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# Joy as Kuwait's football ban lifted after more than 2 years

Amir meets FIFA chief • Infantino tours Jaber Stadium • MPs congratulate youth

By B Izzak, Faten Omar and Agencies

**KUWAIT:** World football governing body FIFA announced yesterday it was lifting its suspension of Kuwait, after the National Assembly adopted a law meant to end government interference in the sport. "The suspension of the Kuwait football association is lifted," FIFA's president Gianni Infantino announced.

HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, alongside other senior Kuwaiti officials, received Infantino and a delegation accompanying him yesterday at Bayan Palace. The Amir expressed his gratitude to the FIFA chief for his unyielding support for Kuwaiti athletes, which he said was imperative to give the nation's youth the opportunity to excel.

The encounter brought together officials from across Kuwait's political spectrum, including HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan and head of parliament's priorities committee MP Ahmad Al-Fadhl.

Infantino spoke of his "honor to have met a world-renowned figure like His Highness the Amir", as he announced that the two-year ban imposed on Kuwait's football federation has officially been lifted. Infantino hoped it would be the start of a new era for the soccer-crazed nation, saying he was proud that Kuwait has rejoined the FIFA family. He added that lifting the suspension on Kuwait's football federation was a "commemorative gift to His Highness the Amir in a day that will forever be remembered". Ghanem thanked HH the Amir for his efforts to allow Kuwaiti footballers the chance to play again, saying that Infantino should be given his due as well for welcoming Kuwait back to FIFA.

World sports bodies led by FIFA and the International Olympic Committee suspended Kuwait in Oct 2015 for the



**KUWAIT:** HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah presents FIFA president Gianni Infantino with a Kuwaiti national team kit bearing his name in the presence of HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA

second time since 2010 over alleged government meddling in sports. The suspensions meant Kuwait missed out on the qualifiers for the 2018 World Cup and the 2019 Asian Cup, and before that the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. On Sunday, the Assembly passed a new law in line with FIFA's requirements and on Tuesday, Kuwaiti clubs elected

the head of a new football federation.

Infantino later toured the Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. "On behalf of the sports authority, I thank all people and brother countries that exerted efforts and stood up for Kuwait to witness this day," Acting Director of the Public Authority for Sports Humoud Fulaiteh said.



**Infantino and Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Roudhan speak with Kuwaiti youth during a tour of the Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat**

He affirmed that the Public Authority for Sports will focus on working in reclaiming what Kuwait lost during the past two years. "Our members were depressed because of a lack of participation in sports competitions locally and internationally.

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## #MeToo 'Silence Breakers' named Time 'Person of the Year'

**NEW YORK:** Time magazine named as Person of the Year yesterday "the silence breakers" who triggered a national reckoning by revealing the pervasiveness of sexual harassment, assault and abuse in US life. US President Donald Trump was runner-up in the prestigious ranking, ahead of his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping. Time designated as "silence breakers" the individuals, mostly women, who came forward this year to publicly expose patterns of sexual harassment, assault and even rape by some of society's most powerful public figures.

Those recognized by Time range from famous actresses who took on disgraced Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein to ordinary women who shared their stories of abuse using the hashtag #MeToo and its

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## Trump recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital



**(Left)** US President Donald Trump holds up a signed memorandum after he delivered a statement on Jerusalem from the Diplomatic Reception Room of the White House in Washington yesterday. **(Right)** Palestinian protesters burn US and Israeli flags in Gaza yesterday. — AFP

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump yesterday recognized the disputed city of Jerusalem as Israel's capital - a historic decision that overturns decades of US policy and risks triggering a fresh spasm of violence in the Middle East. "I have determined that it is time to officially recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel," Trump said from the White House. "It's the right thing to do."

The declaration calls into question seven decades of deliberate diplomatic ambiguity about the final status of a

holy city vociferously claimed by both Israelis and Palestinians. Trump also kicked off the process of moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, making good on a campaign promise dear to evangelical Christian and right wing Jewish voters - as well as donors.

Trump's predecessors - from Bill Clinton to George Bush - made similar promises on the campaign trail, but quickly reneged upon taking office, and the burden of war and peace. This most unlikely of presidents, who

came to office with no foreign policy experience and denouncing experts, was determined to show his arrival in Washington spells the end of business as usual. "Many presidents have said they want to do something and they didn't do it," Trump said in the hours leading up to his historic address. "Whether it's courage or they changed their mind, I can't tell you," he said. "I think it's long overdue."

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## Egyptian expat savagely beaten; attacker nabbed

By Hanan Al-Saadoun & A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The interior ministry's relations and security media department yesterday announced the arrest of a citizen who brutally assaulted an Egyptian worker. The video of the beating was uploaded on social media, causing out-

rage. The owner of a store where the Egyptian worked filed a case at Shuwaikh industrial area police station, and detectives arrested the owner of the vehicle seen in the store's surveillance video. But the man denied the charges and claimed that the assailant was his friend. He was nevertheless detained for further investigations. Late yesterday, the assailant was arrested in Salwa, and admitted to beating the salesman.

"It's the staff's lunchtime now," was all that the Egyptian said when the Kuwaiti customer got enraged and beat him savagely, knocking him down and kicking

his head several times, said security sources. They added the assailant was restrained by coworkers, but he returned with a large rod and repeatedly hit the prone salesman in the face. The worker was rushed to Sabah Hospital with serious injuries.

The interior ministry statement yesterday said the victim was now out of the ICU and was being treated at the hospital after his condition became stable.

Egyptian Minister of Immigration and Egyptian Expatriate Affairs Nabila Makram decided to fly in today to visit the victim, identified

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## Local

# Amir receives letter from Qatar's Sheikh Tamim

## Sheikh Sabah commended for his efforts to enhance GCC solidarity

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday a letter of thanks from Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani. In the letter, Qatar's Emir expressed appreciation of hospitality shown during the GCC 38th summit Kuwait hosted on Tuesday. He also commended His Highness the Amir's efforts to enhance cooperation and solidarity among the GCC Member States, as well as reinforcing basis of security and stability in the region.

In addition, Sheikh Tamim stressed that Qatar would spare no effort pursuing whatever that may serve the interests of the Gulf people, as well as the Arab and Muslim nations. He prayed to Allah Almighty to bless His Highness the Amir with perpetual well-being, and to achieve the aspired progress and prosperity for Kuwait under his wise leadership. In return, His Highness the Amir sent a cable to the Qatari Emir thanking him for his warm sentiments, and praying for his everlasting well-being and prosperity for the Qatari people, as well as for the entire GCC.



### Crown Prince acknowledges officials' efforts

expressed wishes of good health to His Highness Sheikh Sabah, hoping that Kuwait would continue to prosper and flourish. His Highness the Amir replied by thanking His Highness the Crown Prince for his good sentiment on the occasion of the 38th GCC summit. His Highness the Amir hailed the constructive decisions which emerged from the summit which he hoped would consolidate the blessed march of the GCC and to achieve more accomplishments and prosperity.

His Highness the Crown Prince also congratulated several state officials on the success of the summit, thanking them on their efforts during the event. His Highness the Crown Prince wished the officials evermore success in future events under the guidelines of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince sent cables to Chief of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Deputy Chief of the KNG Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Minister of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance

and his Crown Prince and to the Kuwaiti people on such occasion," the minister said in a press statement. The minister also recalled the role of senior political leadership and support throughout the period of endeavors that culminated finally in this national achievement.

"The support and guidance of His Highness the Amir has been a driving force for exerting such tremendous work to resolve this complex issue," Roudhan said adding, "nothing would have been made without the direct support of His Highness the Amir and the support of His Highness the Crown Prince, to reach what we have reached today." Roudhan thanked all those who participated in the efforts to reach this auspicious day for Kuwait and the Kuwaiti people. He also thanked efforts exerted by Parliament Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, which were very critical and cannot be ignored, especially the tools and constitutional procedures that have been activated and amended recently, and the adoption of the new sports laws.

#### Tremendous efforts

Roudhan added that "the tremendous efforts exerted by the Speaker was certainly a uniting efforts along with His Highness the Prime Minister, and his government which went over every detail step by step until we



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with FIFA President Gianni Infantino. — KUNA

got back rightfully.

"I would also like to thank the distinguished members of parliament, especially the members of the Youth and Sports Committee, who were keen to reach this result today," Roudhan added. "The people of Kuwait have the right to rejoice after the lift, we wholeheartedly miss being in international competitions, and we hope to see Kuwait's flag back again shining high in the skies of international forums," he said. — KUNA



**FIFA President Gianni Infantino, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan, and Acting Director of Public Authority for Sports (PAS) pose for a group photo with young athletes during a tour at Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat**

## Premier meets FIFA chief after football ban lifted

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday the visiting FIFA President Gianni Infantino and a delegation accompanying him. Joined by Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Sabah as well as Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan, His Highness the Prime Minister credited His Highness the Amir for his efforts to ensure that a two-year ban imposed on Kuwait's football federation is ultimately lifted. He said the lifting of the ban on the national football team was the culmination of a struggle on the part of the government to make sure that Kuwaiti footballers are allowed to play at international venues again.

His Highness the Premier cited a newly-drafted and FIFA-approved sports law as a catalyst that set in motion FIFA's decision to lift the suspension on the Kuwaiti football team. The encounter was attended by the head of His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikhha Itimad Al-Sabah and the Deputy Director General of the Public Authority for Sports Dr Humoud Flaiteh.

#### National achievement

Earlier yesterday, Roudhan congratulated the country's political leadership and people on lifting the suspension of Kuwaiti football activity officially by FIFA and welcomed the visit by Infantino to Kuwait. "I extend my sincere congratulations to His Highness the Amir

## Today last day for NBK Walkathon registration

**KUWAIT:** Today is the last day for National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) walkathon registration. The Walkathon will be held on Saturday. The Registration Center, located next to the Scientific Center, will be open for its last day from 1:00 pm until 10:00 pm.

NBK Group CEO Issam J Al-Sager, NBK-Kuwait CEO Salah Yousef Al-Fulajj and NBK-Kuwait Deputy CEO and NBK General Manager, Treasury Group, Sulaiman Barrak Al-Marzouq, were welcomed at the NBK Walkathon registration center in Salmiya as they prepared to take part in the event.

"Thousands of participants have signed



up for this annual festival. NBK's Walkathon is marked by a variety of fun, entertainment and health awareness activities. People still have the chance to take part today," said Talal Al-Turki, NBK Public Relations Team Leader.

Turki added "at NBK, we believe in encouraging people in Kuwait to live a

healthier lifestyle and that's why we organize the Walkathon every year as part of our corporate social responsibility initiatives." NBK will award the top 10 winners in each category, and will give away two brand new Renault cars, as grand prizes during the Walkathon along with many other valuable prizes.



Ten winners will be selected from each of the 10 categories of participants. The walk for both the female and male participants will start from the Green Island on the Gulf Road to the Shuwaikh Beach Park, parallel to the Gulf Road, next to KPC building for a distance of 11 kilometers.

NBK strongly supports sporting events

and encourages various sporting activities as means to promote a healthier and more active lifestyle for members of the community. Throughout the years, NBK also organizes several social awareness programs including Educational, Environmental, Health and many other active initiatives.



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA

Anas Al-Saleh, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah and Minister of Health Dr Jamal Al-Harbi.

#### Receptions

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received at Bayan Palace His Highness the Crown Prince, as well as His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber

Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, Deputy Premier and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. — KUNA

## Mattis praises 'special' relationship between US, Kuwait

**WASHINGTON:** US Secretary of Defense James Mattis praised Tuesday the relationship between the US and Kuwait, saying the relationship between the US Department of Defense and the State of Kuwait, the military of Kuwait, the leadership of Kuwait "is obviously one that was really forged in a fight, in a war for the liberation of Kuwait."

Speaking to reporters en route to the US, Mattis said "since that time, there has been a special bilateral relationship. We can always count on them. It's a very open, transparent, honest relationship." He added that Kuwait is a "cosmopolitan country and has been for many years," saying His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah "is very big, for example, on education for his young people. It is a very high priority. So, they encourage their young people to go to United Kingdom, United States." He reiterated that "it is a very close relationship," and that "it's a close and very much of a partnership kind of relationship."

Meanwhile, the Pentagon chief affirmed, "for the United States, we

need the GCC structure. We need the unity of GCC, in terms of a stabilizing influence in the Gulf," reiterating that the US support His Highness the Amir's efforts in this regard, "we applaud what he's doing, and we stand with him on that effort. We are looking for cohesion in the GCC and the peaceful resolution of the regional disputes."

#### Strategic partnership

In a statement summarizing Mattis' meeting in Kuwait, chief Pentagon spokesperson Dana White said that Mattis expressed appreciation for the strategic partnership between the US and Kuwait, and that he thanked His Highness the Amir "for his nation's ongoing support in the fight against the Islamic State (in) Iraq and Syria, specifically Kuwait's hospitality in hosting US and coalition forces based in Kuwait in support of military operations."

She added that Mattis "also recognized Kuwait's critical role in hosting the Gulf Cooperation Council summit and mediating the rift among its member nations," adding that he noted the importance of de-escalating tensions so all partners in the Gulf region can focus on the next steps in meeting common goals. Earlier this week, Mattis arrived in Kuwait for a three-day visit and as part of a regional tour. Mattis also met with His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah accompanied by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace. Mattis conveyed greetings and appreciation on behalf of US President Donald Trump and his wishes to His Highness the Amir good health, and prosperity to the people of Kuwait. — KUNA

Local

# Lawmakers urge premier to avoid reappointing 'unwanted' minister

## Sheikh Mohammad likely to be reinstated as cabinet affairs, oil minister

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** A parliamentary delegation asked His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to avoid including cabinet affairs minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah in the new Cabinet, which is expected to be declared by early next week. The MPs had noticed that Sheikh Mohammad participated in the GCC Summit and also attended a meeting held two days earlier between foreign minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and the US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis. "This likely confirms that Sheikh Mohammad is returning to office," said sources familiar with the situation, quoting the MPs as saying.

The Cabinet resigned last month in the aftermath of a grilling motion against Sheikh Mohammad which ended with a request for a vote of confidence that was heavily expected to oust the minister out of office. According to the sources, over 30 MPs are opposed to his reappointment even in a different position. The sources added that reinstating him will be a challenge to lawmakers and might lead to more confrontations between the government and the parliament.

The sources confirmed that Sheikh Mohammad will be appointed in the same position in the new Cabinet and that he might be appointed oil minister as well. The new Cabinet will likely take the constitutional oath before His Highness the

Amir on Sunday or Monday and attend the parliament session on Tuesday, the sources added.

### FATCA

State Audit Bureau sources pointed that 100 percent of Kuwait's financial establishments are committed to the US Financial Account Taxes Compliance Act (FATCA), and that almost the same percentage of individuals are committed too. The sources added that the number of dual citizens renouncing their US citizenships to avoid FATCA is next to nothing and that US citizens and residents have showed full compliance to the law to avoid legal accountability in case of evasion. The sources added that the US Treasury had listed the number of

US citizens in the region and pointed out that those wishing to evade taxes have no options. According to unofficial statistics, the total number of Kuwaitis holding US citizenship is 7,000, and only 13 of them have renounced it.

### Camps

Well-informed sources at Kuwait Municipality said relevant municipality bodies had licensed around 1,000 camps since Nov 15 in various camping areas, and stressed that license issuance is still open. The sources added that KD 350,000 had been collected so far in fees, including KD 50,000 in deposits that would be refunded to campers once the season is over and the camping site is handed over in good condition.



Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah

### Oil Minister to lead delegation at 99th OAPEC meeting

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait has announced that its minister of oil Essam Al-Marzouq will be heading the Kuwaiti delegation at the 99th meeting of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) on Sunday. Marzouq will also be representing Kuwait as OAPEC marks its 50th anniversary in celebrations sponsored by His Highness the Prime Minister on Saturday, read a statement by Kuwait's Ministry of Oil. As for the meeting's agenda, the statement revealed that OAPEC will unveil its estimated budget and audit for the year 2018, in addition to discussions over current happenings in the oil industry. Meanwhile, the statement added that preparations are well in place for the forthcoming 11th Arab Energy Conference, while the ministers will also examine some of OAPEC's recent activities. The OAPEC meeting comes as the Kuwait-based regional bloc celebrates its golden jubilee five decades after its inception in 1968, the statement pointed out. —KUNA

### 'Abdali Cell' defendants' contest rejected

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** The constitutional court yesterday rejected a contest filed by the defendants in the Abdali Cell case against their ruling. The court's advisory chamber reviewed the request contesting the verdict over claims that the article on which it was based was unconstitutional. Notably, the public prosecution had accused a number of defendants of committing actions jeopardizing the unity and safety of Kuwait, coordinating with Iran and Hezbollah to commit hostile acts against Kuwait, procuring, collecting and possessing explosives, machineguns, firearms, ammunition and tapping devices without a license with the aim of using them in a criminal manner.

### Case dropped

Lawyer of Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem yesterday dropped the case filed against former MP Abdul Rahman Al-Anjari, for which the latter had been sentenced to two years in jail with labor. Meanwhile, Kuwait International Airport security forces yesterday arrested a former MP sentenced to prison with labor in absentia for circulating false information and slander,



The Palace of Justice

while he was trying to leave the country. The suspect was referred to the criminal court.

### Phone bills

The Ministry of Utilities urged landline subscribers to pay their phone bills, reminding them that the automated service cuts for December will soon commence by sending

the first warning on Dec 10, followed by a second on Dec 17 before disconnecting the service on Dec 24. The ministry explained that the maximum limit at which the system works is KD 50 for home and KD 100 for commercial landlines, in addition to subscribers who had not paid their annual subscription for six months. The ministry also reminded that phone bills are payable at [www.moc.kw](http://www.moc.kw) and [www.e.gov.kw](http://www.e.gov.kw).



### CBK hosts blood donation drive

**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently sponsored a blood donation campaign organized by the Capital Governorate in collaboration with the Central Blood Bank under auspices of Capital Governor retired Lt Gen Thabet Al-Muhanna. The activity, which was also co-sponsored by Kuwait BMW Biking Club, came as part of CBK's efforts to sponsor various social activities, and out of its strong belief in the values of sponsoring health awareness activities held by nongovernmental organizations. Speaking on the occasion,



Muhanna hailed CBK's role and stressed that the campaign was held to highlight the values of benevolence and humanity through donating blood to save lives. Meanwhile,

CBK's assistant manager for public relations Amani Al-Wer'a said that the campaign was held as part of the bank's social responsibility activities.

### Al-Zad supports Horeca 2018

**KUWAIT:** In collaboration with the Hospitality Services Company, Leaders Group Company for Consulting and Development is organizing the Horeca Kuwait 2018 exhibition at Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref from January 15-17, 2018.

In this regard, Al-Zad Trading Group's Chairman Abdullah Al-Nafisi, said that Horeca Exhibition had proved the significance of spe-

cialized exhibitions in promoting trade exchange amongst companies, adding that this exhibition plays a role in highlighting this vital line that is closely related to the development and housing projects as well as touristic plans in Kuwait. He added that the exhibition would be the largest gathering of specialized individuals under one roof.

Speaking about his group, Nafisi said that it is one of the biggest 'full line' suppliers to hotels and restaurants in Kuwait. Al-Zad Trading Group was established in 1994 and has become one of Kuwait's largest suppliers to hotels, restaurants and catering companies, Nafisi said. He also noted that the company was established by the owners of



Abdullah Al-Nafisi

Kuwait's five-star hotels and the support services' division of Kuwait Airways (KASCO), and that it is now the sole agent of international food brands.

### German company selected for wastewater project

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP) has appointed a consortium led by WTE Wassertechnik GmbH Group (WTE) and International Financial Advisors K.S.C.C (IFA) to implement the Umm Al-Hayman Wastewater Projects. KAPP said that Umm

Al-Hayman Project will involve the design, financing, building (or upgrading / rehabilitation), testing, commissioning, operation, maintenance and transfer of wastewater treatment plant with a capacity of 500,000 m3/d. It can be expanded in the future depending on flow ability to such to a final capacity of 700,000 m3/d.

A Kuwaiti public joint-stock company will be established to build, operate and manage the project for 25 years according to a partnership agreement with the Ministry of Public Works. The project's objectives include the improvement of the overall state of infrastructure in Kuwait's water and wastewater sector; ensuring the standard of sanitary services in the country adheres to both international and local environmental guidelines and best practices. — KUNA

### Citizens in Los Angeles warned from wildfires

**LOS ANGELES:** The Kuwaiti Consulate General in Los Angeles, California, appealed to all Kuwaiti citizens in the areas affected by the recent fire in the city to be cautious and move to safe areas. The consulate stressed in a state-

ment yesterday that all citizens should follow instructions by local authorities in case of any emergency. The consulate also provided a hot line: 310-310-279-3644 including the Consulate's own phone number: 310-556-0300 or by post E-mail: [info@kuwaitconsulate.org](mailto:info@kuwaitconsulate.org). Local authorities have issued warnings and instructions to evacuate areas in the vicinity of fires in parts of the forests of Los Angeles, California, which began to widen due to the winds of two days ago. Last Monday, thousands in southern California were forced to evacuate their homes as wildfires moved through at least 45,000 acres of land, according to authorities. — KUNA

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Local

# Alghanim Industries concludes its activities in NUKS-USA conference

## Company focuses on education and employing Kuwaiti talent

**KUWAIT:** Alghanim Industries, one of the largest private companies in the region, concluded its sponsorship for the 34th annual conference of the National Union of Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) USA branch, which took place from the 23rd to the 26th of November in Atlanta, Georgia, under the slogan "The Spirit of Cooperation for a Unified Kuwait."

The conference was attended by the Ambassador of Kuwait to the United States Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah, as well as a number of parliamentary members and representatives from private and public sector companies. The conference featured forums on a multitude of topics including politics, sports, and humanitarian causes.

Alghanim Industries participated in the career fair, where representatives of the company were present at the company's booth during the fair to answer students' questions about the company, as well as internship and job opportunities available. Towards the end of the conference, Alghanim Industries held a draw as part of the closing ceremony, and presented the winners with valuable gifts from X-cite.

Commenting on Alghanim Industries' sponsorship of this year's NUKS conference, Head of the Corporate Communications Department at Alghanim Industries, Abdullateef Al-Sharikh, said: "At Alghanim Industries, we believe in the critical role that education plays in shaping our youth and preparing them for their futures. We're pleased to have participated in this year's NUKS conference, making this our tenth year of supporting the student union."

He went on to say, "The NUKS Conference is also a



One of the draw winners receives his gift.



Alghanim Industries team pose with Ambassador of Kuwait to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah.



### Event held recently in Atlanta, Georgia

great opportunity to meet and interact with potential candidates and tell them about why we chose careers in the private sector, and more specifically, at Alghanim Industries. We wish our students success in their studies and look forward to welcoming them back to Kuwait, and to seeing them as colleagues at Alghanim Industries."

The company has been actively working to increase its Kuwaiti workforce through a variety of initiatives. One example is the Alghanim Future Leaders Program (AFLP), which is a special program to develop the professional skills of tal-

ented Kuwaitis who have recently graduated from college. In addition, the Kuwaiti Mentoring Program gives Kuwaiti employees the opportunity to develop their leadership capabilities through the engagement and counsel of the company's senior leaders. Building a strong Kuwait workforce is a strategic priority for the company, and its participation in the NUKS conference is an important part of these efforts.

The sponsorship of the annual NUKS conference in the United States comes as part of Alghanim Industries' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, which is committed to empowering the underprivileged, supporting education and encouraging entrepreneurship. It

is worth noting that the company was the Strategic Sponsor for the sixth annual Tmkeen Youth Symposium, an initiative that provides youth with valuable insights about entrepreneurship from industry leaders, academics and experts, and was held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The company is also the largest supporter for INJAZ-Kuwait, as it encourages its employees to volunteer regularly in INJAZ's different programs. In addition, the company also launched an English Language and Skills Summer Program in association with AMIDEAST for children at the Children's Home orphanage in Kuwait.

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\* This campaign is limited to participants in Kuwait only. Ministries and their departments, companies and NGOs cannot enter the festival.  
\* Kuwait Times employees, spouses and their second-degree relatives also cannot participate.

## KIB empowers aspiring young entrepreneurs

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait International Bank (KIB) sponsored the 34th annual National Union of Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) conference, which was held in Atlanta, Georgia under the theme 'A united spirit for a brighter Kuwait'. The event was attended by a number of notable figures and speakers across several fields, including politics, economics, religion, sports, and arts.

Jamal Al-Barrak, General Manager of the Investment Department at KIB, spoke on behalf of the Bank as part of the economic seminars that took place during the conference, alongside a panel of leaders in the fields of economics and business. Barrak expressed his delight at being able to participate in this exciting conference, as he was able to convey the important role local banks play in contributing to the business environment.

He also noted that KIB strongly believes in the key role local banks play in encouraging small and medium sized business owners by providing easy, simplified banking solutions and financing instruments that cater to the very specific



ic needs of these emerging businesses. During the conference, Barrak also pointed out that KIB believes in the importance of SMEs as a core component of the national economy, as these projects actively drive economic growth and development, and help boost the local job market. Accordingly, the Bank seeks to empower aspiring young entrepreneurs' right from the very beginning by encouraging them to pursue their dreams and launch their projects.

KIB's sponsorship of this conference came as part of its ongoing commitment to supporting students by participating in various educational activities and events, whether locally or abroad. The Bank believes that these activities provide the necessary moral support needed to support students' study abroad experience and make them feel closer to home.

## PAAET institute reviews its achievements

**KUWAIT:** The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training's (PAAET) higher institute of communication and navigation recently held its annual ceremony to review the institute's achievements. The event was held under auspices and with the attendance of PAAET Deputy Director for Training Affairs Tareq Al-Omairi.

Speaking on the occasion, the institute's manager Captain Monther Al-Kandari said

that the institute had achieved a lot in terms of academic certification and developing the programs and curricula it teaches. He added that the institute had been academically certified by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) and awarded the international ISO 9001/2015 award to be the first Kuwaiti government body to get it.

Kandari added that the institute simulators were also connected to one of the marine machines in the college of technology. He added that the institute was about to sign a protocol of cooperation with the Jordanian Academy for Marine Studies. The ceremony was concluded by honoring a number of the institute department's managers and heads of training sections as well as a number of retirees.



KUWAIT: The institute's manager Captain Monther Al-Kandari is honored.

Local

# ACK holds students' graduation project exhibition

## 38 outstanding projects conducted by 139 students



Isam Zabalawi, President of Australian College of Kuwait.



Dr Mohammed Abdul-Niby, Acting Dean of Engineering Faculty.



KUWAIT: Officials tour the Australian College of Kuwait's seventh Engineering Students Graduation Project Exhibition. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

By Faten Omar

**KUWAIT:** The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) held the seventh Engineering Students Graduation Project Exhibition yesterday at Salwa Sabah Al-Ahmad Theater and Hall in Salmiya, whereby students from four Engineering programs - mechanical, electrical, civil and petroleum - showcased their final graduation projects. The exhibition was developed as a platform to provide students with the opportunity to present their innovative concepts, reflecting their knowledge, competency and special technical skills acquired during their studies at the School of Engineering.

In his opening speech, Isam Zabalawi, President of Australian College of Kuwait, said that the exhibition was implemented by Abdullah Al-Sharhan, Chairman of ACK who believed in the power of ACK's students. Zabalawi praised the efforts of the engineering faculty's members in supporting and supervising the students. He revealed that ACK invited a number of stakeholders to open an opportunity for engineering school students after graduation. "The aim of

such exhibition is to strengthen the students' ability to solve problems by using the tools and ideas they learn in ACK. A number of students develop their skills to create and invent," he added.

**Outstanding projects**  
Dr Mohammed Abdul-Niby, Acting Dean of Engineering Faculty, said that the exhibi-

tion of the fall 2017 semester had 38 outstanding projects conducted by 139 students "We are here to celebrate the achievements of our students in our seventh student's graduation projects exhibition at the Australian College of Kuwait for the fall semester. I

would like to start by congratulating each and every student on their success." Abdul-Niby added that ACK believed that the students will profit from completing the graduation project only when they work self-sufficiently and as a team. "ACK emphasized that the graduation project is a positive learning activity that will benefit the students in their educational careers while meeting a state-mandated requirement for the graduation," he said.

The student's graduation exhibition is the culmination of what has been a challenging and a very rewarding experience for the students, Abdul-Niby noted. "The feeling is indeed a great range of emotions, relief, pride in their abilities, and a sense of reward in the recognition of their qualifications," he said. "I would also take this opportunity to acknowledge the support and hard work of our faculty members who gave skills attributes to the students to build solid foundations in their work places." The exhibition was attended by Warren Hauck, the Australian Ambassador to Kuwait, and Karlfried Bergner, the German Ambassador to Kuwait.



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Crackdown, airstrikes keep Yemenis indoors

## A borderless Africa? Some countries open doors, raise hopes



EL KHIYAM, Lebanon: A boy waves a flag of Lebanon's militant Shiite movement Hezbollah as a soldier stand guard during a tree planting event organized following a call by Hezbollah in the southern Lebanese village of Khiam, along the border with Israel. — AFP

# Hariri saga: Saudi's Lebanon gambit backfires

## An audacious endeavor to rein in regional rival Iran

**BEIRUT:** A month ago, Saudi Arabia pressured Lebanese premier Saad Hariri to step down in an audacious endeavor to rein in regional rival Iran. But the aftermath brought just the opposite. Not only did Hariri rescind his resignation on Tuesday, but Riyadh's power play paradoxically led divided Lebanese factions to come together in order to avoid a political breakdown. The Lebanese cabinet issued a joint statement on Tuesday to reaffirm their commitment to staying out of regional conflicts and apparently put an end to the month-long Hariri saga.

His resignation caught Lebanon and outside countries by surprise, and was seen as a direct result of the escalating power struggle between Riyadh and Tehran that has seen them square off from Syria to Yemen. Saudi Arabia has supported Hariri for years, hoping he would fight back against what it sees as Iran's main instrument in the region—Lebanon's powerful Shiite armed movement Hezbollah. But in 2016, a landmark compromise deal in Lebanon cut across those political lines,

bringing Hariri in as the head of a government that included Hezbollah ministers.

### 'We will punish Lebanon'

By the time Hariri's premiership turned a year old, the Saudis had grown exasperated with Hezbollah's growing influence and threatened to push back financially, a source close to the premier said. "When Hariri travelled to Saudi Arabia (in early November), he got a huge shock," the source said. "He thought he was going to discuss economic projects. He found himself faced with a list of economic sanctions brandished by the Saudis against Lebanon." Riyadh threatened to expel 160,000 Lebanese nationals working in the Gulf and force regional businessmen to withdraw their investments from Lebanon. "This would have been catastrophic for the country. Hariri had his back up against the wall," the source said. The 47-year-old premier wrote his own resignation announcement, crafting it in a way he thought would

appease the Saudis. "He was not a prisoner in the literal sense but the Saudis told him, 'if you go back to Lebanon, we'll think of you as Hezbollah, and your government as an enemy,'" the source said.

