan Division			
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	
Winnipeg	16	6	4	89	71	36	Tampa Bay	18	6	2	95	67
St. Louis	17	8	2	88	72	36	Toronto	17	10	1	99	84
Nashville	16	7	3	82	75	35	Montreal	13	12	3	78	86
Dallas	15	10	1	77	74	31	Boston	12	8	4	66	68
Chicago	12	9	5	81	70	29	Detroit	10	12	5	74	90
Minnesota	13	10	3	78	77	29	Ottawa	9	9	6	74	81
Colorado	12	10	2	77	75	26	Florida	10	13	3	75	88
Los Angeles	16	8	3	82	60	35	Buffalo	6	17	4	56	94
Las Vegas	15	9	1	87	80	31	Columbus	17	9	1	79	66
San Jose	14	9	2	65	57	30	New Jersey	15	7	4	80	80
Vancouver	13	10	4	75	77	30	Pittsburgh	15	10	3	83	91
Calgary	14	11	1	78	83	29	NY Islanders	15	8	2	94	82
Anaheim	11	11	5	72	82	27	Washington	15	11	1	80	83
Edmonton	11	14	2	78	92	24	NY Rangers	14	10	2	87	78
Arizona	7	18	4	71	101	18	Carolina	11	9	5	72	77
							Philadelphia	8	11	7	70	81

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).

Kevan Miller, but it didn't work. The Bruins jumped in front on Spooner's first goal of the season 14:30 into the game, and then added two more in the second.

### COYOTES 5, DEVILS 0

Scott Wedgewood stopped 27 shots for his first shutout of the season and second of his career, leading Arizona over New Jersey. Derek Stepan had a goal and an assist, and Jason Demers, Jordan Martinook, Alex Goligoski and Dylan Strome also scored for Arizona, which snapped a three-game losing streak and won at

home in regulation for the first time this season. Keith Kinkaid finished with 22 saves for New Jersey, which came in with the NHL's best road record at 9-2-2.

### CANUCKS 2, MAPLE LEAFS 1

Jacob Markstrom stopped 35 shots to lead Vancouver over Toronto. Markus Granlund and Alexander Edler scored for the Canucks, who were coming off a 3-2-1 trip. James van Riemsdyk scored for Toronto, and Frederik Andersen finished with 24 saves. The Maple Leafs lost for just the fourth time in 13 games (9-3-1). — AP

## Smith wins Australian PGA in play-off

**GOLD COAST:** Cameron Smith claimed the Australian PGA championship when he beat fellow Australian Jordan Zunic on the second play-off hole on Queensland's Gold Coast yesterday. Smith and Zunic finished the tournament locked at 18 under par 270 on Royal Pines Resort course.

Smith started the day three shots behind Zunic but fired his fourth consecutive sub-70 round with a four-under 68 to peg back the overnight leader. "I tried to stay aggressive all day," Smith said. "With Jordan's lead that he had, I thought that I had to stay aggressive. I knew he was playing well."

The 24-year-old Smith grew up in nearby Brisbane and is considered the rising star of Australian golf. He grew up watching fellow Queenslanders Adam Scott and Jason Day. "Jason was just kind of coming out of junior golf in Queensland as I was going into it, so I used to go and watch him and stuff like that," he said. "I remember going out with dad and mum watching Adam and those type of guys up there (at the Australian PGA) in Coolool."

"And then it was really one of my goals, I wanted to win one and just being in Queensland makes it a little bit more special." The win was the second of his professional career and follows his success at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans alongside Sweden's Jonas Blixt on the US PGA tour in May.

Zunic was disappointed, particularly after his superb eight-under round of 64 on Saturday. But the 25-year-old from New South Wales could not find the



**GOLD COAST:** Golfer Cameron Smith holds the trophy after winning the Australian PGA Championships at RACV Royal Pines Resort yesterday in Gold Coast, Australia. — AP

same touch as he did on Saturday, his three birdies spoilt by bogeys on the first and 10th holes in a one-under round of 71. "I felt really good, had a good mindset all day," Zunic said. "But I didn't quite hit it as well off the tee today, which didn't give me as many birdie opportunities." Smith scrambled to save par on the first play-off hole then took advantage on the second when Zunic found a fairway bunker. When Zunic's par-saving putt lipped out, Smith was left with a simple three-footer to win the title. The win makes Smith eligible for the European Tour, who co-sanctioned the tournament, but Smith said he had not thought that far ahead. "I didn't even realise that that was what happened," he said. "I didn't even know. I might go over there for a few weeks and maybe do a little playing holiday type thing. I'm not sure."

Adam Bland finished one shot behind Smith and Zunic, three shots clear of Marc Leishman and David Bransdon. Defending champion Harold Varner III was in sixth place on 12-under, while US Masters champion Sergio Garcia faded in the final round with a two-over 74 to finish on six under in a tie for 24th. — AFP

## Holloway beats Aldo again, keeps UFC belt

**DETROIT:** Max Holloway sought to build up his UFC legacy and push Jose Aldo closer to the end of his career. Done and done. Holloway defended his UFC featherweight title by dominating the former champion in a rematch, winning his 12th straight fight with a TKO late in the third round Saturday night.

"He is a hell of a technician, but this is the 'Blessed' era," Holloway said, referring to his nickname. "This is something new." Holloway (19-3) beat Aldo in his native Brazil in June, rallying from a slow start to win with a TKO in the third. The 25-year-old Hawaiian was in control throughout the bout in Detroit, but Aldo (26-4) landed his fair share of punches and kicks as one would expect from one of the greats in mixed martial arts. Holloway's last loss was to Conor McGregor in 2013. McGregor made about \$100 million for boxing Floyd Mayweather Jr. last summer. UFC President Dana White isn't sure if McGregor, the UFC lightweight champion, will ever get in the octagon again, even though he's under contract for four more fights.

"Who knows even if Conor is going to fight again," White said. "I'm rolling like he's not." Frankie Edgar was supposed to fight Holloway but broke an orbital bone a few weeks ago while training. He was asked to fight two weeks earlier than scheduled. Aldo acknowledged he got away from his strength in the previous fight, keeping his feet on the mat instead of kicking them. He went back to kicking in Detroit, but it didn't seem to affect the agile Holloway.

"He kicks very hard, but I think we passed the test," Holloway said. "I took him into deep waters." The 31-year-old Aldo has lost three of his last four fights, including to McGregor nearly two years ago after going nearly a decade without a setback.

### ONE-PUNCH KO

Heavyweight Francis Ngannou knocked out Alistair Overeem (43-16) with a left hook, and as the division's top contender lay on his back motionless, a right fist made sure he was finished for the night.

"That's as impressive of a heavyweight knockout as you'll ever see," White said. Ngannou (11-1) set himself up to get a shot against champion Stipe Miocic, a matchup White said will happen soon, by improving to 6-0 in UFC without a fight going to the judges. "I'm ready for that," said Ngannou, who is from Cameroon. "Ready as ever."

### VIOLENT, AS ADVERTISED

Eddie Alvarez dropped Justin Gaethje in the middle of the octagon by thrusting his right knee into his opponent's chin in the third round for a TKO, ending a lightweight matchup that lived up to the billing of being very violent.

The former champion took his share of blows, leaving him with a jaw so swollen it looked like he had a tennis ball in there, plus wobbly legs. Alvarez (29-5) gave Gaethje (18-1) his first loss, staying upright against the former Northern Colorado All-American wrestler and hitting him with a flurry of punches that drew blood about his right eye to affect his vision. "I don't expect either one of them to be back anytime soon," White said.

### BUSINESSLIKE VICTORY

US Olympic champion Henry Cejudo, who won wrestling gold in 2008, beat Sergio Pettis with a unanimous decision in a flyweight bout. Cejudo (12-2) was in control throughout the bout against Pettis (16-3) by grappling on the ground, drawing boos from fans wanting to see more punching and kicking.

"I feel bad for the fans because I do want to entertain and put on a show," Cejudo said. "I do want to fight (division champion) Demetrious Johnson. I want to say (wrestling) was a safe way out." "I want to be a crowd-pleaser, but Sergio is one of the best strikers in our division," Cejudo said.

### LADIES FIRST

Tecia Torres (10-1) started the main card by



**DETROIT:** Max Holloway celebrates his victory over Jose Aldo of Brazil during UFC 218 at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit, Michigan. — AFP

beating Michelle Waterson (14-6) with a unanimous decision, putting herself closer to a potential opportunity to fight women's strawweight champion Rose Namajunas. — AP



Sports

# Ivan Perisic hat-trick sends Inter Milan top of Serie A

## Inter are now league's only unbeaten team after 15 games

**MILAN:** Ivan Perisic fired unbeaten Inter Milan top of Serie A yesterday with a hat-trick in a 5-0 win over Chievo after Gennaro Gattuso's reign at city rivals AC Milan began with giving lowly Benevento their first ever Serie A point. Croatian Perisic opened the San Siro goal blitz after 23 minutes and added two more in the second half, while Inter captain Mauro Icardi made it 16 for the season seven minutes before the break and defender Milan Skriniar finding the net on the hour mark.

Luciano Spalletti's Inter are now the league's only unbeaten team after 15 games, after Napoli lost 1-0 at home to champions Juventus on Friday. Inter have 39 points and are alone at the top of Serie A for the first time since January 2016, one point ahead of Napoli and two ahead of Juventus, who are chasing their seventh straight league title and host Inter on Saturday. "It's not important who scores the goals, only the team counts, we've waited a long time for first place, now we have to stay, we're going to Turin to win against Juve," said Perisic ahead of next weekend's clash. Despite the absence of key players Roberto Gagliardini, Matias Vecino and Joao Miranda Inter proved deadly efficient against Chievo. Icardi moved top of the goalscoring charts but it was Perisic who stole the show on a night where there were double celebrations for Inter fans as AC Milan let points slip against rock-bottom Benevento.

### GOALKEEPER TURNED GOAL SCORER

Goalkeeper Alberto Brignoli snatched newcomers Benevento's first ever Serie A point deep in stoppage time to spoil Gattuso's debut and spark wild celebrations for the hosts and their fans.

With the home side a goal down after 90 minutes

and pushing ten-man Milan back in search of an equaliser, Brignoli headed home Danilo Cataldi's free-kick five minutes into injury time to end the southern side's record losing run. Benevento had surpassed Manchester United's 12-game losing start, a record established 87 years ago, on November 19, and were stuck on zero points after 14 games coming into the match with Milan. "Someone from the bench told me to go up, there was nothing to lose, I went to jump and I closed my eyes," said Brignoli. "It's a very strong, indescribable feeling," continued the 26-year-old, who joined promoted Benevento on loan this season from Juventus. "I dedicate the goal to all the people who are living a dream that they hoped would be better."

"We have lost so many games undeservedly at the end, even with Juventus, for once after three months of sacrifice by everyone it is nice to be able to celebrate."

Giacomo Bonaventura had opened for Milan after 38 minutes at the Stadio Vigorito, before George Puscas pulled Benevento level five minutes after the break.

Croatian forward Nikola Kalinic got Milan back in front seven minutes later only for Alessio Romagnoli to be sent off for a second bookable offence leaving the visitors a man down for the final 15 minutes. But in the final seconds of the game as Benevento looked set for their 15th straight defeat Brignoli jumped highest after a desperate last free kick to scenes of euphoria among the home crowd.

Former Milan midfielder Gattuso had taken over midweek after predecessor Vincenzo Montella was sacked as the former European giants sit eighth on 21 points, way below the Champions League ambitions of their new Chinese owners. "We have to improve our form and mentality but I've nothing to hold against the



**MILAN:** Inter Milan's Mauro Icardi, left, kicks the ball onto Chievo's Dario Dainelli during the Serie A soccer match between Inter Milan and Chievo Verona at the San Siro stadium in Milan, Italy, yesterday. — AP

players," said Gattuso. "They gave everything when down to ten. We conceded a goal that hurt. "We lost the ball too many times playing out of defence. Trying

to do something new is good, but we knew that despite the defeats, Benevento have been performing much better lately." — AFP

## Valencia fall to first defeat at 10-man Getafe

**MADRID:** Valencia blew a huge chance to move to within two points of Barcelona at the top of La Liga as they slumped to a first defeat of the season, losing 1-0 at Getafe. The visitors' disappointment was also compounded by the fact Getafe played for 65 minutes a man down after Mauro Arambarri was sent off midway through the first half.

However, a Valencia shorn of the creative talents of PSG loanee Goncalo Guedes through injury lacked ideas to break the hosts down and were beaten by Markel Bergara's deflected effort 24 minutes from time.

Barca's failure to win at home in La Liga for the first time in a year on Saturday against Celta Vigo had opened the door for Valencia to continue their unlikely title challenge after finishing 12th in each of the last two seasons. Instead, the Catalans extend their lead at the top to five points with Valencia now just a point ahead of Atletico Madrid in third. Real Madrid are fourth, a further two points back, after they too were held 0-0 at Athletic Bilbao on Saturday.

Two poorly timed challenges from Arambarri early on looked to have gifted Valencia the upper hand. However, the best Los Che could muster before half-time was a trio of Dani Parejo free-kicks that tested Vicente Guaita. The 10 men then missed a great chance to go in front at the start of the second period when Angel Rodriguez fired wide with just Valencia goalkeeper Neto to beat.

Getafe did, though, get a lucky break for the opener when Bergara's powerful effort from 25 yards ricocheted off former Arsenal defender Gabriel Paulista to leave Neto wrong-footed. Once again Valencia's biggest threat came



**GETAFE:** Getafe's Spanish midfielder Markel kicks the ball during the Spanish league football match Getafe CF vs Valencia CF at the Col. Alfonso Perez stadium in Getafe yesterday. — AFP

from a Parejo free-kick that Guaita brilliantly tipped onto the post. And the ex-Valencia keeper denied his former club once more in stoppage time with a smart stop from Carles Soler's piledriver.

On a fine Sunday for La Liga's other two Madrid sides, so often overshadowed by Real and Atletico, Leganes also came from behind to beat Villarreal 3-1. Daniel Raba had given Villarreal the lead at Butarque on the hour mark.

However, the introduction of Moroccan international Nordin Amrabat, who could face Spain at next year's World Cup after the countries were paired together in Friday's draw, swung the game Leganes' way. Amrabat teed up Diego Rico to equalise before another Moroccan Nabil El Zhar put Leganes in front. And Amrabat was the creator once more in stoppage time for Gabriel Pires to complete the scoring. — AFP

## Boateng strike breaks Hertha hearts in Berlin

**BERLIN:** Ghana midfielder Kevin-Prince Boateng hit a superb winning goal 10 minutes from time to seal Eintracht Frankfurt's 2-1 comeback victory at his ex-club Hertha Berlin in the Bundesliga yesterday. In falling snow at Berlin's Olympic Stadium, the 30-year-old Boateng unleashed a superb shot from the edge of the area to leave Hertha goalkeeper Rune Jarstein with no chance.

But the Berlin-born Frankfurt midfielder muted his celebrations having started his career at Hertha. "It feels good to have won, because we have an important game coming up against Bayern Munich," said Boateng with Frankfurt hosting the Bundesliga leaders next Saturday. "Personally, that was perhaps the weakest performance of my career, so I am glad we won." Boateng had to tread carefully in a bad-tempered game after picking up a yellow card with just nine minutes gone, but Frankfurt coach Niko Kovac, who played alongside Boateng for Hertha a decade ago, left him on. "We talked about it during the break, but the coach knows I have enough experience to hold myself back a bit," explained Boateng. The result lifted Frankfurt to eighth, while Hertha are 11th and five points from the relegation places.

It was a poor display from Hertha, who got off to a bright start when Australia striker Mathew Leckie put in a great pass over the Frankfurt defence which Davie Selke fired home on 15 minutes. However, Marius Wolf hauled Frankfurt level by rifling his shot into the roof of the net from a corner on 26 minutes.

Boateng settled the matter on 80 minutes when he hammered a curling shot into the top left-hand corner for his third league goal of the season. The half-brother of Germany star Jerome Boateng has played all 14 Bundesliga games for Eintracht since joining in August after a hurried departure for family reasons from Spanish club Las Palmas. Boateng has played for AC Milan, Portsmouth, Tottenham Hotspur, Hertha and Schalke in a colourful career.

He made the last of his 15 appearances for Ghana at the 2014 World Cup, but left the tournament under a dark cloud after a row with the coach. On Saturday, Bayern went six points clear at the top of the table with a 3-1 win at home to Hanover 96 as striker Robert Lewandowski converted a penalty to leave him with 14 goals in as many league games.

Second-placed RB Leipzig crashed to a 4-0 defeat at Hoffenheim, while former leaders Borussia Dortmund are down to sixth after their 1-1 draw at Bayer Leverkusen left them winless in their last seven games. — AFP

## Irving scores 19 points as Celtics top Suns 116-111

**BOSTON:** Kyrie Irving scored five of his 19 points in the final 1:53 to help stop a Phoenix comeback and allow the Boston Celtics to escape with a 116-111 victory over the Suns on Saturday. Phoenix had cut a late eight-point deficit down to two before Irving calmly drained a three-pointer with 1:53 left to start a crazy finish that saw the home team hold on for the win, despite 38 points from Devin Booker. Booker, who scored 70 the last time he played at TD Garden, 51 in the second half, fouled out Saturday after hitting a three-pointer to bring his team to within three with 17.6 seconds left. The win was the 10th in the last 11 home games for the Celtics, who are 20-2 in their last 22 games overall. T.J. Warren scored 19 points and veteran big man Tyson Chandler delivered a season-high 18 rebounds and 14 points in the loss for Phoenix.

### Mavericks 108, Clippers 82

JJ Barea came off the bench to collect 21 points and 10 assists and spark a second-quarter rally to help lead Dallas to an easy victory over Los Angeles. Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle became the 18th coach-third active-to win at least 700 career games. Barea ignited a 21-4 run when he came off the bench to score eight points and helped stake the Mavs to a 45-21 lead midway through the second quarter. Lou Williams (18 points, six assists) and DeAndre Jordan (14 points, 17 rebounds) led the Clippers, who lost their second straight game.

### Hawks 114, Nets 102

Dennis Schroder scored 24 points to lead Atlanta past Brooklyn. Schroder reached 20 points for the 12th time, and Luke Babbitt hit 7-of-9 shots, including 4-of-6 from three-point range, to score a season-high 20 points. Babbitt led a second unit that produced 56 points. Spencer Dinwiddie led the Nets with 15 points.

### Pelicans 123, Trail Blazers 116

DeMarcus Cousins poured in 38 points as New Orleans topped Portland. E'Twaun Moore added 19 points and Jrue Holiday 17 for the Pelicans, who ended a three-game losing streak. Damian Lillard scored 29 points and CJ McCollum and Meyers Leonard added 17 apiece for the Trail Blazers, who lost their second straight.

### Cavaliers 116, Grizzlies 111

LeBron James scored 34 points, including his team's final 13, in Cleveland's win over Memphis. The Cavaliers have now won 11 consecutive games. James scored 15 overall in the fourth quarter and strengthened his grip on the NBA lead in fourth-quarter scoring. He entered averaging 9.3 points in the fourth quarter, and it was his jumper with five seconds left that finished the Grizzlies. He added 12 assists in 39 minutes.

### 76ers 108, Pistons 103

Joel Embiid and Robert Covington had 25 points apiece as Philadelphia rallied to beat Detroit. Embiid, who had engaged in a war of words with Detroit center Andre Drummond earlier in the day, added 10 rebounds. He made just 7-of-21 shots from the floor, however. Drummond, who fouled out with 2:35 left, finished with 14 points, 11 rebounds and six assists.

### Bucks 109, Kings 104

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 33 points and grabbed 13 rebounds as Milwaukee beat Sacramento for the second time in five days. Khris Middleton scored 25 points and Eric Bledsoe added 19 as the Bucks shot 49.3 percent and hit 6-of-19 three-point attempts. Zach Randolph had 22 points off the bench to lead the Kings, who also got 19 from Buddy Hield and 14 from De'Aaron Fox while shooting 48.1 percent, including 11 for 24 from beyond the arc.

