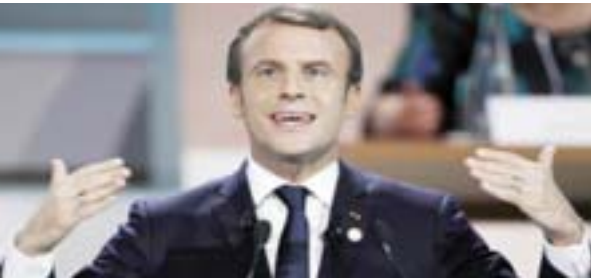


4 Gulf defense, aerospace exhibition boosts Kuwait leadership vision



11 Macron warns world losing battle against climate change



31 US filmmakers in Kuwait to make documentary on Rowe



14 Kuwaitis, residents exempt from Russia visa to attend World Cup



New Cabinet members take oath of office before Amir

Sheikh Sabah calls on ministers to work as one team



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives, in the presence of HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and his newly sworn-in Cabinet members at the Amiri Airport yesterday. — KUNA

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at the Amiri Airport yesterday, in the presence of HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, who presented to the Amir his government's ministers who took oath before the Amir on the occasion of their appointment in their new posts.

HH the Amir delivered a speech on the occasion, in which he welcomed and congratulated the new members of the Cabinet, appreciating their acceptance to

take part in the new lineup. Sheikh Sabah welcomed the tremendous efforts exerted by the prime minister in the formation of the Cabinet, hailing at the same time efforts of the previous ministers who had worked tirelessly in carrying out the responsibilities entrusted upon them, wishing them all the best.

The Amir added that the new government formation comes amidst critical internal and external challenges that require wisdom and farsightedness to deal with, in addition to doubling efforts in order to address such critical circumstances for the best interests of the

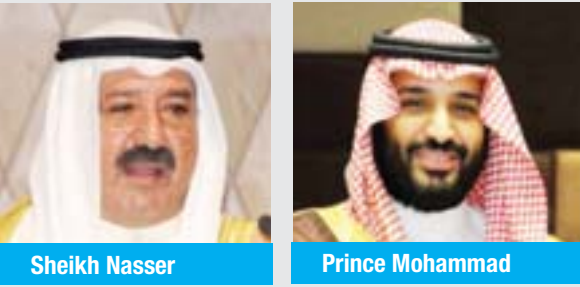
homeland and its people. He also called on the new ministers to work as a one team based on cooperation, confidence and mutual respect between the legislative and executive branches, saying he was fully confident that the ministers will be able to achieve best interests of the dear homeland and citizens, wishing peace, stability and prosperity to prevail.

The prime minister responded to HH the Amir's speech by thanking him for the confidence entrusted upon himself and the rest of the government members, especially amidst these critical circumstances, express-

ing his appreciation. "We will work hard to be fit for it," Sheikh Jaber vowed. The premier asserted that such challenges and dangers facing the region require that efforts be doubled in order to address such challenges in order to achieve the ambitions of the dear homeland and its people. He also expressed commitment to work tirelessly with his colleagues to fulfill their oath, thanks to the noble directives of the Amir, saying that the government will work positively with the National Assembly to achieve the sought-after ambitions. — KUNA

Prince Mohammad congratulates Sheikh Nasser

KUWAIT: Kuwait's First Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah received Monday a phone call from Saudi Crown Prince and Defense Minister Mohammad bin Salman to congratulate him on assuming his new post. Prince Mohammad wished Sheikh Nasser best of luck in the service of Kuwait to achieve prosperity and advancement, and to boost cooperation between the two countries, the Office of the Minister of Defense



said in a statement. Prince Mohammad, who invited Sheikh Nasser to visit Saudi Arabia, wished Kuwait's leadership, government and people enjoy further development and security, it added. Sheikh Nasser thanked Prince Mohammad and prayed to Allah the Almighty to bestow protection upon Saudi Arabia and its people.

Kuwait keen to clamp down on human trafficking

KUWAIT: Kuwait maintains a close rapport with international organizations involved in the fight against human trafficking, a Kuwaiti diplomat said yesterday. Kuwait's assistant foreign minister of development affairs Nasser Al-Sabeh was addressing a seminar on the country's efforts to combat human trafficking, where he spoke of the foreign ministry's plan to bring the country's well-chronicled contributions to humanitarian causes into the limelight.

He recalled that Kuwait had actively participated in the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly in September,



KUWAIT: Kuwait's assistant foreign minister for development affairs Nasser Al-Sabeh speaks during the seminar yesterday. — KUNA

where a UN plan to rid the world of human trafficking was promulgated, underlining the gravity of the scourge.

Continued on Page 11

Riyadh to raise energy prices, compensate Saudi families

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia decided yesterday to hike energy prices while paying compensation to Saudi families, as the world's top oil exporter seeks new revenue sources. The cabinet, in a session chaired by King Salman, approved plans to "reform" electricity and fuel charges, as part of measures to counter lower oil prices on the world market, the official news agency SPA reported. In a first, the government also approved cash transfers to some 3.7 million Saudi families, covering 13 million of the country's 20-million population, to compensate them for the hike.

Expatriates working and living in the kingdom have been excluded from the cash transfer program which will start next week. The electricity authority has announced minor price increases from early next year. The energy ministry said new prices for petrol, diesel and aviation fuel will be applied in the first quarter of 2018, but without giving details on the planned increases. The hikes are the second wave of Saudi subsidy cuts.

The kingdom, which pumps around 10 million barrels per day of oil, has embarked on a series of reforms and price hikes since oil revenues plummeted in mid-2014. Saudi Arabia has posted huge deficits in the past three fiscal years, totaling over \$200 billion, and withdrawn another \$250 billion from its fiscal reserves. — AFP

Chess, therapy for ex-militants at Syria rehab

MAREA, Syria: In a rehabilitation center in northern Syria, young men huddle over an innocuous game of chess and some cigarettes - activities they once brutally suppressed as Islamic State group militants. Based in the rebel-held town of Marea, the Syrian Centre for Countering Extremist Ideology is home to around 100 onetime IS fighters from Syria, the Middle East and even Europe. "I used to dream of establishing an Islamic state... but now, we take courses that clear up what's wrong with what we once believed," 23-year-old Mohammad Haj Ahmad says.

Ahmad hails from Raqqa, the northern city that served as the de facto capital of a now-collapsed militant "caliphate" sprawling across Syria and Iraq. He joined IS in 2014 and took part in one of its most gruesome battles at Tabqa airport near Raqa, where militants executed more than 200 army troops. "I was completely convinced by their slogans about jihad, that they were the only ones implementing religion correctly, and that everyone else was an infidel and an apostate," he tells AFP. "My father was scared I'd be convinced to blow myself up."

Now, Ahmad and fellow ex-militants are undergoing intensive rehabilitation courses in Marea aiming to wash away extremist habits so they can ultimately reintegrate into society. Ahmad doesn't know what he will



MAREA, Syria: Syrian men attend a lecture at the Syrian Centre for Countering Extremist Ideology in this town in Aleppo district on Nov 30, 2017. — AFP

do once he is cleared by rebel authorities to leave the center. "Maybe I'll start a business, continue my studies, or go to Europe," he shrugs.

The two-storey center in Marea opened on October 27. "We founded the center because of the many fighters coming to northern parts of Aleppo province after the collapse of IS, which created a security problem," says its head, Hussein Nasser. Some lodgers checked in voluntarily, while others are undergoing therapy as part of the jail sentence dished out by rebel authorities for joining IS. They are split into three categories: Short-

term IS fighters, those who fought heavily or for an extended period and foreigners from Tunisians to Uzbeks.

Treatment lasts up to six months, which can be renewed, Nasser says. The administrators, doctors, and activists who run the center coordinate closely with rebel authorities, particularly the court system. "The center's lecturers provide an assessment to relevant judicial authorities, who decide if the person can be integrated into society or not," Nasser adds.

Continued on Page 11

Major challenges ahead for new Cabinet: Prime Minister

‘Economic reform and remedying structural imbalances is inevitable’



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah takes oath before His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday. — KUNA



First Deputy Premier and Defense Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.



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



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior retired Lieutenant-General Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: The key challenge for the new cabinet to overcome, as identified by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, is protecting Kuwait against perils of sectarian strife, and maintaining national unity, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah told the cabinet's first session yesterday.

In a statement to the session which took place after the new ministers were sworn in in front of His Highness the Amir, His Highness Sheikh Jaber stressed the prime importance of preserving and enhancing national unity as the pillar, shield and fence safeguarding the domestic front.

This requires the utter rejection of any sectarian or tribal line-up since “We are all for Kuwait and Kuwait is for us all,” Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Khaled Al-Saleh said after the session. His Highness the Amir stressed these challenges in an address to the opening of the Second Term of the National Assembly's 15th Legislative Term. Maintaining Kuwait's security and stability has always to be the top concern of everyone, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak said, referring to the perilous repercussions and implications of the changes and developments sweeping the region, and the world at large, prompting top alertness and caution.

No doubt, security is realized through achieving the rule of law, applying it to all, with no distinction, as well as upholding the power of the judiciary, and enforcing principles of justice and equality. The concept of security includes - in addition to fighting and exterminating terrorism - achieving social security, and providing all bases of safety for people, now and in the future.

Economic reform

Inevitability of economic reform, and remedying structural imbalances resulting from relying on one non-renewable source, namely oil, offer the second challenge

facing the new cabinet only worn in a day earlier, His Highness the Prime Minister said. Economic reform requires diversification of sources of income, enhancing non-petroleum revenues, pushing economic reform rates higher, improving the climate of investment and localizing distinguished foreign capital, besides bettering business environment to provide further job opportunities.

Improving planning for development, promoting government performance, supporting prerequisites of official administration through reducing duration of procedure, are further requirements. Others are modernizing management methods, reinforcing sound institutional work and cooperation with the control bodies to unravel shortages and imbalances, for a remedy and avoiding repetition. Moreover, economic reform needs discipline of the state's finances, bolstering rationalization and curbing losses, and in the meantime preserving the basis of dignified living and stability for the Kuwaiti people, both at present and in the future. Closely related to this is the necessity of protecting public funds by all means, and activating the fight against corruption to exterminate it, and to dry up its sources, besides crystalizing integrity, transparency and honesty through all official procedures.

A key commitment is achieving “Kuwait 2035” vision, with all its vital content and ambitious development plans, His Highness the Prime Minister said. This prompts harder work to complete development of the infrastructure, and public services; remedying education - maintaining the firm Islamic values and well-established constants- and promoting health and other services.

“I would like to point out the necessity of reviewing the agenda of the former government which I submitted to the National Assembly during this legislative chapter, to check if it copes with the views to face the outstanding challenges, and to meet the needs of the approved development plan,” His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak said.

National commitment

The last challenge His Highness the Amir indicated was emending the path of parliamentary work as a national commitment, that can never be postponed, for “maintaining, and consolidating our national gains,” His Highness the Prime Minister said.

Putting things right could be realized through serious commitment to the rulings of the Constitutional Court, the National Assembly's bylaw, the Court's explanatory notes on parliamentary work, commitment by each power to its domains with no concession of such authority whatsoever, in line with their responsibilities, as well as reaffirming independence, according to Article 50 of the Constitution. His Highness the Premier stressed that the government is always extending hand in cooperation with the National Assembly.

This is achieved through a work method that allows a

‘constitutional’ compromise formula for joint work mechanisms to realize the aspired fruitful cooperation achievements. Amid the widespread of misuse of social media by some people under the claim of freedom of expression, to incite sedition, enmity, and hatred, as well as stirring the public opinion in a way that threatens social security and the society's values and morals, His Highness the Amir has called for speeding up efforts to ‘legally’ curb this, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak said.

This will be realized through appropriate mechanisms that preserve the values and constants of the society, protecting it against perils of sedition. Concluding the statement, His Highness the premier told the ministers that the Kuwaiti people are looking forward to their efforts and work to push a head progress and prosperity for the dear nation.

Sharing the burdens

At the onset of the statement to the first session of the newly formed cabinet, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak highly appreciated His Highness the Amir's assignment to the cabinet, praying Allah Almighty to help them fulfill their duty as should be.

His Highness the Premier thanked the ministers for accepting to share him the “burdens of this stage our nation is going through, with its challenges and commitments that require hard efforts and sacrifices and joint work, inspired by ‘Kuwait's interests, glory and prosperity.’”

His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak also appreciated the fruitful efforts by the last cabinet, which led to remarkable achievements for serving the nation and the people. “Based on our responsibility toward our nation and His Highness the Amir's dear confidence in us, we look forward to fulfilling the expectations of the (Kuwaiti) citizens and their hopes in a brighter future, so that Kuwait will remain - as it has always been-an oasis of security and safety, a state of law, and institutions,” His Highness the Premier told the session.

In this way “we will be up to the responsibility His Highness the Amir has vested in us. This requires more efforts and sacrifices to combat the massive challenges and the outstanding files, combining good planning with assiduous and sincere work for efficient implementation and pursue of development.” Following the statement, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, on behalf of fellow ministers, highly praised the confidence of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Premier in the new cabinet. Sheikh Nasser reiterated will and determination to work seriously and lavish utmost efforts to serve the nation and the citizens and achieve glory and prosperity for Kuwait. Meanwhile, the cabinet reviewed His Highness the Amir's latter appreciating the hard efforts by the different ministries and bodies for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) 38th Summit Kuwait hosted recently. — KUNA



Minister of Finance Dr Nayef Falah Mubarak Al-Hajraf.



Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Sabeeh Bararak Al-Sabeeh.



Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Nasser Abdullah Al-Roudhan.



Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Khaled Al-Saleh.



Minister of Health Dr Basel Hmoud Hamad Al-Sabah.



State Minister for Housing Affairs and State Minister for Services Affairs Dr Jenan Mohsen Hasan Ramadan Boushehri.



Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Hamed Mohammad Al-Azmi.



Minister of Information Mohammad Naser Al-Jabri.



Minister of Public Works and State Minister for Municipality Affairs Husam Abdullah Al-Roumi.



State Minister for National Assembly Affairs Adel Musaedi Al-Jarallah Al-Kharafi.



Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Adviser Dr Fahd Mohammad Mohsen Al-Afasi.



Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Shbib Al-Rasheed.

Local

Amir in Istanbul to attend Organization of Islamic Cooperation's urgent summit

US Jerusalem decision highlights urgent summit

ISTANBUL: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah arrived in Istanbul yesterday to attend the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) urgent summit. Heading Kuwait's delegation to the meeting, His Highness the Amir was received upon his arrival at the airport by senior Turkish officials, along with Kuwait's Ambassador to Turkey Ghassan Al-Zuwawie and its Consul General Mohammad Al-Mohammad.

Upon their departure from Kuwait, His Highness the Amir and the accompanying delegation were seen off at Kuwait international airport by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem, senior Sheikhs, Deputy Chief of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad

Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad, Deputy Minister of the Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, senior officials of the State, and the top brass at the police, army, KNG, and Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD).

His Highness the Amir's delegation includes Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh

Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, head of His Highness the Amir's office Ahmad Al-Fahad, Amiri Diwan Advisor Mohammad Abulhassan, Amiri Diwan head of protocols Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Head of Media and Culture at the Amiri Diwan Yousef Al-Roumi, Chief of Political and Economic Affairs at the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Fawaz Saud Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah, in addition to senior Amiri Diwan and Foreign Ministry officials.

The OIC will hold its urgent summit today to discuss the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel as well as the step to move the American embassy to the holy city. Last Saturday in Cairo, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled stressed that Kuwait will not compromise went the issue of supporting the Palestinians is at stake. He called on the United States to back down from the decision it has taken and remain neutral on the issue of the Mideast peace process.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said it was important to implement Arab summit resolutions concerning Jerusalem's status, affirming that the US decision was against international laws and norms. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan deemed the decision taken by his US counterpart Donald Trump as void from any legitimacy, saying that the OIC will showcase to Trump that his decision was wrong. Erdogan had contacted several regional and world leaders to discuss the recent development. Trump's decision has been met by protests worldwide especially in Arab and Muslim states. —KUNA



Trump decision met by protests worldwide



ISTANBUL: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is welcomed by Kuwait's Ambassador to Turkey Ghassan Al-Zuwawie upon his arrival to Istanbul. — KUNA

Message of love from French Ambassador to his friends before leaving Kuwait

Dear Kuwaiti friends, or rather, I should say "Dear Kuwait."

I address this message to Kuwait and my friends and to the meetings and gatherings I had with them, as well as the work we accomplished together in four years and three months, which allowed me to discover an extraordinary country in the Arab world that I came to know quite well. I arrived from Paris on the 15th September 2013 and, literally, I did not know any person here at that time. My diplomatic life has allowed me to visit your country only once about ten years ago and it was for a short visit. I was a student in 1990 when, just like everybody else, I was shocked with the invasion of Kuwait and, seven months later, I was happy to know that Kuwait was liberated. In the courses I attended in preparation for the competition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in France, Kuwait was often mentioned as an example in the administrative work we had to prepare and submit in the field of international relations and law enforcement. Directly after liberation, a friend of mine, a journalist who was living with me in Cairo at the time, visited Kuwait upon an invitation from Kuwaiti authorities to witness the looting and robbery that Saddam Hussein's forces had carried out. He returned with a live testimony that I kept all these years among my personal belongings without ever imagining that one day I would be with you during my term of office, which is about to end in a few days.

This message of friendship, or rather, this message of love, is my testimony on the years I spent with you: a message of love to those friends I met: young and old, women and men, students, artists, businessmen, politicians, ministers, members of the National Assembly and human rights defenders. During my stay in your country, I highly appreciated the spirit of debate that prevails, whether in offices, in press or through social networks. Democracy in your country is not an empty word, but a reality, and your diplomacy is a diplomacy of peace, just like diplomacy of France. Kuwait owes this to its leaders, in particular to His Highness the Amir, who is a true example of wisdom to the region as a whole and a "humanitarian leader" for the entire world.

The family spirit, which I treasure the most, prevails in Kuwait; everyone knows each other and exchanges visits in joyful occasions, such as weddings, and in times of grief at the death of any person. Kuwait is a large family in itself, with a very important trade heritage that is part of the country's fundamentals, in addition to its cultural dimension, with photographers, painters and musicians. I also learned the art of "selfies" and I did notice how distinguished the bloggers are on social networking sites and the activists in the fashion world. Your country is one of the most modern countries in the Arab and the entire world!

I am leaving behind in Kuwait several friends with whom I spent quality times chatting, exchanging conversations and dreaming about a better future for the region and peace in the world. Of course, as always, HH. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, from the very moment His Highness received me at

Bayan Palace, when I visited to deliver my credentials on the 4th November 2013, and while speaking in Arabic with me in a very nice and friendly manner, he just said to me gently and humorously: "Welcome in your second home!"

His Highness was extremely right! It took me mere few hours after my arrival on the evening of the 15th September 2013 to feel at home. I knew the Gulf States by then because I worked as the General Consul in Jeddah for many years. I also knew Lebanon, Syria and Palestine, as much as I knew Iran and its language, in addition to my knowledge of the Arabic language and the history of this region of the world. What I did not know is that all this, mixed in a high-speed mixer, would make me a friend to many Kuwaitis whom I found enjoying all the above characteristics: all except for the language. I had to get used to the local dialect and the use of feminine and masculine, which I mistook all the time. There was a friend who used to address me at the beginning of my stay saying "Shlonek" (How are you?), yet I always thought he was addressing the lady behind me, but then I found out that when he spoke to her he used "Shlonech" instead. Here I figured that I obviously have a lot of work on this subject or I shall look stupid in my conversations!

Now that we have become friends, I allow myself to reveal some secrets and perhaps give some advice, in a spirit of humor of course! Please, dear Kuwaitis: Travel less because it is almost impossible for me to know if I can see you at the end of the week except by following up your accounts on Instagram. Stop publishing Snapchat because whenever I am about to open this app the story disappears. Guys, spend less time at the gym and more time at the French Institute to get a certificate in French! Also, an advice from a friend about visas: do not submit your requests on Monday the 12th while you would like to travel on Sunday the 11th! You also shall have to find a solution to WhatsApp: this "national epidemic" with the "Selfie" pictures, which hit me as well, since I consult my messages by my right hand while dipping a "darabeel" into a glass of hot milk with saffron with my left hand; frankly, I cannot do them at the same time without ending up dipping my iPhone in the milk instead of the biscuits!

Kuwait has been a school for me: a school of working with excellent professionals at all levels, not to mention in foreign affairs and other ministries, as well as with the Amiri Diwan. Moreover, in the private sector, I learnt perseverance, patience and taking enough time to think, in addition to friendship in work relations and the desire to share with my country, France, which loves you so much in return.

In the last few weeks, I have visited many "diwaneyas" and offices that I have visited during my stay to say goodbye to my friends. I met some of you personally to pay tribute. I also sent messages on WhatsApp and made some phone calls ... to bid farewell to you all and confirm that I shall see you again real soon. As our dear poet Sheikhha Suad Al-Sabah says with great skill, "We Remain". I shall always enjoy seeing you again and I shall definitely accept all future invitation to 'majbus' dish on Tuesday or to share a dish of 'Naqr Fish', because, as per the old saying, "He who eats the eye of Naqr shall never leave". I shall come back!

Christian Nakhle
Ambassador of France to the State of Kuwait



Christian Nakhle

Kuwait Times

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Gulf Defense and Aerospace Exhibition, Conference opens

Event assists in realizing the Kuwait Vision 2035

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Over 130 companies from 20 countries are participating in the Gulf Defense and Aerospace Exhibition and Conference at Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref from Dec 12-14, 2017. Justin Webb, President of TNT Productions, said all four editions of this major event have been held in Kuwait. "This is the largest of the four editions, and has grown by over 30 percent from the previous edition," he said during the opening ceremony.

The exhibition strives to assist in realizing the Kuwait Vision 2035 to develop Kuwait into a business, trade and commercial hub. "Bringing these international companies helps achieve this goal. The event attracts most of the world's leading private defense manufacturers who will meet members of the GCC and other regional armed forces and help in transforming Kuwait into modern financial, business and trade center," Webb said.

In addition to commercial displays of latest cutting-edge defense technologies, the exhibition also features a large display of defense technologies that are currently in use by the ministry of defense. Such exhibitions are very transparent and everyone can see the kind of products that the ministry of defense is trying to acquire to keep people safe," explained Webb.

Brig Gen Ali Al-Shanfa, Assistant Chief of Staff of the Supply Department, noted that part of the objective of this large display is to showcase to the people of Kuwait that the government has invested and is still investing in the world's most modern defense technologies. "Most defense exhibitions take place in Turkey or Dubai, and today we have it in Kuwait. Kuwait is always participating in any event that aims for peace and defense. Some of the commercial companies participating in this year's event are

worldwide industry leaders, including Eurofighter Typhoon, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon Company, MBAD Missile Systems, Textron Systems Corporation, Lurssen Shipbuilding, Aselsan, and many others," he pointed out.

"Furthermore, we hope that young Kuwaitis who are considering their future careers will be able to visit the expo and may decide to join the Kuwait Armed Forces, as it's a highly professional organization, and they would be training and using the most modern defense equipment. They will also have the opportunity to speak directly to members of the army who are experts in using these equipment, and who will encourage them to join the army," concluded Shanfa.

International leading defense manufacturers are participating in this event from Kuwait, US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Bulgaria, China, Canada, Denmark, Kazakhstan, Korea, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey, which has a large pavilion.

The interior ministry is participating in this expo. "The ministry is displaying some of the equipment that we are using. This event is an opportunity for experts in the field to view our machines and equipment and exchange experiences. Having all these participants in one place saves effort and time to travel to other places. This event also serves the economy of Kuwait, and brings various public institutions together in one place to exchange their experiences. We are here to strengthen national security. Our officials will visit the expo during these three days to check their needs, based on which they can place orders," said Interior Ministry Undersecretary Maj Gen Mahmoud Al-Dossari. The exhibition's opening hours 10:00 am to 5:00 pm on Wednesday and 10:00 am to 3:00 pm on Thursday.



KUWAIT: Officials inaugurate the Gulf Defense and Aerospace Exhibition and Conference yesterday. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



A visitor looks at shotguns on display at the exhibition.



A model of a Eurofighter Typhoon jet on display at the exhibition.

History of archaeological excavations in Kuwait

KUWAIT: Throughout the years, foreign archaeological missions in Kuwait have contributed significantly to the discovery of several historic civilizations, some of which date back more than 7,000 years. The story of archaeological excavations in Kuwait dates back to 1957, before the independence of Kuwait, when the British administrator at the time invited the Danish exploration mission in Failaka Island, which is located 20 km from Kuwait City.

This was followed by the issuance of a law regulating archaeological work in 1960, the first in the Gulf region, and the later establishment of Kuwait National Council for Culture Arts and Letters (NCAAL) in 2004.

Since its conception, NCAAL has signed several coop-

eration agreements in the field with international academic bodies like the Slovak Academy of Sciences, the French Institute for the Near East, University of London, Durham University and University of Warsaw, amongst others.

NCAAL also has its own department of antiquities and museums, which is currently cooperating with a Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) counterpart on a project on the island of Failaka, where homes and a mosque dating back to the late Islamic period have been discovered.

The above-mentioned excavation missions are predominantly focused on two areas, namely the island of Failaka and the Al-Sabbiyah area, north of the Kuwait Bay. On Failaka, a whole city inhabited by the Dilmun civilization was unearthed by a joint team of French and Kuwaiti archaeologists. The civilization was around during the Bronze Age, around 2,000 BC.

The Dilmuns thrived between Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq) across the eastern regions of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, up until the northernmost tip of the United Arab Emirates. The same team is also responsible, along with a team of Greek archaeologists, for the discovery of a Hellenic castle, also on Failaka, which dates back between 323 and 146 BC.

Two churches and a village, inhabited by Christians pre-Islam, were also discovered on the island along with kitchen utensils made from pottery. On the other hand, an Kuwaiti-Italian team are carrying out the excavation of an 800m area, where buildings dating back to the early and mid-Islamic periods have been found. —KUNA



Italian excavations' team in Failaka.



A statue believed to be of ancient Persian king Mithridates II found in Failaka.



A historic lamp unearthed in Kuwait.



An ancient sculpture unearthed in Kuwait.

Local

Awqaf ministry to lay off 2,032 employees in massive budget cut

MPs meet to discuss jailed comrades' status

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: In a bid to lower expenses, the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs plans to lay off 2,032 employees working on assignment basis in various sectors, especially in the Quran affairs sector which currently employs 2,390 citizens and expatriates. The ministry's central assignment committee addressed the Assistant Undersecretary for Quran and Islamic Studies Dr Waleed Al-Shuaib and informed him that the second phase of reduction should include at least 15 percent of assignees and demanded a list of them by December 15, 2017. The committee explained that only ten out of 68 assignees working at Shuaib's office, 173 out of 1,153 in the Quran affairs department, 133 out of 888 in the Islamic studies department, eight out of 56 at the family development department and 34 out of 225 working at 'Al-Seraj Al-Muneer' department will be able to keep their jobs.

Expats replaced

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education (MOE) is currently coordinating with the Civil Service Commission (CSC) to replace expatriate social workers with citizens,

Undersecretary Dr Hisham Al-Athari said yesterday. In other news, CSC yesterday approved proposed incentives for members of the judiciary and designated public prosecutors assigned by the Supreme Judicial Council to perform extra tasks. Designees in technical offices, those working in Kuwait institute for judicial studies, judicial inspec-



KD 25 million not enough for EPA

tion and judges will receive KD 500-600 monthly. In the meantime, designees in the public debts protection apparatus will receive KD 1,000-1,250 monthly.

Jailed MPs

Several lawmakers met yesterday at MP Mohammad Al-Mutairi's office to discuss the

issue of the detainees over charges of breaking into the National Assembly building. Mutairi is one of three lawmakers jailed in the case, along with Waleed Al-Tabtabae and Jamaan Al-Harbash. MP Adel Al-Damkhi said that the meeting came in consolidation with the detainees and to listen to briefings from the legal team following up the case in courts. He added that another meeting will be held today at MP Tabtabae's diwan, noting that a message was sent to the speaker asking him and the parliament to act. Damkhi said that another meeting will be held next Monday at MP Harbash's office to discuss the issue regarding the new cabinet formation. The list of MPs who attended the meeting includes Mohammed Hayef, Thamer Al-Suwait, Omar Al-Tabtabae, Al-Humaidi Al-Subai'e, Abdul Wahab Al-Babtain, Osama Al-Shaheen, Damkhi, Abdullah Fahhad, Khaled Al-OTAibi, Nayef Al-Merdas, Abdul Kareem Al-Kandary and Mohammed Al-Dallal.

Not enough

Environment Public Authority (EPA) Director Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah said that the recently approved



authority budget was enough for all the duties and tasks stated in the environment law, but noted that the current budget of KD 25 million will not be enough in the future to perform all EPA duties, and therefore needs to be increased. On a different concern, Sheikh Abdullah stressed that the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) will have to cooperate on protecting fish reserves and national waters.

'Co-op' brand

The Union of Consumer Co-operative

Societies (UCCS) Secretary Ahmad Al-Mutairi said that a directive was distributed to various co-ops around Kuwait on providing 'Co-op' brand onions to help control onion prices in local markets. Mutairi added that the union has set the price of selling five kilos of Turkish onion to co-ops at KD 0.910, allowing them to sell the same to consumers at a KD 1 price. He added that co-ops wishing to purchase onions will have to request their purchases directly from the union and that they should respect the prices set for sale to consumers. Mutairi urged co-ops to shelve 'Co-op' brand products in outstanding places to encourage their sale.

KIB welcomes students for 'Day as a Banker' initiative

KUWAIT: Following the great success of its previous 'Day as a Banker' initiatives which saw the bank host students from various schools across Kuwait, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently welcomed students from the Nasiba Bint Kaab Middle School for Girls at its Head Office Branch. This initiative aimed at introducing students to the world of banking and the many different roles and functions within a bank.

The 'Day as a Banker' initiative provided students with a unique opportunity to spend an entire day at a branch and experience firsthand the life of a banker, by allowing them to carry out several roles and tasks within the branch, including serving as tellers and greeters. During the visit, KIB staff provided students with a

basic overview of the fundamentals of Islamic banking and presented them with the chance to practically apply their newly-learned saving skills.

Speaking about this visit, Corporate Communications Team Leader at KIB, Fahad Al-Sarhan, commented: "KIB is keen on organizing numerous and varied initiatives that engage directly with the local community's youth, aiming at promoting greater financial literacy and enhanced economic awareness amongst the younger generations. Through this initiative, we aim at providing students with an educational experience that develops their financial knowledge, taps into their potential, and encourages them to pursue a career in the banking sector."

Throughout the year, KIB organizes several visits to schools and hosts students from areas all over Kuwait. In doing so, the Bank hopes to build a more financially-conscious future generation. One of the first-of-its-kind programs, KIB's financial literacy program aims at promoting economic awareness across all segments of the local community. Focusing primarily on youth, the program seeks to instill basic values of saving and good money management.



ABK sponsors 'The Space Within' seminar by Michael Neill

KUWAIT: In line with the Bank's strong belief in self-development of individuals, Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) was the main sponsor at yesterday's seminar titled 'The Space Within' by internationally renowned transformative coach Michael Neill. The seminar, which took place at Al-Thuraya Ballroom in JW Marriott, was organized by the Institute of Banking Studies (IBS) with the aim of helping attendees unleash their personal and professional potential through a deeper understanding of the mind.

Listed in the top 30 coaching gurus worldwide, Michael Neill shared the three principles behind all

human experience and how understanding the mind at this level opens both employees and works teams up to higher levels of productivity and creativity with less effort, stress, or pressure than before.

"As part of our commitment to support our employees to undertake sustainable programs and initiatives that enable personal development, we are very proud to sponsor 'The Space Within' seminar," acknowledged Hamza Enki, General Manager of Human Resources at ABK.

"We are confident that by attending the seminar, individuals will be encouraged to tap into their innate intelligence for easier decision making, better problem solving, and higher levels of performance," Enki further added.

Some of the key takeaways from the seminar included the three fundamental principles behind all human experiences which helps people become the best versions of themselves, implications for handling pressure and stress, and building higher quality relationships with staff, clients and customers. Michael Neill also shared insight into producing quality results over time and where creativity stems from and how to make the most of it, which is an important skill to master in our industry.



Man arrested with 14,600 psychoactive pills

By Hanan Al-Saadoun and Agencies

KUWAIT: Criminal detectives arrested an Asian man with possession of 14,600 psychoactive tablets and cash. The suspect was arrested red-handed while exchanging the drugs with an undercover agent. He showed strong resistance before police were able to put him under arrest. The suspect confessed to trading in illicit substances and led detectives to an apartment where he hid the drugs. He was sent to the proper authorities to face charges.

Fire


A family was rescued from a fire reported in a Salwa apartment Monday night. Firemen from two different fire stations responded to the scene and rescued the family members, before they successfully tackled the blaze. No injuries were reported.

Blackmail

Detectives arrested a Pakistani man who threatened to post a female citizen's personal photos on social media if she does not pay him KD 400. The woman's social media account was hacked by the suspect who blackmailed her and asked for KD 400 so that he does not post her private photos online. The woman obliged to the Pakistani's request to gain control of her account, and then went to police. Detectives identified and arrested the suspect.



KUWAIT: Drugs and cash found with the suspect.



عمليات الخفجي المشتركة

AL-KHAFJI JOINT OPERATIONS

الشركة الكويتية لنفط الخليج
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Aramco Gulf Operations Company Limited ("AGOC") and Kuwait Gulf Oil Company (K.S.C) ("KGOC"), (Al Khafji Joint Operations) invites intending bidders to participate for the **Tender No.: HT 456 CB17 - Asphalt Maintenance and Sand Removal Services.**

Each intending bidder may purchase the tender documents upon payment of **Saudi Riyals Two Thousand (SR 2000) or Kuwaiti Dinars One Hundred Sixty (KD 160) only** which is non-refundable by visiting our Contracts Department at Al-Khafji, Saudi Arabia, or KGOC's Kuwait Office located in Al-Ahmadi, Tender & Contracts Section, Building L (Ex-PTC Office). The bidder may review part of tender documents, before purchasing.

Attending the Pre-Tender Meeting is Mandatory

A Pre-Tender meeting for this tender to be held for interested bidders at Community and Business Services Department, at Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Saudi Arabia, at 10:00 AM on Monday 8 January, 2018.

The sale of Tender Documents will be effective from December 12, 2017 until 12:00 Noon, January 08, 2018.

The bidder shall note that he shall be required to provide an irrevocable bank guarantee from a bank in Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, in the sum of **United States Dollars Seventy five thousand (USD 75,000.00/-) only**, to warrant the bid proposal. Such bank guarantee shall be on behalf of the bidder himself and valid for (120) days from the closing date of the tender, any bid proposal received without the said bank guarantee will be rejected.

The bid proposal shall be delivered by hand-delivery or thru courier service to the Contracts Department in Al-Khafji Joint Operations, Al-Khafji Saudi Arabia on or before the closing date **14:00 Hours, Monday, February 12, 2018** of the time stipulated in the tender document.

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Abortions in India 20 times higher than estimated

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Syria forces not yet victorious - but IS already defeated

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RAMALLAH: A masked Palestinian protester dressed as a clown kicks a flaming tire towards Israeli security forces during clashes in the West Bank city of Ramallah yesterday, following the US president's controversial recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. — AFP

‘We are one’: Palestinian Christians, Muslims unite

Three faiths keep delicate balance in Jerusalem

JERUSALEM: Less than an hour after US President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Palestinians protested by turning off the lights on the Christmas tree outside Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, the traditional birthplace of Jesus. It was a timely reminder that while headlines focused on Islamist calls for uprisings and Trump's references to Jewish historical ties, the president's words also stirred deep feelings among the Palestinians' small Christian community.

Coming out of the Sunday service in his Assyrian Catholic church in Jerusalem, Fredrick Hazo accused Trump of "dragging all the world into trouble", and called on the US leader to reverse his decision. "We are united - Christians, Muslims, we are one," said the 59-year-old Palestinian musician, standing in an alley in the heart of the Old City, surrounded by shops selling religious trinkets. He was frustrated by the politics, but confident the delicate balance the three faiths kept in the holy city would prevail. "In this sacred place, God is protecting us all. We are guarded by his angels in Jerusalem," Hazo added.

Christians make up around just one percent of the

Palestinian population in Gaza, the West Bank and East Jerusalem - though they punch above their weight in local and national politics. Back in July, Hazo protested alongside Muslims against Israel's installation of security scanners at the nearby Al-Aqsa mosque - Islam's third holiest site - after two Arab-Israeli gunmen shot dead two Israeli police officers at the site. It removed the metal detectors after days of bloody clashes, scenes that have not been repeated in the city since Trump's declaration.



US evangelicals welcome Trump statement

United in prayer

The appeals to religious unity inside Jerusalem's walls stand in contrast to the more divided voices outside. In the hours running up to Trump's statement,

Pope Francis called for the status quo in the city to be respected. The Episcopal Church of the United States said Trump's announcement "could have profound ramifications on the peace process and the future of a two-state solution". But Trump's decision found strong backing from another corner of the Christian community - many among his own country's politically powerful evangelicals who see God's hand in the modern-day return of Jews to a biblical homeland.

Trump convened a circle of evangelical advisers during his presidential bid, and he was the overwhelming favorite of white evangelical voters in last year's US election. "We are all bible-believers and we believe that this is the bible-land and that Jerusalem is the

ancient capital of Israel back to the days of King David," said Dallas-based Mike Evans, part of an evangelical group that met Trump on Monday. "So for our president to stand up and declare it makes us extremely proud and honored." For Palestinian supermarket cashier Mohammed Al-Hawa, however, Trump's words and the logic behind them ignored the more complex reality on the ground.

People of all faith in Jerusalem were united in prayer, the 33-year-old said, even if they were divided over politics. "Christians, Jews and Muslims live in this city together. There is no problem between them. Only the politics. The governments want to make wars," he said. "This is my city - my blood, my life," added a 70-year-old Palestinian, walking through the pilgrim-packed courtyard of Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre, revered by Christians as the site of Jesus's tomb. The church is packed into a small parcel of land that also holds the Al-Aqsa compound and Judaism's Western Wall "I can go to the church, to anywhere in Jerusalem, not Trump nor Netanyahu can stop me," added the man who identified himself only as a "Jerusalemite". — Reuters

Russia on alert for returning militants

MOSCOW: Russia's security service yesterday said it was on alert for the possible return of jihadists from Syria ahead of the World Cup and the presidential election in 2018. The FSB's warning came after the Russian military last week declared Syria "liberated" from the Islamic State group, and after a visit on Monday by President Vladimir Putin to Russia's airbase in the war-ravaged country.

Russia first intervened in the Syrian conflict in 2015, staging air strikes in support of President Bashar Al-Assad which targeted both IS and other jihadists as well as rebels fighting government troops. As many as 40,000 fighters travelled from all over the world, including Russia, to join IS in Russia after the 2014 declaration of its self-styled

"caliphate" straddling Syria and Iraq.

In 2015, Russian security services estimated that 2,900 Russian citizens had joined IS, as well as "several thousands" from Central Asia. Now that IS' "caliphate" has all but collapsed, its "leaders and fighters are looking for ways to continue their terrorist activities in the territory of other countries, including Russia", FSB director Alexander Bortnikov was quoted by Russian agencies as saying. "The return of former members of illegal armed groups from the Middle East to Russia poses a real danger" as they can form sleeper cells and recruit new members, he added.