"They said: 'We will punish Lebanon like

backfired. "The Saudis wanted to send a powerful message demonstrating their determination to push back on Iran's foray into the Levant," said Bitar. "But it produced a real boomerang effect."

### 'Gone too far'

After his resignation, Hariri spent two weeks in Riyadh amid furious speculation he was being held "hostage" there by Saudi authorities. Eventually, he returned to Beirut, put his resignation on hold, and dove into consultations with political rivals. On Tuesday, he held his first ministerial meeting since his return, declaring he had rescinded his resignation and that Lebanon remained committed to "disassociation," or neutrality in regional conflicts. "As fictitious, provisional and

fragile as it is, this forced rapprochement between the two Lebanese camps is necessary and welcome, since security and economic risks are real," Bitar said. He expected Riyadh would continue demanding

Hezbollah withdraw its forces from Yemen. "The Saudis want more than just cosmetic concessions," Bitar warned. "The Saudis have not said their last word yet. They're still determined to clip Iran's wings in the region." Last week, Saudi foreign minister Adel Jubeir warned "there will not be peace" in Lebanon as long as Hezbollah stayed armed.

Riyadh, however, has also struggled to backpedal on its faux pas after Hariri's resignation sparked French and US interventions on his behalf. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman "realized he had gone too far... and that the operation resulted in Hariri regaining popularity," a French diplomatic source said. Another Western source said that Riyadh remained "very reluctant" to back Hariri, now once again leading a cabinet that includes Hezbollah. "They thought he would be able to counter Hezbollah. The opposite happened," the source said. And the source close to Hariri said Saudi's crown prince was not necessarily wedded to the Lebanese premier. — AFP



## Saudis worried over Hezbollah's growing influence

Qatar," he said, referring to Saudi's months-long land, sea, and air blockade on Qatar. Karim Bitar of the Paris-based Institute of International and Strategic Affairs said Riyadh's plan spectacularly

## Jerusalem: A city of prayer and conflict

**JERUSALEM:** US President Donald Trump was set yesterday to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital in a move that would upturn decades of precedent and run counter to international consensus. The city is revered by three major faiths but mired in political, as well as religious, disputes. Its status is one of the thorniest issues of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

### Whose capital?

Jewish Israelis consider Jerusalem to be their 3,000-year-old capital and the inalienable birthright of Jews everywhere. Since the destruction in ancient times of two separate Jewish temples in the city and the exile of the Holy Land's surviving Hebrews, Judaism has looked for a return of its people to their biblical home. According to scripture, King David made Jerusalem the capital of a unified kingdom of Israel around 1000 BC. The city's heavily visited Western Wall is among the last remnants of the second Jewish temple, destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

The Palestinians, who make up about a third of the modern city's population of some 882,000, claim east Jerusalem as the capital of the state to which they

aspire. It also has great religious significance for Muslims as it houses the Al-Aqsa mosque complex, Islam's third-holiest site, and the emblematic gold-topped Dome of the Rock. While Palestinians have been divided in recent years between president Mahmud Abbas's Fatah and Islamist movement Hamas, Jerusalem remains one of their most powerful rallying points for both religious and nationalistic reasons. The city is also home to the holiest sites in Christianity, including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built on the site where most Christians believe Jesus was crucified and buried.

### City of controversy

A 1947 United Nations plan prescribed partitioning British-run Palestine into three separate entities: a Jewish state, an Arab state and a separate enclave, or "corpus separatum", consisting of Jerusalem, nearby Bethlehem and holy places in the vicinity to be under UN control. The proposal was accepted by Zionist leaders but rejected by the Arabs. Following the departure of the British in 1948, the Jews declared an independent state of Israel, followed by fighting with Palestinians and neighboring Arab states. At the end of the war, east Jerusalem was in Jordanian hands while the new Jewish state set up its capital in the west. The two sides were divided by barbed wire, sandbags and machinegun emplacements until the Six-Day War of 1967, when Israel seized and occupied the eastern zone. —AFP

## Babies' brains at risk from toxic pollution: UN

**NEW DELHI:** As New Delhi and other major cities hit new toxic smog peaks, the United Nations sounded the alarm yesterday over the damage that pollution is doing to babies' developing brains. The UN's children's agency, UNICEF, said Asia accounts for more than 16 million of the world's 17 million infants aged under one year living in areas with severe pollution—at least six times more than safe levels. India topped the list of countries with babies at risk, followed by China, UNICEF said in a report.

Satellite imagery used to assess pollution levels around the world found that South Asian countries accounted for 12.2 million of the total number of affected children but that there is also a growing problem in African cities. Air pollution has already been linked to asthma, bronchitis, and other long-term respiratory diseases. "But a growing body of scientific research points to a potential new risk that air pollution poses to children's lives and futures: its impact on their developing brains," UNICEF said.

The report highlighted links found between pollution and brain functions "including verbal and nonverbal IQ and memory, reduced test scores, grade point averages among school children, as well as other neurological behavioral problems." "As more and more of the world urbanizes, and without adequate protection and pollution



NEW DELHI: Indian men play cricket amid heavy smog in New Delhi. — AFP

reduction measures, more children will be at risk in the years to come."

### 'Danger in the air'

The ultra-fine particles in city pollution can damage the blood-brain barrier—a delicate membrane that protects the brain from toxic substances. Damage to the membrane has been linked to Alzheimers and Parkinson's disease in the elderly. UNICEF also highlighted the growing risk from minute particles of the iron ore magnetite which is increasingly found in urban pollution.

The nano-particles, which easily get into the blood stream, are highly dangerous to

the brain because of their magnetic charge and have also been linked to degenerative diseases. The author of the "Danger In The Air" report, Nicholas Rees said that toxic pollution is "impacting children's learning, their memories, linguistic and motor skills." Delhi closed schools in early November after doctors declared a public health emergency, but quickly reopened them—provoking anger from parents who accused authorities of "playing with children's health". The crisis saw large swathes of north India and parts of neighboring Pakistan blanketed in acrid air—an annual phenomenon as cooler air traps particles near the ground, cause pollution levels to spike. — AFP

International

# Global murder hot spot? No problem, let's stroll around Venezuela capital

## Murder and kidnap rates rival a war zone

**CARACAS:** The murder and kidnap rates rival a war zone. Streets often shake to violent political protests. The poor scavenge garbage for food, while the rich go around with armored cars and bodyguards. Only a fool would go for a quiet stroll in Caracas, right? Not so. In the last few years, groups have sprung up offering walking tours of the chaotic Venezuelan capital's architecture, historic sites and famous hillside "barrios."

Nearly a dozen organizations now run trips of several hours at a time for groups as small as four or as large as 150. While volunteers offer some tours for free, others are small businesses charging between 20,000 and 200,000 bolivars per person - 20 cents to \$2 at the black-market exchange rate. "I want to see the positive side of the city," said lawyer Francis Lopez, 50, who joined dozens of other people on a recent Saturday walking tour around the poor west Caracas neighborhood of Catia, avidly snapping pictures of the colorful marketplace.

"In the old days, I used to go all over the city, but people have stopped going out ... for fear of being assaulted. It's not just that they rob you, they can shoot you too." With more than three killings per hour, Venezuela last year was the world's second most murderous nation after El Salvador, a local crime monitoring group said. The homicide rate in Caracas alone was a staggering 140 per 100,000 people, according to the group, the Venezuelan Observatory of Violence.

Authorities say nongovernmental groups inflate figures to create paranoia and tarnish the government, but even so the most recent official national murder rate - 58 per 100,000 inhabitants for 2015 - was still among the world's highest. Violence peaks in the teeming shantytowns that cling to Caracas' steep slopes, and it is precisely there that some of the tours head, using locals as guides and for protection.

Tourists who would never go alone into "barrios" like Catia or Petare feel safe moving in large numbers.

### 'Breaking myths'

The groups walk freely, chat with residents, buy artisan products and sometimes even enjoy traditional music. Most are Venezuelans, though the occasional foreigner joins. "It enables us to break the myth that the 'barrio' is different from the city, full of bad things: violence, insecurity and poverty," said Lorena de Marchena, 27, who helps organize walking tours in the "barrio" of El Calvario near the colonial hilltop suburb of El Hatillo.

"When you enter El Calvario, you connect at different levels because you see that people are the same as anyone in the city." Locals often tag along, most friendly and laughing, but some suspicious as to the outsiders' intentions. "Here we are revolutionaries, 'Chavistas!'" one old lady chided a recent group, mistaking middle-class visitors to Catia for opposition supporters opposed to the ruling movement called "Chavismo" for former leader Hugo Chavez. Though a relatively new phenomenon in Caracas, such "barrio" tours have long been common in other dangerous part of the world such as Rio de Janeiro or some African capitals.

Political tourism has also been going on for years in places like Belfast, where visitors see the "peace walls" dividing Roman Catholic and Protestant communities, or Medellin where they trace the steps of ex-Colombian drug boss Pablo Escobar. During Chavez's 1999-2013 rule of Venezuela, leftist sympathizers would often travel here on "solidarity" tours from Europe or other Latin American countries. However, much of the current tours' emphasis is on celebrating the city's underappreciated cultural heritage, particularly in this year's 450th anniversary of its founding. Especially popular is the colonial center, where visitors can see a statue to 18th-century liberation hero Simon Bolivar, as well as his house and the

pantheon housing his remains. Some tours also go to the main state university, which is a UNESCO heritage site; the cobbled streets of El Hatillo; the once-upmarket boulevard of Sabana Grande; and elegant Plaza Altamira, known both for its signature obelisk and as a focus of anti-government protests. Various people died close to Plaza Altamira during this year's anti-government protests, in which 125 people were

killed in all. While some are rediscovering a city they have for years feared to walk around in, others are taking a last, wistful look before joining Venezuela's ever-growing wave of emigration. "Caracas is such a beautiful city," enthused oil company worker Zaylin Daboin, 29, admiring a renovated 1940s theater in Catia that she had never seen before. "We lost our initiative and curiosity because of the insecurity." —Reuters



## Second most murderous country

## Crackdown, airstrikes keep Yemenis indoors

**ADEN:** A Saudi-led coalition intensified air strikes on Yemen yesterday as the armed Houthi movement tightened its grip on the capital after it killed former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, who switched sides in the civil war. Saudi Arabia and its allies launched dozens of raids on Houthi positions in Sanaa and nearby provinces, a day after Saleh's son vowed to take revenge. Yemen's pro-Houthi Al Masirah television station said the coalition bombed Saleh's residence and other houses of his family members which are now controlled by the Houthis. Air strikes also hit northern provinces including Taiz, Haja, Midi and Saada, it added.

There was no immediate word on casualties. The intervention by Ahmed Ali, a former leader of the elite Republican Guard once seen as a successor to his father, provided the anti-Houthi movement with a potential figurehead after a week of fighting that saw the Houthis rout Saleh's supporters. But a day after Saleh supporters announced the deaths of his nephew Tareq, another top commander, and the head of his party Aref Zouka, many Sanaa residents hunkered indoors out of fear of a Houthi crackdown on the ex-president's many admirers.

Yemen's war, pitting the Iran-allied Houthis who control Sanaa against a Saudi-led military alliance backing a government based in the south, has unleashed what the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian



**SANAA:** Houthi rebel fighters inspect the damage after a reported air strike carried out by the Saudi-led coalition targeted the presidential palace in the Yemeni capital Sanaa. —AFP

crisis. The proxy war between regional arch-rivals Saudi Arabia-armed and furnished intelligence by the West-and Iran has already killed more than 10,000 people, with more than two million displaced. Political sources said the Houthis had arrested dozens of Saleh's allies and army officers affiliated with his party in and around the city. Several had been killed in the raids.

"There's a scary calm in the city," said Ali, a 47-year old businessman who declined to use his full name. "People are reporting that there are many arrests and they are trying to shoot military men and (Saleh party) members." Saleh had helped the Houthis win control of much of the north, including Sanaa, and his decision to switch allegiance and abandon the Houthis in the past week was the most dramatic change in three years

of stalemated war. But the Houthis swiftly crushed the pro-Saleh uprising in the capital and killed him. Top Houthi officials called his attempted putsch high treason backed by their Saudi enemies.

Several dozen women gathered in a main square holding Saleh's portrait and demanding his burial, eyewitnesses said, but were forcibly dispersed by Houthi supporters and ran in terror from the site. The Houthi-controlled interior ministry distributed a video of dozens of seated barefoot men it said were pro-Saleh fighters detained in one of its party headquarters. Media rights group Reporters Without Borders appealed for the release of 41 journalists it said have been held "hostage" by the group since it overran the headquarters of the Saleh-owned al-Yemen al-Yaum TV station on Saturday.—Reuters

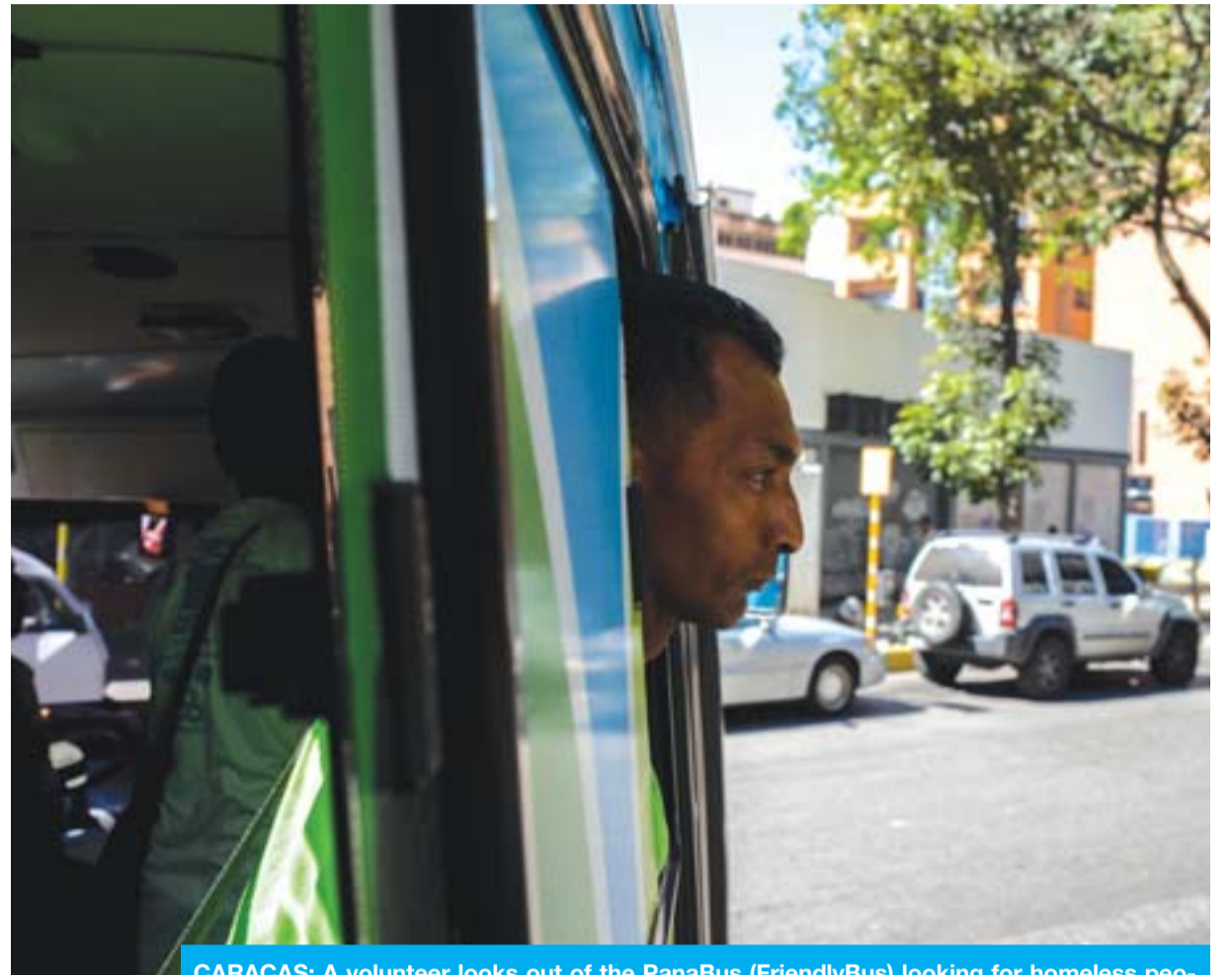
direction the 54-nation continent needs to take. "I urge all African states that have not yet done so to take similar measures," AU Commission chairman Moussa Faki Mahamat said on Twitter after Kenya's announcement. Trade among African countries is at just 16 percent, while trade among European Union states is at 70 percent, Mahamat told AU trade ministers on Friday.

For a continent whose leaders often speak fondly of "African brotherhood" and once pondered the idea of a United States of Africa, the visa policies of many countries for many years suggested little progress in implementing the continent-wide, visa-free ideal advocated by the AU. Africans can get a visa on arrival in 24 percent of African countries, yet North Americans, for example, have easier access on the continent, according to a 2017 report on visa openness by the African Development Bank. African Union figures show Africans need visas to travel to 54 percent of the continent. Free migration of people across the continent would help in talent exchange as well as trade, said Ali Abdi, the Uganda chief of mission at the International Organization for Migration. Countries may have to invest more in border patrols but "the benefits far outweigh the costs, in my view." —AP

## A borderless Africa? Some countries open doors, raise hopes

**KAMPALA:** For years African leaders have toyed with the idea of free movement by citizens across the continent, even raising the possibility of a single African passport. Now some African countries are taking bold steps to encourage borderless travel that could spur trade and economic growth on a continent in desperate need of both. Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta announced during his inauguration last week that the East African commercial hub will now give visas on arrival to all Africans. That follows similar measures by nations including Benin and Rwanda. "The freer we are to travel and live with one another, the more integrated and appreciative of our diversity we will become," Kenyatta said.

The African Union has cheered such steps, calling it the



**CARACAS:** A volunteer looks out of the PanaBus (FriendlyBus) looking for homeless people to assist in Caracas. Monday through Friday, the PanaBus (FriendlyBus) makes its way around the Venezuelan capital offering homeless people a shower, clean clothes, a meal, a health check-up and advice to help them out of their plight. —AFP

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## International

# Police thwart plot to kill British Prime Minister May

## Terror suspects target PM's Downing Street office

**LONDON:** A 20-year-old man appeared in court yesterday charged with plotting to assassinate British Prime Minister Theresa May in a bomb and knife attack. Naa'imur Zakariyah Rahman is accused of planning an explosion outside May's Downing Street office then trying to enter the building with a suicide vest and a knife in a bid to kill her. State prosecutor Mark Carroll said Rahman planned to detonate an improvised explosive device at the Downing Street gates, then, in the ensuing chaos, try to enter the building "with a view to trying to kill the prime minister". He planned to use a suicide vest, pepper spray and a knife, Carroll told Westminster Magistrates Court in London.

Rahman had carried out hostile reconnaissance of the area as part of his preparation, it is alleged. Rahman is charged with preparing terrorist acts and also with assisting another man, Mohammad Aqib Imran, to prepare separate terror acts. He appeared in court alongside Imran, 21, who is accused of trying to join the Islamic State jihadist terror group by trying to obtain a fake passport with a view to travelling to Libya. The men were arrested on November 28. Rahman spoke only to confirm his name and date of birth. He said he was of no fixed abode and said his nationality was "Bangladeshi British. I'm Bangladeshi." Imran said he was "Pakistani British".

They both appeared wearing grey tracksuits. Rahman had long black hair while Imran had shorter hair and a beard. Lawyers for the pair gave no indication of their plea

on their first court appearance so not guilty pleas were formally registered. The hearing lasted under 10 minutes. Chief Magistrate Emma Arbuthnot remanded Rahman and Imran in custody to appear for a short hearing at England's Old Bailey central criminal court on December 20. The court appearance came a day after Home Secretary Amber Rudd told parliament that 22 Islamist terror plots had been thwarted since the killing of a British soldier on a London street by two Islamist extremists in 2013.

### Picture of Prince George

Meanwhile, a British man posted a picture of Prince George, 4, and the address of his London school as part of a series of possible targets for Islamist militants, a court heard yesterday. Husnain Rashid, 31, is accused of posting information on the Telegram messaging service to encourage jihadis to carry out attacks along with information to help them with possible targets

### Series of possible targets for Islamist militants in UK

such as stadia. Prosecutor Rebecca Mundy told London's Westminster Magistrates Court that this included posting a picture of Prince George, son of Queen Elizabeth's grandson Prince William and Kate and destined to be the future king, next to a silhouette of a jihadi fighter.

The post included the address of his school in southwest London which he started attending in September and was accompanied with the caption "even the royal family will not be left alone", the court heard. Rashid, from Nelson in Lancashire, northern England, is charged with



**LONDON:** An armed police carries his automatic weapon as he walks on patrol outside 10 Downing Street in central London yesterday. Two men have been charged with a plot to kill British Prime Minister Theresa May. —AFP

preparing terrorism acts, which involved plans to travel to Syria to engage in fighting, and preparing to assist others to commit terrorist acts. He did not apply for bail and indi-

cated he would plead not guilty to the charges. He was remanded in custody until Dec 20 when he will appear at London's Old Bailey central criminal court.—Agencies

### News in brief

#### Colonial-era massacre

**AMRITSAR:** London's first Asian-origin mayor Sadiq Khan said the British government should apologize for a colonial-era massacre in India as he visited the site yesterday. The 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre, in which British troops opened fire on thousands of unarmed protesters in the city of Amritsar, remains an enduring scar of British colonial rule over the subcontinent. The then British prime minister David Cameron described it as deeply shameful when he visited the memorial in the northern state of Punjab during a 2013 trip to India, but stopped short of an apology. Writing in the visitors' book, Khan said it had been "incredibly moving" to see the site of the massacre, calling it a tragedy that should never be forgotten. "It is time for the British government to finally apologize," he wrote. "Our thoughts are with all those who died." Colonial-era records show about 400 people died when soldiers opened fire on men, women and children in the enclosed area, but Indian figures put the toll at closer to 1,000.

#### Yemeni women protest

**SANAA:** Yemeni women held rare protests in Sanaa yesterday, demanding that the capital's rebel authorities hand over the body of slain ex-president Ali Abdullah Saleh. Around 20 women, dressed head to toe in black, did not hide their loyalty to the leader of three decades, who was killed by the Iran-backed rebels on Monday after their uneasy alliance collapsed. "There is no God but God and the martyr is a friend of God," they shouted in front of the Saleh mosque, the largest in the capital and named for the former president. The rebels dispersed the protest but video footage of the women fleeing the scene was posted on social media. A second group of women gathered in front of Sanaa military hospital, shouting: "The people want the remains of the leader," witnesses said. It was unclear yesterday whether the Houthis had already buried Saleh's body.

#### China slams Australia

**SYDNEY:** Beijing accused Australia yesterday of stirring "anti-China hysteria" after Canberra proposed a suite of foreign interference laws, labeling comments by some government officials as irresponsible. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull on Tuesday announced wide-ranging reforms to tackle rising concerns of foreign interference, noting "disturbing reports" about Chinese influence. That came after Turnbull ordered an inquiry in June in the wake of media revelations that the nation's spy agency had warned the country's political elite two years ago about taking donations from two billionaires with links to the Chinese Communist Party. The Chinese embassy in Canberra issued a furious response to the proposed laws yesterday, saying Australian media had "repeatedly fabricated" stories about "so-called" Chinese infiltration in Australia. "Those reports, which were made up out of thin air and filled with cold war mentality and ideological bias, reflected a typical anti-China hysteria and (are) paranoid," an embassy spokesperson said in a statement.

#### Cyclone death toll hits 41

**JAKARTA:** A tropical cyclone that pounded Indonesia's main island of Java has killed 41 people, the country's disaster agency said yesterday, more than double the initial toll, with tens of thousands displaced by severe flooding and landslides. Among the victims of Cyclone Cempaka were 25 people killed by a single landslide in east Java last week, the agency said. The initial cyclone death toll was 19. Some 28,000 people have been displaced by the storm, which hit Indonesia's most populous island last week. "Almost five thousand homes have been damaged and more than three thousand others were inundated by flooding," said agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho. The destruction from the cyclone came as the rumbling Mount Agung volcano on the neighboring resort island of Bali threatened to erupt, forcing tens of thousands to flee their homes.

## Lagos looks to the water to beat traffic gridlock

**LAGOS:** Idris Anjorin believes his life changed in 2009 when he turned up for work-late as usual-distracted and stressed after more than three hours stuck in Lagos traffic. "I wasn't happy I came late again. A coworker who noticed my mood advised me to try a boat ride," the retired banker told AFP. "The next day, I arrived at Bayeku jetty at 6:00 am and within an hour I had made it to the office. That was a turning point in my life." Bayeku is one of several ferry terminals run by private boat operators in the Ikorodu area of Lagos, some 40 kilometers by road to Anjorin's old office on Victoria Island.

Making a 20-minute boat trip across the lagoon seems an obvious way to avoid the monster traffic jams for which Nigeria's biggest city and commercial hub is famous. But for a variety of reasons—from the safety of boats to funding and infrastructure—the sector has not been developed to its full potential. Now, Lagos state governor Akinwunmi Ambode wants to change that and introduce water taxis as part of an integrated transport system to unclog the city's roads.

"Twenty-five percent of Lagos is water and it is important that we put in the right initiatives that can actually make activities on our waterways thrive," Ambode said recently. The state government said the "grand plan" was "to divert at least two million passengers on the waterways daily, thereby reducing traffic on the road". Seven new ferries are set to be bought in the coming months; support will be given to 70 private firms running boat services; and 10 new operators are to be licensed. Thirty routes are being identified for dredging while 10 new jetties are being built.

### Time-saving

Lagosians used to be able to take the ferry from Mile 2, on the mainland, to Marina on Lagos Island in the 1980s and 1990s but no service has run since then. But with more than 23 million people now living in Lagos state—a figure growing at a rate of nearly four percent a year—it's clear commuting by water has its advantages. A worker in



**LAGOS:** People discuss near abandoned speed boats at Bayeku jetty, Ikorodu district of Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital. —AFP

Ikorodu, for example, will normally spend three hours in a car to travel to the main business areas of Ikoyi, Victoria Island and Lagos Island. By speedboat, the trip takes just 30 minutes. At Bayeku, passengers file in to buy tickets for the morning commute. All agree that their lives have improved since ditching their cars. "I now have more time for my family," said Saheed Ayinla, a project manager who had a long commute to get to his office by 8:00 am until he started using the boat eight years ago.

"I even look healthier. I don't have to wake up early and return home late. My family is very happy that they always have me around now. "It's even cheaper. A trip to Lagos Island, Lekki, Falomo and CMS/Marina costs 600 naira (\$2, 1.4 euros)," he said. Lola Alawode, a chemical engineer, has been using the boat for the last four years "because it saves time", but said improvements need to be

made, especially on safety. "The operators do not regularly service and maintain their boats to ensure they are in good condition. This puts passengers at risk," she said.

### Safety concerns

Private boat operators blame poor funding, high operating costs and a lack of government support for their inability to develop the sector. "The cost of maintaining our boats is prohibitive and the government is not doing enough to assist us," said Justin Ogunbayo, owner of Tango Oscar Marine Service. Ogunbayo launched his firm in 2012 after 27 years as a merchant ship's captain. He now has six boats that transport at least 400 passengers every day. "Three of my boats are now grounded and I don't have the cash to put them in order," he said, adding that he has been unable to get bank loans to cover repairs.—AFP

## California hit once more by devastating infernos

**SANTA PAULA:** More than a thousand firefighters were struggling to contain a wind-whipped brush fire in southern California on Tuesday that has left at least one person dead, sent thousands fleeing, and was choking the area with thick black smoke. The Ventura County Fire Department said more than 27,000 people had been told to evacuate as the fast-moving fire in the coastal county north of Los Angeles grew to 45,000 acres. More than 150 homes and businesses had already been destroyed.

California Governor Jerry Brown declared a state of emergency over the area, announcing: "This fire is very dangerous and spreading rapidly." "It's critical residents stay ready and evacuate immediately if told to do so." The northern part of Los Angeles county was engulfed in thick smoke, leaving the air almost unbreathable as ash fell on the streets. Mayor Eric Garcetti warned residents to remain vigilant for fresh outbreaks.

"This is an extreme weather event and these winds can spread embers far and/or kick small new fires up quickly. We expect five days of this," he tweeted. A Red Cross

evacuation center which had hosted 600 people Monday night was expecting that number to rise to around a thousand by Tuesday, spokesman Fred Mariscal said. Lexus Deloni, a 20-year-old caregiver who had brought her two young girls, aged one and two, said she had only 45 minutes to evacuate after returning home from a 12-hour shift in the city of Ojai, an hour-and-a-half drive from L.A. "I'm making sure they are eating, drinking, having fun, playing with them," she said, as a man dressed as Santa Claus arrived, much to the delight of the youngsters.

### Apocalyptic images

Prospects for containment depended on improving weather conditions. "Really, Mother Nature is going to decide when we have the ability to put it out," Ventura County Fire Chief Mark Lorenzen told a news conference. Strong seasonal gusts known as the Santa Ana winds had registered speeds of up to 55 miles per hour (80 kilometers per hour), the National Weather Service said, predicting they could hit upwards of 80 miles per hour. "The fire is pushing quickly towards the city of Ventura," Lorenzen said, and has reached the eastern city limits. The ocean-side city has a population of around 100,000.

The fire chief said one death had been reported. "As the individual was evacuating from the fire, the car overturned," he said. Authorities said more than 1,000 firefighters were currently fighting the "Thomas Fire"—a blaze captured in apocalyptic images with flames sometimes taking on the appearance of a volcanic eruption.



**CALIFORNIA:** A resident watches as the Creek Fire burns along a hillside near homes in the Shadow Hills neighborhood of Los Angeles, California. —AFP

"Fixed wing aircraft and helicopters are expected to attack the fire at daybreak," the Ventura County website said. Two other large blazes broke out Tuesday—the Creek Fire, which has so far swallowed 11,000 acres and the more contained Rye fire, spread over 1,000 acres.

### Tinder dry

The NWS put a "red flag" warning into effect for much of Los Angeles and Ventura counties through Thursday, saying the coming days would likely see "the strongest and longest duration Santa Ana

wind event we have seen so far this season." Lorenzen said the fire was consuming dry brush. "It's heavy brush, brush that hasn't burned in 15 to 20 years," he said.