### Nuggets 115, Lakers 100

Jamal Murray scored 28 points, Will Barton had 13 of his 16 points down the stretch, and shorthanded Denver rallied to beat Los Angeles. Trey Lyles had a season-high 18 points and Gary Harris and Kenneth Faried had 13 points apiece. Faried had nine rebounds for Denver, which has won seven straight at home. Brandon Ingram had 20 points, Brook Lopez and Julius Randle had 15 apiece, and Lonzo Ball had nine points, nine rebounds and five assists for the Lakers. — Reuters

### NBA results/standings

New Orleans 123, Portland 116; Denver 115, LA Lakers 100; Milwaukee 109, Sacramento 104; Cleveland 116, Memphis 111; Philadelphia 108, Detroit 103; Atlanta 114, Brooklyn 102; Dallas 108, LA Clippers 82; Boston 116, Phoenix 111.

#### Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	20	4	.833	-
Toronto	14	7	.667	4.5
Philadelphia	13	9	.591	6
NY Knicks	11	10	.524	7.5
Brooklyn	8	14	.364	11

#### Central Division

Cleveland	16	7	.696	-
Detroit	14	8	.636	1.5
Milwaukee	12	9	.571	3
Indiana	12	11	.522	4
Chicago	3	18	.143	12

#### Southeast Division

Washington	12	10	.545	-
Miami	11	11	.500	1
Orlando	9	14	.391	3.5
Charlotte	8	13	.381	3.5
Atlanta	5	17	.227	7

#### Western Conference

##### Northwest Division

Denver	13	9	.591	-
Minnesota	13	10	.565	0.5
Portland	13	10	.565	0.5
Utah	12	11	.522	1.5
Oklahoma City	9	12	.429	3.5

##### Pacific Division

Golden State	17	6	.739	-
LA Clippers	8	13	.381	8
LA Lakers	8	14	.364	8.5
Phoenix	8	16	.333	9.5
Sacramento	7	16	.304	10

##### Southwest Division

Houston	17	4	.810	-
San Antonio	15	7	.682	2.5
New Orleans	12	11	.522	6
Memphis	7	15	.318	10.5
Dallas	6	17	.261	12

**Live**

**Matches on TV**  
(Local Timings)

SPANISH LEAGUE		
Girona v Deportivo Alaves		23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3		
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE		
Crotone v Udinese Calcio		21:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4		
Hellas Verona v Genoa		23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 4		



**12** Cotto bows out of boxing with loss to Ali



**14** Smith wins Australian PGA in play-off



**15** Valencia fall to first defeat at 10-man Getafe



**MANCHESTER:** Manchester City's Spanish midfielder David Silva (R) leaps into the air to strike their second goal during the English Premier League football match between Manchester City and West Ham United at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester. — AFP

## City moves eight points clear at the top

### Record-equalling City savour Silva service

**MANCHESTER:** Manchester City moved eight points clear at the top of the Premier League as David Silva's superb late strike capped a dramatic 2-1 victory over West Ham yesterday.

Pep Guardiola's side maintained their recent habit of finding dramatic, late winning goals, with Silva netting seven minutes from full-time at Eastlands to give City a record-equalling 13th successive Premier League victory. Silva produced his impressive volley after Nicolas Otamendi struck in the second half to cancel out a first ever league goal from Hammers defender Angelo Ogbonna just before the interval.

City have drawn level with Chelsea in 2016-17 and Arsenal in 2001-02 for the most consecutive victories in a single season in Premier League history.

The all-time record for successive victories is Arsenal's 14, achieved between February and August 2002. City also set a club record with a 20th straight win in all competitions, giving them the perfect preparation for next weekend's summit meeting with second-placed Manchester United at Old Trafford.

West Ham are second bottom of the table after failing to win for the eighth consecutive league game.

The visitors, looking for their first win under new manager David Moyes, looked surprisingly untroubled, in the first half at least, and arguably created the better chances of the opening 45 minutes. That was certainly underlined a minute before the interval when Ogbonna headed his side into an unexpected lead that exposed some poor play in City's defence.

Aaron Cresswell exchanged a short corner with Manuel Lanzini and crossed for the Italian, who beat Otamendi to the ball and steered a well-aimed header into the corner. City were stunned but West Ham had enjoyed the better chances of the first half, while surrendering possession to the hosts.

The best of three decent openings fell to Lanzini, in the 38th minute, after a rare mistake by Silva who gifted the ball to the West Ham man in midfield. The attack ended with

City keeper Ederson turning his shot around the post, somewhat unconvincingly, as the visitors coped with City's impressive arsenal of attacking talent.

#### IMMEDIATE IMPROVEMENT

City were curiously off the electrifying pace they have set so far this season. The only moment that really troubled West Ham reserve keeper Adrian—selected because City loanee Joe Hart was unable to play—came from Silva's deflected 25th-minute shot which he did well to tip over his bar. Guardiola had left Vincent Kompany and Fernandinho out of his starting line-up, to avoid either collecting a yellow card which would earn them a suspension and a ban for the upcoming Manchester derby. It had looked a potentially costly decision but, at the interval, the City manager

brought on Gabriel Jesus and saw an immediate improvement. A foul by Declan Rice on Fabian Delph presented Kevin De Bruyne with a free-kick on the edge of the area and his superb curling strike was parried away, equally impressively, by the diving Adrian on 55 minutes. Two minutes later, City were level. Raheem Sterling's deft touch sent Jesus darting to the right-hand by-line from where his low cross was turned in from close range by central defender Otamendi. They could have been in front on 61 minutes when Leroy Sane's crisp shot drew another diving save out of the West Ham keeper.

It was now one-way traffic with Sane's dribbling run and shot bringing yet another acrobatic parry out of Adrian before Sane and De Bruyne both tried shots from the edge of the area.

Soon, Adrian was required to keep out a shot from Jesus with the rebound falling invitingly to Sterling who, uncharacteristically, miskicked from what looked a promising position. Silva struck in the 83rd minute with a brilliant finish, diving to meet De Bruyne's cross at full stretch and steer the ball in from five yards, past the wrong-footed goalkeeper. —AFP



Set club record with a 20th straight win

### Austin leveller rescues Saints

**BOURNEMOUTH:** In-form Charlie Austin rescued Southampton with a second half equaliser in a 1-1 draw at south-coast rivals Bournemouth yesterday. Mauricio Pellegrino's side trailed to Ryan Fraser's goal late in the first half, but Austin nabbed an important point with his third goal in as many games. The result means Bournemouth climb to 14th in the table, five points above the relegation zone, while Southampton move up to 11th. Striker Austin saved a point for the

Saints thanks to an assist from Nathan Redmond just days after the winger was on the receiving end of a bizarre exchange with Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola.

Guardiola was seen shouting at Redmond after the final whistle of City's 2-1 win over Southampton on Wednesday, but the Spaniard and the Saints winger both said the heated exchange was actually complimentary. Redmond might still have been keen to prove a point, particularly after Pellegrino left him out of the starting line-up at Dean Court. Austin's goal came in only his second Premier League start this season, giving Saints encouragement that he can be the solution to their scoring problems.

Virgil van Dijk had an early sight of goal

but headed wide before Saints goalkeeper Fraser Forster made an excellent reaction save at the other end to deny Jermain Defoe. It was a defensive error that prompted the 42nd minute opener. Wesley Hoedt had twice turned his way out of trouble but a third risk proved one too many as Josh King nicked possession before Andrew Surman rolled left to Fraser, who stroked the ball past Forster.

Redmond replaced James Ward-Prowse at half-time on the right of the attacking three and Southampton equalised in the 61st minute. Bournemouth's Lewis Cook dallied on the edge of the area and Oriol Romeu nipped in to pick out Redmond, whose low cross was steered home by Austin. —AFP



**BOURNEMOUTH:** Southampton's Manolo Gabbiadini, centre and Bournemouth's Simon Francis battle for the ball, during the English Premier League soccer match between Bournemouth and Southampton, at the Vitality Stadium, in Bournemouth. — AP



## Business

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2017

**19** US Senate finally approves  
Republicans, tax overhaul**21** Free exclusive desert package  
with every Patrol Safari**22** Xi welcomes countries to ride fast  
train of internet, digital economy

RIYADH: The centerpiece listing of state oil company Saudi Aramco - expected alone to raise up to \$100 billion - is on track to go ahead next year.

# \$300bn Saudi state sell-off moves slowly

## Privatization critical to economy in era of cheap crude

DUBAI/RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's \$300-billion privatization program was billed as the sale of the century when Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman unveiled his plan to great fanfare. Nineteen months later, it is moving at a snail's pace, bankers, investors and analysts familiar with the process say. The main problems they cite are heavy bureaucracy, an inadequate legal framework, frequent changes of priority in government departments and fatigue among investors. Some also blame a wait-and-see approach among many investors due to uncertainty about the fallout from an anti-corruption campaign in which dozens of royal family members, ministers and senior officials were rounded up in early November.

The centerpiece listing of state oil company Saudi Aramco - expected alone to raise up to \$100 billion - is on track to go ahead next year, Prince Mohammed told Reuters in October. However, Riyadh has yet to select any exchange abroad that will handle - along with the Saudi market - what would be the biggest share flotation in history. Sectors where the privatization process has been slow include grains, the postal service and healthcare. "It's going to take longer (than many expected)," a Saudi banker who has worked on transactions told Reuters. "There are headwinds from the shifting of priorities in government and at a micro-level as these are old institutions that have often never kept books and are not up to the rigours of privatization."

The sell-off is a cornerstone of Prince Mohammed's Vision 2030 plan to bring in fresh revenue and diversify the economy - which is recession and blighted by high unemployment - away from energy exports in an era of low oil prices. But the bankers, investors and analysts are expressing concerns including over the lack of a regulatory framework to assure would-be shareholders about how much control foreign companies could gain as a result of the stake sales, including the right to lay off staff.

Vice Minister for Economy and Planning Mohammed

Al-Tuwaijri told Reuters in April that, excluding Aramco, the government aimed to make \$200 billion by putting large parts of the Saudi economy in private hands. The Ministry of Economy and Planning did not immediately reply to a Reuters request for comment.

### Patchy progress

The sell-off, including five percent of Aramco, is intended to improve state finances. The government posted a \$79 billion deficit last year. However, the record is patchy in the four sectors that Tuwaijri had highlighted as priorities for this year: grain silos, sports, electricity generation and water provision. Banks recently submitted bids to advise on the privatisation of Saline Water Conversion Corporation's \$7.2 billion Ras Al-Khair desalination and power plant. But there has been less progress in the other three sectors. Saudi Arabia's deputy electricity minister said in October he aimed for progress in privatizing the power sector in 2018, after "some developments required us to wait". Prospective bidders for the kingdom's state-owned grain mills have complained of an unwieldy sale process and onerous ownership rules. Elsewhere, the Ministry of Health has put on hold its tender seeking financial advisers for the privatization of 55 primary healthcare units in Riyadh, after receiving their bids in April, a financial source familiar with the matter said. It then issued a new tender to seek a technical adviser on the expected costs and demand linked to the privatization, the source said. The Ministry of Health did not



### Sale of the century?

"It makes sense to focus more on putting that corporate DNA, leadership and resources, then think about a complete privatization," said Alswaha.

Uncertainty has surrounded a plan to privatize soccer clubs. Earlier this year Jadwa Investment was appointed to advise on the sale of up to five soccer clubs in the Saudi Professional League, sources told Reuters in February.

The General Sports Authority did not immediately reply to a request for comment. "At one stage it was looking like the bidding process could start as early as 2018 but recent indications perhaps suggest 2019-20 is more likely," said Steven Bainbridge, head of sports law and events manage-

### Expanding perks, activities

Steve King, analyst at Emergent Research, said WeWork's strength is building a sense of community, allowing its members to benefit from the network of co-workers from diverse sectors. WeWork offers a mobile application that enables users to contact other members, and be notified of events ranging from cocktail receptions to manicures. Expanding its mission, WeWork has begun a handful of "co-living" spaces that offer some of the same perks, and recently acquired the online social network Meetup-which keeps members apprised of events ranging from tech networking sessions to sporting events-and the Flatiron School, which provides online and offline classes and training. But WeWork's most visible move came in October with the announcement it would buy the landmark Lord & Taylor store on New York's Fifth Avenue-which will become its new headquarters, with expanded co-working space.

As it ramps up its business, WeWork defies categorization. "They don't want to be a real estate company because real estate's old and boring, whereas they want to be new and hip," King said.



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman

ment at Al Tamimi & Company, who has been fielding interest from potential clients on the process.

Confusion has been created about an airport privatization process after some local media reported that the government intended to privatize 27 of them by the middle of 2018, a target analysts said was unrealistic. But in an emailed reply to questions from Reuters, Faisal Hamad Al-Sugair, Chairman of Saudi Civil Aviation Holding Company, said the goal was for the airports to be "corporatized", or turned into private companies, by that date. Privatization would follow later. "Various challenges have arisen and have been resolved. The deadline of mid-2018 is reachable," he said. — Reuters

While it's not quite a tech company, "they want to be a tech-enabled company that's creating human interaction," according to King. WeWork has risen to the top of a crowded field of co-working rivals, and earlier this year got a \$4.4 billion capital infusion from Japan's SoftBank Vision Fund. "WeWork is disrupting preconceived notions of work styles and opening up myriad opportunities for the next generation of creators around the world by taking a scientific approach that fully utilizes the latest technologies," said SoftBank chairman and CEO Masayoshi Son.

The WeWork model has yet to be tested in a weak economy, and King points out the model carries some risk because WeWork has to buy real estate or sign long-term leases for its space while renting to members on short-term deals. "The risk in the leasing model is that if you face a recession, and you've leased long-term and you're selling short term, they could lose a lot of members but still have to pay the lease," King said. "The real estate risk is that they pay too much and won't be able to fill it." WeWork's head start however could help it be more resilient, the analyst noted. "They always argued that WeWork creates network effect, which is the more members they have, the more valuable they are," King said. —AFP

## WeWork rides lifestyle change to become new economy star

SAN FRANCISCO: Going to the office isn't what it used to be. As more workers shift to on-demand and "gig" employment, the workplace has changed, and no company has capitalized on this more than WeWork. With free-flowing beverage and coffee, the smartly designed offices that have popped up in dozens of cities in some 20 countries have become coveted by small firms and freelancers in technology and other sectors.

WeWork, with a whopping valuation by investors of \$20 billion, has taken the lead in the co-working space and in the process is disrupting the office and real estate mar-

ket. "At WeWork, we want to create a world where people work to make a life, not just a living," says chief executive Adam Neumann, who co-founded the group in 2010 in New York with Miguel McKelvey.

Those who rent desk space or enclosed offices at WeWork are not just clients, they are members of a "community" under the WeWork credo.

Started in New York, WeWork has expanded to some two dozen US cities and around the world in Brazil, Argentina, China, Japan, India, Ireland and Israel, among others, and claims more than 150,000 members.

WeWork supplies an internet connection, cleaning service, a reception desk and more. In San Francisco, the \$400 monthly rent offers a workspace in a shared office, while an enclosed office for several people may cost several thousand dollars. The monthly deals can be particularly attractive to independent workers who don't want to make a long-term commitment. But WeWork also rents to employees of large firms such as IBM where regional offices are less convenient.

WeWork's annual revenues have topped \$1 billion, according to Neumann, amid speculation the group would launch a public share offering.



# AUB wins 'Best Bank for Private Banking Services Award' in Kuwait

## The Banker holds 'Global Private Banking Services Awards 2017'

**KUWAIT:** For the second time in 2017, Ahli United Bank receives a Best Private Banking Award. In October, 2017 AUB Private Banking received the award of the Best Bank for Private Banking Services in Kuwait as part of the "Global Private Banking Services Awards 2017" organized by The Banker magazine in cooperation with the Professional Wealth Management magazine. Affiliated to the Financial Times Group, both magazines grant awards for global private banking services to honor banking institutions that achieve remarkable success in implementing growth strategies, appropriate investment solutions and service levels in the area of private banking services and wealth management according to international standards.

Earlier in May 2017, AUB had won the "Best Bank for Private Banking Services and Wealth Management in Kuwait for 2017" from the prestigious The Banker Middle East magazine, for the second time, having won the prize for the first time in 2014.

Commenting on this award, Medhat Tawfik, AUB's General Manager Private Banking and Wealth Management, said: "We are proud to receive this recognition from globally-distinguished magazines such as The Banker and Professional Wealth Management magazines and our achievements to date. The prize constitutes a clear validation of our unique business model and recognition as a leading bank. I seize this opportunity to emphasize

that private banking services is a field that Ahli United Bank actively seeks to develop in light of the opportunities available in wealth management and financing."

Tawfik added: "This prestigious award reflects the phase of maturity attained by our private banking services platform through which AUB succeeded in developing private banking services that stand out among local and regional competitors, thanks to its determined focus on adopting well-tryed investment strategies and providing unique customer services."



Medhat Tawfik

### Award for the second time in 2017



Needless to say, none of this could have been achieved without the tremendous efforts of our team, highly dedicated, qualified & certified relationship managers with numerous years of experience resulting in a well-seasoned, diversified & competent team."

### 'Day-sell-bloom'

Taking exception to the plaudits would be Yanis Varoufakis, Greece's former finance minister, a left-wing firebrand with whom Dijsselbloem frequently battled over Greece's bailout program. The pair-one be suited and bespectacled, the other shaven-headed and fond of leather jackets and motorcycles-famously shared the tensest of handshakes after one early meeting and reportedly almost came to blows.

But, strongly backed by the powerful German finance minister Wolfgang Schaeuble, who has also recently left office, Dijsselbloem bloomed into a skilled and no-nonsense negotiator.

His first breakthrough came in early 2014, when he put together Europe's banking union, an ambitious project devised to protect taxpayers from forking out public funds in case banks go bankrupt. Against the odds, Dijsselbloem found agreement between different European institutions as well as France and Germany.

But it was the third rescue of Greece in 2015, with an Athens run by radical leftists, that took up much of "Mr Euro's" time.

Despite his sparring with the maverick Varoufakis, Dijsselbloem maintained dialogue with Athens as default loomed, travelling to discuss the issues with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras.

### Dancing and chicken

The Dutch centre-left newspaper De Volkskrant once described him as "a little stuffy and as loyal as a guide dog" who didn't seek the limelight. Dijsselbloem studied agricultural economics in the Netherlands and business in Ireland and early on acquired a reputation as a backroom strategist.

Positioned on the right of the Netherlands' left-of-center Labor party, Dijsselbloem shares his party's pro-European vision, while backing balanced budgets and austerity measures.

This stance would cost him and his party dearly, losing miserably in elections earlier this year.



The top honor from The Banker magazine is a testimony to the success achieved by AUB Private Banking's unique business model that focuses on adopting well-tryed investment strategies and providing unique customer services.

Harsh and Pleasant Treatment  
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ahli united bank

## Saudi privatization plans: At a glance

**DUBAI:** Saudi Arabia has said it aims to raise around \$200 billion in the next several years through privatization programs in 16 sectors ranging from oil to healthcare, education, airports and grain milling. It separately wants to raise another \$100 billion through the sale of a five percent stake in Saudi Aramco. Following is a list of major privatization plans underway.

**SAUDI ARAMCO.** The government has said it plans to sell close to 5 percent of the national oil giant next year through an initial public offering. Initially, officials said the shares would be listed in Riyadh and at least one foreign exchange, but in recent weeks some officials have suggested Riyadh might be the only venue. Officials have said the sale will value Aramco at \$2 trillion or more, though many private analysts estimate a lower range.

**SAUDI POSTAL CORP.** In February, Riyadh invited banks to pitch for an advisory role in the sale of the government-owned postal service, sources said. But since then it is unclear whether any banks have been mandated and Abdullah Alswaha, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, told Reuters last month that Saudi Post would enter a five-year "corporatization phase", which would turn it into a state-run company before a private sector sale.

**SAUDI GRAINS ORGANIZATION.** State-owned Saudi Grains Organization, which handles the kingdom's grains purchases, is preparing to sell off its milling operations by placing them in four specially-formed corporate entities while retaining other functions. The sale had attracted interest from agribusiness giants US Archer Daniels Midland Co and Bunge. But prospective investors have fretted about the ownership limits and structure of the sale process, sources have told Reuters.

**SPORTS.** Saudi Arabian investment bank Jadwa Investment was appointed to advise on the privatization of as many as five soccer clubs in the Saudi Professional League, sources told Reuters in February.

**AIRPORTS.** Faisal Hamad Al-Sugair, Chairman of Saudi Civil Aviation Holding Company, told Reuters it was on track to "corporatize", or turn into private companies, 27 airports by the middle of 2018. Goldman Sachs was hired to manage the sale of a minority stake in Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport, the first major privatization of an airport in the kingdom, Reuters reported in July. In April, Singapore's Changi Airport Group was awarded in April a contract to operate the King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah for up to 20 years.