Attacks thwarted

Bortnikov said the security services had ensured the Confederations Cup ran smoothly this year. They will draw on this experience to ensure they prevent attacks on venues in 13 cities hosting the World Cup from June 14 to July 15 next year. "Our priority is to secure locations where crowds will gather, as well as energy infrastructure sites ... and sports venues that will host the 2018 football World Cup, to ensure they are not targets for terror attacks," Bortnikov said. — AFP

New York bomber not on Bangladesh terror list: Police

DHAKA: Bangladesh police scrambled yesterday for details about alleged New York subway bomber Akayed Ullah, but uncovered few early leads that might shed light on what might have driven him to try and kill commuters with a homemade bomb. US police say the 27-year-old immigrant from Bangladesh set off a crude bomb strapped to his body in a crowded New York subway passage on Monday but the device failed to detonate properly, leaving him the only one seriously harmed. Ullah told police investigators he wanted to avenge US airstrikes on the Islamic State group and was also inspired by Christmas terror plots in Europe, US media reported.

Bangladesh police are investigating whether Ullah was radicalized in his Muslim-majority homeland, where foreigners have been among those targeted in deadly assaults claimed by the IS group and Al-Qaeda. "So far, his name is not on our wide-range list of radicalized persons or members of terror groups, both from Bangladesh and outside," senior counter terrorism police officer Sanwar Hossain said. "We are trying to gather more details," he said. US authorities say Ullah migrated seven years ago as the member of a family already living there under what is known as "chain immigration".

But a police spokeswoman in Bangladesh



NEW YORK: Police officers stand guard as commuters make their way through the passageway connecting the Times Square subway station to the Port Authority subway station and bus terminal, near the site of attempted terror attack in New York City. —AFP

said preliminary investigations suggested the family left "17 or 18 years ago". Bangladesh authorities are unclear exactly when Ullah left, but speculated he could have been shuttling back and forth between the two countries. "Maybe he was 10 or 11 years old (when the family left for the US)," police spokeswoman Sahely Ferdous said, adding Ullah's "development of thinking" likely took place there. Bangladesh police said Ullah's family hailed from Sandwip, an island off the coast of the southern port city of Chittagong but his father had left for the capital Dhaka some 30 years ago.

Visited Bangladesh in Sept

A friend of the family told AFP that Ullah married two years ago, but did not take his wife to the US. "His wife lives in Hazaribagh neighborhood in Dhaka, where the family lived for the last three decades, and where his father ran a grocery shop. They were married in 2015," Sazzad Hossain Mukul, a friend of Ullah's mother said. He said Ullah visited Bangladesh in September, and spent a month with his wife. Police confirmed the date of his last visit, but could not say whether Ullah was married. — AFP

International

‘Be careful,’ murdered activist’s daughter warns Europe exiles

Dutch police investigating shootings of Iranians

THE HAGUE: The daughter of an Iranian Arab activist killed in the Netherlands last month linked his death to political conflict in the Middle East, and warned other exiles in Europe to be on their guard. Ahmad Mola Nissi, 52, was gunned down by an unidentified assailant in front of his home in The Hague on Nov 8 in a suspected political killing. Hawra Ahmad Nissi said her father's death was reminiscent of a string of murders of Iranian dissidents in Europe in the 1990s.

“Europe seems safe, but be careful,” she told Reuters in an interview. “The conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran is not confined to the Middle East. It is spreading into Europe.” Relations between Shiite Muslim Iran and Sunni Muslim Saudi Arabia have soured in recent months, with the struggle for influence between the two long-standing regional rivals played out through increasingly bitter proxy confrontations, notably in Syria, Yemen and Lebanon. Mola Nissi established the Arab Struggle Movement for the Liberation of Ahwaz (ASM-LA), which seeks a separate state in Iran's oil-rich southwestern Khuzestan province, in 1999.

Since his murder, his family have been under Dutch police protection at a safe house. “We came here to be safe but we don't feel safe. European governments should do more to secure the safety of activists,” Hawra Nissi,



Iran, Saudi Arabia locked in regional power struggle

25, said. Ahvazi Arabs are a minority in mainly ethnic Persian Iran, and some see themselves as victims of occupation and want independence or autonomy. Tehran, which has condemned Mola Nissi's killing and promised to investigate it, accuses Riyadh of funding separatist groups active in Iran, a charge the Saudis deny.

‘Open to all scenarios’

A source close to Mola Nissi's family, who asked not to be named due to security concerns, said he had accepted Saudi financial support but did not want the Ahvazi cause to be used as a pawn in the proxy war. This attitude could have made him an obstacle to efforts to bring the ASMLA movement under Saudi influence, the source said. “The family is open to all scenarios. Iran is a prime suspect, but not the only suspect,” Hawra Nissi said. Police are exploring a possible link between Mola Nissi's killing and the unsolved murder of another Iranian near Amsterdam in December 2015, a spokeswoman said.

They are looking for two suspects believed to have gunned down Ali Motamed. The police declined to comment on the circumstances of Motamed's death or a motive, but Iranian media have linked him to exiled Iranian opposition Shiite group the People's Mujahideen Organisation of Iran (PMOI), which would



TEHRAN: Portraits of US President Donald Trump burn during a demonstration in the capital Tehran to denounce his declaration of Jerusalem as Israel's capital. —AFP

have made him a potential target. A man detained in relation to Mola Nissi's death has since been released, the spokeswoman added. The most prominent among a string of killings and disappearances of Iranian dis-

sidents in the 1980s and 1990s was the shooting of three Iranian Kurdish opposition leaders in Berlin in 1992, which a German court ruled had been ordered by the government in Tehran.—Reuters

Syria forces not yet victorious - but IS already defeated

BEIRUT: Syria is expected to soon follow in Iraq's footsteps in proclaiming victory against the Islamic State group, whose fighters are either on the run or trapped and largely toothless. On Saturday, the Baghdad government declared the end of a huge military effort that saw Iraqi forces painstakingly reclaim every little piece of the third of the country the jihadists controlled three years ago. The Syrian side of the “caliphate” IS proclaimed in 2014 has also disintegrated, with now only gaggles of fighters launching short-lived attacks or clinging to small pockets where they are completely besieged.

IS no longer controls a single town in Syria and while it may still count several thousand fighters among its ranks, observers expect Damascus to declare final victory before the end of the year. Syria's top ally Russia called it last week when senior military officer Sergei Rudskoi claimed “Syria has been completely liberated from fighters of this terrorist organization”. On Sunday, French President Emmanuel Macron argued that was slightly premature and predicted that “military operations against Daesh (IS) in Syria will continue until mid- to late February”.

Rami Abdel Rahman, who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, argued that IS was now largely rudderless and that surviving units were essentially fending for themselves. “There no longer is one central command giving orders. IS has been turned into groups scattered over Syria,” said Abdel Rahman, whose monitoring group relies on a wide network of sources across the country. The group's fighters are most active in Syria's eastern Deir Ezzor province, where they are defending the last specks of land that used to be part of their “caliphate”.

Several hundred fighters remain in that province alone, not enough to plan any realistic territorial reconquest but enough to cause damage in guerrilla-style attacks. According to Abdel Rahman, 23 pro-government forces were killed Monday in an attack



RAQA: A member of the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) runs to take cover from sniper shots near the central hospital of Raqqa. —AFP

near Albu Kamal, the last major town IS controlled fully before it eventually lost it in November.

Dregs of the caliphate -

IS is still active in the following areas: The group still holds 18 villages on the eastern side of the Euphrates river in Deir Ezzor province, according to the Observatory. It controls a small area in the northeastern province of Hasakeh, which Kurdish-led forces hope to reclaim swiftly. The jihadists also hold remote areas in the central Homs province, mostly two pockets which the regime is expected to take on soon.

IS fighters are also in a small sliver of Hama province, further north, where they are battling jihadists from a rival group. IS also has a presence in the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmuk, in Damascus, but IS fighters there have been besieged for years. The group also has fixed positions in two other areas of southern Damascus, Hajar al-Aswad and Tadamun. In the southern province of Daraa, fighters affiliated to IS also have a small presence.

EU summit set to unlock next phase of Brexit talks

BRUSSELS: European Union leaders are set to open the next phase of Brexit talks at a summit this week, but may toughen their conditions after Britain cast doubt on whether a deal on divorce terms is binding. British premier Theresa May and European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker reached a last-minute agreement Friday regarding the Irish border, Britain's divorce bill and the rights of EU migrants.

The leaders of the 27 remaining countries are to decide on Friday whether to approve that deal and green light the opening of talks on a post-Brexit transition period and the bloc's future relationship with Britain. But they have been alarmed by comments by Britain's Brexit Minister David Davis in which he said that Britain would not pay the bill without a trade agreement, and that Friday's deal was a “statement of intent” rather than “legally enforceable.”

European Parliament Brexit coordinator Guy Verhofstadt said Davis's comments were “unac-

ceptable” and a self-inflicted “own goal” for Britain as the EU would now take a tougher stance. “I have seen a hardening of the position of the council (of EU leaders) and hardening position of the parliament,” Verhofstadt told reporters at the parliament in Strasbourg, France on Tuesday. The European Parliament is set to back in a vote today the opening of the second phase of Brexit talks. MEPs will also have a final say on any Brexit deal in 2019.

‘Most difficult challenge’

With the possibility of a British backtrack in mind, the EU negotiating guidelines that leaders are set to adopt on Friday will say phase two talks can only start once the divorce commitments are “translated faithfully in legal terms.” The EU leaders will also say that talks on trade will not start until March, to give the British government time to provide “further clarity” on what it wants from the future relationship.

Britain has said it will leave the EU's single market and customs union but has given no hint of a wider plan, with May's cabinet only having its first meeting on the subject next week—a full year and a half after the June 2016 Brexit referendum. The EU guidelines will add that talks on the transition—a period of around two years during which the bloc says Britain will have to follow EU law cannot start until January. The clock is ticking, as the EU says an outline deal needs to be in place by October 2018, so that the British and EU parliaments can approve it by



LONDON: Pro-EU protesters wave EU and Union flags outside the Houses of Parliament in central London as Britain's Prime Minister Theresa May makes a statement to the House on the phase one Brexit interim agreement with the EU. —AFP

the time Britain leaves the bloc on March 29, 2019. EU President Donald Tusk warned last week after the divorce deal that “the most difficult challenge is still ahead”.

Euro reforms

The EU leaders, again without Britain, will also on Friday discuss ways to reform the euro single currency, a top priority of French President Emmanuel Macron as well as Juncker. In a draft of the “leader's agenda” to prepare the summit, Tusk said there was

broad convergence among the heads of state on creating a crisis-fighting European Monetary Fund, as well as forging ahead with the banking union. But Macron's ambitions have been stymied by political uncertainty in Germany, where a weakened Chancellor Angela Merkel is still trying to form a government.

Germany is especially reticent to reforming EU public spending rules or setting up a European-wide deposit insurance scheme, the last remaining pillar of the banking union.—AFP

News in brief

Two Palestinians killed

GAZA: Two Palestinians were killed in the Gaza Strip yesterday with authorities in the Hamas-run territory blaming an Israeli strike, but Israel's military immediately denying the claim. The circumstances of the incident, which occurred near Gaza's northern border with Israel, were initially unclear. Palestinian health ministry spokesman Ashraf Al-Qudra said the two men were killed “in Beit Lahia in northern Gaza after an Israeli strike targeted a motorcycle”. The Israeli army immediately denied this, saying in a statement “contrary to Palestinian reports earlier today, the (army) did not attack in the northern Gaza Strip”. Qudra named the two men as Hussein Ghazi Nasrallah and Mustafa al-Sultan, both in their 20s. Family members at the hospital where the bodies were taken told AFP the two men were members of Islamic Jihad, an Islamist group that fought alongside Hamas in the last war with Israel in 2014.

Washington blasts Maduro

CARACAS: The US accused Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro on Monday of a dictatorial bid to wipe his opponents off the political map following his latest poll victory, after he announced the main opposition is barred from next year's presidential election. Maduro's ruling socialists triumphed as expected in mayoral polls Sunday, taking 300 of the country's 335 mayorships after a boycott by the main opposition parties. But the president insisted that boycott would cost the opposition dearly: “A party that has not participated today and has called for the boycott of the elections cannot participate any more. That is a criterion of the National Constituent Assembly... and I support them.” That removes from the electoral fray key figures such as Henrique Capriles, Leopoldo Lopez and others, and led the United States to say Maduro was seeking to consolidate his “dictatorship.”

Fugitive wins seat

KATHMANDU: A fugitive wanted over a deadly attack on police won a seat in Nepal's national parliament yesterday, despite being in hiding and not once appearing in public during his campaign. Resham Chaudhary won the seat from Kailali in western Nepal by a landslide, securing more than double the votes of his closest rival, according to results from the election commission. Chaudhary has been in hiding since 2015 when he was accused of masterminding an attack in which eight police officers and a toddler were killed. “He is in our wanted list and we can arrest him even though he has been elected as a member of parliament, if we find him,” said police spokesman Manoj Neupane. Chaudhary was a key figure in violent protests that erupted in 2015 over a contentious new constitution.

Australian MP quits

SYDNEY: A prominent Australian opposition senator, Sam Dastyari, said yesterday he would resign from parliament after a series of allegations emerged about his links with Chinese-aligned interests in Australia. Relations between Australia and China have become strained since Australia announced last week it would ban foreign political donations as part of a crackdown aimed at preventing external influence in domestic politics. In announcing the ban, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull specifically singled out China, citing “disturbing reports about Chinese influence”. China hit back, with the ruling Communist Party's official People's Daily describing media reports about its interference as “racist” and “paranoid”. Dastyari, widely viewed as a rising star of the centre-left Labor opposition party, has been under fire since domestic media reported he had sought to encourage the party's deputy leader not to meet a Chinese pro-democracy activist opposed to Beijing's rule in Hong Kong in 2015.

International

Rio’s stray bullets give the innocent nowhere to hide

Brazil among the world’s most dangerous countries

RIO DE JANEIRO: While the fighting in Rio de Janeiro’s crime war is done by commando-style police and heavily armed drug traffickers, a growing number of the victims look quite different: innocent, joyful children like Maria Eduarda. Firefights erupt in densely packed, poor favela neighborhoods, leaving thousands of people with nowhere to hide each time the shooting, involving Kalashnikovs and other military grade rifles, begins.

AFP has investigated the stories of those caught in the middle, like 13-year-old schoolgirl Maria Eduarda, in a new multimedia report: “Stray Bullets: violence and broken lives in Rio.” With around 60,000 murders a year, Brazil is among the world’s most dangerous countries. Rio, host of the 2016 Olympics, has long been one of the hotspots.

But as AFP’s investigation highlights, stray bullet incidents add a cruel twist to the wider crisis. People are shot outside church, in parks or in restaurants, in daytime or at night. Since the cheap construction of favela houses will not necessarily stop a bullet, even staying at home can be dangerous. Official figures for stray bullets are not released, but reports of incidents come in steadily. A count by Globo newspaper found that 632 people were shot by stray bullets in Rio state, at least 67 of them killed, in the first half of 2017 alone.

‘So much blood’

For Maria Eduarda Alves da Conceicao, sudden death came at the northern Rio school where she was known as a diligent student and mad keen basketball player. In a tough city, she was doing everything right. On March 30, though, everything went wrong. Just outside her school gates, police with automatic rifles were firing on drug dealer suspects. It was the type of violent opera-

tion that would make top news in many cities around the world but is so common in Rio that it passes largely unnoticed. One burst of bullets tore past the school fence, hitting Maria Eduarda as she went to fetch water during gym class.

The police officers almost certainly didn’t realize what had happened. They were busy wrapping up their operation outside: on a bystander’s cellphone footage, they can be seen executing two apparently wounded suspects on the sidewalk in an almost casual manner. Inside, Maria Eduarda already lay dead. “I hugged and

hugged her,” the girl’s mother Rosilene Alves Ferreira said, recalling her arrival at the scene shortly after the tragedy. “She was still all warm. I hugged her and there was so much blood,” said the 53-year-old mother, creases of worry etched across her forehead. “Two of the bullets had hit her little head.”

‘Logic of death’

Despite the lack of transparency on overall stray bullet casualties, an NGO called Rio de Paz (Rio of Peace) has kept a careful count of child victims since 2007. In just over a decade, the toll is 42 killed, including babies, toddlers and adolescents. Some died in the family car, some playing football, or while asleep. The rate is rocketing: 10 children died in 2016 and 10 so far this year, a steady increase on the seven slain in 2015, and a huge jump from the combined total of 10 in the five previous years.

Antonio Carlos Costa, founder of Rio de Paz, says the combination of dense populations, powerful rifles and ceaseless turf wars between different drug factions makes a lethal cocktail in the favelas. But he reserves his harshest criticism for the police, who treat the areas as war zones. “Police operations follow the logic of death, the logic of shooting first and finding out who it



RIO DE JANEIRO: A graffiti portraying late Maria Eduarda Alves is seen at the entrance of Daniel Piza Municipal School in Rio de Janeiro, near the same courtyard where she was killed by stray bullets. —AFP

was afterward,” Costa said. “They’ve lost sight of the risks they impose on civilians.” The police answer that ruthless drug traffickers, ruling entire neighborhoods at the point of a gun, are to blame. So far this year, 126 officers have been killed in Rio state this year, so they have reason to feel they are in a war.

Police are also hampered by funding problems and falling morale in the wake of the Olympics spending splurge. But while the debate about what needs chang-

ing goes on, the likes of Maria Eduarda are likely to keep getting maimed or killed. “I know they didn’t target Maria, they didn’t want to kill her, but they were reckless,” her mother said.

“They killed her. Although they saw a school there, they still let off more than 60 shots,” AFP’s investigation “Stray Bullets: violence and broken lives in Rio” looks at eight cases, including children, a university student and a kindergarten employee. — AFP

News in brief

Somali journalist killed

MOGADISHU: A Somali television journalist was killed by a car bomb in front of his children, relatives said, the fifth murder of a journalist in the war-torn country this year. Mohamed Ibrahim Gabow, a journalist working for Kalsan TV, had taken a break from work to spend time with his children. He had just left his home on Monday afternoon in the capital Mogadishu when a bomb planted beneath the driver’s seat ripped through the car. He died in hospital. “He was a professional journalist dedicated to working for the public,” grieving relative Mohamed Abdurahman said late Monday. “We don’t know why they killed him in front of his children.” No one has claimed responsibility for the attack, but journalists have been regularly targeted by rival forces in the long-running conflict. “The explosive device was attached beneath the driver’s seat of the car,” said police officer Ibrahim Mohamed.

Mugabe flies to Singapore

HARARE: Zimbabwe’s former president Robert Mugabe has left the country for medical checks in Singapore, his first foreign travel since the army forced him from office last month, a state security official said yesterday. The 93-year-old, who ruled the southern African nation for 37 years, resigned after the army and his ruling ZANU-PF party turned against him when it became clear that his 52-year-old wife, Grace, was being groomed as his successor. Until recently the world’s oldest head of state, Mugabe had a reputation for extensive and expensive international travel, including regular medical trips to Singapore – a source of public anger among his impoverished citizens. He left Harare with Grace and aides on Monday evening, the official said. He is expected to make a stop-over in Malaysia, where his daughter, Bona, is expecting a second child.

170 killed in S Sudan

JUBA: The death toll from inter-clan fighting in South Sudan’s Great Lakes region last week – a new source of violence in a country devastated by a four-year civil war – has reached at least 170, officials said yesterday. The clashes in the province’s Malek county broke out after a group of young men from the Ruop ethnic group attacked rival youth from the Pakam group on Wednesday and Thursday. Revenge attacks have since taken place. Dharuai Mabor Teny, a member of parliament from the region, updated an earlier death toll of 45. “Right now, from both sides, we have 170 plus people who lost their lives. 342 houses have been burnt and almost 1,800 people displaced,” Teny said. The violence prompted the government to declare a three-month state of emergency in the region and surrounding areas on Monday. The military has also been ordered to deploy troops to quell the unrest.

Quake hits southeast Iran

BEIRUT: An earthquake of magnitude 6.2 hit Kerman province in southeast Iran yesterday, injuring 15 people and causing the walls of some houses to collapse, state media reported. The quake struck near the town of Hojdak, according to state TV. The US geological survey recorded its magnitude as 6.1 and said it struck at a depth of 57 km. Another quake, which Iranian state media reported at 6.0 and the USGS reported at 5.4, hit western Iran on Monday, in the same region where a magnitude 7.3 earthquake killed at least 530 people last month. There have been no reports of deaths or injuries from Monday’s quake. Hardline rivals of President Hassan Rouhani have criticized the government’s response to last month’s quake as too slow and inadequate.

California wildfires

LOS ANGELES: It’s been a week since southern California has been charred by a devastating wave of wildfires, blasted by almost hurricane force winds. Vast areas have been destroyed, hundreds of thousands of people have been evacuated and thousands of firefighters are working around the clock. The future of the infernos is at the mercy of the wind. The biggest concern is Thomas, which broke out last Monday and has already destroyed an area five times larger than the US capital Washington and threatens Pacific coast towns like Carpinteria, Summerland and Montecito. Here is a review of the present situation.

Number of fires

Six were registered during the week: in addition to Thomas, in Ventura County, there were three in Los Angeles (Creek, Rye, Skirball), Lilac in San Diego; and Liberty in Riverside. Other than Thomas, almost all are contained and the evacuation orders have already been lifted. But there have been long hours of panic. Los Angeles evacuated 150,000 people. Skirball – 85 percent controlled-affected the exclusive neighborhood of Bel-Air and millions of dollars of mansions were caught in the flames. The losses have not yet been calculated. Lilac, which engulfed a rural area with many stables, forced hundreds of horses had to be evacuated. Just over two dozen perished.

Extent of Thomas’ damage

It still remains to be seen how much harm Thomas will do. The fire continues to grow and threatens nearby areas. In one week it wiped out 23,000 acres (93,000 hectares) and “severe weather conditions” could lead to “significant growth,” according to the latest California firefighters bulletin (Cal Fire). More than 800 buildings have been destroyed, including 644 homes, while almost 6,400 officials work to try to contain the flames. Evacuation orders remain standing in areas of Ventura, Ojai, Carpinteria, Montecito and Santa Barbara.

Victims

Despite its hellish intensity, which has left behind scenes reminiscent of a moonscape in many areas, authorities so far



CALIFORNIA: A man watches the Thomas Fire in the hills above Carpinteria, California. —AFP

have reported one fatality—a 70-year-old woman who died in a car accident while fleeing from the flames in the Thomas area. Tens of thousands had to leave their homes, some ending up in shelters opened by the authorities and the Red Cross.

Weather forecast

The causes of the fires are under investigation. But whatever they are, it is the hurricane-strength winds and the low humidity that cause them to spread over huge areas of land at an amazingly alarming speed. Eric Boldt, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service (NWS), explained to AFP that even when the

wind dies down, the drought conditions complicate everything. The fire is already the biggest disaster in California’s history, but Boldt believes he has the potential to climb to the top spot.

Financial losses

There is no exact figure for the losses from this fire wave that has not even ended. The California Department of Insurance told AFP that the calculation is the product of the figures from insurance companies. As the fires are not over yet, there are people who do not even know if they lost their homes or businesses and did not activate their insurance. —AFP

Anger brewing in German SPD against Merkel power pact

BERLIN: To many German Social Democrats it sounds like a monster that will destroy their party if not democracy itself: the GroKo. The term is shorthand for “grand coalition”, the mega-alliance of Chancellor Angela Merkel’s conservatives and their own SPD labor party that has ruled Europe’s top economy for the past four years.

“Never. Again. GroKo,” read a pin-on button handed out by the party’s youth wing at a fractious party congress in Berlin last week that was dominated by painful soul-searching over its worst election result in post-war history. The blunt message was illustrated with a picture of two hands forming a diamond shape, Merkel’s standard gesture in front of cameras, which has come to symbolise the veteran chancellor dubbed “Mutti” (mummy). “We don’t want a grand coalition,” said one member, Michelle Rauschholz, 25, who fears the SDP will be forced to “betray its ideals” if it has another stint as Merkel’s junior partner.

Going into talks with Merkel this Wednesday, SPD chief Martin Schulz is deeply sceptical about another GroKo power pact, and aware much of his party base is openly hostile to another coalition. But after months of post-election deadlock, Schulz has agreed to meet Merkel to sound out plans to give the unhappy partnership another lease of life, even though many Social Democrats fear it spells a mortal threat to their 150-year-old party.

‘Political suicide’

The U-turn came after Schulz declared on the night of his September 24 election defeat that he would take the

battered party into opposition rather than again play second fiddle to Merkel. But he had to eat his words three weeks ago when Merkel’s efforts to build an alternative alliance with two smaller parties collapsed and pressure rose on the SPD to avert political paralysis.

Schulz consented to “open-ended” talks that may or may not allow Merkel to lead another GroKo government from sometime in early 2018. At the Berlin party congress, speaker after speaker argued passionately that to again govern under Merkel would further weaken the party’s message and credibility. The revolt was led by the party’s youth wing, which collected reasons against a GroKo in messages stuck onto a white board. “Political suicide,” read one, while another stated: “GroKo is the final nail in the coffin of Social Democracy.” A third featured a drawing of a “GroKodile” with a gaping jaw about to swallow up a hapless SPD stickman. One declared simply: “I already have a Mutti.”

‘A little lost’

The SPD leadership itself has been brutally honest after four election defeats in a row, stating in a discussion paper that “many voters are unclear about what the SPD stands for”. It was a sobering admission for the traditional working class party that long battled for the rights of workers, women and minorities, and whose members start their speeches with “dear comrades”.

Now the SPD is struggling to reinvent itself in the age of vanishing factories, mines and dockyards and as robots and algorithms threaten to destroy ever more jobs. “That’s the big question that hovers above everything,” said youth wing leader Kevin Kuehnert, 28. “In future who will be the SPD’s voter base?” At the congress, Kuehnert vowed to push on with the #NoGroKo campaign when delegates and members get to vote on a potential coalition deal. “The last GroKo was voted out when the two big parties between them lost 14 percentage points,” he said. “That’s certainly not a mandate for a new coalition.” —AFP



BERLIN: Parliamentary group leaders of the far-right AfD (Alternative for Germany) party Alexander Gauland (front right) and Alice Weidel (front left) and other AfD members of parliament stand to pay their respects to a recently deceased MP yesterday. —AFP

International

India abortions 20 times ‘higher than estimated’

15.6 million abortions take place in India each year

NEW DELHI: Some 15.6 million abortions take place in India each year, with the majority of women taking pills at home without adequate counseling, a study said yesterday, calling for more trained doctors in public hospitals. The New York-based Guttmacher Institute’s research found that abortions are more than 22 times more common than the government’s estimate of less than 700,000 terminations, produced by focusing on state-run hospitals and clinics. Just over 80 percent of abortions took place at home using drugs like mifepristone and misoprostol, 14 percent were performed surgically in clinics and hospitals, and 5 percent were conducted using other, typically unsafe, methods.

“Women in India face considerable challenges trying to obtain abortion care, including the limited availability of abortion services in public health facilities,” the Guttmacher Institute’s investigator Susheela Singh, said in a statement. “Our findings suggest that a shortage of trained staff and inadequate supplies and equipment are the primary reasons many public facilities don’t provide abortion care,” she said of the study, published in the Lancet Global Health journal.

It is India’s first national study of the incidence of abortion and unintended pregnancy, researchers said. Half of India’s more than 48 million pregnancies were unintended, and a third resulted in abortions, the study said, using 2015 abortion pill sales and distribution data and surveys of six highly populated states. Researchers said that close to three in four abortions were achieved using drugs from chemists and infor-

mal vendors, rather than from health facilities where proper counseling and health checks should be provided.

In addition, the public sector – the main source of health care for rural and poor women – accounted for only a quarter of abortions, partly because many state-run hospitals and clinics do not offer abortion services. “Although abortion has been legal under a broad range of criteria in India since 1971, we have never had a reliable estimate of the number occurring until now,” said Chander Shekhar from the Mumbai-based International Institute for Population Sciences, which collaborated on the study.

“This new evidence provides policymakers with information that is essential for designing and implementing effective reproductive health care programs,” he added in a statement.

Condom advertisements

Meanwhile, India has slapped a nationwide ban on television ads for condoms during prime time hours, citing rules prohibit-

ing “vulgar” content and concerns over children viewing salacious material. The information and broadcasting ministry ordered India’s estimated 900 television channels to restrict condom commercials to between 10pm and 6am, threatening repercussions if the ads fall outside graveyard hours. “All TV channels are hereby advised not to telecast the advertisements of condoms which are (a) for particular age group and could be indecent for viewing by children,” the order said Monday. It also cited broadcasting regulations prohibiting “indecent, vulgar, suggestive, repulsive or offensive themes”. India’s public and private television channels beam into

India bans condom ads during prime time



SRINAGAR: A Kashmiri resident walks along a road following fresh snowfall on the outskirts of Srinagar yesterday. — AFP

nearly 183 million households across the country, data from the Broadcast Audience Research Council industry group shows. Advocates for birth control warned the blackout risked undoing decades of progress on sexual and reproductive health. The Population Foundation of India, a Delhi-based nonprofit, said condoms were one of the few meth-

ods available for family planning and encouraged men to also take responsibility for birth control. “What we need is a more sensitive approach without compromising on information and advocating for sexual and reproductive choice,” the charity’s executive director Poonam Muttreja said in a statement. —Agencies

A British murderer appeals conviction

HONG KONG: A British banker jailed for life for the horrifying murder of two Indonesian women at his upscale Hong Kong apartment in a cocaine-fuelled rampage appealed against his conviction yesterday. Cambridge University graduate Rurik Jutting tortured Sumarti Ningsih for three days-filming parts of her ordeal on his phone-before slashing her throat with a serrated knife and stuffing her body into a suitcase.

Days later, and with Ningsih’s corpse on his balcony, the former Bank of America worker picked up Seneng Mujiasih, intending to play out the same fantasies. He killed her when she started screaming. Jutting, now 32, had pleaded guilty to manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility but was found guilty of murder with the judge at the time describing the killings as “sickening in the extreme”.

However, Jutting’s defense team yesterday argued that judge Michael Stuart-Moore had repeatedly given wrong directions to the jury during the trial last year when explaining how they should determine whether his state of mind had impaired his responsibility for his actions. Defense lawyer Gerard McCoy argued the judge had wrongly told the jury to look for mental “disorders” rather than the broader spectrum of “abnormality of the mind”. “Abnormality of mind need not be a disorder,” McCoy told the court Tuesday. “The judge has wrongly and prescriptively directed the jury that they should look for disorders because disorders are what is an abnormality of mind,” he added.

Diminished responsibility

The defense team during the trial had argued that Jutting’s mental responsibility had been substantially affected by heavy alcohol and cocaine use as well as sexual sadism and narcissistic personality disorders. Not all four medical experts who testified agreed that Jutting’s behavior met the criteria for a “disorder” in all four areas,



HONG KONG: A migrant worker holds up a piece of paper showing photos of Sumarti Ningsih (left) and Seneng Mujiasih (right), both in their 20s, who were found dead in British banker Rurik Jutting’s Hong Kong apartment on November 1, 2014. —AFP

said McCoy. However, they did all find that Jutting was suffering from an abnormality of mind because he had impaired mental functioning, he added. “The ground of appeal is the judge wrongly directed the jury as to the true meaning of abnormality of the mind,” McCoy argued yesterday afternoon.

“All four experts agreed there were four concurrent abnormalities of the mind,” he added. “That’s what the jury should have been asked: did those four functionings constitute an abnormality of the mind?” Jutting was alert and taking notes in court Tuesday, dressed in a blue shirt and wearing dark-rimmed glasses, at one point smiling and talking with the guards in the dock. In the gruelling 10-day

trial last October and November, the jury heard how Jutting became obsessed with slavery, rape and torture-fantasies he acted out on his first victim, Ningsih.

The jury was forced to watch iPhone footage of parts of the attack as well as Jutting’s own self-recorded descriptions of how he had used pliers, sex toys and a belt during the killing. He then went on to murder his second victim, Mujiasih, slashing her throat in his living room. At the end of the trial, Stuart-Moore said Jutting had known what he was doing and described him as an “archetypal sexual predator” who presented an extreme danger to women. The hearing will continue today for prosecution arguments.—AFP

Indian media taken by surprise at every turn. The party’s outgoing president, Rajiv’s Italian-born widow Sonia Gandhi, has said nothing publicly about her intention to stand down after 19 years. There has been speculation about her health since she travelled to the United States in 2011 for surgery. She was believed to be suffering from cancer, but this has never been confirmed. Rahul’s sister, the charismatic Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, is hardly seen in public except on the rare occasions she campaigns for the party. Rahul Gandhi rarely gives interviews to the media and only recently took to social media—a space his political rival Narendra Modi has conquered in earnest.



Rahul Gandhi

Dominance

The Nehru-Gandhi family’s decades-long dominance of Indian politics began to diminish in the late 1990s with the fortunes of the Congress party. Critics blamed the decline on a failure to identify with a new class of aspirational young voters. After Rajiv’s death, the party was not led by a member of the Nehru-Gandhi family for several years, but in 1998, Sonia Gandhi agreed to take over. She propelled Congress back to power in 2004 and ruled behind the scenes for 10 years. But in 2014, the party was routed by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party following a string of corruption scandals.

Future

Despite a series of electoral setbacks, few in the party have questioned the leadership of Sonia and Rahul. Many party veterans regard Sonia as untouchable after she agreed to take on the party presidency but turned down the chance of high office, choosing instead to rule from behind the scenes. But analysts see her hand in Rahul’s elevation and warn that her reputation and that of the dynasty as a whole-now hangs on his performance as party leader.—AFP

Nehru-Gandhi dynasty; the 5 things to know

NEW DELHI: Rahul Gandhi, the scion of India’s Nehru-Gandhi political dynasty, was Monday named as the new leader of the main opposition Congress party, which has ruled the country for much of its independent history. Here are five key things to know about India’s most famous political family:

Longevity

The Nehru-Gandhi family has dominated Indian politics since independence from Britain in 1947, when Jawaharlal Nehru became the country’s first prime minister. The dynasty has produced three prime ministers and a member of the family has been in charge of the country for nearly 50 of the 70 years since independence. The Gandhi surname derives from Feroze Gandhi, who married Nehru’s daughter Indira in 1942. He was unrelated to Mahatma Gandhi, but sharing his name is unlikely to have harmed the family’s political fortunes.

Tragedy

In 1984, Nehru’s only daughter Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards when she was prime minister, following a deadly confrontation between Indian security forces and Sikh separatist militants at the Golden Temple in Punjab state. She had groomed her younger son Sanjay to be her political heir, but he was killed in 1980 when the small plane he was piloting crashed. Her eldest son Rajiv reluctantly took over her political mantle, and served as prime minister from 1984 to 1989. He too was assassinated in 1991.

Secrecy

The family has long cultivated an air of secrecy that some see as alien to modern politics. Even the details of Rahul’s promotion to president were shrouded in mystery, with

In Jakarta, flood-hit slum residents aim for a drier future

JAKARTA: Whenever floods hit her one-room shack in northern Jakarta, Irma Susanti hangs her most precious furniture – a bed and a table – from the ceiling with a rope. “You can never be too prepared,” says the resident of Muara Angke, a coastal area in Jakarta. In July alone heavy rains flooded her home up to knee level, she said.

“But that wasn’t the worst – once the water was up to our necks and destroyed all the food, clothes, everything,” she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation, mimicking the action of waves with her arm. Jakarta, a coastal city built on a swampy plain, faces no end of flood worries, not least because roughly 40 percent of its land sits below sea level. Increases in sea level and regular floods from heavy rain and monsoons, combined with crumbling infrastructure to cope with excess water, mean the city’s slumdweller often face the brunt of water problems, experts say.

But an effort by the city to rehouse some of the city’s threatened poor in low-cost but flood-resilient buildings is winning converts, not least among flood-battered slumdweller. “Residents in informal settlements along the riverbank, like (in) Muara Angke, are most at risk of flooding,” said Nyoman Prayoga, flood resilience program manager at charity Mercy Corps Indonesia. “Not only are they exposed to sea-level rise, they also have to deal with the drainage system being clogged up with trash, which makes the flooding worse,” he added.

The Indonesian government is trying to address the growing problem by demolishing homes in flood-prone areas like Muara Angke to make way for new, affordable housing, said Muhammed Andri, head of the Penjarangan district in northern Jakarta. “Four years ago, 90 percent of the district was flooded, and people’s homes and belongings destroyed,” the official said. “Since then we’ve relocated 1,200 families to new low-cost buildings in the area.” —Reuters

News in brief

Forced labor uncovered

NEW YORK: US authorities have accused two men in New York of recruiting immigrants from the Philippines to work for little or no pay at an historic catering hall in a case of human trafficking happening “in plain sight”. The pair lured workers with promises of good jobs and paid money into their bank accounts but took it back and threatened to report them if they complained, the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency said in a statement. Many of the workers were living with expired visas in the basement of one of the accused men, ICE said. “This case is an example of ruthless labor trafficking hiding in plain sight,” said Angel Melendez, ICE special agent in charge of Homeland Security Investigations in New York, in a statement. “These individuals allegedly committed visa fraud while forcing people to work in their catering hall under horrible conditions, in what seemed to be an inescapable situation.”

Sri Lankan rail strike

COLOMBO: Hundreds of thousands of pupils were left stranded yesterday after railway workers in Sri Lanka refused to abandon a strike during national exams. President Maithripala Sirisena had appealed to drivers, station masters and technical staff to end their industrial action to enable students to get to school. More than 400,000 students aged around 15 are sitting the examinations, which began yesterday, and the president’s office said the transport difficulties would cause them severe stress. “Those who go on strike must realize the plight of the students sitting the exams today,” one parent told the ITN television network. “Don’t they have children of their own?” But a trade union spokesman said staff would not return to work until their demands for higher pay were met. And he condemned parliament for declaring railways an essential service, effectively making the strike illegal. “We did not want to cause inconvenience to the students, but we are continuing the strike because the government slapped the essential services order against us,” Janaka Fernando said.

New ‘supernote’ found

SEOUL: A new high-quality counterfeit \$100 bill has been found in South Korea, bank officials said yesterday, prompting suggestions the sanctions-hit North might have resumed forging “supernotes”. A team of forgery specialists at KEB Hana Bank have confirmed that a \$100 note found at a Seoul branch in November was a fake which was almost impossible to distinguish from real banknotes, they said. “It was the first of a new kind of supernote ever found in the world,” Yi Ho-Joong, head of the KEB Hana Bank’s anti-counterfeit centre said. Previous “supernotes” were dated either 2001 or 2003 but the new forgery is dated 2006. The same methods including raised and dented printing and no-smudge inks that are normally used for real banknotes have been applied to the newly found supernote, he said. “You need facilities worth some \$100 million to produce counterfeit bills of this quality and no crime rings would invest that much to make fake dollars,” he said.

French oppn veers right

PARIS: France’s new opposition leader Laurent Wauquiez scrambled yesterday to hold his Republicans party together, two days after it picked the controversial rightwinger to take on centrist President Emmanuel Macron. Wauquiez was elected head of the centre-right Republicans on Sunday, running on a hard-right platform that has seen him accused of cosyng up to far-right National Front (FN) voters. Twenty-four hours later, Xavier Bertrand, a party heavyweight from the northern Pas-de-Calais region, quit the Republicans-the first of a handful of politicians to walk out. “I no longer recognize my political family, so I’ve decided to quit,” Bertrand, a moderate who served as the party’s secretary-general from 2007 to 2010, said Monday evening, accusing Wauquiez of “aggressiveness”. On Tuesday, the mayor of the northern town of Roubaix, Guillaume Delbar, followed suit, as did two other Bertrand loyalists in the north.