"And it's been a five, six-year drought so the fuel is just tinder dry and just as ripe as can be for fire spread." Roads in the northern part of Los Angeles meanwhile were packed with traffic as firetrucks raced towards the flames, while several sections of highways were closed. Widespread power outages had hit a quarter of a million people as well as forcing the closure of 20 schools.—AFP



International

# B-1B bomber joins US-South Korea military drill as tensions escalate

## Drills 'pushing peninsula to brink of nuclear war'

SEOUL: A US B-1B bomber yesterday joined large-scale US-South Korean military exercises that North Korea has denounced as pushing the peninsula to the brink of nuclear war, as tension mounts between the North and the United States. The bomber flew from the Pacific US-administered territory of Guam and joined US F-22 and F-35 stealth fighters in the annual exercises, which run until tomorrow. The drills come a week after North Korea said it had tested its most advanced intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States, as part of a weapons program that it has conducted in defiance of international sanctions and condemnation.

Asked about the bomber's flight, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told a regular news briefing in Beijing: "We hope relevant parties can maintain restraint and not do anything to add tensions on the Korean peninsula." North Korea regularly threatens to destroy South Korea, the United States and Japan. Its official KCNA state news agency said at the weekend that US President Donald Trump's administration was "begging for nuclear war" by staging the drills. It also labeled Trump, who has threatened to destroy North Korea if the United States is threatened, "insane".

KCNA said on Tuesday that the exercises in which the bomber took part are "simulating an all-out war", including drills to "strike the state leadership and nuclear and ballistic rocket bases, air fields, naval bases and other major objects..." US Republican Senator Lindsey Graham

on Sunday urged the Pentagon to start moving US military dependants, such as spouses and children, out of South Korea, saying conflict with North Korea was getting close. The US-South Korea drills coincide with a rare visit to the isolated North by UN political affairs chief Jeffrey Feltman.

North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Pak Myong Guk met Feltman yesterday in the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, and discussed bilateral cooperation and other issues of mutual interest, KCNA said. Feltman, a former senior US State Department official, is the highest-level UN official to visit North Korea since 2012. The State Department said on Tuesday he was not carrying any message from Washington. South Korean President Moon Jae-in will visit China next Wednesday for a summit with his counterpart Xi Jinping. Seoul's presidential Blue House said. North Korea's increasing nuclear and



### N Korea fumes, threatens US and it allies

missile capability would top the agenda, it said. The military exercises, called "Vigilant Ace", are designed to enhance joint readiness and operational capability of US extended deterrence, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement. North Korea has vehemently criticized the drills since the weekend, saying the exercise precipitates US and South Korean "self-destruction". China and Russia had proposed that the United States and South Korea stop major military exercises in exchange for North Korea halting its weapons programs. China is North Korea's lone major ally and



SEOUL: US Air Force B-1B Lancer bomber (left), two US F-35A and two US F-35B stealth jets fly over South Korea with South Korea's two F-16 (right) and two F-15K (left top) fighter jets during a joint military drill. —AFP

fears widespread instability on its border. Russia also has communication channels open with North Korea and is ready to exert its influence, the RIA news agency quoted Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov as saying on Tuesday.

North Korea has tested dozens of ballistic missiles, two

of which flew over Japan, and conducted its sixth and largest nuclear bomb test in September. It says its weapons programs are a necessary defense against US plans to invade. The United States, which has 28,500 troops stationed in South Korea, a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War, denies any such intention. —Reuters

## Putin seeks new six-year term as Russia president

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday said he would seek a new six-year term in the country's March elections in a move that would make him the longest-serving Russian leader since Joseph Stalin. Putin, who has been in power for the past 18 years, is expected to sail to victory, with only token opponents competing against him. "I will offer my candidacy for the post of president of the Russian Federation," he said during a visit to a car factory in Nizhny Novgorod. He made the widely-expected announcement surrounded by cheering workers, who prodded him to unveil his plans in a carefully-choreographed ceremony.

"There is perhaps no better place and better excuse to announce this," Putin said in a nod to his core constituency. "Russia will go only forward! And no-one would ever stop her in this direction." Predictably, a chorus of Russian politicians praised the announcement, while social networks were abuzz, with many ridiculing the Kremlin strongman. Top Putin critic Alexei Navalny, who has earlier declared a Kremlin bid even although he will not be allowed to run due to a suspended sentence for fraud, called Putin a "swindler."

"I suggest we don't agree," the 41-year-old Western-educated lawyer said on Twitter, referring to Putin's plans to seek a fourth Kremlin term. Putin's confirmation of the Kremlin bid came as Russia reeled from a decision by the International Olympic Committee to ban the country from the Winter Games as punishment over claims of state-orchestrated doping. But despite a litany of mounting problems including corruption, poverty and poor healthcare, the 65-year-old leader enjoys approval ratings of some 80 percent.

### 'Do you trust me?'

Just hours earlier Putin visited a glitzy ceremony for volunteers in Moscow where he sought to rouse supporters. "I want to ask, do you trust and support me?" he addressed the huge audience of mostly young people. "Yes!" the audience chant-

ed. Before Putin took the floor prominent figures, including athletes and Soviet-era celebrities such as 83-year-old actor Vasily Lanovoi, took to the stage to extol the country's successes, such as Soviet victory in World War II. Cosmonaut Sergei Ryazansky addressed the audience via video link from the International Space Station.

Putin has sought to appeal to the country's youth after thousands of young Russians took to the streets earlier this year to protest alleged corruption among the elites, targeting Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev among others. The demonstrations were sparked by a documentary fronted by Navalny. Putin, who first became president after Boris Yeltsin sensationally resigned on New Year's Eve 1999, handed power to his ally Medvedev in 2008 at the end of his second term. Putin served as prime minister—though few doubted who was really in charge—and returned as president in 2012.

If he extends his rule to 2024, Putin will have led Russia longer than Leonid Brezhnev, who presided over an era of stagnation from 1964 to 1982 and became the target of derision in his later years. "He cannot not seek a new term," independent analyst Dmitry Oreshkin said. "If he left the system he himself created he would become weak and vulnerable." Analysts say that after more than 17 years of leadership—both as president and prime minister—Putin fatigue may be spreading across the country.

Many Russians say they would vote for Putin simply because they don't see an alternative to him amid the former KGB officer's chokehold on domestic politics. With the result of the election already a foregone conclusion, turnout could be low, dealing a blow to the Kremlin's hopes for a decisive new mandate, observers say. According to a poll conducted by the independent Levada Centre pollster last month, just 58 percent of respondents said they would take part in the polls, down from 75 percent in December 2007.

### 'What will happen after 2018?'

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov stressed this week that those figures came ahead of the start of a political campaign, saying they were set to grow. Many expect that Kseniya Sobchak, a 36-year-old glamorous former host of a television reality show and daughter of Putin's former mentor, will likely be allowed to run against Putin to rekindle public interest in the dull election. —AFP

## N Korea missile test raises flight safety concerns

SEOUL: A North Korean ballistic missile was seen by the crew of several airliners last week, aviation authorities said yesterday, raising concerns about the threat to civilian flights posed by Pyongyang's unannounced tests. The North has conducted a flurry of missile tests this year in defiance of repeated international protests, including from aviation authorities.

Pyongyang fired an intercontinental ballis-

tic missile (ICBM) last week, which reached an altitude of 4,475 kilometers before splashing into the sea 950 kilometers east of its launch site, North Korean state media said.

"A Korean Air jet flying to Incheon from San Francisco reported to Japanese controllers that its flight crew saw a flash from what was believed to be the North Korean missile," a Korean Air spokesman told AFP. Four minutes later another Korean Air plane on a Los Angeles-Incheon flight also reported the same sighting to Japanese control, he said. A South Korean transportation ministry official, who wanted to remain unnamed, said the flight paths of both Korean airlines were some 220 kilometers away from where the missile landed. "In the clean dark sky, you can see flashes from a missile from that long distance," he said.

### 'A bright flame falling down'

Japan's transport ministry also said air controllers in the country received reports of four such sightings. A Japan Airlines spokesman said the cockpit crew of one of its airliners, flying from Tokyo to London, "saw a bright flame falling down" over the sea of Japan. The reports from South Korea and Japan come after Hong Kong carrier Cathay Pacific said Monday that the crew of its flight from San Francisco to Hong Kong saw "what is suspected to be the re-entry" of the North Korean missile.

Cathay said there was no current plan to change air routes, saying its plane was "far from the event location". In a message shared with staff, Cathay general manager Mark Hoey said the crew had described seeing the missile "blow up and fall apart", the South China Morning Post reported. —AFP

## North Korea boats off Japan spark spy scare

TOKYO: An increasing number of fishing boats from North Korea has been appearing off Japan - some in distress, some abandoned and some with dead bodies on board - raising fears about infiltration by spies as tension with North Korea surges. The coastguard has beefed up patrols in response to the boats - including one labeled military property - just off the coast, or even grounded on Japanese beaches.

The coastguard and analysts of North Korea have played down the fears, attributing the surge in boats to more mundane reasons, such as a North Korean drive to increase winter fish catches. But the worries persist. "The government is well aware that this is causing great anxiety to local people," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters this week.

"The police and coastguard ... are working to clarify the situation," he said. "Once we have the facts, we will respond firmly." There were 28 cases of boats drift off Japan's coast or grounded on its shores in November, the coastguard said, compared with four in November last year. One of the boats was a 14-metre wooden vessel from North Korea found off the northern island of Hokkaido with 10 crew on board. Raising alarm in a country North Korea has threatened to destroy, amid tension over its relentless development of nuclear bombs and missiles, was a square plate attached to the boat reading: "Korean People's Army, No. 854 military unit" in Korean script.

Police and the coastguard questioning the crew declined to comment. A day before that boat was detained, eight decomposed bodies were found in a small boat washed up on a beach. Also on board were life jackets bearing Korean lettering. "I have no intention to stoke fears," opposition lawmaker Tetsuro Fukuyama told parliament on Tuesday, referring to another case when eight men who said they were from North Korea were found wandering along a marina. "What about the risk of these people, if they are special agents, making a landing just when some military operation is going on?"

### Battle for fish

Analysts point to rising demand for fish in North Korea, and competition with Chinese boats, pushing North Korean fishermen further out to sea. North Korea is calling for bigger catches from fishermen sailing rough winter seas in small, old boats with unreliable engines. North Korea's Rodong Sinmun newspaper last month urged fishermen to fight their "important battle" of meeting annual quotas in winter. "Fish are like bullets and artillery shells," it said.

Nihon University professor Ken Kotani said he did not think the boats signaled a North Korean spy campaign, noting that local authorities were handling the situation. "The government has entrusted this to local police," he said. Satoru Miyamoto, professor at Seigakuin University, said he suspected growing demand for fish was luring more fishermen to sea in rickety boats. "The number of wealthy people is growing and they're seeking a healthy diet. Fishing is meeting that demand," he said. —Reuters



Nizhny Novgorod: Russian President Vladimir Putin (center) visits the GAZ factory in Nizhny Novgorod. Putin yesterday said he would seek a new six-year term in the country's March elections. —AFP

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## Russia pays price, but no winners in doping saga

If you're looking for winners after the International Olympic Committee's decision to boot Russia from the upcoming Games, keep on looking. There are none. Yes, it's easy to view the IOC's decision as a victory for clean athletes who have been desperately waiting for a day like Tuesday - when the IOC finally delivered a sanction that was, at least on some level, in line with the crimes. It's easy to see it as vindication for Grigory Rodchenkov, the Russian lab director who helped execute the cheating, then got sick of it all and became a whistleblower who is now living in hiding in the United States.

And it's easy to see it as a long-awaited come-uppance for the Russians, who have been thumbing their noses at long-accepted rules and norms of fair competition, virtually daring the powers that be to do something about it. But the crimes - they have already been committed, and those who were cheated at the Sochi Olympics will never get that moment back, even if the IOC gives them a ceremony at the Pyeongchang Games in February.

Rodchenkov's life will never be the same. "It's going to be challenging in ways hard to imagine," his attorney, Jim Walden, said. "It's unlikely he'll ever be reunited with his family, unlikely he'll ever leave the United States, and he's going to be looking over his shoulder every day." And while it might seem like a good deal to ban Russia from the Olympics - or at least the Russian flag, anthem and uniforms, though not all its athletes - it's a precarious position for the IOC.

One potential endgame is that Russia just throws up its hands and leaves the movement altogether. Imagine, if you will, the NBA without the Lakers or the World Cup without Brazil, and you get a sense of what the Olympics might be like in the future without its second biggest team. As the IOC left it, there figure to be a number of Russians competing in Korea. They will be individually referred to as "Olympic Athlete from Russia," or "OAR".

The fact that Russian Olympic Committee President Alexander Zhukov called the name a "very important" concession - to say nothing of the fact that IOC left open the possibility that the Russian flag could fly at the closing ceremony - gives a window into the contortions the IOC has been going through to make sure it doesn't completely alienate the country that spent \$51 billion to stage the Sochi Games where it cheated all its guests.

### Russian values

That \$51 billion wasn't simply to put on a good show. It was part of Russia's attempt to use sports to show it could still be a major player on the world stage, more than two decades after the breakup of the Soviet Union. For a country spending that much, a poor showing in the medals table was a non-starter. After finishing 11th at the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver, something had to change.

"They view (the Olympics) as a vehicle for promoting Russian values," said Steve Roush, the former chief of sport performance at the US Olympic Committee who now does international consulting. "Vancouver was embarrassing for them. That led to, 'We are going to change the way we do things for 2014.'" Boy did they. As the IOC investigation confirmed, Rodchenkov helped build the cheating program at the behest of higher-ups in the Russian government. And now that the IOC has climbed on board with all the other investigators and whistleblowers and athletes in acknowledging that Russia's government masterminded the plan, there are no major forces outside of that country who argue about the lengths Russia would go to use sports as a symbol of national strength.

So, even Russia's small victory - that it can send athletes to compete under the Olympic flag - may feel like something less, given that nobody will see the Russian flag unfurled, the uniform worn or the anthem sung, and that name "Russia" will never appear on the official medal tally. That is, after all, what the Olympics are all about. But the IOC's small victory - that, after long last, it did the "right" thing - feels like something less, as well, given all the time it wasted, all the athletes who got hurt along the way, not to mention the concessions it made in an attempt to appease Russia one more time.

"Justice for a horrendous act on sport, a great option for clean athletes to have the opportunity to compete, and partial vindication for so many who we're hurt by Russia's actions." American gold-medal bobsledder and current US Olympic Committee board member Steve Mesler said in describing Tuesday's decision. Hardly the stuff champagne toasts are made of. But probably the best that can be said given the current state of the Olympics. —AP



## 'Swire prince' culture survives at Cathay

Loss-making Cathay Pacific Airways Ltd hired McKinsey & Co consultants earlier this year to advise on a transformation plan, drawing on turnarounds at regional rivals such as Qantas Airways Ltd and Japan Airlines Co Ltd. Battered by competition from Chinese and Middle East airlines and hobbled by missteps in fuel hedging, Cathay in January completed a strategic review, and later announced its biggest job cuts in almost two decades. Following McKinsey's subsequent input - which has not been previously reported - Greg Hughes, Cathay's Chief Operations and Service Delivery Officer, said more than 740 initiatives had so far been identified to cut costs, boost productivity and improve customer service - including easier access to higher 'frequent flyer' status, more economy-class seats on Boeing 777 airliners, and on-demand dining for business-class fliers. "We were very keen on learning from them the best way to go about a transformation," Hughes told Reuters. "They have done thousands of them, and we haven't."

Steve Saxon, McKinsey's aviation expert partner in Shanghai, said the firm's policy is to decline comment on client work. Hughes said McKinsey's involvement ended after its consultants helped structure the three-year transformation programme, which is being carried out by Cathay Pacific staff and aims for HK\$4 billion (\$512 million) of savings from lowering costs and boosting productivity. "We have always wanted our transformation programme to be something that our people own and can deliver upon," he said.

### 'Colonial Culture'

But, as Cathay chases a return to profitability, it looks set to continue a practice that some current and former employees say may be the biggest obstacle to a real change of culture: the airline's unusual executive rotation system. Under this system, so-called "house staff" at unlisted British conglomerate John Swire & Sons Ltd - which owns a majority stake in Hong Kong-listed Swire Pacific, which, in turn, owns 45 percent of Cathay - rotate positions at group companies every few years.

This could, in theory, see a Coca-Cola refrigeration manager at a Swire-owned plant in China take charge of Cathay's operations in France. Supporters of the scheme say it brings a fresh eye and diverse experience to the job, and helps succession planning. "If they go through all these different areas they learn to look at things from different perspectives," said Achim

Czerny, associate professor of aviation management at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Critics, though, say it's a costly, two-tiered relic that leads to short-term and conservative thinking and can demotivate talented middle-managers, who feel excluded from the scheme. Some blame it for Cathay being slow to spot the strategic threat from rival airlines. "It's a bit of a colonial culture," said Terence Fan, an assistant professor specializing in transport at Singapore Management University. "There's certainly a lot of complacency." Cathay declined to say whether McKinsey had



### Airline hired McKinsey to aid with transformation

examined its rotation system, but said it planned to keep it in place as part of its transformation program.

### 'Swire Princes'

Founded as an import-export business in Liverpool in 1816, John Swire & Sons opened its first China office 70 years later. Still family-controlled, it also owns majority stakes in maintenance group Hong Kong Aircraft Engineering Co Ltd (HAECO) and Swire Properties Ltd. As a management service fee, the companies pay John Swire & Sons 2.5 percent of their profit before tax and non-controlling interests.

The arrangement doesn't give Cathay much incentive to hire top executives from outside as it pays Swire regardless. Air China Ltd and Qatar Airways are major Cathay shareholders, though Swire gives them little say in the airline's day-to-day operations. Former Cathay CEO John Slosar is chairman of

Swire Pacific, Cathay, HAECO and Swire Properties. Like many senior managers - including Cathay's current CEO Rupert Hogg - Slosar started out on Swire's "house staff" program - once an all-male and predominantly 'Oxbridge' preserve, with members dubbed by outsiders as 'Swire princes'.

There is a separate stream of management trainees, more usually Hong Kong locals with Chinese language skills, who stay at a Swire company throughout their careers but move around within that company. Hogg's predecessor, Ivan Chu, began as a management trainee at Cathay. Many airlines have graduate programs and employees rotating between management posts, but at Cathay managers could be rotated in with no knowledge of the aviation industry. Cathay rarely brings in top outside talent from rival airlines.

"It's a very traditional, fairly conservative company and its policy has always been to grow its own management talent," said a person who previously worked with Swire, and didn't want to be named so as not to jeopardize relations with the company. A former Cathay employee, who asked not to be named, said the rotation system at the top was frustrating for middle managers. "These weren't glass ceilings, but brutally hard concrete ceilings. If you were in middle-management, there was no way you were going to get into the cadre of top management." One current employee said the Swire culture held up decision making as approvals were needed to react to sometimes fast-changing situations, and another said it hampered the airline's long-term strategy as CEOs commonly moved on after 2-3 years, with a new manager coming in "changing things again". However, a second former Cathay middle manager, who didn't want to be named as he is still in the aviation industry, said Swire's two-tiered management system worked well. While senior country and regional managers sometimes brought no aviation knowledge, "they were there for their corporate knowledge, for their business acumen".

"The culture is a fabulous thing," said a former 'house staff' member. "If there's one small weakness, you might argue that if you grow up with people, it's sometimes quite hard to look them in the eye and call them out when they are wrong, and have a really robust conversation." Slosar declined an interview request, but told The Wall Street Journal in 2014 that a benefit of the rotation system was that managers were all on the same page with the corporate culture. —Reuters

## Saleh death kills hope for a silver bullet in Yemen

The killing of ex-leader Ali Abdullah Saleh, days after his overtures to the Saudi-led coalition, has buried hopes for a breakthrough in Yemen's war, analysts say, and risks fuelling a standoff between Riyadh and Tehran. "The future of Yemeni politics has changed completely - Saleh was the foundation and now he's gone," Maged Almadhaji, Cairo-based director of the Sanaa Center for Strategic Studies, told AFP. On Saturday, the strongman ruptured three years of uneasy alliance with Iran-backed Houthi rebels, offering to "turn the page" with foe Saudi Arabia in return for the lifting of a crippling blockade and a ceasefire.

With Yemen's conflict locked in stalemate, the move was welcomed by Riyadh and its allies and sparked expectations of a major shift in a war that has claimed over 8,750 lives since 2015. Battles broke out between the Houthis and pro-Saleh forces on the streets of the capital Sanaa that they have controlled since 2014, while Yemen's exiled president - long sidelined from events - looked to activate his Saudi-backed troops east of the city.

"Saleh brought a big hope for an end to Houthi rule," said Almadhaji. "It's not that people loved him. It was a chance to break a frightening militia rule." But that came to an abrupt end on Monday when Saleh was gunned down by the Houthis and a gruesome video emerged of his bloodied corpse. "People are upset because this was an important opportunity and it's been lost," said Almadhaji.

### No substitute for Saleh

Before his slaying Saleh was seen as Yemen's great survivor. As president he dominated for over three decades and, even after mass protests forced his resignation in 2012, he remained a key player in the chaos that followed by ally-

ing with Houthi forces he had once fought. The attempt to seduce the Saudis, whose military coalition has been facing off against him since 2015, was another stunning turnaround - and Riyadh will be hard-pressed to find another such dealmaker.

"There are no Yemeni political figures comparable to Saleh in terms of influence," the US-based Soufan Center said in a briefing. "The near-term result of Saleh's death may be an increase in fighting by local forces, which in turn could intensify foreign interventions on both sides, as the Saudi coalition and Iran continue to protect and prop up their proxies."

In its first statement after Saleh's death, Riyadh called for a Yemen free of "militias supported by Iran", while regional rival Tehran defiantly insisted the strongman was killed for attempting a coup. Inside the coalition, allies Saudi Arabia and the UAE appear to differ on who to work with now, with commentators saying Riyadh favors the Islamist Al-Islah party while the Emiratis are plumping for Saleh's son.

Analyst Randa Slim of the Middle East Institute in Washington predicted Saleh's death would diminish any chances for a push to end a war that has created a humanitarian catastrophe. "Everyone, local and regional, will want this military cycle to play itself out for some time before they will be ready to sit at the negotiation table," Slim told AFP. Yemeni tribes who were "sitting on the fence" waiting to see if Saleh's

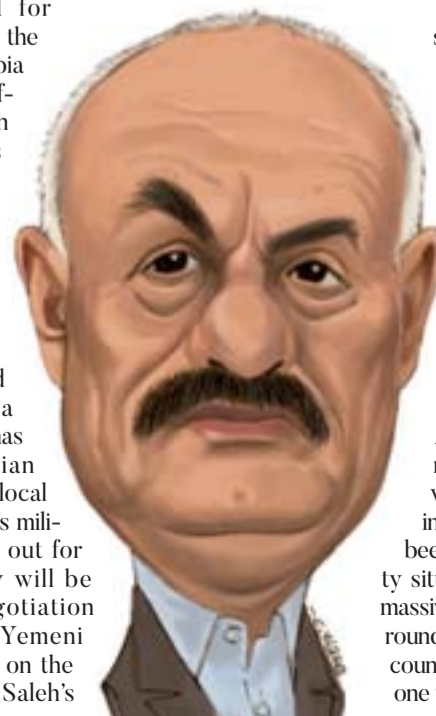
gambit succeeded may now pledge allegiance to the Houthis, she said. "One thing for sure is that Yemen is headed toward more conflict."

### 'End their suffering'

The latest surge of violence in Sanaa came on the back of an already dire humanitarian situation in Yemen, where a Saudi-led blockade had fuelled fears of a devastating famine. In a sign of growing concern over a fresh deterioration, the UN Security Council called on all sides to "de-escalate" and return to talks after a closed door meeting in the wake of Saleh's killing. The world body on Tuesday demanded a pause in fighting to allow it to deliver aid to civilians trapped in the capital after five days of bloodshed that killed over 230 people.

"You've got children terrified and pregnant women stuck," Humanitarian Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick told AFP by phone from Sanaa. "In the coming days there will be more air strikes and more ground fighting," he warned. Analyst Almadhaji said the death of Saleh has left the warring parties reeling - and peace an even more distant prospect. For Saudi Arabia, negotiating with the Iran-backed rebels is a non-starter, he said, while the Houthis are weakened by the loss of their key governing partner, who helped deflect accusations of loyalty to Tehran.

At a Tuesday rally in Sanaa, the rebels sought to project an image of unity and said they would ensure the safety of members of Saleh's party. But Almadhaji said frustrations of local residents - and the readiness of some to put their hopes in Saleh - go well beyond the Saudi-led blockade and are increasingly focused on the faults of Houthi rule. "Trade has been decimated, the black market is thriving. The security situation is terrible. Streets are closed and there is a massive campaign of detentions," he said, predicting that roundups of Saleh loyalists would continue. "People want a country. They want laws. They would welcome back anyone who could end their suffering." —AFP



News

## Women in rural Tunisia mix hot sauce with business

**MENZEL MHIRI, Tunisia:** These Tunisian women have some sauce, pooling their resources and a seasoned culinary expertise handed down the centuries from mother to daughter. Their secret? Harissa - the spicy hot pepper paste used to add zing to dishes traditionally prepared in North Africa's Maghreb region. These days, when Najoua Dhiflaoui prepares harissa, it is no longer just for her family. She and another 150 women are now making money by producing and even exporting their ancestral savoir faire.

Harissa, made from sun-dried chilli peppers, freshly prepared spices and olive oil to both preserve and soften its heat, is added to most dishes in restaurants in Tunisia, and is also popular abroad. In 2013, a group of women farmers in Menzel Mhiri near Kairouan in rural central Tunisia banded together to form a cooperative they dubbed "Tahadi" - Arabic for "challenge". Dhiflaoui and her co-workers certainly rose to it.

They went "door-to-door to convince others to join them, to combine their knowledge and sell their products together", the dynamic fortysomething told AFP. The women were able to take advantage of an official project to support local produce and were given training in the technical, hygienic and commercial aspects of their venture. For the past two years, they have marketed their harissa under the "Errim" trade name. That's Arabic for small gazelle, also a symbol of feminine beauty.

"It's a way of representing the Tunisian woman - hard-working, authentic and fiery," said Dhiflaoui with a smile, her forehead beaded with sweat from both the heat and the peppers. Tahadi now has 164 people working for it, and is one of the first firms in Tunisia to work exclusively with local rural women under a rotational system - its members work according to a flexible schedule. In a spotless white

laboratory lined with machinery that grinds, kneads and fills, the gloved women wash and prepare locally harvested ingredients to make the red paste.

Women play a key role in the Tunisian economy, said Farouk Ben Salah of PAMPAT, a UN, Swiss and Tunisian project aimed at getting rural products such as harissa onto the market. "The main thing is to create working conditions for them as soon as possible," he said. The harissa makers are paid "slightly more than the agricultural wage, around 15 dinars" (five euros) per working day, said Ben Salah.

Others work from home, performing essential tasks for the project and generating some income by cleaning and drying peppers on the roofs of their houses. Dhiflaoui is full of enthusiasm. "This work allows women a certain financial autonomy," she said, boosting their confidence and enabling them "to move forward". Since the launch of the cooperative, the farmers "have encouraged each other to make their mark. No longer do you have to be a teacher or doctor, now they too can work and feel they have a place in society."

Women in rural Tunisia are particularly affected by gender discrimination and lack of job security. While female unemployment is 22.5 percent at a national level, the rate exceeds 35 percent in rural provinces, according to a 2015 report by the National Institute of Statistics. Dhiflaoui said that many of the women who now work at Tahadi used to labor in the fields in "terrible conditions" or "waited until their husbands brought money home". Their new role has "made them bloom" and given them "liberty", she added.

"There's a big difference between a woman with her own monthly salary and a woman who relies on a husband," said Chelbia Dhiflaoui, Najoua's cousin who also works at Tahadi. "She feels a sense of responsibility, she sets goals she can reach - and she's working to improve her living conditions." Ben Salah said PAMPAT could help Tahadi diversify its production to give the cooperative more opportunities to employ women who live in rural areas.

Errim Harissa is already making a name for itself. Sold in gourmet food stores nationally, it can also be found in Switzerland and Germany, and orders have been dispatched to France and Italy. Talks are also underway to export the delicacy to Canada. — AFP



MENZEL MHIRI: Tunisian women pick tomatoes in a field on July 13, 2017 in the governorate of Kairouan. — AFP

## Joy as Kuwait's football ban...

Continued from Page 1

But we promise that we will cooperate more with the Kuwait Football Association and will work to lift the injustice on other sports by negotiating with the International Olympic Committee," he added.

Meanwhile, MPs welcomed the decision by FIFA to lift the suspension on Kuwaiti football. Ghanem congratulated the Kuwaiti people for the long-awaited step, while Roudhan hailed the great efforts made by Ghanem to

secure the lifting of the suspension. Opposition MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri congratulated the Kuwaiti youth for the decision, but demanded that the entire sports file be referred to the public prosecution for an investigation to penalize those who "betrayed" the country. Fadhl, who took part in the negotiations with FIFA, and opposition lawmaker Abdulwahab Al-Babtain also congratulated Kuwaiti youth.

Former president of Kuwait Football Association and ex-chief of Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Talal Al-Fahd Al-Sabah said the latest developments prove his point of view. He said that he had repeatedly called on the government to stop interfering in sports affairs and to respond to demands by international sports bodies, "but these calls were always rejected". "Now, the suspension on football has been lifted after the government accepted not to interfere," he added.

## Egyptian expat savagely beaten...

Continued from Page 1

as Waheed Mahmoud Al-Refae Hassan, who hails from Alexandria. Makram also contacted Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Tareq Al-Qouni and Kuwaiti Ambassador to Egypt Mohammed Al-Thuwaikh to follow up on the latest developments.

Makram expressed regret over what she described as "individual incidents" against Egyptians, stressing these will not affect the good Egyptian-Kuwaiti relations. Makram called Qouni to inquire about Waheed's condition, adding the ministry was closely following the situation with the Kuwaiti authorities. Qouni informed Makram that embassy staff immediately visited the victim in hospital and found that his condition had stabilized. Meanwhile, Thuwaikh expressed grief over such 'individual incidents', adding the embassy was ready to provide the Egyptian ministry of immigration with all the help needed to protect the young Egyptian's rights.

## Trump recognizes Jerusalem as Israel...

Continued from Page 1

Trump said his decision marked the start of a "new approach" to solving the thorny conflict between Israel and the Palestinians - as he insisted Washington remained intent on pursuing a peace deal for the region. "Peace is never beyond the grasp of those willing to reach it," said the US leader, who declared that "the United States would support a two-state solution if agreed to by both sides".