**SAUDI ARABIAN AIRLINES.** The airline has started the sale of its medical services business in Jeddah, valued at around \$500 million, sources said in May. The sale is on hold or has seen little progress, people familiar with the matter said.

**HEALTHCARE.** One of the first assets to be privatized is one of Saudi Arabia's top hospitals, King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre in Riyadh, an official said previously. The process was in a "very advanced stage". Vice Minister for Economy and Planning Mohammed Al-Tuwajri told Reuters last in April. Also, the Ministry of Health received at least six bids to act as financial adviser for the privatization of 55 primary healthcare centres in Riyadh, sources said earlier this year. — Reuters

## Last tango for Eurogroup chief Dijsselbloem

**BRUSSELS:** Jeroen Dijsselbloem, who steps down as chair of the Eurogroup today, rose from obscurity to become an unflappable dealmaker who helped guide Europe through the worst of the Greek debt crisis.

Only two months after becoming Dutch finance minister in November 2012, Dijsselbloem was thrust into heading the powerful Eurogroup of 19 finance ministers-and headlong into the crisis in Cyprus. In a baptism by fire, the straight-talking Dijsselbloem drew criticism for his handling of the 2013 bailouts, put down mainly to his inexperience in navigating the treacherous waters of a global economy in meltdown.

He was criticized for a bailout that forced the closure of a major Cypriot bank, and then sent markets into a tail-spin when he said the Cyprus plan could serve as a template for future bailouts-an off-the-cuff observation that in the end turned out to be partly true.

A clumsy turn of phrase would become a running motif for Dijsselbloem, who last year drew the fury of southern Europeans with a quip that implied that bailed out countries spent their money on "drinks and women".

Despite the bumps, the curly-haired Dijsselbloem-pronounced "day-sell-bloom"-stoically weathered the storms and ends his tenure respected for his cool and calm approach. The 51-year-old is "serious, patient, and someone who fought hard to win the deep trust of his partners", former French finance minister Michel Spain told AFP. "Despite his usual reserve, he became a true friend," Sapin said.



BRUSSELS: Minister and Eurogroup president Jeroen Dijsselbloem ringing the bell during a Eurogroup meeting at the European Union (EU) headquarters in Brussels. — AFP

Dijsselbloem was born in the southern city of Eindhoven, into a mostly apolitical family. His political awakening came at 15 when he took part, against his parents' will, in a 1983 protest against a Cold War nuclear missile installation.

Father to a teenage son and daughter, Dijsselbloem is an admirer of Miles Davis and of the British comedy series "Monty Python's Flying Circus." In his spare time, he enjoys reading books on economic matters and dancing tango with his wife. Dijsselbloem would also like to spend more time on his other hobby: raising chickens and pigs and working in his garden in the central Dutch city of Wageningen. — AFP

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.714
Indian Rupees	4.670
Pakistani Rupees	2.864
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.967
Nepali Rupees	2.921
Singapore Dollar	225.470
Hongkong Dollar	38.750
Bangladesh Taka	3.579
Philippine Peso	5.974
Thai Baht	9.266

#### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.680
Qatari Riyal	83.097
Omani Riyal	785.733
Bahraini Dinar	803.370
UAE Dirham	82.373

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.000
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.084
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.214
Tunisian Dinar	122.160
Jordanian Dinar	426.630
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.017
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.651

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.350
Euro	362.060
Sterling Pound	404.240

Canadian dollar	238.730
Turkish lira	77.230
Swiss Franc	309.940
Australian Dollar	231.300
US Dollar Buying	301.150

#### GOLD

20 Gram	260.520
10 Gram	133.180
5 Gram	67.430

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.100
Canadian Dollar	238.885
Sterling Pound	408.505
Euro	360.925
Swiss Frank	296.475
Bahrain Dinar	801.800
UAE Dirhams	82.640
Qatari Riyals	83.465
Saudi Riyals	81.420
Jordanian Dinar	427.375
Egyptian Pound	17.104
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.966
Indian Rupees	4.686
Pakistani Rupees	2.864
Bangladesh Taka	3.664
Philippines Peso	6.004
Cyprus pound	17.980
Japanese Yen	3.695
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.934

Malaysian Ringgit	74.765
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.075
Thai Bhat	10.260
Turkish Lira	77.665

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.402513	0.410013
Czech Korune	0.006128	0.018128
Danish Krone	0.044418	0.049418
Euro	0.354686	0.362186
Georgian Lari	0.134710	0.134710
Norwegian Krone	0.032536	0.037736
Romanian Leu	0.064704	0.081554
Russian ruble	0.005176	0.005176
Slovakia	0.009009	0.019009
Slovenian Krona	0.032186	0.037186
Swiss Franc	0.303646	0.314646
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.222235	0.234235
New Zealand Dollar	0.202358	0.211858
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.233443	0.242443
US Dollars	0.298350	0.302770
US Dollars Mint	0.298950	0.302870
<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003295	0.003879

Chinese Yuan	0.044289	0.047789
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036785	0.039535
Indian Rupee	0.004103	0.004744
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002628	0.002808
Korean Won	0.000268	0.000283
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070140	0.076140
Nepalese Rupee	0.003018	0.003188
Pakistan Rupee	0.002644	0.002934
Philippine Peso	0.005865	0.006165
Singapore Dollar	0.219935	0.229935
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001699	0.002279
Taiwan	0.009992	0.010172
Thai Baht	0.008932	0.009482

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.795261	0.803761
Egyptian Pound	0.014491	0.020209
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000185	0.000245
Jordanian Dinar	0.421976	0.430976
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000155	0.000255
Moroccan Dirhams	0.023500	0.047500
Omani Riyal	0.779266	0.784948
Qatar Riyal	0.078786	0.083726
Saudi Riyal	0.079567	0.080867
Syrian Pound	0.001282	0.001502
Tunisian Dinar	0.117538	0.125538
Turkish Lira	0.072374	0.082674
UAE Dirhams	0.080921	0.082621
Yemeni Riyal	0.000983	0.001063



## Business

## NBK Money Markets Report

# US Senate finally approves Republicans' tax overhaul

## US dollar might be poised for appreciation amid senate vote

**KUWAIT:** Last week, the greenback was under pressure after the US Senate suspended voting on the tax bill on Thursday as a key compromise to win a majority collapsed, leaving Republicans scrambling to salvage the legislation. On Saturday, Senate Republicans finally passed their version of the tax bill by a 51-49 vote. Republicans will now move on to reconcile the versions of the House and Senate, starting as soon as today. The party targets to put the legislation for President Donald Trump's signature by the end of the year. Markets have become sensitive to any optimism on the reforms, which may give fresh incentive to the equity bull-run into the final weeks of the year.

On a different note, Jerome Powell, Federal Reserve Chairman Nominee spoke in his confirmation hearing before the Senate Banking Committee that the case for raising interest rates in the upcoming December meeting is firming as the labor market improves without spurring the US economy to overheat.

In the Brexit saga, the breakthrough in Brexit talks that Theresa May has been working to clinch was at risk on Friday as the Northern Irish party that props up her government threatened to bring her down if she agrees to the concessions that Europe is demanding. The EU has set May a deadline today to present a solution to avoid a hard border in Ireland, as well as an improved offer on the divorce bill. Otherwise, according to the EU, there won't be time to orchestrate the breakthrough that both sides seek by year-end that would allow negotiations to move on to the future trading relationship. Nevertheless, Sterling reacted positively to the progress made in the negotiations and closed the week higher.

On the currency front, the dollar had a volatile week with solid economic data lifting the dollar before hopes of tax reform changing due to breakdown in the majority in the Senate. The greenback opened the week at 92.757 and reached a high of 93.505 before closing the week at 92.907. Now, with the tax bill finally passed by the Senate, the greenback would likely come back to the spotlight in the upcoming week with continued.

The Euro started the week with a bearish move towards the lows of 1.1807 as a dollar bull-run was the theme. However, fueled by positive inflation data and progress in the Brexit negotiations the single currency reached a high of 1.1960 and closed the week at 1.1893.

Sterling took the lead, boosted by posi-

tive Brexit news, as UK and EU seemed to have agreed on the Brexit bill and the Irish border. The pair appreciated to reach 1.3549 on the back of solid manufacturing data but was halted by the Northern Irish party's objection to concessions that the EU are demanding. The currency closed the week at 1.3475.

The Japanese yen had a week of continuously losing ground to the dollar as the increased divergence in monetary policy and political concerns rise with North Korea's military activity. The currency opened the week at 111.41 and reached a high of 112.87 on Friday before closing the week at 112.12.

On the commodity front, oil prices remain supported as OPEC and its allies outside the group agreed to maintain production cuts until the end of 2018. Both West Texas and Brent are trading around 2 year highs of \$57.80 and \$63.10 respectively.

### Consumer confidence

Consumer confidence in the US increased for the fifth consecutive month at 129.5, well above the market's expectation of 123.9. The results of the survey showed

### Rates - 03 December, 2017

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	Low	High	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1931	1.1807	1.1960	1.1893	1.1710	1.2095	1.1961
GBP	1.3335	1.3219	1.3549	1.3475	1.3265	1.3655	1.3518
JPY	111.41	110.83	112.87	112.12	110.25	113.90	111.57
CHF	0.9792	0.9733	0.9881	0.9768	0.9560	0.9965	0.9701

slight improvements in the consumers' assessment of current conditions, yet their expectations regarding the short-term outlook improved more. The main contributor to the results was optimism of further enhancements in the labor market.

Consumers' outlook for the job market was also more upbeat than in October. The proportion expecting more jobs in the months ahead increased from 18.7 percent to 22.6 percent, while those anticipating fewer jobs declined from 11.6 percent to 11.0 percent. Regarding their short-term income prospects, the percentage of consumers expecting an improvement decreased marginally from 20.3 percent to 20.1 percent, while the proportion expecting a decrease was virtually unchanged at 7.6 percent.

### US GDP grows

The second estimate of GDP growth in the US for the third quarter marked the quickest pace in three years. The upbeat performance was due to robust business spending on equipment and an accumulation of inventories. Gross domestic product expanded at a 3.3 percent annual rate last quarter also boosted by a rebound in government investment, the Commerce Department said in its second GDP estimate on Wednesday. That was the fastest pace since the third quarter of 2014 and a pickup from the second quarter's 3.1 percent rate.

The economy was previously reported to have grown at a 3.0 percent pace in the July-September period. It was the first time since 2014 that the economy experienced growth of 3 percent or more for two straight quarters.

The growth pace, however, likely exaggerates the health of the economy as inventories, goods yet to be sold, accounted for nearly a quarter of GDP growth. Excluding inventory investment, the economy grew at a 2.5 percent rate. When measured from the income side, output also expanded at a 2.5 percent rate.

### Pending home sales

Pending home sales rebounded strongly in October following three straight months of diminishing activity, but still continued their recent slide of falling behind year ago levels, according to the National Association of Realtors. All major regions except for the West saw an increase in contract signings last month. The Pending Home Sales Index, a forward-looking indicator based on contract signings, rose 3.5 percent to 109.3 in October from a downwardly revised 105.6 in September. The index is now at its highest reading since June (110.0), but is still 0.6 percent below a year ago.

**Eurozone Inflation on the rise**  
CPI flash estimate for November



increased by 0.1 percent to 1.5 percent in Europe. When breaking down the main components of the inflation, energy is expected to have the highest annual rate in November followed by food and services. Oil prices should have a great effect on the actual inflation figures as 24-month high crude oil prices will hit the economy.

### UK banks stress test

Governor of the Bank of England Mark Carney described the results of this year's stress tests on seven major lenders as evidence that they can withstand a disorderly Brexit scenario. Carney said the Bank had reached this judgment after considering a variety of factors, including the logistical impact faced by airlines and customs, as well as issues the City faces from processing complex derivatives transactions without a transition deal. The stress tests took into account that the banks would lose 50 billion Sterling Pounds collectively under the scenario the central bank imposed. Carney said a disorderly Brexit would have an impact that was "no worse" than this year's tests which, while not explicitly modeling the impact of the UK's exit from the EU, were at the extreme end of what might be expected.

### UK manufacturing

November saw the UK manufacturing sector move up a gear, with rates of increase in new orders and production among the best registered over the past four years. This tested capacity and encouraged further job creation, with employment rising to the greatest extent since June 2014. The index rose to 58.2 in November, up from 56.6 in

October (originally reported as 56.3), its highest level since August 2013. The reading is the tenth-best registered during the near 26-year series history. The latest survey was conducted between 13-27 November. Manufacturing production expanded at the fastest pace since September 2016 and to one of the greatest extents during the past four years. Companies linked this to stronger inflows of new orders, reflecting solid domestic demand and steeper gains in new export business.

### China's PMI

China reported on Thursday that factory activity expanded at a faster pace in November with manufacturing PMI coming at 51.8. The index rose by 0.2 points from October results of 51.6, higher the market's forecast of 51.8 signaling an expanding manufacturing activity. China's services sector also saw activity pick up, with its PMI reading accelerating to 54.8 in November from the previous month's 54.3, official data showed.

### Japan's inflation

Japanese core inflation increased by 0.1% in November reaching 0.8% year on year and meeting the market's forecast. The increase is considered marginal at best and far away from the BOJ's target of 2 percent, a further lift to core inflation may be coming due to the rise in energy prices globally.

**Kuwait**  
Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30160  
The USDKWD opened at 0.30160 yesterday morning.

## Liberian economy struggles as election crisis drags on

**MONROVIA:** Businesses in Liberia's dual-currency economy are feeling the pinch as customers stay home and the exchange rate keeps climbing in the absence of a resolution to the country's disputed presidential election. "Nobody wants to buy, people are keeping their money," said Ruth Wollie, one of many female market traders who make up an important voting bloc for Liberian politicians.

"For us to sell 1000 LD (\$8) per day is very difficult," she added at her stall in Monrovia.

Liberia has enjoyed 12 years of peace under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, but hopes for an economic revival after back-to-back civil wars between 1989 and 2003 were dashed by slumping commodity prices hitting key exports of iron ore and rubber, and the impact of the 2014-16 Ebola crisis which left some 4,800 people dead. Now an electoral crisis has compounded the problem, with conditions becoming intolerable in a nation hugely reliant on informal trading for income. It began in late October, when Vice President Joseph Boakai and opposition leader Charles Brumskine finished second and third in the October 10 election, but alleged "massive fraud" afterwards.

The allegations however were rejected by the National Elections Commission (NEC), which found that the two parties failed to provide "indubitable evidence" as required by the constitution that the vote was tainted by fraud. The parties then appealed to the Supreme Court, which is due to rule next week on whether to reject Boakai and Brumskine's complaint and allow the runoff to go ahead, or call new elections.

The process has delayed the selection of a Sirleaf successor for nearly a month, as Boakai was due to face top-placing candidate and former international footballer George Weah on November 7.

"We were expecting a run-off and they took themselves and carried themselves to court," market trader Beatrice Harris said. "They were thinking that it was for our (own) good, but it was not for our good-only for themselves. "If they love us as Liberians, they will understand what it means to come to the market and can't even find a meal for your child". Harris added that politicians are making the people "suffer".



Businesses in Liberia's dual-currency economy are feeling the pinch as customers stay home.

### 'Businesses on hold'

Christopher Pewee, a shoe seller in Paynesville, said the situation had "stagnated". "Investors are holding back investments, and the demand for US dollars is high. That's why the rate has climbed from 110 to 130 Liberian dollars to the US dollar," he said, surrounded by brightly colored flip-flops.

"The election is on hold, the businesses are also on hold. We don't know what is going on".

Liberia has two legal currencies: the Liberian dollar and the US dollar. The country also imports the vast majority of its food, and wholesale imports and taxes are payable in US dollars only. "If you don't have US dollars to buy, the price will be increased and the rate is 130 (Liberian dollars) now. We are just asking the government to at least speed up the process," market trader Ruth Wollie complained.

Trader Annie Saah said "most people are afraid" that the situation will devolve into violence.

"So they're keeping their money just in case of anything, to sustain their families," she added.

Sirleaf has urged a speedy resolution to the dispute for the sake of the economy.

"Our economy is under stress due to the delay of the electoral process," Sirleaf said on November 7. "We have to do all we can to save our democracy and allow a smooth transition". Liberian economist Ansu Sonii, who is also campaign manager for Weah's Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) said investors tended to "play safe and hold on" in a nation with few safeguards on their money, and with the civil war and sanctions never far from memory. — AFP

## Why Republicans who once fought budget debt now embrace it

**WASHINGTON:** When did Republicans stop worrying and learn to love budget deficits? Over the next decade, their tax plan would add at least \$1 trillion to the national debt. That would be on top of an additional \$10 trillion in deficits over the same period already being by forecast by the Congressional Budget Office. As a share of the economy, the national debt would be rising to levels last seen during the height of World War II.

This borrowing spree would mark a sharp reversal for Republicans who made a career of sounding the alarm that mounting national debt would ultimately crush the economy and perhaps impoverish future generations. House Speaker Paul Ryan warned back in 2013 that endless deficits would "weigh the country down like an anchor. In short, we are on the verge of a debt crisis."

But on Friday, as the Senate debated its version of tax legislation, which it passed early Saturday, a rather different Republican Party was in full view. The party's few remaining deficit hawks, like Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee, were clearly out of step with most in their party.

"Obviously, I'm kind of a dinosaur on fiscal issues," Corker said ruefully before declaring his opposition to the bill.

So what changed?

Republicans gained control of the House and Senate as well as the White House, said Robert Bixby, executive director of the Concord Coalition, an advocate for fiscal responsibility. Its all-inclusive control gave the party the leverage to focus on slashing tax cuts, rather than taking the sometimes painful steps required to curb the debt, which would likely do little on the eve of an election year to rally their donors

and base of voters.

"When you don't have to make legislative compromises and have things you want to do, it's easy to set aside fears about the budget deficit," Bixby said.

Congressional Republicans had more incentive to reduce the deficit when President Barack Obama was in office. They ultimately agreed to the 2011 Budget Control Act to pare the deficit by mandating nearly \$1 trillion in automatic spending cuts in return for raising the government's borrowing authority.

The historically low US interest rates that have prevailed for nearly a decade have made managing the debt less of a burden than in the 1980s under President Ronald Reagan. What's more, the US economy has steadily improved as the unemployment rate has fallen to a 17-year low of 4.1 percent. So any anxiety that deficits could stifle growth has lessened despite the rising debt.

Rather than worry about the debt, President Donald Trump has been eager to increase it. He campaigned on the promise of extravagant tax cuts. And he welcomed the prospect of borrowing to finance them in hopes that the economy would start gushing with growth.

"It's called priming the pump," he said in a May interview with The Economist magazine.

In fact, the president pledged that economic growth propelled by the tax cuts would be so much more robust than the tepid average annual growth rates of roughly 2 percent of recent years that the deficits would start to fall after two years. His budget director, Mick Mulvaney, has gone so far as to argue that higher deficits are even necessary to produce sustained 3 percent annual growth.

Mulvaney contends that such growth would eventually cause the national debt to decline. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin has repeated similar versions of this argument that the tax cuts would, over time, pay for themselves. But no independent analysis of the tax plan has shown that it could generate nearly enough growth to shrink the deficits. Mnuchin's own Treasury Department never released an analysis to support such claims.

Indeed, the Joint Committee on Taxation concluded this week that, even with a bump in growth, the Senate tax bill as written at the time would swell the national debt by \$1 trillion over 10 years. — AP



Business

Wall Street Week Ahead

Fear of missing out keeps investors in stocks

NEW YORK: Wall Street's fear of missing out on a relentless rally appears to be trumping rising political risk in a high-stakes December in Washington. The ticking clock on the Republican Party's efforts to cut corporate taxes, alongside the risk that the US government may shut down if a budget deal isn't reached by December 8, is increasing the levels of political risk for investors - but they have yet to really react.

"Right now the market is assuming that everything will work out, but you've got a tremendous number of moving parts," said Phil

Orlando, chief equity market strategist at Federated Investors in New York. Alongside the back-and-forth on taxes, Wall Street will be watching a Dec. 8 expiration date for funding needed to keep the US government open alongside the deadline when the US Treasury hits its limit on borrowing; as well as a Dec 12 Special US Senate election in Alabama.

On Tuesday, President Donald Trump warned on Twitter that "I don't see a deal" to keep the government open and work past Dec. 8, although the White House said Wednesday it did not see such an eventuality.

