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MPs up in arms over possible scrapping of new health fees

New health minister to review all previous decrees

Amir to bear all expenses of Gulf Cup

KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has decided to personally bear the costs of the Gulf football championship due to be held in Kuwait between Dec 22 and Jan 5, the organizing committee's head said. "This Amiri generosity is added to His Highness the Amir's record of initiatives that reflect his attention to young people and his interest in encouraging them to do their utmost to raise the name of Kuwait and promote its status," Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Chairman of the Organizing Committee Anas Al-Saleh told KUNA yesterday.

He said he was honored to meet HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah earlier yesterday and briefed him on ongoing preparations and arrangements for the Gulf football tournament, known as "Gulf 23". Saleh said that he affirmed



HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

to the Amir that the organizing committee is exerting great efforts to complete all required arrangements for the Gulf sports event that will bring together the national football teams of the GCC member states, in addition to Iraq and Yemen. Despite time constraints, all Kuwaiti agencies involved are completely geared up for properly organizing the tournament, the organizing committee's head pointed out. — KUNA

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Lawmakers yesterday threatened to question new Health Minister Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah after he said that he will review the rise in medical fees imposed on expatriates for possibly scrapping them. In his first press statement after his appointment last week, Sheikh Basel said he will subject the hike in medical fees to a study, and "they could be scrapped or could continue". He said the higher health fees on expatriates will remain intact, but the process will be re-evaluated to avoid any negative outcomes.

Sheikh Basel added the ministry will look into all possible ventures that will contribute positively to the development of healthcare in Kuwait. All previous ministerial decrees will be revised and re-evaluated in coordination with senior officials at the ministry, he said. The top priority is to improve health services at the ministry, affirmed the minister, who hoped that he would be able to accomplish this goal during his tenure.

Former health minister Jamal Al-Harbi approved the hefty increase in health charges on expatriate patients only about two months ago. In some cases, the increase was several multiples of the previous charges. The decision was strongly criticized by many doctors and human rights activists as "unfair" to poor expatriates who draw very low salaries and will not be able to afford the health prices. But it was warmly greeted by many lawmakers, who saw it as a

key tool to reduce the number of expatriate patients visiting public medical centers.

MP Safa Al-Hashem issued a stern and harsh warning to the minister. "Listen to me carefully your excellency the new health minister: If the health of our Kuwaiti people does not bother you, we care a lot about their health and comfort," Hashem, who has issued several explosive anti-expatriate statements, wrote on her Twitter account. "Any decision to scrap the health charges on expatriates is rejected ... rejected. I will confront it with violent political tools and question you," she added.

MP Saleh Ashour warned the minister against cancelling the fee hike, saying he will file to grill him for this. MP Abdulkarim Al-Kandari also strongly rejected the minister's move, saying that the decision to hike charges has reduced pressure on public health facilities, making it easier for Kuwaiti patients. MP Majed Al-Mutairi said the new health minister should continue with the reforms initiated by his predecessor.

MP Faisal Al-Kandari said the minister should not even think about scrapping the rise in health charges, otherwise he will face a grilling. He said that the decision had positive results in reducing the number of expatriate patients visiting clinics and hospitals and it has helped expose "bogus patients" who unnecessarily filled health centers to get free medicines.

The minister's statement triggered a debate on social media, with a majority



KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr. Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah (right) meets his predecessor Dr. Jamal Al-Harbi yesterday. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

shocked at the statement, while a small minority of Kuwaitis praising the decision and saying that the rise was too high and many low-paid expatriates cannot afford it.

Meanwhile, opposition MP Adel Al-Damkhi said a number of MPs will hold a meeting today to discuss the issue of the MPs and activists jailed for storming the National Assembly.

Nine killed in IS bombing of Pakistan church

QUETTA/ISLAMABAD: Two suicide bombers stormed a packed Christian church in southwestern Pakistan yesterday, killing at least nine people and wounding up to 56, officials said, in the latest attack claimed by Islamic State in the country. Police guards stationed at the church entrance and on its roof killed one of the bombers but the second attacker detonated his explosives-filled vest outside its prayer hall just after Sunday services began in Quetta, capital of Baluchistan province, said Sarfraz Bugti, the provincial home minister.

Baluchistan police chief Moazzam Jah said there were nearly 400 worshippers in the church for the pre-Christmas service. The death toll could have been much higher if the gunmen had forced their way into the sanctuary, he said. Jah said the venue - Bethel Memorial Methodist

Church - was on high alert as Christian places of worship are often targeted by extremists over the Christmas season. "We killed one of them, and the other one exploded himself after police wounded him," he said.

Islamic State claimed the attack, the group's Amaq news agency said in an online statement, without providing any evidence for its claim. Another police official, Abdul Razaq Cheema, said two other attackers escaped. Broken wooden benches, shards of glass and musical instruments were scattered around a Christmas tree inside the prayer hall that was splashed with blood stains.