"This decision is not intended in any way to reflect a departure from our strong commitment to facilitate a lasting peace," Trump said, as he announced that Vice President Mike Pence would travel to the region in the coming days. "So today we call for calm, for moderation, and for the voices of tolerance to prevail over the purveyors of hate."

The announcement leaves many angry US allies and leaders across the Middle East trying to find a measured response and hoping that the tinderbox region is not destined for yet another round of bloodletting. Pope Francis joined a list of leaders warning of an historic misstep that could trigger a surge of violence. "I cannot silence my deep concern over the situation that has emerged in recent days," the pontiff said yesterday, one day after speaking by phone with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas.

The pontiff added that maintaining Jerusalem's status quo was important "in order to avoid adding new elements of tension to an already volatile world that is wracked by so many cruel conflicts". In a frantic series of calls, the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the European Union, France, Germany and Turkey also warned Trump against the move.

Moving the US embassy will probably take years to implement, but the repercussions of Trump's decision are likely to be swift. Hundreds of Palestinians burned US and Israeli flags as well as pictures of Trump in the Gaza Strip, while relatively small clashes erupted near

the flashpoint West Bank city of Hebron. The Palestinian armed Islamist movement Hamas has threatened to launch a new "intifada", or uprising.

Palestinians called for three days of protests - or "days of rage" - starting yesterday. Anticipating protests, US government officials and their families were ordered to avoid Jerusalem's Old City and the West Bank, though the situation remained largely calm yesterday. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called for a summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the main pan-Islamic body, in Istanbul on Dec 13 "to display joint action among Islamic countries" over Jerusalem. "Such a step will only play into the hands of terror groups," Erdogan said at a joint news conference in Ankara after talks with Jordan's King Abdullah II.

Jordan and the Palestinians also called for an emergency meeting of the Arab League in Cairo. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu refrained from commenting on the issue yesterday his first speech since Trump's plan was confirmed. Most of the international community does not formally recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, insisting the issue can only be resolved in negotiations.

The White House argues the move would not pre-empt final talks and would represent the reality that west Jerusalem is and will continue to be part of Israel under any settlement. Critics say Trump's approach could extinguish his own efforts to broker Middle East peace while igniting the flames of conflict in a region already reeling from crises in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Qatar.

Israel seized the largely Arab eastern sector of Jerusalem during the 1967 Six-Day War and later annexed it, claiming both sides of the city as its capital. The Palestinians want the eastern sector as the capital of their future state. Trump was pushed to act on the embassy as a result of the a 1995 law, which stated that the city "should be recognized as the capital of the state of Israel" and the US embassy be moved there. A waiver has been invoked by successive US presidents, postponing the move on grounds of "national security" once every six months, meaning the law has never taken effect. Several peace plans have unraveled in the past decades over the issue of how to divide sovereignty or oversee holy sites in Jerusalem. — Agencies

## #MeToo 'Silence Breakers' named...

Continued from Page 1

foreign language equivalents. The accusations against Weinstein, who has denied wrongdoing, proved a tipping point for a flood of sordid revelations involving other titans of Hollywood, big business, politics and the news media.

Many once-admired leaders in their fields have been fired or suspended, their brilliant careers in tatters. One of the figures singled out by Time, Ashley Judd was the first actress to come forward on the record to make accusations against the 65-year-old Weinstein. She was followed by more than a hundred others, and a watershed moment began. "When a movie star says #MeToo, it becomes easier to believe the cook who's been quietly enduring for years," a Time article read.

"This reckoning appears to have sprung up overnight. But it has actually been simmering for years, decades, centuries. These silence breakers have started a revolution of refusal, gathering strength by the day, and in the past two months alone, their collective anger has spurred immediate and shocking results: nearly every day, CEOs have been fired, moguls toppled, icons disgraced. In some cases, criminal charges have been brought."

The Person of the Year announcement came as The New York Times published a report detailing a wide-

spread "complicity machine" of powerful relationships that enabled Weinstein to silence or intimidate his accusers for years. Weinstein has denied via his lawyers and spokespeople that he engaged in any non-consensual behavior. He has not been charged with any crimes, though investigations have been launched in London, Los Angeles and New York.

A number of men also have revealed they were victims of sexual abuse, including Anthony Rapp, who accused Oscar-winning actor Kevin Spacey of making sexual advances on him when he was a teenager. More than a dozen men have since come forward with similar accusations against Spacey, some of whom were teens at the time of the alleged abuse.

On Time's cover is a composite group photograph featuring Judd, along with singer Taylor Swift and ex-Uber engineer Susan Fowler. "The galvanizing actions of the women on our cover... along with those of hundreds of others, and of many men as well, have unleashed one of the highest-velocity shifts in our culture since the 1960s," Time editor-in-chief Edward Felsenthal said in a statement.

Calling #MeToo a "powerful accelerant", Felsenthal noted that the hashtag has been used millions of times in at least 85 countries. "The idea that influential, inspirational individuals shape the world could not be more apt this year," Felsenthal said. "For giving voice to open secrets, for moving whisper networks onto social networks, for pushing us all to stop accepting the unacceptable, The Silence Breakers are the 2017 Person of the Year." Time has designated an individual or group who has most influenced the year's news and events as Person of the Year since 1927. —AFP



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## Sports

# Westbrook's triple-double helps Thunder rally past Jazz

## Beal has career-high 51, Wizards down Trail Blazers

### NBA results/standings

Washington 106, Portland 92; Oklahoma City 100, Utah 94; Toronto 126, Phoenix 113.

#### Eastern Conference

##### Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	21	4	.840	-
Toronto	15	7	.682	4.5
Philadelphia	13	10	.565	7
NY Knicks	11	12	.478	9
Brooklyn	9	14	.391	11

##### Central Division

Cleveland	17	7	.708	-
Detroit	14	9	.609	2.5
Milwaukee	12	10	.545	4
Indiana	13	11	.542	4
Chicago	3	19	.136	13

##### Southeast Division

Washington	13	11	.542	-
Miami	11	12	.478	1.5
Charlotte	9	13	.409	3
Orlando	10	15	.400	3.5
Atlanta	5	18	.217	7.5

##### Western Conference

##### Northwest Division

Denver	13	10	.565	-
Minnesota	14	11	.560	-
Portland	13	11	.542	0.5
Utah	13	12	.520	1
Oklahoma City	11	12	.478	2

##### Pacific Division

Golden State	19	6	.760	-
LA Clippers	8	14	.364	9.5
LA Lakers	8	15	.348	10
Phoenix	9	17	.346	10.5
Sacramento	7	16	.304	11

##### Southwest Division

Houston	18	4	.818	-
San Antonio	16	8	.667	3
New Orleans	12	12	.500	7
Memphis	8	15	.348	10.5
Dallas	7	17	.292	12

**OKLAHOMA CITY:** Russell Westbrook scored 34 points in his seventh triple-double of the season, and the Oklahoma City Thunder rallied from 17 points down in the second half to defeat the Utah Jazz 100-94 on Tuesday night. Westbrook finished with 14 assists and 13 rebounds. Paul George scored 21 points, Steven Adams had 20 points and nine rebounds and Carmelo Anthony added 14 points and eight rebounds for the Thunder, who won their third straight. Rookie Donovan Mitchell scored 31 points and Joe Ingles added 16 for the Jazz, who had won six straight and scored at least 106 points in each game. The Jazz led 47-39 at halftime, and they opened things up even more early in the third quarter. A driving layup by Alec Burks put the Jazz up 72-55 as the Thunder continued to misfire on open shots. Westbrook closed out the third quarter strong and helped the Thunder cut Utah's lead to 80-68 by the



### Toronto improves its NBA-best home record to 9-1

end of the period. He scored 11 points in the quarter. The Thunder finally took the lead on a layup by Westbrook with about four minutes remaining.

#### WIZARDS 106, TRAIL BLAZERS 92

Bradley Beal scored a career-high 51 points, and Washington bounced back from a demoralizing loss the night before to beat Portland. Beal made 21 field goals, also a career high, and the Wizards led by as many as 23 points. He hit five 3-pointers. Damian Lillard finished with 30 points, eight rebounds and nine assists for the Blazers, who have lost three straight at home after returning from a 4-1 trip. Portland was hurt midway through the final quarter when center Jusuf Nurkic limped off the court and to the locker room after appearing to injure his right ankle. He had 15 points and nine rebounds before leaving. The Wizards were coming off a 116-69 loss Monday night at Utah, the second-



**OKLAHOMA CITY:** Oklahoma City Thunder forward Carmelo Anthony, right, shoots over Utah Jazz forward Joe Ingles (2) in the fourth quarter of an NBA basketball game in Oklahoma City. — AP

largest losing margin in franchise history.

#### RAPTORS 126, SUNS 113

Kyle Lowry had 20 points and 10 assists. DeMar DeRozan scored 20 points and Toronto beat Phoenix, improving its NBA-best home record to 9-1. Suns guard Devin Booker had to be carried off the floor by two teammates after suffering an apparent leg injury with 2:40 remaining and Phoenix trailing by 11. Booker froze in pain while playing defense and did not move as train-

ers came out to examine him. Booker, who shook off a 2-for-11 start to score a season-high 46 points Monday in a win at Philadelphia, shot 0 for 7 in the first half Tuesday. He finished 4-for-15 with 19 points, including 10 of 12 from the foul line. Serge Ibaka scored 19 points and OG Anunoby matched his career high with 16 as Toronto won its fourth straight. The Raptors, who have scored 100 or more points in 10 consecutive games, almost reached triple digits in three quarters Tuesday. Toronto led 97-79 heading to the fourth. — AP

## Motul partners at Le Mans truck racing

**LONDON:** Making full use of Motul's Heavy Duty range, the international lubricant specialist is technically supporting Rooster Racing in the British Truck Racing Association (BTRA) Championship, one of the series which feeds into the FIA-sanctioned European Truck Racing Championship.

The wishes of thousands of truck racing fans came true recently at the home of endurance racing, Le Mans, with the first 100% truck racing event - the FIA ETRC, the French Cup for Trucks and the BTRA - joining the event as an unofficial round of the national championship. With the trucks shaking the ground and wowing the senses, it provided spectators with the ultimate entertainment and some heavy-duty racing action.

From the four races over the weekend, Rooster Racing's driver, Luke Taylor, scooped three 2nd places and one 3rd making it a dream weekend for the Manchester driver and "King Klaus", his MAN racing-prepared truck.

Motul has provided the team with the very specific products needed for this type of racing - Tekma Ultima + 5W30 engine oil, Gear Synt TDL 75W90 gear-box oil and Multi ATF power steering fluid, all of which helped Rooster Racing

towards their success.

Driver Luke Taylor explains more about how Motul made light work of the heavy-duty racing environment: "For a while we were having issues with the power steering which made the truck a lot more physical to drive through the corners. We had a chat with the Motul technical expert who straight away understood the problem and recommended we use Motul Multi ATF. From the minute we switched, at Le Mans, we notice a real improvement in the handling during the race and, of course, our results improved too. Definitely the best decision we've made!"

Motul Head of Heavy-Duty, Keith Johnson, added: "We've been developing our range of products dedicated to HD and, as in the case of cars and power-sports, the natural next step was to get involved in truck racing. As we've proved with other areas of motorsport, racing - and especially endurance racing - is the best laboratory and test bench to develop and test our products for wider consumer use. We're delighted with this new collaboration with this promising team."

ALSAYER Engineering, a subsidiary of ALSAYER Holdings is the authorized distributor for Motul in Kuwait, world class lubricants with global presence in 160 countries. Technologically leading products from Motul lubricants will be available for customers at ALSAYER Engineering's wide network of five centers for tires, oils and paints as well as in authorized dealers, co-ops, garages and Auto-repair shops across the State of Kuwait.

## Vitali Klitschko, Erik Morales win selection to Boxing HOF

**CANASTOTA:** Three years after he threw his hat back into the political ring for good, former heavyweight champion Vitali Klitschko achieved the ultimate honor for his time in that other ring - selection to the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

"It's a dream of many boxers to be a member of the Hall of Fame family," Klitschko, now the mayor of Kiev, Ukraine, said in a statement from the Hall of Fame. "I've thought about the Hall of Fame, but I never expected one day that I would be among the legends who were always examples for me. It's a big honor."

Klitschko was one of nine people selected for induction next June. Other boxers in the class of 2018 announced Tuesday were four-division world champion Erik Morales and light middleweight champion Ronald "Winky" Wright, while Sid Terris was elected posthumously in the old-timer category.

Elected in the observer category were broadcasters Steve Albert and Jim Gray, and German promoter Klaus-Peter Kohl was selected in the non-participant category. Ring announcer Johnny Addie and promoter Lorraine Chargin were elected posthumously in the non-participant category.

Voting was conducted by members of the Boxing Writers Association and a panel of international boxing historians. With a Ph.D in his portfolio, the 6-foot-7 Klitschko earned the nickname "Dr. Ironfist." A product of the Soviet athletic system, Klitschko and his younger brother, Wladimir, dominated the heavyweight class for a decade.

Vitali Klitschko boxed professionally from 1996-2013 but took three years off to pursue politics, finishing second in the race for mayor of Kiev in 2006. He used a fierce jab and aggressive punching to register an impressive 45-2 record with 41 knockouts, and his most memorable fight might have been his second loss. It came against WBC champion Lennox Lewis in Los Angeles in 2003. Klitschko was ahead on the scorecards when the fight was stopped after the sixth round because of a bad cut above Klitschko's left eye.

Morales won titles in four weight divisions. Nicknamed "El Terrible," the native of Mexico followed his father into the ring and won the NABF and WBC super bantamweight titles. He also defeated Guty Espadas Jr. for the WBC featherweight title in 2001, captured the WBC and IBF super featherweight titles in 2004, and in 2011 defeated Pablo Cano for the WBC light welterweight title. He retired a



**MUNICH:** In this Jan. 28, 2001, file photo, Vitali Klitschko, of Ukraine, shows the world championship belt after he knocked out Orlin Norris, of the United States in the first round of a WBO heavyweight title fight in Munich, Germany. Klitschko, have been elected to the International Boxing Hall of Fame. — AP

year later after back-to-back losses to Danny Garcia, finishing with a pro record of 52-9 (36 KOs).

Wright, a native of Washington, D.C., was a 5-foot-10 southpaw who captured the NABF light middleweight title twice (1995-96, 2000) and four world 154-pound title belts. He also competed as a middleweight and scored wins over Sam Soliman and Felix Trinidad before retiring in 2012 with a pro record of 51-6-1 (25 KOs).

"Oh, man, it's an honor," Wright said. "I appreciate it. It feels so great." For Don Chargin, his wife's selection was a dream come true. Together, they co-promoted thousands of boxing shows over nearly five decades before her death in 2010.

"This news has made my day," Chargin said. "I'm just so happy. I've been wishing and praying for this." Albert is the younger brother of broadcasters Marv and Al Albert, so talking had always been second nature - until Steve got the word.

"It's rare for me, but I'm a little speechless right now," said Steve Albert, who called more than 300 championship bouts for Showtime from 1987-2009. "Having been out of the sport for a few years I didn't expect it to happen. It's a little overwhelming."

For Gray, a veteran of over 700 championship bouts as part of the broadcast team at Showtime, it, too, was an unforgettable moment. "I got chills," Gray said. "I'm so honored and so grateful to the sport, the fighters and the Hall of Fame. What an amazing feeling to have this unique recognition."

Kohl, a native of Hamburg, Germany, was a timekeeper for the German Professional Boxing Association before venturing into promoting in the late 1980s under the Universum Box-Promotion banner. He promoted more than 2,100 bouts.

Terris, dubbed the "Ghost of the Ghetto," was a lightweight from New York who excelled as an amateur, going unbeaten in 50 fights. In 1922, he won the New York state, New York City, national and international amateur lightweight championships and also was the national AAU bantamweight champion. Although he never fought for a title, Terris had a solid pro career, retiring in 1931 with a record of 92-13-5 (12 KOs). He died in 1974.

A native of Italy, Addie was a broker on Wall Street and announced boxing matches as a sideline before being hired by Madison Square Garden in 1948. He called virtually every major fight there until his death in 1971. — AP



Sports

# Australia lead series 2-0 after Starc, Hazlewood clean up England

## England face the prospect of losing series in next week's third Test

**ADELAIDE:** Pacemen Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood spearheaded Australia to a crushing 120-run win in Adelaide yesterday leaving Ashes holders England trailing 2-0 and on the verge of losing the five-Test series.

Hazlewood snuffed out England's hopes of a miracle victory when he claimed the key wicket of captain Joe Root in the third over of the final day of the first-ever day-night Ashes Test. Left-arm Starc ripped through the tail to finish with five for 88 and bowled Jonny Bairstow to clinch victory 15 minutes from the end of the first session. England now face the prospect of losing the series in next week's third Test at Perth's WACA Ground where they have not beaten Australia since 1978. "It's always tough coming back from 2-0 down, particularly when you're away from home," Smith said.

"You're only one or two bad sessions away from the series, really. We have to be confident, doing the basics well and just backing up day-in and day-out." While Root was batting England still had a chance to pull off a record run chase of 345 at Adelaide Oval. But Hazlewood enticed a bottom edge and wicketkeeper Tim Paine did the rest to the unrestrained glee of the Australian team. Root left the field on his overnight score of 67 and with him England's hopes disappeared.

### DREAM START

"Disappointing. I don't think we did ourselves justice," Root said. "The way we showed character in the second innings proved to everyone we are still massively in the series. We've shown throughout the two games in periods we can outperform Australia, just not over the five days. If we can perform to our ability for longer periods of time we'll win games." Australia got off to a dream start when nightwatchman Chris Woakes was out to the second ball of the day, caught behind off Hazlewood for five.

Woakes sought a review and while the 'Hot Spot' infrared imaging system could not find anything, the 'Snicko' sound-video technology



**ADELAIDE:** Australia's Mitchell Starc (4/L) is congratulated by teammates after dismissing England batsman Craig Overton (3/L) on the final day of the second Ashes cricket Test match in Adelaide yesterday. — AFP

detected an edge and the umpire's decision was upheld and Root followed shortly afterwards.

Nathan Lyon got the wicket of fellow off-spinner Moeen Ali for the fourth time in the series, leg before wicket as he attempted to sweep when on two. England had lost three wickets in the opening 45 minutes of play and were lurching towards defeat.

### MOMENTUM SHIFT

Craig Overton stayed around for almost 40 minutes before he fell lbw to a Starc inswinger for seven with the first delivery of the second new ball. Starc had Stuart Broad caught behind for eight and finished off the Test bowling Jonny Bairstow for 36.

England entered the final day 178 runs from victory with six wickets in hand after a dramatic momentum switch on Tuesday. Australia dis-

missed England for 227 on Monday but contentiously decided against sending them back in to bat despite holding a 215-run first innings lead heading into the bowler-friendly twilight period under lights.

The tourists subsequently skittled out the Australians for 138, leaving them with a chance of chasing down a record 354-run victory target in the final five sessions of play. "A lot of people have been asking me that question (about not enforcing the follow-on)," Smith said.

"I haven't thought too much about it but we've won the game. I would have thought about it had we lost. Fortunately we were able to hang in there and get the result we were after. Doesn't make any difference anymore."

The highest winning fourth innings at the Adelaide Oval remains 315 for six by Australia against England in 1902. — AFP



### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play on the fifth day in the second Test between Australia and England yesterday in Adelaide, Australia.

<b>Australia 1st innings 442</b> for 8 decl (S. Marsh 126no, T. Paine 57, U. Khawaja 53)	C. Overton lbw b Starc 7
<b>England 1st innings 227</b> (N. Lyon 4-60)	S. Broad c Paine b Starc 8
<b>Australia 2nd innings 138</b> (J. Anderson 5-43, C. Woakes 4-36)	J. Anderson not out 0
<b>England 2nd innings</b> (Overnight: 176-4; Target: 354 runs)	Extras (b-7 lb-5) 12
A. Cook lbw b Lyon 16	Total (all out, 84.2 overs) 233
M. Stoneman c Khawaja b Starc 36	Fall of wickets: 1-53 A. Cook, 2-54 M. Stoneman, 3-91 J. Vince, 4-169 D. Malan, 5-176 C. Woakes, 6-177 J. Root, 7-188 M. Ali, 8-206 C. Overton, 9-224 S. Broad, 10-233 J. Bairstow
J. Vince c Handscomb b Starc 15	Bowling: M. Starc 19.2-3-88-5; J. Hazlewood 20-7-49-2; P. Cummins 20-6-39-1; N. Lyon 25-6-45-2.
J. Root c Paine b Hazlewood 67	
D. Malan b Cummins 29	
C. Woakes c Paine b Hazlewood 5	
M. Ali lbw b Lyon 2	
J. Bairstow b Starc 36	Result: Australia won by 120 runs

## Slip cordon concern for India: Pujara

**NEW DELHI:** India's Cheteshwar Pujara bemoaned their spilled catches in the third and final Test against Sri Lanka yesterday but was optimistic they would plug the porous slip cordon for next month's Test series in South Africa.

Sri Lanka's Angelo Mathews ended his two-year century drought with generous help from the Indians as home captain Virat Kohli spilled the batsman on six and Rohit Sharma on 98, both at second slip.

Mathews was dropped again on 104, this time at mid-off, by substitute fielder Vijay Shankar. "We haven't taken many catches (in the slips) but we will definitely get better at it," Pujara, a reliable slip fielder himself, told reporters yesterday.

"Overall, the Indian team has improved as a fielding unit but slip fielding is something we are still looking to improve." Sri Lanka opener Dilruwan Perera was also dropped at second slip by Shikhar Dhawan, prompting concerns as India prepare to leave for a tougher

assignment in South Africa.

"We are having a chat about it and we will assign a few players throughout the away series," Pujara said. "We will prepare a few players who will be standing at the slips. We will discuss (it more) when we reach South Africa but we are already talking about that."

The 29-year-old said injuries to players like opener-slip fielder Murali Vijay forced the team into reshuffling the slip cordon. "To be honest, we haven't fielded well and I would accept that. At the same time... there have been occasions where batsmen (who field in the slips) have got injured and we had to replace them with some other player."

Pujara was not sure if there was anything wrong with the technique of India's slip fielders. "I don't know technically what is going wrong. I do agree that we haven't taken enough catches, we are working hard."

"To be honest, we put in a lot of hard work in our fielding... All players standing in the slips are taking 50 to 100 catches (daily in practice). We are trying to improve and eventually results will come."

Starting on Jan. 5, India play three tests in South Africa followed by six one-day and three Twenty20 internationals. — Reuters



**NEW DELHI:** India team members pose with the trophy at the end of third Test cricket match against Sri Lanka in New Delhi, India, yesterday.—AP

## Mitchell Marsh gets Australia call-up for Perth

**ADELAIDE:** All-rounder Mitchell Marsh was called up to join his brother Shaun in the 13-man Australia squad for next week's third Ashes test in Perth yesterday with seamer Chadd Sayers making way.

Marsh, who injured his shoulder playing the last of his 21 tests in India in March and needed reconstructive surgery, is no stranger to the WACA as captain of Western Australia.

The 26-year-old would be expected to

offer a fourth pace option to back up the strike trio of Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins, who secured Australia a 120-run victory to give them a 2-0 lead in the series yesterday.

To get into the side, however, he will probably need to supplant Peter Handscomb or brother Shaun, who won the Man of the Match award for his unbeaten 126 in the first innings in Adelaide.

Handscomb, who bats at number five, has scored 14, 36 and 12 in his three innings in the series and looked jittery at the crease in his second innings in Adelaide.

Squad - David Warner, Cameron Bancroft, Steve Smith (captain), Jackson Bird, Pat Cummins, Peter Handscomb, Josh Hazlewood, Usman Khawaja, Nathan Lyon, Mitchell Marsh, Shaun Marsh, Tim Paine, Mitchell Starc. — Reuters

## India win ninth Test series in a row after Sri Lanka draw

**NEW DELHI:** Sri Lanka's Dhananjaya de Silva struck a heroic hundred and Roshen Silva made a gallant unbeaten 74 to help secure a morale-boosting draw in the final test against India, who won the three-match series 1-0 yesterday.

Playing his first match in the series, de Silva braved a thigh injury to score 119 before retiring hurt. Debutant Silva and Niroshan Dickwella then batted out the final session as the tourists secured their second draw of the series at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium.

The tourists, who finished on 299-5, could not chase down the 410-run victory target but battled superbly to salvage some pride after being outplayed in the series.

India's ninth straight test series triumph puts the world number one side into an elite club with Australia and England.

"When you're not able to finish off in the second innings after having them three down on day four is disappointing," India captain Virat Kohli said at the presentation ceremony.

"But they played well, they showed composure and confidence," added the batsman who was given the man-of-the-match and man-of-the-series awards.

### SCOREBOARD

**NEW DELHI:** Scoreboard at the end of the third test between India and Sri Lanka at the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium.

<b>India, 1st innings: 536-7d</b>	Niroshan Dickwella not out 44
<b>Sri Lanka, 1st innings: 373</b>	Extras: (5b, 1lb, 1nb) 7
<b>India, 2nd innings: 246-5d</b>	Total: (for five wickets) 299
<b>Sri Lanka, 2nd innings:</b> (Overnight 31-3)	Overs: 103. Minutes: 398.
Dimuth Karunaratne c Saha b Jadeja 13	Did not bat: Dilruwan Perera, Lakshan Sandakan, Lahiru Gamage.
Sadeera Samarawickrama c Rahane b Shami 5	Fall of wickets: 1-14, 2-31, 3-31, 4-35, 5-147
Dhananjaya de Silva retired hurt 119	Bowling: Ishant Sharma 13-2-32-0, Mohammed Shami 15-6-50-1, Ravichandran Ashwin 35-3-126-1, Ravindra Jadeja 38-13-81-3 (1nb), Murali Vijay 1-0-3-0, Virat Kohli 1-0-1-0.
Suranga Lakmal b Jadeja 0	Match drawn.
Angelo Mathews c Rahane b Jadeja 1	
Dinesh Chandimal b Ashwin 36	
Roshen Silva not out 74	

### SRI LANKA RESISTANCE

Resuming the final day on a precarious 31-3, Sri Lanka lost Angelo Mathews early in the morning session but de Silva and Dinesh Chandimal resisted India for two hours as the smog-hit test finally saw a mostly sunny day.

India tasted success in the sixth over of the day when Mathews was caught in the slip off Ravindra Jadeja for one. Dropped three times in his first innings knock of 111, Mathews was not so lucky in the second, given out on a no-ball which went undetected by umpire Joel Wilson.

Jadeja bowled Chandimal, then on 24, with a drifted, sharply-turning ball but replays confirmed the left-arm spinner had marginally overstepped. Nimble-footed de Silva scored freely, especially against the spinners, while Chandimal looked content playing second fiddle. Ashwin ended the 112-run partnership when he lured Chandimal out of the crease and spun the ball past his bat to hit the stumps. The Sri Lanka captain, who smashed

a career-best 164 in the first innings, made 36.

### FULL-BLOODED DRIVE

Ashwin had a chance to catch de Silva, then on 110, off his own bowling but the off-spinner spilled the full-blooded drive.

By then, de Silva was struggling with his thigh injury and the 26-year-old eventually hobbled off the field, passing on the baton to Silva, who proved equal to the challenge.

De Silva's third Test century contained 15 boundaries and a six off Ashwin. Silva and Niroshan Dickwella (44 not out) raised 94 runs, denying India a wicket in the final session, before the teams shook hands.

"It was a really good series, apart from the second one (test). We learnt a lot," Chandimal said. "Dhananjaya and Roshen batted really well in tough conditions against some great bowlers... Dickwella played a totally different brand of cricket. (I'm) happy with the way we played today." — Reuters



Mitchell Marsh



Sports

# Man Utd secure Champions League passage as Bayern down PSG

## Bayern and PSG secure qualification from Group B

PARIS: Manchester United and Juventus were among the sides to clinch a place in the last 16 of the Champions League on Tuesday, while Bayern Munich gained a measure of revenge over Paris Saint-Germain.

United, Juventus, Roma and Basel all went through with victories in their final group games, but Atletico Madrid, beaten finalists in 2014 and 2016, were eliminated. Jose Mourinho's United side came from behind to beat CSKA Moscow 2-1 at Old Trafford as they reach the knockout rounds for the first time since 2013-14. Only a heavy defeat could have eliminated United in Group A, but Romelu Lukaku and Marcus Rashford scored two minutes apart in the second half to seal victory at Old Trafford, where they are unbeaten in 40 games in all competitions now.

CSKA had taken the lead on the stroke of half-time, a shot from the Brazilian Vitorino going in off the back of Alan Dzagoev. "I'm really happy because we don't want to qualify with a defeat, we don't want to qualify with a bad performance," said Mourinho.

CSKA drop into the Europa League, while Basel reached the last 16 for the third time this decade, the Swiss champions beating Benfica 2-0 in Lisbon with goals from Mohamed Elyounoussi and Dimitri Oberlin.

Last season's beaten finalists Juventus progressed from Group D thanks to their 2-0 win away to Olympiakos. Juan Cuadrado opening the scoring early on before Federico Bernardeschi completed the victory late on. The Italian champions go through behind

Barcelona, who rounded off their group phase by easing to a 2-0 win at home against Sporting Lisbon.

Lionel Messi was left on the bench at a sparsely populated Camp Nou as Paco Alcacer headed the hosts in front and Jeremy Mathieu then scored an own goal against his old side. Sporting drop into the Europa League. Diego Simeone's Atletico, who have only been knocked out by Real Madrid in each of the last four years, reaching at least the quarter-finals every time, must now accept a spot in the Europa League. They won that trophy in 2010 and 2012.

"I am not looking anywhere but forward. This will help us for sure. These situations, apart from the frustration of not being in the next round, will help the team move forward and onto the Europa League," Simeone told

beIN Sports Spain.

### TOLISSO DOUBLE FOR BAYERN

Bayern and PSG had already secured qualification from Group B but met at the Allianz Arena with first place still up for grabs. Having lost 3-0 in Paris in September, Bayern needed to win by four goals to leapfrog Neymar and co. They gave themselves a chance, with Robert Lewandowski and Corentin Tolisso both heading home in the first half.

Kylian Mbappe got one back just after the break, leaving Bayern with too much to do, although Tolisso did score again to make it 3-1. PSG will be the happier side at winning the group, although possible last-16



MANCHESTER: Manchester United's Romelu Lukaku, right, scores a goal as CSKA's Viktor Vasin tries to block during the Champions League group A soccer match between Manchester United and CSKA Moscow in Manchester, England. — AP

opponents for them are Chelsea, Juventus and Real Madrid. "I am 50 percent happy and 50 percent disappointed," said their coach Unai Emery.