Typically, the threat of a government shutdown alone would prompt fund managers to move more of their assets into cash. The benchmark S&P 500 lost 2.6 percent in the eight trading days before the last government shutdown in 2013, and has declined an average of 0.6 percent during government shutdowns overall, according to LPL Financial. Debt limit concerns are likely to be put off until 2018 as the US Treasury is expected to take steps to postpone any need for action by Congress. Yet with the benchmark S&P 500 up nearly 18 percent for the year to date, some

portfolio managers see a greater risk in stepping to the sidelines. Throughout the year, the stock market has rallied in the face of standoffs ranging from increasing tensions in North Korea to former FBI director's James Comey's testimony to Congress that President Trump fired him to undermine the agency's Russia investigation.

On Friday, stocks sold off on a report that former national security adviser Michael Flynn was prepared to tell investigators that before taking office Trump had directed him to make contact with Russians. However, shares quickly pared those losses.

Despite his skepticism, Orlando has yet to move more of his assets to cash, in large part because corporate earnings keep rising and should continue to do so even if a tax package is not signed, he said. If the tax bill fails, Orlando said he expected the S&P 500 to fall by as much as 10 percent. He would be a buyer in that case, he said, because he expected the S&P 500 to reach 3000 within the next 18 months.

Crowded calendar

Brian Peery, a portfolio manager at Novato, California-based Hennessy Funds, said a government shutdown or the tax bill failing would prompt a swift sell-off, but that rising consumer confidence would ultimately continue to push the market higher over the next year.

"I'm looking at a 10 percent correction. If I'm a buyer," he said. The inaction is not limited to the stock market. Christopher Ryon, a municipal bond fund manager at Santa Fe, New Mexico-based Thornburg Investment Management, said that the Republican tax bill could reduce the size of the municipal bond market by 25 to 30 percent by limiting the ability of stadiums, airports and privately-financed toll roads to qualify for tax-exempt status.

At the same time, there could be an



Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report - Sunday 03 December 2017. Includes sections for Index (Price Index, Weighted Index, KSX 15), Trades (Security, High, Low, Volume, Value (KD), Trades, Last, Change), Real Estate, Consumer Goods, Health Care, Consumer Services, Banks, Insurance, and Parallel Market. Tables show market movements and trading volumes for various sectors and individual stocks.

increased demand for municipal bonds if residents of high-tax states are no longer able to deduct their full state and local property taxes, leaving tax-free municipal bonds as one of the few ways wealthy investors can reduce their taxable incomes.

As a result, Ryon is largely sitting on his hands, ignoring both lower-rated bonds that have rallied as investors have reached for yield and triple A rated bonds that look "on the rich side," he said.

"There are a whole lot of unintended consequences attached to this legislation," Ryon said. "This is going to be an interesting couple of weeks where we will really see how the sausage gets made." — Reuters

What is bitcoin? A look at the digital currency



LONDON: The price of a single bitcoin has pierced the \$10,000 level and some experts say it could rise further. The world's most popular virtual currency allows people to buy goods and services and exchange money without involving banks, credit card issuers or other third parties. It has a fuzzy history, having been used by hackers to demand ransom and for the purchase of illegal drugs online. But recently it's become more popular with a different crowd: speculative investors. As its price keeps rising, here's a brief look at bitcoin.

How bitcoins work

Bitcoin is a digital currency that is not tied to a bank or government and allows users to spend money anonymously. The coins are created by users who "mine" them by lending computing power to verify other users' transactions. They receive bitcoins in exchange. The coins also can be bought and sold on exchanges with US dollars and other currencies.

How much is it worth?

Bitcoin was trading over \$11,000 Wednesday before dipping to around \$9,800 later in the day, according to coindesk, a website that monitors the price. That's about a tenfold increase from the start of the year, when it was worth under \$1,000. The value of bitcoins can swing sharply, though. A bitcoin's value plunged by 22 percent against the dollar in just three days earlier this month.

Why bitcoins are popular

Bitcoins are basically lines of computer code that are digitally signed each time they travel from one owner to the next. Transactions can be made anonymously, making the currency popular with libertarians as well as tech enthusiasts, speculators - and criminals.

Is it really anonymous?

Yes, to a point. Transactions and accounts can be traced, but the account owners aren't necessarily known. However, investigators might be able to track down the owners when bitcoins are converted to regular currency.

Who's using bitcoin?

Some businesses have jumped on the bitcoin bandwagon amid a flurry of media coverage. Overstock.com accepts payments in bitcoin, for example. The US exchange operator CME Group said in October that it plans to open a futures market for the currency before the end of the year, if it can get approval from regulators. Still, its popularity is low compared with cash and cards, and many individuals and businesses won't accept bitcoins for payments. Some high-profile banking executives have spoken against bitcoin.

Should I own bitcoin?

There are basically two reasons why an individual would want to buy bitcoin: to use it as a form of payment, or as an investment to store value. Bitcoin's usage among mainstream merchants is limited. Microsoft accepts it as a form of payment on its Xbox and Windows Store platforms. Overstock.com accepts it. But don't expect to spend it at Wal-Mart or Amazon. The virtual currency is a matter of debate among investors. Some, like Dimon and billionaire Mark Cuban, are strongly against it while others are enthusiastic about it. Wall Street is starting to build products around it. The more grounded investors see bitcoin as a highly speculative, highly risky investment that a person should not put all their money into, not unlike gold, commodities or traditional currencies.

How bitcoins are kept secure

The bitcoin network works by harnessing individuals' greed for the collective good. A network of tech-savvy users called miners keep the system honest by pouring their computing power into a blockchain, a global running tally of every bitcoin transaction. The blockchain prevents rogues from spending the same bitcoin twice, and the miners are rewarded for their efforts by being gifted with the occasional bitcoin. As long as miners keep the blockchain secure, counterfeiting shouldn't be an issue.

How bitcoin came to be

It's a mystery. Bitcoin was launched in 2009 by a person or group of people operating under the name Satoshi Nakamoto. Bitcoin was then adopted by a small clutch of enthusiasts. Nakamoto dropped off the map as bitcoin began to attract widespread attention. But proponents say that doesn't matter: The currency obeys its own internal logic. An Australian entrepreneur last year stepped forward and claimed to be the founder of bitcoin, only to say days later that he did not "have the courage" to publish proof that he is. —AP



Business

# Boursa Kuwait equities close November on a bearish note

## Monthly turnover drops 22.97 %

**KUWAIT:** Boursa Kuwait ended November in the red zone. The Price Index closed at 6,196.50 points, down by 4.87 percent compared to the closings of the month before, the Weighted Index decreased by 5.03 percent after closing at 398.78 points, whereas the KXS-15 Index closed at 908.54 points decreasing by 6.12 percent. Furthermore, last month's average turnover decreased by 22.97 percent, compared to the preceding month, reaching KD 15.60 million, whereas trading volume average was 80.05 million shares, recording a decrease of 25.72 percent.

The losses witnessed by the three Boursa indices during the last month came as a result to the selling pressures and included many stocks of all sectors, headed by the Consumer Goods sector, which lost more than 10 percent compared to the month of October. In addition, the market was subject to some negative factors during the last month, that pushed it to record such losses, headed by the political volatility that the region went through, especially in the first half of the month.

Also, the market was affected by the refrain of some traders from trading due to the absence of positive motivators and lack of investment opportunities in the market, especially in light of the poor local economic condition in general and not solving the noticeable obstacles that the national economy is suffering from since

many years; whereas the psychological factor and the low confidence level of the investors played a great role in the recorded declines, especially in light of a weak investment environment in the country and the decrease of most local economic indicators, and absence of internal positive motivators, which has been the ongoing factors being affecting the negative performance of the market.

Moreover, the losses recorded by the Boursa



### Three indices lose amid selling pressure

Kuwait indices during the month of November were considered the highest on a monthly level since the beginning of the current year, as the Price Index recorded by the end of the month losses of 4.87 percent after it closed at 6,196.50 point, while the Weighted Index decrease reached 5.03 percent closing at 398.78 point, and the KXS-15 Index ended last month's trad-

ing at 908.54 point, recording a loss of 6.12 percent compared to last October's closings.

Boursa Kuwait lost during the last month around KD 1.40 billion of its market capitalization, as it reached by the end of the month KD 26.67 billion, down by 4.97 percent of its October level, where it was KD 28.07 billion, to contract by such its gains since the beginning of the year and reach 4.98 percent, compared to its value at end of 2016, where it was KD 25.41 billion. (Note: The market capitalization for the listed companies in the regular market is calculated based on the average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available official financial statements). For the annual performance, the Price Index ended last month recording 7.80 percent annual gain compared to its closing in 2016, while the Weighted Index increased by 4.92 percent, and the KXS-15 recorded 2.66 percent growth.

#### Sectors' Indices

All of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last month in the red zone, except the Health Care sector's index which closed with no change from the previous month. The Consumer Goods sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 10.16 percent to end the week's activity at 877.26 points. The Technology sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 9.93 percent, closing at 498.90 points, followed by the Insurance



sector, as its index closed at 1,003.28 points at a loss of 6.90 percent. The Consumer Services sector was the least declining as its index closed at 919.51 points with a 1.42 percent decrease.

#### Sectors' activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume during the last month of 636.99 million shares changing hands, representing 37.89 percent of the total market trading volume. The Banks sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's

traded shares were 24 percent of last month's total trading volume, with a total of 403.51 million shares.

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of KD 147.99 million or 45.17 percent of last month's total market trading value. The Financial Services sector took the second place as the sector's last month turnover of KD 57.53 million representing 17.56 percent of the total market trading value.

— Prepared by the Studies & Research Department - Bayan Investment Co.

## Ooredoo presents offers for 'Nukhba' in partnership with C Club

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo announced its exclusive offers for Nukhba customers from C Club health club which is part of Al-Argan Real Estate Company. These offers include exclusive discounts for Nukhba customers on the C Club health club subscriptions that provides its members with an outstanding view of the Arabian Gulf in Al-Bedaa during their workouts, social and business gatherings, or while relaxing on the poolside.

Commenting on the partnership, Jasem Abdulrahim, Director, VIP and Direct Sales at Ooredoo, said, "This partnership demonstrates the company's commitment to enriching our customers' experience and providing them with tailored and exclusive offers driven by the company's core values of caring, connecting and challenging. We are also proud to partner with Al-Argan Real Estate Company to offer our customers the best and we are confident that the unique level of services offered by C Club Health Club will meet the expectations of our Nukhba customers."

Abdulrahim added, "The C Club health club will be the perfect place to accommodate the needs of Ooredoo's Nukhba customers' lifestyles. Nukhba customers will enjoy premium services along with a relaxing experience and a state of the art gym that is considered to be one of the best in Kuwait, as well as high end facilities for social and business gatherings that will accommodate their busy lifestyles."

It is worth mentioning that Ooredoo offers exclusive benefits to its Nukhba customers with the Shamel Premium postpaid packages, believing in enriching the experience of its customers. Customers can benefit from exclusive offers, as well as getting the latest smart phones with Nukhba premium packages.

Additionally, all Nukhba clients get Nojoom rewards worth up to KD 500, which can be redeemed from Ooredoo's selection of exclusive partners who offer the best in class services in a variety of industries, ranging

from retail to hospitality and travel. The company is continuously working on enriching its portfolio of partners to ensure delivering customers with an unrivalled experience.

In addition to the unrivalled services, Shamel Premium customers can enjoy the exclusive VIP treatment in Ooredoo's Nukhba lounge, from 8 am to 4 pm in the fifth floor of Ooredoo's Head Office in Kuwait City.

1999 when it launched wireless services as the second operator. The company today provides mobile, broadband internet and corporate managed services tailored to the needs of customers and businesses. Ooredoo Kuwait - which is an enlisted company in the Kuwait Stock Exchange Market - operates a number of telecom service providers in the region, such as Ooredoo Algeria, Ooredoo Tunisia, Ooredoo Maldives, and Wataniya Palestine. Ooredoo Kuwait is a member of the international Ooredoo Group based in Doha, Qatar.

**Our vision:** Enabling the Kuwaiti community through digitalization and enriching people's daily experiences.

**Our mission:** To be a leading one-stop shop, offering comprehensive telecom services to meet all the demands of our customers.

#### Our values:

**Caring:** We care about individuals and respect differences, and we support the communities in which we work through dedication, transparency and high values under all circumstances.

**Connecting:** We strive to build sustainable long-lasting partnerships based on mutual trust.

**Challenging:** Striving to enhance services and continue improving and setting realistic goals to create a positive impact and a real difference.



## CBK announces the winners in daily draw of 'Al-Najma Account'

**KUWAIT:** Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the daily draw of "Al-Najma Account" yesterday at the bank's head office to select 4 winners to win a cash prize of KD 7000 for each. The draw was held in the presence of Latifa Al-Jiaan, representative of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry. The following names were announced as winners of the prizes:

1. Farraj Salbough Al-Azmi
2. Eid Zenati Hasan Othman
3. Fatemah Jamaan Abdulmohsen Awwad
4. Sarah Ahmad Saleh Al-Eissawi

Al-Najma Account allows its customers to win a daily prize of KD 7000 which is the highest daily prize in Kuwait. In addition, the Account offers quarterly draws that provide customers with opportunity to get their



dreams turned to reality by winning great prizes starting from KD 100,000 for the first quarter escalating thereafter by KD 50 thousand for each quarter to reach KD 250,000 in the last quarter. Customers can enjoy additional benefits including obtaining ATM card and a credit card against the customer's account along with enjoying all other banking services.

The Bank congratulates all the lucky winners and draws their attention that the cash prizes will be credited into their accounts with the Bank. Further, the Bank appreciates the Ministry of Commerce & Industry's significant role and its continuous cooperation and effective supervision on the draw that was smoothly and transparently organized.

## Free exclusive desert package with every Patrol Safari

**KUWAIT:** Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz AlBabtain Company (AABC), the sole authorized dealer of Nissan vehicles in the State of Kuwait, is calling all Nissan fans to opt for the dynamic Nissan Patrol Safari when considering camping this season. Starting from only KD 12,900, every Nissan Patrol Safari owner will also be entitled to a special desert package that holds relevant equipment to challenge any obstacles he/she might face in the desert and enjoy a smooth ride.

With impressive styling and richly appointed interiors, Nissan Al-Babtain's Safari features the torque-rich 4.8L DOHC in-line 6-cylinder engine and available in either manual

or automatic transmissions with five-speed. The customer will receive a special package including a desert rescue package, tire pressure reduction, air compressor, several tire patches, LED worklights and slip on seat covers. The vehicles rugged exterior has been enhanced with machine-cut 16-inch black alloy wheels, body side stripes, whilst the interior encompasses fabric seats, wooden decoration, and fitted with cruise control steering wheel-control switches and power windows with one touch auto and anti-freeze functions to contribute to the drivers comfort and convenience.

Backed by superior engineering, the Nissan Patrol Safari is the ultimate off-road performance car with an unrivaled off-road capability and on-road handling. Delivering top-speed and power, the 4.8L DOHC in-line 6-cylinder engine produces 280hp and a heavy 46kg or 451Nm of torque, allowing it to maneuver through sand dunes with ease.

Its formidable all-terrain prowess is underscored by superior engineering including a 5-speed automatic transmission with manual mode, as well as Vehicle Dynamic Control (VDC) and a Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS) that enhance on-road driving.

Nissan Al-Babtain invites customers to visit its showrooms located in Al-Rai and



Ahmadi to grab hold of the winter deal and explore new possibilities on the wild deserts of Kuwait with one of the worlds most rugged all-terrain vehicles.

## McConnell: Tax bill won't add to nation's debt woes

**LOUISVILLE, Ky:** Fresh off his biggest legislative victory of the Trump era, Senate

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Saturday disputed projections that the Senate's tax bill would add to the nation's debt woes.

Back home in Kentucky just hours after the Senate narrowly pushed through the nearly \$1.5 trillion tax bill, McConnell predicted that the boldest rewrite of the nation's tax system in decades would generate more than enough economic growth to prevent the burgeoning deficits being forecast. "I not only don't think it will increase the deficit, I think it will be beyond revenue neutral," he told reporters. "In other words, I

think it will produce more than enough to fill that gap."

Over the next decade, Republicans' tax plan is projected to add at least \$1 trillion to the national debt. That would be on top of an additional \$10 trillion in deficits over the same period already being forecast by the Congressional Budget Office.

"I'm not one of the total supply-siders who just believes that if you cut taxes, no matter what amount, you turn out ahead," McConnell said. "I still believe in revenue neutrality for tax reform, and I believe this is a revenue neutral tax reform bill." — AP

## Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi account draw

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank, the second largest in terms of assets, announced yesterday the names of the daily draw winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a cash-prize of KD 5,000.

- The lucky winners are:
1. Hatim Shabbir Ali Rokadiya
  2. Ali Hameed Abdulmohsen Alherz
  3. Sulaiman Ghloum Hussain Abdullah
  4. Mohammad Abdullah Ali

In addition to the daily draw, Burgan Bank also offers a quarterly draw with more chances to win higher rewards, offering the chance to one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers daily and quarterly draws, wherein the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for two months prior to the draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.



Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The higher the level of the deposit, the higher the likelihood to win.

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENA region supported by one of the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed.



## Technology

# Xi welcomes countries to ride fast train of internet, digital economy

## Call to build a community of common future in cyberspace

**WUZHEN, China:** Chinese President Xi Jinping said China hopes to encourage countries around the world to take a ride on the express train of internet and digital economic development.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, made the remarks in a congratulatory letter to the Fourth World Internet Conference, which opened yesterday in the East China town of Wuzhen.

The conference, which runs from Sunday to Tuesday, has the theme "Developing digital economy for openness and shared benefits—building a community of common future in cyberspace."

In his letter, Xi expressed a sincere welcome to government representatives, heads of international organizations, experts, scholars, and entrepreneurs who are attending the conference.

He expressed hopes that the delegates will draw on collective wisdom and enhance mutual understanding so as to deepen exchanges and cooperation on the internet and digital economy, and make the development of the internet better serve the well-being of all people worldwide.

Xi pointed out that the development of the internet has posed many new challenges for the sovereignty, security, and development interests of the world's countries.

"Building a community of common future in cyberspace has increasingly become the widespread common understanding of international society," he said. Xi said China hopes to work with the international community to respect cyberspace sovereignty and carry forward the spirit of partnership to commonly advance development, safeguard security, participate in governance, and share the benefits.

"China's door to the world will never close, but will only open wider," he said. Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and member of the

CPC Central Committee Secretariat, delivered a keynote speech at the opening ceremony.

Wang said China is willing to conform to the historic opportunities brought by the development of the internet and use the digital economy as an important driving force to promote the openness, cooperation, exchange, and sharing in cyberspace and build a community of common future in cyberspace.

"We should promote security, construct a fine order, and build a secure, stable and prosperous cyberspace," Wang said. He also met with guests at the conference and visited an internet expo. Over 1,500 guests from more than 80 countries and regions, including government representatives, heads of international organizations, leading figures of internet companies, online celebrities, experts and scholars, attended the conference.

Apple chief executive Tim Cook and Sundar Pichai, Google's chief executive, appeared at a state-run internet conference in eastern China yesterday.

Cook told the event that "the theme of this conference - developing a digital economy for openness and shared benefits - is a vision we at Apple share" adding that Apple "is proud to have worked alongside many of our partners in China to help build a community that will join a common future in cyberspace".

His attendance comes after Apple this year agreed to Chinese government requests to remove dozens of virtual private network (VPN) apps - services that allow Chinese users to access blocked websites - from its local App Store, Skype, the calling app, was removed from its mainland App Store this autumn.

Google's Pichai later told delegates that "a lot of work Google does is to help Chinese companies. Many small and medium-sized businesses in China take advantage of Google to get their products to many other countries outside of China." —Agencies



WUZHEN: Delegates listen as Alibaba Group Executive Chairman Jack Ma speaks during the opening ceremony of the 4th World Internet Conference in Wuzhen in China's eastern Zhejiang province yesterday.



WUZHEN: Apple CEO Tim Cook attends the opening ceremony of the 4th World Internet Conference in Wuzhen in China's eastern Zhejiang province yesterday. —AFP Photos



### Tim Cook and Sundar Pichai attending

## Buy it with bitcoin in New York, but it's not cheap

**NEW YORK:** At Melt Bakery, a hole in the wall that sells ice cream sandwiches in New York's upscale Manhattan neighborhood, you can pay for your guilty pleasure in bitcoin. And while a few swipes of a mobile app are all it takes to fill your electronic wallet, the novelty, for now, comes at a hefty cost. Melt is one of several small stores in America's biggest city now accepting the bitcoins, hailed by some as the future of currency.