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US cautious on electric buses despite forecasts

Communities across the United States are looking to replace their dirty diesel buses, ushering in what some analysts predict will be a boom in electric fleets. But transit agencies doing the buying are moving cautiously, an analysis by Reuters shows. Out of more than 65,000 public buses plying US roads today, just 300 are electric. Among the challenges: EVs are expensive, have limited range and are unproven on a mass scale.

A typical 40-foot electric bus costs around \$750,000, compared with about \$435,000 for a diesel bus. Cheaper fuel and maintenance expenses can lower the overall costs over the 12-year life of the vehicles. But those costs can widely depending on utility rates, terrain and weather.

The technology is still a gamble for many cities at a time when bus ridership is falling nationwide and officials are trying to keep a lid on fares, says Chris Stoddart, an executive at Canadian bus maker New Flyer Industries Inc. A top supplier of conventional buses to the US market, the company has just a handful of pure battery electrics in service. "People worry about being an early adopter. Remember 20 years ago someone paid \$20,000 for a plasma TV and then 10 years later it was \$900 at Best Buy," said Stoddart, senior vice president of engineering and customer service for New Flyer. "People just don't want a science project."

Rival electric bus manufacturers expect dramatic growth: the most ambitious forecasts call for all bus purchases to be electric by 2030. But even green-energy advocates are skeptical of such rosy predictions. CALSTART, a California-based nonprofit that promotes clean transportation, figures 50 percent to 60 percent of new buses will be zero emissions by 2030. Market research firm Navigant Research expects electric buses to make up 27 percent of new US bus sales by 2027.

Not Quite There Yet

Transit agencies have found EV performance lags in extreme conditions. In environmentally friendly San Francisco, officials have resisted electrics over concerns about the city's famously steep hills. "The technology isn't quite there yet," Erica Kato, a spokeswoman for the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, said in a statement. Weather is also a major challenge. An electric bus tested last year near Phoenix wilted in the summer heat due to the strains of running the air conditioning. The vehicle never achieved more than 89.9 miles on a charge, less than two-thirds of its advertised range, according to a report by the Valley Metro Regional Public Transportation Authority.

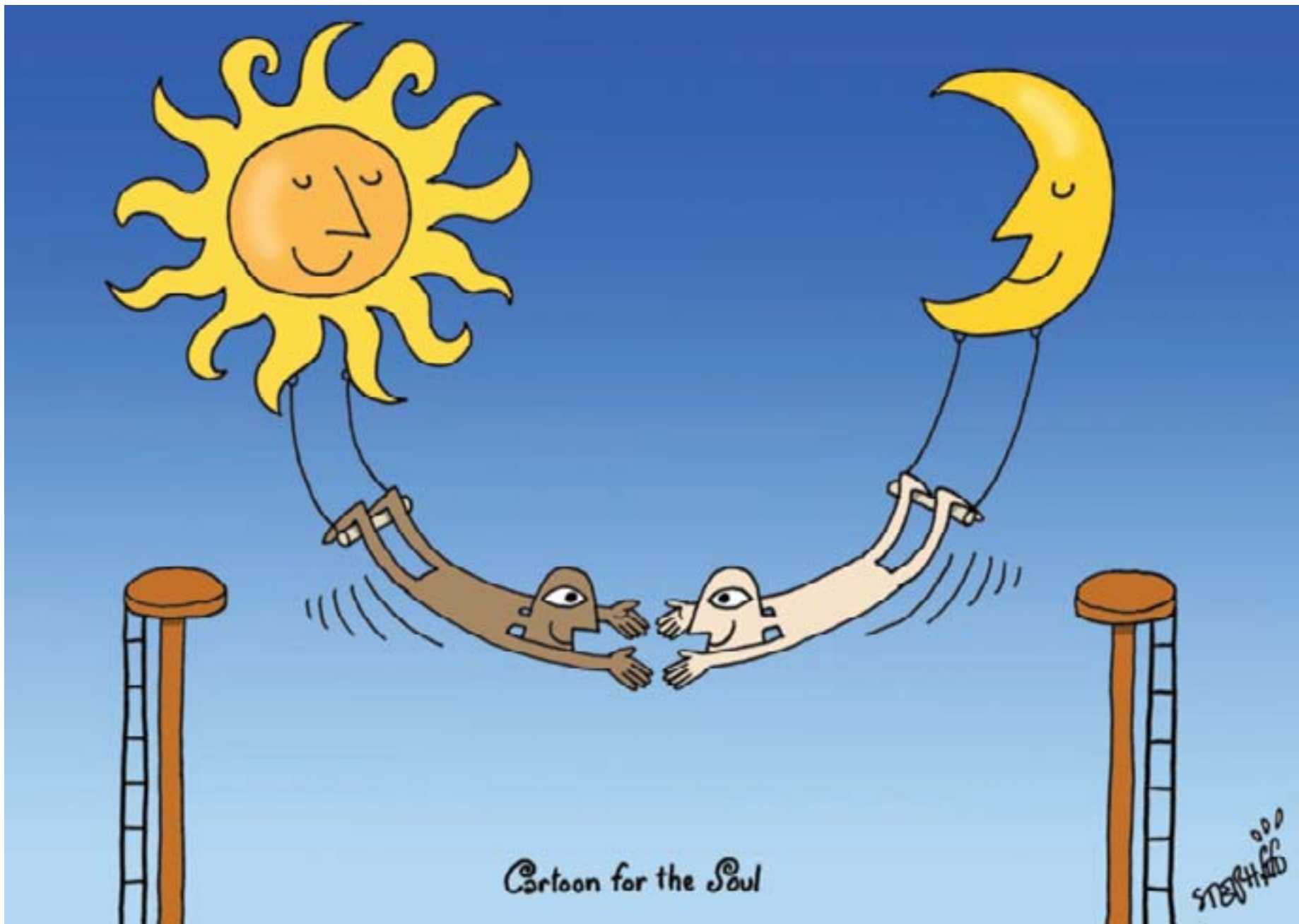
In Massachusetts, two agencies running small numbers of electric buses - the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority in Springfield and Worcester's Regional Transit Authority - say the vehicles weaken in extreme cold and snow. They have no plans to acquire additional EVs, officials at those agencies said. Even places with successful pilots have downplayed expectations. Seattle's King County Metro transit agency soon will be operating more than a dozen vehicles by three manufacturers, according to Pete Melin, director of zero emission fleet technologies. The agency likes what it has seen so far.

Still, Melin said, high electricity rates from the local utility at peak demand periods are a concern. And the lack of a uniform charging system among bus makers has complicated Seattle's goal of running an all-electric fleet by 2034. "We have caveats to becoming zero emissions," Melin said in an interview. Another worry is government funding. Federal money for bus purchases is about 25 percent lower than it was five years ago, according to Rob Healy, vice president of government affairs for the American Public Transportation Association. An Obama-era program that sets aside \$55 million a year in grants to help transit agencies purchase clean buses will expire in 2020 if not renewed by Congress.

The EV Bus Heavyweights

In addition to New Flyer, the fledgling US electric bus industry has two other major players: Chinese automaker BYD, which is backed by Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway Inc; and Silicon Valley startup Proterra Inc. BYD and Proterra began selling electric buses into the US market several years ago, and have 165 and 126 vehicles on the road today, respectively. Both are ramping up US manufacturing on expectations that EVs will account for nearly all new bus sales in a little over a decade. BYD has a plant in Lancaster, California, while Proterra has manufacturing facilities in City of Industry, California and Greenville, South Carolina.

Buffett paid \$230 million for a 10 percent stake in BYD in 2008. Today the company has a market capitalization of \$25 billion, thanks mainly to China's aggressive move to electrify transportation. More than 15 percent of the 608,600 buses in China are pure electric, according to government data. Proterra investors include venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers and the venture capital arm of General Motors Co. Proterra, based in Burlingame, California, is planning an initial public offering, but would not give a timeline for the debut.—Reuters



Erdogan risks diplomatic spat with Israel

By repeatedly hitting out at the US move to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan may be catering to his voter base, but he risks sabotaging Turkey's already fragile relations with the Jewish state. While US President Donald Trump's decision last week was met with near-universal condemnation, particularly from the Muslim world, Erdogan has emerged as its most outspoken critic.

Following Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and to move the embassy there, Erdogan has levelled a string of accusations against Israel and the US, in his usual strident style. Among other things he said Israel was a "terrorist state" that kills Palestinian children, adding that the US had "become a partner to this bloodshed". Such sentiments echo those held by many among Erdogan's traditional voter base of Sunni Muslims in Turkey. His statements have also galvanized his popularity among some Muslims in the Arab world.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responded to Erdogan, saying he was "not used to receiving lectures about morality from a leader who bombs Kurdish villagers in his native Turkey, who jails journalists, who helps Iran go around international sanctions, and who helps terrorists, including in Gaza". Erdogan, who considers himself a fervent supporter of the Palestinians, will hold a summit of leaders of Muslim countries today, which he claimed will mark a "turning point" in the response to Washington's decision. Traditional heavyweights of the Middle East like Saudi Arabia and Egypt have condemned the move, but without announcing any concrete measures of their own.

'Serious risk'

Erdogan, who comes from a conservative Islamist background, frequently criticizes Israel and does not conceal his support for the Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas, listed as a terrorist organization by the US, Israel and several countries around the world. His statements have been "consistent with the prevailing feelings among his own followers inside Turkey", said Marc Pierini, visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe and former EU ambassador to Turkey.

But Erdogan's escalation comes as Turkey and Israel are working to normalize ties since last year after a near-break in relations triggered by Israel's storming of

already thinking about elections scheduled for Nov 2019 when he is expected to run for a new term as president with boosted powers under an executive presidency approved in an April referendum. By taking a firm stand against the Jerusalem move, it is "part of his broader effort to paint himself as the protector of oppressed Muslims around the world," Stein added. "The two sides don't like each other, but are not standing in the way of normal economic relations. I think this is likely to continue, given Erdogan's political calculations and Netanyahu's own legal and political problems," he added.

'Domestic considerations prevail'

Sinan Ulgen, chairman of the Istanbul-based Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy and visiting scholar at Carnegie Europe, believes that Erdogan's rhetoric on Jerusalem more broadly reflects a shift in Turkey's foreign policy approach since the arrival of the Islamic-rooted Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002. "Traditionally, Turkey was able, in its diplomatic practice, to operate more in isolation from domestic political considerations," Ulgen said. "This has changed under AKP rule so that Turkey finds itself at almost another extreme where most foreign policy decisions are driven by domestic calculations." Ulgen said that it was from this perspective that Turkey's efforts to lead the campaign against the US move should be read. Erdogan "believes that there is public support at home to justify this more aggressive rhetoric against Israel", even if it risks provoking a new diplomatic crisis, Ulgen said. "One more time, domestic considerations tend to prevail over more cautious diplomatic practice." — AFP



Popularity of president boosted among Muslims

a Gaza-bound ship in 2010 which left 10 Turkish activists dead. "Given the Israeli reaction to these statements, there is indeed a serious risk for Turkey-Israel normalization. I think this is a risk that both sides are ready to take," Pierini said.

According to Aaron Stein, resident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council's Rafiq Hariri Centre, Erdogan is

Zimbabwe widows left in the cold

When Sheila Chimoyo's husband died in 2011, it didn't take long before accusations started to fly. Her in-laws claimed she had used witchcraft to kill her husband, and seized the small house where she lived with her two children in the Zimbabwean capital Harare. "I was accused of bewitching my husband. I am not a witch and I did not kill my husband. It was a terrible experience because everything happened when I was still mourning," she said. "I hope and pray other women will not go through what I went through," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

But Chimoyo is not alone. Many widows in Zimbabwe lose property to in-laws, even on the day their husband dies. Many Zimbabwean widows face insurmountable obstacles defending their property or taking legal steps to reclaim it, according to a report by Human Rights Watch published last January.

Fending off relatives while mourning their husbands and selling assets like cattle to pay court fees to fight eviction were among the challenges widows face, the report said.

"This is a problem I am familiar with since I am a widow that suffered the same fate," Zimbabwe legislator Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. She was widowed after her husband died from injuries sustained in a botched armed robbery at her home. Even though she is an influential politician and a former government minister, in 2010 she signed over her late husband's estate to his relatives after they hounded her for months - both on her

doorstep and in the courts.

Customary Law

The country's 2012 national census counted more than half a million widows in the country, most of them over 60 years old. And at least 70 percent of women in rural areas are in unregistered traditional marriages and are living under customary law, say rights groups, which offers no protection when it comes to property. "Many widows lose property on the day their husbands die, whilst they are mourning," Misihairabwi-Mushonga said. "Relatives begin to take livestock from the widow and on extreme cases will insist that if she refuses (to marry another member of the family) she can't continue to stay in the family homestead."

In cities, this also includes cars, furniture and banishing the widow from the matrimonial home. "Once in court, widows without an official record of their marriage, if it was a customary union, face a lot of challenges. Courts look to the in-laws - the very people who stand to gain - to confirm the marriage, putting widows at the mercy of their husband's family," said the Human Rights Watch report.

In 2013, Zimbabwe adopted a new constitution which has provisions for equal rights for women, including for inheritance and property. But, in practice, the report said, existing laws only apply to widows in officially registered marriages. The ousting last month of former President Robert Mugabe brought to power his former vice president, Emmerson Mnangagwa. It was not clear what steps Zimbabwe's post-Mugabe government would take to protect the land rights of widows. The new Minister of Justice, Ziyambi Ziyambi, said the government would look into the issue. "I am only a day in office but we will look into the problems and see how best we can address them," Ziyambi told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.—Reuters

US gun control advocates switch strategy

Five years after a gunman killed 20 children and six adults at a Connecticut elementary school, advocates who are disappointed with the failure of efforts to limit access to firearms are changing their strategy. Instead of pressuring lawmakers to push new gun-control measures through the US Congress, volunteers from groups including Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America are now running for office themselves.

Nine of 13 volunteers trained by the group ran for office this year and won seats, ranging from New Hampshire state representative to city council member in West University Place, Texas. Fourteen more have already declared their intentions to run for office in 2018, seeking seats in Congress, state legislatures and local government, all running as Democrats. "The reality is that the work doesn't really start in Congress. That's where it ends," said Moms Demand Action founder Shannon Watts, who launched her group the day after the Dec. 14, 2012, massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

The group began training candidates after more than 400 of its 70,000 members said they were interested in running for office. "This is a marathon, not a sprint," Watts said. "It's going to take several election cycles." Even if the next class of candidates, none of whom are running as Republicans, succeed in winning office, they will face an uphill battle against a US Congress controlled by Republicans, who are staunch defenders of the right to bear arms protected by the Second Amendment of the US Constitution.

Sandy Hook was at the time the second-deadliest mass shooting carried out by a single gunman in US history. It sparked new

energy among gun-control advocates who pushed for fresh federal restrictions on assault weapons, which were blocked by Republican lawmakers and the powerful National Rifle Association lobby. A steady stream of mass shootings have continued across the United States since Sandy Hook, including two deadlier incidents - the slaughter of 58 people at a Las Vegas concert in October and the massacre of 49 people at an Orlando gay nightclub last year.

Grassroots Effort

Mark Barden, whose son Daniel was among the 20 first graders killed in Newtown, said he believes grass roots achievements like the new crop of gun-control candidates will lead to more action. "This is a social change and it takes time," Barden said. "What's happening in Congress notwithstanding, the change is going to come from the ground up."

In the meantime, Barden is working with Sandy Hook Promise, a volunteer effort to prevent more shooting deaths. The group said that in the past two years it has trained 2.5 million students and families to recognize signs of potential gun violence and report them to authorities. Social change, whether it is about drunk driving or recycling, comes from the ground up, said Nicole Hockley, whose 6-year-old son Dylan died in the Sandy Hook attack. "In the gun violence prevention movement, we have not focused on getting behavioral change. It's all been focused on top-down and that is not how you get change," she said.

Next year's class of gun-control candidates includes a mother whose son was shot dead and a bystander paralyzed from the middle of her chest down in a drive-by shooting. Lara Kennedy is running for US House of Representatives in the Texas district that encompasses Austin and north of San Antonio. Lucy McBath, whose only child Jordan Davis was shot dead after an argument over music while parked in Florida in 2012, is running for the Georgia House of Representatives.—Reuters



KUWAIT: Workers conduct maintenance on overhead power lines yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Macron warns world losing battle against climate change

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron delivered a bleak assessment on the global fight against climate change to dozens of world leaders and company executives yesterday, telling them: "We are losing the battle". "We're not moving quickly enough. We all need to act," Macron said, seeking to breathe new life into a collective effort that was weakened this summer when President Donald Trump said he was pulling the United States out of an international accord brokered in the French capital two years ago.

Modern-day science was revealing with each day the danger that global warming posed to the planet, he said. "We are losing the battle," he said, urging the assembled heads of states, ministers and executives to launch a new phase in the fight against global warming. No internationally binding commitments were to be made at yesterday's "One Planet" summit.

In focus is how public and private financial institutions can mobilize more money and how investors can pressure corporate giants to shift towards more ecologically friendly strategies. More than 200 institutional investors with \$26 trillion in assets under management said yesterday they would step up pressure on the world's biggest corporate greenhouse gas emitters to combat climate change. That, they said, would be more effective than threatening to pull the plug on their investments in companies, which include Coal India, Gazprom, Exxon Mobil and China Petroleum &

Chemical Corp. Separately, European Commission Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis said the executive was "looking positively" at plans to reduce capital requirements for environmentally-friendly investments by banks in a bid to boost the green economy. The move could be part of a broader set of measures the EU plans to present in March to meet the target of cutting carbon emissions by 40 percent by 2030, for which it estimates around A180 billion (\$212.2 billion) in additional low-carbon investments are needed per year.

Climate change is causing more frequent and severe flooding, droughts, storms and heatwaves as average global temperatures rise to new records, sea ice melts in the Arctic and sea levels rise. Developing nations say the rich are lagging with a commitment dating back to 2009 to provide \$100 billion a year by 2020 - from public and private sources alike - to help them switch from fossil fuels to greener energy sources and adapt to the effects of climate change. "The missing piece of the jigsaw is the funding to help the world's poorer countries access clean energy so they don't follow the fossil fuel-powered path of the rich world," said Mohamed Adow, charity Christian Aid's lead on climate change.

Yesterday, the European Commission unveiled 9 billion euros worth of investments targeting sustainable cities, sustainable energy and sustainable agriculture for Africa and EU neighborhood countries. Some 50 world leaders and ministers are in Paris, including Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto and leaders of states at the sharp end of climate change such as Chad, Bolivia and Haiti. The United States has sent only an official delegation from the Paris Embassy, but screen superstars Leonardo Di Caprio and Arnold Schwarzenegger and California Governor Jerry Brown, leader of the world's sixth largest economy, are championing more action. In a pointed piece of timing, Macron used the eve of the summit to award 18 grants to foreign climate scientists, most of whom are currently US-based, to come and work in France. — Reuters

Kuwait keen to clamp down on...

Continued from Page 1

The Kuwaiti envoy explained how human trafficking has morphed into a global dilemma with destructive

effects on the social and economic fronts, citing effective legislations Kuwait has passed in efforts to crack down on this nefarious practice.

In a related note, Sabeeh said that he was ecstatic that Kuwait has been granted "observer status" at the International Organization for Migration, which is a testament to the country's diligent efforts to eradicate social ills. Meanwhile, Amy Mahoney, the head of the IOM's counter-trafficking and protection unit in New York, heaped praise on Kuwait for its commitment to crush human trafficking. — KUNA

Chess, therapy for ex-militants...

Continued from Page 1

He says the center is financed locally but seeking additional funds to take in more foreigners and open a branch for female IS members.

Inside, patients shuffle into classrooms for group and individual therapy sessions as well as courses on Islamic law, civil rights, and psychology. Some sport beards and others are clean-shaven. Most wear an unofficial uniform of bright sweatshirts under sleeveless back vests. "The courses are similar to corrective treatment, giving them positive outlooks on themselves and their abilities," says the centre's psychosocial therapist Abdulkarim Darwish.

Darwish listens to their life stories, then runs therapy sessions to identify what social factors led them to join IS. During breaks, the ex-militants pray, eat modest meals on mattresses lined around a windowless room, and play chess - one of the many forms of entertainment IS considered un-Islamic - or spend time with

their wives and children, who also stay at the center.

"I never thought I would turn into a militant," says Hawas Al-Ali, 26, who quit his job as a cook in northern Iraq in 2016 and moved to east Syria. He joined an IS police unit deployed to bolster flailing militant fighting battalions. "My aim was the victory of Islam, but after a while I began thinking about returning to civilian life, society, my relatives and children," says Ali. He checked himself into the center and now says he's excited to return "to my life before Daesh (IS)". Ali fears being arrested if he returns to Iraq, so for now is stuck in northern Syria and may travel to Turkey.

Ashraf Nasir, 24, says he is ready to become again an active member of a society which IS once terrorized. "I'm an essential part of society - I didn't come from under a rock or from Mars, even though I joined Daesh," he says. The problem, Nasir worries, lies in "how society will accept us". Going home will be even harder for foreigners like Muslim Gadzhimetov. The Ukrainian entered Syria in 2016 coming from Turkey to join IS and earlier this year he was detained by rebels. Gadzhimetov says he decided to defect when he learned of the atrocities committed by IS against other Muslims. "I consider myself guilty for this," he says. "Of course I want to socialize and so on, I want to return to civilian life. I dream about this life." — AFP

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Sports

McCall gives Sarries January deadline to save season

Northampton sack director of rugby Mallinder

LONDON: Saracens director of rugby says the European champions have given themselves six weeks to save their season after crashing to their sixth successive defeat. The team went down 46-14 to Clermont on Monday-their heaviest-ever defeat in European competition-capping a miserable weekend for English Premiership clubs.

The Pool 2 match had been delayed by a day due to adverse conditions around Allianz Park but it was the French giants who adapted better to the unfamiliar Monday late afternoon kick-off in front of a near-empty stadium.

“We didn’t see that coming,” said McCall. “I know we’ve lost a few games in a row but they were relatively tight games that we lost by a point or two here or there.” McCall said he and the players had put their heads together after the match a repeat of last season’s final-to thrash out how the two-time defending European champions could pull themselves out of their slump.

“What we said in the changing room is that by the end of January we hope we can be proud of how we respond to this difficult situation we find ourselves in,” he said. “Potentially, that isn’t just about outcomes because we have a difficult game against Clermont away in six days-it’s also about staying tight as a group and sticking together as a group.

“We’ve got enough good players at the club and people who care about the club enough to respond in the right way over a six-week period.” The rivals meet again in France on Sunday with Clermont now occupy-

ing first place in Pool 2 with three rounds of the group phase remaining-the final two matches will be played on successive weekends in January.

Clermont were infuriated by the decision to postpone the fixture from 3:15 pm on Sunday to 5:30 pm on Monday due to the hazardous condition of the approaches to the stadium after a night of snowfall.

Last season’s beaten finalists said they were not consulted throughout a process they described as “completely absurd” and were angry at multiple changes to the kick-off time for the rearranged fixture.

The main target of their ire was Champions Cup organisers European Professional Club Rugby (EPCR), which Saracens owner Nigel Wray claimed was not fit for purpose. On a miserable weekend for English clubs in the European Champions Cup, Harlequins, Wasps, Exeter, Bath, Northampton and Leicester also lost.

Northampton, whose European hopes are all but over, announced on Tuesday they had sacked long-serving director of rugby Jim Mallinder.

Meanwhile, English Premiership side Northampton yesterday announced the sacking of long-serving director of rugby Jim Mallinder following a string of poor results.

The club’s board said in a statement that a change in management-with immediate effect-was in the best interests of the club, who have lost their past four matches. “Jim has been an outstanding director of rugby,” said chairman John White. “We have been very



Mark McCall

lucky to have him at Franklin’s Gardens and he will always be a part of the Saints family.

“This is not a decision that has been taken lightly but the board and major shareholders felt that the time was right for some change.”

Alan Dickens, the club’s attack coach, will take over

as interim head coach until a replacement is found for Mallinder, who was appointed in 2007.

Saints were Premiership champions in 2014 but are currently languishing in 10th spot and are on the brink of elimination from the European Champions Cup after Saturday’s defeat by the Ospreys. —AFP

ROC approves athletes competing under neutral flag

MOSCOW: The Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) yesterday gave a green light for its athletes to compete under a neutral flag at the 2018 Winter Olympics despite a ban on the country’s national team.

“We all had the same opinion: our athletes need to go to South Korea and try to bring back a victory for Russia. Russian athletes have expressed their will to take part in the games,” the ROC president Alexander Zhukov, who is suspended from the IOC, told a press-conference in Moscow.

The ROC “will respect the will of every athlete. The ROC will take all necessary measures for financial, legal and sport-related assistance for those who will take part in the games and those who will be refused or will not receive an invitation”, Zhukov added.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) last week decided to ban Russia from the 2018 Games, from February 9-25, over accusations of a state-sponsored doping programme at the 2014 Sochi Games.

It said it would only allow “clean” Russian athletes to participate under strict conditions and under the Olympic flag. Zhukov said the Russian Olympic Committee will send a delegation to Lausanne, —AFP



MOSCOW: The President of the Russian Olympic Committee, Alexander Zhukov (5thR) and officials prepare to start a meeting in Moscow yesterday on deciding how to respond to IOC ban on Russia participating in Winter Games. — AFP

Russia’s Olympic Committee to support neutral athletes at Winter Games

MOSCOW: Russia’s Olympic Committee agreed yesterday to support its athletes who choose to compete in next year’s Winter Games in South Korea as neutrals following a ban on the Russian national team.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) last week banned Russia from the Games, due to take place in Pyeongchang in February, for what it called “unprecedented systematic manipulation” of the anti-doping system.

But it left the door open for Russian athletes with a clean history of non-doping to be invited to compete as neutrals under an Olympic flag, not a Russian one.

President Vladimir Putin said last week Russia would not prevent its athletes from competing, dismissing calls by some for a boycott, and an ROC official said on Monday most Russian athletes still wanted to attend.

The Russian committee(ROC) agreed its position at a meeting on Tuesday attended by sporting figures including the national men’s hockey team, figure skaters, speed skaters and the presidents of winter

sports federations. ROC President Alexander Zhukov said: “All the participants were of the same opinion - our sportsmen need to go to Korea, need to compete, achieve victory for the glory of Russia, for the glory of our motherland.” Zhukov said Russia would do its best to support Russian athletes competing under a neutral flag and hold serious talks with the IOC in the near future to discuss the problems and practicalities of the arrangement. He did not say what form this support would take.

“Russian sportsmen have stated their readiness to take part in the Olympic Games, despite the difficult conditions and decision of the IOC, which is undoubtedly unfair in many ways,” he said. Zhukov added that Russia would also support the athletes who had decided not to compete in Pyeongchang.

Senior Russian Olympic official Vitaly Smirnov, who heads Russia’s state-backed anti-doping commission, said the country had made the “right decision” not to boycott. “A boycott is not a solution,” Smirnov said. “That (would mean) new sanctions and problems for our athletes.” In the weeks leading up to the IOC ban, more than 20 Russian athletes who competed at the 2014 Sochi Games were banned for life from the Olympics for allegedly breaching anti-doping rules.

Russian authorities have vehemently denied any state support for doping and have pledged to co-operate with international sports bodies to counter the use of banned performance-enhancing drugs.

Russia’s athletics federation, paralympic committee and anti-doping agency RUSADA remain suspended over doping scandals.

“OLYMPIC ATHLETE FROM RUSSIA”

Sitting in the front row of the Russian Olympic Committee auditorium ahead of the meeting, hockey star Ilya Kovalchuk said he would not mind competing at the Games as an “Olympic Athlete from Russia,” the term the IOC uses to designate the Russians who will go to Pyeongchang.

“We are athletes from Russia, after all,” Kovalchuk told reporters. “They took the flag away but they can’t take away our honour and our conscience.”

Kovalchuk, one of the first to call for athletes to compete in Pyeongchang after the IOC ban, thanked authorities for taking the opinions of athletes into consideration. “Thank you for having heard us, for having believed us,” Kovalchuk said. “I think that every athlete who takes part in the Olympic Games in Pyeongchang will do everything possible.”

Olympic fencer Sofya Velikaya, chair of the ROC’s athletes commission, called on the Russian public to respect athletes’ decisions to go to Pyeongchang amid concerns that some could be branded traitors for agreeing to compete without the country’s flag. “The athletes will show their love for their motherland and their patriotism through their results, through their accomplishments and medals,” Velikaya said. —AFP

Late Sheikh Fahad Al-Salem shooting tournament begins tomorrow

By Abdellatif Sharaa



Obaid Al-Osaimi

KUWAIT: Kuwait Shooting Sporting Club with the support of Sheikha Latifa Al-Fahad Al-Salem Al-Sabah will organize the annual tournament of the Late Sheikh Fahad Al-Salem shooting tournament. Starting tomorrow in the Olympic skeet, trap, double trap, 10m air pistol and rifle, 50m pistol and rifle, in addition to the Olympic archery with the participation of Kuwait National teams members as well shooters from the national guard, UAE and Qatar shooting federations. Secretary General of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations thanked Sheikha Latifa for her support and patronage of this annual tournament, which carries the name of one of Kuwait’s national symbols who contributed to the development and flourishing of modern Kuwait.

Obaid Al-Osaimi welcomed the participation of UAE and Qatari shooters pointing out this tournament attracts large participation. He said that local competitions and the support it receives from respectable dignitaries and national contributions, all in the interest of youth and contributes significantly to the local activities of the club and help enhance the technical level of Kuwait shooters.

The tournament will conclude on Saturday with a closing ceremony at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex.

Marsh raring to go if called in Perth Test

SYDNEY: Australia all-rounder Mitchell Marsh said he was ready to go if his improved batting in domestic cricket earned him the nod for the third Ashes test against England that starts in Perth tomorrow.

The 26-year-old underwent shoulder surgery earlier this year and faced nine months on the sidelines but returned for Western Australia in October and scored 680 runs in all forms of cricket at an average of 68.

He has scored two centuries, a 95 and 80 in his 14

innings and is expected to be in competition with Peter Handscomb for a position in the third Test lineup. If selected, elder brother Shaun is likely to move to number five with Mitchell slotting in at six, where his medium-pace bowling will complement the all-out pace trio of Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Pat Cummins.

“I am renowned as the ‘glue’ of the fast bowling cartel,” Marsh told reporters in Perth yesterday. “I did a bit of sucking up and I’m back in their WhatsApp group. The cartel are happy to have me back. I got invited to dinner last night. It was a huge honour,” he added with a laugh.

While Marsh’s improved batting had no doubt put him back in the frame, the all-rounder said his reconstructed shoulder was holding up well to the rigours of bowling. “Shoulder’s feeling really good, body’s feeling really good, got through the last two Shield games bowling, ready to go if I get the chance,” he said.

“I know I’m in great form at the moment, I probably didn’t expect to get back in so soon after my injury. I’ve worked hard over the last nine months to get my body back into shape. “If I get an opportunity to play, I’ll bowl as many overs as Smudger (captain Steve Smith) needs me to bowl.

“Rhythm-wise, the ball’s coming out really well, pace-wise I think I’m up where I was 18 months ago.” Marsh added that his possible test return on his home ground, which was hard and generating good pace, would be special if he gets to play with his brother, but the job was to wrap up the series with two tests remaining.

“It’d nice to be back playing for Australia and playing with Shaun again, it’s always special,” he said. “But we’re playing an Ashes test and we have an opportunity to win the series so all I’m focused on, if I get an opportunity, is doing my job for the team.” — Reuters

Sports

New Zealand wrap up Windies series with 240-run victory

Hostile Neil Wagner bounces out Windies

SCOREBOARD

HAMILTON: Scoreboard in the second Test between New Zealand and the West Indies in Hamilton yesterday:

New Zealand first innings 373 (J. Raval 84, C. de Grandhomme 58; Gabriel 4-119, Roach 3-58).

West Indies first innings 221 (K. Brathwaite 66; Boult 4-73)

New Zealand second innings 291-8 dec (R. Taylor 107 not out, K. Williamson 54; Cummins 3-69).

West Indies second innings (overnight 30-2)

K. Brathwaite c Williamson b Boult	20
K. Powell c Southee b Boult	0
S. Hetmyer c Wagner b Southee	15
S. Hope c de Grandhomme b Wagner	23
R. Chase c de Grandhomme b Wagner	64
S. Ambris retired hurt	5
S. Dowrich c Nicholls b Wagner	0
R. Reifer c Williamson b Southee	29
K. Roach b Santner	32
M. Cummins c Boult b Santner	9
S. Gabriel not out	0
Extras: (lb5, w1)	6
Total: (for 9 wickets: 63.5 overs)	203
Fall of wickets: 1-4 (Powell), 2-27 (Hetmyer), 3-43 (Brathwaite), 4-68 (Hope), 4-80 (Ambris retired), 5-80 (Dowrich), 6-158 (Chase), 7-166 (Reifer), 8-203 (Cummins), 9-203 (Roach)	
Bowling: Southee 19-3-71-2, Boult 16-1-52-2, Wagner 15-5-42-3 (1w), de Grandhomme 9-5-20-0, Santner 4.5-0-13-2	
Result: New Zealand won by 240 runs	
Series: New Zealand won 2-0	

HAMILTON: New Zealand congratulated themselves on a smart plan as they decimated the West Indies with a day to spare in the second Test to sweep the series 2-0 yesterday. The tourists struggled to cope in their second innings against New Zealand's three-pronged fast bowling attack in Hamilton, particularly against a barrage of bouncers from Neil Wagner.

A brutal spell from Wagner produced three wickets and a broken arm as the hosts romped to a 240-run victory. The West Indies, set a target of 444 to win after losing the first Test by an innings, folded at nine for 203 with the injured Sunil Ambris unable to continue batting. "The way we were able to keep putting pressure on them with the ball and bat was a credit to the way we executed our plans," said captain Kane Williamson.



Win improved New Zealand's home record

"Here the bounce became a little bit variable which is great in a Test match. You want to see the surface age a little bit and the way (the bowlers) were able to execute plans was outstanding."

Wagner, who tormented the West Indies throughout the series with his aggressive short balls, took three for 42 while new-ball pair Tim Southee and Trent Boult grabbed two wickets apiece, as did spinner Mitchell Santner. The victory improved New Zealand's home record to 13 wins, three losses and seven draws in their last 10 home series.

'DIDN'T WORK OUT'

While Wagner was the chief destroyer, Williamson said the two significant factors were Boult and Southee's 61-run stand at the tail of the first innings and Ross Taylor's unbeaten 107 in the second. West Indies captain Kraigg Brathwaite laid the blame on his bats-



HAMILTON: Neil Wagner of New Zealand bowls during day four of the second Test cricket match between New Zealand and the West Indies at Seddon Park in Hamilton yesterday. — AFP

men for failing to learn from the first Test when Wagner took nine wickets. "We didn't bat well. The key was to take it over by over, session by session. Obviously it didn't work out that way," he said. "It's key to have your plans worked out and be very decisive in your shot selection." Ambris was taken to hospital after a vicious blow to the forearm during a blistering spell by Wagner. It ended a tough Test baptism for Ambris who made unwanted history in the opening Test when he became the first person to be out for a golden duck in his debut innings by stepping on his wicket.

In the first innings of the second Test, his misfortune continued when he became the first person to step on his stumps in consecutive Tests. Shai Hope, on 23, was also hit on the forearm by a rising Wagner delivery.

When play resumed after medical treatment, he tried to take on Wagner only to be caught at long leg.

Shane Dowrich lasted two balls after Ambris left, fending a Wagner bouncer to Henry Nicholls at short leg. Roston Chase and Raymon Reifer manufactured a solid 78-run partnership until Chase, on 64, went in similar fashion to Hope, pulling a Wagner bouncer to the safe hands of de Grandhomme. Reifer was out soon after for 29 as the tail folded with the last three wickets adding 45. The series now moves to three one-day internationals and three Twenty20s with the tourists to be reinforced with the inclusion of Chris Gayle and Marlon Samuels for all six matches, while Andre Fletcher, Sunil Narine and Kieron Pollard will play the Twenty20s. —AFP

England on the brink at WACA house of pain

MELBOURNE: England's hopes of clawing their way back into an Ashes series fast slipping from their grip will be put to the ultimate test at the WACA where the tourists have won only once in nearly 50 years. The WACA bore witness to the meek surrender of the 2013/14 series by Alastair Cook's England, and at 2-0 down after Brisbane and Adelaide, Joe Root's men face a similar predicament when the third Test starts tomorrow.

With its traditionally quick and bouncy wicket playing to the strengths of home pacemen, the WACA has been a house of pain for English cricket and Australians will be hoping for more of the same when the ground hosts its final Test. One has to delve deep in the records to even find the last time England drew a match.

That was in 1986, when Mike Gatting's unlikely band of hard-partying tourists put on 592 in the first innings to frustrate Allan Border's team.

The maiden win was in 1978 when Mike Brearley's side thrashed Graham Yallop-captained Australia by 166 runs, a victory that might otherwise have been remembered as a triumph of English cricket but for the fact that the hosts had been gutted by the World Series Cricket rebellion. Australia have beaten England in their last seven matches at the WACA and with the hosts' pacemen licking their lips, it may take something truly special from Joe Root's men just to keep the series alive to

the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne.

Managing that would be a victory of sorts, given England need only to square the five-test series at 2-2 to keep the coveted urn. Having fought hard but ultimately crumbled at both the Gabba and the Adelaide Oval, England's chances of rallying at the WACA have been given short shrift by bookmakers.

Their week has also included further off-field problems with coach Trevor Bayliss left fuming after English Lions batsman Ben Duckett poured a drink over the head of James Anderson in a Perth bar.

And yet, a small increase in application by the tourists could ensure a contest at the WACA. England have paid dearly for a few dreadful sessions and the scoreline has, to an extent, flattered Steve Smith's Australia.

The vulnerability of the home side's batting was on full display in the second innings at Adelaide Oval as they crashed out for 133 to raise England's hopes of an unlikely victory. Several of Australia's batsmen are under pressure, most notably number five Peter Handscomb whose place could be taken by Mitchell Marsh, an all-rounder with a poor batting record at test level. Anderson and the England seamers, meanwhile, will have enjoyed a boost of confidence from Adelaide, where Craig Overton provided much better support than Jake Ball at the Gabba.

More will be needed from the English batsmen, though, given none have managed a century this series. Root and his most senior batsman Alastair Cook have been particularly culpable for failing to set the benchmark by converting promising starts into big scores. Both were present for England's last capitulation at the WACA and will be desperate to make a contribution to avoiding another. — Reuters

Islanders snap 3-game losing streak with a 3-1 win over Capitals

NEW YORK: Andrew Ladd and John Tavares scored less than a minute apart early in the second period as the New York Islanders snapped a three-game losing streak with a 3-1 win over the Washington Capitals at Barclays Center. Brock Nelson scored in the first period for the Islanders, who vaulted past the idle New Jersey Devils into a tie for second place in the Metropolitan Division with the Capitals. Jaroslav Halak recorded 31 saves. Dmitry Orlov scored in the third period for the Capitals, who had their season-high, four-game winning streak halted as they lost for the second time in the past nine games (7-2-0). Braden Holtby made nine saves before being chased after Tavares' goal. Philipp Grubauer stopped all 17 shots he faced.