Celtic, who lost 7-1 at PSG last time out, lost 1-0 at home to Anderlecht after a Jojo Simunovic own goal in

the second half. Despite a fifth loss in six group games, they limp into the Europa League in the new year. Liverpool are among the sides hoping to secure a place in the last 16, with four more berths still up for grabs for next Monday's draw. — AFP

## Atletico Madrid crash out, Chelsea sink to second place

LONDON: Atletico Madrid were eliminated from the Champions League after a 1-1 draw at Chelsea that denied the English side top spot in Group C. It was a depressing evening for both clubs at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday as neither got what they wanted from their final group fixture. Atletico had to win to have a chance of advancing, but although Saul Niguez's second-half header put the visitors ahead, Chelsea drew level through a Stefan Savic own goal. In the end, Roma's win against Qarabag in the other group match made the result irrelevant for Diego Simeone's team, who failed to qualify for the last 16 for only the second time and the first since the 2009-10 season. It was a painful moment for Atletico and, after finishing as Champions League runners-up in 2014 and 2016, they are now consigned to the Europa League. "It's part of football. It hurts but there are no excuses. The responsibility is ours," Simeone said.

"This can be a new challenge. Everything bad we can make into a positive." Chelsea were already through to the knockout stages, but blew their chance to finish in first place and in theory earn an easier draw. Having lost and drawn against Roma, Chelsea finished second behind the Italians due to their inferior head-to-head record. That is bad news for Antonio Conte's side, who could be pitted against Champions League heavyweights including Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain in next week's last 16 draw. "We tried to play our game. We created many chances to score. When you play this way and create so much you must be satisfied," Conte said.

"Our opponent (in the next round) won't be happy to play against us." Atletico striker Fernando Torres endured a difficult three-and-a-half years with Chelsea, but he came close to giving his side an early lead on his return to west London when his shot deflected onto the roof of Thibaut Courtois' net.



LONDON: Chelsea's Belgian midfielder Eden Hazard (L) shoots goal-ward and Atletico Madrid's Montenegrin defender Stefan Savic (R) blocks to score an own goal during a UEFA Champions League Group C football match. — AFP

Unlike Torres, his compatriot Alvaro Morata has had no problems adapting to life at Chelsea and he showcased his deft touch to make space for a curling shot that flashed just wide. With Roma always expected to beat Qarabag, Chelsea knew only a win would be enough to guarantee top spot. Again Morata went close to the opener when he stretched to meet Victor Moses' cross, but Atletico goalkeeper Jan Oblak spread himself to block the Spaniard's close-range effort. Causing Atletico all manner of problems, Morata almost caught Oblak with a dipping strike from wide on the left that had the keeper scrambling to save. Davide Zappacosta was next to test Oblak when the Chelsea wing-back unleashed a fierce shot that was pushed around the post. Conte's men kept pushing after the interval and Andreas Christensen's header was saved

by Oblak before Eden Hazard's deflected shot looped narrowly wide. Despite that barrage, Filipe Luis, another Chelsea old boy in the Atletico side, almost put the Spaniards ahead against the run of play when his long-range shot cannoned back off a post to Koke, who should have done better than head straight at Courtois.

Sparked by that near-miss, Atletico snatched the lead in the 56th minute. When Torres flicked on a corner, Niguez easily escaped Tiemoue Bakayoko's slack marking and had the simple task of heading home from close range. Christensen should have equalised from a Cesc Fabregas cross 10 minutes later, but the Chelsea defender somehow headed wide of the open goal. Pedro fared no better when his back-heeled flick was saved on the line by Oblak. — AFP

## Di Francesco taking Roma to another level: De Rossi

ROME: Captain Daniele de Rossi credited new coach Eusebio Di Francesco with taking Roma to another level after the Serie A outfit topped their Champions League group ahead of Premier League champions Chelsea.

Luciano Spalletti led Roma to a runners-up spot in Serie A last season before moving to Inter Milan but now Di Francesco looks set to get the club back into the quarter-finals of Europe for the first time in a decade.

"Spalletti got us back on track, he did a fantastic job and he's the coach who taught me more than any other," De Rossi said. "Di Francesco has surprised everyone. He's come in and instantly taken us to another level in Europe."

"He has us adopt the same aggressive style of play no matter who we're up against." Roma qualified for the last 16 by edging out Azeris Qarabag 1-0 to top Group C with Diego Perotti's second-half header ensuring they finished ahead of Antonio Conte's Chelsea who were held 1-1 by 2014 and 2016 finalists Atletico Madrid in Stamford Bridge. The Spanish club were eliminated

"We knew it was going to be tricky but in the end we got the result we all hoped for - and maybe which none of us expected when we saw the draw we'd been given," De Rossi said. "It's a magnificent result for us, for our confidence, for the rest of our season and for Roma's reputation on the international stage." Serie A clubs are bidding to restore footballing pride in Italy after the national team's failure to qualify for the World Cup, with Roma and Juventus both advancing to the knockout stage on



ROME: Qarabag's Haitian midfielder Donald Guerrier vies with Roma's Belgian midfielder Radja Nainggolan (back) during the UEFA Champions League Group C football match AS Roma vs FK Qarabag. — AFP

Tuesday. Last season's runners-up Juventus brushed aside Olympiakos 2-0 in Greece to go through, and Napoli will try to make it three out of three for Italy yesterday. "It's satisfying because nobody believed we could qualify at all, they assumed we'd be eliminated, but we worked hard, proved ourselves and won the group," said Di Francesco.

Roma's path to top spot followed a solid campaign which included maximum points against Qarabag, beating

Chelsea 3-0 in Rome, and coming away with a 3-3 draw from London, with their only loss coming in a 2-0 defeat by Atletico Madrid in Spain. "It was a great victory, a difficult one, especially as I have no Champions League experience," continued Di Francesco, whose side will now be seeded for Friday's draw, where they could face teams including Real Madrid and Bayern Munich as they bid for a first quarter-final appearance in 10 years. — AFP

## Pep v/s Jose - this time it's for real

MANCHESTER: After the phony war of their first season in Manchester, the rivalry between Jose Mourinho and Pep Guardiola will resume for real in Sunday's seismic derby showdown at Old Trafford.

The two managers renewed acquaintances at the beginning of last season after Mourinho took the reins at Manchester United and Guardiola set up shop across town at Manchester City.

Guardiola claimed first blood, leading City to a 2-1 win at Old Trafford in September 2016, but both teams fell by the wayside thereafter, finishing the campaign well adrift of Premier League champions Chelsea.

Fifteen games into the new season, City are eight points clear of United at the head of the table and Sunday's game is being billed as Mourinho's big chance to stick a spoke in Guardiola's wheels.

"We have a big week, with Swansea and Tottenham following the United game," says City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne. "If we lost two out of three and they win everything, they are there."

The arrival in Manchester of the two pre-eminent managers of the age stoked the embers of a bitter personal rivalry that had crackled with blistering intensity during the two years they spent in opposing camps in Spain. Mourinho's first season at Real Madrid in 2010-11 culminated in an infamously spiky series of matches against Guardiola's Barcelona, who would have the last laugh by claiming a La Liga and Champions League double.

Mourinho nourished the hostility, villainously jabbing his finger in the eye of Guardiola's assistant, the late Tito Vilanova, during a Spanish Super Cup match in 2011. Madrid finished the 2011-12 season as champions and Guardiola, worn out by the constant sniping, stepped down at Camp Nou and would not resurface at Bayern Munich for another year. The men's September 2016 reunion promised much, Guardiola's slick City wiping the floor with United in the first half before a Claudio Bravo blunder enabled Zlatan Ibrahimovic to make a game of it in the second.

But by the time of their most recent meeting, at the Etihad Stadium in April, thoughts of an all-Manchester title shootout had vanished. 'ray of hope'

A grim 0-0 draw left both teams locked in a battle for fourth place as Antonio Conte's Chelsea streaked towards glory. City eventually finished third as United trailed home in sixth place, but Mourinho could reflect on the season with greater satisfaction after leading his team to a League Cup and Europa League double.

Seven months on City look almost transcendent, their sublime and devastatingly effective possession football reminiscent of Guardiola's great Barcelona team. Having won their last 13 league games, they can set a new mark for successive wins within an English top-flight campaign if they prevail on Sunday.

Recent results, however, give United reason for optimism. While City have had to grind out wins, needing late goals to see off Feyenoord, Huddersfield Town, Southampton and West Ham United, Mourinho's counter-attacking United team have hit form.

They followed up impressive wins at Watford and Arsenal with a 2-1 defeat of CSKA Moscow that sent them into the Champions League last 16 and have not lost at home since last year's loss to City—a run of 40 matches.

"They (United) might, for the first time this season, have just seen a little ray of hope," said former United captain Gary Neville in his Sky Sports podcast. "There will be better teams (who play City) than Huddersfield, Southampton and West Ham, yet all came close."

"United will be confident going into the game because of what has happened this weekend for City, even though it has been a good week for City too, as they've scored three late winners and have taken maximum points." — AFP

**12** Vitali Klitschko, Erik Morales win selection to Boxing HOF



**14** Mohammed Dawood, Iraq's star of the future



**15** Atletico Madrid crash out, Chelsea sink to second place



LAUSANNE: International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach arrives to a press conference closing an IOC executive meeting yesterday in Lausanne. Analysts praised the International Olympic Committee for being "brave" and "strong" in banning Russia from the 2018 Winter Games in South Korea. — AFP

## No Olympics boycott after IOC ban: Putin

### 'Grigory Rodchenkov is the perfect traitor'

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin yesterday said Russia would allow athletes to compete at the 2018 Winter Olympics under a neutral flag, after the country was banned from the Games over a state-orchestrated doping programme.

There had been speculation Moscow could boycott the Games entirely after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Tuesday barred the country from competition over what its chief Thomas Bach described as Russia's "unprecedented attack on the integrity of the Olympic Games and sport". Clean Russian athletes would be allowed to compete under an Olympic flag, the IOC said.

"We will certainly not declare any boycott, we will not prevent our Olympians from competing, if they want to take part in a personal capacity," Putin said after a speech at an automobile plant in Nizhny Novgorod, in which he announced he would run for a fourth presidential term next year. "The final decision of course must be made by the Olympic team," he said.

Putin said the ban looked like "an absolutely staged and politically motivated decision", repeating denials that any state sponsored doping programme had existed in Russia.

"I feel for those guys-I consider many of them friends rather than just acquaintances. I really feel for

them," he said of the athletes in the Russian team.

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov earlier yesterday cautioned against an "emotional" response to the ban. Russian officials are expected to address the ban in a meeting next Tuesday. Politicians and athletes earlier reacted with anger and disappointment to the IOC decision.

The head of Russia's Olympic Committee, Alexander Zhukov, told the IOC that punishing clean athletes was "unjust and immoral". Russian media expressed regret at the decision while welcoming the possibility of some athletes participating in South Korea next year, albeit under tight restrictions. The IOC "chose one of the harshest options it was considering but still not the harshest of all", which would have been a total ban, wrote Kommersant business daily.

"It's very hard to take accusations and punishments. But the fate of our athletes and preserving our place in the Olympic family is more important," wrote the Sport

Express daily. It slammed the decision as "very harsh and in some ways even humiliating for Russia," citing the life bans on attending the games for ex-sports minister Vitaly Mutko, now first deputy prime minister. "Can't get by without Russia," the pro-Kremlin Izvestia daily headlined its front page, stressing that "Russian Olympic athletes will defend the honour of the Motherland under any banner."

Some top sports figures agreed, with ice hockey forward Ilya Kovalchuk telling TASS state news agency: "We must go to the Olympics. Refusing is surrender." Pole vault star Yelena Isinbayeva told TASS: "Addressing our athletes, I want to say that they should absolutely not despair and should continue training for the games."

**'THIS IS SPORT, DAMN IT!'**

Some politicians vented rage, however. "This is an absolute outrage," said the last Soviet leader Mikhail

Gorbachev, quoted by state RIA Novosti news agency. "This is sport, damn it!" he added.

Nationalist politician Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, condemned the decision as "sporting racism, political racism." Chechen strongman Ramzan Kadyrov, writing on his Telegram social networking page, warned that "not one athlete living in Chechnya will participate under a neutral flag." Olympic gold-medallist gymnast Svetlana Khorkina, now a ruling party MP, told Sport Express: "What have we come to? Crushing our great country Russia? No, they won't manage it. Russia has an army, nuclear weapons and great people."

Pro-Kremlin media focused on discrediting Grigory Rodchenkov, the whistleblower who gave evidence of a state-controlled doping programme in which he played a central role. Rodchenkov has been living in hiding in the United States since lifting the lid on the intricate workings of a state-supported doping scheme at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi. "Grigory Rodchenkov is the perfect traitor," wrote tabloid daily Komsomolskaya Pravda. It said the IOC's actions proved that "you can destroy a whole Olympic country on the basis of indirect evidence and a single witness who was under a criminal investigation and has been treated in a psychiatric hospital".—AFP

“Punishing clean athletes was unjust, immoral”

### Evergrande face tricky test in Asian Champions League

KUALA LUMPUR: Two-time champions Guangzhou Evergrande have been handed a potentially bumpy ride to the knockout stages of the 2018 Asian Champions League after the draw for the group phase of next year's competition was made yesterday.

Evergrande, title winners in 2013 and 2015, will take on South Korea's Jeju United, Buriram United of Thailand and an as yet undetermined Japanese representative in group G when the competition kicks off in February.

Guangzhou's last triumph came under Luiz Felipe Scolari but they exited the com-

petition this year at the quarter-final stage at the hands of Chinese Super League rivals Shanghai SIPG.

However, Scolari still steered Guangzhou to a club-record seventh straight domestic league title before resigning and was replaced by Fabio Cannavaro. The former Italy defender's first game back at the helm of the club he led at the start of 2015 will be against Thai champions Buriram at Tianhe Stadium on Feb. 14.

Shanghai Shenhua, China's other automatic qualifier for the group phase, have been drawn in group H to take on Australian champions Sydney FC as well as former Japanese champions Kashima Antlers and either Suwon Bluewings from South Korea, Vietnam's Thanh Hoa or Eastern from Hong Kong.

With the champions not gaining automatic qualification, Urawa Red Diamonds, who won the 2017 title in November with a 2-1 aggregate win over Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia, will not defend their crown after failing to claim a place through Japan's domestic competitions.

Jeonbuk Hyundai Motors, who won the title in 2016 but were banned from this year's competition due to their involvement in a match-fixing scandal, return after winning the Korean league title. Choi Kang-hee's team will meet Hong Kong's Kitchee with two playoff winners in group E.

Newly-crowned Japanese champions Kawasaki Frontale have been drawn to face Ulsan Hyundai of South Korea, Australia's Melbourne Victory and the winner of a playoff that could see China's Shanghai SIPG join the fray.

In the west of the continent, Al Hilal, who were defeated by Japan's Urawa Red Diamonds last month, were drawn to face Iran's Esteghlal, Al Rayyan of Qatar and either Al Ain of the United Arab Emirates or Bahrain's Malkiya in group D.

Iran's Persepolis take on Al Sadd of Qatar, UAE's Al Wasl and either Nasaf Qarshi from Uzbekistan or Aizwal from India in group C while group A will feature Al Jazira from UAE, Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli, Tractorsazi Tabriz of Iran and either Qatar's Al Gharafa or Pakhtanor from Uzbekistan. — Reuters



KUALA LUMPUR: AFC National Team Competitions Director Shin Man Gil announces the 2018 AFC Cup official draw for group stages at the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. — AFP



# Business

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2017

**19** US businesses added a solid 190,000 jobs in November

**21** Global markets mixed, GCC bourses pull back

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LOS ANGELES: Homeless man Alonzo Harrison, 47, takes a nap on a bench at Pershing Square decorated with Christmas lights in the background on Monday in Los Angeles. — AP

## US homeless population jumps in 2017

### West Coast homeless crisis pushes country count higher

**LOS ANGELES:** The nation's homeless population increased this year for the first time since 2010, driven by a surge in the number of people living on the streets in Los Angeles and other West Coast cities.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development released its annual Point in Time count yesterday, a report that showed nearly 554,000 homeless people across the country during local tallies conducted in January. That figure is up nearly 1 percent from 2016.

Of that total, 193,000 people had no access to nightly shelter and instead were staying in vehicles, tents, the streets and other places considered uninhabitable. The unsheltered figure is up by more than 9 percent compared to two years ago. Increases are higher in several West Coast cities, where the explosion in homelessness has prompted at least 10 city and county governments to declare states of emergency since 2015. City officials, homeless advocates and those living on the streets point to a main

culprit: the region's booming economy. Rents have soared beyond affordability for many lower-wage workers who until just a few years ago could typically find a place to stay. Now, even a temporary setback can be enough to leave them out on the streets.

"A lot of people in America don't realize they might be two checks, three checks, four checks away from being homeless," said Thomas Butler Jr., who stays in a carefully organized tent near a freeway ramp in downtown Los Angeles. Butler said he was in transitional housing - a type of program that prepares people for permanent homes - for a while but mostly has lived on the streets for the past couple of years.

The numbers in the report back up what many people in California, Oregon and Washington have been experiencing in their communities: encampments sprouting along freeways and rivers; local governments struggling to come up with money for long-term solutions; conflicts over whether to crack down on

street camping and even feeding the homeless.

The most alarming consequence of the West Coast homeless explosion is a deadly hepatitis A outbreak that has affected Los Angeles, Santa Cruz and San Diego, the popular tourist destination in a county where more than 5,600 people now live on the streets or in their cars. The disease is spread through a liver-damaging virus that lives in feces. The outbreak prompted California officials to declare a state of emergency in October. The HUD report underscores the severity of the problem along the West Coast. While the overall homeless population in California, Oregon and Washington grew by 14 percent over the past two years, the part of that population considered unsheltered climbed 23 percent to 108,000. That is in part due a shortage of affordable housing.

In booming Seattle, for example, the HUD report shows the unsheltered population grew by 44 percent over two years to nearly 5,500.

The homeless service area that includes most

of Los Angeles County, the epicenter of the crisis, saw its total homeless count top 55,000 people, up by more than 13,000 from 2016. Four out of every five homeless individuals there are considered unsheltered, leaving tens of thousands of people with no place to sleep other than the streets or parks.

By comparison, while New York City's homeless population grew to more than 76,000, only about 5 percent are considered unsheltered thanks to a system that can get people a cot under a roof immediately. In the West Coast states, the surge in homelessness has become part of the fabric of daily life.

The Monty, a bar in the Westlake neighborhood near downtown Los Angeles, usually doesn't open until 8 p.m. Partner and general manager Corey Allen said that's because a nearby shelter requires people staying there to be in the building by 7. Waiting until after that to open means the streets outside are calmer.

Allen said the homeless have come into his

bar to bathe in the restroom wash basins, and employees have developed a strategy for stopping people from coming in to panhandle among customers. Seventy-eight-year-old Theodore Neubauer sees the other side of it. Neubauer says he served in Vietnam but now lives in a tent in downtown Los Angeles. He is surrounded by thriving business and entertainment districts, and new apartments that are attracting scores of young people to the heart of the nation's second most populous city.

"Well, there's a million-dollar view," he said. Helping those like Neubauer is a top policy priority and political issue in Los Angeles. Since last year, voters in the city and Los Angeles County have passed a pair of tax-boosting ballot initiatives to raise an expected \$4.7 billion over the next decade for affordable housing and services for the homeless. HUD Secretary Ben Carson praised the region for dealing with the issue and not relying solely on the federal government. — AP

### US House conservatives show openness to bill averting shutdown

**WASHINGTON:** Hard-right House conservatives signaled an openness yesterday to backing a short-term spending bill this week, raising the odds that Congress will pass the measure and prevent a partial government shutdown on Saturday. "We've got to get across the finish line on tax reform," Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., leader of the House Freedom Caucus, told reporters after the group met privately early yes-

terday. "Any distraction from that is a problem." Asked if a federal shutdown would be a problem, he said, "Of course."

Top Republicans plan to push legislation through Congress this week financing federal agencies through Dec. 22, a period that would allow time for both parties to bargain over long-term budget decisions and other issues. Government closures would begin at midnight Friday night unless lawmakers approve more money. The roughly 30-member caucus has been trying to win promises of tight budget curbs and other concessions from leaders in exchange for backing the short-term bill. Without support from many of them, Republicans would need votes from Democrats to push the temporary spending measure through the House, and Democrats have not said what they will do.

Meadows and other caucus members said the group had made no final decision to back the short-term spending measure and planned to meet with House leaders later in the day. "We want to stay focused on tax reform," said Rep. Jim

Jordan, R-Ohio, another conservative leader. Top Republicans are adamant about sparking a federal shutdown that would deal the latest blow to a party that has strained all year to show it can govern effectively. They want voters riveted on the party's near-\$1.5 trillion tax bill, the paramount priority for themselves and President Donald Trump. The conservatives have also wanted GOP leaders to add a third week to the short-term measure. They've said the two-week version makes a bad agreement with Democrats likelier because lawmakers will want to cut a deal and leave town for Christmas.

But few other Republicans in the House or Senate have shown any support for the caucus' three-week proposal. Republican leaders had already postponed a planned House vote on the temporary spending measure until today, buying time to iron out disputes with conservatives.

There seemed to be little taste by most in either party, at least for now, to shutter agency doors with 2018 midterm elections for control of Congress coming into view. That included the

White House, where Trump often revels in conflict and unpredictable tactics that members of his own party consider counterproductive.

"It's always a possibility, but it's certainly not what we hope for," White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said of a potential shutdown. House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., will join GOP leaders for a White House meeting with Trump on Thursday, and Sanders said. "The president hopes to be able to have conversations with them to make sure that doesn't happen." Democratic votes for any budget measure will be crucial in the Senate, where Republicans by themselves lack the 60 votes needed to approve the legislation. Knowing that, Democrats are using their leverage to try forcing concessions to boost domestic spending in areas like health care and infrastructure. Hinting that they might back a short-term measure preventing a shutdown, Schumer said approving such a bill "gives us a little more time to do the things we're talking about now." — AP



WASHINGTON: (From left) Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, House Majority Whip Steve Scalise, and Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, meet with reporters after House Republicans held a closed-door strategy session in Washington on Tuesday. — AP



## Business

# US businesses added a solid 190,000 jobs in November

## 3Q worker productivity strongest in 3 years

WASHINGTON: US businesses added a robust 190,000 jobs in November, according to a private survey, a sign that hiring is strong enough to reduce an already-low unemployment rate.

Payroll processor ADP said yesterday that last month's hiring followed an even larger gain of 235,000 in October. Some of October's job increase reflected a bounce-back from hurricane effects, which lowered hiring in September to just 96,000.

Manufacturers helped drive the increase, adding 40,000 jobs, the largest gain this year, ADP said. Health care added 31,000 positions, and a category that includes restaurants and hotels hired 25,000.

Job gains at last month's pace should, over time, lower the unemployment rate, which is currently at a 17-year low of 4.1 percent.

US worker productivity rose 3 percent in the third quarter, the best showing in three years, while labor costs fell for a second straight quarter. The increase in productivity in the July-September quarter was double the 1.5 percent gain in the second quarter and both quarters were up significantly from a scant 0.1 percent rise in the first three months of the year. Labor costs fell 0.2 percent after an even bigger 1.2 percent decline in the second quarter.

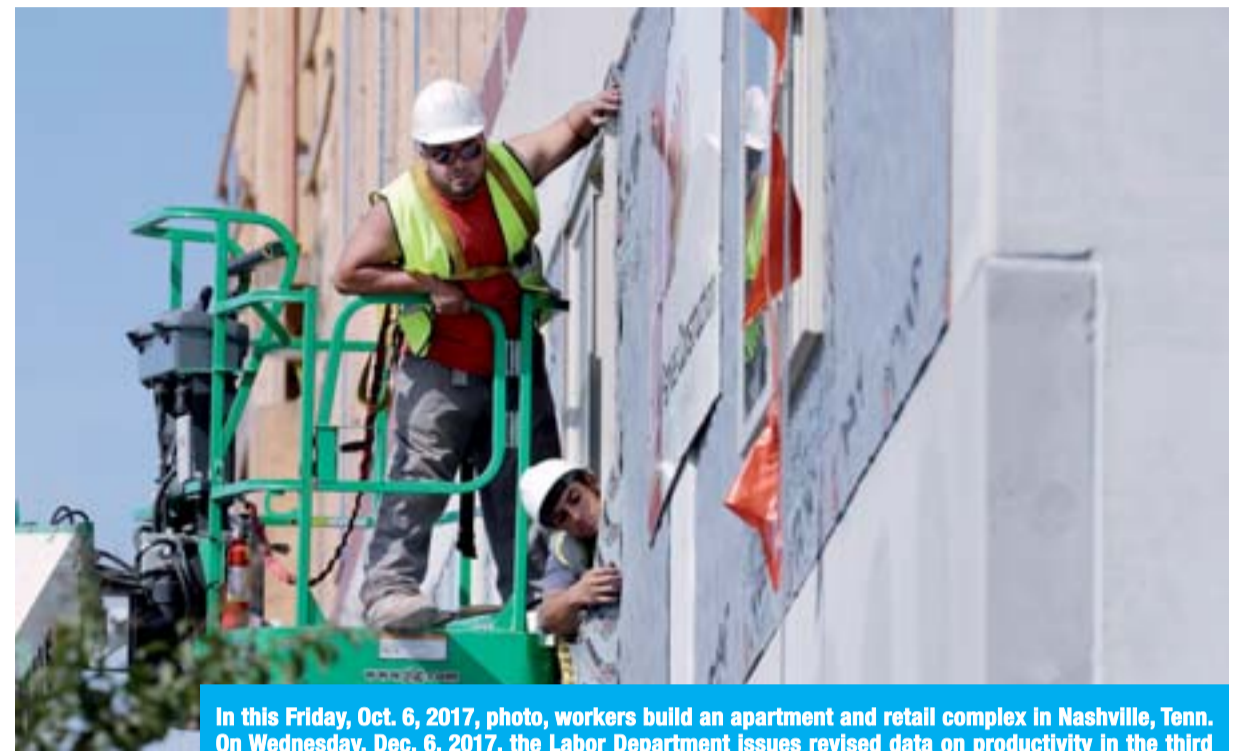
The third quarter figure for productivity was unchanged from an initial estimate while labor costs were initially estimated to have risen by 0.5 percent. Economists are hopeful that the upturn in productivity may be a sign that this key measure of living standards is improving after a prolonged period of weakness.

Economists believe finding ways to increase productivity, the amount of output per hour of work, is the biggest challenge facing the economy right now. They say that without an improvement, the Trump administration will have difficulty reaching its goal of doubling economic growth in coming years.

The upturn in the past two quarters reflects the fact that overall output, as measured by the gross domestic product, accelerated sharply following a weak start to the year. GDP grew at an annual rate of 3.3 percent in the third

quarter, the government reported last week, and that followed a 3.1 percent rise in the second quarter. It was the first back-to-back GDP gains of 3 percent or better in three years.

Productivity actually declined in 2016, dropping 0.1 percent. It was the first annual decline in 34 years and followed a string of weak annual performances since the economy emerged from recession in mid-2009. Productivity has averaged annual gains of just 1.2 percent from 2007 through 2016, a sharp slowdown from average annual gains of 2.6 percent from 2000 to 2007. Those increases



In this Friday, Oct. 6, 2017, photo, workers build an apartment and retail complex in Nashville, Tenn. On Wednesday, Dec. 6, 2017, the Labor Department issues revised data on productivity in the third quarter. —AP



### Hiring strong enough to cut unemployment

## 26 new winners in Al-Hassad account

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank recently conducted its Al-Hassad Islamic account weekly draw, Kuwait's leading sharia-compliant rewards program that offers a broad range of prizes to the largest number of winners, yesterday. The account provides 26 weekly prizes that are comprised of KD 25,000 as a grand prize and 25 other prizes valued at KD 1,000 each. AUB also offers four quarterly prizes that are valued at KD 250,000 to each winner allowing them to achieve their dreams of travelling, studying abroad, or owning their dream home or car.

On this occasion Ahli United Bank announced, "With this draw, we are adding 26 new winners and prizes to the Al-Hassad Islamic Account whereby, the total number of winners annually will include more than 1300. The weekly grand prize winner of KD 25,000 Lateefah Sultan Aldabbous, 25 other winners won prizes of KD 1,000 and are as follows: Abdulwahab Ali Alkhateeb, Thuraya Mostafa Alhareeri, Jamal Saad Ali, Abraham George, Khaled Dahlous Alazmi, Suad M Baqer, Abdullah Ali Aabasril, Ali Ahmad Alfalakawi, Louwah Jaber Ahmad, Osamah Mohammad Alkhateeb, Hisya Youssef Ahmad, Faisal Aabula Alsarraf, Emad Hasan Alasousi, Mariam Sabeeh Alwoqayan, Abdulrahman Albedaiwi Alsubae, Ahmed Saleh Alabwa, Ajmi Alsheikh Almutairi, Ammar Abdulbaqil Mahmoud, Naser Zaben Alrasheedil, Aysha Rashid Khalifa, Khushal Mohammed, Mohammed Al Khan, Mohammed Jamshed Omar, Amal Mohd Abdulla and Hameeda MirzaA Jaafar. Al-Hassad Islamic account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the program's terms and conditions. Ahli United Bank added, "There are increased opportunities that await our current customers and those who are interested in opening an Al-Hassad Islamic account to benefit from the wide range of prizes and opportunities offered this year." Individual customers can open their accounts with a minimum deposit of KD 100, qualifying them to enter the draw. For every KD 50 deposited in the account, customers are given one chance to enter the quarterly draw. They must have held the minimum deposit requirement for at least two weeks prior to the draw date. The more deposits made, the higher the chances of winning on a weekly basis.

## China targets booming online lending as crisis fears build

BEIJING: When Jia Xinru needed to borrow money to buy new clothes, order food and buy a projector to screen Breaking Bad on her wall, she had instant access to China's growing number of lenders via her mobile phone. The 24-year-old secretary is among millions of Chinese who have turned to proliferating online companies that dish out quick loans—and are worrying the country's leadership.