Investors' interest has been piqued by the virtual currency's surging value while industry insiders see it as an alternative instrument for consumers who want to shop online but don't have access to traditional instruments like a credit card.

It has even triggered an expanding ATM network that lets people turn their cash into bitcoins, and their bitcoins back into cash. At Melt's checkout counter, each transaction can take several minutes to process and trigger varying fees. That means a \$5 chocolate ice cream sandwich cost \$9.29 for a recent bitcoin purchase.

#### Gift cards

Though its presence is growing, bitcoin use is still far from widespread at the storefront level. A New York chiropractor who released a statement in 2014 announcing he would accept bitcoin payments has yet to receive any. Nick Allen, head of product development at the Blockchain Technologies startup, acknowledges such use is limited. "It's just for promotion," said the 24-year-old.

"Bitcoin will never be used largely in real life. Transaction fees are too high and an owner is not able to track the transactions made by its employees." For his part, Allen converts his entire income into the currency which he then uses to do all his shopping online, including basic groceries.

He buys store gift cards on an online platform where, he says, vendors "want bitcoins more than they want gift cards." In just a few clicks, he can buy \$100 worth of takeout food delivered by UberEats for just \$36. But he found himself in a bit of a bind during a recent trip to Amsterdam, where, without a credit card and just 200 euros (\$238) in cash, he couldn't find anywhere to convert his bitcoins.

#### Buy tickets, sofas

More and more major companies now accept virtual currency, including Bitcoin but also others, as a valid form of payment from booking a flight on Expedia to a new sofa from retailer Overstock. "We are a big believer that it is good for us," said Overstock's president Jonathan Johnson. "It is another way for customers to spend money at our stores and it is cheaper for us because we don't have to pay a credit card transaction fee."

The firm initially converted all its bitcoins into dollars, but now retains half in order to pay suppliers, and to take advantage of its surging value. A bitcoin was worth about \$1,000 at the start of the year, but is now more than \$10,000. At a small grocery store in Harlem, Matthew, a former financier who now works in tech and who gave his first name only, said he bought his first bitcoins in 2016 and was now withdrawing his profits from an ATM. "Buying bitcoin at an ATM is the easiest and safest way to do it," he said, adding he did not entirely trust other platforms. Investors make up 25 percent of the userbase of Coinsource, a nationwide bitcoin ATM network, according to its manager, Sheffield Clark. —AFP

## Behbehani GMC launches free winter checkup campaign

**KUWAIT:** As parts of GMC continuous effort toward the safety of its customer's base, Mohammed Saleh and Reza Yusuf Behbehani Company, have completed its preparation for the launch of its free GMC winter checkup campaign under the title "Enjoys safe driving this winter".

Owners of GMC Yukon's and Sierra's manufactured from 2010 to 2014 are welcome at our main GMC service center in Al-Rai Industrial area, between 02nd and 10th December 2017, as follows - Saturday to Wednesday, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm and Thursday 7:30 am to 1:00 pm.

#### The campaign Includes:

- Full Front-body checkup
- Battery checkup
- Tires & Brakes checkup
- Engine radiator checkup
- Heating systems checkup
- Windscreen, lights & Anti-fog switches checkup

Nidal Salem, Service manager said "This campaign is one of the most important campaigns as it aims at providing high standard safety checks for customer vehicles. Therefore, we have fully prepared our service technicians to ensure vehicles checked in speedy and effective manner, so that we don't delay customers.

## Activists occupy Paris Apple store over EU tax dispute

**PARIS:** About a hundred activists occupied an Apple store in the French capital Saturday, demanding that the US technology giant pay billions of euros the EU says it owes in back taxes. The members from Attac, a group that seeks alternatives to unbridled globalisation, invaded the expansive two-level store near the Paris Opera for several hours—leaving only after they were assured of a meeting with management. "One hundred Attac activists occupied the Apple store" to demand the company "pay its fair share of taxes in the country in which it really operates," spokeswoman Aurelie Trouve said.

Members standing on the second-level balcony held a banner reading "We will stop when Apple pays", while others held signs that read "Pay your taxes".

"We received a formal commitment from an Apple manager that we would be granted a meeting with national leadership within 15 days," Trouve told AFP. "If this meeting does not take place, we will come back before Christmas". The group held about 30 demonstrations across France on Saturday, including at an Apple store in the southern city of Marseille. Apple France was not immediately available for comment. In August 2016, European authorities estimated that the company behind the iPhone owed \$14.5 billion in back taxes after it negotiated highly favorable tax arrangements with the Irish government.



As we approach the winter season, we know there's high demand for vehicles checkup, hence we decided to carry out this campaign which covers the efficiency of cooling, heating systems in addition to the performance of oil and brake systems.

MSRYB Company confirmed that customer satisfaction is its number one priority, therefore this campaign mainly focus on GMC Yukon's & Sierra's that exceeded the warranty period.

The company also explained that periodic checkup doesn't only gives customers peace of mind it also save a lot of money.

The beginning of winter is considered to be the most appropriate time for customers to checkup their vehicles in preparation for the cold weather, to avoid sudden breakdown that might be costly or put your family at risk. Mohammed Saleh and Reza Yusuf Behbehani Company strives to excel in satisfying its customers by keeping in-touch with them through our service center by specialized and trained technicians.

Our service centre has clearly marked entrance and exits points, as well as advanced maintenance techniques and inspection systems while still preserving resources that friendly to the environment.



PARIS: Activists of the Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions and Citizen's Action (ATTAC) stage a protest against alleged tax evasion by US multinational technology company Apple at an Apple store in Paris on Saturday. —AFP

Revelations last month from the "Paradise Papers" shed light on Apple's tax avoidance strategy, which shifted tens of billions of dollars in profits from one fiscal haven to another.

The report—from a trove of documents released by the US-based International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) — said Apple transferred funds to the small island of Jersey, which typically does not tax corpo-

rate income and is largely exempt from European Union tax regulations. Apple has said it follows the law in each country it operates.

Attac also protested against the company last month on the day Apple released its iPhone X globally, dumping a load of freshly picked apples as demonstrators carried signs saying "Apple, pay your taxes" in the southern city of Aix-en-Provence. —AFP



Health

# Cholera could resurge in Yemen due to lack of aid and fuel: WHO

## Nearly 1 million cholera cases since epidemic began

GENEVA: Another wave of cholera could strike Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition blockade has cut off fuel for hospitals, water pumps and vital aid supplies for starving children, the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday. Dr Nevio Zagaria, WHO country representative in Yemen, told Reuters that 16 percent of Yemeni children under the age of five suffer from acute malnutrition, including 5.2 percent with a severe form that is life-threatening, and the problem is increasing.

Yemen, where 8 million people face famine, is mired in a proxy war between the Iran-aligned Houthi armed movement and the US-backed military coalition that the United Nations says has led to the world's worst humanitarian crisis. Some 960,000 suspected cases of cholera and 2,219 deaths have been reported since the epidemic began in April, WHO figures show. Children account for nearly a third of infections of the waterborne disease, spread by food or water contaminated with human feces, that causes acute diarrhoea and dehydration and can kill within hours if untreated.

Although the number of new cases has dropped for 11 straight weeks, 35 districts in Yemen are still reporting cholera with "high attack rates" in communities, Zagaria said. A deteriorating economic situation and lack of safe drinking water, due to water sewage systems in many cities lacking fuel for the pumps, have compounded the humanitarian crisis, he said. "This is a perfect mix to have a new explosion of a cholera epidemic at the beginning of the rainy season in March of next year," Zagaria said in a telephone interview from Sanaa, amid four days of clashes in the capital city.

WHO is working with local authorities in both the internationally recognized government and Houthi-controlled Sana'a to identify areas at highest risk of a spike in the cholera epidemic and to boost defenses, he said. A campaign of oral cholera vaccination - initially planned last July during an acute phase and then abandoned by authorities - is now under recon-

sideration but as a preventive action next year, he said. Meanwhile, a ship carrying 35 tons of WHO surgical and medical supplies is being diverted to Aden after waiting weeks to offload at Hodeidah port, Zagaria said.

"We are waiting and hoping that the situation of the blockade will be resolved. We have an opening to the humanitarian blockade but the opening to the commercial blockade is only partial," he added. The United Nations appealed on Friday to the coalition to fully lift its blockade of Yemen, which was partially eased last week to let aid into Hodeidah and Salif, and UN flights into Sanaa. The US-backed military coalition closed air, land and sea access on Nov. 6 in a move it said was to stop the flow of Iranian arms to the Houthis, who control much of northern Yemen. Aid shipments cover only a fraction of Yemen's needs, since almost all food, fuel and medicine are commercially imported.

### Constant flow of patients

Yemen's health system has virtually collapsed, with most health workers unpaid for seven months. WHO supports 130 hospitals across the country, providing fuel, water, oxygen, drugs, medical supplies and essential equipment, Zagaria said. "The (fuel) contractors that we are working with are finding difficulty in keeping the stock," he said, noting that some hospitals require 60,000 litres of fuel per month.

WHO runs 15 stabilization centers for severely acute malnourished children with medical complications and is expanding with 10 more, Zagaria said. "We see that there is a constant flow of newly admitted patients to these centers. The deterioration of the situation in terms of malnutrition in children is increasing... It is very difficult to quantify with precise numbers," said Zagaria, who went to the intensive care unit of the pediatric ward in Sadaa last week. "I am a pediatrician. I worked many years in Africa. You don't need to take the weight and the height." — Reuters



SANAA: A Yemeni family carries their belongings as they flee an area in the Yemeni capital Sanaa yesterday, during clashes between Houthi rebels and supporters of Yemeni ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh. —AFP



## Severe acute malnutrition on the rise

## 'Super beans' raise hopes in hunger prone parts of Africa

NWOYA: Richard Opio dipped a dirt-stained hand into the pinkish beans, marveling at the dramatic changes they've made for his family. They used to harvest two sacks of normal beans; now they take in six. The so-called "super bean," a fast-maturing, high-yield variety, is being promoted by Uganda's government and agriculture experts amid efforts to feed hunger-prone parts of Africa. It's also a step toward the next goal: the "super, super bean" that researchers hope can be created through genetic editing.

The beans that Opio now tends are thrilling farmers in this impoverished part of northern Uganda that also strains under the recent arrival of more than 1

million refugees from its war-torn neighbor, South Sudan. The International Center for Tropical Agriculture says the beans have been bred by conventional means to resist the drought conditions that can lead to starvation as arable land disappears. The group operates one of just two bean "gene banks" in Africa, which is expected to be hit hardest by climate change even though the continent produces less than 4 percent of the world's greenhouse gases, according to the UN Development Program.

One "gene bank" is on the outskirts of Uganda's capital, Kampala, where the beans that Opio now farms were bred. The other is in Malawi in southern Africa. Beans kept at the two banks are sent to partners in 30 countries across the continent to be developed further so they can cope with local conditions. The Uganda bank stores around 4,000 types of beans, including some sourced from neighboring Rwanda before its 1994 genocide killed around 800,000 people and wiped out many of the country's bean varieties. —AP

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## Global Medical Center Welcomes

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## What's On

# 'Hessa and Bader' performed at Al-Yarmouk Cultural Center

Presented by LOYAC's Academy for Performance Arts

LOYAC's Academy for Performance Arts (LAPA) recently presented a melody titled 'Hessa and Bader' which was inspired by Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet and presented at Al-Yarmouk Cultural Center with the presence of LOYAC's chairlady Fare'a Al-Saqqa. The play was localized by Rasoul Al-Sagheer and directed by Sherien Hajji while the actors were all amateurs from LAPA. The performance included many Kuwaiti songs. Speaking before the performance, Saqqa said that LOYAC would soon celebrate its 15th anniversary marking the growth of what was once a small family active in Kuwait, Jordan, Lebanon, Yemen and will soon be working in Egypt.



## NBK sponsors TGI event at Avenues Mall

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) sponsors the Training Gate International (TGI) event at the Avenues Mall to support persons with disabilities, on the occasion of the International Day that celebrates their cause.

Manal Al-Mattar, NBK Assistant general Manager, Public Relations, expressed the utmost support for TGI in its efforts to help Disabled people.

"NBK's sponsorship is part of its ongoing drive to fulfill its corporate social responsibilities," said Mattar. "NBK endeavors to shoulder its social responsibilities and share with the various private and public sector institutions the burdens and responsibilities of broader national efforts towards social advancement".

Mattar added "NBK stood as the strategic partner for this event which is held for the consecutive year to enable people with disabilities to be active, empowered, productive and influential members for themselves and their country.

The event was held from 1-3 December, 2017 at the Avenues Mall-Phase2. It consisted of an art gallery to showcase the special art pieces of the disabled persons, where visitors can buy and support. In addition to different workshops for visually impaired to promote



sign language and Brail writing. Also, special storytelling sessions occurred over the 3 days and NBK CSR Book "Abdallah Wins" was distributed for free.

TGI is a non-profit organization and is the

first and the only one of its kind in Kuwait to operate as a specialized human resources development organization, in collaboration with international partners, focusing on training and skills development for people with disabilities.



Happy birthday to Mohammed Toybur Rahman Bishal, celebrated on 23-11-2017, best wishes from father Rahman Belal, mother Jahnnatul Fardaus, and relatives.

## CBK sponsors Kuwait's Fourth International Basketball Tournament



In Keeping with the support and sponsorship it renders to sporting activities and other youth oriented programs, the Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) sponsored the Fourth International Basketball Tournament organized by the British Academy of Sports in collaboration with the Embassy of Romania in Kuwait.

The tournament itself hosted 10 teams from different countries and saw the participating team competing against each other in a series of matches to win the 2017 cup. The event was held at the British School of Kuwait (BSK) campus in Salwa, where CBK held a booth to promote its Al-Najma account and its British Airways cards.

The event saw high attendance from basketball fans who were present to encourage their teams throughout the tournaments where they were introduced to the current campaign of CBK British Airways cards under the name of "Double Welcome AVIOS".

CBK's Marketing Team explained to the visitors of CBK booth the rewards CBK British Airways offer for all British Airways cards issued between 1st of November and 31st of December 2017, as customers have the opportunity to double their welcome bonus AVIOS by spending a predefined amount during the first 3 months after card issuance date, a total of AVIOS that might reach a full flight from Kuwait to London (Tax and Fees excluded).

Additionally, they were introduced to Al-Najma account's benefits and draws, which is known for being the highest daily draw in Kuwait with a daily prize of KD 7,000. The account also holds quarterly draws that start from KD 100,000 to KD 250,000.

Finally, and on this occasion, CBK was offered a shield of appreciation for being one of the event's sponsors and it was received by the Executive Manager of the Marketing and Research Department Rami Al-Mokdad.



TV

AM MOVIES ACTION
00:05 As Above, So Below
01:50 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part II

ANIMAL PLANET HD
00:50 Untamed & Uncut
01:45 Treehouse Masters

BBC FIRST
00:45 The Coroner
01:35 Doctor Foster

crime & investigation network
00:00 The Killing Of Jonben\_t: Her Father Speaks

COMEDY CENTRAL
00:05 Comedy Central Roast Of Charlie Sheen

Discovery Family
19:25 Impractical Jokers
19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood

Discovery Family
00:30 Ultimate Survival
01:20 Ultimate Survival

ID
00:00 Hear No Evil
00:50 American Monster

Disney HD
00:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

Discovery Family
00:05 Ultimate Survival
01:20 Ultimate Survival

Disney Junior
00:00 PJ Masks
00:30 Vampirina

Discovery Channel HD
00:20 Street Outlaws
01:05 Harley And The Davidsons

Discovery Channel HD
00:20 Street Outlaws
01:05 Harley And The Davidsons

XD
06:00 Disney II
06:25 Supa Strikas

Discovery Channel HD
00:20 Street Outlaws
01:05 Harley And The Davidsons

02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:20 Celebrity Style Story

00:00 Bakers vs. Fakers
01:00 Patti Labelle's Place

00:00 Who's Doing The Dishes?
01:00 Emmerdale

00:00 Cities Of The Underworld
01:00 UFO Files

00:20 Ultimate Wheels
01:10 American Pickers

06:00 Ultimate Wheels
06:50 American Pickers

00:45 Maximum Foodie
01:10 Rustic Adventures Italy

00:10 Cold Water Gold
01:00 The Long Road Home

00:20 Savage Kingdom: Uprising
01:10 Deadly Instincts

00:15 Little Loopers
01:50 Alone For Christmas

08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 SpongeBob SquarePants

00:45 Shimmer And Shine
00:39 Shimmer And Shine

00:10 Cold Water Gold
01:00 The Long Road Home

00:15 Little Loopers
01:50 Alone For Christmas

00:15 Little Loopers
01:50 Alone For Christmas

07:30 My Sister
09:30 Things We Lost In The Fire

00:05 Boyz In The Hood
02:05 Calendar Girls

00:15 The Assignment
03:00 Big Hero 6

00:00 Three
01:00 Three

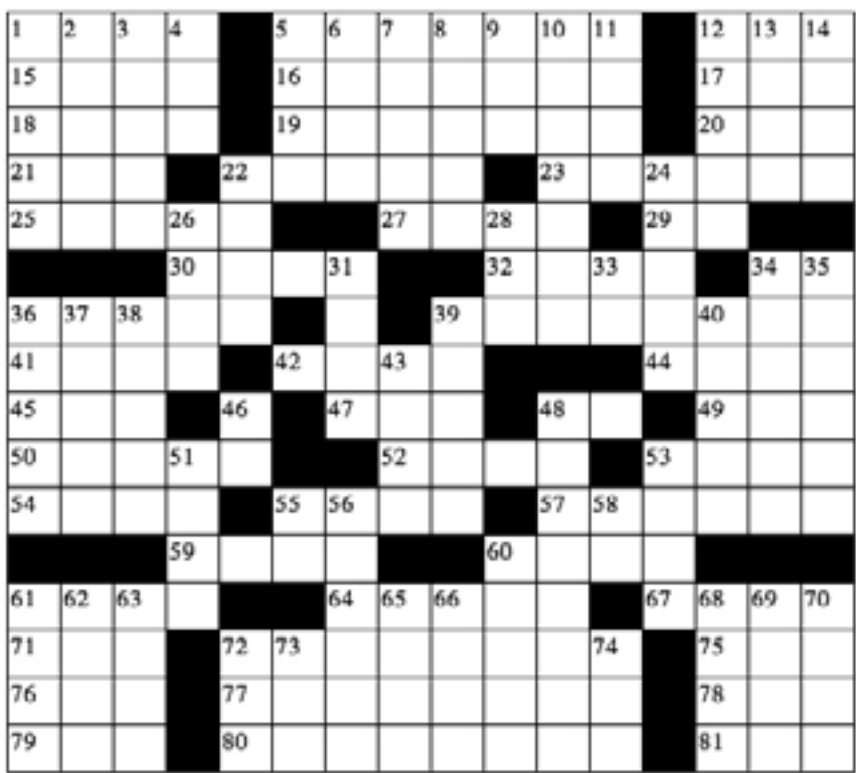
00:20 Meet The Putmans
01:05 Hair Goddess

00:20 Meet The Putmans
01:05 Hair Goddess



Stars

CROSSWORD 1775



ACROSS

- 1. A island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
5. A subject or pursuit that occupies one's time and thoughts (usually pleasantly).
12. A shape that sags.
15. (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
16. Dressed or clothed especially in fine attire.
17. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
18. Similar to the striped mullet and takes its place in the Caribbean region.
19. The work of carting.
20. Tag the base runner to get him out.
21. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
23. The capital of Turkey.
25. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
27. English writer and a central member of the Fabian Society (1858-1943).
29. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
30. The (pre)hensile extremity of the superior limb.
32. A small cake leavened with yeast.
36. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
41. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
42. (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque.
44. (British) A simple board game in which players move counters according to the throw of dice.
45. A luminance unit equal to 1 candle per square meter measured perpendicular to the rays from the source.
47. Relating to or characteristic of or occurring on the sea or ships.
49. The act of slowing down or falling behind.
50. A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
52. A member of the Siouan people inhabiting the valleys of the Platte and Missouri rivers in Nebraska.
54. King of Saudi Arabia since 1982 (born in 1922).
57. 40th President of the United States (1911-59).
59. A three-tone Chadic language.
61. Speaking a Slavic language.
64. Russian country house.
67. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
71. Someone who is morally reprehensible.
75. Someone (especially a woman) who annoys people by constantly finding fault.
76. A benevolent aspect of Devi.
77. Of or relating to or characteristic of Lebanon or its people.
78. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
79. An informal term for a father.
80. Excited by sudden surprise or alarm and making a quick involuntary movement.
81. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.