AVALANCHE 2, PENGUINS 1

Defenseman Mark Barberio's goal at 6:17 of the third period broke a scoreless tie, and Colorado downed Pittsburgh. Blake Comeau added an empty-net goal with 1:29 left before Phil Kessel broke up what would have been a shutout by Avalanche goaltender Jonathan Bernier with 11.8 seconds left. Bernier made 39 saves. Tristan Jarry stopped 26 shots for the Penguins and is on a 1-2-0 stretch plus a no-decision after getting pulled following one period Saturday.

STARS 2, RANGERS 1 (SO)

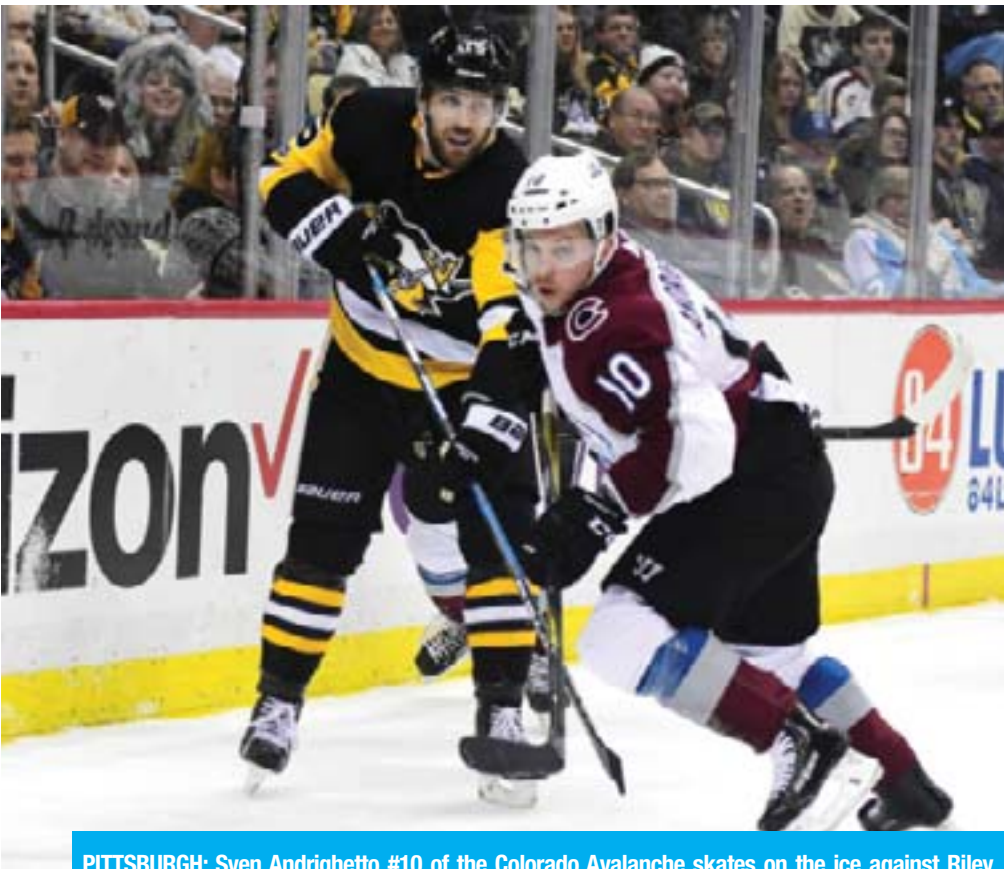
Jason Spezza scored the decisive goal in the third round of a shootout as Dallas edged New York. The Stars, who snapped their second three-game losing streak of the season, got a goal from Julius Honka. The Rangers' Rick Nash forced overtime by scoring his eighth goal of the season on a deflection with 3:41 remaining in regulation.

PANTHERS 2, RED WINGS 1 (OT)

Mike Matheson scored 2:02 into overtime as Florida rallied past Detroit. After Red Wings goalie Jimmy Howard sprawled to make a save on Nick Bjugstad, Matheson pounded a rebound into the net for his first goal of the season. Vincent Trocheck also scored for the Panthers, while Henrik Zetterberg had the Red Wings' goal.

JETS 5, CANUCKS 1

Mathieu Perreault scored two goals, including what proved to be the game-winner, and assisted on an insurance goal to help Winnipeg beat Vancouver. Nikolaj Ehlers, Josh Morrissey and Dmitry Kulikov also scored for the Jets. The Canucks, who lost their third straight, got a goal from rookie



PITTSBURGH: Sven Andrighetto #10 of the Colorado Avalanche skates on the ice against Riley Sheahan #15 of the Pittsburgh Penguins at PPG Paints Arena in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. — AFP

NHL results/standings

Anaheim 3, Carolina 2; Winnipeg 5, Vancouver 1; Florida 2, Detroit 1 (OT); NY Islanders 3, Washington 1; Dallas 2, NY Rangers 1 (SO); Colorado 2, Pittsburgh 1.

Western Conference						Eastern Conference							
Central Division						Atlantic Division							
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	Tampa Bay	21	6	2	110	74	44
St. Louis	21	8	2	104	78	44	Toronto	20	10	1	106	88	41
Winnipeg	18	8	5	107	87	41	Boston	14	9	4	78	75	32
Nashville	18	7	4	95	84	40	Montreal	13	14	4	85	99	30
Dallas	17	13	1	91	90	35	Florida	12	14	4	90	105	28
Minnesota	15	11	3	87	87	33	Detroit	11	13	6	81	99	28
Chicago	14	11	5	90	82	33	Ottawa	9	12	7	77	98	25
Colorado	14	13	2	92	95	30	Buffalo	7	17	6	64	102	20
Pacific Division						Metropolitan Division							
Los Angeles	20	8	3	97	68	43	Columbus	19	10	1	86	73	39
Las Vegas	19	9	1	103	91	39	NY Islanders	17	10	3	108	100	37
San Jose	16	10	3	79	69	35	Washington	18	12	1	95	91	37
Calgary	16	12	2	88	94	34	New Jersey	16	9	4	89	91	36
Anaheim	13	11	7	83	91	33	NY Rangers	16	11	3	99	89	35
Vancouver	14	13	4	82	90	32	Pittsburgh	16	13	3	94	104	35
Edmonton	12	16	2	86	99	26	Philadelphia	11	11	7	83	86	29
Arizona	7	21	5	75	114	19	Carolina	11	11	7	80	91	29
Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).													

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

Brock Boeser, his team-leading 16th of the season. Boeser matched Tony Granato's 1988-89 mark for the most goals by a U.S.-born rookie through his first 30 games.

DUCKS 3, HURRICANES 2

Logan Shaw had a goal and an assist, and John Gibson recorded 28 saves as Anaheim defeated Carolina. The Ducks celebrated the return of Ryan Getzlaf to the lineup after the

captain missed 19 games due to facial fractures. However, Anaheim's Corey Perry left in the first period with an apparent knee injury. Derek Grant and Jakob Silfverberg also scored for the Ducks. Justin Williams and Victor Rask had the goals for the Hurricanes, who went winless on their three-game California road trip, though they took both the San Jose Sharks and the Los Angeles Kings to overtime. — Reuters



PERTH: File photo shows spectators cheering after Australian fieldsman Michael Hussey took an outfield catch to dismiss South African batsman Vernon Philander. The WACA ground, where the third Ashes Test will be played from tomorrow has been described as ramshackle, frozen in time, evocative and a veritable graveyard for visiting teams. —AFP

Sports

Rockets, Warriors roll on as depleted Celtics crash to defeat

Raptors six-game winning streak ends

NBA result/standings

Golden State 111, Portland 104; LA Clippers 96, Toronto 91; Chicago 108, Boston 85; Houston 130, New Orleans 123; Memphis 82, Miami 107; Oklahoma City 103, Charlotte 116.				
Eastern Conference				
	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	23	6	79.3	0
Cleveland	19	8	70.4	3
Toronto	17	8	68.0	4
Milwaukee	15	10	60.0	6
Indiana	16	11	59.3	6
Washington	14	12	53.8	7.5
Detroit	14	12	53.8	7.5
New York	13	13	50.0	8.5
Miami	13	13	50.0	8.5
Philadelphia	13	13	50.0	8.5
Brooklyn	10	15	40.0	11
Orlando	11	17	39.3	11.5
Charlotte	10	16	38.5	11.5
Chicago	6	20	23.1	15.5
Atlanta	6	20	23.1	15.5
Western Conference				
Houston	21	4	84.0	0
Golden State	22	6	78.6	1.5
San Antonio	19	8	70.4	3
Minnesota	16	11	59.3	6
Denver	14	12	53.8	7.5
New Orleans	14	14	50.0	8.5
Portland	13	13	50.0	8.5
Utah	13	14	48.1	9
Oklahoma City	12	14	46.2	9.5
LA Clippers	10	15	40.0	11
LA Lakers	10	15	40.0	11
Phoenix	9	19	32.1	13.5
Sacramento	8	18	30.8	13.5
Memphis	8	19	29.6	14
Dallas	7	20	25.9	15

HOUSTON: Chris Paul and James Harden came alive late, and the Houston Rockets erased a 13-point, third-quarter deficit and extended their winning streak to 10 games with a 130-123 victory over the New Orleans Pelicans on Monday. Harden scored 12 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter and matched his career high of 17 assists. Paul scored 16 points over the final 13-plus minutes while adding nine rebounds and six assists. The Rockets remained undefeated with Paul in the lineup at 11-0. Houston also got a career-high 28 points from Clint Capela and 27 points from Eric Gordon. Jrue



Thunder fails yet another attempt to crawl back

Holiday poured in a season-high 37 points for the Pelicans, and E'Twaun Moore scored a career-high 36 points. DeMarcus Cousins posted 24 points, 14 rebounds and eight assists, and Rajon Rondo had a triple-double (13 points, 12 boards, 12 assists).

BULLS 108, CELTICS 85

Nikola Mirotic scored 24 points in his first start of the season, and Bobby Portis scored 23 as Chicago won its third consecutive game. David Nwaba finished with 13 points for the Bulls, who have not lost since snapping a 10-game losing streak on Friday with an overtime victory over the Charlotte Hornets. Kris Dunn added 12 points for Chicago. The Celtics played without Kyrie Irving, who sat out due to a left quadriceps contusion. Al Horford scored 15 points, and Jaylen Brown, Marcus Smart and Terry Rozier each contributed 13 points for Boston.

WARRIORS 111, TRAIL BLAZERS 104

Despite missing Stephen Curry (sprained right ankle) and Draymond Green (sore right shoulder), Golden State earned its seventh consecutive win. Kevin Durant scored 28 points, Klay Thompson had 24 points, and four other Warriors, including replacement starters Omri Casspi and Jordan Bell, also scored in double fig-



HOUSTON: Clint Cappella #15 of the Houston Rockets grabs the rebound against the New Orleans Pelicans on Monday at the Toyota Center in Houston, Texas. — AFP

ures. Oakland native Damian Lillard poured in 39 points for the Trail Blazers, who were short-handed as well without Jusuf Nurkic (sprained right ankle) and Mo Harkless (bruised left quad). Portland dropped its fifth game in a row.

CLIPPERS 96, RAPTORS 91

Montrezl Harrell and Lou Williams each scored 17 points as Los Angeles held on for a victory over Toronto. Jonas Valanciunas scored 23 points and grabbed 15 rebounds as the Raptors saw their six-game winning streak end. In his first game back after missing 22 contests with a strained left foot, guard Milos Teodosic made a key 3-pointer with 40.5 seconds remaining, giving the Clippers a late 91-87 lead. Teodosic was just 2 of 9 from 3-point range for the game but finished with 12 points.

HORNETS 116, THUNDER 103

Dwight Howard scored 23 points and Kemba Walker

added 19 as Charlotte used a big third quarter to beat Oklahoma City. Charlotte snapped a three-game losing streak by earning just its second win in nine games. The Thunder failed at yet another attempt to crawl back to .500. Oklahoma City has lost three games with a chance to even its record since Nov. 15, when it was 7-7. Russell Westbrook scored 30 points for the Thunder. Paul George added 20 in his first game back after missing two consecutive games with a calf injury. Steven Adams had 11 points and 10 rebounds.

HEAT 107, GRIZZLIES 82

Goran Dragic scored 19 points as Miami defeated Memphis. The Grizzlies have lost four straight and 15 of their past 16 games, and their home record fell to 5-11. The Heat shot 56.1 percent from the floor and went 14 of 27 from 3-point range, 51.9 percent. Miami got 17 points from guard Josh Richardson and 14 points each off the bench from center Bam Adebayo and guard Tyler Johnson. Marc Gasol led the Grizzlies with 19 points. —Reuters

New Shanghai boss Pereira vows to go one better than Villas-Boas

SHANGHAI: Vitor Pereira wants to go one better than predecessor Andre Villas-Boas by winning a title after being named coach of big-spending Chinese Super League side Shanghai SIPG yesterday.

The 49-year-old, who was once assistant to Villas-Boas at Porto, has been out of football since leaving 1860 Munich following relegation to the German third tier in May. Pereira, who had notoriously poor relations with Dutch striker Robin van Persie before being sacked by Turkish giants Fenerbahce in August 2016, is tasked with breaking Guangzhou Evergrande's stranglehold on the Chinese Super League (CSL).

Villas-Boas left SIPG two weeks ago after a turbulent season failed to yield a trophy despite reaching the last four of the Asian Champions League, the final of the Chinese FA Cup and coming second behind Guangzhou in the CSL.

"The Chinese league is a big challenge at the moment, a lot of (foreign) coaches come here, a lot of good players come to this league at this moment," said Pereira, who plans to speak to his fellow Portuguese and "friend" Villas-Boas about the job.

"I will do my best to help the club to fight to achieve our goals. I know what the club wants and I know what I want for my career, and both of us want to win titles," he told a press conference at his unveiling. "This is the main reason why I decided to come here to China, to Shanghai. Together, for sure, we will reach our targets at the end of the season." Pereira was number two to Villas-Boas at Porto in the 2010-2011 season and together they won the Portuguese League, Cup and Europa League.

Villas-Boas subsequently left for Chelsea and Pereira took charge of Porto, lifting the Portuguese League twice, before spells in charge of Al Ahli in Saudi Arabia, Olympiakos in Greece and then Fenerbahce. SIPG boast a squad led by 60-million-euro attacking midfielder Oscar and his fellow Brazilian international Hulk, while in winger Wu Lei they have China's best offensive player. Hulk worked under Pereira at Porto and the new coach said he was looking forward to reacquainting with the powerful forward. "I was with Hulk at Porto for three years and I know the personality and the quality of the player," said Pereira. "For sure he will help us a lot, but the key player for me is the team."

Compared to former Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur manager Villas-Boas and the Italian legend Fabio Cannavaro at Guangzhou, Pereira is a relative unknown to Chinese football fans and some SIPG supporters were quick to criticise his appointment.

"To be honest, from the bottom of my heart, I feel like he won't be able to control the dressing room," wrote one unhappy fan on Weibo, China's equivalent of Twitter. "Not really looking forward to his performance, but I hope the results will prove me wrong." —AFP

Kuwaitis, residents exempted from visas to attend 2018 WCup

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Russian Embassy announced Kuwaitis and residents who want to travel to Russia to attend the 2018 FIFA World Cup are exempt from visa requirements. Gaidar Gamzatov, Counselor, Deputy Head of Mission, said at a press conference on Monday that special procedures are already in place. "All those wishing to visit Russia during the tournament are required to obtain a FAN ID from FIFA's official website (www.fifa.com) and have a passport. No bank statement or hotel reservations are required," he said.

Gamzatov noted people should not visit Russia only for the 2018 World Cup, but also because Russia is a beautiful country and has many places to visit to enjoy the beauty of nature and cultural heritage. "We invite them to take advantage of their presence there to enjoy the atmosphere of tourism in Russia," he added.

Bassel Al-Aswad, head of the Russian National Bureau of Tourism in Kuwait at Yaish Travel, said the company is ready for the huge number of people who have applied to attend the big event, adding economy class tickets are available online starting from \$200. Aswad said Yaish Travel is offering a "match hospitality" ticket and will provide the customers hotel rooms, travel tickets, free transportation and the FAN ID that gives them the free visa to Russia". He pointed out that all procedures will be handled by the travel company. He noted that Russia is keen on welcoming Gulf and Arab tourists, adding tourists are welcome to arrive 10 days before the date of the booked match and remain for another 10 days after the fixture.



From left to right Ayaz Ismagilov, diplomatic attache Bassel Al-Aswad, head of the Russian National Bureau of Tourism and Gaidar Gamzatov, deputy counselor. —Photos by Yasser Al Zayyat



Sports

Mata rallies Man United in wake of Mourinho defeatism

Lukaku has scored just two goals in 14 appearances

MANCHESTER: Manchester United players will have to motivate themselves at home to Bournemouth today after manager Jose Mourinho suggested their Premier League title challenge was probably over.

The 2-1 defeat at home to Manchester City on Sunday leaves United second in the table but a daunting 11 points behind their city rivals. However, United's Spanish forward Juan Mata issued a stirring rallying call in the wake of the defeat.

"We must carry on, knowing there's still a long way to go," said Mata. "The calendar gives you no time for mourning and we have to focus on what's next. "The list of fixtures is very demanding this month so it's important to get to each game in the best condition possible. "I think we have the ability to do it, even though we know these are the toughest weeks of the season. "We are Manchester United and we have experience in playing every few days." United's fixture list is indeed a hectic one-today's match is the fourth of nine games they face during December.

It does not help that they will once again be without France midfielder Paul Pogba, who serves the second game of a three-match ban incurred for his sending-off at Arsenal on December 2. Pogba's influence was undoubtedly missed during Sunday's derby, although Bournemouth should be far less of a test for Nemanja Matic and Ander Herrera than Manchester City were.

‘PICKED UP LITTLE NIGGLES’

Herrera still needs to watch his step, though, as he is one booking away from a one-match suspension, as is wing-back Ashley Young. Mourinho has given every indication so far that he intends to persist with Romelu Lukaku, despite the Belgium striker's poor run of form in front of goal.

Having scored 11 goals in his first 10 United games, Lukaku has hit just two in 14 appearances since. Bournemouth's 2-2 draw at Crystal Palace at the weekend left Eddie Howe's side three points clear of the bottom three.

The Cherries had Jermain Defoe to thank for claiming a point with the veteran scoring twice and offering signs he is returning to his best form after an inconsistent start to the season. "Hopefully it's a start for him, he had a few niggles early on in the season so he was set back a little," said



OLD TRAFFORD: File photo shows Manchester City's Brazilian goalkeeper Ederson (2L) makes the second of a double save from a shot from Manchester United's Spanish midfielder Juan Mata (3L) during the English Premier League football match between Manchester United and Manchester City. — AFP

Manchester City eye record against Swansea

MANCHESTER: Manchester City look unstoppable in their relentless surge towards the Premier League title, and only have lowly Swansea standing in the way of Pep Guardiola's men setting a new record of consecutive wins today.

City are 11 points clear at the top of the Premier League and the managers of Manchester United and Chelsea both effectively conceded defeat in the title race at the weekend.

Their victory against Jose Mourinho's United on Sunday was their 14th straight win in the Premier League—a single season record that also equalled the best-ever run Arsenal established over two seasons in 2002. Yet despite their frightening form, City defender

Kyle Walker is urging caution. "We have to keep our feet on the floor and keep working hard, preparing physically and mentally," he said. "We have another important one today against Swansea. We have to keep getting three points."

Guardiola has declared repeatedly that his team will lose a league match at some point this season but few people would expect that to happen at second-from-bottom Swansea. David Silva is in dazzling form, with goals in each of his past two appearances and a man-of-the-match display on Sunday but the Premier League's leading scorers have an array of talent supporting him.

However there could be consequences on and off the field following derby victory. Captain Vincent Kompany was substituted after an hour with what appeared to be the latest in a sequence of muscle injuries.

With John Stones out until early January with a hamstring injury, it means Guardiola has just two fit senior centre-backs—Nicolas Otamendi and Eliaquim Mangala. And the Football Association has demanded answers from both United and City following reports of an ugly fracas in the Old Trafford tunnel after the match that

reportedly left City assistant coach Mikel Arteta bloodied. Guardiola must decide whether to recall striker Sergio Aguero, who was an unused substitute on Sunday, after Gabriel Jesus played in a front three against United alongside Raheem Sterling and Leroy Sane. Swansea striker Wilfried Bony may feel he has a point to prove against his former club. Bony had a disappointing year-and-a-half in a City shirt, scoring just 10 goals in 46 appearances after joining them from Swansea in January 2015.

An uninspiring season on loan at Stoke failed to rebuild his reputation and the Ivory Coast forward is now back at the Liberty Stadium for a second spell.

After failing to score in his first eight games back at Swansea, Bony has now found the net in each of his past two. He struck on Saturday as they beat West Brom 1-0, climbing off the bottom of the Premier League and easing some of the pressure on manager Paul Clement. "We have to go into our next game with no fear," said winger Nathan Dyer.

"Manchester City are doing very well so we will have to ensure we are concentrating for the full game and then take the chances we create." —AFP

Gomez urges team-mates to make West Brom suffer

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool defender Joe Gomez has urged his team-mates to bounce back from the draw in the Merseyside derby when they host West Bromwich Albion today. The Reds were held 1-1 by Everton at Anfield despite having the bulk of possession in the match after Wayne Rooney's penalty cancelled out Mohamed Salah's opening goal.

The share of the points leaves Liverpool in fourth spot, 16 points off leaders Manchester City. Gomez believes the visit of the 'Baggies' so soon after that result gives Liverpool the opportunity to address their frustrations, even if West Brom try to adopt a similar defensive approach to Everton. "That's one of the positives," said Gomez.

"Obviously it's tough, it's a gruelling schedule but it gives you a chance to try and fix it straight away. "We've got to take the positives from the derby. I think we all put in a good fight and we knew the importance of the game and what it means and we all did our best.

"We've seen it a few times this season at Anfield—people know the attacking threats we have and tend to sit off a bit, especially because we are so quick on the counter." Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp was criticised for leaving out Brazilian attacking duo Philippe Coutinho and Roberto Firmino against Everton. The pair are expected to return to the starting line-up for today's game having been introduced as late substitutes in the Merseyside derby.

Gomez regularly has to face Coutinho, Firmino in addition to Salah and Sadio Mane on the training ground and said the quality of Liverpool's attacking players leaves him open-mouthed at times.

"Sometimes they do a few things and I am like 'wow!'," said the 20-year-old Englishman.—AFP

Rejuvenated Real Madrid eye fifth prize of 2017

MADRID: Real Madrid can round off the most successful year in the club's already glorious history by claiming a fifth trophy in 2017 at the Club World Cup in Abu Dhabi this week. They won La Liga, the Champions League, UEFA and Spanish Super Cup in a thrilling fashion after hitting top form in a four-month spell between April and August, but since then the European champions have faded, understandably fatigued by a heavy schedule.

Madrid trail Barca by eight points at the top of La Liga and finished second to Tottenham Hotspur in their Champions League group, which proved costly as they were paired with free-spending Paris Saint-Germain in a blockbuster last 16 tie on Monday.

However, traces of the Madrid that swept aside the likes of Bayern Munich, Juventus, Atletico Madrid, Manchester United and Barcelona in the spring and summer were back as Real hit five past Sevilla before half-time in a 5-0 rout on Saturday.

Until then Madrid had lacked the same killer instinct as last season with Cristiano Ronaldo and Karim Benzema scoring a combined total of just six times in La Liga, while Gareth Bale has made just one brief appearance as a substitute since September.

"We are improving in every sense," said Zidane after thrashing Sevilla. "If you play well, you will create more chances. We created plenty of chances."

Ronaldo scored twice at the weekend to celebrate picking up his fifth Ballon d'Or in style and his return to form is timely, as Madrid face Barcelona in their final game of the year on December 23 once their work in the Middle East this week is done.

"It is a reward just to be here," said Madrid captain Sergio Ramos. "We have the opportunity to defend our title. "We are preparing with plenty of desire and excitement. After a great game against Sevilla we are very motivated and our confidence is very high."

TACTICAL SWITCH

Real's return to form coincided with a change of tactics from Zidane as the pace of Marco Asensio and Lucas Vazquez on the wings produced an instant impact. However, if the Spanish duo are to keep their places then the French coach has to bench two of his preferred midfield diamond of Casemiro, Toni Kroos, Luka Modric and Isco.



ABU DHABI: Real Madrid players take part in a training session two days prior to their FIFA Club World Cup semi-final football match at the New York University Abu Dhabi stadium in the Emirati capital yesterday. — AFP

After missing out at the weekend, Casemiro and Isco are expected to feature on Wednesday when Real take on local side Al Jazira, who have already dealt with Oceania's Auckland City and Asian champions Urawa Red Diamonds to reach the last four. "We don't just play as Jazira now, we play for the UAE," Al Jazira coach Ali Mabkhout told FIFA.com.

"We know Real Madrid are one of the best teams in the world and this is incentive for all the players."

Yet, after the scare of falling behind to Kashima

Antlers in last year's final before a Ronaldo hat-trick won the competition in extra-time, Zidane warned against complacency and thinking ahead to a potential final with Brazilian giants Gremio on Saturday.

The newly crowned South American champions take on Mexican side Pachuca in the other semi-final on Friday. "Everyone thinks the game on Wednesday will be easy, but it won't," added Zidane. "We need to think about today and doing things right to try and win this trophy once again." — AFP

Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

FIFA CLUB WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 2017

AlJazira v Real Madrid 20:00

beIN SPORTS HD 1

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Newcastle United v Everton 22:45

beIN SPORTS HD 8

Southampton v Leicester City 22:45

beIN SPORTS HD 9

Swansea City v Manchester City 22:45

beIN SPORTS HD 2

Liverpool v West Bromwich Albion 23:00

beIN SPORTS HD 3

Tottenham Hotspur v Brighton & Hove Albion 23:00

beIN SPORTS HD 7

Manchester United v Bournemouth 23:00

beIN SPORTS HD 1

West Ham United v Arsenal 23:00

beIN SPORTS HD 4

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

TSG 1899 Hoffenheim v Stuttgart 20:30

beIN SPORTS HD 5

Hertha Berlin v Hannover 22:30

beIN SPORTS

Bayer 04 Leverkusen v Werder Bremen 22:30

beIN SPORTS HD 12 EN

Bayern Munich v Koln 22:30

beIN SPORTS HD 5

Schalke v Augsburg 22:30

beIN SPORTS

12 McCall gives Sarries January deadline to save season



13 New Zealand wrap up Windies series with 240-run victory



15 Mata rallies Man United in wake of Mourinho defeatism



MIAMI GARDENS: Dion Lewis #33 of the New England Patriots rushes during the fourth quarter against the Miami Dolphins at Hard Rock Stadium on Monday in Miami Gardens, Florida.— AFP

Dolphins snap Patriots' 8-game win streak

Cutler shines with three touchdown passes

MIAMI: Jay Cutler threw three touchdown passes as the double-digit underdog Miami Dolphins upset the New England Patriots 27-20 on Monday night at Hard Rock Stadium. Jarvis Landry caught two of Cutler's TD throws. After his second touchdown grab, he celebrated by pretending to inflate the football—perhaps mocking New England quarterback Tom Brady's "Deflategate" issues. Cutler completed 25 of 38 passes for 263 yards. Kenyan Drake led Miami's ground game with 114 yards on 25 carries. It was the second straight 100-yard game for Drake, who also had five receptions for 79 yards.

The Patriots (10-3), who visit the 11-2 Pittsburgh

Steelers on Sunday in what was looking like a battle for home-field advantage throughout the AFC playoffs, may have been caught looking ahead. Their eight-game win streak was snapped. Brady got off to a poor start, missing all four of his first-quarter passes. He completed 24 of 43 passes for 233 yards and one touchdown, but he was intercepted twice, both times by cornerback Xavien Howard.

Before Monday, Brady had just four interceptions all season and never more than one in a game. Miami (6-7) compiled an impressive 123-2 yardage advantage after one quarter but led just 6-0. The Dolphins scored on

field goals of 30 and 44 yards by Cody Parkey. The first field goal was the result of a 13-play, 69-yard drive. The second was set up by an interception by Howard.

New England got untracked in the second quarter, taking a 7-6 lead on a 3-yard run by Rex Burkhead. On the next possession, Miami drove 80 yards in seven plays and took a 13-7 lead on a 5-yard touchdown pass from Cutler to Landry.

New England closed its deficit to 13-10 on a 46-yard field goal by Stephen Gostkowski with two seconds left in the first half. Miami extended its advantage to 20-10 when Jakeem Grant made a spectacular, leaping, 25-

yard touchdown catch, crashing to the turf in the end zone. The Dolphins closed the third-quarter scoring with Landry's 4-yard reception for a 27-10 lead. New England crept closer as Brady's 3-yard touchdown pass to James White cut the deficit to 27-17 with 13:05 to play.

The Patriots, who had a first-and-goal at the Miami 1-yard line late in the fourth quarter, had to settle for a 33-yard Gostkowski field goal after getting hit with illegal-shift and holding penalties. Trailing 27-20, New England failed to recover an onside kick, sealing the win for Miami. — Reuters

Ribery taken to court by ex-agent

BERLIN: Bayern Munich star Franck Ribery briefly appeared in court in Germany yesterday over claims he owes 3.5 million euros (\$4.1m) to his ex-agent before the case was adjourned until January. The 34-year-old is contesting claims over unpaid commission from his 2007 transfer from Marseille to Bayern, which cost 25 million euros. A decision by Munich's district court has been postponed until January 16 because Ribery's former agent, Bruno Heiderscheidt from Luxembourg, was unable to appear after his flight from Brussels was cancelled. Heiderscheidt claims the pair made a verbal agreement a decade ago, which was later put in writing.

This is not the first time Heiderscheidt has taken the footballer to court. In December 2015, Luxembourg's Court of Appeal ordered the Bayern forward to pay Heiderscheidt 1.6 million euros, plus legal fees, for a breach of contract over the 2007 deal. Ribery is out of contract at Bayern in June, but has just returned from a knee injury.

He played in last Tuesday's 3-1 win over Paris Saint-Germain in the Champions League and Saturday's 1-0 victory at Eintracht Frankfurt in the Bundesliga. —AFP



MUNICH: Bayern Munich's Franck Ribery (L) and his attorney Carlo Brusa leave the courtroom after the court hearing on a case filed by his former agent Bruno Heiderscheidt.— AFP

Japan, S Korea set up East Asian showdown

TOKYO: An own goal from Ri Yong-chol gave South Korea victory over North Korea, while Japan downed China 2-1 to set up a showdown between the World Cup-bound nations for this year's East Asian Championship.

Japan's Gen Shoji scored with an effort from the edge of the centre circle three minutes from time to double his side's lead after Yu Kobayashi had put Vahid Halilhodzic's side ahead just three minutes earlier.

A penalty in stoppage time from China's Yu Dabao could not deny the hosts, who move to the top of the standings with six points having already defeated North Korea on Saturday, with South Korea second on four points.

"It was a wonderful game and it was a wonderful win for my team," said Halilhodzic.

"In the second half we had some problems and

China could create chances to score, but after that the quality of play was really good.

"We showed really good football and the combinations, especially up front, were really good. We had some very good chances to score but the ball didn't go in." South Korea picked up their first win of the competition after Ri deflected a cross from Kim Min-woo into his own goal under pressure from the opposition.

The win follows on from their 2-2 draw with the Chinese on Saturday to keep the pressure on Japan. A victory for Shin Tae-yong's team at the weekend will see them successfully defend the title they won in 2015.

"Japan are playing at home, but South Korea have very strong players and we want to show our strength because both teams are going to the World Cup," said Shin. "The best thing would be if both teams do their best and play to win and then everyone can be happy. We are preparing ourselves for that."

North Korea coach Joern Andersen has seen his side narrowly lose both of their opening games in the competition and the Norwegian claimed his players were overawed against the Japanese.

"It was a special game for us, for the players and the country, and I think in the first 30 minutes they were nervous and not as free as in the game against Japan," he said. "They were a little closed and not so prepared like against Japan." — Reuters

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2017

18 Kuwait's consumer inflation bounces to multi-month high



19 Soaring energy prices drive US inflation to 5-yr record



22 Ooredoo launches 'Shamel Home,' comprehensive entertainment plan



LONDON: British Airways airplanes on the runway with the towers and buildings of the Canary Wharf financial district in background before taking off at London City Airport in London. —AFP

British inflation soars to 6-year high

Expensive Christmas this year as food prices skyrocket

LONDON: British inflation has hit its highest level in almost six years, official data showed yesterday, forcing Bank of England governor Mark Carney to explain the rise in an exceptional letter. The Consumer Price Index climbed to 3.1 percent on a 12-month basis in November compared to 3.0 percent in October, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement. Analysts' consensus forecast had been for no change to the CPI reading. Carney must send a letter to British finance minister Philip Hammond, explaining why inflation overshot the Bank of England's 2.0-percent target rate by more than one percentage point. The open letter, which must outline what action the BoE's Monetary Policy Committee is taking to return inflation to target, will be published by the bank in February. Such a letter was last published a year ago, after inflation fell by



CB chief forced to explain rise to finance chief

more than one percentage point below target in October 2016. The headline measure for November this year was spurred on by the high price of air fares, recreational goods and the rising cost of food and non-alcoholic drinks, the ONS said. It said that rising prices of computer games had a notable upward effect and higher transport prices were fuelled by the rise in Brent oil prices and a falling pound.

Expensive Christmas

"Christmas dinner is going to be a lot more expensive this year," said Frances O'Grady, head of the TUC umbrella body for unions. "Food prices have gone up at twice the rate of wages." Average wage growth continues to lag behind the rise in prices, meaning that real pay packets are falling. Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Mel Stride said

she recognized families were "feeling the squeeze". "We are determined to help," she added, pointing to recent pay-boosting measures by the Conservative government of Prime Minister Theresa May. Last month, the Bank of England increased its main interest rate for the first time since before the financial crisis, in a bid to tackle high inflation caused largely by the pound falling in the wake of Britain's vote for Brexit. "While the one rate hike so far was never meant to slay the inflation dragon straight away, (the latest inflation figure) will doubtless come as an unpleasant shock, and a sign that there will be further tough decisions in the months to come," commented Chris Beauchamp, analyst at online trader IG. "While inflation is expected to weaken in due course, potentially lessening the pressure on the BoE, it could be an anxious time over Christmas," the expert said. —AFP

US Treasury halts pension investments to avoid debt default

WASHINGTON: The US Treasury on Monday announced it was halting investments for two government employee pension funds in the latest move to avoid hitting Congressionally-mandated borrowing limit. The book-keeping moves are part of the effort to avoid defaulting on the US debt until Congress raises the debt ceiling from the current level of more than \$20 trillion.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin in a letter to Congressional leaders urged them to "protect the full faith and credit of the United States by acting to increase the statutory debt limit as soon as possible." Last week Mnuchin informed Congress the department would need to begin taking "extraordinary measures" to prevent a default as the government again bumps up against the debt ceiling.

The latest action means Treasury will not invest retirement savings held in two government pension

funds until Congress acts. Treasury on Friday suspended the sale of certain securities for state and local governments that count towards the debt limit.

While the Congress on Friday approved a stopgap spending bill to fund the government through December 22, it did not address the cap on borrowing, after the temporary fix expired December 8.

Because the federal government traditionally runs a budget deficit, it has no choice but to borrow to finance government operations, including salaries, retirement benefits, social spending and other expenses approved by Congress. Under the administration of former president Barack Obama, Congress repeatedly pushed the government to the verge of default as Republicans used the debt limit to force spending cuts. According to the Congressional Budget Office, President Donald Trump's administration likely can continue to function until spring while still making timely payments to meet its obligations, such as Social Security and Medicare.

Analysts say a default by the US would have catastrophic consequences for the world financial system. —AFP

Ryanair hit by further strike action

LONDON: Strike action at embattled Ryanair intensified yesterday, with German pilots the latest to plan possible walkouts over conditions, following similar moves by staff based around Europe.

Germany's powerful pilots' union said members would strike at Ryanair for better pay and conditions, although they insisted they would not disrupt flights over the Christmas holiday.

Pilots "announce a strike at Ryanair", the Cockpit union posted on Twitter. They aim "to force the start of talks to create employment and pay conditions for Ryanair pilots in line with the market", the union said in a statement. Ryanair had a "last chance" to avoid strikes by immediately coming to the negotiating table, union president Ilja Schulz said.

The Irish airline, which is cancelling thousands of flights because of pilot shortages, said it had not been notified of any industrial action by its German pilots. Unions have long complained that no-frills Ryanair does not offer pilots pay and conditions up to standards elsewhere in the aviation industry. German prosecutors searched offices belonging to the carrier at six airports last year, part of an investigation into possible tax evasion and withholding salaries against two British temp agencies that supply the Irish airline with



DUBLIN: This file photo shows a Ryanair plane parked on the tarmac at Dublin Airport. —AFP

self-employed pilots. In its statement, Cockpit claimed pilots were leaving the airline "in droves" for the better conditions offered by other carriers, leaving Ryanair with a shortage of aircrew.

Italian pilots for the Irish carrier have already set dates for strike action, while Irish and Portuguese aviators have announced unspecified industrial action.

Ryanair said last week that it would "ignore" the Italian pilots' move, saying its staff rarely heeded calls to walk out. The carrier on Monday said some of its pilots in Dublin had voted for strike action.

The unspecified industrial action was backed by less than 28 percent of around 300 pilots based in the Irish capital for Ryanair, the airline said. Although the air-

line has around 300 pilots based in Dublin, reports said the strike ballot was issued to the 84 pilots directly employed by Ryanair.

The move comes less than a week after Ryanair pilots and flight attendants in Italy announced a four-hour strike for December 15. The planned industrial action comes after Ryanair said in September that it had to cancel 20,000 flights until March because of pilot scheduling problems.

Air traffic control delays and weather disruption also contributed to the cancellations. Despite such difficulties, Ryanair said last month it still expected to deliver annual profit after tax of 1.40-1.45 billion euros (\$1.65-1.71 billion). —AFP

Kuwait’s consumer inflation bounces to multi-month high

Retail sector provides a healthy boost to price index

KUWAIT: Consumer price inflation bounced to a multi-month high of 1.4 percent in October, as inflation in the retail sector provided a healthy boost to the general index. Inflation excluding housing rent, food costs and energy prices, rose from 2.5 percent y/y in September to 3.3 percent y/y in October, highlighting some upward inflationary pressures from retail goods and services, which coincided with the improving momentum in the consumer sector.

The annual average inflation rate for 2017 is likely to ease to 1.6 percent, from the 3.5 percent annual average recorded in 2016. While there are some upward pressures from the retail goods segment and some services, these pressures are likely to be offset by continued softness in housing rent and food prices. Housing inflation remains subdued during the third quarter of 2017. The slowdown in the real estate sector sales in 2015 and 2016 has led to an orderly and slow correction in property prices and rents. Housing inflation trended down from 2Q16 to reach deflationary territory in 1Q17. Housing inflation witnessed an uptick in October to -0.3 percent y/y, due to basis effects.

Local food price inflation remained soft in tandem with weaker inflation in global food prices. Inflation in local food prices advanced slightly in October to 0.4 percent y/y, following a flat month. According to the Commodity Research Bureau, inflation in international food prices

contracted slightly. This weakness is likely to limit any significant increases in local food costs in at least the near-to-medium term.

Inflationary pressures in the retail sector rose in October, just as consumer spending continued to see improvement. Consumer spending improved in 3Q17 with growth in card spending (POS) accelerating to 12.5 percent y/y, following a systematic moderation in 2016. Card spending has bounced back as the sector stabilized. At the same time, inflation in the three major retail goods related components accelerated to near multi-month highs, with inflation in clothing and footwear accelerating to 2.9 percent y/y in October from 1.9 percent y/y the previous month.