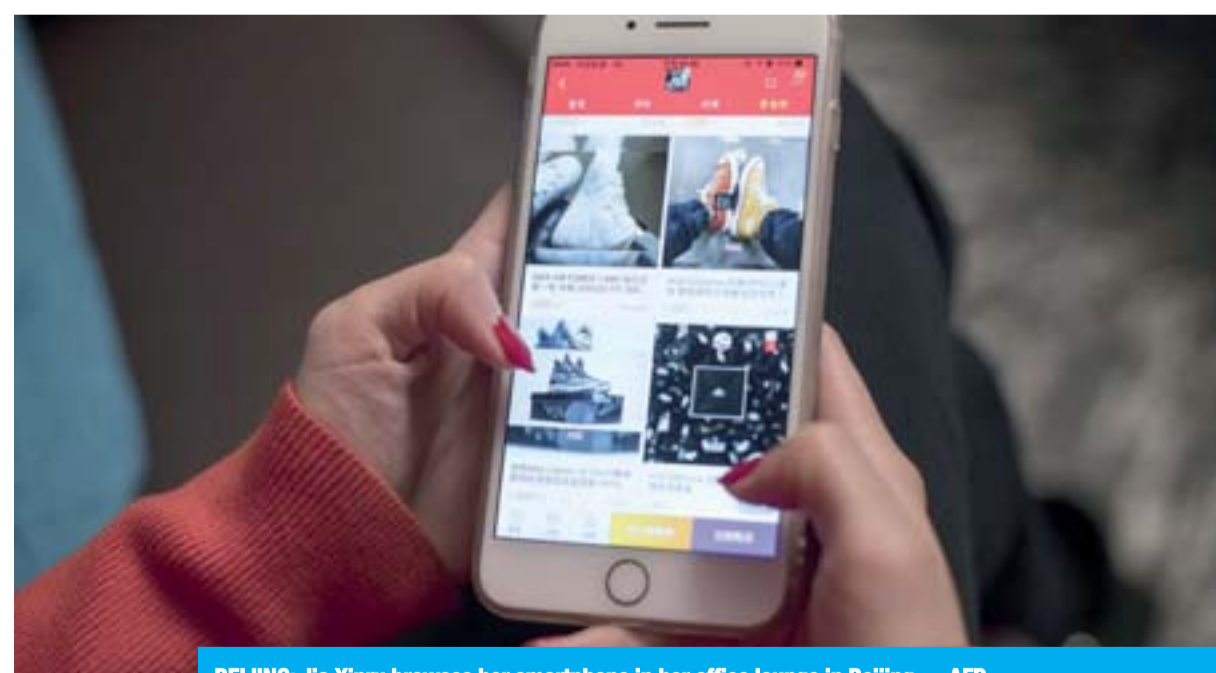
On Friday authorities issued new rules on microlending, designed to protect consumers and limit risk for creditors. The move was the latest aimed at tackling financial risks as the world's number two economy faces ballooning debt that has drawn warnings of a potential global financial crisis.

While most economists and analysts have focused their concerns on corporate debt, household debt has risen rapidly, roughly doubling since 2012, according to the Bank for International Settlements, known as the central banks' central bank.

And smartphones have made it even easier for consumers to borrow cash in China, with e-commerce apps and mobile payment increasingly prevalent.

Jia started accumulating her debt when she was in college, turning to tech titan Alibaba when she could not get a credit card.

The ease of a few taps on her phone and a four minute wait led Jia to borrow and borrow and when she was finally able to take out a card, she used it to



BEIJING: Jia Xinru browses her smartphone in her office lounge in Beijing. —AFP

repay Alibaba's affiliate Ant Financial. But her debt reached roughly \$9,000 this summer, and her monthly interest payments eclipsed her meager salary. She described the debts as "snowballing", finding it harder to pay one debt as she borrowed to pay another.

### 'Lending nirvana'

Alternative lending, with loans that can be wired to accounts within minutes, has taken off in China and accounts for 85 percent of the global market, according to a University of Cambridge report.

By 2020, some estimates forecast the business could approach that of credit cards, suggesting

some Chinese may be leapfrogging from plastic to mobile loans. Online lenders say most of their business comes from consumers and small businesses with little access to the formal banking system—only a third of Chinese have credit cards, according to the central bank.

"Most of our borrowers are in third or fourth tier cities," said a marketing employee at lending platform Guangxindai, who declined to give her name. "They have a hard time getting credit cards from banks." The business's growth comes as a new generation of Chinese shed their parents' penchant for saving and embrace the credit culture. —AFP

## Honor 7X, the most accessible full view display for millennials launches in GCC

KUWAIT: Honor, the leading smartphone e-brand under the Huawei Group, releases today their latest and premium product in its leading Honor X-series range, the Honor 7X, which delivers an unparalleled full-screen viewing experience at an extremely competitive price point of 999 AED

The Honor 7X is the first smartphone to feature Honor FullView Display; a 5.93 inch edge-to-edge, bezel-less screen design that provides remarkable display quality and achieves an extraordinary high screen-to-body ratio, meaning that users can enjoy striking images on a sleek, compact phone which comfortably fits into the palm of their hand.

In addition, the max-ed bezel-less screen and dual-lens 16MP + 2MP rear camera with large aperture and fast focusing means DSLR-level photo quality and shooting experience is at selfie-lovers' fingertips. Combined with a powerful octal-core Kirin 659 and graphics processing unit (GPU), the Honor 7X provides a clarity and user experience that is incomparable at this highly competitive price.

Chris Sun Baigong Vice President of Honor in the Middle East and Africa commented, "The Honor 7X clearly demonstrates our capability to offer young tech savvy consumers in the Middle East and Africa unprecedented technology at a value added price while challenging the current market competitors. A smartphone that far exceeds their expectations with the best fullview display that caters to their ever-changing needs. Honor 7x offers a phone that inspires action and creativity at a surprisingly accessible price."



## High tech, high finance and high times for US pot industry

NEW YORK: Two years ago, Alan Gertner was head of Google's Asia-Pacific sales team in Singapore, handling more than \$100 million in business. Now, he begins his day in a small Toronto office, building a cannabis brand that sells fancy smoking accessories such as vaporizers and bongs that cost up to \$335 CAD (\$261.72).

Gertner is among a growing group of entrepreneurs and investors who are trading in high-paid corporate jobs in the technology and finance sectors to launch start-ups focused on the fast-growing marijuana industry. Two decades after the first legalization of medical marijuana by a US state, pot-based businesses are professionalizing their operations by luring top talent from other industries and billions of dollars in investments from Wall Street firms. A new commodity index even offers data on the going rates for greenhouse and field-grown weed. Gertner still gets surprised reactions to his career change, as when his mother asked: "Can't you just get another job at Google?" And yet he's raised \$10 million in capital in ten months as the chief executive of Toyko Smoke, despite the continuing taboos and legal risks in the industry.

The legal cannabis market, currently worth about \$8 billion, is predicted to triple in size to \$22.6 billion in total annual sales by 2021, according to cannabis industry tracker, Arcview Market Research. That could make it bigger than the America's most profitable sports organization, the National Football League, which saw about \$13 billion in revenue last year and aims to reach \$25 billion by 2027. So far in 2017, there have been at least 27 investments by venture capital funds in cannabis companies, compared with just 10 deals in 2016 and 9 deals in 2015, according to venture capital data provider CB Insights. The influx of capital helps finance the paychecks of 150,000 workers in the legal U.S. pot industry, representing job growth of 20 percent from a year ago, according to an estimate from the cannabis website Leafly, a marketing firm for dispensaries and other cannabis firms.

Eric Eslao, founder of Defonce Chocolatier - which makes artisanal cannabis-infused chocolates costing \$20 a bar - was a senior production manager at Apple just over a year ago. He feared the stigma of joining the weed industry, but it didn't stop him. "The opportunity was too good not to make the jump," he said.

### Legal risks and challenges

Thirty states have legalized marijuana for recreational or medical use, but possession and sale is still banned at the federal level. The administration of President Donald Trump has sent mixed signals on its enforcement policy. Attorney General Jeff Sessions has vowed to crack down on the pot trade in states with legalization laws, but Trump has extended a ban on using federal funds to interfere with the industry through the end of this year. Americans increasingly support marijuana legalization, according to the Reuters/Ipsos opinion poll. The number of adults who believe it "should be legal" to possess small amounts of marijuana rose to 54 percent in a poll conducted between Oct. 27 and Nov. 10, up from 41 percent in a similar poll in 2012. —Reuters



Business

# Free local calls from Ooredoo to all customers for 24 hours

## In celebration of the return of Kuwait sports

**KUWAIT:** In celebration of the lifting of the sports ban, Ooredoo is sharing this celebration by offering all customers free local calls for 24 hours, which has started from 6th December 12:00 noon and will continue until 7th December 12:00 noon.



Mijbil Al-Ayoub

This gesture comes in alignment with Ooredoo's corporate social responsibility strategy, which is based on caring, connecting and challenging and playing a vital role in all local events and celebrations. Ooredoo continuously ensures to be part of all joyous occasions such as this, which the Kuwaiti public has been longing for. The company has distributed shirts to the public in front of its Headquarters in Kuwait City as a celebratory gesture in honor of this occasion.

Commenting on this occasion, Corporate Communications Senior Director at Ooredoo, Mijbil Al-Ayoub stated, "We are extremely happy today as we receive the news of the lift of the ban on Kuwait's Soccer. This is nothing but the fruits of the efforts exhausted by officials in the country who strived to



have this ban lifted. We congratulate the people of Kuwait and our youth and we extend our thanks and appreciation to all those who made this a reality. We continuously ensure that we share such celebrations with our customers, which is why we decided to gift them today". Al-Ayoub added, "We will continue to offer what we can to our customers in order to make



them feel exclusive and unique, and to further showcase our love to our nation and the unity of Kuwait".

Ooredoo's operations in Kuwait date back to December 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 busi-

nesses. 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 Tunis, Ooredoo Maldives, and Wataniya Palestine. Ooredoo Kuwait is a member of the international Ooredoo Group based in Doha, Qatar.

## ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller wins 'Middle East Consultancy of the Year'

**DUBAI:** ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller won top honors at the internationally renowned 9th Gold Standard Awards held in Hong Kong last Thursday, (November 30), being named 'Middle East Consultancy of the Year' and winning the 'Social Media Communications' category for the campaign 'New ways to connect with #AvayaEngage'.



Sunil John

In winning the 'Social Media Communications' prize, the agency was lauded for its innovative use of digital channels to engage with stakeholders of the multinational technology company, Avaya, and to drive footfall to its global showcase event, Avaya ENGAGE.

"Today, the recognition of our work is transcending our traditional regional boundaries," said Sunil John, Founder and CEO of ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller. "The Gold Standards, the most prestigious awards of their type in Asia Pacific and the Middle East, recognize the best of the best, and we are thrilled with our wins, which recognize the world-class standard of the work we do. Our team works tirelessly to produce work of the highest quality, and such recognition only fuels our passion to deliver excellence" he added.

With five dedicated practices - Brand



Communications, Enterprise & Technology, Financial, Public Affairs and Corporate - and 11 wholly-owned offices across the region, ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller is the agency of record for regional businesses, governments and multinationals alike. Throughout 2017, the Agency has invested in strengthening its expertise, with major hires at its Dubai HQ, including the recent addition of former National editor Hassan Fattah as managing director, and increasing personnel and resources across regional offices.

The strengthened team has allowed ASDA'A BM to compete across every sector and market in which it operates. Core new business wins since January 2017 include ADNOC, the Islamic Military Counter

Terrorism Coalition, VISA, Roche Diagnostics, HTC and the UAE Federal Tax Authority, to add to the stellar work with existing clients such as Ford, Nestle, General Electric, Emaar, Abu Dhabi Financial Group, GEMS and a other organizations across regions and sectors.

Now in its ninth year, the Gold Standard Awards are organized by Public Affairs Asia - a network for senior government relations, corporate affairs and corporate communications professionals operating across the Asia Pacific and Middle East region, to showcase excellence in corporate public affairs, strategic communications, citizenship and stakeholder engagement. This year, the platform received more than 300 entries across all categories, exceeding past records.

## Data workers prove a rare resource for Barrick, fellow miners

**TORONTO:** Barrick Gold, the world's biggest gold miner, is staking new ground in a dogged push to overhaul its operations, seeking scarce artificial intelligence experts to oversee projects using technology for everything from exploration to robot-run mining.

But for an industry perceived as slow-moving and macho, attracting prized human resources can be as difficult as striking gold - particularly as technology titans like Facebook and Alphabet Inc.'s Google chase the same talent.

Though the mining sector is late to the so-called "digitization" party, Barrick and others are compelled to push productivity gains in the face of rising costs and depleting resources.

Miners are stepping up investments in technology that ranges from driverless trucks to computers that sift through and make sense of mountains of data from operations. That shift could deliver global efficiency gains of \$373 billion by 2025 for the industry and its stakeholders, estimates consulting giant McKinsey & Co.

"There's so much value that can be created in mining, if we run our mines predictively, rather than reactively," said Michelle Ash, Barrick Chief Innovation Officer.

At Barrick, artificial intelligence (AI) managers will oversee projects that use computers to study reams of data, from sensors tracking equipment and workers, to better understand mine geology, for example. Computers could analyze that information to predict where to mine the best ore, she said, or when equipment maintenance is needed, for example. —Reuters

### Monthly global markets report

## Global markets mixed, GCC bourses to pull back

**KUWAIT:** Global equities closed the month of November in the green with the MSCI All Country World Index up 1.8 percent. In the US, the investigation into Russia meddling in the 2016 elections continues to take center stage alongside President Trump's tax overhaul plan, while in Europe, political uncertainty stemming from Angela Merkel's failure to form a coalition government was cause for concern. In Asia, the escalation of words between the US and its allies and North Korea continues to make headlines. Commodities were up for the month with Gold posting a gain of 0.3 percent and Brent posting a gain of 3.6 percent. Supporting the rally in oil was OPEC and Russia's announcement to extend cuts for an additional 9 months until the end of 2018.

In the US, the Markit Manufacturing Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) came in at 53.9 for the month of November, while the preliminary Services PMI came in at 54.7 retreating from the previous month's reading of 55.3. The latest reading in November for Initial Jobless Claims came in at 238,000 compared to the previous reading of 240,000. Durable Goods Orders decreased by 1.2 percent in October, while Housing Starts and Building Permits increased reaching 1.290m and 1.297m respectively. Retail Sales, on the other hand increased by 0.2 percent month on month in October while Gross Domestic Product recorded an annualized 3.3 percent on a preliminary basis for the third quarter beating expectations.

US equities were up for the month of November 3.8 percent and 2.8 percent for the Dow Jones and S&P 500, respectively.

## NBK CAPITAL

### UK equities

In the UK, the Markit Manufacturing PMI increased to 58.2 in November from 56.6 while the Services PMI came in at 53.8. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 0.1 percent in October while Retail Sales increased 0.3 percent. The GDP for Q3 2017 remained stable compared to the previous reading and in line with expectations recording 1.5 percent year-on-year. Consumer Confidence continues to drop month on month, reaching -12 in November compared to October's reading of -10.

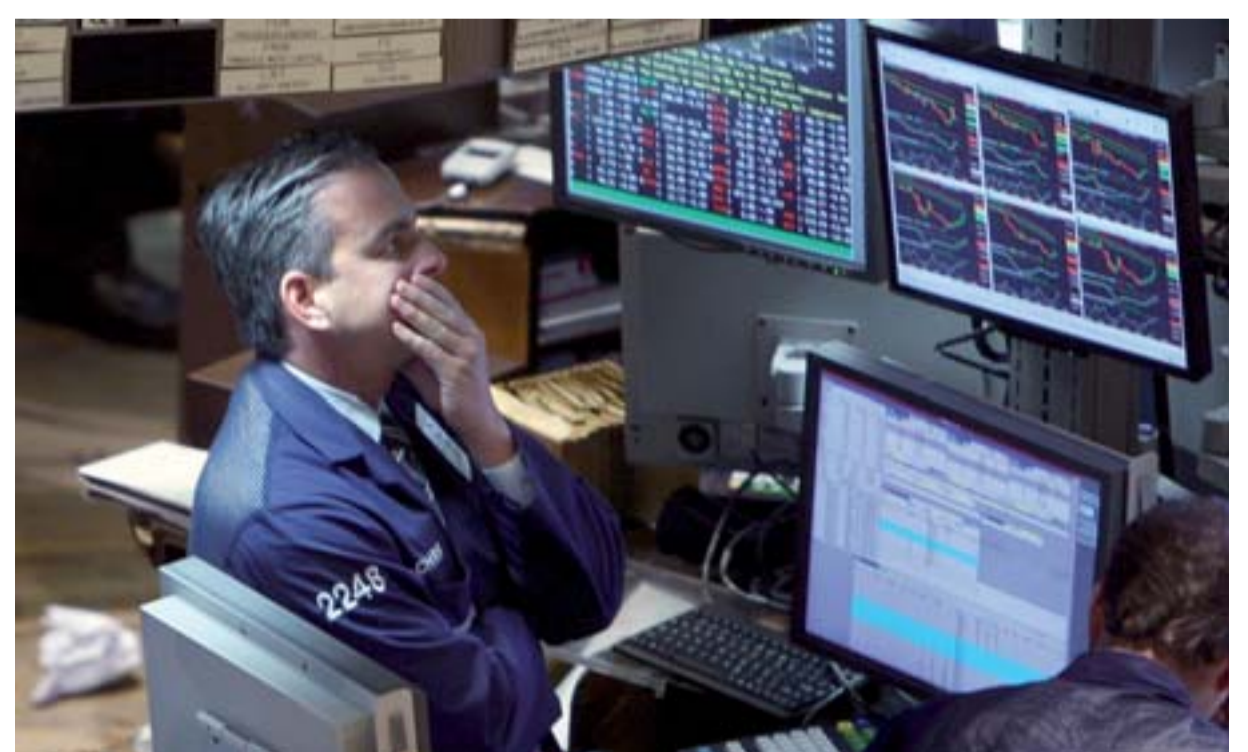
### European equities

In the Eurozone, the Markit Manufacturing PMI for November was flat compared to October at 60.1 versus 60.0 while the Services PMI came in at 56.2 unchanged from the previous month's reading. Retail Sales decreased, month on month, by 1.1 percent in October compared to September. Consumer Confidence improved to 0.1 in November on a preliminary basis from the previous month's reading of -1.1.

### Japanese equities

In Japan, exports and imports increased by 14 percent and 18.9 percent respectively in October. In both cases, the readings were below expectations. The Nikkei Manufacturing PMI came in at 53.6 in October slightly below September's reading of 53.8 while Retail Trade dropped 0.2 percent year on year as expected compared to the previous month's reading of 2.3 percent. Housing Starts also dropped 4.8 percent year on year in October compared to the drop of 2.9 percent in September.

In China, both imports and exports came in below expectations and below September's figures. In local currency terms, imports grew by 15.9 percent versus



an expected growth of 19 percent while exports grew at 6.1 percent compared to expectations of 7.9 percent. The CPI inched upwards by 0.1 percent month-on-month compared to the September's reading of 0.5 percent. Retail Sales recorded a year-on-year growth of 10 percent in October, marginally lower than the 10.4 percent expected and September's reading of 10.3 percent. The Caixin Manufacturing PMI for November came in at 50.8 slightly below the October reading of 51 while the non-manufacturing PMI increased to 54.8 from 54.3 in October.

The MSCI Emerging Market Index was slightly green for the month of November, gaining 0.2 percent. Chinese equities, on the other hand, closed

down 2.2 percent in November as measured by the Shanghai Stock Exchange Composite.

The majority of the GCC equity markets performed poorly during the month of November. The MSCI GCC Countries Index closed in the red 1.1 percent. The worst performer during the month was Dubai's equity market closing down 5.9 percent followed by Qatar down 5.5 percent and Kuwait and Abu Dhabi down 5.0 percent and 4.4 percent, respectively. On a positive note, Oman managed to close the month up 2.0 percent while Saudi Arabia and Bahrain recorded increases of 1.0 percent and 0.6 percent respectively. Egypt's equity index, EGX 30, was up 1.7 percent for the month of November.

## Technology

# Google blocks YouTube on Amazon devices in feud

## Escalating battle gets consumers in the crossfire

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Google is pulling its popular YouTube video service from Amazon's Fire TV and Echo Show devices in an escalating feud that has caught consumers in the crossfire.

The decision to block YouTube is retaliation for Amazon's refusal to sell some Google products that compete with Amazon gadgets. That includes Google's Chromecast streaming device, an alternative to Fire TV, and an internet-connected speaker called Home, which is trying to catch up to Amazon's market-leading Echo. Amazon's high-end Echo Show has a screen that can display video. "Given this lack of reciprocity, we are no longer supporting YouTube on Echo Show and Fire TV," Google said in a Tuesday statement.

Amazon didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. The battle highlights the power that the world's major technology companies are gaining as they dominate important corners of commerce and communications. As the world's largest online retailer, Amazon has tremendous sway over what people buy, while the results delivered by Google's ubiquitous search engine often help determine what people do on and off the web.

Google is hoping to pressure Amazon into selling Google's products by taking away access to the world's most widely watched video service. Unless a truce is reached, YouTube will stop working on Fire TV on Jan 1. YouTube was supposed to disappear from the Echo Show Tuesday, although Amazon has previously found ways to make unauthorized versions

of YouTube available on that device.

The dispute between Amazon and Google mirrors the face-offs that occasionally crop up between pay-TV providers and TV networks when it comes time to re-negotiate their deals.

But in this instance, the two tech heavyweights aren't fighting over licensing fees. Instead, they are jockeying to position their gadgets and, by extension, their digital services into homes as internet-connected appliances and devices become more deeply ingrained in people's lives.

The bickering between Google and Amazon has been going on several years as they have ratcheted up the competition with each other. One of the first signs that the companies were at odds came when Amazon redesigned Google's Android mobile software for its Kindle tablets. Two years ago, Amazon ousted Chromecast from its store, even though that device had previously been its top-selling electronics gadget.

The latest standoff between Google and Amazon was ridiculed by a trade association of high-speed internet providers. The group, USTelecom, has been trying to persuade skeptics that internet providers will preserve equal access to all digital services, even if the Federal Communications Commission adopts a proposal to rescind current "net neutrality" regulations.

Internet providers are committed to "protections like no content blocking or throttling," said USTelecom CEO Jonathan Spalter. "Seems like some

of the biggest internet companies can't say the same. Ironic, isn't it?"

Besides withholding Chromecast and the Home speaker from its store, Amazon has also rankled Google by declining to sell an internet-connected thermostat made by Nest, which is owned by Google parent Alphabet Inc. Amazon also doesn't allow its Prime video streaming service on Chromecast, an omission that Google wants to change. Amazon also

doesn't sell Apple's video streaming player. But that could change if Amazon's video streaming service starts working on Apple TV, something Apple has said would happen by the end of this year. But that announcement was made in June and Prime video still isn't available on Apple TV.

Roku's market-leading streaming players are sold through Amazon. Roku's players feature channels for watching both Prime video and YouTube. —AP



### Google cites lack of reciprocity

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In this file photo shows an Amazon Fire TV streaming device with its remote control. —AP

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Roku's market-leading streaming players are sold through Amazon. Roku's players feature channels for watching both Prime video and YouTube. —AP

## Russian bitcoin suspect fights US extradition in Greece



ATHENS: A police officer escorts Alexander Vinnik, center, as they arrive at Greece's supreme court in Athens yesterday. —AP

**ATHENS, Greece:** Russian cybercrime suspect Alexander Vinnik, who is wanted in the United States on charges of laundering billions of dollars' worth of the virtual currency bitcoin, appeared yesterday before Greece's Supreme Court for a hearing into his extradition to the US.

Vinnik is the subject of a judicial tug-of-war between the US and Russia, which is also seeking his extradition on lesser charges. The US is accusing Vinnik of laundering \$4 billion worth of bitcoins through BTC-e, one of the world's largest digital currency exchanges, which he allegedly operated. Russia, meanwhile, wants him back to face charges related to a 667,000-ruble (\$11,500) fraud.

Lower courts in Greece have approved both extradition requests. The Supreme Court is expected to issue a decision in coming days. If it decides in favor of extradition to the US, Greece's justice minister will have the final word on where the suspect will be sent. Vinnik, who denies any involvement in bitcoin fraud, is fighting his extradition to the United States, but not to Russia.

The 37-year-old was arrested on a US request in July while on holiday with his family in the Halkidiki area of northern Greece, which is popular with Russian tourists.

The US Justice Department says Vinnik has been indicted by a grand jury in the Northern District of California on charges including money laundering, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and engaging in unlawful monetary transactions. The charges carry maximum sentences of up to 20 years in prison. —AP

## YouTube says over 10,000 workers will help curb shady videos

**NEW YORK:** YouTube is hiring more people to help curb videos that violate its policies. YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki said "some bad actors are exploiting" the Google-owned service to "mislead, manipulate, harass or even harm." Google will have more than 10,000 workers address the problem by next year, though her blog post Monday doesn't say how many the company already has. Spokeswoman Michelle Slavich said Tuesday that some have already been hired, and the team will be a combination of employees and contractors.

Wojcicki said the company will apply lessons learned from combating violent and extremist videos to other "problematic" videos. YouTube will expand the use of "machine-learning" technology, a new form of artificial intelligence, to flag videos or comments that show hate speech or harm to children. It's already been using the technology to help remove violent extremist videos.

Several advertisers have reportedly pulled ads from YouTube in the past few weeks as a result of stories about videos showing harm to children, hate speech and other topics they don't want their ads next to. Some 250 advertisers earlier this year also said they would boycott YouTube because of extremist videos that promoted hate and violence. YouTube said Monday that it is also taking steps to try to reassure advertisers that their ads won't run



LOS ANGELES: In this file photo, YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki speaks during the introduction of YouTube TV at YouTube Space LA in Los Angeles. —AP

next to gross videos.

There have been reports of creepy videos aimed at children and pedophiles posting comments on children's videos in recent weeks. There was also a conspiracy-theory video that came up in a YouTube search a day after the October Las Vegas shooting that killed dozens.

Google isn't the only tech company that's stepping up human content reviews to help it police its platform after criticism. Facebook in May said it would hire 3,000 more people to review videos and posts, and, later, another 1,000 to review ads after discovering Russian ads meant to influence the US presidential election. —AP

## Apple CEO hopeful banned apps will return to China store



**HONG KONG:** Apple's chief executive said yesterday he's optimistic some apps that fell afoul of China's tight internet laws will eventually be restored after being removed earlier this year.

Speaking at a business forum in southern China, CEO Tim Cook also dismissed criticism of his appearance days earlier at an internet conference promoting Beijing's vision of a censored internet.

Cook's high-profile appearance Sunday at the government-organized World Internet Conference drew comments from activists and US politicians who say Apple should do more to push back against Chinese internet restrictions. He said he believed strongly in freedoms but also thought that foreign

companies need to play by local rules where they operate.

When asked about Chinese government policies requiring removal of apps, including ones from operators of virtual private networks that can get around the country's internet filters, he said, "My hope over time is that some of these things, the couple things that have been pulled, come back." "I have great hope on that and great optimism," he added.

Cook said he didn't care about being criticized for working with China, because he believes change is more likely when companies participate rather than opting to "stand on the sideline and yell at how things should be." —AP

## Delivery robots will need permits to roam San Francisco



**SAN FRANCISCO:** Delivery robots in San Francisco will need permits before they can roam city sidewalks under legislation approved by city supervisors. San Francisco has struggled to regulate hometown startups that grew too popular, including short-term vacation rental platform Airbnb and ride-hailing service Uber. Supervisor Norman Yee proposed an outright ban on delivery robots but settled on a permitting system. The supervisors approved it on Tuesday. A maximum of nine "autonomous delivery devices" may be allowed at any time in the city. The robots can't go more than 3 miles per hour (4.8 kilometers per hour) and human operators must be nearby. The robots must yield to pedestrians. Chief executives for autonomous delivery companies Starship Technologies, Marble and Postmates submitted a letter saying they welcomed government regulations. Other cities have taken similar steps. —AP

Health

# WHO says 480 need to be evacuated from Damascus suburb with worst malnutrition

GENEVA: Nearly 500 sick and wounded patients still await medical evacuation from the Damascus suburb of eastern Ghouta, which the Syrian government has not granted, the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday. Malnutrition rates in the besieged rebel-held area, about a 45-minute drive from the capital, are now "the highest seen so far in Syria since the beginning of the crisis", WHO representative in Syria Elizabeth Hoff said. A week ago the United Nations called on world powers to help arrange the evacuations saying eastern Ghouta had become a "humanitarian emergency". Nine patients have died in recent weeks while waiting, UN envoy Jan Egeland said at the time.

"The Syrian government has not approved the medical evacuation yet," Hoff told Reuters from Damascus. "There has been no movement. The list of priority patients was provided from the opposition-controlled area about four weeks ago, she said. Almost 200 children are among those on the growing but stalled UN list, who mainly suffer from severe chronic diseases including kidney failure, cancer and cardiovascular diseases, Hoff said. Some war-wounded are among priority evacuees, she said. More than 400 relatives are also seeking to

accompany the 480 patients for treatment in Damascus hospitals.

Jets believed to be Syrian and Russian struck heavily crowded residential areas in eastern Ghouta, killing at least 27 people and injuring dozens in the third week of a stepped-up assault, residents, aid workers and a war monitor said on Monday. A nutritional survey done in eastern Ghouta during the first half of November collected data on more than 300 children between the age of six months and five years, Hoff said. "The survey data results indicate a deterioration in the nutrition situation among children under the age of five years old," the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WHO said in the findings.

Some 11.9 percent of the children examined were found to have global acute malnutrition, including 1.6 percent suffering from severe acute malnutrition, which can be life-threatening. Aid agencies are providing life-saving curative and preventive nutrition services in eastern Ghouta, through five health facilities and seven mobile clinics in Douma, Harasta and Kafr Batna, it said. "We delivered 8 tons of medical supplies to eastern Ghouta last month, but it is not sufficient," Hoff said. —Reuters



## Nearly 500 afflicted with chronic diseases

## Australian dogs trained to sniff out endangered species

SYDNEY: Australian dogs are being trained to sniff out the droppings of endangered animals in a scheme that offers greater understanding of threatened species through the less-intrusive method of canine tracking. Emma Bennett, a PhD candidate at Monash University in Melbourne, is working with environmentally-conscious dog owners who have volunteered their pets in a rainforest region of Victoria state

to track the scats, or droppings, of the endangered tiger quoll, a small marsupial.

"Scats contain DNA, so you can identify the individual animal," Bennett told AFP yesterday. "They also contain information about diet distribution." The dogs-of varying breeds, including border collies and german shepherds-have been found to have "very high" early detection rates of 50-70 percent accuracy in discovering the samples. "They are working just as efficiently as you would expect a full time working dog to do," Bennett said. Using canines to obtain the faeces sample is a "non-invasive" alternative to traps, reducing the risk of injury or stress, the researcher added. "When you collect scats you're not impacting the threatened species at all, but you're still able to collect its DNA and a whole range of other information about it, so you don't have to trap the animal" she said. —AFP

## FDA approves diabetes drug that also helps with weight loss



TRENTON, New Jersey: This photo provided by Novo Nordisk shows an injection pen of the company's drug Ozempic. —AP

TRENTON, New Jersey: US regulators on Tuesday approved a new diabetes drug that reduces blood sugar levels and also helps people lose significant weight. Danish drugmaker Novo Nordisk said the Food and Drug Administration approved its once-a-week shot for people with Type 2 diabetes. The drug, Ozempic, also known as semaglutide, works by stimulating the body's own insulin production and reducing appetite.