DOWN

- 7. Of a pale yellow color like straw.
8. A levy of one tenth of something.
9. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
10. Large Old World bat of warm and tropical regions that feeds on fruit.
11. Any place of complete bliss and delight and peace.
12. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
13. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
14. An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
22. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
24. A village of huts for native Africans in southern Africa.
26. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
28. (computer science) A computer that is running software that allows users to leave messages and access information of general interest.
31. A software system that facilitates the creation and maintenance and use of an electronic database.
33. A nonmetallic largely pentavalent heavy volatile corrosive dark brown liquid element belonging to the halogens.
34. A member of an agricultural people of southern India.
35. A favorite saying of a sect or political group.
37. Any plant of the genus Erica.
38. All the loaves of bread baked at the same time.
39. Italian violin maker in Cremona.
40. A Russian prison camp for political prisoners.
43. (in Gnosticism) A divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of the universe.
46. A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances.
48. Provide with a terrace, as of a house.
51. A television system that has more than the usual number of lines per frame so its pictures show more detail.
53. Port city in northwestern Belgium and industrial center.
55. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
56. A member of an agricultural people in southeastern India.
58. The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
60. A simple machine consisting of a circular frame with spokes (or a solid disc) that can rotate on a shaft or axle (as in vehicles or other machines).
62. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
63. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
65. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
66. Having the slant of a bevel.
68. Small buffalo of the Celebes having small straight horns.
69. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
70. A city in northern India.
72. Thickening of tissue in the motor tracts of the lateral columns and anterior horns of the spinal cord.
73. Remaining after all deductions.
74. (Brit) A tough youth of 1950's and 1960's wearing Edwardian style clothes.

DOWN

- 1. Food mixtures either arranged on a plate or tossed and served with a moist dressing.
2. (law) A defense by an accused person purporting to show that he or she could not have committed the crime in question.
3. A street of small shops (especially in Orient).
4. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
5. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
6. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You are very clearheaded and able to view all of the alternate paths—you are in a planning mood. Go ahead and make those decisions. You can see the road ahead and will make the right choices. Someone will understand just how you feel and be on your side. You should feel appreciated or valued for your feelings and your ability to take action and get things accomplished. Along with your humor, others may see your somewhat eccentric nature. You could conceivably have new insights or breakthroughs with regard to your living situation or life circumstances. Those around you may value you for your independence and unique qualities. Volunteer work appeals to you and today you will find a way to serve. It's a super time to work or play with family.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your feeling of responsibility and sheer determination may not allow you to admit any feelings of vulnerability and sensitivity that may be coming to your attention. You are careful to block any power struggle, and a careful compromise may have to be found. You have a natural sense for communicating with those around you, especially those that are younger than you. Clear and positive thoughts about the past will be easy to find. You are sharp witted with great ideas and clear thoughts. You may have quite a bit to do with children and young people now and this should bring some fun into your life. This is an excellent time to make decisions and take care of mental work. Things are working with rather than against you so, don't hold back.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may want to delay any anticipated travel plans, as they could be more trouble to you than they are worth; reschedule, if possible. Ideas and communications are topics of interest and concern for you just now. Getting the facts and making sure that people get your message straight can make all the difference in the world; any shortcomings in these areas could cause problems. This is a time when new information may come to light that could make it clear that a change of plans or outlook may be to your benefit. Keep both eyes wide open and an ear to the ground. You are in a learning phase now and that means adapting to changing circumstances. Your energies and feelings will be directed toward solutions and moving forward at this time.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your emotional drive and desire to succeed trumps any doubts you may have—you know the way to success. You could make some bad decisions, but you are watchful and take care to ask questions and listen to advice. This would be a good time to get down to long talks with your business partner. You may decide on a sensible budget, or you may set aside certain days to spend more time in teamwork. You and your loved ones may become involved in some kind of sporting activity and this will be successful for you on many different levels. New and perhaps unusual ways of appreciating and loving may be possible now. You may discover something new about love or may adopt a different and unconventional value system for a time.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Fate sends opportunity your way. New information can change your outlook and your life, but you must be on the lookout for it. Money, sensuality and health can be a focus for this—travel may help to decide the outcome. Gurus and ideologies of one kind or another—religious, political, philosophical and such—may seem to have all the answers at this time. Be very careful to be aware of your belief system and that you are not deceived or led astray. Your powers of intuition are reaching a new high and you could even find yourself experiencing something on a psychic or spiritual level. Inner thoughts and feelings are very important to you just now. This evening is a good time to plan new goals or to help a loved one shape any future plans.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Romantic and social relationships are apt to be in a state of change now. There could be a new understanding with regard to the consideration of others. You may critique the impact of words and actions and become interested in how to instruct, correct and direct others in subjects that are not easily described. Money matters require attention. Things need fixing and much of your day is spent doing just that, replacing light bulbs, cleaning out filters and other similar tasks. Travel, communicating and other connections with people are emphasized now. Let any breakdowns or weaknesses in these links be a signal of the need to rethink your approach and establish new directions—otherwise, you may find yourself stranded. You gain from the ideas of the young.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You should find yourself having a clear vision into your own inner sense of values: how you appreciate and love. This is a good time to examine and ponder what is important and of lasting value. This should be a great time for new achievements. Your activities today may be centered near water and could involve travel—an ocean voyage is not out of the question. Take time to strengthen your energies today with good nutritional meals. Remember to at least say you want a rain check as your appointment book becomes full. Your path of personal improvement becomes more powerful now. An issue that you are involved with now deserves your full attention. Perhaps you will find new ways to improve community communications.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a time when you will want to create some changes and you may find yourself examining your foundations—responsibilities and basic security. You can get rid of all that is unsound or superficial, leaving only that which has been properly determined or solid. You get down to the basics, which may come as a need to balance the budget or plan some future event. Your analytical insights and getting to the heart of subjects will be most positive at this time. Outer conditions seem to work in your favor. You may find that you are more organized than before and you are able to reach new levels of self-discipline. Modifications in your thinking can lead you to an entirely different approach to life—tap into your inner resources.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

A change of residence is possible now, perhaps a long-distance relocation. Educational plans need changing, as you now realize that they do not suit you as well as you would like. Anything connected with publishing, advertising or broadcasting requires reexamination. A change of plans or perspective gives you the upper hand. You may take a keen interest in religion, or even mysticism, and you feel great empathy for others. You may be a great help to a business associate or even a stranger because your compassion is heightened. You encourage others to be more charitable. Your natural psychic abilities are aroused today. You use your psychic talents to help you solve and resolve whatever challenges you find in your life at this time.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You tend to family and domestic duties like a real trooper. This may include a bit of decorating as well as paying bills. Do not let feelings get in the way of real judgment. Seeing that your personal business is taken care of may be a major theme where your emotional orientation is concerned. You crave organization and you want to get things established. If you have your way, you will find a place for everything and keep everything in its place. You are open to unexpected adventures this afternoon and may find one when you visit a mall or a local bazaar. A good week is coming up for you as you renew old acquaintances and reestablish family ties. Work should go along smoothly for the most part with a chance of advancement.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Clearing up any misunderstandings is an important issue today. Missing information is likely the only problem. Be sure that you get all of the facts and be sure that you understand the situation; make your ideas known. You will flourish by pursuing your ideals and most deep-seated dreams of how life could be. In a group gathering later today you may notice that your popularity soars. You enjoy the interaction with others and may be very influential to the young people around you as well. Relationships, group efforts and your general outlook on life are harmonious. The spirit of cooperation and sharp mental activities make it fun and easy for you to make friends and influence people for the positive. There is time to relax this evening... Music fills the air.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Do not forget that working together brings the greatest joy for a family. You may be reminded of a dream from last night. There is an important message for you: if you do not get it the first time it may be repeated in a future dream, so be on the alert. It might be fun to begin a dream diary for the next couple of weeks. Neighborhood gatherings or projects can be fun. You may consider taking on a leadership role in some project now. Reach out to your neighbors with some logical ideas. This is a good time for you in other matters such as affairs of the heart, entertainment ideas and perhaps new and fun treats to send to family and friends in another state. As you plan for the holidays ahead you may be pleased to find your financial investments are in an upswing.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Chess

Find and circle all of the Chess words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message. Note: QUEEN and QUEENING are separately hidden and do not overlap.



- ATTACK, BISHOP, BLITZ CHESS, BLOCKED, BLUNDER, CAPTURE, CASTLING, CENTER, CHECKMATE, CHESSBOARD, CHAMPIONSHIP, DEEP BLUE, DIAGONAL, EN PASSANT, ENDGAME, KIBITZING, KING, KNIGHT, LOSE, MATE IN TWO, MIDDLEGAME, GAMBIT, GRANDMASTER, JUMP, KASPAROV, KING, KING, ROOK, SACRIFICE, STALEMATE, TOURNAMENT, WIN, PAWN, PIECE, PROMOTION, QUEEN, QUEENING, ROOK, SACRIFICE, STALEMATE, TOURNAMENT, WIN.

Yesterday's Solution

Cheerleading - All Star

A large word search grid for cheerleading terms with a list of words including AERIAL, ALL STARS, ARCH, AROUND THE WORLD, BACK BEND, BOW AND ARROW, CARTWHEELS, CHOREOGRAPHER, COACH, COMPETITIONS, CRADLE CATCH, DIAGONAL, DIAMOND HEAD, DIVE ROLL, DOUBLE CLIFF, DOUBLE FULL, DOUBLE HOOK, EXTENSION, FEETS, FLAT BACKS, FLIP FLIP, FOUNTAIN, FRIG JUMP, HANDSPRINGS, HANDSTAND, JUMPS, KICK OUT, KICK OVER, KNEE DROPS, LAYOUT, LOG ROLL, LOW V, NATIONALS, SCALE, SCISSORS, SCOTCHION, SHOULDER STAND, SKIT, SPLIT, PRESS DOWN, REBOUND, STICKING IT, SUPERMAN, TEAMS, THE SUMMIT, TRIF CRADLE, TUCK, TUMBLING, WHIRLWIND, WORLDS.

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





It's the perfect time to learn kite-flying basics

# Send 'em soaring

By JAMIE GUMBRECHT  
McClatchy Newspapers

With a little luck and a gentle breeze — and a few tips from experts — you may never know a plummeting kite again. We asked Byron Bell and Jessica Mayes, a kite-flying couple and members of KICK — Kite Flyers in Central Kentucky — to share how to choose the best kite for you.

But there are a few essentials to consider before you get started:

- In some areas, spring and fall are best seasons for kites. But if you're going to the beach, you'll likely be able to fly a kite any time of the year.
- If the wind is slower than 5 mph, you're probably wasting your time. If it gets over 20 mph, expect a broken kite. The ideal wind speed is from 5 mph to 12 mph.
- A kite can cost as little as \$50 and as much as \$1,000. Find the right kite for your skill level and interest. And try shopping online or ordering with a club for wholesale prices.

## HORNBEAM SLED KITE

For your first plunge into kite making, the "sled" is hard to beat. It's the ultimate in simplicity — two sticks and a plastic bag — and it's a great kite for kids. The Hornbeam design, featuring a crescent-shaped cutout at the leading edge, eases the sled's tendency to collapse in side winds. These directions are for a 24-inch kite, but the design easily can be scaled up to larger dimensions. However, sled kites develop lots of "pull" as they grow in size. Sleds like steady, light winds.

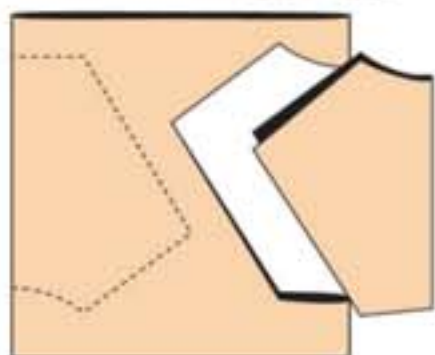
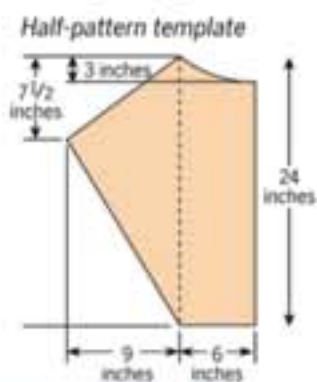
Kitchen garbage bags make nice sled kites, as do plastic lawn bags. You can decorate them with markers or colorful stickers. Plastic shopping bags also work well, and they often come already decorated.

### Materials and tools

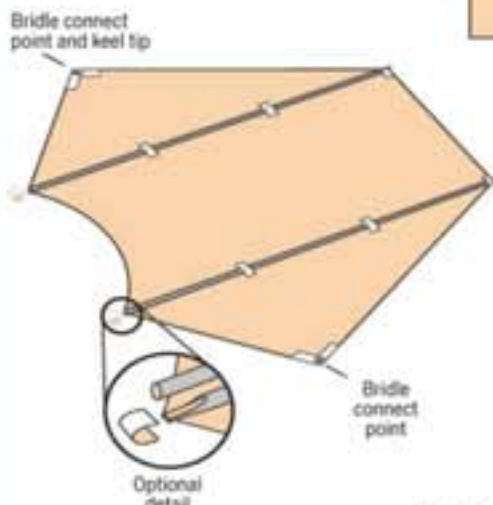
- 1 large plastic kitchen garbage bag (13 gal. size, 2 feet by 2 feet 5½ inches)
- 2 hardwood dowels, ¼ inch by 24 inches
- Fiberglass-reinforced strapping/packing tape
- straightedge or yardstick
- sharp knife

1. Following the measurements in the illustration, make the half-pattern template from heavy paper or cardboard.

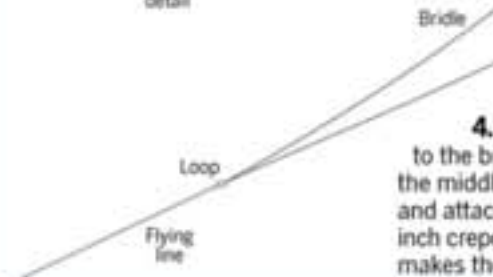
2. Two kites may be cut from one trash bag. Lay the bag flat and align the straight side of the template along the bag's side, as shown at right. Cut out a half-pattern for a complete kite.



3. Use 3-inch strips of tape to secure the dowels in position as shown at left. Reinforce the bridle connect points with an overlapping section of strapping tape; punch holes in the keel tips for the bridle. (Optional detail: The tape will hold the dowel tips more securely if the dowel ends are sanded flat as shown.)



4. For the bridle, tie a 12-foot piece of string to the bridle connect points, then form a loop at the middle of the bridle using an overhand knot and attach the flying line. Adding two 6-foot by 1-inch crepe paper tails to the aft ends of the dowels makes the kite more stable in higher winds.



KITE PHOTOS COURTESY OF PREMIER KITES



## TYPES OF KITES

Here are some basic types of kites, along with examples from the catalog of Premier Kites, a major online source for kites based in Hyattsville, Md. ([www.premierkites.com](http://www.premierkites.com)).

### Diamonds

These classically shaped kites are old favorites for a reason: They're easy to find or build on your own. Most need a tail to be good fliers. **Who should use it:** Anybody, especially kids and inexperienced fliers. **When to use it:** Winds 7-20 mph (when leaves and twigs are constantly moving up to when small trees will sway). **What the fliers say:** "The tail on the kite gives it some stability," Mayes says. "It helps aerodynamically to get some lift."

### Rokkakus

Rokkakus are six-sided Japanese kites that are taller than they are wide. They're sometimes used in battles where the fliers try to ground each others' kites while they're in the air. (These fights are popular in several Asian countries, although people there often use small, diamond kites with glass-coated line for cutting.) **Who should use it:** Only fliers with practice — fighter kites can be tough to handle. **When to use it:** Winds 4-18 mph. **What the fliers say:** "I don't think anybody's going to have rokkaku battles" at kite festivals, Bell says.

### Box kites

Box kites are part of a branch called cellular kites. They can be big, like the one above, and complex looking, but a lightweight one is easy to fly. **Who should use it:** Anybody tired of the old diamonds and deltas. **When to use it:** Winds 7-20 mph (when leaves and twigs are constantly moving up to when small trees will sway). **What the fliers say:** "More complicated to build but very easy to fly," Bell says. "I used to make them from dowel rods and model airplane paper. Alexander Graham Bell made some huge cellular kites also."

### Deltas

This kite doesn't have the iconic diamond shape, but it's popular for being easy to fly, especially in low-wind situations. **Who should use it:** Anybody, especially kids and inexperienced fliers. **When to use it:** Winds 5-18 mph (from when you can feel wind on exposed skin up to when small trees will sway). **What the fliers say:** "It's more like a miniature hang glider," Bell says.

### Sport kites

Sport kites are steerable and often used for stunts. (Think synchronized swimming without the water.) They use two or more lines, instead of the single line found on many other kites. **Who should use it:** Anybody can figure them out, but don't expect to be a daredevil on your first fly. **When to use it:** Winds 4-20 mph. **What the fliers say:** With dual lines, "you can steer those left and right," Mayes says. "The more lines, the more control and the more difficult to fly."

### Soft kites

Soft kites inflate like a large balloon and require a lot of wind and strength to manage. They come in shapes such as fish or puppies or giant blue or orange lobsters. **Who should use it:** Strong fliers with a sense of humor and patience — you'll have to wait for wind and answer to excited crowds. **When to use it:** Winds 9-22 mph. **What the fliers say:** "The kite club has a 21-foot inflatable lobster, but you have to get a pretty good wind to get it going," Mayes says.

## SAFETY TIPS

- **Don't** fly a kite around power lines or in a thunderstorm. Everything your mother told you is true.
- **Don't** fly a kite anywhere near traffic. It was cool to see your kite a few hundred feet in the air, until it came down and landed on a car's windshield.
- **Don't** run with the kite. Seems innocent, but if you're running and watching your big beautiful kite, you won't notice the tree/telephone pole/small child/picnic table in front of you.
- **Don't** fly a kite within 5 miles of an airport or 500 feet above the earth's surface. The feds and pilots don't find it cute or impressive.
- **Don't** let the wind unravel the line in your hands. Ouch. That'll burn later.
- **Don't** fly kites near trees, and never climb to get one back. Charlie Brown had a kite-eating tree, not a kitespitting tree or a kite-growing tree.



## Lifestyle | Gossip

## Rag'n'Bone Man splashed out on saucepans



Rag'n'Bone Man has used the money from his hit album to buy a "nice set of kitchen knives and saucepans". The 'Human' hitmaker catapulted to fame with his hit single and LP of the same name but he insists he has only used the money to treat himself to small things so far. He said: "People think all musicians are millionaires, but, even if you are successful, you don't get to see that money for a long time. I've been able to treat myself - I bought a nice set of kitchen knives and saucepans. I love cooking, Beth's vegetarian and I do a veggie fry-up for lunch." And if the music didn't work out in the end, the 32-year-old singer would be straight back to work as a carer. He added: "After I left school, I washed cars for five years, then became a carer for children with Down's syndrome. I'd never considered music as a career. "I did local gigs when I was at school, and every year it just kind of grew. Then, suddenly, it went haywire. I released the Human single last year and my debut album earlier this year, and it got to No 1. How did that happen? ... "If the music career comes to an end, I'd go back into the care industry. You've got thousands of stressed-out parents of disabled children getting no help." And the 'Skin' hitmaker - whose real name is Rory Graham - insists his new focus is getting health for his son Reuben, who he shares with his partner Beth Rouy. He told The Sunday Times magazine: "Since Reuben was born, I've tried to look after myself a bit more. I've always been big - I was 6ft even in year 10 - but I've never felt unhealthy. And it doesn't worry me from a vanity point of view. But I would like to lose a stone or two for the boy. I've started swimming in the afternoon and cut down on the smoking - not to mention the recreational smoking. When I'm not on tour, nights are just me, Beth and Reuben."