Kal Alaxander, 52, was at the church with his wife and two children when the attack happened. "We were in services when we heard a big bang," he told Reuters. "Then there was shooting. The prayer hall's wooden door broke and fell on us ... We hid the women and children under desks." Maryam George, 20, cried at a hospital where her younger sister Aizeh was fighting for life with two broken legs and multiple other wounds. Liaqat Masih, a member of the congregation, said he was heartbroken by the



QUETTA: Pakistani Christians are evacuated by security personnel from a Methodist church after a suicide attack during Sunday service yesterday. — AFP

violence and feared for his life as the firefight erupted between one attacker and police, who were later reinforced by paramilitaries and regular troops. "I am

devastated to see many of our dear ones dead and wounded today here in front of me," said Masih, 35.

Continued on Page 11

French sailor pulverizes solo around the world record

BREST, France: French sailor Francois Gabart smashed six days and 10 hours off sailing's around the world record yesterday, producing what many pundits felt was a previously unthinkable time of 42 days, 16 hours, 40 minutes and 35 seconds. Huge crowds of well-wishers were on hand to welcome the sailor into the port of Brest, accompanied by dozens of small craft as he burned flares at the helm and was carried aloft to shore by his ground crew where he popped a bottle of champagne.

"I'm aching all over and it's been like that for weeks, weeks since a proper sleep, I can hardly go on," an exhausted Gabart told the press on his ecstatic arrival in port. "I've been at sea all alone for 40-days and now suddenly I'm sur-

rounded by everyone here it's amazing, I really only thought I had a slender chance of breaking the record," he claimed. "It was hard and I was on the very edge of things the whole time."

The 34-year-old sailor crossed a virtual finish line between the island of Ushant off France's northwest tip and Lizard Point in southwest England at 0145 GMT, ripping to shreds the previous record set by compatriot Thomas Coville last year by a massive six days and 10 hours. Moments before crossing the finish line Gabart, a father of two and engineer by trade, sent out an emotional video showing his boat's progress on a computer monitor. "The little blue is us, the red line is the finish. We should cut it soon, the computer says 30 seconds," he said, wiping his eyes.

The race time was announced by an observer from the World Sailing Speed Council but will be subject to checks of the boat's black box and its GPS data before final confirmation. "I'm happy and proud to have made this lovely voyage around the world," he said in the video. "It hasn't sunk in yet but I know it's a great time. I have cargo ships and fishing



BREST: French skipper Francois Gabart celebrates during a welcoming ceremony upon his arrival at the end of his solo around the world trip yesterday. — AFP

boats around me in the dark here and it all seems strange and extraordinary."

Gabart becomes just the fourth titleholder for a world record of sailing the

globe solo without stopping. Huge leaps have been made in that time - since the record was first set in 2004, nearly 30

Continued on Page 11

News in brief

CMA eyes Bursa stake sale

KUWAIT: The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) is seeking advisers to help it sell a stake in Kuwait's stock exchange, the region's best performing market this year, joining a growing number of Arab Gulf countries that are looking to privatize their equity markets. The market regulator yesterday issued a tender for the advisory services mandate for the sale of a stake in the exchange, known as Bursa Kuwait. Financial advisory firms have until Jan 7 to submit bids, according to an announcement on the regulator's website. The CMA did not specify how much of the share capital of the Bursa Kuwait could come up for sale, or when the transaction is expected to take place.

Palestinian billionaire freed

AMMAN: Jordan's most influential businessman, the Palestinian billionaire Sabih Al-Masri, returned to his home in Riyadh after being detained by Saudi authorities and is expected to be allowed to leave the country soon, sources close to the family said yesterday. Masri's detention, which follows the biggest purge of the Saudi kingdom's affluent elite in its modern history, has sent shockwaves through business circles in Jordan and the Palestinian territories, where the billionaire has major investments. A Saudi citizen of Palestinian origin, Masri is also the chairman of Amman-based Arab Bank, one of the Middle East's largest financial institutions. He was detained last Tuesday hours before he was planning to leave after he chaired meetings of companies he owns, sources said.

Turkey plans E Jerusalem embassy

ISTANBUL: Turkey intends to open an embassy in East Jerusalem, President Tayyip Erdogan said yesterday, days after leading calls at a summit of Muslim leaders for the world to recognize it as the capital of Palestine. It was not clear how he would carry out the move, as Israel controls all of Jerusalem and calls the city its indivisible capital. Palestinians want the capital of a future state they seek to be in East Jerusalem, which Israel took in a 1967 war and later annexed in a move not recognized internationally. Erdogan said in a speech to members of his AK Party in the southern province of Karaman that Turkey's consulate general in Jerusalem was already represented by an ambassador. "God willing, the day is close when officially, with God's permission, we will open our embassy there," Erdogan said.