In one big company-funded study, Ozempic, on average, reduced long-term blood sugar levels at least 2 1/2 times as much as a popular daily diabetes pill, Merck & Co's Januvia. It also helped study participants lose two to three times as much weight as those in the comparison group. Over 56 weeks, patients who got a lower dose of Ozempic lost an average of 9.5 pounds (4.3 kilograms) while those who got a higher dose lost 13.5 pounds (6.1 kilograms). The patients who took Januvia lost an average of 4 pounds (1.9 kilograms).

The 1,200 study participants were also taking one or two standard diabetes medicines. Novo

Nordisk, a leader in diabetes care, has also been testing the drug separately for weight loss alone. Many Type 2 diabetes patients are overweight or obese, and losing significant weight usually helps them reduce their blood sugar and better control their diabetes. Over time, too high sugar in the blood can damage multiple organs and weaken circulation.

The new drug comes in injector pens and costs about the same as similar weekly drugs: \$676 for a four- to six-week supply without insurance. Novo Nordisk already sells a similar once-a-day shot, Victoza. Ozempic will compete with other popular once-a-week drugs in the same class, including Eli Lilly and Co.'s Trulicity and AstraZeneca PLC's Bydureon, which don't produce as much weight loss. However, they all carry warnings about possible serious side effects, including kidney damage and inflammation of the pancreas. They also may be linked to thyroid cancer, so people taking all drugs in the class are being followed via a patient registry. Januvia is in a different drug class. —AP

CLINIC  
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## Global Medical Center Welcomes Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader

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What's On

# Farewell lunch held for Indian Ambassador at Courtyard by Marriott



Kuwait Marriott Hotels held a farewell lunch in honor of Sunil Jain, Indian Ambassador to Kuwait to congratulate him on his new assignment and thank him for a great alliance with Marriott throughout the years. The event took place at the renowned Indian Restaurant 'Soul and Spice' at Courtyard Hotel Kuwait and was attended by a huge number of diplomats, Indian businessmen and representatives from local newspapers and magazines. The event was kicked off by a short speech given by George Aoun, Cluster General Manager of Kuwait Marriott Hotels, in which he wished Jain best of luck for his new assignment and presented him with a trophy, as a token of appreciation for all his support to Marriott Kuwait. After that, the attendees were treated to a mouthwatering selection of Indian

delicacies from the recently launched menu at Soul and Spice Restaurant. The invitees were impressed with the rich variety of food, breathtaking decor and comfortable seating, which makes 'Soul and Spice Restaurant' the ideal venue to enjoy the true flavors of India. Soul and Spice Restaurant offers a fresh approach to contemporary modern Indian cuisine, which is prepared using a unique blend of authentic Indian spices and crafted with the finest seasonal ingredients. The result is an exquisite creation that is sure to delight the senses. On this occasion, George Aoun, Cluster General Manager of Kuwait Marriott Hotels said 'on behalf of Kuwait Marriott Hotels' Management and Associates would like to thank Sunil Jain for all his support to Marriott Kuwait and wish him all the best in his new assignment.'



## Armenian Prelacy hosts Christmas bazaar



The Armenian Prelacy of Kuwait and the Neighboring Countries and the society's charity organized the annual Christmas bazaar under auspices of Archbishop Masis Zuboyan; patriarch of

Orthodox Armenians in Kuwait and neighboring countries. The bazaar was held this past weekend and was attended by the Armenian and Palestinian ambassadors to Kuwait.

## 3 performances by Zaid Nasser Jazz Quartet

The Public Affairs Section of the US Embassy in Kuwait, in collaboration with the National Council of Arts and Letters, is pleased to invite

you to attend three musical performances by the Zaid Nasser Jazz Quartet. The Zaid Nasser Jazz Quartet is from New York City. They perform songs from the Golden Age of Jazz (1930s - 1950s), and their own original compositions have been celebrated by the international jazz press. Admission to all three concerts is free. The concerts take place this Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 360 Mall, Sirdab Lab, and Yarmouk Cultural Center respectively, and that from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm.



## 'Al-Resala' hosts annual art show



Hessah Al- Mutawa, the general director of art instruction, and many other distinguished guests attended Al-Resala Art Annual Show that took place last Wednesday at the school theater. Ajjal Bilingual School also participated in the event

that was full of gorgeous, artistic works that the talented students in both schools ingeniously created and put on display, which made the show a great success. It was a great art show that everyone liked and admired so much.

## New discount to Burgan Bank's credit card holders

Burgan Bank is pleased to announce that its credit card customers can now save 10 percent when booking in SeaShell Julai'a Beach Hotel and Resort in Kuwait. The offer comes to accommodate its customer's seasonal needs through a variety of

innovative offers for different segments. Burgan Bank's customers can enjoy the discounted deal on one of Kuwait's most popular hotels by simply booking and paying using any of Burgan Bank credit cards at the venue. SeaShell Julai'a Hotel and Resort is a five-stars beach hotel that houses Mediterranean style villas and chalets that provides luxury, serenity and enjoyment. The hotel is also equipped with fine dining restaurants, modern cafes, seafront swimming pools and an artistic landscape, and is located on King Fahad Highway 30, exit road 245, Julai'a. To find out more about Burgan Bank's latest offers, or any of its products and services, customers can visit any of the bank's branches.



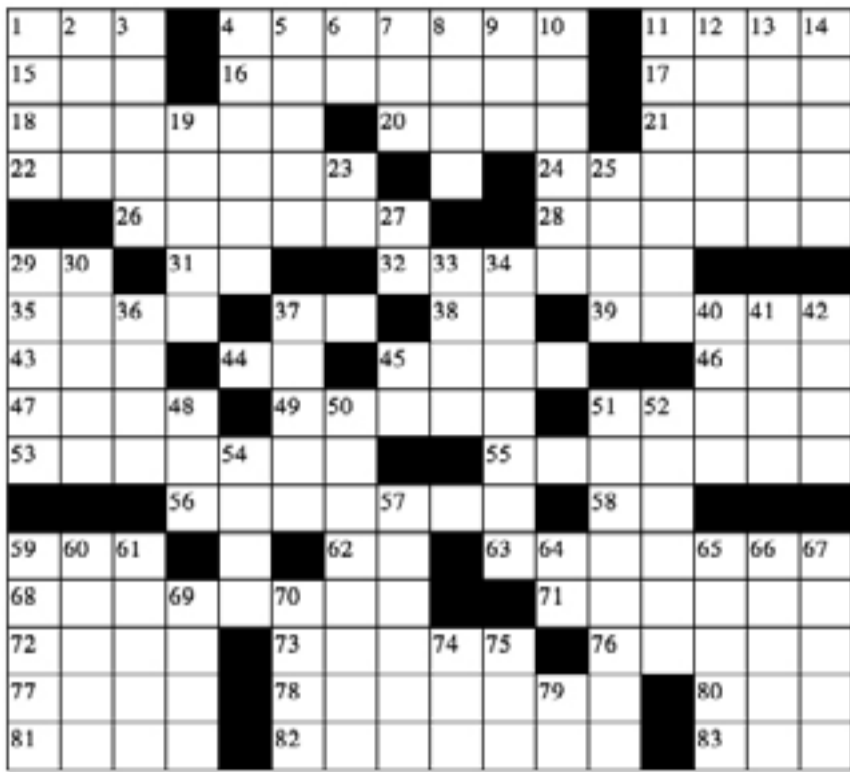
The Ambassador of Thailand to Kuwait Dusit Manapan hosted a reception on the occasion of his country's national day. Senior officials, diplomats and media personalities attended the event. — Photos by Joseph Shagra





Stars

CROSSWORD 1778



ACROSS

1. A number of sheets of paper fastened together along one edge.
4. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
11. A unit of length equal to 3 feet.
15. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
16. Tropical American shrub bearing edible acid red fruit resembling cherries.
17. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
18. A notation cancelling a previous sharp or flat.
20. A city in northeastern Egypt at the head of the Gulf of Suez and at the southern end of the Suez Canal.
21. Chinese tree bearing seeds that yield tung oil.
22. Relating to or like or divided into areolae.
24. Away from the mouth or oral region.
26. Of or pertaining to or characteristic of the Baltic States or their peoples or languages.
28. Type and sole genus of the family Albulidae.
29. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
31. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
32. Noisy quarrel.
35. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
38. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
39. Notable English cricketer (1882-1963).
43. Gear (including necessary machinery) for a particular enterprise.
44. An uproarious party.
46. A flat wing-shaped process or wing-like part of an organism.
47. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
49. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in Missouri in the valleys of the Missouri and Osage rivers.
53. (botany) Outer tissue of bark.
55. A genus of the family Droseraceae.
56. A windstorm that lifts up clouds of dust or sand.
58. A blood group antigen possessed by Rh-positive people.
59. (nautical, aeronautical) Situated at or toward the stern or tail.
62. A midwestern state in north central United States in the Great Lakes region.
63. A Powhatan Indian woman (the daughter of Powhatan) who befriended the English at Jamestown and is said to have saved Captain John Smith's life (1595-1617).
68. A bet that you can pick the first and second finishers in the right order.
71. Not open or affording passage or access.
72. Humble request for help.
73. Having the leading position or higher score in a contest.
76. Jordan's port.
77. (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
78. In the interval.
80. (British) Your grandmother.
81. Remove with or as if with a ladle.
82. The father of your father or mother.
83. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
2. The sixth month of the civil year.
3. The brightest star in Cygnus.
4. (Spanish) Saffron-flavored dish made of rice with shellfish and chicken.
5. Enthusiastic approval.
6. A Mid-Atlantic state.
7. The bureau of the Treasury Department responsible for tax collections.
8. A sudden and decisive change of government illegally or by force.
9. Fermented alcoholic beverage similar to but heavier than beer.
10. A shop where a variety of goods are sold.
11. Disease of rodents (especially rabbits and squirrels) and sometimes transmitted to humans by ticks or flies or by handling infected animals.
12. (Akkadian) Mother and earth goddess in Gilgamesh epic.
13. Of or relating to the kidneys.
14. (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
19. Omnivorous mammal of Central and South America.
23. A state in New England.
25. Pompous or pretentious talk or writing.
27. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
30. One of the two main branches of orthodox Islam.
33. A Bantu language spoken in Cameroon.
34. The condition of being free.
36. American novelist (1909-1955).
37. A man who courts a woman.
40. A small cake leavened with yeast.
41. (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
42. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
45. Unknown god.
48. Thickening of tissue in the motor tracts of the lateral columns and anterior horns of the spinal cord.
50. A power tool used for sanding wood.
51. Large red-skinned apple.
52. Take off a hook.
54. A characteristic state or mode of living.
57. A stiff chitinous seta or bristle especially of an annelid worm.
60. A boy or man.
61. A step in walking or running.
64. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
65. (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
66. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
67. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
69. An agenda of things to do.
70. Open-heart surgery in which the rib cage is opened and a section of a blood vessel is grafted from the aorta to the coronary artery to bypass the blocked section of the coronary artery and improve the blood supply to the heart.
74. Slender bristlelike appendage found on the bracts of grasses.
75. A doctor's degree in education.
79. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Care must be taken to steer clear of overextending your services or your energies. There seems to be a sense of testing the limits at this time. New friends and associates may develop into partnerships and lend assistance in long-term goals. You could be moved to appreciate and perceive all of the beauty in your life and in those around you. Also, everything could assume added importance and worth. The big trick will be to refrain from overspending or indulging too much just now. This is a good time to keep some of your ideas to yourself as you gradually develop them into a definite plan. Any dealings with older people or parental figures will go well at this time. A reunion of sorts may take place or be planned for the near future.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Gain approval for your organizational plans that are within the workplace. You may be quite pleased with the results. Without delay, you could dive in and organize projects and people, and create a suggestion box in order to eliminate so many interruptions. You could find those around you feeling a big sense of appreciation or value for your contributions and the way you get things accomplished. There is a sense of knowing a secret as you could find the approval for your ideas very self-rewarding. You are able to tap into a wellspring of inspiration and without being pushy, an idea or two occasionally, that show increased business, will gain you rewards. Some amazing item you ordered may have arrived at your home this afternoon—playtime.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

If you have given any thought to committing your thoughts and deeds to a book or journal, now would be the appropriate time, as you will be full of imagination and creativity. Your ideas and thinking, together with your talent for putting your thoughts into words, would allow you to captivate and spellbind. You might even find yourself enjoying a good movie or book. Alliance with others and manners are the major keys to emotional satisfaction now. Friendship and charm are most satisfying and the insufficiency of them can be emotionally disturbing. Matrimony and other partnerships, as well as close personal ties to other people, deserve your most critical attention. Someone close to you watches and uses you as a mentor.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may find it easy to bring a group together with your words or ideas that move others. You may be guiding, instructing, encouraging, translating or possibly escorting others through survival techniques. You love the interaction as well as the ability to help others. Escaping from this busy day you could be very happy to return home this afternoon. Time to be refreshed and to think over your day, poetry and art may come to mind. Your whole world may seem meditative or dreamy. Quiet time is important for you to be able to relax. It may benefit you in many ways to take the time to think a bit on your goals and the steps you can take now to move forward with those goals. Tonight you may plan on ways to change a few things around your home.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

There could be a change in work plans today and you will have to help make some temporary adjustments so that a situation sidetracking your regular routine will have a successful outcome. This could be because there is a change in the weather, a change in accommodations or a change in people that have leadership roles. Whatever the case, you will be able to step in and make the transition as easy as possible. Your job may be more satisfying just now and you could be absorbing the responsibility that it entails more than usual. You may suddenly find yourself enjoying approval, especially with superiors or in relation to the work that you do. Some form of flattery could find its way to your ears concerning your tastes or belongings and you are pleased.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your marketing skills are excellent and should be directed to large groups or organizations. This is where you will have your greatest successes. A strong urge to be out and among your friends and to be socializing is very tempting during the noon break. You are determined to stick with the important professional issues this afternoon. There seems to be a big need to make some changes, breaking with the old system. You want anything that is new, different and unique—that motivates and challenges you—and you may discuss this with your supervisor as a way to increase productivity or sales. Your sensitivity to, and understanding of, others' needs are well received by those around you. Tonight you might be tempted to an indoor swim with a friend.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Being active on the social scene and demonstrating your social graces will be a big step in paving your path to success, particularly if you are in the entertainment industry. This is a time for forging ahead, a time that you can combine business and pleasure and a time to enjoy your career. Your ambition is strong and your achievements are many; count your blessings and enjoy using your talents in the best ways possible. Care must be taken not to waste too much time on any one thing, or you could find yourself battling such things as ulcers or digestive problems. Knowing that you have done a good job will be your reward. Hug a friend this afternoon and then go home and hug each family member. People love to feel needed and hugs are beneficial.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

Impatience could cause you to feel in a bit of a rush this day. Take care not to try to make up for any amount of lost time—better to be late. Communications are excellent—all day long. You have self-confidence and marvelous persuasive talents and may use these things to enhance your career. This could mean a higher-up is indecisive and needs persuasion to see the views of you and your co-workers. This afternoon is a time of accomplishment—stay focused. Figuring out new ways to make your dreams come true is essential to your wellbeing. This could be the beginning of great enthusiasm as well as pleasure in your pursuit of professional aspirations. A friend may be calling on you to lend a hand in something very important this evening.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

This is a time when you will have to give yourself time to make decisions. Moving too quickly could find you making some wrong choices. Everyone around you seems preoccupied or extremely busy so it may not be so easy to find the help you might need. Stay focused and you will instinctively know what is needed to win support for your views and projects. There is an impulse for a social life that could quickly turn from good to difficult as you may feel frustrated by someone's attitude or by your own stumbling blocks. Perhaps your feelings are that some avenues of support have been closed. Arguments of an emotional kind may be easy to find, if you are not careful. Your focus will be best served on things that are ordinary this evening.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

There is the danger of foggy thinking and of your being misled or getting too carried away with some plan or idea this morning. There could be a lot of mental pressure. This will all pass in time, but for now, take your breaks and get away for a while from your work or any repetitive activity with which you are involved. A very close friend or relative, whom you care for a great deal, could be coming to you for advice and counsel concerning a very personal issue. This evening is a great time to reflect on your goals and what the next step is in making the progress you want to achieve. Emotions, or the feelings of those around you, may be very clear. With just a few words, you can guide a youngster in a positive direction regarding budgeting.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

The planetary energies at this time are perfect for your type of self-expression and work well with your progress in the workplace. You find yourself most persuasive with others. A sales presentation this afternoon will bring people from all over the store to see just what you have to offer. You are good at showing off this particular product and make lots of good sales. Expect an illuminating conversation with someone you love later today. Sophistication and connection to others is the key element to emotional gratification for you now. Rapport and splendor are deeply satisfying and you are a wizard at achieving good relations between those people that may be a bit difficult. Your emotional support comes from friends.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

The folks around you are appreciative of your ability to be able to make constructive suggestions or to help them with practical decisions, which relate to group issues. Knowing exactly what the public wants at this time is yet another feather in your hat. Your name and reputation are spreading quickly. Expect an upgrade soon in your job identity and pay. The idea of value or a greater appreciation for things of value is fun to comprehend this afternoon. It is most assuredly a time when tangible things have a great deal of importance. Your emotions or the feelings of those around you should be quite clear, making it a great time to reflect and truly understand individual family members and your connection in the family. A super time!

Wordsearch Puzzle

Comedy Movies 1

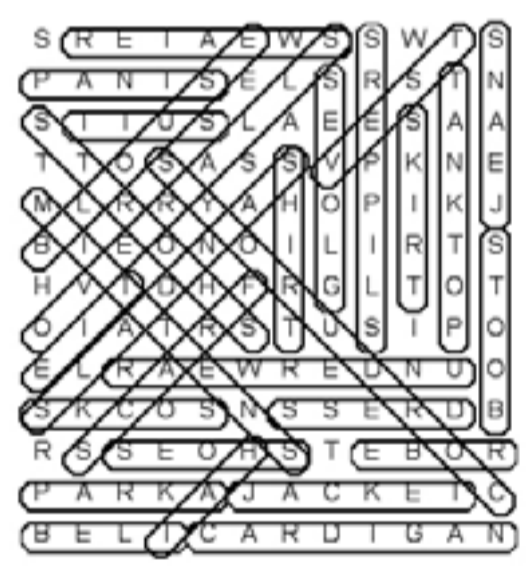
Find and circle all of the comedy movies that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional comedy movie.



- ALL OF ME
- ANNIE HALL
- BABE
- BEING THERE
- BIG
- BOB ROBERTS
- BULL DURHAM
- CARS
- CAT BALLOU
- CITY SLICKERS
- CLERKS
- CLUELESS
- DUCK SOUP
- ELECTION
- FLEET
- GHOSTBUSTERS
- HAPPY GILMORE
- HARVEY
- HOLIDAY
- HOTSHOTS
- LEGALLY BLONDE
- LIAR LIAR
- LOCAL HERO
- MALLRATS
- CLERKS
- MANHATTAN
- MEATBALLS
- MOONSTRUCK
- OH, GO!
- PLAZA SUITE
- REPO MAN
- RUSHMORE
- SHREK
- SLACKER
- SLAP SHOT
- SLEEPER
- THE RUTLES
- TOOTSIE
- TRADING PLACES
- UNCLE BUCK
- YES MAN

Yesterday's Solution

Clothing



- BELT
- BLOUSE
- BOOTS
- CARDIGAN
- CORDUOYS
- DRESS
- GLOVES
- HAT
- JACKET
- JEANS
- MITTENS
- OVERALLS
- PANTS
- PARKA
- ROBE
- SANDALS
- SCARF
- SHIRT
- SHOES
- SHORTS
- SKIRT
- SLIPPERS
- SOCKS
- SUIT
- SWEATER
- TANK TOP
- TIE
- UNDERWEAR
- VEST

The hidden clothing item is: SWEATSHIRT

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





## Trendsetters: South African mothers do business with fashion cast-offs

Juggling paperwork, car keys and an always-beeping cellphone, Inet Situole, a 33-year-old in a crisp white blouse, runs a fashion boutique with more than 100 customers a month - a far cry from a decade ago, when she worked as a maid while trapped in an abusive marriage. Despite working seven days a week cleaning and cooking in an attempt to save some money, at the end of the month Situole would invariably find herself with nothing. "My husband would take all the money and spend it," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. He also beat her and was unfaithful, she said.

When she left him, Situole - an orphan since birth - was terrified of what lay ahead for her and her toddler. "I felt like dying," she said. "I didn't have anyone to run to." But in 2015, her prospects were transformed after she joined a scheme to help unemployed mothers set up their own businesses. The Clothing Bank (TCB) was launched in 2010 in Cape Town by two businesswomen, Tracey Chambers and Tracey Gilmore. Gilmore started out by giving unemployed friends smart outfits to wear to job interviews - but it wasn't working.

"While sourcing the clothing was quite easy, finding opportunities for the women to get employment was really non-existent," she said. At about 28 percent, South Africa's unemployment rate is among the highest in the world. Lack of education is a key barrier to finding work, with less than a third of South Africans completing secondary school, according to a 2011 census. Chambers and Gilmore decided to combine business and entrepreneurship training with clothing to create a venture that could help tackle joblessness among mothers.

More than a third of South Africa's households are run by single mothers, a 2015 study by Statistics South Africa showed. "We've always believed that if you influence and change a mother's life, you change an entire family," said Tracy-Leigh Kinsey who runs TCB's Johannesburg branch. "You change generations - and that's why we focus specifically on mothers with dependent children."

### Business ideas

Once selected, the women follow a two-year program that allows them to study and earn a living at the same time. "There was a huge amount of excess clothing stock in the retail supply chain," Gilmore said. "That's how we came up with the idea of using (it) as a tool to teach unemployed women to run businesses." The women buy the surplus clothing - customer returns or end-of-season merchandise - at discounted prices from TCB, setting up small fashion businesses and growing them as they make a profit.

After the training, women are free to apply their new skills in any sector, Kinsey said. "We push them quite hard to start their second business while they're still here, so that they have something up and running, so that they are sustainable," she said.

Graduates from TCB's five branches across the country have gone on to establish creches, cleaning businesses, laundromats, cafes and catering firms, often operating initially out of their living rooms or rented shipping containers. Building on the success of the clothing-based scheme, TCB has branched out into other areas in recent years, such as beauty salons.

Unemployed men are also being trained to repair household appliances, from toasters to fridges, using broken stock from retailers. At the same time they learn business and computer skills to help them go it alone. TCB has also experimented with setting up small franchises such as coffee shops or early childhood learning centres, and recruiting people to become self-employed business owners. Today, Situole mentors some of the students who are launching their own ventures. "Some come and see me for advice," she said. "I'm proud of this, as at the end of the day I'm helping someone to put food on the table."

### 'Fast fashion'

Key to the success of The Clothing Bank are donations from major South African retailers. In the Johannesburg branch, women are busy sorting through a warehouse crammed with last season's dresses, shoes

and household appliances. "We do everything from collecting to de-branding the stock, to fixing it and making sure it's useful," said Kinsey, adding that it relieves suppliers of the hassle of disposing of it. "It's important we're reusing this waste in a way that is helping people that aren't as privileged, or who are living in poverty," she said. What to do with excess clothing stocks is becoming a controversial global issue. Some have branded the clothing industry - especially "fast fashion" - as one of the most polluting industries in the world, not least for its contribution to climate change. Making 1 kg of fabric generates on average 23 kg of planet-warming greenhouse gases, according to a study by global consultancy McKinsey. In recent weeks, Danish and Swedish media have reported that some fashion giants are sending garments to be incinerated, sparking criticism from environmentalists and politicians.

Gilmore said retailers should seek green ways of dealing with unwanted stock, such as giving it to programs like TCB. By doing so, South African retailers can also earn points on their "Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment" scorecard, a government program to redress the inequalities of apartheid, which provides competitive advantages to certified businesses. "They have an incentive to give us that stock," said Gilmore. Woolworths, a major South African retailer, has donated almost 1.6 million items over the past seven years. Gilmore said TCB's model could be replicated in Europe, to create business opportunities for refugees. "It's just getting people to be open to the possibility," she said. — Reuters

“I felt like dying, I didn't have anyone to run to”

## Indonesia's selfie-snapping monkey named 'Person of the Year'



An Indonesian monkey who shot to fame after it snapped a grinning selfie and sparked a landmark US copyright case was named "Person of the Year" yesterday by the animal rights group that took on the simian's cause. The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) said it was honoring Naruto, a crested black macaque with a goofy-looking grin, to recognize that "he is someone, not something". In 2011, the monkey pressed the shutter button while staring down the lens of a camera set up by British nature photographer David Slater on the island of Sulawesi. The photos quickly went viral and PETA launched a lawsuit that claimed the then six-year-old Naruto should be "declared the author and owner of his photograph".

"Naruto's historic selfie challenged the idea of who is a person and who is not and resulted in the first-ever lawsuit seeking to declare a nonhuman animal the owner of property, rather than being declared property himself," PETA Founder Ingrid Newkirk said in a statement yesterday.

The court case set off an international debate among legal experts about personhood for animals and whether they can own property. Slater maintained he owned the rights to the pictures since he engineered its creation-setting up the tripod and walking away for a few minutes, only to find out that the monkey had grabbed his camera and snapped away.

The British photographer won the first hearing in California but PETA then appealed to a higher court. The case was settled in September-before that court could make a ruling - with Slater agreeing to donate 25 percent of any future revenue from using or selling the monkey selfies to help protect the habitat of crested macaques in Indonesia. Authorities and activists have been trying to persuade villagers on Sulawesi to stop consuming the critically endangered monkeys, one of many creatures that form part of the local indigenous community's diet. — AFP

## Retirement? Not yet, says French bar doyenne, aged 100

Marie-Louise Wirth wouldn't dream of giving up her bar in northern France, even if many of the 100-year-old's regulars have passed away. The tall, blue-eyed proprietor, known to locals as Marie-Lou, also has seen little reason to modernize the brick-fronted tavern with lace curtains in the town of Isbergues near the Belgian border. "It's been like this for 50 years," Wirth said, wiping the same Art Deco countertop she did as a 14-year-old when she began working in the bar for her father back in 1931.

"They're all surprised there's no beer pump or coffee machine, but they don't remember the old days, because there wasn't a beer pump or a coffee machine," says the sprightly centenarian, who keeps her grey hair close-cropped and wears no makeup, except for a hint of red lipstick. The tiny bar-only around 20 square meters (200 square feet) — has no name. "If you have good beer you don't need a name," says Wirth, who likewise has no use for the internet, a cellphone or credit card. Never married and childless, Wirth took over the establishment when her father died in 1954 and she was 37.

Those were the days when customers ordered sweet wines like Byrrh and Dubonnet, as well as absinthe or pastis, the anise-flavored spirit that is still broadly popular in France. But the country has seen a sharp decline in bars since their heyday in the 1960s when they numbered around 600,000, a figure that has shrunk to fewer than 35,000 today. Wirth recalls when Isbergues, which now has a population of around 10,000, was home to a steelworks with 6,000 workers. "Back then... there were a hundred bars," she says without a trace of nostalgia.

### 'Only God knows'

Wirth opens the bar at 8:15 every morning, sipping a glass of cherry brandy with her first customer. Hale and hearty, she calls herself a "little curiosity" who cannot explain her longevity. "How am I supposed to know why I'm like this? Only God knows



Photo shows Marie-Louise Wirth, a 100-year-old bar owner— AP

but he doesn't speak to me!" The secret couldn't be in her diet, she says: "I eat a lot of spicy food... I eat everything I shouldn't. You give me mayonnaise or jam and I'll take the mayonnaise. But I don't have cholesterol!"

What about exercise? "You know, I live like someone who's 60 years old. I go out a lot. I like to go dancing. I don't mind coming home at 2:00 am and waking up at 7:30. I'm not tired." And Wirth takes risks that may seem ill-advised for a person of such an advanced age. Her best friend Marie-Claire Legrand confirms that she took up the challenge of a treetop adventure course in the French Caribbean island of Martinique in 2013, and that the two of them have been up in a hot-air balloon. "I'm a daredevil!" Wirth exclaims. "There's no point living to do nothing and see nothing." Regulars at Wirth's bar are becoming fewer. "I've buried a lot of them," she says-but she vows to keep going as long as she can. — AFP

## Al-Futtaim expands its presence in the region, launches TOYS R US second store in the Avenues

TOYS R US expands operations in Kuwait and officially opened its doors at The Avenues. Expanding its presence across the region, the TOYS R US opening was celebrated at an official ribbon cutting ceremony attended by Patricia Fietz, Deputy Chief of Mission, US Embassy in Kuwait and Mehsen Al-Mutairi the country regional manager for Al-Futtaim central market company for Kuwait and Bahrain and other senior officials of Al-Futtaim Group along with members of the press and lots of guests. With the opening of the new store, Al-Futtaim Group now has 2 Toys R Us stores in Kuwait and 19 across the MENA region.

The Avenues store, which is over 20,000 sq ft, stocks thousands of quality toys for boys and girls, the latest and hottest games, educational and developmental toys, sporting goods and baby products. Also on hand are knowledgeable toy-trained staff members ready to help customers find the perfect toy.

Speaking at the launch Mehsen Al-Mutairi said: "Expansion has always played an important role in Al-Futtaim Group's growth strategy. We're really proud to bring TOYS R US to The Avenues, one of the most popular shopping destinations in the city. We look forward to offering parents excellent value in a one-stop shopping experience that includes the widest collection of toys and games for kids of all ages and a great selection of baby products."

In regards to the company expansion in Kuwait, Mehsen added that Al-Futtaim company have a wide plan for expansion in 2018 as we are going to open the fourth branch for Mark & Spencer in Al-Kout Mall. Also there will be an opening for two branches for "Kate Spade" brand in both of Avenues & 360 Degree Malls



in the upcoming days.

Joaquim Fernandes, Regional Area Manager for TOYS R US further reiterated: "TOYS R US has the most up-to-date Toys, learning material and all the traditional favorites - everything you would expect of the premier children's store in the region. Located on level one of the first phase, The Avenues store offers a fun interactive environment with a diverse and exclusive product range and an easy-to-shop floor layout."

TOYS R US offers a variety of unique and exclusive products not available anywhere else. From classic favorites to options for technology-driven entertainment on-the-go, TOYS R US shelves are stocked with the latest, hottest and safest toys year-round. Please note that Al-Futtaim Company operates in Kuwait following brands as well: Mark & Spencer, Toys R Us, BCBG, Guess, Kate Spade.