## Sparks planning Trump song

Sparks want to rework 'Everybody's Stupid' in honor of President Donald Trump and his wife. The duo have previously name-checked First Ladies Jacqueline Kennedy and Mary Lincoln in their songs and joked revisiting one of their old songs would "probably work" if they wanted to reference the current US leader's spouse, Melania Trump. Asked if they'd do a song about Melania, singer Russell Mael said: "There's a song we did already called 'Everybody's Stupid'. That could probably work. We'll do a re-recorded version of that. An updated version. His brother, keyboardist Ron Mael added: "I think 'Help' would be a good song title." But the brothers don't want to write a song about the controversial president because they think it is too obvious to point out the fact he is a "bad guy". Asked if it's hard to be ironic in the age of Trump, identity politics and nuclear testing, Russell said: "You can't concoct anything that's on the level of all of those things you've mentioned. "That is one of the reasons why we steer away from doing anything overly political - like referencing Trump or things that are happening in the world. It seems one dimensional to sing. 'Ain't Trump a bad guy?' We know he's a bad guy and our saying that probably isn't going to help anything." However, the 'This Town Ain't Big Enough For the Both Of Us' hitmakers do like songs, which reference real people. Ron told Q magazine: "You don't often see proper names in songs. Apart from maybe 'Bette Davis Eyes'. So many lyrics just seemed generic. At least when you have a proper name it is pointed in some sort of way and you can work backwards and try to figure out what the song is about."



## Lauren Jauregui enjoying 'branching out' from 5H

Lauren Jauregui is enjoying "branching out" from Fifth Harmony and "exploring" her own sound. The 21-year-old singer - who has collaborated solo with the likes of Steve Aoki and Halsey - thinks it is "really cool" that the group have been able to work on their own music as well as with the band. She said: "I mean, all of us are exploring [our own projects] right now. We're at such an amazing place harmoniously with each other with communication and support for one another. We've grown so much over the past year even, and I love genuinely being able to explore myself and know that my girls are there for me. "It's really cool, because we're branching out to creatively discover ourselves, because we never really got an opportunity to do that since we started this when we were ... I was like 16 when I started. It's cool to be able to give each other that space to really explore ourselves individually and grow." However, the 'Work From Home' hitmaker insists the group are still "really focused" on the band's musical offerings too. She added to Entertainment Tonight: "We're still promoting this [album] and we're touring a little bit next year in Australia and Asia in March ... and hopefully we'll do a US and Europe run. We're really focused still on this album. [Fifth Harmony] is so fire and it's our best work thus far, so I'm grateful for that, and hopefully we can keep exploring that. That'll be amazing."

## Ronson felt intimidated producing Queens of the Stone Age's album

Mark Ronson found it "intimidating" producing Queens of the Stone Age's new album. The 42-year-old producer thinks frontman Josh Homme is incredibly talented and can do "everything" better than him, so it was awkward having to direct him in the studio on new LP 'Villains'. Mark said: "He's a great songwriter, lyricist, producer, and arranger who also has the ost sublime falsetto. He knows more about gear than any engineer. "He's like Sly, D'Angelo, Jack White, McCartney, people who can do everything better than you. It's quite intimidating. His quality bar is so high." Thankfully, Mark was able to meet Josh's tough standards on the record. The singer added: "My name is not by the producer credit, because it's Ronson's victory or loss to carry. He really did an amazing job." The 'No One Knows' hitmaker turned to Mark to produce the record because he was looking for a completely new direction. He said: "It doesn't take a rocket surgeon to understand that he was asking me to be on the Gaga record to bridge the gap. I was like, 'Why deny signs along the road? Why not band together and break as many preconceived notions as we can.' It's that word again - to agitate. It's flashing again now - agitate now, agitate now." Josh was also driven to go further following the mass shooting at an Eagles of Death Metal - his other occasional band - concert in Paris in 2015, though he wasn't there, and also the death of David Bowie, which happened while he was producing a record for the 'Absolute Beginners' hitmaker's friend Iggy Pop. He told Mojo magazine: "When I was younger, I almost drowned - and when I got out of the water, I remember thinking, 'I'm never gonna wait...' So after Batacan and Iggy, the word now just kept pulsing like a heartbeat in glaring lights. This is it, every step is all you get. Take a chance. From top to tail, I've always thought of Queens as a dance band."



## Moby's global success made him the 'worst version' of himself

Moby's global success made him the "worst version" of himself. The 52-year-old musician hit the big time with his 1999 album 'Play' - which sold over 10 million copies and have every track licensed to films, TV shows and adverts - and he has admitted the attention he received made him "insane" while he indulged in a lot of "depraved" behavior. He told Mojo magazine: "A lot of degeneracy, depravity, hedonism, sybaritic behavior came after that... "I had a lot of insecurity and in the course of just a few months, you had everyone in the world celebrating you like you're some demi-god. "Every woman you've ever longed for is suddenly in love with you. "It didn't just make me insane, it made me the worst version of myself that I could be. "I became entitled but also anxious, my alcoholism went out of control, but so did my self-loathing. It sort of rearranges your neural architecture - wonderful when it's happening but when it starts to go away, that's when you really start to lose your mind." The 'Porcelain' hitmaker admitted there were a lot of "unnecessary" releases connected with the album, but he didn't want his success to end. He said: "We mined the album to the point where there was nothing left. The last real single was a version of 'Honey' with Kelis and Pharrell. "Play' had been out for two years and I remember thinking, 'This is just unnecessary'. But I wanted that success to go on forever. "I wanted to stay drunk and promiscuous ad surrounded by sycophants." And after reaching the peak of success, Moby admitted he then had a seven-year downward spiral behind closed doors. He said: "The next seven years was a downward spiral of entitlement and bitterness and belligerence... it didn't happen in public much, it happened on tour buses at four in the morning or in my apartment after 15 drinks and \$300 worth of cocaine. "For a while it did bother me, that nothing I did after that had the same level of success and to my shame there was a time in the 2000s when I desperately wanted to claw my way back to the success I'd had with 'Play.'"

## Grammer's new song was lullaby to baby daughter



Andy Grammer's new song was originally a lullaby he sang to his baby daughter. The 33-year-old singer-songwriter has revealed his new track 'Always' - taken from his new album 'The Good Parts' - holds a special place in his heart because he played it to his now-three-month-old daughter Louisiana to get her to sleep. Speaking to Billboard, he said: "I was singing that to my daughter right when she was born, and she was still kind of crying. I'd put her in a little cart and do a lap singing that song to her. It's very sweet and emotionally connected to me... I've been bumping it in the car - me and my little three-month-old, we go to coffee dates every morning and I play that song to her, it's so sweet." And that wasn't the only song on the album that he played to little Louisiana as he has admitted 'Spaceships' was one he sang to her while she was in the womb. He explained: "That's like, the best bridge I've ever written, which is comparing to the womb - which is the world before this world - and wherever you go when you die as the place after. As I was singing into the womb to try and let Louie know that she was coming to someone that loves her, I imagined, while I was singing to her, 'Ah, I wonder whether my mom is doing that to me from wherever she's at?' She passed away. But that's such a cool idea." 'The Good Parts', which was released last week, features some of Andy's most personal songs - including 'Smoke Clears', which documented his health scare. He said: "It's very autobiographical, about a health scare that happened when we were on vacation in Ireland. I fainted in the shower and chipped my tooth and looked like I was having a seizure because I hadn't slept in like, two years."

## Pearl Jam announce London shows for 2018

Pearl Jam have announced two huge London shows for their 2018 European Tour. The 'Jeremy' grunge icons have confirmed they will perform their sole UK dates in the capital next summer as they embark on a 14-date tour. While a full UK leg hasn't been announced, the rockers will still be playing two shows at the O2 Arena on June 18 and 19 as part of the upcoming run on the road. The tour kicks off on June 12 at the Ziggo Dome in Amsterdam, followed by a set at Pinkpop Festival in Landgraaf. After the two London dates, Pearl Jam - made up of Eddie Vedder, Mike McCready, Stone Gossard, Jeff Ament and Matt Cameron - will move on to play in cities like Rome, Prague, Berlin and Barcelona, before bringing proceedings to a close at NOS Alive Festival in Lisbon on July 14. They'll headline the huge event in Portugal in the summer, playing alongside the likes of Queens of the Stone Age and Wolf Alice. Earlier this year, it was reported that Vedder signed a cheque for around £22,000 to continue Pearl Jam's concert after the curfew at Dublin's 3Arena. The 'Better Man' hitmakers ended up doing a mighty 32 songs at the show in June, and a fan has claimed the 52-year-old rocker paid the staggering amount to perform beyond the 11pm time limit. Eddie is believed to have walked off stage briefly to sort out the money before continuing to perform the rest of the set, which included Bob Dylan covers. A fan wrote on the group's forum on PearlJam.com: "A lad who works at the 3Arena said Eddie walked off stage and signed a cheque for £25,000 (£22,000) so he could keep playing."





Lifestyle | Features

# Mark Hamill won't be defined by Star Wars role



Mark Hamill doesn't think being Luke Skywalker "dominates" his career. The 66-year-old actor won't let himself be defined by his role in the 'Star Wars' franchise and insists he isn't "bothered" by it as he never expected to be remembered for anything he's done in his career. He said: "I don't see Luke dominating my career. It just doesn't bother me, because I didn't expect to be remembered for anything. I wanted to be a character actor, and about all the best character actors, people say, 'Oh, that guy, I can't remember his name.' "Look at Richard Riehle. He is as solid as it gets, always word-perfect. He knows his lines and he knows yours. He is the most incredibly versatile actor. Those are the people I really admire." However, the 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' actor did recall one time where he was refused a role because of his Star Wars success. He added: "I could have done Amadeus the film. Milos Forman had me over to his suite. He was interviewing people to play Constanze, Mozart's wife, and I was in his suite from nine in the morning until six at night. "At lunch, I asked him flat out, 'Milos, why can't you consider me to play Mozart - because I've done it on Broadway?' He said, 'Oh, Mark, no one is going to believe that Luke Skywalker is Mozart.'" Mark is thrilled with how well the science fiction franchise has been received over the years and thinks that is due to the fact that people are looking for "escapism". He told The Sunday Times' Culture magazine: "People need escapism. They need to be able to get to a happy place, whether it's Oz or Middle-earth or Hogwarts - or a galaxy far, far away. It's an escape from the dreary reality of life. I totally understand it."

# Dame Judi Dench's vision struggle



Dame Judi Dench is finding it difficult to watch her down movies. The 82-year-old actress has been battling with macular degeneration, which causes a person to experience a gradual loss of vision, and admits it is "not so much fun" to watch films as she misses some parts of the movie. Speaking at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival in California, where she was honored for her long career, she said: "I do go [to the movies] but a friend of mine usually has to say, 'He's kissing her now' or, 'He's walking away. A lot of things I miss. It's not so much fun.'" It comes after Judi admitted she struggles to read the scripts at time and has to have it printed in extra-large font but insists it won't make her give up on her career. She explained: "I just want to go on being mobile really and able to do things. I'm not going to be beaten by my eyes for instance. "I have macular degeneration, which means treatment every six weeks, but you just have to settle for it. On my scripts, my font is point-size 22, so you can imagine...if we're doing a sonnet of 14 lines, all the others will have one page and I'll have 14. It's ridiculous, it's a farce, but I'm not going to give in." Judi also finds it very therapeutic when she paints. She shared: "She shared: "I paint a lot and now I find it very, very difficult because if I look at something and then look back here, my eyes don't adjust quickly enough to actually transfer that. "Then I thought, 'That's what's painting is about. You should paint what you see.' And therefore it doesn't matter - don't translate it literally, translate it in the only way you can. It's a different system."

## Winslet auditioned for Titanic with Matthew McConaughey

Kate Winslet auditioned for 'Titanic' with Matthew McConaughey. The 42-year-old actress became a global sensation 20 years ago when she nabbed the leading role of Rose DeWitt Bukate alongside Leonardo DiCaprio's Jack Dawson in the romantic disaster film but, although Paramount and the director James Cameron were in two minds about who to cast as the handsome orphan, she has admitted she actually went for the part alongside the 48-year-old actor. Speaking on 'The Late Show with Stephen Colbert', the host said: "Paramount wanted Matthew McConaughey for the role of Jack but [James] Cameron insisted on Leo, how would that have changed things?" To which Kate said: "'I auditioned with Matthew, isn't that weird? "I've never said that in public before!" Although Leonardo's character Jack spent the majority of his scenes in the freezing water, Kate has admitted she's the one who got sick with hypothermia because the vast filming location made it impossible for the crew to warm the water up. She confessed: "I did get hypothermia. It was really cold!" Despite getting ill from the final scenes, it didn't put Kate off doing any other water work as she has demanded to do all "her own" acting in the water in 'Avatar 2'. Cameron - who is also directing Avatar 2 - said previously: "She does, and she's very excited about it. She blazed through for a couple of days of rehearsals and saw the world that we had created, and how we do the work, and she's very excited. She plays a character who's part of the Sea People, the reef people. The one thing she did do is demand that she do all her own water work. I said, 'Alright, that's fine, we'll have to teach you how to free dive.' The other actors are up to three- and four-minute breath holds. We've already been doing underwater capture. We did a scene last week with six teenagers, well, actually five teenagers and one seven-year-old underwater holding their breath for a couple minutes and acting, actually doing a dialogue scene under water because they speak kind of a sign language."

## Angelina Jolie wants 'First They Killed My Father' to inspire viewers



Angelina Jolie hopes her new film will encourage people to go to Cambodia. The 42-year-old actress-turned-director made 'First They Killed My Father' - which is based on author Lung Ung's account of the Khmer Rouge 1975-79 regime - in the Asian country, and though it depicts an incredibly difficult period in history, she wants viewers to see past that and embrace the "beautiful" land and its people. She told Psychologies magazine: "I love this country so much and I hope that when people see the film, they don't just see the war and the suffering, but they get to really know this Cambodian family. "My wish is that they see the beautiful culture, language and talented artists. I hope that people will come and bring work and travel to Cambodia." And Angelina - who raises Maddox, 16, Pax, 13, Zahara, 12, Shiloh, 11, and nine-year-old twins Knox and Vivienne with estranged husband Brad Pitt - thought it was very "special and beautiful" to work on the movie with so many local creatives. She said: "I was so proud of everybody in Cambodia and how hard they worked and participated in the creation of the film. "It was also important for them, because one of the first steps the Khmer Rouge took was to kill all the artists and writers and anyone who could be creative and expressive. So seeing Cambodian artists contributing to this film was special and beautiful." But the filmmaker was also aware it was a "painful" period to recreate, so she made sure there was always help and support on hand. She added: "It was painful for everyone - you can imagine how hard it was for them to relive certain moments. "Seeing Khmer Rouge soldiers marching up brought many traumatic memories. That's why we made therapy available on the set for anyone who needed it. "We were constantly talking about every scene and it was a way of bringing the crew together as a community. It was a cathartic process."

## Jodie Foster needs a year off after acting



Jodie Foster needs a year off after each acting role. The 54-year-old star admitted she finds it much easier to recover after completing a directing job than she does when she's been working on screen. She said: "The thing with directing is that it's hard, it's difficult and taxing, but once I've had a good sleep for about five days, I'm ready to get on the boat again. "As an actor? I have to go on vacation for a year - a year minimum - before I'm ready to come back." The 'Silence of the Lambs' star - who has sons Charlie, 19, and Kit, 16, with former partner Cydney Bernard and is married to photographer Alexandra Hedison - frequently takes breaks from her career because she thinks it is important to invest her time in relationships with the people who matter to her. She said: "Sometimes people say, 'Gosh, you only act once every three years, what have you been doing?' I scratch my head and say, 'What have I been doing? Have I been water-skiing? No. Have I been learning to use the computer? No.' "There's a lot of time that goes into being a good mother, a good daughter, a good friend. Listening to other people and what they're going through. And saying, 'I can take care of that.' I want to have that time open. If I fill it up with a bunch of trivial things - even things I could make money for - I feel like I won't have time to be the person I hope all this is for. That's what I try to do."

## Queen biopic suspended due to 'health matters' affecting director Bryan Singer

Filming for the forthcoming 'Bohemian Rhapsody' has been temporarily suspended. Twentieth Century Fox have been forced to halt production for the Freddie Mercury biopic due to a personal "health matter" affecting the producer Bryan Singer. A statement released to the BBC by the studio said: "Twentieth Century Fox Film has temporarily halted production on 'Bohemian Rhapsody' due to the unexpected unavailability of Bryan Singer due to a personal health matter concerning Bryan and his family... Bryan hopes to get back to work on the film soon after the holidays." A source has told 'The Hollywood Reporter' that Singer, 52, didn't return to filming, which is taking place in the UK, after the Thanksgiving break and producers were reportedly talking about "potentially replacing him" with a new director. Despite the delay, it's thought the December 2018 release date will stay the same. 'Bohemian Rhapsody' will chart the rock band's story up to their appearance at the Live Aid charity concert in 1985. Tom Hollander will portray Queen managers John Reid and Jim Beach respectively in the British band's biopic. Reid - who also managed Sir Elton John - departed Queen in 1978 after three years at the helm. Beach took over in 1978 and is still the band's manager today. Ben Hardy will portray drummer Roger Taylor, Joe Mazzello is in line to star as bassist John Deacon and Gwilym Lee will play lead guitarist Brian May. Former 'Downton Abbey' actor Allen Leech will star as Freddie's personal manager Paul Prenter, who was employed by the talented frontman from 1977 to 1986 but was later sacked after he betrayed him by selling stories to newspapers. What's more, Lucy Bolton is set to star as Freddie's lifelong companion Mary Austin.



## Mark Hamill almost didn't return to Star Wars

Mark Hamill was reluctant to return to 'Star Wars' as fans are "brutal". The 66-year-old actor starred as Jedi Master Luke Skywalker in the original sci-fi trilogy and is set to reprise his role in the upcoming eighth movie in the franchise 'Star Wars: The Last Jedi', but admitted he was hesitant to come back as he didn't want to ruin "people's memories of it". Speaking to December's edition of American Way Magazine, Hamill said: "On one hand, I liked the idea because, when I look back, I never had so much fun making movies. Ever. "But part of me was very terrified. There was a beginning, a middle and an end. Why go back and take the chance of ruining - or at least tarnishing - people's memories of it? "Fans can be just brutal. Some of the things they said about the prequels were just so over the top. I can see it's not your favorite movie, but it ruined your childhood? Come on. Let's put it in perspective." George Lucas - who created the iconic franchise - personally told Harrison Ford and Carrie Fisher, who played Han Solo and Princess Leia in the original trilogy, that he was retiring and handing over Lucasfilm to Kathleen Kennedy. During their conversation, Lucas revealed that a new trilogy was being planned and if the original stars didn't want to participate, their characters would have been written



out. However, Hamill was "flipping out" at the suggestion. He said: "George sat us down very matter-of-factly and told us he was retiring and turning Lucasfilm over to [co-chair] Kathleen Kennedy. "He didn't say Disney was buying it because, you know, insider trading. I would have gone out and bought stock that day. Inside, I'm going, 'What?!' I am flipping out. Externally, I'm keeping a poker face. But Carrie just leaned over and went, 'I'm in!'" Hamill then only agreed to join the new trilogy after Ford signed on to the new project. The 'Star Wars' legend is set to have a bigger role in the upcoming 'The Last Jedi' this December. — Bang Showbiz





## Lifestyle | Features



A farmer displays a piece of cannabis resin (hashish) near the town of Ketama in Morocco's northern Rif region. — AFP photos



A German tourist stands in a cannabis field near the town of Ketama in Morocco's northern Rif region.



A masked farmer holds on to branches of cannabis in a field near the town of Ketama.

## Tourists roll up for Morocco's cannabis trail

It may not feature in Morocco's official tourism brochures but cannabis attracts thousands of visitors a year to the North African country. At a hotel bar in the northern region of Ketama, German tourist Beatrix made no attempt to hide the joint she was rolling. The 57-year-old said she had fallen in love with the area for "the quality of its hashish and the friendliness of its residents". Hassan, a 40-something sporting a conspicuous gold watch, said cannabis was "our main source of wealth". "The climate here is very special. Nothing grows here except kif," he said, using a Moroccan name for the drug.

Northern Morocco is a key production center for hashish for export to Europe, but it has also seen traffic in the other direction—an influx of European visitors heading to sample the local pleasures. While Moroccan law bans the sale and consumption of the drug, that has not stopped farmers growing vast plantations of it, providing a living for some 90,000 households, according to official figures for 2013, the most recent available. Smoking kif is seen as part of

the local culture, and is largely tolerated by the authorities. Beatrix was among the organizers of the mid-September "Bombola Ganja" festival, essentially an evening gathering of smokers at a hotel swimming pool.