Inflation in services excluding housing services continues to trend downward in October on the back of fading price growth in transportation costs due to base effects. Despite the downward pressures from transportation prices, inflation in services excluding housing services remained supported by continued gains in inflation in the recreation and culture segment and steady inflation in restaurants and hotels. Inflation in restaurants and hotels was steady at its multi-month high of 3.0 percent y/y in October, while inflation in recreation and culture rose from 5.4 percent y/y to 5.7 percent y/y during the same period.

Housing inflation subdued



Table: Consumer price inflation

(% change)	Year-on-year		Annual average	
	Sep-17	Oct-17	2015	2016
Food & beverages	0.0	0.4	3.0	1.7
Tobacco & cigarettes	2.1	2.1	5.6	0.3
Clothing & footwear	1.9	2.9	0.3	0.8
Housing services*	-1.8	-0.3	6.1	6.1
Furnishings & household maintenance	3.7	3.8	3.7	2.3
Healthcare	0.4	0.9	1.7	1.2
Transportation	1.7	1.7	0.9	4.1
Communication	-0.1	0.8	0.6	2.0
Recreation & culture	5.4	5.7	-0.3	-1.8
Education	1.9	1.8	4.8	3.6
Restaurants & hotels	3.0	3.0	6.3	6.9
Other goods & services	2.8	3.8	2.4	0.8
Core**	0.6	1.6	3.8	3.9
Durable goods	0.9	1.3	2.4	2.5
Semi-durable goods	1.8	2.4	1.4	1.1
Non-durable goods	3.6	4.6	0.0	0.4
Services	-0.8	0.8	5.4	4.9
Services ex-housing	3.3	3.0	3.9	2.4

General index 0.5 1.4 3.7 3.5
Source: Central Statistical Bureau, NBK estimates

IMF: Sudan must float currency to boost growth, investment

CAIRO: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has urged Sudan to float its currency to boost growth and investment, a measure the government has opposed even after the United States lifted 20 years of sanctions in October. The government would need to accompany a market-determined exchange rate with other tough reforms such as expanding the country’s tax base if Khartoum hopes to benefit from sanctions relief, the IMF said in a report published on Monday.

The Sudanese pound has weakened against the dollar since Washington lifted sanctions encouraging traders to step up imports, putting pressure on scarce hard currency. It hit an all-time low of 27 pounds against the dollar on the black market in November but strengthened to 23 pounds per dollar after a raft of emergency measures that included capping currency transfers and cracking down on currency traders.

The IMF said the end of sanctions was an opportunity for Sudan to strengthen its economic outlook but it required a currency float. “Fiscal policy should be tightened to eliminate the monetization of deficits, thus helping to reduce inflation and buttress macroeconomic stability,” it said. It projected GDP growth of 3.25 percent for 2017, down from 3.5 percent in 2016.

The weakened pound has contributed to surging inflation, which reached 33.08 percent year-on-year in October, according to the Central Statistics Office.

The central bank has held the official exchange rate at 6.7 pounds to the dollar but currency is largely unavailable at that price. “The tax base should be broadened, energy and wheat subsidies phased out and replaced by increased cash transfers to the poor, and capital investment increased,” the IMF said. The import-dependent country has suffered both from the sanctions and from the secession of South Sudan in 2011, when it lost three-quarters of its oil output, its main source of foreign currency.—Reuters

Beirut redeveloper Solidere struggles through Lebanon’s crisis

BEIRUT: The company formed to rebuild Lebanon’s capital Beirut after its civil war ended in 1990 is struggling to overcome the latest period of political turmoil roiling the Middle East. Until the 2011 Arab uprisings and the start of neighboring Syria’s civil war, Solidere’s property business was booming along with Lebanon’s real estate sector. But political tensions have put a security cordon around Solidere’s glittering central Beirut showcase and scared off investors. Low oil prices also weigh on a market long dependent on petrodollars from the Gulf.

“(Investors) have to believe Lebanon is going somewhere stable to start to invest ... At the moment people are still in a wait and see mode, even though there are some bullish investors negotiating deals to benefit from the long-term value of downtown properties,” Oussama Kabbani, Chief Operating Officer of Solidere International, told Reuters.

Solidere has sold no land this year, recording an unaudited net loss of \$18.9 million in the first half of 2017. But the company said some negotiations are in progress. Its reliance on land sales means revenue can swing dramati-

cally between profit and loss. However, the peaks are now much lower and the troughs deeper than a decade ago.

In response, Solidere is offering new deals to potential land buyers, has focused more on rent revenues and cut expenses. “Solidere is trying to make it easy for people who are serious to buy,” said Kabbani, who was involved in drawing Solidere’s original masterplan for Beirut.

Analysts say the scarcity of land in Lebanon and Solidere’s ownership of prime sites mean the company has good value medium to long-term, but maintaining liquidity in the short term is more of a challenge.

Decline

The Lebanese Company for the Development and Reconstruction of Beirut Central District (Solidere) was founded by then prime minister Rafik Al-Hariri in 1994, aiming to finish its work and dissolve by 2019. But he was assassinated in 2005, prompting a series of political, security and economic crises in Lebanon that also pushed central Beirut into steady decline.

Solidere’s mandate has been extended to 2029, but it still has around 1.7 million square meters of land to sell and shareholders received no dividend this year. Because of the tight security around the showpiece Place d’Etoile area near Lebanon’s parliament, people cannot access the area freely and most shops and restaurants have closed.

Solidere has sold on most of the buildings there, but the area’s decline has deterred investors. It has also reduced the flow of people to the adjacent Beirut Souks shopping

area, where Solidere makes money from rent. “There was a period where people from the Gulf, their dream was to come and sit ... to do nothing but sit and watch people going by,” Kabbani said, referring to the boom years in 2004-05. “If we didn’t have those security enclaves in Downtown, I’m sure Downtown could have continued to be the center of attraction.”

Investor deals

Instead, land prices in Downtown have fallen by 1-2 percent annually and by around 15 percent in the past 5-7 years. In response Solidere plans to start converting unused office space into small apartments and is offering investors better deals. “Today Solidere might give you more flexible terms to pay (or) to develop, simply because it understands you are taking a country risk with your cash,” Kabbani said. It is also trying to reduce costs and has cut overheads by 25-30 percent, he said. This included withdrawing from the London Stock Exchange because the low trading volume was not worth the fees.

Solidere’s share price in Beirut, which peaked at around \$40 mid-2008, has declined to around \$8 today. Some of Lebanon’s political problems appeared to abate earlier this year, only to flare again in November when Prime Minister Saad Al-Hariri, Rafik al-Hariri’s son, unexpectedly resigned in a shock broadcast from Saudi Arabia — a move linked to conflict in the wider region between Riyadh and Tehran. He subsequently withdrew the resignation, with Western states pledging support for Lebanon’s stability. —Reuters

UK pipeline outage sends oil price to more than 2-year high

LONDON: Britain’s biggest oil pipeline from its North Sea fields is likely to be shut for a number of weeks for repairs, operator INEOS said yesterday, sending international crude prices to their highest since the middle of 2015. The closure has also

disrupted gas flows through the network, which carries a third of Britain’s gas produced offshore. It has struck during a winter freeze in Britain, where snow and ice have driven up demand for heating fuel.

The pipeline, which carries about 450,000 barrels per day (bpd) of Forties crude, was shut on Monday after cracks were found. Benchmark Brent crude prices rose above \$65 per barrel for the first time since mid-2015. “We’re hearing it will be likely down for two weeks,” an industry source familiar with the operations said.

INEOS, which completed the purchase of the Forties pipeline system from oil major BP in October, said it was too soon

to say how long repairs would last but said that it would be “weeks rather than days.” A minor leak had caused a partial shut-down on Dec. 7.

The pipeline has particular significance to global markets because Forties is the largest out of the five crude oil streams that underpin the dated Brent benchmark, against which other crude prices are broadly based. Forties is carried to Hound Point on the Scottish coast, where it is either loaded onto tankers, stored in tanks or piped to the 200,000-bpd Grangemouth refinery.

“If it’s a lengthy outage, then a recovery period for the fields will be long as well,” the trading source said. A number of pro-

ducers including BP, Shell and Chrysaor, said they had closed down oil fields in response to the outage.

According to monthly loading programs, supply of Forties is expected to reach 21 cargoes of 600,000 barrels each this month, equal to a daily supply rate of 406,000 bpd. The closure has created havoc with loading schedules in the North Sea, with one trading source saying cargo owners had been offered options to drop cargoes from the loading program. “At this point we would expect a large deferral list for the Forties loading program to spill over into January,” analysts from JBC Energy said in a note. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.690
Indian Rupees	4.700
Pakistani Rupees	2.866
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.966
Nepali Rupees	2.937
Singapore Dollar	225.740
Hongkong Dollar	38.713
Bangladesh Taka	3.640
Philippine Peso	5.967
Thai Baht	9.305

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.747
Qatari Riyal	83.166
Omani Riyal	786.383
Bahraini Dinar	804.040
UAE Dirham	82.441

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.900
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.069
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.215
Tunisian Dinar	122.760
Jordanian Dinar	426.680
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.017
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.538

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.600
Euro	360.550
Sterling Pound	408.810

Canadian dollar	239.870
Turkish lira	78.700
Swiss Franc	309.090
Australian Dollar	232.550
US Dollar Buying	301.400

GOLD

20 Gram	260.520
10 Gram	133.180
5 Gram	67.430

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.650
Canadian Dollar	236.265
Sterling Pound	406.995
Euro	358.030
Swiss Frank	301.810
Bahrain Dinar	803.260
UAE Dirhams	82.790
Qatari Riyals	83.615
Saudi Riyals	81.565
Jordanian Dinar	428.150
Egyptian Pound	17.101
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.977
Indian Rupees	4.708
Pakistani Rupees	2.832
Bangladesh Taka	3.671
Philippines Peso	6.011
Cyprus pound	18.010
Japanese Yen	3.665
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.945

Malaysian Ringgit	75.085
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.230
Thai Bhat	10.270
Turkish Lira	79.420

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.398314	0.405814
Czech Korune	0.005897	0.017897
Danish Krone	0.043822	0.048822
Euro	0.350958	0.358458
Georgian Lari	0.112379	0.112379
Norwegian Krone	0.032083	0.037283
Romanian Leu	0.059983	0.076833
Russian ruble	0.005128	0.005128
Slovakia	0.009034	0.019034
Swedish Krona	0.031490	0.036490
Swiss Franc	0.298738	0.309738
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.219753	0.231753
New Zealand Dollar	0.203464	0.212964
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.230317	0.239317
US Dollars	0.298900	0.303320
US Dollars Mint	0.299400	0.303320
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003301	0.003885

Chinese Yuan	0.044268	0.047768
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036721	0.039471
Indian Rupee	0.004119	0.004760
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002584	0.002764
Korean Won	0.000267	0.000282
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070275	0.076275
Nepalese Rupee	0.003023	0.003193
Pakistan Rupee	0.002634	0.002924
Philippine Peso	0.005937	0.006237
Singapore Dollar	0.218694	0.228694
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001699	0.002279
Taiwan	0.009961	0.010141
Thai Baht	0.008949	0.009499
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.796825	0.805325
Egyptian Pound	0.014525	0.020243
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000186	0.000246
Jordanian Dinar	0.422755	0.431755
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150	0.000250
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022747	0.046747
Omani Riyal	0.780695	0.786375
Qatar Riyal	0.078937	0.083877
Saudi Riyal	0.079713	0.081013
Syrian Pound	0.001284	0.001504
Tunisian Dinar	0.117389	0.125389
Turkish Lira	0.073806	0.084105
UAE Dirhams	0.081071	0.082771
Yemeni Riyal	0.000985	0.001065

Business

Soaring energy prices drive US inflation to 5-yr record

Producer prices increase 0.4% in November

NEW YORK: Soaring gasoline prices drove US wholesale inflation higher in November, with one measure hitting its second straight five-year record, according to government data released yesterday.

However, other signs of price pressures were muted, with less volatile categories holding steady or slowing. Producer prices rose in November as gasoline prices surged and the cost of other goods increased, leading to the largest annual gain in nearly six years.

The fairly strong report from the Labor Department yesterday suggested a broad acceleration in wholesale price pressures, which could assuage concerns among some Federal Reserve officials over persistently low inflation. The Labor Department said its producer price index for final demand increased 0.4 percent last month, advancing by the same margin for three straight months. In the 12 months through November, the PPI shot up 3.1 percent. That was the biggest gain since January 2012 and followed a 2.8 percent rise in October.

Economists had forecast the PPI rising 0.3 percent last month and increasing 2.9 percent from a year ago. A key gauge of underlying producer price pressures that excludes food, energy and trade services rose 0.4 percent last month. The so-called core PPI had increased by 0.2 percent for two straight months. It

rose 2.4 percent in the 12 months through November, the largest gain since the series started in August 2014, after increasing 2.3 percent in October.

The dollar advanced against a basket of currencies on the data, while prices for US Treasuries fell. US stock index futures were trading slightly higher. The broad rise in producer prices supports views that weak inflation readings experienced through the first half of the year have probably run their course. Some Fed officials had worried that the factors that had held down inflation early in the year could become more persistent. The Fed officials were due to gather for a two-day policy meeting. The US central bank is expected to raise interest rates today, for a third time this year, with a robust labor market and strengthening economy expected to overshadow policymakers' earlier concerns about tame inflation.

The central bank tracks the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index excluding food and energy, which has undershot the Fed's 2 percent target for nearly 5-1/2 years. Last month, gasoline prices surged 15.8 percent, the biggest gain since August 2009, after dropping 4.6 percent in October. Gasoline accounted for two thirds of the 1.0 percent increase in the final demand goods index. There were also increases in the prices of light motor trucks, pharmaceutical preparations, beef, residential electricity and jet fuel.

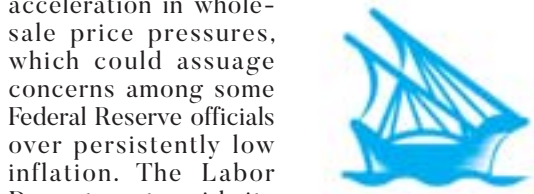


MEXICO CITY: This file picture shows a British Petroleum petrol station in Ciudad Satellite, Naucalpan de Juarez municipality, Mexico State, near Mexico City. —AFP

Wholesale food prices rose 0.3 percent in November after increasing 0.5 percent in October. Prices for services increased 0.2 percent last month after increasing 0.5 percent in October.

Core goods increased 0.3 percent in November, rising by the same margin for a third consecutive

month. Prices for passenger cars increased 0.5 percent last month, the largest increase since December 2016, after being unchanged in October. The cost of healthcare services was unchanged last month after rising 0.3 percent in October. Those costs feed into the Fed's core PCE price index. —Agencies



Core PPI gains; up 2.4% year-on-year

Singapore launches electric car-sharing service

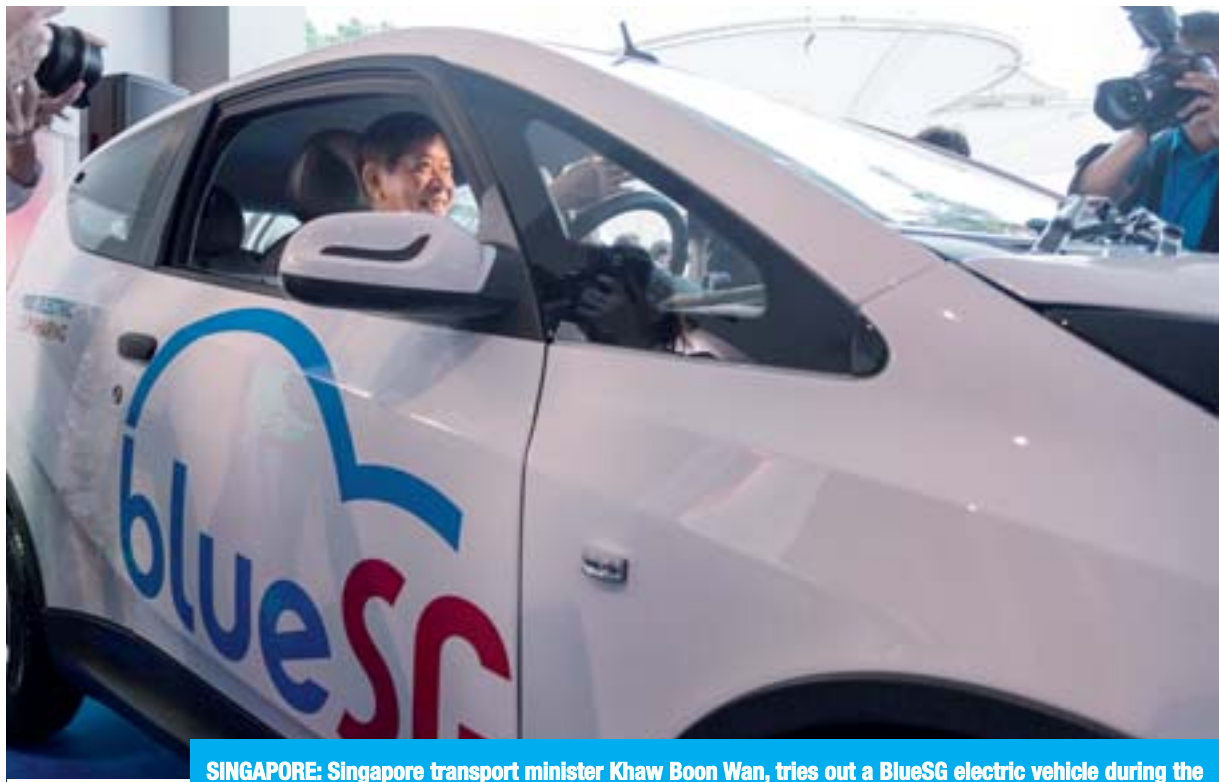
SINGAPORE: Singapore yesterday launched an electric car-sharing service, the latest transport innovation aimed at encouraging people away from owning vehicles and keeping gridlock at bay in the space-starved city-state. BlueSG, a subsidiary of France's Bolloré Group, rolled out the scheme with 80 cars and 32 charging stations—which serve as drop-off and pick-up points — and plans to expand its fleet more than 10-fold in coming years.

It is the latest effort by authorities in the tightly-controlled financial hub of 5.6 million to prevent the sort of gridlock that has blighted other fast-developing Asian cities.

Officials have already introduced tough measures, including a license fee that has pushed the average car price to over \$80,000, a freeze on car numbers on the roads, and major new investments in public transport. The electric car scheme is being launched in partnership with the government, and the company hopes to eventually provide Singapore with the second-biggest electric car-sharing service in the world, after Paris.

BlueSG plans to increase the number of its cars to 100 by the end of the year, and is targeting 1,000 cars and 2,000 charging points by 2020. The specially-built Bluecars — four-seaters with two doors—are slightly bigger than a smart car and were designed with Italian coachbuilder Pininfarina.

Users will be able to book an electric car online or with a mobile app, and charged for the time they rent the vehicle rather than the distance travelled. There is also an option for a monthly membership



SINGAPORE: Singapore transport minister Khaw Boon Wan, tries out a BlueSG electric vehicle during the launch of an electric car-sharing service in Singapore yesterday. —AFP

costing SG\$15 (\$11).

Marie Bolloré, managing director of Bolloré's electric vehicles division, said Singapore's high population density and well-developed network of roads made it an ideal launchpad for the company's foray into Southeast Asia.

Ngien Hoon Ping, chief executive of Singapore's Land Transport Authority, said he hoped the initiative

“will pave the way for greater adoption of electric vehicles in Singapore.”

The city-state's tough traffic-control policies have largely been a success, with its streets relatively clean, orderly and clear of traffic. But the rising price of cars and a series of recent public transport breakdowns have caused anger and prompted calls for the system to be improved. —AFP

ANZ Bank sells life insurance arm to Zurich for \$2.14bn

SYDNEY: ANZ Bank unveiled plans yesterday to offload its life insurance arm to Zurich for Aus\$2.85 billion (\$2.14 billion), making the Swiss giant Australia's largest retail life insurer by premiums. It follows National Australia Bank selling most of its life insurance business to Japan's Nippon and Commonwealth Bank shedding its insurance arm to AIA in recent years as Australia's top lenders streamline operations.

ANZ said the sale of One Path Life Australia Holdings, subject to regulatory approvals, was another step in its strategy to create “a simpler, better balanced bank focused on retail and business banking in Australia and New Zealand”.

“From the outset we’ve been focused on partnering with a high-quality organization culturally aligned to ANZ,” said ANZ's Executive Wealth Australia chief Alexis George. “We’re pleased we will be able to provide our customers with access to wealth products from one of the world’s leading and most respected global insurers.”

It described the deal as a good out-

Asia-Pacific in Zurich's sights

All of Australia's big banks are battling higher funding costs and lower interest margins, with rules now demanding they hold more reserves as a buffer against rising mortgage liabilities and fears over bad loans. They also face a hefty new government levy to raise Aus\$6.2 billion over four years through a 0.06 percent charge on the borrowings of the big five — ANZ, Commonwealth, Macquarie, NAB and Westpac. The Commonwealth sold its Australian and New Zealand life insurance business to AIA for \$3.0 billion in September, while NAB received US\$1.7 billion from Nippon Life for an 80 percent stake in its insurance arm in 2015.

As part of the agreement, ANZ and Zurich will enter into a 20-year strategic alliance to offer life insurance solutions through ANZ's distribution channels.

Following completion of the deal, funded through cash and debt and expected to be finalized late next year, Zurich will be Australia's largest retail life insurer as measured by in-force premiums, with more than 1.5 million



A file photo shows an ANZ sign adorning a branch of the bank in Sydney. —AFP

customers, or 19 percent market share.

The deal comes on the heels of a string of Asia-Pacific acquisitions by the Swiss firm, whose chief executive Mario Greco said it was a good fit for its growth strategy.

“ANZ's portfolio of non-traditional and profitable retail products fits well with Zurich's strategy to focus on capital-light protection and unit-linked business,” he said. Zurich's Asia-Pacific head Jack Howell said the region was an

important market for the company.

“Zurich has earmarked the Asia-Pacific region to be a major engine of growth in distribution and service capabilities, building on our recent acquisitions of Macquarie's retail life insurance business and the Cover-More Group,” he said. “Importantly, we are acquiring a profitable business (ANZ's life insurance) with loyal customers and a track record of strong, stable cash flows.” —AFP

Fed to open policy meeting, rates hike likely

WASHINGTON: The US central bank was to open its final two-day policy meeting of the year yesterday, and is likely to raise the benchmark interest rate despite the absence of inflation.

It would be the third rate hike this year, and possibly the final time Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen presides over a policy move since President Donald Trump has opted to replace her in February.

Analysts say the booming labor market, which in recent months has pushed the unemployment rate down to 4.1 percent, the lowest in 17 years, will outweigh the Fed's perplexity over why inflation has stayed stubbornly below the central bank's two percent target.

And with Republicans in Congress working to finalize a unified final version of a massive tax overhaul that will slash corporate taxes, central bankers likely will be thinking about the measure's potential to add fuel to the economy and finally ignite price increases, economists say.

“Labor markets and prospects of fiscal stimulus outweigh soft inflation” in the rate decision, Barclays said in its Fed outlook note.

With the rate-setting Federal Open Market Committee widely expected to increase the benchmark lending rate, analysts will focus on the wording of the Fed statement and the quarterly forecast for hints about how fast rates are likely to increase next year.

Most economists see three increases again in 2018, but will watch to see if more Fed officials forecast four rate hikes or make any mention of the tax cuts' likely impact on economic growth.

Even so, “Further upward adjustment will likely have to wait until either the tax cut passes or there is sufficient evidence to suggest that inflation is firming faster than anticipated,” Barclays said.

But Jim O'Sullivan of High Frequency Economics said “we expect officials will signal no let-up in tightening in response to a tight and still-tightening labor market.” He is projecting four rate increases next year.

Job gains, while slower than last year, are running at 174,000 a month on average, and companies around the country are reporting difficulty finding workers to fill open positions.

Normally that would be expected to drive wage gains and fuel price increases, but the Fed's preferred measure of annual inflation has remained well below the two percent target, slipping to 1.6 percent in October.

The absence of inflation has baffled Fed officials and led to a split among those policymakers who want to go slow, and those who want to hike more quickly before price increases hit the economy.

Yellen will preside over one more FOMC meeting in January, and then Trump's pick for central bank chief, Fed governor Jerome Powell, is due to take over in early February. —AFP

European equities rise as US Fed meets

LONDON: Global stock markets were higher yesterday, as investors girded themselves for this week's key interest rate decisions, with the energy sector boosted by firm oil prices.

Wall Street opened tentatively higher as the US Federal Reserve sat down for its last policy-setting meeting of the year. On this side of the Atlantic, however, Germany's DAX was underperforming

Europe's other main indices, "losing ground amid a slightly stronger euro," said Accendo Markets analyst, Mike van Dulken.

Meanwhile, the Dow rose from record peaks early yesterday, lifted by a Boeing dividend boost and as investors prepared for a likely Federal Reserve interest rate increase.

Aerospace giant Boeing surged 3.2 percent after announcing it would increase its dividend by 20 percent and undertake a new \$18 billion share repurchase program.

Analysts expect shareholders to benefit from similar moves once the tax bill moving through Congress becomes law, even as President Donald Trump has touted the corporate tax cuts as a way to boost economic growth and job creation.

"If the tax cuts are approved and signed into law, those reductions should help boost earnings and cash flow, which are the fuel for dividend payments and share repurchases," Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare said.

About 15 minutes into trading, the Dow Jones Industrial Average stood 24,492.20, up

0.4 percent. The broad-based S&P 500 added 0.1 percent to 2,661.50, while the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index lost 0.1 percent to 6,870.49.

In London, however, the FTSE was outperforming "thanks to a weaker pound versus the dollar and higher Brent Crude oil prices after a North Sea supply shutdown," the expert said.

London's FTSE 100 index advanced 0.3 percent in mid-afternoon deals and the Paris CAC 40 index won 0.4 percent, while Frankfurt's DAX 30 was only fractionally higher. "The shutdown of the Forties pipeline can have a durable impact on the price because it adds to the tighter supply picture brought about by OPEC's output cuts," said London Capital Group analyst, Jasper

Lawler. "We suspect... that Brent is on its way to challenge the 2015 high near \$68 per barrel." Some degree of profit-taking had set in by mid-afternoon, with crude prices coming off recent highs, the overall rise has energized the oil sector because higher prices tend to translate into bumper profits and revenues.

In London, Anglo-Dutch energy giant Royal Dutch Shell's 'A' shares jumped 1.4 percent to 2,445 pence and British rival BP gained 1.5 percent to 506.40 pence. French oil and gas titan Total saw its share price rally 1.6 percent to 47.84 euros in Paris.

etary policy meetings of central banks in the United States, Britain and the eurozone. Today, the US Federal Reserve unveils its latest decision, followed on Thursday by both the Bank of England (BoE) and the European Central Bank.

"European markets are trading in positive territory, with oil stocks particularly buoyant after the shutdown of the Forties Pipeline sent Brent crude oil to a 30-month high," said Rebecca O'Keeffe, head of investment at online stockbroker Interactive Investor. "With all eyes on central banks this week, investors will be hoping that (ECB chief) Mario Draghi will remain the benevolent Santa Claus for markets and not turn into Scrooge," she told AFP. — AFP

Global

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Tuesday 12 December 2017

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing
Price index	▲ 41.96	6,187.58	6,155.60
Weighted Index	▲ 3.71	394.14	390.43
KSX 15	▲ 5,314.22	6,187.58	883.36

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	372	— 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	890	— 0.0
ENERGYH	29.5	29.0	5,133	149	3	29.5	▼ -0.5
GPI	29.6	29.0	88,100	2,563	19	29.4	▲ 0.2
ABAR	74	68	162,302	11,237	7	74	▲ 6.0
Oil & Gas			255,535	13,948	29	950.77	▲ 4.40

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KFOUC	268	255	520	133	2	268	▼ -2.0
BPCC	639	613	456,300	282,487	24	625	▲ 13.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	586	— 0.0
ALQURAIN	320	315	392,070	124,956	21	317	— 0.0
Basic Materials			848,890	407,576	47	1225.36	▲ 4.50

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOUDUK	47.8	46.0	16800	783	3	47.8	▼ -0.1
KRE	56	55	123,601	6,863	8	56	— 0.0
URC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	74	— 0.0
NRE	124	121	26,704	3,682	4	124	▲ 4.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0.0
AREC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	176	— 0.0
MASSALEH	36.5	36.5	10,347	378	1	36.5	▼ -2.0
ARABREC	28.5	27.9	265,650	7,498	14	28.3	▲ 0.1
ERESCO	32.4	32.3	116,000	3,752	7	32.4	▲ 0.1
MABANEI	698	686	277,580	191,174	48	694	▲ 12.0
INJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	— 0.0
INVESTORS	17.0	16.7	241,872	4,069	17	16.7	— 0.0
IRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	29.2	— 0.0
ALTUARIA	92	91	274,970	25,281	13	92	▲ 0.1
SANAM	30.0	29.7	10,002	297	3	29.8	▼ -4.2
AAYANRE	77	73	26,000	1,941	4	77	— 0.0
AGAR	69	68	20,000	1,370	4	69	▲ 2.0
ALQARIA	32.0	27.0	3,055	87	4	27.0	▼ -2.5
MAZAYA	108	106	145,361	15,534	9	108	▲ 1.0
TUJARA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	58	— 0.0
TAMEER	26.0	25.5	35,550	919	7	26.0	— 0.0
ARKAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	— 0.0
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	— 0.0
ABYAAR	20.2	19.9	1,349,789	27,054	33	20.2	▲ 0.1
MUNSHAAT	71	71	25,500	1,798	5	71	— 0.0
FIRSTDUBAI	40.0	39.0	1,020	40	3	40.0	▲ 1.0
KBIT	45.0	44.0	182,300	8,036	17	44.0	▼ -1.0
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	— 0.0
MENA	16.5	15.6	238,527	3,808	26	16.0	▲ 0.9
ALMUDON	34.4	33.9	27,200	923	4	34.3	— 0.0
MARAKEZ	33.0	27.2	5,100	139	4	33.0	▼ -1.0
REMAI	35.3	32.5	933,079	31,869	64	34.0	▼ 0.9
Mashair	64	63	19,000	1,211	4	63	▼ -2.0
Real Estate			4,378,387	338,307	306	870.76	▼ -1.40

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KINV	115	113	31,650	3,579	8	115	▲ 2.0
FACIL	170	166	330,192	54,868	14	170	▲ 2.0
IFA	29.5	28.5	468,087	13,512	34	28.5	▼ -0.9
NNV	100	90	32,022	3,197	10	100	▼ -0.1
KPROJ	293	289	37,839	11,028	13	293	▲ 3.0
COAST	33.0	32.0	31,055	1,006	8	32.9	— 0.0
SECH	52	50	448,035	22,752	12	52	▼ -0.1
ARZAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	30.9	— 0.0
MARKAZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	109	— 0.0
KMEFIC	25.0	25.0	45,000	1,125	2	25.0	— 0.0
ALAMAN	55	53	810,751	44,517	12	55	▲ 0.2
ALOLA	39.4	38.0	215,130	8,384	6	39.0	▼ -0.3
ALMAL	27.9	26.0	294,385	7,778	19	27.5	▼ -0.4
GH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	— 0.0
AAYAN	35.8	34.1	7,279,917	254,954	119	35.0	▼ -0.9
IBAYANV	49.5	46.5	2,349,298	114,835	45	49.5	▲ 0.7
OSGOL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	57	— 0.0
KPIC	45.4	45.0	11,800	532	4	45.0	— 0.0
KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	— 0.0
NH	59	59	100	6	1	59	▼ -2.5
UNICAP	42.0	39.5	13,964,590	559,174	42	42.0	▲ 2.2
MADAR	24.1	24.1	105,000	2,531	3	24.1	▲ 0.1
ALDEIRA	27.5	25.1	30,500	767	2	27.5	▼ -0.1
ALSALAM	39.0	39.0	3,250	127	1	39.0	— 0.0
EKTTITAB	30.5	30.0	31,000	931	2	30.5	▲ 0.4
ALMADINA	36.5	36.5	100	4	1	36.5	▲ 1.0
NOOR	62	60	5,000	306	2	62	▲ 1.0
TAMNV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	300	— 0.0
EKCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	— 0.0
KSHC	27.9	27.0	306,177	5,641	12	27.9	▲ 0.3
ASRYA	40.5	38.7	8,440	336	8	40.4	▲ 0.4
GNAMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	36.2	— 0.0
AMWAL	35.3	34.5	357,700	12,480	15	35.3	▼ -0.2
ALUMTIAZ	160	158	377,584	60,010	15	160	▲ 2.0
MANAZEL	30.9	29.0	33,580	982	4	30.7	▼ -0.1
NIND	145	143	771,872	110,859	31	145	▲ 2.0
BIHC	38.5	36.0	900	35	4	38.4	▲ 6.1
SENERGY	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	36.0	— 0.0
AGHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	88	— 0.0
KPPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	53	— 0.0
TAHSSILAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	25.0	— 0.0
EKHOLDING	244	242	505,212	122,672	12	244	▲ 8.0
GPH	127	125	188,405	23,590	20	126	▼ -1.0
INVEST	83	80	19,467,180	1,565,716	111	80	▼ -2.1
Financial Services			48,441,751	3,028,241	992	622.37	▲ 2.30

Investment Instruments							
ASC	135	135	25,000	3,375	1	135	▲ 3.0
OSOS	92	90	41,886	3,770	3	92	— 0.0
HAYATCOMM	63	56	7,100	406	6	62	▲ 5.0
Technology			73,986	7,553	10	475.65	▲ 2.90

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SANAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	— 0.0
AFAC	95	95	1,000	95	1	95	▲ 5.0
EFFECT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	27.9	— 0.0
AJWAN	25.5	22.9	10,648,150	255,612	175	24.0	▲ 0.6
MASAKEN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	— 0.0
DALGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	390	— 0.0
ALEID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	80	— 0.0
MIDAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,220	— 0.0
THURAYA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	204	— 0.0
AMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	49.0	— 0.0
Parallel Market			10,648,150	255,707	176	963.55	▼ -5.10

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	274	— 0.0
GINS	699	560	3,042	1,913	9	699	▼ -1.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0.0
WINS	60	60	289	17	1	60	▼ -1.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	187	— 0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	— 0.0
WIETHAQ	44.0	44.0	100	4	1	44.0	▲ 5.0
BKQWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0.0
Insurance			3,431	1,935	11	1040.60	▲ 18.00

National Bank of Kuwait

Financial Markets

Daily Report

At 02:00 PM Previous Day

Global Stock Indices					
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Dow Jones	24,329.16	24,386.03	56.87	▲	0.23
NASDAQ	6,840.08	6,875.08	35.00	▲	0.51
S&P 500	2,651.50	2,659.99	8.49	▲	0.32
Financial Times	7,453.48	7,472.16	18.68	▲	0.25
DAX	13,123.65	13,134.88	11.23	▲	0.09
CAC 40	5,386.83	5,399.46	12.63	▲	0.23
Swiss	9,314.76	9,321.86	7.10	▲	0.06
Nikkei 225	22,938.73	22,866.17	-72.56	▼	-0.32
Topix	1,813.34	1,815.08	1.74	▲	0.10
Hang Seng	28,965.29	28,793.88	-171.41	▼	-0.59
Straits Times	3,460.45	3,465.54	5.09	▲	0.15

MENA Stock Indices					
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait	6,155.60	6,197.58	41.98	▲	0.68
Saudi Arabia	7,100.46	7,116.55	16.09	▲	0.23
Dubai	3,414.05	3,433.99	39.94	▲	1.17
Abu Dhabi	4,356.30	4,381.80	25.50	▲	0.59
Bahrain	1,265.09	1,264.13	-0.96	▼	-0.08
Qatar	7,923.07	8,033.28	110.21	▲	1.39
Oman	5,041.06	5,050.54	9.48	▲	0.19
Lebanon	1,120.90	1,124.35	3.45	▲	0.31
Jordan	2,109.48	2,129.35	19.87	▲	0.94
Egypt	14,426.75	14,597.50	170.75	▲	1.18
Morocco	12,332.14	12,362.27	30.13	▲	0.24
Tunisia	6,178.31	6,158.09	-20.22	▼	-0.33

Global Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwaiti Dinar		12.2963	3.2927	2.7957	2.4655	3.2618	373.49	4.3468
Saudi Riyal	0.08132		0.2678	0.2274	0.2005	0.2653	30.37	0.3525
US Dollar	0.30370	3.7344		0.8490	0.7488	0.9906	113.43	1.3201
Euro	0.35770	4.3984	1.1778		0.8820	1.1669	133.61	1.5550
Sterling Pound	0.40559	4.9873	1.3355	1.1338		1.3232	151.49	1.7636
Swiss Franc	0.30658	3.7698	1.0095	0.8570	0.7557		114.54	1.3327
Japanese Yen	0.00268	0.0329	0.0088	0.0075	0.0066	0.0087		0.0116
Australian Dollar	0.23005	2.8288	0.7575	0.6431	0.5670	0.7504	85.92	

Business

Chevrolet Middle East breaks two Guinness World Records

Brand rallies enough passion with support of customers and fans across GCC



DUBAI: Representatives from the Guinness World Records certified two new broken records for Chevrolet Middle East last night. Thanks to customers and fans across the Middle East, Chevrolet was able to rally enough passion for the brand to attempt two successful record breaking attempts simultaneously.

The first record, 'largest online photo album of people holding a sign', garnered a total of 37,163 photos breaking the previous record held by a Dubai Entity by 4,947 photos.

The second world record broken by Chevrolet was for 'most people contributing to a stamp image' with a total of 4,948 participating Chevrolet customers and fans, the new record improves on the old by 1,795. The previous record was held by a company based in China.

Chevrolet's #iamarecorder campaign kicked off in Beirut in October and toured across the GCC throughout November and December with overwhelming success. Participants from Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE came together to set Guinness World Records titles with Chevrolet Middle East.



Participants from Oman, Kuwait, Saudi and UAE attend

Commenting on the achievement, Chevrolet Middle East Head of Brand Ahmed Soudodi said: "We set our sights on breaking these two Guinness World Records titles in celebration of Chevrolet's best-ever line-up. We were humbled and honored by the amount of participation, and shows Chevrolet's true relevance to our region and the passion that exists for our brand, it also reiterates our commitment to putting customers at the center of everything we do." He added: "Going in to 2018, Chevrolet customers and prospects can expect one of the most diverse, and among the youngest portfolios on the market, combining cutting-edge automotive engineering, innovative technologies, advanced safety features, sleek design and unrivalled practicality."

Founded in 1911 in Detroit, Chevrolet is one of the world's largest car brands, doing business in more than 100 countries and selling more than 4.0 million cars and trucks a year. Chevrolet provides customers with fuel-efficient vehicles that feature engaging performance, design that makes the heartbeat, passive and active safety features and easy-to-



use technology, all at a value.

The Chevrolet portfolio for the Middle East for 2018 features award-winning passenger cars such as the Spark, Aveo, Malibu, Impala, Camaro and Corvette; crossovers such as the Trax all new Equinox and Traverse; and, SUVs and pickups including the Trailblazer, Tahoe, Suburban and Silverado. Chevrolet also offers customers a high-level aftersales service experience through Chevrolet Complete Care.