## Did Santa really exist? Ancient relic offers new clue

Was Santa real? Scientists have offered a tantalizing clue by dating a bone said to belong to St Nicholas, the inspiration for Father Christmas, to the same century in which he died in what is now Turkey. Oxford University researchers analyzed a micro-sample of a pelvis fragment and found that it dated back to the fourth century. Legend has it that St Nicholas, who is depicted with a white beard in icons and was said to have died in 343 AD, was widely known for his generosity—a trait that inspired the story of Father Christmas.

"Many relics that we study turn out to date to a period somewhat later than the historic attestation would suggest," Tom Higham, co-director of the Oxford Relics Centre, said in a statement. "This bone fragment, in contrast, suggests that we could possibly be looking at remains from St Nicholas himself," Higham said. The actual bone fragment analyzed is owned by Father Dennis O'Neill, a priest based in the US state of Illinois. But the bulk of relics said to be of St Nicholas are held in the Italian cities of Bari and Venice.

The scientists said the fragment was of the left pubis—the lower part of the pelvis—while the Bari collection only contains the upper part of the bone, suggesting they could be from the same person. The relics in Venice consist of as many as 500 bone fragments, which an anatomical study has concluded were complementary to the Bari collection. "These results encourage us to now turn to the Bari and Venice relics to attempt to show that the bone remains are from the same individual," said Georges Kazan, co-director of the Oxford Relics Centre. St Nicholas is thought to have lived in Myra, near the modern-day Turkish town of Demre, and his relics were carried away by a group of Italian sailors. The legend of Father Christmas began in the 16th century at a time when stories about St Nicholas became popular. Several European countries celebrate December 6 as St Nicholas's Feast Day. — AFP

Lifestyle | Music and Movies

# 'Shawshank' star Tim Robbins's real-life prison revolution

With an acclaimed starring role in "The Shawshank Redemption" and an Oscar nomination for directing "Dead Man Walking," Tim Robbins owes many of his career highlights to the prison system. But the 59-year-old Hollywood star's interest in criminal justice and the incarcerated extends far beyond his efforts to win critical approval or awards. Over a decade, Robbins has made a dramatic dent in reoffending rates among Californian prisoners taking part in a drama program that encourages hardened criminals to put on make-up and get in touch with their emotions. "We're not in there to make theater with them, we're not there to do plays with them, and we're certainly not there to turn them into actors," he says at a presentation on The Prison Project in downtown Los Angeles.

"We don't want them coming out and competing with us—particularly if they are good," he jokes. "But it does provide them with a path, a path that leads toward transformation." Crime rates in the US are at historic lows, yet incarcerations have soared since the 1970s, with 2.3 million American prisoners making up almost a quarter of the world's prison population. California has among the highest recidivism rates nationwide, yet in 2008 all public funding to prison arts programs was cut, despite evidence of their positive impact.

The Prison Project brings together rival gang members, convicted murderers and white supremacists in workshops where it is not taboo to express emotions, as it is elsewhere in prison. Groups of inmates sit in white make-up and masks, improvising scenes as stock characters from the 16th Century Italian Commedia

dell'Arte movement that represent happiness, sadness, fear or anger.

**'Rough crowd'**

"In prison, there's one appropriate emotion: anger. To survive you have your angry face on, you have to project an aura of invincibility and toughness," says Robbins. "You do not express fear or sadness, and the only happiness you express usually has to do with mocking someone, not true joy." Robbins says the workshops have a transformative effect on inmates, allowing them "a safe zone" to express feelings that had been buried, in some cases for decades. Before long, participants begin to realize that they can be the master of their emotions in real life as well as in drama workshops.

Born near Los Angeles to a devoutly Roman Catholic folk singer father, Robbins moved with his family to New York's Greenwich Village, where he began performing at the age of 12. The actor, who won an Oscar for 2003's "Mystic River," often muses that he might have ended up behind bars like several of his friends, but for the good fortune of having discovered theater. "The kids I ran with were a rough crowd. In order to prove yourself on the streets of New York you had to

be tough, or fast," Robbins says. "I learned how to be both." He moved to Los Angeles in his 20s and founded experimental collective The Actors' Gang in 1981 along with young artists from his college, including John Cusack. British actress Sabra Williams joined up and, in 2006, came up with the idea for The Prison Project, having been inspired by the benefits of work she had done in jails back home as a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company.

**'Hug a thug' liberals**

Dismissed initially as another band of well-meaning but essentially useless "hug a thug" liberals, Robbins and Williams have proved that their approach works. The return-to-

prison rate in California has been as high as 67.5 percent in recent years, according to a recent study by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. Encouraging preliminary data for inmates who completed The Prison Project, according to the department, showed that number dropped to 10.6 percent. And a 2015 study by Impact Justice showed an 89 percent drop in in-custody offenses for inmates participating in the Prison Project.

The program has expanded into 12 California prisons, two community re-entry programs and two juvenile detention centers and, thanks to relentless lobbying



This file photo shows actor Tim Robbins during the 2017 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah. — AFP

by Williams, funding for arts in prison has been reinstated. Last year, Governor Jerry Brown made \$6 million available for California's Arts in Corrections program and all 35 of the state's prisons now have some kind of publicly funded arts-up from exactly zero a decade ago. "If I were to tell you I had developed a pharmaceutical that could reduce recidivism to 10 percent and reduce in-prison infractions by 89 percent, you'd fast-track that drug and have it in every inmate's mouth," Robbins said. "This is a public safety issue. You can't keep people in prison forever, they're going to get out at some point. Wouldn't you want them coming out with better skills to deal with their emotions?" — AFP

“ In prison, there's one appropriate emotion: Anger ”

## Eminem reveals more collaborations on new album due Dec 15



Rap superstar Eminem's long-awaited album finally has a release date—December 15 — and it will feature an array of star collaborators. The top-selling rapper of all time took to social media Tuesday to reveal details of "Revival," his ninth studio album and his first in four years. Eminem last month put out the album's first single, "Walk on Water," a sharp shift in his sound with gospel-tinged vocals by Beyonce over a lonesome piano. The tracklist showed that the album also brings in other major stars from the pop world—Skylar Grey, Kehlani, Alicia Keys, Pink and Ed Sheeran—as well as upstate New York rockers X Ambassadors.

Grey, who performs on a song entitled "Tragic Endings," will be making her latest appearance with Eminem. As a little-known songwriter, she wrote one of Eminem's number-one hits—2010's "Love the Way You Lie" featuring Rihanna—and later appeared alongside Eminem on Dr Dre's track "I Need a Doctor." Eminem's new album only appears to include one other rapper and he picked one who is relatively obscure—Phresher, who has been making a buzz on the New York club scene. Phresher rejoiced at the massive new exposure he will likely enjoy through the album. —AFP

## Terry Crews sues agent over alleged groping incident

Terry Crews alleges talent agents at William Morris Endeavor are "knowingly permitted and encouraged to engage in sexually predatory conduct" in a lawsuit filed Tuesday against the agency and one of its top executives. Crews' complaint filed in Los Angeles Superior Court states the actor and former NFL player was subjected to sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender violence and emotional distress during and after a Feb. 2016 incident in which he says he was repeatedly groped by a talent executive.

The lawsuit recounts Crews' allegations that agent Adam Venit groped him at the Hollywood party last year and details the actor's efforts to see Venit disciplined after the incident. Crews complained about Venit to agency chairman Ari Emanuel, and the two men have retaliated against him for going public with his allegations, the lawsuit states. The lawsuit contends the agency knew Venit was predatory and condoned his behavior by failing to punish him for it. Venit and William Morris Endeavor did not respond to requests for comment Tuesday. — AP



## Dustin Hoffman grilled over sexual misconduct claims



A starry anniversary discussion of the film "Wag the Dog" turned testy Monday when moderator John Oliver confronted Dustin Hoffman about allegations of sexual harassment. Hoffman seemed blindsided and defensive by the line of questioning from the host of HBO's "Last Week Tonight." Hoffman explained the accusation was 40 years old. "I don't love that response either," Oliver said. Hoffman shot back: "What response do you want?" Hoffman maintained that he did nothing wrong. Actress Anna Graham Hunter has alleged that Hoffman groped her and made inappropriate comments when she was a 17-year-old intern on the set of the 1985 TV movie "Death of a Salesman."

Hoffman had said in an earlier statement that the incident "is not reflective of who I am," which Oliver seized on and called a "cop-out," adding: "It is reflective of who you were." Hoffman complained: "You've put me on display here." The back-and-forth came at a 20th-anniversary screening panel at the 92nd Street Y. Onstage in addition to Oliver and Hoffman were Robert De Niro, producer Jane Rosenthal and director Barry Levinson. "I get no pleasure from having this conversation," Oliver said. Referring to Hoffman, he added: "But you and I are not the victims here." — AP

## Helen Mirren to get Movies for Grownups career honor

AARP the Magazine says its Movies for Grownups Awards will be televised for the first time next year, when Helen Mirren will receive its lifetime achievement honors. The magazine announced yesterday that Mirren will accept the Career Achievement Award at a ceremony on Feb. 5, 2018. The 17th annual Movies for Grownups Awards will premiere on PBS on Feb. 23. Mirren says she is "greatly honored" by the award, adding that she considers film a high art form and "the ultimate mirror up to nature."

She joins previous Career Achievement honorees including Morgan Freeman, Susan Sarandon, Robert Redford and Sharon Stone. AARP established its Movies for Grownups series in 2002 to celebrate and recognize filmmaking for audiences with "a grown-up state of mind." — AP



# Review: Tonya Harding tale 'I, Tonya' sticks the landing

"I, Tonya" is the Tonya Harding film you never knew you wanted: an outrageously entertaining reappraisal of the Olympic figure skater who, in 1994, was involved in a scheme to injure her main rival, Nancy Kerrigan. Resurrecting Harding from the yellowed pages of '90s tabloids may seem about as necessary as a production of "Lorena Bobbitt on Ice." But yesterday's media spectacle has been very good for today's movies. It's no surprise by now that the tabloid caricatures sketched in a sensational news stories don't always do justice to the truth.

The more layered truths behind scandals of the past have made for some great documentaries (particularly last year's "O.J.: Made in America" and "Hot Coffee," the illuminating story behind the coffee that was "too hot") and a number of recent dramatic highlights, like Aaron Sorkin's upcoming "Molly's Game," about the woman callously dubbed the "poker princess" by the tabloids. Craig Gillespie's movie - an "I, Claudius" for less regal times - isn't a sober reassessment of Harding. It's a winking, rollicking dark comedy both empathetic and pugnacious. It reframes Harding's story as an American tragicomedy with some of the unapologetic, this-is-the-real-America sneer of "GoodFellas." "I, Tonya" is a peek behind a media circus that can't help going along for the ride, too.

**Abusive chain-smoking mother**

"I, Tonya," written by Steven Rogers, is introduced as: "Based on irony free, wildly contradictory, totally true interviews with Tonya Harding and Jeff Gillooly." It begins in a mock-documentary style with the characters - Margot Robbie as Harding, Sebastian Stan as Gillooly - giving present-day interviews recalling "the

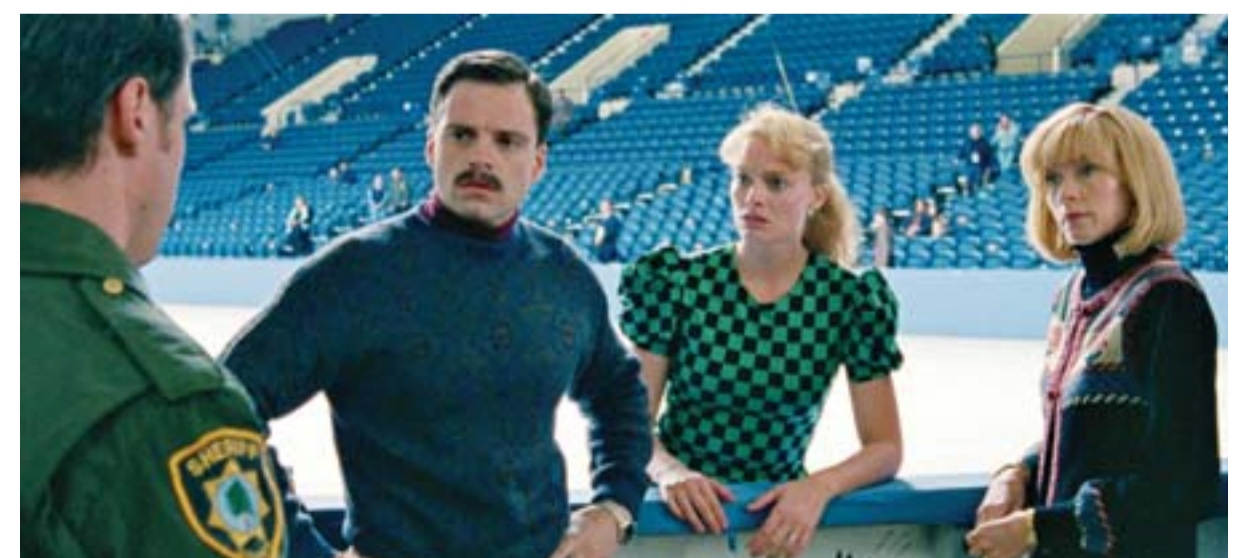
incident." Their stories sometimes converge, sometimes deviate and the movie - in a well-worn gimmick - playfully pauses at various points with characters turning to the camera to relay their perspective.

The approach sometimes spoils the fun of "I, Tonya" but Tatiana S. Riegel's editing is kinetic and the performances keep "I, Tonya" hurtling forward. Especially Allison Janney. She plays Harding's bitter, abusive chain-smoking mother, LaVona, and her performance is a monument of brutal, caustic wit. In the film's early scenes at their Portland, Oregon, hometown, she puts a 4-year-old Tonya on the ice and smirks as she skates loops around much older and more well-to-do competitors. But she's downright mean, too. In one scene, she refuses to let Tonya go to the bathroom. When Tonya pees herself, LaVona declares, "Skate wet!"

And that is, on the scale of things, not the worst of the abuse heaped on Harding. Once she finally flees her mother's cruelty, she moves in with Gillooly - a leap from the frying pan to the fire if ever there was one. Their romance is sweet at first, but he soon begins hitting her, especially as Harding's career blossoms. (She was the first US skater to land a triple axel.)

**'Trashy Tonya'**

"I, Tonya" casts its infamous protagonist, nicknamed "Trashy Tonya," as a working-class insurgent in a glitzy and prim sport. She's proudly "poor and redneck," jogging with bags of dog food hoisted on her back and performing skating routines set to ZZ Top. Gillespie ("Lars and the Real Girl," "Their Finest Hours") fills his movie with tasteless interiors and period scrunches, and scores it with a blaring rock 'n roll soundtrack that plays across Harding's on-ice triumphs and domestic



This image released by Neon shows Sebastian Stan as Jeff Gillooly, from left, Margot Robbie as Tonya Harding and Julianne Nicholson as Diane Rawlinson in a scene from "I, Tonya." — AP

poundings, alike. Robbie, in her finest performance yet, plays Harding as above all a survivor, smiling through pain and prejudice as she pursues her dream, only to be dragged down by those around her. She's a punching bag who should be pitied, but is instead made a punchline when the Coen brothers-esque scheme by Gillooly - likewise a victim of his associates - and bodyguard Shawn Eckhardt (Paul Walter Hauser) rapidly spins out of control.

"I, Tonya" has fun with the various versions of the

Kerrigan attack, treating it like "Rashomon" for idiots. But the main takeaway is a believable one: that Harding, just 23 at the time, deserved better than yet another beat-down meted out by a much-entertained public. "America," she says. "They want someone to love, but they want someone to hate." "I, Tonya," a Neon release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "pervasive language, violence, and some sexual content/nudity." Running time: 121 minutes. Three stars out of four. —AP

# French mourn death of 'French Elvis' Johnny Hallyday



A file photo taken on June 2, 2013 shows French singer Johnny Hallyday gesturing as he performs on stage in Bordeaux, southwestern France. — AP/AFP photos



This file photo taken on May 13, 1998 in Cannes shows French singer Johnny Hallyday and his wife Laetitia arriving for the opening ceremony of the 51st Cannes film festival.

Johnny Hallyday, whose death at 74 was announced by his wife and the French president yesterday was a rock and roll giant in his native France, surviving drug use, family strife and near-death episodes to strut the stage for more than fifty years. Known for his cowboy swagger, gravelly voice, abundant tattoos and leather biker jackets, the "French Elvis" had tens of millions of fans, above all in his native France, where he sold more records than any other singer. Hallyday died after a battle with lung cancer. His wife Laetitia phoned French President Emmanuel Macron at about 2 am (0100 GMT) with news that triggered an outpouring of grief from fans, politicians and celebrities.



This file photo taken on May 2, 1973 shows French rock star and actor Johnny Hallyday attending a dinner in Paris.



Fans of French singer and actor Johnny Hallyday and journalists gather near the house of Johnny Hallyday, in Marnes-la-Coquette.

"For more than 50 years, he was a vibrant icon," Macron's office said in a lengthy statement. Hallyday sold more than 100 million albums over the decades, mostly in the French-speaking world. He never quite conquered the United States, where he lived in Los Angeles in later years. "I write these words without believing them. But yet, it's true. My man is no longer with us," wife Laetitia said in a statement.

Police were posted outside his house west of Paris. Radio and TV stations provided wall-to-wall coverage of the rocker's life, with

reams of black-and-white film and song tapes tracing the history of a man regarded by many, non-fans included, as part of French national heritage. French-Canadian singer Celine Dion took to Twitter to mourn the loss of "a true icon". American singer Lenny Kravitz posted a tweet saying: "Repose en Paix (Rest in peace). Your soul is pure Rock and Roll." In Belgium, his father's birthplace, the underground railway authority said it would pipe his music into trains in tribute.

#### Rock star life

American newspaper USA Today once dubbed Hallyday "the greatest rock star you never heard of," but in France he was a monument known simply as "Johnny." He easily filled the 80,000-seat Stade de France stadium and sang to more than 750,000 at a free concert he held near the Eiffel Tower on France's Bastille Day national holiday in 2009. Hallyday's 2011 album "Jamais Seul" went straight to number one, selling 100,000 copies in a week, despite his reputation among younger generations as passe.

A star who forged his career recycling rock gems such as The Animals' version of "House of the Rising Sun" or Jimi Hendrix's "Hey Joe", Hallyday also starred in movies and adverts. He spoke good English, once claimed to have been born in Oklahoma and said his stage name Hallyday came from a doctor there who saved an acquaintance.

Born Jean-Philippe Leo Smet in Paris to

Huguette Clerc and Belgian-born Leon Smet in 1943, Johnny was raised by his aunt Helene Mar when his parents split up. He spent his early years on the road with his cousins in an acrobatic dance troupe, taking to the stage himself at 12 and singing country songs dressed as a child Davy Crockett.

He changed look after seeing Elvis Presley in "Loving You". His first single, "T'aimer Follement" (To Love You Madly), came at age 16. Wild stage antics sparked rioting at concerts. The Harley Davidson fan won a name for his hard-living self-destructive streak as well as his chart-topping albums.

Drugs, alcohol and a lot of dark-tobacco Gitanes cigarettes, the latter apparently adopted on the advice of rock icon Keith Richards, all helped to carve out the husky voice and craggy face that became a trademark before age too took its toll.

In 1965 he married pop singer Sylvie Vartan, with whom he had a son, David Hallyday. Their divorce in 1980 was quickly followed by four other marriages, including one lasting 62 days and two to the same woman, Adeline Blondiau. His fifth marriage was to Laetitia Boudou in 1996, with whom he adopted two daughters, Joy and Jade. After a back operation in 2008, Hallyday was put into an artificial coma to treat pain caused by an infection, which he had sought for weeks to keep at bay with ever larger amounts of alcohol. His son David followed him into the music world while daughter Laura Smet, by third wife Nathalie Baye, is an actress. — Reuters



In this file photo taken on May 08, 2009 French singer Johnny Hallyday performs on stage at the Zenith in Saint-Etienne, eastern France, during what he announced to be his last career tour, "Tour 66".



A file photograph taken on December 1, 1983 in L'Etang-La-Ville, shows French musician Johnny Hallyday (left) and actress Nathalie Baye looking at their child Laura after her birth on November 15 1983, at the American Hospital in Neuilly.



In this file photo taken on April 29, 1969 French rock singer Johnny Hallyday performs on stage of the Palais des Sports in Paris.



This file photo taken on September 14, 1982 shows French singer Johnny Hallyday performing at the Palais des Sports in Paris during his show "galactique".

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In this file photo taken on February 1, 1969 French singer Johnny Hallyday (left) and then his wife singer Sylvie Vartan attend the preview of the film "Krakatoa, a l'est de Java" directed by Bernard Kowalski (not pictured) with Austrian actor Maximilian Schell (right) at a Parisian cinema.



French fans Andre Thibert, left, and Andre Duval display a poster of Johnny Hallyday while walking to his house in Marnes-la-Coquette, outside Paris.

FIVE THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW ABOUT JOHNNY HALLYDAY

He was an enormous star in France, but Johnny Hallyday, the "French Elvis", whose death was announced by his wife Laeticia yesterday, was almost unknown in the English-speaking world. Here are five key things to know about the biggest rock star you have probably never heard of:

He wasn't called Johnny

Johnny Hallyday was born Jean-Philippe Smet in Paris in 1943, but as he said himself, "it wasn't a very rock 'n' roll name". So he changed it to Johnny Halliday after an American relative, Lee Halliday, who became a father figure for the singer when his own father abandoned him, and who first introduced him to rock. "He always called me Johnny because he couldn't say Jean-Philippe," the singer said. But when his stage name was misspelled "Hallyday" on his first record in 1960, the teenager had no option but to live with the "y". It was also from Halliday that Johnny learned his idiosyncratic English, leading some young French fans to initially assume he was American.

Johnny "The American"

Johnny Hallyday epitomized French postwar youth's love affair with all things American-infiltrating an older and official France that was snooty about American taste and still more wary of US domination. The rocker loved to tell how a French radio announcer smashed his first record on air, saying, "You will never hear that again." Hallyday longed so much to make it big in the United States that he recorded his third album, "Johnny Hallyday Sings America's Rockin' Hits", entirely in English in Nashville in 1962. He toured several US cities and even appeared on the "Ed Sullivan Show" in the hope of charming Americans with his cover versions of "Blueberry Hill" and "Be Bop A Lula". But it was not to be. Two further attempts failed until Hallyday's American dream finally came true in 1996 when 5,000 of his French fans flew the 9,000 kilometers (5,500 miles) to see him play Las Vegas. The star, who criss-crossed America on road trips on his Harley Davidson motorbike, moved his family to Los Angeles in 2010 where he lived down the road from Tom Hanks and Ben Affleck in Pacific Palisades. "I love the tranquility," he later said of LA. "There are stars everywhere, but when I go for a walk no one bothers me."

Sex, drugs and Gitanes

Hallyday was the ultimate musical survivor, adapting to every trend. He went from rocker to hippie, to prog rock intellectual with his rock opera "Hamlet", then back to basics with blues, country and western and French ballads, before a final flourish of Mad Max-style post-apocalyptic rock. The only constants were the untipped Gitanes cigarette that hung perennially from the corner of his mouth and the hard-partying "life of destruction" he led off stage. "For a long time I couldn't get out of bed in the morning without cocaine," he admitted in 1998, telling the French daily Le Monde that he also tried to drown his unhappy childhood in alcohol, opium and cannabis. His love life was equally rock 'n' roll, with a long list of lovers as well as five marriages. "I am a rocker and a rocker must live like a lone wolf," he once said.

You only live twice

Having survived a suicide bid, drug abuse and a veritable pile-up of car crashes, the state of Hallyday's health has long been a national obsession in France. The singer's millions of fans were plunged into premature mourning in 2009 after he reportedly "died" on an operating table from an infection picked up during earlier routine back surgery. France held its breath for weeks as the star was put into a medically induced coma, and the surgeon who carried out the initial operation was attacked in the street in Paris. Hallyday later laughed off his brush with death. "The first time I died I didn't like it so I came back," he said.

When Johnny met Jimi

Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin founder Jimmy Page and even Bob Dylan all played second fiddle to Hallyday at one time or another. Hendrix and his band backed up Hallyday during a tour of France in 1966 and the pair partied together, while Page worked for the French rocker as a session musician both in Paris and London.

Hallyday later had a huge hit with Hendrix's "Hey Joe". When Bob Dylan turned up in Paris in 1966 Johnny was at his side, ensuring the attention of the paparazzi and hordes of screaming fans. Hallyday himself grew up worshipping Edith Piaf but when the older woman tried to seduce him his ardour cooled somewhat, though he continued to sing her songs. — AFP



In this May 17, 1962, file photo, French singer Johnny Hallyday greets singer Ray Charles as he arrives at the Paris Orly Field in Paris.



A file photo taken on March 8, 1991 in Paris shows French singer David Hallyday (center) flanked by his parents French singers Johnny Hallyday (left) and Sylvie Vartan posing after his first concert in France, at the Zenith venue.



This file photo taken on July 4, 2016 shows French singer Johnny Hallyday and his wife Laeticia posing before Christian Dior 2016-2017 fall/winter Haute Couture collection fashion show in Paris.



This file photo taken on October 20, 1962 shows US pianist and singer-songwriter Fats Domino (left) being congratulated by French singer Johnny Hallyday (center) and US boxing champion Ray Sugar Robinson following his performance at the Palais des Sports in Paris.



This file photo taken in the 1960s shows French singer Johnny Hallyday posing in his car.



This Oct 22 1962 shows French pop singer, Johnny Hallyday, leaps into the air whilst rehearsing at the Olympia Theater in Paris.



A file photo taken on June 25, 1999 in Paris shows French president Jacques Chirac (right), his wife Bernadette and French singer Johnny Hallyday walking out of the Saint Honore d'Eylau church after the funeral of Simone Boute, singer Line Renaud's mother.



In this March 25 1996 file photo, French rock star Johnny Hallyday, 53, right, and Laeticia Boudou, 19, leave the Paris suburb, Neuilly-Sur-Seine's town hall after their civil wedding ceremony.



This file photo taken on September 29, 1976 shows French singer Johnny Hallyday performing at the Palais des Sports in Paris.



This file photo taken on June 11, 2003 shows French singer Johnny Hallyday performing at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris.



In this June 15, 1993, file photo, French rock star Johnny Hallyday performs during his 50th birthday concert at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris.

A file photograph taken on January 6, 2002, in Atar, central Mauritania, shows French musician Johnny Hallyday posing near his Nissan Terrano, during a Nissan-Dessoude team press conference at a bivouac during the rest day of the 24th Arras-Dakar Rally-Raid.



# Lifestyle

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2017

## Farewell Johnny Hallyday



This file photo taken on December 15, 2003 shows French singer Johnny Hallyday performing on stage in Paris. France's best-known rock star Johnny Hallyday has died aged 74 after a battle with lung cancer, his wife Laetitia told AFP yesterday. — AFP

# Hedonist hounds escape the dog's life on India's mean streets

Velvet beds, a relaxing spa, 24-hour medical care and non-alcoholic beers imported from Belgium: the life of a pampered pooch in India would leave many humans envious. Critterati, which claims to be South Asia's first luxury hotel for dogs, offers suites at up to \$70 a night for pets whose "parents" will spare no expense to indulge their pride and joy. A world away from the daily struggle to survive for India's estimated 30 million strays, breeds such as St Bernards, Labradors and Lhasa Apsos can now enjoy the last word in canine coddling.

Chief executive Deepak Chawla opened Critterati in the New Delhi satellite city of Gurgaon to offer the wealthy an alternative to more down-at-heel facilities in India. "No decent dog owner would want his dog to stay in those places," he said.

The facility is riding a wave of growing love for pets as the Asian giant's economy hits new heights. The number of household dogs in India has risen from two million in 2002 to an estimated 15 million in 2016 — and is forecast to hit 26 million by 2021.

The top-of-the range Critterati suite offers a giant bed with velvet headboard, television and private dog-flap leading onto a balcony. There is a swimming pool, a spa with ayurvedic massage oils and a vet on 24-hour call, while a medical unit with operating theatre is being built. A dog cafe serves rice and chicken and the menu also features muffins, pancakes and ice-cream-with bacon and vanilla a particular favorite—all washed down with non-alcoholic dog beer from Belgium.



In this photograph Deepak Chawla, owner and chief executive officer (CEO) of luxury dog hotel Critterati, speaks with an AFP reporter during an interview in Gurgaon. — AFP photos

### Luxury potty break

Chawla says in standard kennels animals can be left alone for long hours. "Here things are quite different," he declared. "It starts from 7.00am with potty breaks, then breakfast, then again a potty break, then play sessions for around two hours, then swimming sessions, then again play sessions, plus time in the cafe." Unlike the streetwise hounds waiting outside for scraps, Critterati clients have their every need met and their owners—many of whom refer

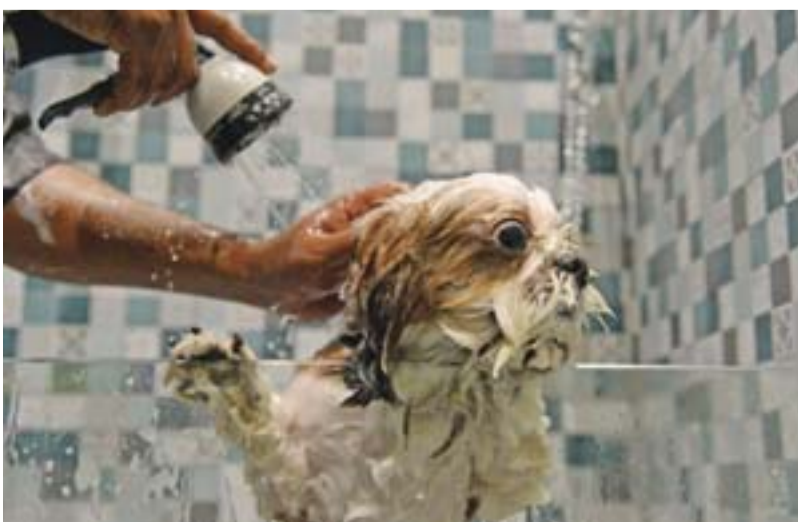
to themselves as "parents"—think it is money well spent. Ashish Arora, a hotel chain executive, says he has no qualms about indulging Rubo the Labrador. "He loves coconut water and vitamin water. He tells me he wants to eat chicken, so he eats it every day," said Arora. "I keep spending quite a bit. I don't mind, it is like you are spending on a child." Chawla says his guests are worth the best. "An animal is more loyal than human beings, they will do anything for us so they deserve it." — AFP



Dogs relax at the luxury dog hotel Critterati.



A dog bathes in a swimming pool.



An employee bathes a dog at the luxury dog hotel Critterati.



Ashish Arora holds his dog Rubo as he speaks with an AFP reporter at the luxury dog hotel Critterati.



A vet inspects a dog at the luxury dog hotel Critterati.