### 'Kifficulteur' tours

Cannabis leaves appeared prominently on the poster on Facebook for the event, alongside the names of trance DJs and a call for cannabis to be legalized for medicinal purposes. Ketama hosts thousands of tourists a year, mostly from Europe but also from other parts of Morocco. "People are attracted by the mountains, the hiking, the climate," hotel director Abdelhamid said. But it has also been famed for its cannabis since the 1960s, when it became popular with hippies seeking the high life. Later it gained a reputation for lawlessness, and by the late 1990s guidebooks were advising tourists to avoid the region entirely. "Tourism saw a sharp decline," Mohamed Aabbout, a local activist, told AFP, adding that "the extension of kif culture to other cities in northern Morocco" was partly to

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Our main source of wealth

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Tourists and consumers take pictures of a farmer extracting cannabis resin (hashish).

blame. Hashish has helped put the town of Chefchaouen, high in the hills 100 kilometers (60 miles) to the west and now buzzing with visitors, well and truly on the map.

"Twenty years ago, the tourists were mainly young Spaniards who came to smoke," one local tour operator said. "Now, non-smokers also come for the blue of the city, highly appreciated by Chinese tourists." Famed for its

narrow alleys lined with striking blue houses, the town is also the main urban center of a region famed for its cannabis production. Small-time dealers and unlicensed guides approach tourists to offer them hashish or a tour of nearby farms to meet the "kifficulteurs"—local cannabis producers.

Chefchaouen guesthouses offer a similar service for around \$18 (15 euros), although

they are careful not to mention it in their brochures. On the terrace of a strategically located cafe, dealer Mohamed approached potential buyers, showing them a large pellet of hash and offering a "field visit" to see how the cannabis is processed. After gathering a group of tourists, he took them to a nearby village. Standing in a field, with cannabis plantations covering the hillsides as far as the eye can see, he pointed out the varieties being cultivated.

"Here you have the Mexican plant, the Afghan and the beldia (Arabic for domestic)," he said. Most farmers in the area import seeds in order to ensure a bigger harvest, he said. Nearby, a group of young French tourists crossed the plantation with another guide. The two groups met in front of a modest building where a farmer tapped a container full of cannabis clippings, collecting the finely powdered resin in a bucket below. Dressed in a Paris Saint-Germain football jersey, one of them said he had just bought a batch of the drug worth \$230 (200 euros).

Women from the village watched the scene with amusement as chickens pecked around the cottage. The farmer took the bucket to his workshop and returned a few minutes later with the finished product—a block of hashish. "Here, you smoke where you want, except in front of the police station," Mohamed said. —AFP



File photo shows Boston Symphony Orchestra music director James Levine conducts the symphony on its opening night performance at Tanglewood in Lenox, Mass. — AP

### Met Opera to investigate alleged conductor teen abuse

The Metropolitan Opera announced Saturday it would investigate claims that its music director sexually abused a teenage boy decades ago, as the US avalanche of misconduct allegations spread to classical music. "We are deeply disturbed by the news articles that are being published online today about James Levine," said the New York house, one of the world's most prestigious opera companies. "We are working on an investigation with outside resources to determine whether charges of sexual misconduct in the 1980s are true, so that we can take appropriate action."

The probe is based on a 2016 Illinois police report, the Met said. But Levine, now 74, continued to work there until now. He conducted a performance of Verdi's "Requiem" at the Lincoln Center on Saturday. "At the time, Mr Levine said that the charges were completely false, and we relied upon the further investigation of the police," the Met said, referring to last year's police report. "We need to determine if these charges are true and, if they are, take appropriate action." The report indicated Levine's alleged abuse of the unnamed man began in 1985 when he was 15, according to The New York Times and New York Post.

Levine, who was in his early 40s at the time, was said to have driven him home and stopped the car in his family's driveway. "He started holding my hand in a prolonged and incredibly sensual way," the alleged victim told the Times, saying the abuse escalated the following summer.

The alleged victim, who aspired to become a conductor, said the abuse continued until 1993 and pushed him to the brink of suicide. "He inflicted shame and guilt on me," the Post quoted the alleged victim as having told police. "Emotionally, I have been hurt by this and confused and paralyzed." A titan in classical music, Levine made his Met debut in 1971, going on to lead more than 2,500 performances of 85 different operas, and working with greats like Luciano Pavarotti and Placido Domingo.

#### 'Alone and afraid'

He was music director at the Met for 40 years before retiring at the end of the 2015-16 season for health reasons—he has Parkinson's disease—but has stayed on as music director emeritus. The allegations cannot be criminally prosecuted as the state's statute of limitations has expired. No charges have been brought. The newspapers said the man first met the maestro as a four-year-old at the Ravinia Music Festival in Chicago's posh North Shore suburbs, where Levine was guest conductor for decades. — AFP

## Midas announces the addition of GLASBORD panels to its products list

Midas International General Trading & Contracting Co W.L.L. held a product launch and workshop for its new product GLASBORD in cooperation with Crane Composites, Inc the event took place in Symphony Style Hotel in the presence of Kamal Jamil, Midas Vice President, Mark Youssef, President of Crane Co MEA, Sofiene Zitoun, Regional Sales Manager of Crane Co MEA, Mohamad Al-Shanti, Midas Sales Manager, Akram Mehio, Brand Manager, in addition to several employees of the two companies and guests from the concerned companies and manufacturers. The event also included a workshop to show the attendees how to install and use the new product.

Furthermore, Midas announced that it has agreed to represent Crane Composites, Inc in the Kuwait market. Crane Composites is a leading manufacturer of fiberglass reinforced plastic (FRP) panels widely used throughout the building products, recreational vehicle, and transportation industries. Crane Composites prides itself on manufacturing a unique one-of-a-kind wall and ceiling protection solution that use both FRP and Surfaseal. The mix is known as GLASBORD panels which today is the best durable and hygienic solution to both walls and ceilings within all type of buildings, where the End User will look for a Hygienic and Durable product that has the lowest cost of maintenance.

"Crane Composites is a Crane Co Company. Crane Co.(NYSE:CR), is a diversified manufacturer of highly engineered industrial products. Since 1855, Crane provides products and solutions to customers in the hydrocarbon processing, petrochemical, chemical, power generation, unattended payment, automated merchandising, aerospace, electronics, transportation and other markets" says Mark Youssef, President of Crane Co MEA "The



Company has four business segments: Fluid Handling, Payment & Merchandising Technologies, Aerospace & Electronics and Engineered Materials. Crane has approximately 11,000 employees globally."

Sofiene Zitoun, MEA Regional Sales Manager of Crane Composites says "Crane Composites made the strategic decision in 2015 to introduce GLASBORD wall covering and ceiling tiles to the Middle East Market. GLASBORD also called FRP with Surfaseal film, is an upgraded FRP solution that provides protection which is highly dent and scratch resistant. Because of its unique process, the Surfaseal finish will not trap soil or bacteria on the panel, the Surface is up to 10 times easier to clean and up to 6 times more stain resistant than any other FRP panels and very much higher than normal traditional building material such as Ceramic, Paint, PVC.

Today, Surfaseal, found only on GLASBORD panels is the best wall and ceiling protection within the Food operation (Kitchen, Catering, and Food pro-

cessing plants), Hospitality, Healthcare, Education and all areas from the Back of house to Front of House where the customer needs an easy and quick solution to install. GLASBORD provides the best ROI because of its low cost of maintenance compared to other building material. GLASBORD is available in panels and can be fixed on all type of surfaces for both new construction and renovation jobs where the End User is looking to

combine unsurpassed Hygiene and durability with high-performance and style. Our strategy is building a strong local partner that will support our End Market and provide an excellent service to our product in each application". Kamal Jamil, VP Midas says "We are proud to announce our partnership with Crane Composites. He added, "Adding this wonderful and important product to other products in the specialized materials section, provides qualitative solutions to the commercial sector, industrial, health, restaurants and food industries.

Midas and Crane Composites form a strong partnership to support customers and provide excellent solution to the Kuwaiti Market. GLASBORD will provide the most Durable and Hygienic performance to walls and ceiling in Kitchen, Food processing plants, Catering, Hotels, Hospitals, Schools and Universities. It will reduce the cost of maintenance, pointing out that Crane guarantees these panels for ten years.



## Leia leads resistance in Carrie Fisher's final 'Star Wars' film

Carrie Fisher's final performance as the beloved Leia in "Star Wars" puts the character on the front lines in a dark new chapter that reaches theaters this month, leaving a galactic hole to fill after the sudden death of the actress a year ago. Fisher had filmed all of her scenes for "Star Wars: The Last Jedi," the eighth installment of the blockbuster space saga, before she died of a heart attack in December 2016. "She's irreplaceable," Mark Hamill, who plays Luke Skywalker, told Reuters. "Star Wars" is about great triumphs and great tragedies, and I can't think of a bigger tragedy than missing our Leia," Hamill told Reuters.

Writer and director Rian Johnson said he did not change Leia's story in "Last Jedi" after her death. The film debuts in theaters December 14. It will be up to the makers of 2019 film "Episode IX" to decide the ultimate fate of the character first seen as a spunky

princess in the original 1977 "Star Wars" film, Johnson added. In "The Last Jedi," "we didn't tailor it to be a farewell to her," Johnson said. "But, that having been said, I think there's some moments that I think will really mean a lot to fans. You will see more from Leia that you haven't seen before."

Fisher's final film appearance is expected to boost already feverish interest in the franchise, now owned by Walt Disney Co. Boxoffice.com projects "Last Jedi" will haul in \$185 million to \$215 million at US and Canadian ticket windows its first weekend, which would rank as one of the biggest film debuts in history. The cast and director provided few details about the film's plot. John Boyega, who portrays former Stormtrooper Finn, said the movie finds Leia, now a general, leading the Resistance against the evil First Order during a tense time in the raging battle to protect the galaxy far, far away.

"There is a lot of pressure on the Resistance, and General Leia is on the front lines having to make big decisions," Boyega said. "It's a performance that requires a heartfelt approach, and she definitely had that." Oscar Isaac, who plays Resistance pilot Poe Dameron, said the time in Leia's life mirrored Fisher's in some ways. Leia understands "she's not going to be around forever, and there is a passing of the torch that needs to happen," Isaac said. "She wants to give over as much of her wisdom as she can before this moment happens."

Fisher, however, would not want fans to get too sentimental, Hamill said. "I do know her well enough to say that she would want us to be laughing and even mocking her," Hamill said.

"She was irreverent, she was cynical, and she was bitterly funny and caustic and all these things. But she was always fun to be around," he added. — Reuters



# 101 cremations: The rise of Bangkok's Buddhist pet funerals



Photo shows the family of Dollar, a six-year-old Shih Tzu dog, entering a funeral compound before taking part in rites to mark her passing, at Wat Krathum Suea Pla Buddhist temple in Bangkok.— AFP photo



Photo shows Pimrachaya Worakijmanotham (left) and her friend taking a selfie with a photo of Dollar, her six-year-old Shih Tzu dog, during the pet's funeral at Wat Krathum Suea Pla Buddhist temple in Bangkok.



Photo shows mourners praying for their pets before releasing their bones and ashes in the Chaopraya river in Bangkok.

**B**uddhist monks chant next to a pink coffin where Dollar's small body is nestled amongst flowers—a \$600 final farewell for the Shih Tzu at a Bangkok temple that administers elaborate pet funerals. Dollar's owner, Pimrachaya Worakijmanotham, fights back tears as she takes a last fond look at her six-year-old pet dog, whose tousled grey-white body rests under jasmine garlands. "This is the last time I can be with her... so I want Dollar to receive good things," Pimrachaya, dressed in black and wearing sunglasses, told AFP, a framed photo of "her child" Dollar behind her.

Pet cremations, complete with Buddhist rituals, are popping up across Bangkok for dogs, cats and even monkeys. In a devout Buddhist kingdom where religion and superstitious beliefs entwine, some pet owners believe the monk-led send off will boost their pets' chances of being reincarnated as a higher being. According to Buddhist belief, merit garnered in each life eventually leads to nirvana—the state of non-suffering.

"In this life, she (Dollar) couldn't go to the temples to make merit for herself. This is the

only thing we can do for her," Pimrachaya, who is a banker, said. The trend is not unique to Thailand—Japan is particularly fond of lavish goodbyes to its pets. But in Bangkok it is catching on fast as Thais increasingly see pets as family members.

## 200 a month

At least three temples offer daily services, including a monk-led ceremony, cremation and sprinkling of ashes in rivers—the symbolic ritual of returning earthly remains to nature. Theerawat Sae-Ian, the founder of Pet Funeral Thailand, says his company cremates more than 200 animals each month, from cats and dogs, to monitor lizards, snakes and baboons. "Successful or famous animals like fighting cocks who won the

awards will also be brought for cremation," said Theerawat, a former pet salon owner who jumped into the "good" business of full-blown pet cremation four years ago. Surging demand for his service also reflects the shrinking public spaces in the bustling Thai capital. "Before, we buried them in authorized parks or backyards

but now it's rare to find ones in Bangkok," said Phrakru Samu Jumpol, a monk at Wat Krathum Suea Pla. His temple has partnered with Theerawat's company and now has a ceremonial compound and cremation chambers.

While it makes for a good business—starting prices are around 3,000 baht (around \$91) but the most extravagant services cost up to 100,000 baht—the monk says the funerals have

brought people closer to religion. "Some people might not have a chance to come to the temple at all. When their pets die, they come here," said Phrakru Samu Jumpol, adding the pet-lovers will be taught the Buddhist lesson that "all things are temporary." So far, the temple has not faced criticism for its business links. Thailand's junta is examining temple finances across the country as it seeks to improve the image of a religion

which has been hit by a stream of financial scandals in recent years. For pet lovers, the service provides spiritual succour at a time of great pain. At the end of a ceremony to spread the ashes of her Siberian husky Maprang in November, teary-eyed Tipaporn Ounsiri found cause for optimism. "If the next life exists, please come back and be my daughter, don't be born as a pet anymore," she said.— AFP

"This is the last time I can be with her"

## Desperately seeking this Frida Kahlo painting. Last seen in Poland



Anna Hryniewicka, the director of the ZAMEK Culture Centre, poses in front of a painting titled Diego on my mind (Self-portrait as Tehuana) by late Mexican artist Frida Kahlo.— AFP photos



Young visitors take pictures at the entrance of the exhibition on the famed Mexican married couple Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera at the ZAMEK Culture Centre in Poznan, Poland.

**A**fter taking an overnight bus to Poznan in Poland for an exhibition on Mexican artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera, two Portuguese sisters are now standing in front of a curious blue suggestion box. "Who can tell us what happened to the missing painting or where we can find it?" reads a sign next to a photo of Kahlo's largest work, "The Wounded Table", a mysterious surrealist masterpiece that vanished without a trace in Warsaw more than half a century ago.

"I wrote that the painting was probably destroyed. Or it could have been stolen and sold on the black market," says 21-year-old Ines Cavaco, currently studying in the Polish city of Krakow. "For sure. It's sitting in someone's living room," adds her sister Joana, a 23-year-old megafan who did her hair up with flowers in homage to Kahlo's trademark look. A black-and-white replica of the horizontal oil painting, a double self-portrait with Kahlo represented both as herself and a wounded table dripping

with blood, can be seen until January 21 at "Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: Polish Context".

The exhibition at the ZAMEK Culture Centre—a castle built for Kaiser Wilhelm II and later meant to be a residence for Adolf Hitler—spotlights the famed married couple's little-known links to Poland. Several dozen of their works shine against a vibrant yellow wall that recalls Kahlo's bright palette and love of life, despite loneliness and pain brought on by life-long health issues and Rivera's many affairs, including with her sister. The exhibition also features work by two Polish-born Jewish artists close to the couple: photographer Bernice Kolko, who captured Kahlo on her deathbed, and muralist Fanny Rabel, one of Kahlo's most devoted students.

## Unwanted gift

Finally, a blue room focuses on the 1955 Warsaw exhibition of Mexican art where "The Wounded Table" was last shown. "It must be

somewhere. It cannot have just disappeared. Such a big painting. Unless they burnt it in an oven in the 1950s," curator Helga Prignitz-Poda told AFP. "That is one of the reasons why I made the exhibition. Because somebody in Poland might remember that he had seen this painting once somewhere." At 2.4 meters long by 1.2 meters high (eight by four feet), larger than a standard door, the painting was unusual for Kahlo, who preferred to work small, unlike her muralist husband Rivera.

The artist known for her unibrow, long skirts and heavy jewelry created the painting for the 1940 International Exhibition of Surrealism in Mexico City. For a long time it hung in her dining room, before she donated it to the Soviet Union out of love for communism. The Last Supper-like work was then sent to Warsaw for the exhibition that would travel around several socialist countries, but the painting never made it past the first stop. Prignitz-Poda points out that while the painting is considered great today and would be worth around \$20 million (17 million euros), back then its "surreal absolutely cruel depiction of the double Frida" went against the preferred socialist realist style. "There were official statements saying that this painting is not exhibitable, that it is so terrible that they really didn't find it worth the money to pay for transport. It is possible that the (Russian) landlords didn't want it back," she said.

## 'Under the rug?'

For Prignitz-Poda, who just published the book "Hidden Frida Kahlo: Lost, Destroyed, or Little-Known Works", the disappearance is frustrating because only half of Kahlo's 300 works are available to see. The rest are missing, burnt or in collections that never lend. "I'm happy that I got to see even a bit of this legend in the original. Mexico's far," said 56-year-old actor Krzysztof Najbor, who took the train up from his southern mountain town of Zakopane for the exhibition.— AFP



Young visitors take pictures of photographs taken by Nickolas Muray showing Mexican artist Frida Kahlo during the exhibition on the famed Mexican married couple Kahlo and Diego Rivera at the ZAMEK Culture Centre in Poznan, Poland.



Photo provided by the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center, is the front of an uncovered sphinx featuring ornate detail, including a detailed necklace in Guadalupe, Calif.— AP photos

## Sphinx from 90-year-old movie set unearthed in California

**A**rchaeologists working in sand dunes on the central California coast have dug up an intact plaster sphinx that was part of an Egyptian movie set built more than 90 years ago for Cecil B DeMille's epic "The Ten Commandments."

The 300-pound sphinx is the second recovered from the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes. Dunes Center Executive Director Doug Jenzen tells Santa Barbara news station KEYT-TV that it's unlike other

items found on previous digs because most of it is preserved with the original paint intact.

The set of the 1923 movie included more than 20 sphinxes. After filming, DeMille ordered everything buried in the dunes 175 miles northwest of Los Angeles. They lay undisturbed for decades before recovery efforts began. The newly recovered sphinx is expected to go on display at the dunes museum next summer.— AP



Photo provided by the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center, crews move an unearthed sphinx head into safekeeping, where it will be carefully restored in Guadalupe, Calif.— AP



# Lifestyle

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2017



People take part in an annual parade celebrating the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in Sale, near Rabat, Morocco. — AP photos

## Families take to the streets and cheer from balconies

*Prophet's birth brings color, music to Morocco*



Children take part in the annual parade.

A large parade with historic roots takes place in the Moroccan city of Sale each year to mark the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), an occasion Muslims around the world observe as Mawlid an-Nabi. Sale, a bustling city of about 890,000 residents across the Bouregreg River from the kingdom's capital, Rabat, transforms as residents join the procession. A Saadian dynasty monarch who ruled Morocco in the 1570s is believed to have imported the procession from the Ottoman Empire.

The parade has been held continuously since then. Men carrying wooden structures that resemble the minarets on mosques lead it off. Colorful candles arranged like mosaic tiles and spelling out the names of Allah, Muhammad, and members of the Moroccan royal family adorn the towers. Children in traditional dress and musicians with horns and drums take part in the choreographed spectacle, which swells in size as people chase and merge with the festive throng moving through the old medina quarter. Families take to the streets and cheer from balconies. The parade that takes place on the eve of the date recognized as Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) birthday - Dec 1 this year - is the main event of a week-long festival that gives local bands the chance to perform and receive tips from patrons. — AP



People take part in an annual parade celebrating the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).



People take part in the annual parade.



Women gather at a Sufi shrine as they celebrate the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).



A man sits next to flags before taking part in an annual parade celebrating the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).



People carry large structures adorned with candles and religious phrases, as they take part in the annual parade.