Renault Al-Babtain awards winners of 23rd annual NBK Walkathon event

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co, the authorized agent of Renault in the State of Kuwait recently awarded Ibrahim Dsousky and Dan Solo with a Renault Koleos and Renault Megane respectively upon their participation at the annual NBK walkathon. Visitors also had the chance to enter a draw and win fun test drive cars during the weekend of which are the latest models of the Renault Koleos, Renault Talisman & Renault Megane.

Demonstrating passion, integrity and commitment through every community engagement that Al-Babtain initiates or participates in, Saleh Al-Babtain The Chief Executive Officer of Al-Babtain group recognized the winners for their determination. Starting from the walk from Green Island on the Gulf Road to the Shuwaikh Beach Park, for a distance of 11 Km, the event witnessed participation of over 9,000 people. The winners were delighted to receive the Renault Koleos, a powerful and refined SUV and the Renault Megane, a dynamic compact saloon car.

Al-Babtain group emphasized on its role in supporting the sports activities which help in a healthy lifestyle for Kuwait community. The leading group in automotive brands in Kuwait will continue in its major role in the social responsibility through the continuous participation and support to social initiatives.



Boursa Kuwait supports educational initiatives by endorsing Q8 open quiz 2017

KUWAIT: Building on its CSR portfolio, Boursa Kuwait has participated at the Q8 Open Quiz Show 2017, held on the 24th of November 2017. The show is an annual signature event organized by the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) Alumni, and is open to all nationalities.

Eman Ali, Executive Director - Strategic Transformation and CEO Office, represented Boursa Kuwait at the event, a gesture that reflects its commitments to supporting educational initiatives conveying the importance of this function in elevating the overall performance metrics of communities in the Kuwaiti market.

Boursa Kuwait's CSR strategy focuses on providing the necessary support to the different segments of the society, in various areas such as children care, health, environment, social development, providing job opportunities to young Kuwaitis and give them an opportunity to excel and shine in their areas of expertise, educating the society through various forums, seminars & internship programs, investing in our employees and provide them with an ideal work environment.

The show is supported by Indian Business & Professional Council, with a directive to promote economic co-operation between Kuwait and India, and to provide a platform for interaction between Kuwaitis, Indians and other foreign residents.

The Open is hosted by acclaimed and popular Quiz master from India - Giri Balasubramaniam well known as Pickbrain. Giri holds seven Limca records for quizzing achievements and has hosted more than 1250 shows across 65 destinations of India, USA, Sri Lanka, Singapore, London and the Middle East Region.

The inaugural 2014 as well as 2015 events were resounding successes with more than 100 teams (3 members a side) from 10 nationalities participating for the Crown. Following last year's success which marked the participation of more than 30 international schools and more than 1500 audience attendances during the finals, this year's edition continued to mark a grand success.

The IIT IIM Alumni Association in Kuwait is an association of alumni of the premier Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs). Registered as a professional association with the Embassy of India in Kuwait, the association functions under the auspices of the Ambassador of India to Kuwait as its patron. The Association represents a vast blend of talent and experience from very senior executives to the high energy of youngsters who have just embarked on their professional journeys.

In-line with its CSR strategy, Boursa Kuwait's team has recently conducted a visit to Bayt Abdullah Children's Hospice - BACCH and presented gifts to children, the company has also hosted schools and universities students to raise their awareness on the history and future of Kuwait stock exchange. Additionally, and conducted health driven activities for its employees. Boursa Kuwait keep on hosting educational workshops, seminars and forums targeting different stakeholders.



Dutch classrooms empty again as primary teachers strike

AMSTERDAM: Elementary schools stayed closed across the Netherlands yesterday, as thousands of teachers went on strike for the second time in two months to demand higher pay and better working conditions. The previous one-day strike was in October, when eleven-hour funding promises by the government failed to avert the largest work stoppage by Dutch primary school teachers since the 1980s. Prime Minister Mark Rutte offered them 700 million euros (\$825 million) in extra funds over the next four years, but they say they need double that to cover salary increases and pay for classroom assistants. Participation in yesterday's stoppage among the Netherlands' 100,000 primary teachers appeared to be high, with unions estimating around 90 percent of schools remained shut. The strike reflects growing frustration across the Dutch workforce, with employees in many sectors feeling left behind by strong economic growth that has not been matched by wage increases.

Primary school teachers have demanded a one-time 1.4 billion euro cash injection to bring their salaries up to the level of their counterparts in secondary schools, who on average earn 20 percent more. For many teachers the confrontation with the state is also about a serious labor shortage that has increased their workload. The Netherlands will have a shortfall of 11,000 primary school teachers by 2027, estimates by the Ministry of Education showed last month, while a pay gap with other professions is expected to grow. —Reuters

Ooredoo launches ‘Shamel Home’

Kuwait’s first comprehensive internet, mobile and entertainment plan



The work team during the event. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah bin Mohammed Al-Thani



Danny Bates



Francisco Berta



KUWAIT: Ooredoo, announced the launch of Shamel Home, a comprehensive plan that offers customers with fixed and mobile internet in addition to online digital entertainment content from beIN, OSN and STARZPLAY. The announcement was made during the launch event held yesterday in Four Seasons Burj Al Shaya Hotel in Kuwait City.

As part of this plan, customers can benefit from high-speed up to 10 Mbps fixed internet with unlimited capacity courtesy of FASTtelco, a company owned by Ooredoo Kuwait, in addition to speeds up to 10 mbps, on their mobile lines, and they can enjoy 100 GB internet that can be shared with four additional SIM cards which are considered add-ons and customers can choose them upon their discretion. Customers will also enjoy 1500 local minutes. Additionally, customers can choose between beIN’s beIN CONNECT, OSN’s WAVO or STARZPLAY, for digital services. They can get 2 years of digital content subscription with WAVO, which includes a comprehensive range of entertainment, movies, series and sports programs as well as 21 live TV channels, STARZPLAY, which has 10,000+ Hours of blockbuster Hollywood movies, latest series, Arabic shows, Bollywood, children’s entertainment, and one year of digital content from beIN CONNECT to watch live streaming of the biggest sports events. The content can be streamed through the service providers’ websites and their apps for smart devices, including smart TVs, smartphones and tablets. It is worth mentioning that customers can choose from a diverse portfolio of devices which include handsets, tablets, and gaming consoles.

Pioneering digitalization

Commenting on the launch of this unique plan, Ooredoo Kuwait’s CEO and General Manager Sheikh

Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Thani noted that Shamel Home is an important step form Ooredoo towards embracing digitalization, especially as digital entertainment content witness substantial growth and demand in the region due to the rising popularity of smart devices. Underscoring that the move comes in tandem with the company’s core values of caring, connecting, and challenging, Al-Thani said, “Ooredoo Kuwait is committed to providing customers with services and plans that meet customers’ expectations and complement their lifestyle and mode of usage of the internet at home and on the go. We believe that it is vital to embrace this transformation of telecommunication and the role it plays in people’s everyday life: it is no longer exclusive to making phone calls on mobile devices.”

He also highlighted Ooredoo’s pride in partnering with reputable service providers such as STARZPLAY, a content provider that garnered substantial following in a short period of time, in addition to WAVO, the all-new online and mobile app entertainment platform of OSN, the region’s leading entertainment network, which offers exclusive content from the likes of HBO and Disney and exclusive sporting events such as the UFC and IPL and beIN CONNECT, the renowned sports entertainment provider in the region that offers exclusive international events such as the Champions League. “I would like to take this opportunity to thank our respected partners for their trust in collaborating with us in launching this product; it is such an honor to work with partners who are aligned with our strategy in providing customers with the best possible experience,” he added.

Commenting on this initiative, Youssef Al-Obaidly Deputy CEO, beIN MEDIA GROUP said, “Young and mobile Kuwaiti consumers expect to catch up with their favorite sports and programs on-the-go at their convenience. The partnership between Ooredoo Kuwait

Online content from beIN, OSN, STARZPLAY, and FASTtelco



Mijbil Al-Ayoub

and beIN enables sports fans in Kuwait to watch the absolute best in football, tennis, cricket, F1, handball, basketball and many other sports, anytime anywhere. We expect this initiative to be an instant hit in Kuwait.”

Francesco Perta, VP of Telecom Partnerships, at OSN, said: “OSN’s strategic partnership with Ooredoo for our leading online and mobile entertainment platform, WAVO, reflects our commitment to putting customers first, offering them world class entertainment, anytime, anywhere, at a price to suit every pocket. As a result of this partnership, even more people in Kuwait can now enjoy WAVO’s unrivalled blend of exclusive English and Arabic content across a vast array of genres. WAVO is unmatched anywhere in the region. WAVO offers customers an unprecedented 21 live TV channels, capitalizing on some of OSN’s top exclusive partnerships with leading studios, including HBO and Disney, making it the home of Emmy Award-winning hits, Westworld and Big Little Lies; as well as Disney family favourites. WAVO also offers customers access

to a massive library of video on demand and catch up TV, with everything from exclusive Western and Arabic programming to major sporting events; all of which can be enjoyed anytime, anywhere.

WAVO is the perfect online and mobile entertainment companion to Ooredoo’s Shamel Home offer, and we are delighted to announce that when Ooredoo Kuwait customers select any one of the WAVO Sports, WAVO Entertainment or WAVO Movies packages, they will get complementary access to the other two WAVO packages until February 2018.”

Danny Bates, Co-Founder and CCO of STARZPLAY commented: “Our growing library aims to meet our customers’ desires, and through our partnership with Ooredoo Kuwait, we continue to help our subscribers receive value for money. We enjoy a solid bond with Ooredoo and look forward to working together. “We are excited to bring customers our latest exclusive shows such as Knightfall, Vikings, Power and Taboo.”



A group photo of the event.



Health

Four-million-dollar challenge to transform the world of people with lower-limb paralysis

Solutions will come from across the technological and design spectrum

The Toyota Mobility Foundation, in partnership with Nesta's Challenge Prize Centre, has launched a \$4 million global challenge, 'Mobility Unlimited Challenge,' to change the lives of people with lower-limb paralysis, culminating in the unveiling of the winners in Tokyo in 2020.

The Mobility Unlimited Challenge is seeking teams around the world to create a game-changing technology that will help to radically improve the mobility and independence of people with paralysis.

The Mobility Unlimited Challenge aims to harness creative thinking from across the world to accelerate innovation and encourage collaboration with users to find winning devices that will transform the world for people with lower-limb paralysis. The Challenge will reward the development of personal mobility devices incorporating intelligent systems.

The mobility solutions of the future could include anything from exoskeletons to artificial intelligence and machine learning, from cloud computing to batteries.

"We are delighted to launch this unique challenge, which seeks the world's innovators and problem-solvers to create game-changing technology," said Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation. "Toyota believes that mobility goes beyond cars; it is about overcoming challenges and making dreams come true. Throughout our history, we have been driven by a commitment to contributing to society, and this challenge will help radically improve the mobility and independence of those with lower-limb paralysis. We thank our customers for continuing to inspire us and their support to our initiatives aimed at building a more joyful mobile society by advancing mobility for all."

Around the world, millions of people have lower-limb paralysis (the most common causes being strokes, spinal cord injury, and multiple sclerosis). While there are no statistics on paralysis worldwide, the World Health Organization estimates there are between 250,000 and 500,000 new cases

of spinal cord injury globally every year.

Innovation in 'smarter' mobility technology has the potential to create personal devices that are better integrated with the user's body and the environment. But the application of this groundbreaking technology is slow due to disincentives such as small and fragmented markets, regulatory burdens, and reimbursement complexities from healthcare systems and insurers.

This can make the field unattractive to small or new entrants, and prevent innovative solutions by existing innovators from getting to market. Even though huge advances have been made in improving travel between places, innovation in everyday functionality still lags behind.

The Mobility Unlimited Challenge Prize is supported by a number of ambassadors from around the world, all of whom have experience of living with lower-limb paralysis. Global ambassadors include Aki Taguchi, Director of Paralympian Association of Japan; August De Los Reyes, Head of Design at Pinterest; Turner-Prize nominated British/Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare (MBE); South African rower Sandra Khumalo; Indian athlete and campaigner Preethi Srinivasan; British TV presenter Sophie Morgan; US track and field athlete Tatyana McFadden; and Dr. Rory A. Cooper, Director of the Human Engineering Research Laboratories at the University of Pittsburgh.

Ryan Klem, Director of Programs for Toyota Mobility Foundation, stated: "This is the beginning of our challenge - a three-year journey concluding in Tokyo in 2020. A journey where the greatest minds in technology, design, and engineering, from every corner of the world, will compete to make the environment and society more accessible for people with lower-limb paralysis. We know we don't have solutions yet; this Challenge is about working with the people who can help develop them."

Charlotte Macken of Nesta's Challenge Prize Centre, commented: "Challenge Prizes are a way to make innovation happen. The Mobility Unlimited Challenge is about the



freedom to move. It will support innovators, creating cutting-edge personal mobility devices incorporating smart technology and intelligent systems that will transform people's lives."

A panel of expert judges will pick five finalists who will each receive \$500,000 (equivalent to AED 1.83m) to take their concepts from an intelligent insight to a prototype. The Challenge winner will receive \$1,000,000 (equivalent to AED 3.67m) to make the device available to users?

The Mobility Unlimited Challenge aims to attract and support smaller innovators who might otherwise struggle to break into the assistive technology market. The Discovery Awards will provide seed funding of \$50,000 (equivalent to AED 183,000) for 10 groups with promising concepts, but who might otherwise lack the resources to enter the Challenge. Interested innovators can apply online at mobilityunlimited.org.

Building on universal design principles to create a more equitable environment, entries for the Mobility Unlimited Challenge will be user-centered. The Challenge will be

a catalyst for innovation through co-creation with the people around the world who will benefit most from the solutions discovered by our entrants.

At the end of the Mobility Unlimited Challenge, the Toyota Mobility Foundation and Nesta's Challenge Prize Centre will have supported teams of innovators in creating leading-edge technological solutions, opening a new chapter in personal mobility for people with lower-limb paralysis.

Watch the video here to understand Toyota Mobility Foundation's vision, and for more information, please visit mobilityunlimited.org.

This has included projects such as:

* IBot mark 2 stair-climbing wheelchair, soon to be made slimmer and more affordable;

* Human Support Robot (ISR) A 'partner robot' to assist people with everyday activities;

* Project BLAID A future mobility technology that could help people who are blind or have visual impairments gain better environmental awareness.

Tasmanian tiger doomed long before humans came along

SYDNEY: The Tasmanian tiger was doomed long before humans began hunting the enigmatic marsupial, scientists said yesterday, with DNA sequencing showing it was in poor genetic health for thousands of years before its extinction. Scientists genetically mapped the animal-also known as a thylacine-using the genome of a pup preserved more than a century ago in a jar. The research revealed the creature began to undergo a decline in genetic diversity more than 70,000 years ago, leaving it less resilient to environmental change even before Aborigines are believed to have first inhabited the continent 65,000 years ago.

"Our hope is that there is a lot the thylacine can tell us about the genetic basis of extinction to help other species," said University of Melbourne biologist Andrew Pask, co-author of a study published in Nature Ecology and Evolution. Pask added the research may eventually enable scientists to clone the Tasmanian tiger and bring it back from the dead. "As this genome is one of the most complete for an extinct species, it is technically the first step to 'bringing the thylacine back', but we are still a long way off that possibility."

The animal was once widespread across Australia, but was wiped out on the mainland around 3,000 years ago, having likely succumbed to drought. They survived in the southern island state of Tasmania until 1936 when the last known one died in captivity at Hobart Zoo after the species was hunted to extinction in the wild. Scientists found the genetics of the animal to be more closely related to fellow Australian marsupial the Tasmanian devil than the dog-like dingo with whom it shared many physical features. —AFP

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What's On

Hilton Kuwait Resort celebrates 2017 Annual Corporate Night



Company representatives are honored during the event.



A draw in progress to select the winners.



Ziad Tantawi, The General Manager of Hilton Kuwait Resort delivers his speech.



A general view of the audience.

In commemoration of the hotel 15th anniversary, Hilton Kuwait Resort celebrated a successful year with guests and corporate partners at the hotel's 2017 Annual Corporate '15 Years of success' themed gala. Ziad Tantawi, General Manager of Hilton Kuwait Resort along with Fady Iskandar, Director of Business Development and Karim Fattouh, Assistant Director of Sales sided by the Sales, Public Relations and Marketing team gave a warm welcome to the elite

guests wishing them a pleasant time. Hosted by the famous MC Tamara Saab, the party was held in the hotel's impressive Al-Dorra Ballroom, where guests were treated to entertainment from the famous LED wheel performer Omar Fuentes who flown from Mexico particularly to attend the special occasion.

During the event, Ziad Tantawi, The General Manager of Hilton Kuwait Resort gave an engaging speech, commended the business partners for their

efforts and support throughout 2017. He commented "It is an honor to be standing here surrounded by a large number of our friends, esteemed guests and partners whom we have been associated for many years. We are very fortunate to be celebrating this milestone together, and our happiness is doubled by the fact that Hilton Kuwait Resort is celebrating its 15th anniversary with business leaders and members of Kuwait's elite community."

"This event provided us with the perfect opportunity to thank those individuals and companies who have showed continuous support throughout the year," he added. In addition to the delicious cuisine and world-class entertainment guests enjoyed throughout the evening, a raffle draw also took place with guests winning valuable gifts including complimentary night stays in Hilton Hotels and Resorts around the world as well as precious gifts from Hilton Kuwait Resort.

Blood donation drive at ACK

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) organized a blood donation drive, in collaboration with the Central Blood Bank of Kuwait. Organized by ACK's Health and Safety Department, the Blood Donation drive brought together students, faculty, and staff members from around the College to support the theme of the campaign - 'Every Drop Matters.' Donors

were greeted with a quick quiz arranged by students relating to the types of blood and compatible blood type donors in addition, to fresh juices were given to donors following the donation process.

In total, the Central Blood Bank collected 85 blood bags from ACK. The Central Blood Bank of Kuwait shared their heart felt appreciation towards ACK's community for having one of the highest numbers of donors from educational institutions in Kuwait. Due to high level of engagement and success, further Blood Donation drives will be scheduled to encourage students and staff to raise awareness concerning the importance of regular blood donations.



ACK students during the event

NBK, LOYAC arrange youth trip to Thailand

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and LOYAC arranged a trip for Kuwaiti youth to Thailand. This one-week trip will include social initiatives and activities with locals to get to know different cultures and learn their daily life.

This sponsorship goes with NBK's support to LOYAC's annual activities and events including the trips. A group of volunteers from different backgrounds will participate in this trip which is designed to build the humanitarian and adventurous skills in their personality.

The trip focuses on a community service project that includes meeting with locals to know more about the Thai culture, a visit to rice fields where volunteers will have the chance to prepare meals for families in need and teach English. The volunteers will also have the chance to participate in a group of social initiatives to provide a better under-



standing of the life and culture of locals. During the trip, participants will be introduced to the Elephant conservation project to learn and contribute in the methods of conservation for elephants.

Yaqoub Al-Baqer, NBK Public Relations Team Leader, said: "This sponsorship is part of NBK's commitment to its Corporate Social Responsibility as well as the vital role it plays in supporting students, youths and self-building initiatives in Kuwait."

"NBK always strives to empower Kuwaiti youth to realize their potentials, build their personalities and motivates their ambition. This

trip with LOYAC came in line with our strategy to invest in youth and develop their capabilities," he added. NBK continues to promote a range of philanthropic missions and social welfare programs as part of its corporate social responsibility to assert its leadership in supporting Kuwait's social development, standing as a model in serving all aspects of the community.

LOYAC is a nonprofit organization that runs several programs for the youth to develop their professional skills, enhance their personal growth and help them find their sense of purpose by extending themselves to others.

Mubarak ELT holds 3rd school Scrabble competition

By Hassan Abdul Bari

Mubarak Al-Kabeer ELT supervision recently organized the third annual school Scrabble competition for the area's male high school students. The event was hosted at Abdullah Al-Mubarak Secondary School for boys where a student represented each of the area's seven male high schools.

The organizing committee was headed by Mubarak ELT Senior Supervisor Hadeel Al-Kandari and included ELT supervisors Mahmoud Al-Najjar, Habib Rezzouk and Jawad Amrani in addition to English teachers Mulham Adnan, Hassan Abdul Bari and Ameer Khalloof as judges.

The students played three qualifying rounds before the final game, where student Hussein Khaled Al-Sabti from Imam Malek school won the first place, followed by Waleed Khaled Al-Sonni from Jaber Al-Ali School. The two students will accordingly represent the area in the second round of the competition featuring all educational areas in Kuwait. Notably, Scrabble was introduced as a school activity two years ago, and ever since, the game has been attracting more interest and participation from students.



The winners and teachers pose for a group photo.



The 2nd qualifying game in progress.



The 1st and 2nd place winners face off in the final game.



Students warm up before the start of the official games.

TV



01:20 Blood Circus
01:45 Ant-Man
05:00 The Last Witch Hunter
06:50 Project Almanac
08:40 Point Break
10:35 Age Of Tomorrow
12:10 The Last Witch Hunter
14:00 Ant-Man
16:05 The 5th Wave
18:00 Eagle Eye
20:00 Thor
22:00 Blood Diamond



00:50 Untamed & Uncut
01:45 Treehouse Masters
02:40 Cats 101
03:35 Shamwari: A Wild Life
04:00 Shamwari: A Wild Life
04:25 North Woods Law
05:15 Australia Doesn't Just Want To Kill You
06:02 Deadly Islands
06:49 Untamed & Uncut
07:36 Orangutan Island
08:25 Shamwari: A Wild Life
09:15 Treehouse Masters
10:10 Cats 101
11:45 Deadly Islands
12:00 Shamwari: A Wild Life
12:55 North Woods Law
13:50 Australia Doesn't Just Want To Kill You
14:45 Cats 101
15:40 Deadly Islands
16:35 Untamed & Uncut
17:30 Treehouse Masters
18:25 Tanked
19:20 Treehouse Masters
20:15 Cats 101
21:10 Shamwari: A Wild Life
21:38 Shamwari: A Wild Life
22:05 Tanked
23:00 Treehouse Masters
23:55 Deadly Islands



00:55 Silent Witness
01:55 Silent Witness
02:55 Orphan Black
03:40 Doctors
04:10 New Tricks
05:05 Holly City
06:00 Holly City
06:50 Death In Paradise
07:45 Doctors
08:20 Holly City
09:10 Holly City
10:05 Death In Paradise
11:00 New Tricks
11:55 Doctor Who
12:50 Stella
13:35 Holly City
14:30 Death In Paradise
15:25 Doctor Who
16:20 Stella
17:05 New Tricks
18:00 Doctors
18:30 EastEnders
19:05 Death In Paradise
20:00 Poldark
20:55 The Durrells
22:00 Line Of Duty
22:55 Top Of The Lake



00:00 Campus Nightmares
01:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
02:00 It Takes A Killer
02:30 It Takes A Killer
03:00 The First 48
04:00 Campus Nightmares
05:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
06:00 It Takes A Killer
06:30 It Takes A Killer
07:00 Homicide Hunter
08:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
09:00 It Takes A Killer
09:30 It Takes A Killer
10:00 Homicide Hunter
11:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
12:00 Escaping Polygamy
13:00 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath
14:00 It Takes A Killer
14:30 It Takes A Killer
15:00 Homicide Hunter
16:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
17:00 The First 48
18:00 It Takes A Killer
18:30 It Takes A Killer
19:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
20:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
21:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
22:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
23:00 I Escaped My Killer



00:05 The Half Hour
00:30 The Half Hour
00:55 Amy Schumer-Mark Normand: Don't Be Yourself
01:45 South Park
02:10 Chappelle's Show
02:35 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:25 Tosh.O
03:50 Chappelle's Show
04:15 Kroll Show
04:40 Key And Peele
05:05 Important Things With Demetri Martin
05:30 Impractical Jokers
05:55 Disaster Date
06:20 Ridiculousness Arabia
06:50 Tattoo Disasters
07:15 Tattoo Disasters
07:40 I Live With Models
08:05 Impractical Jokers
08:30 Disaster Date
08:55 Workaholics
09:20 Kroll Show
09:45 Key And Peele
10:10 Important Things With Demetri Martin
10:35 I Live With Models
11:00 Impractical Jokers
11:25 Disaster Date
11:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
12:15 Impractical Jokers
12:40 Tatoo Disasters
13:05 Tattoo Disasters
13:30 Important Things With Demetri Martin
13:55 Friends
14:20 Friends
14:45 Workaholics
15:10 Key And Peele
15:35 Kroll Show
16:00 Comedy Central Presents
16:30 Impractical Jokers
16:55 Friends
17:20 Friends
17:45 Disaster Date
18:10 Ridiculousness Arabia
18:35 Lip Sync Battle
19:00 Lip Sync Battle

19:25 Impractical Jokers
19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
20:12 Friends
20:35 Friends
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Comedy Central Presents
22:00 Comedy Salwagef
22:25 Tosh.O
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:05 Origins
00:30 Destroyed In Seconds
00:55 Destroyed In Seconds
01:20 React To That
01:45 React To That
02:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things
02:35 Kids Do The Craziest Things
03:00 Ultimate Survival
03:50 Destroyed In Seconds
04:15 Destroyed In Seconds
04:40 How It's Made
05:05 How It's Made
05:30 Origins
05:55 Origins
06:20 Nextworld
07:00 Destroyed In Seconds
07:25 Destroyed In Seconds
07:50 Origins
08:15 Origins
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Nextworld
10:20 Ultimate Survival
11:10 How To Build... Everything
11:35 How To Build... Everything
12:00 The Big Brain Theory
12:50 How It's Made
13:15 How It's Made
13:40 Nextworld
14:30 Destroyed In Seconds
14:55 Destroyed In Seconds
15:20 North America
16:10 Ultimate Survival
17:00 Head Games
17:50 The Big Brain Theory
18:40 Nextworld
19:30 How It's Made
19:55 How It's Made
20:20 Destroyed In Seconds
20:45 Destroyed In Seconds
21:10 Head Games
22:00 The Big Brain Theory
22:50 Ultimate Survival
23:40 North America

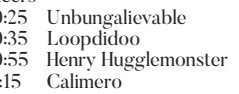


00:50 Killing Richard Glossip
01:45 Chandra Levy: A Mistress Murdered
02:40 Guilty Rich
03:35 American Monster
04:30 Killing Richard Glossip
05:25 The Locator
05:50 The Locator
06:20 I Almost Got Away With It
07:10 Evil Online
08:00 The Locator
08:25 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
09:15 The Locator
09:40 The Locator
10:10 Evil Online
11:05 I Am Homicide
12:00 Gone
12:55 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:45 Evil Online
15:40 I Am Homicide
16:35 Murder Chose Me
17:30 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
18:25 The Locator
18:50 The Locator
19:20 I Almost Got Away With It
20:15 Evil Online
21:10 I Am Homicide
22:05 Evil Stepmothers
23:00 Killing Richard Glossip
23:55 Murder By Numbers



00:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
00:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
00:35 Binny And The Ghost
01:00 Hank Zipzer
01:25 Alex & Co.
01:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
02:15 Evermoor Chronicles
02:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:05 Binny And The Ghost
03:30 Binny And The Ghost
03:55 Hank Zipzer
04:15 Disney Mickey Mouse
04:20 Hank Zipzer
04:45 Alex & Co.
05:10 Alex & Co.
05:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
06:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
06:25 Binny And The Ghost
06:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
06:50 Rolling With The Ronks
07:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
07:55 Elena Of Avalor
08:20 K.C. Undercover
08:45 Bunk'd
09:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
09:35 Tangled: The Series
10:00 Good Luck Jessie
10:50 Bob's Broken Sleigh
11:40 Austin & Ally
12:05 That's So Raven
12:30 That's So Raven
12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
13:00 Bunk'd
13:25 Tangled: The Series
13:50 Jessie
14:15 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
14:40 K.C. Undercover
15:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
15:30 Bizaardvark
15:55 Elena Of Avalor
16:20 Stuck In The Middle
16:45 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
17:00 Tangled: The Series
17:25 K.C. Undercover
17:50 K.C. Undercover
18:15 Descendants Wicked World
18:20 Bunk'd
18:45 Hotel Transylvania: The Series
19:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:15 Liv And Maddie
19:40 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
20:05 Star Wars Forces Of Destiny
20:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
20:35 Disney The Lodge
21:00 Alex & Co.
21:25 Alex & Co.

21:50 Lolirock
22:15 Lolirock
22:40 Evermoor Chronicles
23:05 Rolling With The Ronks
23:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
23:45 Lolirock



00:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
00:25 Unbungalievable
00:35 Loopedidoo
00:55 Henry Hugglemonster
01:15 Calimero
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Loopedidoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:45 Loopedidoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopedidoo
04:50 Calimero
05:05 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Henry Hugglemonster
06:00 Art Attack
06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
06:45 Loopedidoo
07:00 Henry Hugglemonster
07:15 Calimero
07:30 Loopedidoo
07:45 Henry Hugglemonster
08:00 P-King Duckling
08:30 Puppy Dog Pals
09:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
09:30 Sofia The First
10:00 Sofia The First: The Curse Of Princess Ivy
10:45 Minnie's Bow-Toons
11:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
11:30 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
12:00 The Lion Guard
12:30 The Lion Guard
13:00 Sofia The First
13:30 Sofia The First
14:00 PJ Masks
14:30 PJ Masks
15:00 P-King Duckling
15:30 Goldie & Bear And The Magic Map
15:35 Sofia The First
16:00 PJ Masks
16:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
17:00 Doc McStuffins
17:30 Vampirina
18:00 Sofia The First: Once Upon A Princess
19:00 Sofia The First
19:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
20:00 The Lion Guard
20:30 P-King Duckling
21:00 Doc McStuffins
21:30 PJ Masks
22:00 Sofia The First: The Curse Of Princess Ivy
22:45 Minnie's Bow-Toons
23:00 P-King Duckling
23:30 Puppy Dog Pals



00:20 Street Outlaws
01:05 Madiba
01:50 Bushcraft Build-Off
02:35 Ed Stafford: Left For Dead
03:20 Diesel Brothers
04:05 Deadliest Catch
04:50 Alaska: The Last Frontier
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Gold Divers: Under The Ice
06:45 Street Outlaws
07:30 Diesel Brothers
08:15 Deadliest Catch
09:00 Container Wars
09:25 How Do They Do It?
09:47 How Do They Do It?
10:12 Madiba
10:57 Bushcraft Build-Off
11:42 Ed Stafford: Left For Dead
12:25 How Do They Do It?
12:48 Storage Hunters UK
13:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier
13:55 Deadliest Catch
14:40 Gold Divers: Under The Ice
15:25 Diesel Brothers
16:10 Street Outlaws
17:00 How Do They Do It?
17:25 How Do They Do It?
17:50 Storage Hunters UK
18:20 Container Wars
18:50 Deadliest Catch
19:40 How Do They Do It?
20:10 How Do They Do It?
20:35 How Do They Do It?
21:00 Sean Conway: On The Edge
21:50 X-Ray Mega Airport
22:40 Breaking Magic
23:05 Breaking Magic
23:30 Diesel Brothers



06:00 Disney11
06:25 Supa Strikas
06:50 Marvel's Spider-Man
07:15 Right Now Kapow
07:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
07:45 Walk The Prank
08:10 Phineas And Ferb
08:35 Mech-X4
09:00 Marvel's Spider-Man
09:25 Lab Rats Elite Force
09:50 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
10:20 Gravity Falls
10:45 Kid vs Kat
11:10 Milo Murphy's Law
11:35 Right Now Kapow
12:00 Phineas And Ferb: Star Wars
12:55 Pair Of Kings
13:20 Pair Of Kings
13:45 Phineas And Ferb
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
14:15 Phineas And Ferb
14:40 The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody
15:30 Gravity Falls
16:20 Two More Eggs
16:25 Lab Rats
17:15 Kirby Buckets
18:05 Supa Strikas
18:30 Marvel's Ant-Man
18:35 Disney11
19:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
19:55 Walk The Prank
20:45 Supa Strikas
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
21:45 Lab Rats Elite Force
22:10 Lab Rats Elite Force
22:35 Phineas And Ferb
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am



00:10 WAGs La
01:50 E! News
02:50 Celebrity Style Story

03:20 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 Botched By Nature
04:40 Botched By Nature
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
06:55 E! News
07:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
08:10 E! News: Daily Pop
09:10 WAGs La
10:10 WAGs La
11:05 WAGs La
12:00 E! News
12:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
14:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
15:00 E! News
15:15 E! News: Daily Pop
16:15 WAGs La
17:10 WAGs La
18:05 WAGs La
19:00 E! News
20:00 The Platinum Life
21:00 The Platinum Life
22:00 The Platinum Life
23:00 E! News
23:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Man Fire Food
01:30 Man Fire Food
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped Junior
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Barefoot Contessa
06:25 Barefoot Contessa
06:50 Bake With Anna Olson
07:15 The Kitchen
08:05 The Pioneer Woman
08:30 The Pioneer Woman
08:55 Siba's Table
09:25 Siba's Table
09:55 Bake With Anna Olson
10:25 Bake With Anna Olson
10:55 The Kitchen
11:45 Cooking For Real
12:10 The Pioneer Woman
12:35 The Pioneer Woman
13:00 Siba's Table
13:30 Siba's Table
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Chopped
16:00 The Kitchen
17:00 Bake With Anna Olson
17:30 Bake With Anna Olson
18:00 Chopped Junior
19:00 Holiday Baking Championship
20:00 Chopped
21:00 Bakers vs. Fakers
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped



00:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Coronation Street
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 The Chase
03:25 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
04:20 Gino's Hidden Italy
05:15 Murdoch Mysteries
06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
07:05 The Chase
08:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
09:10 Gino's Hidden Italy
09:35 Gino's Hidden Italy
10:00 Murdoch Mysteries
10:55 Who's Doing The Dishes?
11:50 The Chase
12:45 Emmerdale
13:15 Coronation Street
13:45 Coronation Street
14:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?
15:10 The Chase
16:00 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
17:00 Little Boy Blue
17:50 Murdoch Mysteries
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 The Chase
21:00 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
22:00 Little Boy Blue
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Million Dollar Genius
01:00 What Really Happened
02:00 Clash Of Warriors
03:00 Missing In Alaska
03:50 Ancient Aliens
04:40 UFO Files
05:30 Million Dollar Genius
06:20 What Really Happened
07:10 The Universe
08:00 Clash Of Warriors
09:00 Missing In Alaska
10:00 Ancient Aliens
11:00 UFO Files
12:00 Million Dollar Genius
13:00 What Really Happened
14:00 Clash Of Warriors
15:00 Missing In Alaska
16:00 Ancient Aliens
17:00 UFO Files
18:00 The Universe
19:00 What Really Happened
20:00 Clash Of Warriors
21:00 Missing In Alaska
22:00 Ancient Aliens
23:00 How The States Got Their Shapes
23:30 How The States Got Their Shapes



00:21 Ultimate Wheels
01:11 American Pickers
01:41 American Pickers
02:00 Swamp People
02:50 Counting Cars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Time Team
05:00 Counting Cars
05:25 Counting Cars
06:00 Ultimate Wheels
06:50 American Pickers
07:40 Counting Cars
08:05 Counting Cars
08:30 Pawn Stars
08:55 Pawn Stars
09:20 Aussie Pickers
10:10 Ax Men
11:00 Ultimate Wheels
11:50 American Pickers
12:40 Counting Cars
13:05 Counting Cars
13:30 Time Team

14:20 Swamp People
15:10 Alone
16:00 American Pickers
16:50 Counting Cars
17:15 Counting Cars
17:40 Swamp People
18:30 Alone
19:20 Mountain Men
20:10 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars
21:00 Leepu And Pitbull
21:50 Billion Dollar Wreck
22:40 Time Team
23:30 Alone



00:15 What's For Sale?
00:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
01:10 Rustic Adventures Argentina
01:40 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
02:05 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
02:35 World's Best Beaches
03:30 Island Hunter
04:25 David Rocco's Dolce India
04:50 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
05:20 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
05:45 The Food Files
06:15 Fearless Chef
07:10 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
07:35 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
08:05 World's Best Beaches
09:00 Island Hunter
09:55 David Rocco's Dolce India
10:20 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
10:50 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
11:15 The Food Files
11:45 Fearless Chef
12:40 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
13:05 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
13:35 World's Best Beaches
14:30 Island Hunter
15:25 David Rocco's Dolce India
15:50 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
16:20 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
16:45 The Food Files
17:15 Fearless Chef
18:10 Eat Street
18:35 Eat Street
19:05 David Rocco's Dolce India
19:30 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
20:00 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
20:30 The Food Files
21:00 Fearless Chef
22:00 Eat Street
22:25 Eat Street
22:55 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
23:20 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
23:50 World's Best Beaches



00:10 Yukon Gold
01:00 Cold Water Gold
02:00 Air Crash Investigation
03:00 Seconds From Disaster
04:00 Yukon Gold
05:00 Disappeared: The Search For Cody Dial
06:00 Sea Of Hope
07:00 The Long Road Home
08:00 Every Singaporean Son
08:30 Every Singaporean Son
09:00 Disappeared: The Search For Cody Dial
10:00 No Man Left Behind
11:00 Human Ape
12:00 Brain Games
12:30 How To Win At Everything
13:00 Startalk
14:00 Every Singaporean Son
14:30 Every Singaporean Son
15:00 The Long Road Home
16:00 No Man Left Behind
17:00 Dian Fossey: Secrets In The Mist
18:00 Classified: Secret Service Files
19:00 The Long Road Home
20:00 No Man Left Behind
20:50 Dian Fossey: Secrets In The Mist
21:40 Classified: Secret Service Files
22:30 The Long Road Home
23:20 Brain Games
23:45 How To Win At Everything



00:20 Predator Battleground
01:10 Monster Fish
02:00 Kings Of The Kill
02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
04:40 Ultimate Predators GPU
05:35 Kings Of The Kill
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
08:20 Ultimate Predators GPU
09:15 Botswana
10:10 Man v. Monster
11:05 Savage Kingdom: Uprising
12:00 Life On The Barrier Reef
12:55 Dangerous Encounters
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Snake City Compilations
15:40 Ultimate Predators GPU
16:35 Planet Carnivore: Perfect Killers
17:30 Man v. Monster
18:25 Savage Kingdom: Uprising
19:20 Snake City Compilations
20:10 Ultimate Predators GPU
21:00 Planet Carnivore: Perfect Killers
21:50 Man v. Monster
22:40 Savage Kingdom: Uprising
23:30 Life On The Barrier Reef



00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
01:00 Rabbids Invasion
01:24 Sanjay And Craig
01:48 Sanjay And Craig
02:12 Winx Club
02:36 Winx Club
03:00 Harvey Beaks
03:24 Harvey Beaks
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:24 Rabbids Invasion
07:48 Get Blake
08:12 Harvey Beaks
08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
09:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:48 Henry Danger
09:72 Game Shakers
10:36 Regal Academy
11:00 Winx Club
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
11:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

12:12 The Loud House
12:36 Rabbids Invasion
13:00 Breadwinners
13:24 Sanjay And Craig
13:48 Hunter Street
14:12 I Am Frankie
14:36 The Thundermans
15:00 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
15:24 School Of Rock
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
16:36 The Loud House
17:00 Sanjay And Craig
17:24 I Am Frankie
17:48 Hunter Street
18:12 Henry Danger
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
19:00 School Of Rock
19:24 Game Shakers
19:48 The Thundermans
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
20:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
21:24 Sanjay And Craig
21:48 Rabbids Invasion
22:12 Breadwinners
22:36 Harvey Beaks
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



00:14 Shimmer And Shine
00:38 Shimmer And Shine
01:01 Max & Ruby
01:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:34 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:45 The Day Henry Met
01:50 The Day Henry Met
01:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:48 Blaze And The Monster Machines
03:02 Zack & Quack
03:02 Shimmer And Shine
03:24 Nella The Princess Knight
03:35 Paw Patrol
03:58 Little Charmers
04:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
04:22 Dora The Explorer
04:45 Max & Ruby
05:07 The Day Henry Met
05:12 Nella The Princess Knight
05:35 Shimmer And Shine
05:45 Shimmer And Shine
05:58 Wallykazam!
06:21 Zack & Quack
06:31 The Day Henry Met
06:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
07:00 Rusty Rivets
07:13 Paw Patrol
07:37 Dora The Explorer
08:00 Nella The Princess Knight
08:23 Bubble Guppies
08:47 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:09 Paw Patrol
09:32 Shimmer And Shine
09:44 Shimmer And Shine
09:56 Nella The Princess Knight
10:17 The Day Henry Met
10:23 Paw Patrol
10:46 Rusty Rivets
11:10 Wallykazam!
11:34 Bubble Guppies
11:57 Team Umizoomi
12:21 Shimmer And Shine
12:44 Shimmer And Shine
13:07 Max & Ruby
13:30 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:41 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:53 The Day Henry Met
13:58 The Day Henry Met
14:04 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:26 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:49 Zack & Quack
15:11 Shimmer And Shine
15:33 Nella The Princess Knight
15:45 Paw Patrol
16:08 Little Charmers
16:21 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
16:33 Dora The Explorer
16:56 Max & Ruby
17:19 The Day Henry Met
17:24 Nella The Princess Knight
17:47 Shimmer And Shine
17:58 Shimmer And Shine
18:10 Wallykazam!
18:33 Zack & Quack
18:44 The Day Henry Met
18:50 Blaze And The Monster Machines
19:12 Rusty Rivets
19:25 Paw Patrol
19:49 Dora The Explorer
20:12 Nella The Princess Knight
20:35 Bubble Guppies
20:59 Blaze And The Monster Machines
21:21 Paw Patrol
21:45 Shimmer And Shine
21:56 Shimmer And Shine
22:08 Nella The Princess Knight
22:30 The Day Henry Met
22:36 Paw Patrol
22:59 Rusty Rivets
23:22 Wallykazam!
23:46 Bubble Guppies



00:00 Pan
01:55 Mostly Ghostly: One Night In Doom House
03:25 A Tiger's Tail
04:50 Lego DC: Justice League
Gotham City Breakout
06:20 Pan
08:15 Mostly Ghostly: One Night In Doom House
09:45 Get Santa
11:30 A Tiger's Tail
12:55 Mune
14:25 Santa Claws
15:55 Big Baby
17:20 All She Wishes
18:55 The Amazing Wizard Of Paws
20:40 Mune
22:10 Santa Claws
23:40 All She Wishes



00:15 Art School Confidential
02:05 Cooties
03:40 Surviving Christmas
05:15 Joe Somebody
06:55 The Tiger Hunter
08:35 The Duff
10:15 Once I Was A Beehive
12:15 Joe Somebody
13:55 The Tiger Hunter
15:35 Summer Villa
17:05 Hearts Of Spring
18:35 Big
20:20 The Boss
22:00 Deuce Bigalow: European Gigolo
23:25 Dead 7



02:00 Waking Life
03:45 To Kill A Mockingbird
05:55 Goall!

08:00 The Better Angels
09:35 To Kill A Mockingbird
11:45 Waking Life
13:30 Not Without My Daughter
15:30 Alex Of Venice
17:00 Rushmore
18:35 Infinitely Polar Bear
20:15 Lost River
22:00 Suffragette
23:55 A Dangerous Woman



01:15 A Town Called Panic
02:40 The Happy Cricket And The Giant Bugs
04:10 Funny Little Cars
05:15 Get Squirrelly
06:45 Quest For A Heart
08:15 Rhz The Vampire Of Seville
09:45 Azur & Asmar: The Prince's Quest
11:30 Micropolis
13:05 Ploddy Police Car
14:25 A Town Called Panic
15:50 Zodiac: The Race Begins
17:30 Azur & Asmar: The Prince's Quest
19:15 Back To The Sea
21:05 Fire Birds
22:35 Zodiac: The Race Begins

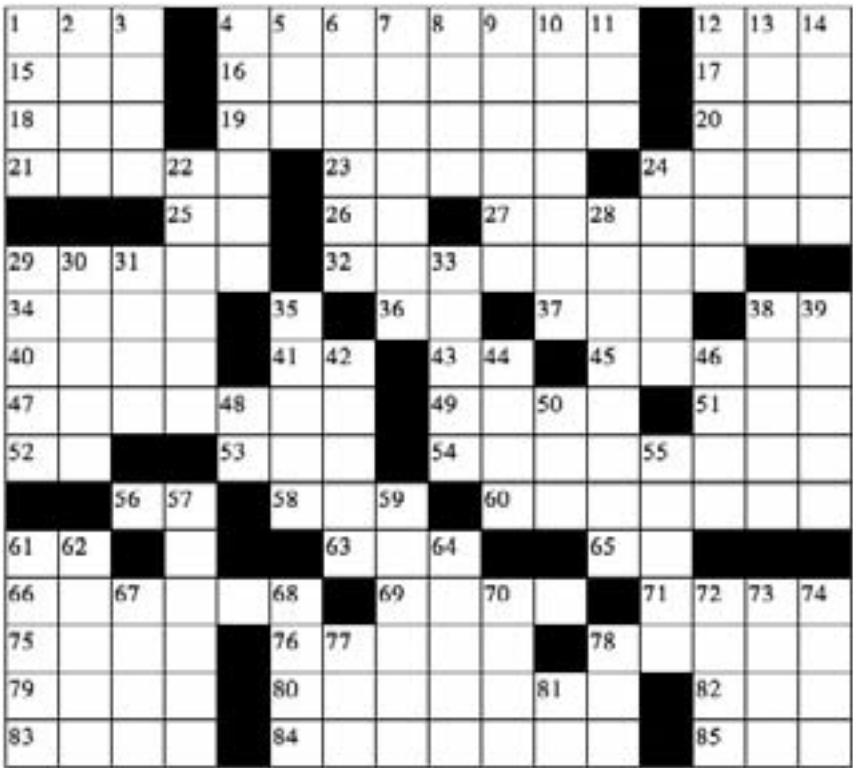


01:05 Sommersby
03:00 Hail, Caesar!
04:50 Chloë And Theo
06:15 Rocky III
08:00 Rocky IV
09:35 Before We Go
11:15 Eddie The Eagle
13:05 Hail, Caesar!
14:55 Rocky IV
16:30 The Finest Hours
18:30 Norbit
20:15 Dangerous Minds
21:55 Sisters
23:55 Pushing Tin



00:40 Mythbusters
01:30 How Do They Do It?
01:55 Food Factory USA
02:20 How It's Made
02:45 How It's Made
03:10 Space Voyages
04:00 Prototype This
04:48 Mythbusters
05:36 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Food Factory USA
06:24 How It's Made
06:48 How It's Made
07:12 Space Voyages
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:26 Prototype This
09:14 Mythbusters
10:02 Space Voyages
10:50 How Do They Do It?
11:14 Food Factory USA
11:38 How It's Made
12:02 How It's Made
12:26 Prototype This
13:14 Mythbusters
14:02 How Do They Do It?
14:26 Food Factory USA
14:50 Space Voyages
15:38 Prototype This
16:26 How It's Made
16:50

CROSSWORD 1783



ACROSS

1. 10 hao equal 1 dong.
4. A plane curve formed by the intersection of a right circular cone and a plane parallel to an element of the curve.
12. A former monetary unit in Great Britain.
15. The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
16. Relating to the blood vessels or blood.
17. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
18. Electrical conduction through a gas in an applied electric field.
19. Bring order and organization to.
20. Light informal conversation for social occasions.
21. The state prevailing during the absence of war.
23. A block of metal that is cast in a particular shape for convenient handling.
25. A Russian river.
26. A hard malleable ductile silvery metallic element that is resistant to corrosion.
27. Type genus of the Sillaginidae.
29. Expletives used informally as intensifiers.
32. A literary or scientific association for the promotion of learning.
34. A river in northern England that flows southeast through West Yorkshire.
36. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
37. United States liquid unit equal to 4 quarts or 3.785 liters.
40. Wearing or provided with clothing.
41. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
43. A blow that renders the opponent unconscious.
45. Russian country house.
47. Alternatively, a member of the family Nymphaeaceae.
49. Morally bad or wrong.
51. Either of two folds of skin that can be moved to cover or open the eye.
52. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
53. A compartment in front of a motor vehicle where driver sits.
54. A program for a race meeting.
56. A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.
58. (Scotland) A small loaf or roll of soft bread.
60. Soviet geneticist whose adherence to Lamarck's theory of evolution was favored by Stalin (1898-1976).
61. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
63. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
65. A white trivalent metallic element.
66. (Welsh myth) The other world.
69. An expression of open-mouthed astonishment.
71. Any culture medium that uses agar as the gelling agent.
75. Old World wild swine having a narrow body and prominent tusks from which most domestic swine come.
76. 100 agorot equal 1 shekel.
79. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
80. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
82. Having much flesh (especially fat).
83. A light springing movement upwards or forwards.

84. A state in the southeastern United States on the Gulf of Mexico.
85. The federal agency that insures residential mortgages.

DOWN

1. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
2. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
3. Predatory black-and-white toothed whale with large dorsal fin.
4. The cardinal number that is the sum of four and one.
5. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
6. The provincial capital and largest city of Saskatchewan.
7. Genus of widely distributed agarics that have white spores and are poisonous with few exceptions.
8. A vigorous blow.
9. Serving no useful purpose.
10. Continuing or enduring without marked change in status or condition or place.
11. Fermented alcoholic beverage similar to but heavier than beer.
12. A word that is written with two letters in an alphabetic writing system.
13. Large long-armed ape of Borneo and Sumatra having arboreal habits.
14. Used as a Hindi courtesy title.
22. A black-tipped plug clogging a pore of the skin.
24. Scale-like structure between the base of the wing and the halter of a two-winged fly.
28. Not treated with lead.
30. Of a pale purple color.
31. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
33. A foot traveler.
35. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
38. Make a shrill creaking, squeaking, or noise, as of a door, mouse, or bird.
39. A group of Plains Indians formerly living in what is now North and South Dakota and Nebraska and Kansas and Arkansas and Louisiana and Oklahoma and Texas.
42. A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
44. Rounded like an egg.
46. Group of people related by blood or marriage.
48. One million periods per second.
50. Devoid of warmth and cordiality.
55. Of or like a cecum.
57. Enclose or enfold completely with or as if with a covering.
59. An Asian temple.
62. A positively charged electrode by which electrons leave an electrical device.
64. A member of an American Indian peoples of NE South America and the Lesser Antilles.
67. A quantity of no importance.
68. Plant with an elongated head of broad stalked leaves resembling celery.
70. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
72. A spar rising aft from a mast to support the head of a quadrilateral fore-and-aft sail.
73. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
74. (Roman Catholic Church) The supreme ecclesiastical tribunal for cases appealed to the Holy See from diocesan courts.
77. A colloid in a solid solid form than a sol.
78. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
81. Before noon.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Welcome all new ideas. You should take every opportunity to get outside and enjoy the natural world as well. Work will seem easier and your creative side will become more expressive. You should feel more relaxed as well. If ever there was a day to work with groups, this is it! Your acute sensitivity to other people's moods will help you tame and reshape the most frustrated attitude as one would play a violin. You enjoy good relations with family members and the financial position is on the upswing. You must be practical in personal decisions about finances. You could be feeling a particular closeness to lovers, children and other people that are near and dear to your heart. Being well-thought-of for your gifts and talents is a wonderful feeling.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your smart shopping is to be envied. Of course, with your ability to socialize, you can be a very good salesperson. Importer, exporter or buyer for a department store would not be an unusual option as a profession for you. There may be much responsibility at this time but much of your work is recognized by people that may not express appreciation. Perseverance, however, is crucial to your own sense of accomplishment—you will be glad you finished what you set out to accomplish. You may show your easygoing manner to friends and family. The need to relax and enjoy the home setting is great. You may decide to do some sort of creative work that will add to the atmosphere or comfort of your surroundings. This is a good time to return a favor.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Something may spell out your need to reorganize and be more conservative. Later today, you may find your friends calling on your talent in some special way. This should all work out well. Your more reserved side will be what others see. You will soon be playing the part of the listener and that is something that most people appreciate. There are far too many talkers and just not enough real listeners! Listening is how you learn. If there is any disagreement today you know how to agree to disagree, in a very diplomatic way. Those around you appreciate your kindness and helpful behavior; you can always present new ideas when your listener is ready. You enjoy your friends—they are a great source of strength and encouragement.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may feel a sense of satisfaction and completeness from the choices you make. Religion, philosophy, law and education are some of the considerations lately. Sympathy for others is an emotional quality that takes on a greater importance. It is commonsense, not just information that counts now. Your taste in art and appreciation of the artist is keen. You may not want to purchase too many things just now but you will enjoy having a list of items that you would like to eventually add to your possession as investments and conversation pieces for your home. Your sense of value is strong. This is also a super time to just sit back and enjoy what you have. A sense of support and harmony makes this a relaxed time.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You should experience all the benefits of this most powerful planet. You will probably be in a talkative and quick-witted mood. Ideas are clear and accessible. This could be a good time for designing, planning, creating the best advertisement or toy, etc. You may have a conversation with an older person or someone in authority and learn about past interests that could fit in with new invention developments. Your creative output is strong and you are enthusiastic to apply your talent to the work at hand. If you give your best effort now, considerable success will follow. There may be a tendency to want to socialize later this evening. Family members seem to like your idea and want the same thing. A favorite pizza place is filled with laughter tonight.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You have a natural sense for communicating with others, especially those younger than yourself. Today you may be asked to branch out a bit and show off your skills for another department, business or trade fair. Your mind is exceptionally sharp, with the result that you may be able to work out the most difficult problems. There is little time to do your regular volunteer service this year but you will find plenty of ways to help people as you go about your next few days. The lights are so pretty this evening that you may decide to experiment a little with a camera and its settings for night pictures, light, video, etc. A fun distraction from the work of your day will help you relax and reset the energies that will prepare you for another full day.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You could find yourself representing or speaking for your company or communicating about your skills. Positive energies are in your corner. You may even feel that all your hard work this year has been worth the effort. Doubts are no longer part of your daily thinking. You are sure of yourself and know that you make good decisions and your co-workers can depend on you as well as you can depend on them. Your motto may be to move full speed ahead. You are ambitious and your supervisors detect the high achievement status. You are practical and will continue to be successful for yourself and your company. You should find this an exceptionally good day for anything job related. You may find new methods of working that will help simplify the process.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Working in a place where you often interact with children and their parents is exciting, although loud upon occasion. There is always something to learn as well as something to teach. It may seem to you that a little breeze has blown that same energy of communication with others throughout your neighborhood. You talk with neighbors and discover the travel or the entertainment that they plan to enjoy in the next few days. It would be good if we could enjoy the friendly interactions and polite expressions all year. This afternoon you could be viewed as the perfect person to put in charge of some project requiring a conservative mind. Expect some new and fresh approaches in your habit patterns. Nighttime hours seem to be made for having fun.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

This day could be a time of challenge from a career standpoint. Some of the requests coming to you at this time may be stressful. You must know you are ready, willing and able to extend your energies and your time to learn and accomplish what is set before you. It is a compliment to be a part of the group that will accomplish important tasks. Your primary goal will be to do things that make you proud of yourself and the way that you get things completed. You have an opportunity this afternoon to relax in a new surrounding that is quite enjoyable. Diet, exercise and work all will somehow mean more to you at this time. Finding a place for all of your interests is a good thing. Organization will probably be the number one key.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You are happy to be with others and to have work. On top of your regular job, you may be sought after as just the person for a new type of technical equipment. You are ready to dive in and accomplish what you can. Your attitude is positive and many co-workers have discovered that about you. The attitude that you have when you have times of doubt determines the time you stay in a quandary and you are determined to get in and get out of whatever difficulty you find. Your directional abilities are in high focus. It is important during this time to stay focused and discourage co-workers from too much chatting on the job. You want to accomplish your work and be recognized for the quality of work that you provide. Obstacles are about to disappear.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a positive day to sign contracts, conclude business deals or make future plans. The things that will pique your interest and stir your heartstrings are adventures that take you completely out of your realm of thinking. You will need to travel, possibly internationally, to achieve a particular goal. There are new worlds, new cultures and new and different approaches to things. This is a time of romantic crusades, a universal love that could conceivably steal your heart away. This could even be the love of a place, versus an individual. These are very deep and powerful longings. Expect pleasant conversations with others and be like a sponge—absorb new ideas and thoughts. You will have a lot to offer and can be quite pleased with the results.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

There are new concepts that you are aware of and you may find yourself talking about them with co-workers. It is an excellent time to solicit the help of others, though it's important that you truly know the needs of your company or business before asking. Your sharp mind will see all aspects from all angles. Any high-level mental pursuits should be rewarding and stimulating. Your ability to make good commonsense decisions both for yourself and others is an admirable trait just now. Expect to make some clear-cut decisions that will affect others. Something you are doing or something that you own could spur compliments from others. It's always nice to receive flattery as it usually indicates that you are doing something right.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Dance crazes

Find and circle all of the dance crazes that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.

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

BALLROOM	HAND JIVE	QUICKSTEP	TEXAS TWO-STEP
BOLLYWOOD	HIP HOP	RIVER	THE BUNNY HOP
CALYPSO	HOCKEY POKEY	ROBOT	THE JERK
CHA CHA SLIDE	JITTERBUG	RUMBA	THE RUNNING MAN
CHARLESTON	JUMP ON IT	SALSA	THE TWIST
CHICKEN DANCE	LIMBO	SAMBA	THRILLER
GA OIP	LINDY HOP	SHIMMY	VOGUE
DISCO	LINE	SINGLE LADIES	WALTZ
ELECTRIC SLIDE	MACARENA MAMBO	SQUARE DANCE	WATUSI
FLAMENCO	MERENGUE	SUZIE Q	YMCA
FOOTLOOSE	MODERN	SWING	ZUMBA
FOXTROT	MOONWALK	TANGO	
GANGNAM STYLE		TAP	

Yesterday's Solution

Countries of Europe

Hidden sentence: IN RESPECT TO AREA EUROPE IS THE SECOND SMALLEST CONTINENT IN THE WORLD

ALBANIA	ANDORRA	ARMENIA	AUSTRIA	AZERBAIJAN	BELARUS	BELGIUM	BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA	BULGARIA	CROATIA	CYPRUS	CZECH REPUBLIC	DENMARK	ENGLAND	ESTONIA	FINLAND	FRANCE	GERMANY	GREECE	HUNGARY	IRELAND	ITALY	LATVIA	LIECHTENSTEIN	LITHUANIA	LUXEMBOURG	MACEDONIA	MALTA	MOLODOVA	MONACO	NETHERLANDS	NORTHERN IRELAND	NORWAY	POLAND	PORTUGAL	ROMANIA	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	SAN MARINO	SCOTLAND	SLOVAKIA	SLOVENIA	SPAIN	SWEDEN	SWITZERLAND	TURKEY	UKRAINE	SERBIA/MONTENEGRO	VATICAN CITY	WALES
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Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

I, Shaik Shabbir Hussain,
S/o Shaik Ibrahim holder of
Indian Passport No.
M3439430 & Civil ID no.
275072002729 hereby
changed my name to Shaik
Rafi Hussain hereinafter in
all my dealings and docu-
ments. **(C 5368)**
7-12-2017

Lost Indian Passport
J1331475, Name: Kalidindi
Sujata on 29th November
2017 at airport, finder
please inform 97942497.
(C 5367)
7-12-2017

SITUATION WANTED

Admin/ facilities/ accom-
modation/ transportation
manager with 20 years
experience in Gulf, seeking
suitable placement.
Contact: +965 55259659.
(C 5366) 7-12-2017

**Automated enquiry about
the Civil ID card is
1889988**

EMERGENCY  **112**



Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 13/12/2017				Departure Flights on Wednesday 13/12/2017				Arrival Flights on Wednesday 13/12/2017				Departure Flights on Wednesday 13/12/2017			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	KAC	774	Riyadh	13:40	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05	WAN	362	Alexandria	12:35
KAC	504	Beirut	00:30	KNE	231	Riyadh	13:55	JAI	528	Asyut	00:15	MEAN	405	Sarajevo	12:35
JZR	267	Beirut	00:40	PAL	668	Manila	14:00	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30	VIZ	201	Beirut	12:55
KAC	102	London	00:50	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:15	WAN	341	Sohag	00:30	FEG	932	Alexandria	13:40
JZR	539	Cairo	00:55	KAC	618	Doha	14:15	FDB	072	Dubai	00:35	JZR	176	Dubai	13:40
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	FDB	059	Doha	14:20	PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40	FDB	076	Dubai	13:45
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	KAC	516	Tehran	14:20	MSC	412	Asyut	01:00	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	KAC	672	Dubai	14:25	JAI	571	Mumbai	01:05	FDK	804	Damascus	14:00
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	JZR	1333	Al Najaf	14:30	JZR	502	Luxor	01:30	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	KAC	412	Bangkok	14:35	JZR	142	Doha	01:45	AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:15
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	352	Kochi	14:35	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50	JZR	124	Bahrain	14:30
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40	KAC	417	Manila	02:00	KNE	382	Taif	15:00
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	KAC	304	Mumbai	14:50	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30	KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	15:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:30	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:15	KAC	788	Jeddah	15:10	SAI	442	Lahore	02:30	FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15	DLH	625	Frankfurt	02:45	KAC	691	Muscat	15:20
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	JZR	787	Riyadh	15:30	AXB	396	Kozhikode	02:55	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	KAC	562	Amman	15:30	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05	KAC	785	Jeddah	15:25
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	502	Beirut	15:30	KAC	351	Kochi	03:05	JZR	188	Dubai	15:25
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	OMA	645	Muscat	15:35	UAE	854	Dubai	03:40	QTR	1079	Doha	15:30
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	QTR	1087	Doha	03:40	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	QTR	1072	Doha	15:55	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:55	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:45
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	RJD	135	Abu Dhabi	16:00	KKK	1269	Istanbul	03:55	KAC	775	Riyadh	15:50
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	ABY	127	Sharjah	16:00	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55	KAC	743	Dammam	16:05
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	SAW	705	Damascus	16:00	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00	KAC	563	Amman	16:10
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	KAC	118	New York	16:00	MSR	607	Luxor	04:05	KAC	619	Doha	16:10
KAC	544	Cairo	04:25	JZR	535	Cairo	16:05	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05	PAL	669	Manila	16:10
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	KNE	531	Jeddah	16:05	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	JZR	779	Jeddah	16:15	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00	OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	FDB	051	Dubai	16:40	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30	KAC	615	Bahrain	16:40
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	RJA	640	Amman	16:55	FDB	070	Dubai	05:45	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:40
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	KAC	542	Cairo	17:05	KAC	303	Mumbai	06:05	RJD	136	Abu Dhabi	16:55
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	JZR	1330	Al Najaf	06:20	KNE	535	Jeddah	16:55
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40	GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	JZR	560	Sohag	06:25	SAW	706	Damascus	16:55
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	JZR	125	Bahrain	17:35	THY	771	Istanbul	06:50	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:45	RJA	643	Amman	07:05	QTR	1073	Doha	17:15
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:20	UAE	875	Dubai	18:00	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15	KAC	503	Beirut	17:15
KAC	362	Colombo	06:25	FDB	063	Dubai	18:10	JZR	1334	Al Najaf	07:30	JZR	240	Amman	17:15
KAC	678	Dubai	06:30	JZR	177	Dubai	18:15	KAC	167	Paris	07:35	JZR	266	Beirut	17:15
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:30	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	JZR	1336	Al Najaf	07:45	KAC	283	Dhaka	17:30
WAN	342	Sohag	06:35	QTR	1080	Doha	18:50	JZR	902	GYD	07:50	FDB	052	Dubai	17:40
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	KAC	744	Dammam	19:10	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00	KAC	357	Kochi	17:45
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:20	KAC	413	Bangkok	08:10	UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
BAW	157	London	07:10	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:25	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30	RJA	641	Amman	17:55
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10	RBG	555	Alexandria	19:25	KAC	791	Madinah	08:35	KAC	331	Trivandrum	18:00
QTR	8511	Doha	07:35	KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	19:25	KAC	787	Jeddah	08:40	KAC	343	Chennai	18:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30	KAC	613	Bahrain	08:55	JZR	538	Cairo	18:15
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	KAC	156	Istanbul	19:30	BAW	156	London	08:55	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	503	Luxor	07:45	NIA	361	Alexandria	19:40	KAC	117	New York	09:00	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45	QTR	8512	Doha	09:05	JZR	184	Dubai	18:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50	JZR	534	Cairo	09:10	WAN	115	Bahrain	18:50
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:00	KAC	616	Bahrain	19:55	KAC	561	Amman	09:40	KAC	381	Delhi	18:50
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KNE	381	Taif	20:00	KAC	671	Dubai	09:45	FDB	064	Dubai	19:10
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	JZR	189	Dubai	20:10	KAC	741	Dammam	09:45	JZR	554	Alexandria	19:20
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	KAC	620	Doha	20:15	KAC	126	Sharjah	09:45	UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	OMA	647	Muscat	20:20	KAC	101	London	09:45	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	692	Muscat	20:40	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45	QTR	1081	Doha	20:00
JZR	1331	Al Najaf	10:00	DLH	624	Frankfurt	20:45	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00	ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
IAW	157A	Al Najaf	10:00	ALK	229	Colombo	21:20	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00	RBG	556	Alexandria	20:05
IRA	673	Ahwaz	10:10	MEA	402	Beirut	21:20	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00	GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20	IRA	668	Mashhad	10:00	FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:00	KAC	168	Paris	21:20	KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	20:40
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC	786	Jeddah	21:25	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10	NIA	162	Cairo	20:40
JZR	1337	Al Najaf	11:10	UAE	859	Dubai	21:35	KAC	617	Doha	10:15	KNE	232	Riyadh	20:45
JZR	1335	Al Najaf	11:10	KAC	676	Dubai	21:40	QTR	1071	Doha	10:20	KAC	353	Bengaluru	20:55
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25	KAC	301	Mumbai	21:00
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	KLM	445	Amsterdam	21:50	JZR	778	Jeddah	10:30	OMA	1543	Cairo	21:20
NIA	161	Cairo	11:35	WAN	116	Bahrain	22:00	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35	DLH	648	Muscat	21:20
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KAC	564	Amman	22:00	RSB	7684	Baghdad	11:00	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:30
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:10	QTR	1082	Doha	22:05	SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00	QTR	1089	Doha	21:50
FEG	933	Sohag	12:40	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	11:00	KAC	205	Islamabad	22:05
FDB	075	Dubai	12:45	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25	JZR	1332	Al Najaf	11:00	KAC	203	Lahore	22:10
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	JZR	241	Amman	22:40	IRA	672	Ahwaz	11:10	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	JZR	185	Dubai	23:10	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25	MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:15	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00	ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
FDK	803	Damascus	13:00	WAN	836	Sarajevo	23:25	SYR	342	Damascus	12:00	GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	BBC	043	Dhaka	23:30	JZR	786	Riyadh	12:00	KAC	783	Jeddah	22:35
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15	MSC	405	Sohag	23:30	MSC	404	Alexandria	12:15	KAC	383	Delhi	22:40
KAC	792	Madinah	13:20	FDB	071	Dubai	23:45	QTR	1075	Doha	12:30	KLM	445	Bahrain	22:50
								VIZ	205	IQA	12:30	UAE	860	Dubai	23:00
												ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
												QTR	1083	Doha	23:20



Lily Allen drops first song in three years

The ‘Smile’ hitmaker hasn’t put out any tunes since her album ‘Sheezus’, but surprised fans on Monday night, by dropping the coming-of-age banger about her wild past. On the track, she sings: “When I was young I was blameless/ Playing with rude boys and trainers/ I had a foot in the rave ‘cause I was attracted to danger/ I never got home for Neighbors, hey/ When I grew up, nothing changed much/ Anything went, I was famous /I would wake up next to strangers/ Everyone knows what cocaine does/ Numbing the pain when the shame comes, hey (sic)” In October last year, Lily debuted a new track at Mark Ronson’s show at The Savoy hotel in London. The ‘Alfie’ hitmaker took to the stage to perform three songs at the MasterCard Priceless event, including a brand new electronic dance track which she created with the superstar DJ. The 32-year-old singer was still learning the words to the as-yet-untitled track as she had to read most of it from a lyrics sheet. Speaking at the show, which was her first concert in over a year, Lily told the crowd: “I haven’t played anything for about a year I’m really nervous.” An album should be on the way from the British star as she told the audience then she’d been in the studio with Ronson, 42. Before performing the track, she said: “Mark and I have been in the studio a little bit this week.” It was previously revealed Lily has teamed up with the ‘Uptown Funk’ hitmaker - her long-time collaborator - for her upcoming record and the producer said she’d channeled the heartbreak caused by her separation from Sam Cooper into her lyrics. Speaking last year, he said: “We’ve been writing together again on the new record. I feel like they are some of the best songs she’s written. “Her voice sounds incredible. The stuff I’m working on is some of her most honest and heartbreaking music ever. She writes so honestly you can feel it.” Mark said he believes the music world needs an ‘honest’ star like Lily - who has two daughters, Ethel, six, and Marnie, four, with Sam - back. He said: “She’s like a needed performer. There’s nobody really doing something like that, really honest.”

Cabello praises artists for ‘breaking barriers’

Camila Cabello thinks there is a lot of “breaking barriers” in the music industry right now. The ‘Havana’ hitmaker is thrilled to see Latin artists getting mainstream recognition now and thinks there has been a big shift in the industry. She said: “I think that the good thing about social media and the internet is that I feel like it makes the world smaller and it just kind of breaks down barriers between languages, between people, between cultures, and I think that might have something to do with that. I’ve been listening to Spanish music forever because that’s just not even Spanish music to me, it’s just music “But I feel like with everything that’s gone on this year and also with groups like K-pop groups performing on American award shows and making their way into the mainstream American industry, I just feel like there’s a lot of just breaking barriers. Which I think is super beautiful, and I don’t know exactly what there is to credit for that, but I’m definitely glad it’s happening.” The 20-year-old singer likes to reference her heritage wherever she can. Asked on why she chose to give her ‘Havana’ video a telenova theme, she told Teen Vogue magazine: “I think that it’s really important to represent and to be proud of your story, and be proud of who you are. And I think that being the most “you” is what makes you different. Also, for me, when I was growing up in Miami, I didn’t really have anybody that shared my story to look up to. So that’s why, for a long time, I thought that having a career in music was not possible for somebody like me that was in Miami. “I came from a family that didn’t really speak English, and we had no money to move to LA and do meetings. That was not even in my vocabulary. So I think that’s why, for a long time, it was only by chance that I auditioned for X Factor. If it weren’t for that chance, I don’t think that I would even be here. So I just think it’s important for me to be authentic and to hopefully inspire young girls and young people that share a similar story.”



Robbie Williams won’t rejoin Take That in 2022

Robbie Williams has ruled out a reunion with Take That in the next five years. The 43-year-old singer has dashed hopes of him and Jason Orange rejoining Gary Barlow, Howard Donald and Mark Owen for shows and new music to mark their 30th anniversary in 2022. He told the latest issue of OK! magazine: “I’m in if it’s a five-piece. I’d probably be in even if it isn’t. “That being said, that’s not on any calendar for the next five years.” The ‘Giants’ trio have been eyeing getting Robbie and Jason back for what seems like years, and there was some hope when Gary said earlier this year that he thinks part-timer Robbie and Jason, 47 - who quit in 2014 - could return in 2022 for a “greatest hits” tour and possibly a record. He said: “I don’t think anything we do with Rob is going to relate to like a big 25-year project. “In fact, I’ll tell you this for the first time, we’re looking at 30 years. “We’re planning something to do for the 30-year all together. We’re looking that far ahead, something big, maybe a new record, maybe a greatest hits with a big tour.” Howard, 49, said then he would love to see the five of them back for good, but said he doubts it will ever happen. He added: “A five-piece would be incredible. Whether that ever happens or not, that’s a different story. My gut’s telling me no. I’d love it to happen. “That’s the nice thing, that we can all hope it will happen but, you know, no pressure on anybody to do anything.” Gary - who announced a solo UK tour for 2018 - later admitted he’d given up hope on Jason rejoining the band. He said: “He didn’t want creative involvement because we’re day-to-day on this and he wanted to leave. “This has been weird with the whole Jason thing. He’d told us for a while, ‘I don’t want to be in music anymore, I don’t want to do this anymore’, and we’d push, push, push. “At the end of the day you’ve got to accept someone doesn’t want to do what you’re doing anymore.”



The Cure’s 40th anniversary BST Hyde Park gig

The ‘Friday I’m In Love’ hitmakers - fronted by Robert Smith - have produced 30 million combined sales of 13 studio albums and more than 40 singles during their four-decade career, and will celebrate the milestone performing at the iconic landmark on July 7, with support from Interpol, Goldfrapp, Editors, Ride, Slowdive and The Twilight Sad. James King, Senior Vice President, AEG Presents commented: “The Cure playing at Barclaycard presents British Summer Time Hyde Park will be an incredible day where The Cure join the list of other global legends who have played the Great Oak Stage. On July 7 we celebrate the 40th anniversary of a truly iconic British band and it’s an honor that they have chosen to share this magical experience with us in Hyde Park.” It follows the announcement that guitar legend Eric Clapton will headline on July 8. The 72-year-old rocker first performed at the London location in 1969 as his debut with new group Blind Faith, and he can’t wait to return. Eric said: “I have happy memories of performing in Hyde Park in the past and I’m really looking forward to playing there again - the whole atmosphere is very special.” The ‘Wonderful Tonight’ star - who also performed at the park in 1996 and in 2008 - will be supported by Santana, Steve Winwood, and Gary Clark Jr. Also performing next summer will be Pink Floyd star Roger Waters on Friday July 6, Michael Buble, making his only performance of 2018, on Friday July 13, and Bruno Mars on Saturday July 14. They follow in the footsteps of The Rolling Stones, Carole King, Stevie Wonder and Tom Petty, who have all headlined the Great Oak Stage since the BST was launched in 2013.



Serge Pizzorno: Writing teams are spoiling music

Kasabian’s Serge Pizzorno says artists who use a team of songwriters usually end up with tracks that “lack soul”. The ‘Processed Beats’ star prefers it when musicians pen their own lyrics because they share a part of themselves with the listener. He told the Metro newspaper: “It’s the ‘writing team’ thing. “I understand it, it’s like American TV shows, the reason why they’re so great is because 15 people in a room write it. “I can’t deny the tunes they’re writing. “I just have time for that band that gets in a room and smashes it, or a singer/songwriter ... you get them ... you get a feeling of their soul.” The 36-year-old rocker says it’s frustrating when other people get involved with writing music. He said: “I’m sure I speak on behalf of any songwriter trying to get something together. “You write one that’s great then someone comes along. ‘I wrote the top line melody’, I wrote the chorus.” One person, who he thinks is nailing it though, is ‘New Shoes’ hitmaker Paolo Nutini. Asked who is doing a good job, he said: “Paolo Nutini. I love that guy.” Serge’s comments come after Kasabian frontman Tom Meighan said Arctic Monkeys and The Libertines are the only indie rock bands of the 2000s that survived. He said: “There’s only us and the [Arctic] Monkeys left on that level. “They’re great. Kaiser Chiefs too, probably. When we came out in 2004, you had Franz Ferdinand, Razorlight, Kings Of Leon, The Holloways, The Paddingtons, The Maccabees. Libertines had just finished. “It was just a good time. We were 22 and there was so much good music. Bands were back, there were loads of rock magazines, indie and rock ‘n’ roll were cool. We survived it.” The singer concluded that rock ‘n’ roll was dead with pop music taking over. He added: “Where is rock ‘n’ roll at the minute? It’s gone, isn’t it? I reckon it’s a mixture of everything. “What runs the world at the moment? It’s R&B, pop, solo artists. Adele, she’s amazing ... Ed Sheeran. There are no bands. “ And Serge agreed: “Interestingly, they are the three - and the best three, which makes sense. We’ve got tunes, and strong, defined characters. Love them or hate them, you’re interested in where they’re going and what they’re going to do.”



U2 chose Kendrick Lamar for his ‘spirit’

The Irish rockers featured on the US rapper’s hit ‘XXX’ and he repaid the gesture by appearing on their tracks ‘Get Out Of Your Own Way’ and ‘American Soul’ on new album ‘Songs Of Experience’, and the group admitted he was “top of [their] list” for potential collaborations. Band member Bono added: “There’s a righteous anger that is hard to argue with. “I asked him would he rap about where America is at, his reply was to rap about where America isn’t at. Smart dude.” Bono is pleased with the direction the group - who have released 14 studio albums - have taken over the years with their latest album inspired by recent political changes, such as Donald Trump’s election and Brexit, and he likes listening to people have “violent disagreements” about U2’s style. Speaking to Stereogum, he added: “I’ve had people talk to me about what they think is or is not authentically U2. They’re often in violent disagreement with each other and I like that and I’ve had those conversations for 40 years. “We’ve had some bad haircuts over the years but stylistically, musically speaking, I’m not embarrassed about anywhere we’ve gone. Lyrically, yes. Vocally, yes. But in terms of the present tense, who isn’t curious about what’s going on around them?”

Kasabian and Courteeners’ Teenage Cancer Trust gigs

Kasabian and Courteeners will headline Teenage Cancer Trust shows at London’s Royal Albert Hall in 2018. The ‘You’re In Love With A Psycho’ hitmakers and the indie rock group are the first acts confirmed for the iconic charity shows with Tom Meighan and co performing on March 24, and the ‘What Took You So Long?’ stars - fronted by Liam Fray - playing the world famous venue on March 23. It’s a special gig for the latter, who are celebrating the 10th anniversary of their seminal album ‘St. Jude’ by performing the 2008 LP in full. It follows their homecoming gig at Manchester’s Old Trafford to 50,000 fans, following the horrific terrorist attacks at Ariana Grande’s Manchester Arena concert in May. Liam said: “It’s a great honor and privilege to perform for such a brilliant charity at such a legendary venue. “This will be the first and last time we’ll ever perform our debut album St. Jude in full in London and we’re really pleased to be doing it for a such a great cause.” Kasabian recently completed a 12 date UK Arena tour, in support of chart-topping record ‘For Crying Out Loud’, and can’t wait to entertain the masses next Spring. Frontman Tom said: “We love playing the Royal Albert Hall for the Teenage Cancer Trust. It is a show we have come back to throughout our career for the special atmosphere and the amazing cause. Our fans love it and we do too, it will be a highlight of 2018 for us.” The concert series was launched by the charity’s Honorary Patron Roger Daltrey CBE, the legendary frontman of The Who, who said: “I’m really pleased to announce the first shows for The Teenage Cancer Trust at the Royal Albert Hall next March. This will be the 18th year of these concerts for the charity. “It’s great to be welcoming back Kasabian, they have been fantastic supporters of this charity since they first headlined for us back in 2007.” Tickets go on sale on Friday.





James Mangold speaks out on Disney and Fox talks

James Mangold thinks it would be “sad” if Disney buys the film side of 20th Century Fox. The 53-year-old filmmaker helmed Fox’s recent R-rated success ‘Logan’ but Disney – which now owns Marvel Studios – is currently closing in on a deal to try and get back the rights for the iconic comic book characters. Fox owns the complete rights to both the ‘X-Men’ and ‘Fantastic Four’ franchises and any new character within its universe belongs solely to the studio – which led to the cancellation of the ‘Fantastic Four’ comic series. However, Mangold told Deadline that if Disney buys out the studio it would mean “less movies” will be made. He said: “If they’re actually changing their mandate, if what they’re supposed to do alters, that would be sad to me because it just means less movies. “The real thing that happens when you make a movie rated R, behind the scenes, is that the studio has to adjust to the reality that there will be no Happy Meals. There will be no action figures. The entire merchandising, cross-pollinating side of selling the movie to children is dead before you even start. And when that’s dead, it means you’re making a grown-up movie.” The ‘X-Men’ franchise and spin-offs have been successful for Fox with both the Bryan Singer trilogy, the ‘First Class’ movies, the Wolverine standalone series and R-rated ‘Deadpool’ all doing very well at the box office. However, Marvel still does retain some input into the franchises and Fox needs Marvel to sign off on all TV deals regarding the superheroes, however, since the Marvel owns ‘The Avengers’ there has been some overlap with characters such as Quicksilver and Scarlet Witch – who have been members of both teams in the comics. Unlike the popular ‘X-Men’ franchise, the ‘Fantastic Four’ films haven’t been as popular at the box office. In 2015, the franchise was rebooted starring Miles Teller, Jamie Bell, Kate Mara and Michael B. Jordan as the titular Four, however, the film was poorly received by fans and critics alike. These two franchises are not the only Marvel comic book heroes that belong outside of the Marvel Studios, with ‘Spider-Man’ being owned by Sony Pictures. However, 2017 saw the first time Marvel Studios and Sony have worked together on the fan favourite superhero after Marvel sold the rights in 1985 for \$225,000, with ‘Spider-Man: Homecoming’. This collaboration meant that Tom Holland – who portrays the webslinger – is part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe rather than Sony’s.

Anthony McCarten: Gary Oldman’s gives defining performance in Darkest Hour

Anthony McCarten thinks Gary Oldman took his portrayal of Winston Churchill to a “whole new level” and his work on ‘Darkest Hour’ is the “performance of his lifetime”. The 56-year-old screenwriter wrote the new Joe Wright movie – which follows the hero British Prime Minister at the beginning of World War II – and McCarten thinks Oldman is more than a worthy Best Actor nominee at the Golden Globes. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz at the UK premiere of the new movie at the Odeon Cinema in London’s Leicester Square on Monday night McCarten said: “When you write a role like Winston you want to write a role that an actor, when they do it, will be magnificent. You have to write magnificent into the script but then someone has got to do it. And Gary then took what I did and took it to a whole new level and I think it’s the performance of his lifetime or of most actors’ lifetimes.” ‘Darkest Hour’ tells the true story at the beginning of World War II and within days of becoming the UK’s leader, Churchill must face one of his most turbulent and defining trials: exploring a negotiated peace treaty with Nazi Germany and deciding whether to back out of conflict in return for assurances Adolf Hitler’s army will leave Britain alone. McCarten spent eight hours writing the script for the film and he admits he did a lot of research into the famous political figure to show sides of Churchill that hadn’t be portrayed before. He said: “I did a bit more research and then found out, not only was there pressure, he yielded to it to some degree and seriously consider a peace deal but then he changed his mind and that was key. And I thought I want to write a movie about a guy who can change his mind. I thought that ability to change his mind was not something that we generally were lead to believe about Winston. “We’ve never seen the humorous Winston yet he is really beloved for his sense of humor but we’ve never seen him as a witty man, the witty Winston. And we have never seen a romantic Winston, the letters he wrote to (his wife) Clementine reveal a very romantic emotional side. So it was just all these colors to play with that no one has ever played with before and then you give it all to an actor like Gary Oldman and see what happens.”



Spencer felt like she was living in a bubble



Octavia Spencer felt she was “living in a bubble” on the set of ‘The Shape of Water’. The 47-year-old actress has opened up about what it was like on the set of the science fiction turned romance film and how she kept in the character of a woman from the 1960s. She said: “I don’t really venture into the real world, because you know it is hard to play a woman from this era and then have all of these things you’re able to do now. “So it is kind of like living in a bubble. So I spent a lot of time with Sally Hawkins.” In the movie, Octavia plays a mute cleaner who stumbles on a amphibious man and admits playing a mute character has an “even deeper meaning” for her because her brother is mute. She added: “I know this very well. My brother is mute. So it has an even deeper meaning for me. It’s more beautiful because I understand the beauty of not being able to say words but still convey feelings.” Octavia enjoyed working alongside Sally and admits she was pleasantly surprised how she managed to channel a “different person” despite being painfully shy. She told king5.com: “Well, here’s something people don’t know about Sally. She is painfully shy. I have never met anyone as shy as she is. When she becomes Elisa, it is a different person so to see her at work and to know how she really doesn’t like the spotlight at all. It’s just so beautiful and humbling, and I love her. Just love her.”

Kesha and Macklemore’s joint tour for 2018

Kesha and Macklemore have announced an extensive joint tour for 2018. The ‘Praying’ singer – whose fans are known as Animals – announced the North American shows called ‘The Adventures of Kesha & Macklemore Tour’ on Twitter on Monday. In a video promoting the gigs, ‘Thrift Shop’ star Macklemore says: “I woke up today and I had an idea ... music? I’ve found a new language. My feet on blades. Everybody knows blades are super hot right now. So what better way to connect with America’s youth by becoming a roller-blade coach.” Kesha then steps out of a car in a glittering ensemble and starts singing, she then asks Macklemore – real name Ben Haggerty – “Hey Ben, what are you doing?” To which he replies: “I’m just kind of over music. Honestly, I just feel like blading is current, it’s new, it’s trendy.” Then Kesha says: “You are not a blader. I have a much better idea, what about if we go on tour, me and you together?” Ben agrees: “OK, alright.” Kesha adds: “Me, you, the fans.” However, when Ben suggests: “Blading?”, Kesha says: “No.” He then says: “Just shows?”, and the ‘Hymn’ hitmaker replies: “Music.” Macklemore then says he’s “in”. And Kesha pointing to his skating shoes, concludes: “Good, take these things off.” Alongside the clip, Kesha wrote: “Animals! I’m going on tour with



@macklemore. Come out and have some adventures with us. Get in line for the Adventures of Kesha & Macklemore Tour Presale here: <http://tnspk.co/MKZi9WM> Can’t wait to see you all, let’s boogie! (sic) The tour kicks off in Phoenix, Arizona on June 6 and ends in Tampa, Florida on August 5. Pre-sale tickets are on sale now.

Hugh Jackman wants to see Wolverine in the MCU



Hugh Jackman wants to see Wolverine in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. The 49-year-old actor portrayed the iconic Marvel comic book character eight times across the ‘X-Men’ series and his own standalone franchise – and had a cameo in ‘X-Men: First Class’ – but made it clear after shooting 2017’s ‘Logan’ that he would never return to the big screen as the adamantium enforced mutant. However, Disney – who purchased Marvel Studios – are currently in negotiations to secure the film and TV studio side of 21st Century Fox – who own the rights to the Marvel created ‘X-Men’ and ‘Fantastic Four’ franchises. Jackman thinks the prospect of those characters joining the rest of the Marvel family is very excited but is adamant cinema goers will never see him in the MCU. Speaking to Collider, Jackman said: “It’s interesting because for the whole 17 years I kept thinking that would be so great, like I would love to see, particularly, Iron Man and the Hulk and Wolverine together. “And every time I saw an ‘Avengers’ movie I could just see Wolverine in the middle of all of them, like, punching them all on the head. “But it was like, ‘Oh well, that’s not gonna happen,’ and it was interesting just when I first saw that headline – it was just the possibility of it and who knows what’s gonna happen, obviously – I was like, ‘Hang on!’ But I think, unfortunately, the ship has sailed for me, but for someone else I would like to see Wolverine in there.”

Sylvester Stallone hands Creed II reins to Steven Caple Jr

Sylvester Stallone has stepped down from directing ‘Creed II’. The 71-year-old star took to Instagram to confirm he has handed over the helming reins to Steven Caple Jr on the forthcoming film because he thinks the ‘Land’ filmmaker is more in touch with “this generation”. He wrote: “The character of Adonis Creed reflects this generation, and I believe it is important to have a director who is part of it, that is why I think we are Lucky to have Stephen Caple, Jr A wonderful new talent take over The directorial chores and make the story as relatable as possible... He and Michael B Jordan will deliver a knockout!u (sic) Caple is said to have been hand-picked by Stallone and Michael B. Jordan – who will reprise his role as boxer Adonis “Donnie” Johnson Creed – to helm the motion picture. He told Variety: “It’s an honor to be a part of such an iconic franchise and to work with such great collaborators. “Mike, Sly, and Tessa are extraordinarily talented and bring something special to today’s culture. I look forward to joining the family and continuing the precedent set by this franchise’s alumni of incredible filmmakers.” Jordan admitted he was “excited” for Caple to take over from the first film’s director Ryan Coogler. He tweeted: “Excited for Coogler to hand over the reins to Steven Caple, Jr – our director for Creed 2! Can’t wait to bring you guys the next chapter of our story ... coming at you November 2018. #Creed2 (sic)” Coogler is expected to join the movie in an executive producer capacity but a deal has not yet been completed. As well as announcing Caple’s role, Stallone also teased fans that WWE star Brock Lesnar could be playing Ivan Drago’s son in ‘Creed II’, but admitted a “new unknown” star will take on the role. Stallone wrote on Instagram: “Big challenges come in all shapes and forms!



Jil Sander wants to empower people with her brand

Jil Sander wanted to empower people with her designs. The 74-year-old fashion designer – who launched her eponymous label in 1968 – has “never” considered herself to be a “feminist”, even though her motivation to create clothes was to make the customer feel “strong”. Speaking to Vogue.co.uk, she said: “I never thought of myself as a feminist, but maybe I was, since I was not happy with the way women presented themselves. I think my work was more about the rapprochement of the sexes and a more androgynous look for men and women. I was looking for more supportive ways to dress myself as a working woman. And since my needs were collective needs in the era of women entering the business world, my work turned out to help them. “We had to give a lot of strength to women and give them the power that men knew. It was the start of globalization, we were travelling, and needed clothes to feel strong.” And Jil – whose full name is Heidemarie Jiline Sander – also felt it was “very important” for her to give “class, quality and personality” in her garments. She said: “I needed the strength and the energy, and also for me it was very important to give class, quality and personality to clothing. It was a time when women had to ask their husbands if they could work, or if they could get a driver’s license.” Although Jil has hinted she struggled setting up her company, she believes inner strength was the key to get her through. She explained: “I’m maybe not a feminist, but I was quite young when I started, nothing was easy and I always said you need a lot of strength to do what you want to do when you have a vision and want to build a company. So I always believed in strong women. I’m not a feminist, but I was looking for strong personality. “Women have to be strong. And we have to support women so that they are able to be in important, responsible jobs. I was always a believer in both, and with my company, I thought women and men needed to work together. I think a woman’s situation is much more open today. It has changed a lot. There is still a lot of need but we have to be optimistic and move forward.” — Bang Showbiz

Adorable or deplorable? Porgs stir debate in ‘Star Wars’ galaxy

The kids thought they looked cute

Furry, wide-eyed and winged critters called Porgs are invading the “Star Wars” galaxy, and Walt Disney Co hopes they will soon be roosting under fans’ Christmas trees. Porgs make their debut in “The Last Jedi,” the new “Star Wars” movie that reaches theaters Thursday. Film trailers have offered only glimpses of a single Porg that rides shotgun on the Millennium Falcon and, in one scene, lets out a squawk. The limited view of their role has sparked questions: are the Porgs sweet or sad? Funny or irritating?

Cuddly creatures are rare in a movie franchise better known for metallic droids and the grotesque Jabba the Hutt, and their occasional appearances haven’t always pleased fans. Many filmgoers believed the teddy bear-like Ewoks ruined the ending of 1983’s “Return of the Jedi.” “‘Star Wars’ fans, understandably, always have suspicion about anything that’s too adorable,” said Rian Johnson, who wrote and directed “The Last Jedi,” in an interview with Reuters. But, he added, “I think the Porgs have their proper place in the movie. I think they fit.” Fan reaction was mixed after a Porg appeared in a “The Last Jedi” trailer in October. Many embraced the creature as cute and huggable, but detractors speculated that Porgs might become the next Jar Jar Binks, a much-derided character



from 1999 film “The Phantom Menace.” “I hate porgs,” one Twitter user wrote in October. “I don’t think they’re cute at all, and I dislike how blatantly gimmicky they are.”

Cast members have joined the debate. John Boyega, who plays Finn, likened Porgs to cockroaches in an interview, while Luke Skywalker actor Mark Hamill has rallied to their defense on Twitter.

When Disney showed “The Last Jedi” to more than 6,000 people at the movie’s premiere on Saturday, the Porgs seemed to captivate audience members, who

laughed at their playful scenes with Chewbacca. Comments on social media were largely positive.

Holiday shoppers

Sales of “Star Wars” toys are important to Disney, which bought the franchise in 2012. “Star Wars” items were the US toy industry’s top-selling line in both 2015 and 2016, with \$1.5 billion in sales over the two years, research firm NPD Group said. Disney licensees are already selling plush Porgs of all sizes, including one that measures four feet (over one meter) tall, to holiday shoppers at malls, online and at theme parks. If the Porgs take off, they could boost sales of plush toys, which accounted for just 2 percent of “Star Wars” US toy sales related to 2015 film “The Force Awakens,” according to NPD toy industry analyst Juli Lennett. A Hasbro Inc Porg is the best-selling “Star Wars” plush toy in the 13 weeks ending Nov. 25, Lennett said. Porg is the most searched for “Star Wars” character on the shopDisney website in December, Disney said. Jim Silver, editor-in-chief of toy review website TTPM, predicts Porgs will be popular with younger children, as Ewoks were. “As much as people criticized them, they sold a gazillion of them,” Silver said. “The collectors say they didn’t like Ewoks, but the kids thought they looked cute.” — Reuters

Honored, humbled, amazed: Stars react to Golden Globe nominations

From a World War Two drama and a fantasy tale to a gay romance and a coming of age movie, a varied crop of films and veteran actors as well as new faces received Golden Globe nominations on Monday. The following are some reactions, through statements, telephone and social media, to the nominations, which are chosen by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA):

Tom Hanks, best actor nominee for “The Post”: “Very happy the work of the others on ‘The Post’ has been given the attention they deserve. Thank you to the HFPA.”

Steven Spielberg, best director nominee for “The Post”: “I am thrilled by today’s recognition by the HFPA and particularly happy for our nominees who made this movie happen ... I only wish (former Washington Post publisher) Kay Graham were still here to experience how much her story affects all of us.”

Timothee Chalamet, best actor nominee for “Call Me by Your Name”:

“Wow! I’m floored ... I’m humbled to be sharing this acknowledgement with my co-star and friend Armie Hammer - and to be included alongside actors I have looked up to and studied closely - it’s just a massive honor!”

Hugh Jackman, best actor nominee for “The Greatest Showman”: “Over 7 years ago we began the journey to get @GreatestShowman made into a major motion picture. Through all of the (literal) blood, sweat and tears giving up was never an option. As it is said - with great risk comes great reward.”

Emma Stone, best actress nominee for “Battle of the Sexes”: “Thank you to the HFPA for this honor and thank you beyond measure to the one and only Billie Jean King. She is a brilliant, brave and game-changing human being, and I wish to be half the woman she is someday.”

Helen Mirren, best actress nominee for “The Leisure Seeker”: “I am honored that our film, ‘The Leisure Seeker,’ has been recognized with this nomination. I would like to recognize the work of the two men in my life of this film:



(From left) Sharon Stone, Alfre Woodard, Garrett Hedlund and Kristen Bell speak during the 75th Annual Golden Globe Nominations Announcement on December 11, 2017 in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

Paolo Virzi and Donald Sutherland.”

James Franco, best actor nominee for “The Disaster Artist”: “Thank you to the HFPA, who have been supportive of my work since I played James Dean 16 years ago. I am grateful that they have recognized our film, ‘The Disaster Artist,’ for Best Comedy, and for nominating me as an actor.”

Saoirse Ronan, best actress nominee for “Lady Bird”: “I’m very humbled to be recognized for this role - to see the effect this film has had on so many people of all ages has meant so much to us ... Lady Bird is a strong, unique female character - I am just honored to be able to tell her story.”

Guillermo del Toro, best director nominee for “The Shape of Water”: “On behalf of the entire cast and crew of ‘The Shape of Water’ and Fox Searchlight, I am profoundly grateful for the seven nominations the Hollywood Foreign Press Association has bestowed upon our picture. Above all, ‘The Shape of Water’ is about love overcoming fear and

embracing the Other. I cannot begin to thank the HFPA for recognizing the very spirit in which we made this film.”

Richard Jenkins, best supporting actor nominee for “The Shape of Water”: “It is a huge honor to be recognized with a Golden Globe nomination and for there to be so much love for ‘The Shape of Water.’ I am very proud to be part of this incredible group that brought Guillermo del Toro’s beautiful story to life.”

Sally Hawkins, best actress nominee for “The Shape of Water”: “What a beautiful gift. Thank you with all my heart to the Hollywood Foreign Press for honoring this special film and my part in it. I am so very humbled by this acknowledgement. Every piece of this film was and is a gift for me.”

Gary Oldman, best actor nominee for “The Darkest Hour”: “I am amazed, flattered and very proud of my first Golden Globe nomination. I am also honored to find myself in such company as I am a serious admirer of all the work of all the other nominees.”

Octavia Spencer, best supporting actress nominee for “The Shape of Water”: “Thanks #HFPA @goldenglobes for all of the #ShapeOfWater love. Congrats to all #gg nominees.”

Willem Dafoe, best supporting actor nominee for “The Florida Project”: “It is gratifying. It is encouragement, and it also helps the film get seen. This will help people find their way to what I think is a very good movie.”

Allison Janney, best supporting actress nominee for “I, Tonya”: “I am so thrilled to be recognized for the role of LaVona in ‘I, Tonya’! My wonderfully talented friend, Steven Rogers, wrote the part for me, which makes it so much sweeter.”

Martin McDonagh, best director nominee for “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri”: “I’m thrilled to receive the news today of the film’s six Golden Globe nominations, and especially that my good friends Frances McDormand and Sam Rockwell, and our composer Carter Burwell, have been recognized for their brilliant work.” — Reuters

Shining spotlight on slavery, dance helps survivors in UK find their feet

Grabbed, groped and thrown to the ground, the young woman adopts the foetal position as the four female attackers loom over her. Dragged, kicked and strangled, the woman goes limp, drawing gasps from the audience as she lies lifeless on the stage. For the victim and her abusers are in fact performers, using theatre and dance to shock their spectators and throw a spotlight on modern slavery in Britain, while also helping survivors to regain their confidence through dancing. “Art is a very powerful way of speaking out about the issue,” Erena Bordon Sanchez, founding director of The Natashas Project, a modern dance and theatre company set up in 2013, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation after a recent show in London.

While modern slavery is increasingly capturing the attention of the media worldwide, few in Britain have grasped the scale of a crime estimated to trap at least 13,000 people in the country in forced labor, sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. One in five people in Britain have never heard of modern-day slavery, and more than half say they wouldn’t know what to do, or who to talk to, if they suspected that someone was a victim, according to a poll in October by British supermarket Co-op.

“Our aim is to connect with the public, by portraying through dance what people might experience during slavery,” said Sanchez, whose company also visits schools and youth groups to talk to young people about the drivers and signs of slavery.

Lifeline

On top of their performances and educational visits, The Natashas Project also holds dance sessions at shelters for survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence and slavery. “We don’t see it as therapy,” Sanchez said. “It’s about creating a community, having fun and building up confidence.” For some women staying in shelters - abused, battered and broken - dancing offers respite from the horrors they have endured and the stress and uncertainty around their future. “Many of these women have suffered from the destruction of their sense of self, and their own worth,” said Charlotte Desorgher, project director at the Company of Dreams, a dance group that offers free belly dance classes for women in refugees.

“We need to give them some fun,” she said. “A giggle, some music and a dance is very powerful - it can lift the spirits.” Yet dance classes can do more than just boost self-esteem. “A lot of the women say the classes have saved their lives, often those who have been abused or raped,” Desorgher added.

I feel free’

While there is no solid data on survivors of slavery in Britain, at least 3,800 possible victims were referred to the government last year. About half were women and girls and many came from countries such as Albania, Vietnam and Nigeria. These people are placed in safe houses and given help ranging from legal aid to counseling while the government decides whether to class them as victims of slavery - meaning that they may be allowed to remain in Britain in the short-term. Activities including arts and crafts, dancing and gardening provide a welcome distraction, and a creative outlet, to such people living in limbo, said Anne Read of the Salvation Army.

“Victims in safe houses often don’t want to talk about their experiences, or engage with counseling services,” she said. “Art, dancing, gardening ... they offer people another way to express themselves, to overcome the language barrier,” added Read, the charity’s head of anti-trafficking and modern slavery. While no survivors of slavery wanted to be interviewed in person or over the phone by the Thomson Reuters Foundation - for personal and safety reasons - two women were willing to share over email their thoughts about a recent dance session. — Reuters



Turkish Airlines announces special fares for a magical winter in Turkey

Turkish Airlines announces special fares to Turkey this winter, offering passengers an opportunity to experience the beauty of Turkey on their holidays. Passengers from Kuwait can now book a ticket directly to Ataturk and to Sabiha Gokcen Airport for special fares. Passengers can also travel to any other destination within Turkey for an additional fee depending on the location.

The offer is valid for passengers booking a flight from now till December 22nd as long as they are intending to travel during the period of December 15, 2017 to May 31, 2018. Winter is one of the best seasons to travel to Turkey, if you are looking to experience centuries of history, wonderfully rich cuisine, authentic local life, and unparalleled natural beauty in every corner. Turkey is also a ski paradise for anyone who is interested in winter sports, and travelers can take



their ski equipment with them for free on Turkish Airlines. Visit some of the most important ski centers: Uludag, Palandoken, Erciyes, and Kartal Kaya. Explore the hot water spas in Pamukkale, Cave Oylat, Ayder, and Yalova. Enjoy the quiet serenity of Sapanca, Abant, and Tarakli. Be blown away by the striking beauty of Uzungol, Yedigöller and Cappadocia, or put on a pair of comfy shoes and discover the magic of Istanbul’s winter scene on foot.

Turkish Airlines, currently one of the fastest growing airlines in the world, has been providing excellent services to its passengers through its business class services, it’s Flagship CIP Lounge which can be accessed by Business Class travellers at Ataturk Airport, and its strong reputation for amazing Turkish hospitality and convenience on all levels. Book your winter holiday tickets now on www.turkishairlines.com





Indian cricketer Virat Kohli and Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma performing their wedding ceremony.

India celebrates Kohli, Sharma 'royal' wedding



This handout picture released by Yash Raj Films shows Indian cricketer Virat Kohli and Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma performing their wedding ceremony in Buoncovento near Siena. — AFP photos

He's the "king" of Indian cricket. She's a glamorous Bollywood actress and former model. Newlyweds Virat Kohli and Anushka Sharma are celebrity royalty and India is cock-a-hoop over their marriage. "Officially India's First Couple," screamed the front page of Mumbai tabloid Mid-Day yesterday—a day after the pair tied the knot at a private ceremony in Tuscany, Italy. "Clean bowled!" read the Mumbai Mirror's headline, one of several newspapers to report the much-anticipated news using a cricket theme. Another publication wished them the best in their "new innings".

Kohli and Sharma, dubbed "Virushka" by local media, have generated the same sort of excitement and coverage in India as Britain's Prince Harry and fiancée Meghan Markle have in the West. Both 29, Kohli is India's cricket captain and one of the world's highest-paid athletes, while Sharma is an award-winning Hindi film star whose credits include the hit movies "Sultan" and "PK".

"We don't have a more power-packed combination than this across Bollywood or the cricketing world. They can be called new-age royalty," Indranil Das Blah, a marketing executive, told AFP. Monday's wedding ended weeks of speculation in the gossip pages of India's newspapers and on the airwaves of the country's excitable 24-hour news channels that the couple had recently got engaged. But while messages of congratulations poured in from Bollywood and cricket stars, some pessimistic astrologers in India—where many are superstitious—struck a different chord by sounding a note of caution.

"While all seems to be perfect in their fairytale wedding, it might not be a very smooth sailing together for them in the years to come, predict

astrologers," read an article in Mail Today, ominously. Astrologers are concerned there may be "disharmony" and "disputes" in their marriage if they are unable to "maintain a balance between their personal and professional lives", it went on to say.

South African honeymoon

Kohli and Sharma started dating in 2013 after they met during the filming of a shampoo advert, and made their first public appearance a year later during a football match. Indian newspapers have been gripped by their four-year relationship—which included a reported break-up in early 2016 — and rumors of their impending nuptials intensified recently when they appeared in a wedding commercial together. Speculation then reached fever pitch when Kohli pulled out of India's limited-overs matches against Sri Lanka, and Sharma ducked out of her busy acting schedule in December before being spotted at Mumbai's international airport with her family.

The couple will host a reception in New Delhi for relatives on December 21, followed by a celebration in Mumbai on December 26 to be attended by Bollywood stars and cricketers. They will then honeymoon in South Africa before setting up home in Mumbai, the cradle of India's multi-billion-dollar Hindi film industry. Theirs is the latest in several marriages between Indian cricket players and movie stars over the years, from former India captain Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi and actress Sharmila Tagore to the recent Zaheer Khan-Sagarika Ghatge union. None quite has the star appeal of "Virushka" though. "Their brand value will definitely sky rocket. Companies will pay a premium to sign them up as it's a one-of-a-kind association," said Blah. — AFP



Nellie Mae Rowe (1900-1982)

and influence of Rowe (1900-1982). Rowe's work can be seen at the American Folk Art Museum in New York City, the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC, among other venues.

Why in Kuwait?

Dalal is an alumna of the Rhode Island school of Design and the Design Institute of San Diego, California. At her school, she has featured several unknown but exemplary unique artists from all around the world. One of the artists is Rowe, whose work is not just displayed in the studio, but is being used as a part of the 'Manifesto13' art curriculum. Dalal said Rowe deserves the highest respect and recognition. Although her work was not widely known when she was alive, her legacy remains as a self-taught artist.

"My art school is located in Hawaii. It is very essential and it is our goal to bring such unique art to the people," Dalal said. "We want to use art in social awareness campaigns to connect with children, and perhaps help these kids become more aware of what's going on in our society," she added. Launched in 2014, Manifesto13 teaches several works of international artists. "Nellie Mae Rowe's work is on level 3 of our art foundation program Manifesto13. One of the many reasons why I love Rowe's work is because kids can connect to it easily and it emphasizes on the importance of self-expression," she said.

Rowe's art is all about self-expression - one very a distinct characteristic of her art is how she



Some of Nellie Mae Rowe artwork.

US filmmakers in Kuwait film a documentary on Nellie Mae Rowe's life

By Ben Garcia

In the world of art, many are admired for being self-taught. Some of them are unknown and unrecognized, yet they certainly leave a remarkable imprint on the world. One out of them was Nellie Mae Rowe, an African-American self-taught artist from Fayette, Georgia. People respect her for her simple yet expressive work. Relatively unknown during her lifetime, she is now recognized as one of the most important American folk artists.

When US filmmakers found out that Dalal Al-Nafisi, an art studio owner and an art school founder, teaches Rowe as part of her art curriculum, they decided to visit Kuwait. The two filmmakers - Petter Ringbom (Swedish) and Ruchi Mital (American) - are here to film "This World is Not My Own", a creative documentary on the life



Dalal Al-Nafisi, center, poses with US filmmakers Ruchi Mital (left) and Petter Ringbom before the lecture.— Photo by Joseph Shagra

uses art as a tool, especially while sending out a message. She expresses every tiny detail and essence of personal issues through art. The work of Nellie Mae Rowe has been regarded as the easiest to understand by kids - children love her work; they can relate to it faster than adults. "Art is self-expression - people can explore regardless of education and background as she herself came from a poor family," Dalal said.

The two filmmakers who were invited by Dalal conducted a lecture yesterday on documentary and filmmaking titled "Storytelling through Film, Globally and Locally: An American Artist Inspires" at GUST's Global Studies Center. "We are producing a documentary on the life of Nellie Mae Rowe. Though she was a black woman from a poor background, she gained respect for her work in the early 1900s. She was a self-taught artist and her work has been exhibited in many countries around the world," said Ringbom.

Ringbom pointed out that Rowe wasn't very well-known, but her work has been labeled as the best example of self-empowerment. "At the art school in Hawaii, we are going to film how her story is being relayed to art students at Manifesto13. We will also document the class and the process of teaching children through her work," said Ringbom.

Dr Zennia Paganini said since the past two years as the US Embassy's cultural attache, she has facilitated about three visits of several filmmakers to Kuwait, some of them channeled through various NGOs. "They are here for a documentary and lecture. This lecture is a part of the Public Affairs Section's ongoing programming on the theme of filmmaking in support of the creative economy. We support local filmmakers. There are many young Kuwaiti filmmakers who are very keen to know more about the filmmaking industry, so we are here to support these young people interested in entrepreneurship through this form of the artistic genre," Paganini noted.

Recent activities include visits by Kohl Glass and Tim Skousen, who conducted a workshop and lectures for filmmakers and university students in Oct 2016, and Bill Megalos, who held a workshop for local filmmakers at LOYAC in Nov 2016.



Some of Nellie Mae Rowe artwork.



Biographies

Ruchi Mital is a filmmaker, producer, and writer with a social justice background. In 2014, Ruchi produced a feature documentary, 'We Could Be King,' which won the Emmy for outstanding sports documentary, as well as the follow up short doc series, Hell Week [ESPN]. Her next production, Sky Ladder: The Art Of Cai Guo-Qiang, premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. She is currently producing a documentary series for HBO about the women's movement; and a feature-length hybrid documentary about the artist Nellie Mae Rowe: 'This World Is Not My Own.'

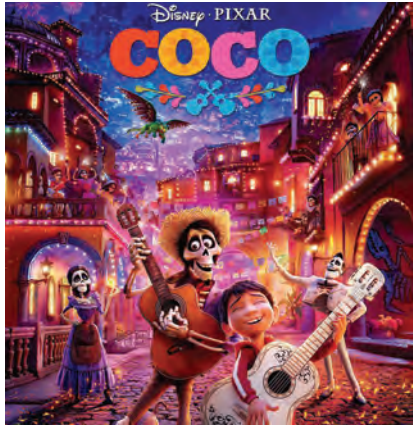
Her experimental short films have screened at festivals from NYC to UK. Ruchi spent over a decade working in non-profit organizations and published a chapter in critical anthology, Michael Jackson: Grasping the Spectacle. Ruchi is a graduate from New York University and holds a Masters in Media Studies from The New School.

Petter Ringbom's debut feature documentary 'The Russian Winter,' premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in 2012. His follow up, 'Shield and Spear,' premiered at Toronto's Hot Docs in 2014, and won the silver price at UK's Passion for Freedom Awards. His films were screened at IDFA, Sheffield Doc/Fest, BAM, the Hammer Museum, Film Society of Lincoln Center, the International Film Festivals of Moscow, Gothenburg, Durban, and Stockholm.

His art video collaboration with Karl Haendel, 'Questions for My Father,' was hailed as a "genuine sleeper" by the New York Times, and was selected for the Art Video program at Art Basel Miami. Ringbom has a BFA from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York City. He started his career as a designer and art director, and previously taught at Parsons School of Design and at New York University. He also served on the Board of the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts.

‘Coco,’ a charmer from the Land of the Dead, lives on

Animated comedy "Coco" showed serious staying power holding on to top spot at the North American box office for its third weekend running, industry monitor Exhibitor Relations reported Monday. The colorful Pixar movie, which tells the story of Miguel (Anthony Gonzalez), a young Mexican who longs to be a musician and stumbles into the Land



of the Dead to unravel a surprising family secret, took \$18.5 million. Rewarded with a Golden Globe nomination on Monday, "Coco" has taken \$135.7 million since its release over the long Thanksgiving weekend, and is already the top-grossing film ever in Mexico.

It is one of just four films to lead the North American box office for three weekends in a row this year, according to entertainment industry weekly Variety. But that is expected to change with the

much-anticipated release next week of "Star Wars: The Last Jedi," predicted to net up to \$220 million in its opening weekend. Second on North American screens this weekend was "Justice League," taking in \$9.7 million, for a four-week total of \$212 million.

The Warner Bros movie features Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman, Ben Affleck as Batman, Henry Cavill as Superman and Jason Momoa as Aquaman, plus Ciaran Hinds as a supervillain. Third was Lionsgate's feel-good film "Wonder," which netted \$8.4 million. The movie, starring Julia Roberts, Owen Wilson and Jacob Tremblay, tells the story of a determined fifth-grade boy with a facial deformity who must deal with rudeness and bullying by schoolmates.

Shooting up to fourth place was "The Disaster Artist," distributed by A24, a comedy-drama directed by James Franco about the making of 2003 cult movie "The Room," reputedly one of the worst films ever. Starring Franco, Seth Rogen and Alison Brie, "The Disaster Artist" took in \$6.4 million for the weekend. In fifth was "Thor: Ragnarok," featuring the self-effacing humor of Chris Hemsworth as the powerful Norse god and Cate Blanchett as death goddess Hela. The Disney film netted \$6.3 million, bumping up its six-week total to \$301 million.

Rounding out the list were: "Daddy's Home 2" (\$5.9 million) "Murder on the Orient Express" (\$5.2 million) "The Star" (\$3.7 million) "Lady Bird" (\$3.5 million) "Just Getting Started" (\$3.2 million)—AFP

After near decade, Beyonce back on top of US song chart

Beyonce, with little argument one of the top stars in pop music, Monday ended an unlikely drought—nine years since she had a number-one US song. Beyonce hit the top of the Billboard Hot 100 chart for her new duet with Ed Sheeran on a remix of the English songwriter's "Perfect," a tender guitar ballad. The song sold 181,000 digital downloads in the week through Thursday on the benchmark US singles chart, which also tracks streaming and radio airplay. "Perfect" is Beyonce's first tune to lead the Hot 100 since December 2008 with "Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)," her blockbuster dance anthem of female empowerment.

Beyonce moved in a more experimental direction with her latest album "Lemonade." But she initially released it last year as an exclusive on

Tidal, the streaming service led by her husband Jay-Z, impeding the chart performance of individual tracks. "Drunk in Love," her duet with Jay-Z off her self-released 2013 album, only reached number two on the Hot 100. The longest gap between number one songs in the chart's history belongs to Cher, who waited nearly 25 years between her 1974 hit "Dark Lady" and her 1999 chart-topper "Believe." — AFP



This file photo shows singer Beyonce at the 2016 MTV Video Music Awards in New York. — AFP

Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2017



People walk next to Christmas decorations in Cali, Colombia. — AFP

Seeking music edge, Apple buys song recognition app Shazam

Pregnant woman wants seat on Tokyo metro: There's an app for that



Pregnant women struggling to bag a seat on the famously packed Tokyo subway could find their salvation in a new app connecting them with nearby passengers willing to give up their coveted perch. The digital match-making app being trialled this week on the metro aims to overcome two problems especially prevalent in Japan: passengers generally have their nose buried in their phones and talking is strictly frowned upon. The service allows a pregnant woman to send a message when she wants a seat.

The app will then look for generous pre-registered users who have said they are willing to give up their seats. If there is a match, the pregnant woman gets a seat map on her smartphone screen showing her partner's location. The exchange can be made without giving personal information to each other. Printing and IT firm Dai Nippon has been testing the service this week on one of the key subway lines in conjunction with Tokyo Metro and the Line messaging app company.

"This may be particular to Japan but some people hesitate to speak to a person who may need a seat," said a spokeswoman at Dai Nippon Printing involved in the project. "Many people are also looking at smartphone screens and do not always realize quickly that someone in need is standing nearby," said the official, who declined to be named. "We try to take advantage of the situation." It is yet to be decided when the service will be rolled out but the companies also hope to expand assistance to elderly and disabled people. Japan has one of the world's lowest birth rates and authorities are trying out several policies to encourage people to have more children. — AFP

Apple said Monday that it would buy leading song recognition app Shazam in a fresh bid to secure an edge in the intensifying battle of streaming services. Apple, whose streaming service has rapidly grown but still has only half the paid subscribers of Spotify, said that Shazam has consistently been one of the most popular items on its App Store. The two companies did not disclose financial terms. The technology news sites Recode and TechCrunch, quoting unnamed sources, both put the deal at around \$400 million.

The market signaled its approval, with Apple share prices jumping 2.0 percent, well outpacing the 0.2 percent rise on the Dow Jones Industrial Average. "Apple Music and Shazam are a natural fit, sharing a passion for music discovery and delivering great music experiences to our users," Apple said in a statement. London-based Shazam said in a separate statement: "We can't imagine a better home for Shazam to enable us to continue innovating and delivering magic for our users."

Shazam, which was founded in 1999 in the early age of online music, has offered a solution to a longtime agony of listeners—putting a name to elusive songs. With a click, the app identifies tracks playing on the

radio, at parties or as background music. But Shazam has struggled to find a way to make money off its technology, even as it said that it had reached one billion downloads on smartphones last year.

Shazam only recently announced it had become profitable, thanks to advertising and steering traffic to other sites such as Spotify and Apple Music. The technology is also no longer quite as novel, with Shazam facing rivals such as SoundHound and with smartphones capable of ever more advanced recognition functions. Mark Mulligan, who writes a popular blog on the music industry, described Shazam as "cool tech without a business model" and said Apple was a rare player that could bring out the app's value.

Facing tough competition

The world's most valuable publicly traded company, Apple earns most of its revenue from iPhones but has also found it vital to be seen on the cutting edge culturally. Apple, which revolutionized online music a generation earlier with iTunes, in 2015 launched Apple Music as the market turns to streaming, which offers unlimited on-demand listening. Apple said in September that the service had more than 30 million subscribers—a quick rise, but still trailing



“Cool tech without a business model”

Spotify. Spotify—which has emphasized a barebones, user-friendly interface instead of unique features—said it had 60 million paying users as of July and 80 million more on its free tier. And with streaming experiencing rapid growth, competition has become even fiercer. Retail giant Amazon seized on its vast consumer reach as it launched its own streaming service last year. YouTube,

the video-sharing behemoth owned by Apple's rival Google, also has its own music streaming platform and recent reports said it was looking to launch a new paid subscription package next year.

Tech battle turns to services

Shazam has already proven it can be woven into another service. A year ago, it formed a partnership with SnapChat, the youth-driven social media platform whose videos evaporate, with users able to "snap" to friends the music they discover around them on Shazam. Neil Saunders, managing director of GlobalData Retail, said the Shazam sale "underlines the fact that the battle of the technology companies is firmly moving beyond hardware and into services."

"This is a good move for Apple that helps to consolidate its already strong position in music content. It won't be the last takeover of a tech firm by these big giants," he said. Apple has already invested in buying big-name music brands, in 2014 paying an eye-popping \$3 billion for Beats Electronics, the headphones, speaker and streaming brand of rapper Dr Dre. Soon afterward, it bought Semetric, a British company that tracks music consumption on behalf of labels and artists. —AFP

Participants dressed in Father Christmas costumes take part in the traditional Santa Claus run in Michendorf, eastern Germany. — AFP