Cabinet commends outcome of Turkey's OIC Jerusalem summit

Trump's decision gives legitimacy for Israel's genocidal policies, settlements' expansion



KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the cabinet's meeting yesterday. —KUNA

KUWAIT: The cabinet lauded yesterday the outcome of last week's urgent Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit on Jerusalem, which was held in Istanbul. The cabinet said in a statement that the gathering had reflected the Muslim world's supportive stance on issues pertaining to the Palestinian cause. After the cabinet's weekly meeting headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said that Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-

Sabah briefed his fellow ministers on the outcome of the OIC summit.

The summit, held on December 13, saw the Kuwaiti delegation-headed by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah—strongly condemning the US President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move the American embassy to the holy city.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah called on the US to back down from this unilateral decision, which poses a great threat towards efforts for peace in the Middle East. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah also deemed

the decision as a clear violation of all international laws and norms, indicating that it was aimed at changing the very essence of the holy city of Jerusalem.

Kuwait, as a non-permanent member of the UNSC, will coordinate with other Islamic states to make sure that the voice of the OIC on this matter was heard on the international level. Saleh indicated that the cabinet was informed that the OIC final communique called on the world to recognize East Jerusalem as the capital of the future Palestinian state.

The OIC communique also urged the international community to denounce the illegal and irresponsible

decision by President Trump, which is deemed as a clear indication of the US bias role in favoring Israelis over Palestinians in the so-called Middle East peace process.

The decision will give legitimacy for Israel to continue its genocidal policies against the Palestinians and it would enable the Zionist state to carry on the expansion of illegal settlements on Palestinian lands. The cabinet took the chance to thank His Highness the Amir, fellow Islamic states' leaders, the OIC, and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for their efforts to highlight the just issue of Jerusalem. —KUNA

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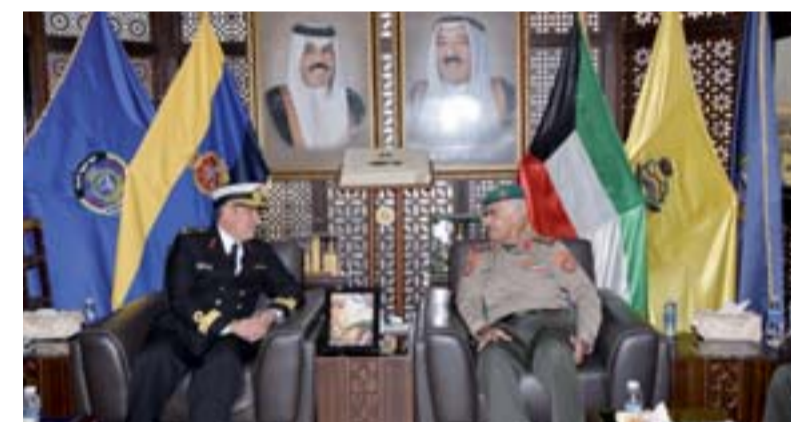
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A Wonderful World

Kuwait, Qatar discuss military cooperation



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti Army Chief of General Staff Lt Gen Mohammad Khaled Al-Khadher meets with Qatar's military cooperation agency chief Brig Tareq Al-Abeidli. —KUNA

KUWAIT: Chief of the General Staff of the Kuwaiti Army Lt Gen Mohammad Khaled Al-Khadher yesterday met with Qatar's military cooperation agency chief Brig Tareq Al-Abeidli. During the meeting, both generals addressed several issues of mutual interest, mainly in the military domain, and ways of promoting and bolstering bilateral military relations, the Defense Ministry said in a press release. High-ranking army officers and the Qatari guest's accompanying delegation were present at the meeting. —KUNA

Sudan, Kuwait ink judicial deals



KHARTOUM: Chairman of Kuwait's Supreme Judicial Council and the Cassation Court Justice Yousef Al-Mutawaa (left) is seen with Sudan's chief judge Haider Dafallah shortly after his arrival in Khartoum on Saturday. —KUNA

KHARTOUM: Sudan and Kuwait yesterday signed a host of agreements for bilateral cooperation in the judicial domain. The deals mainly aim at promoting judicial independence, boosting the skills of judges and exchanging expertise and personnel visits, Chairman of the Kuwaiti Supreme Judicial Council Yousef Al-Mutawaa said.

Under the fresh deals, both sides will hold workshops on major judicial and legal issues and subjects, primarily money laundering, he added. Meanwhile, Sudan's chief judge Haider Dafallah said both sides had agreed on a timetable for carrying out joint programs for bilateral judicial cooperation for 2018.

He hailed the Kuwaiti chief judge's visit to Khartoum as reflecting the size of Arab judicial cooperation. A Kuwaiti judicial delegation arrived in the Sudanese capital on Saturday on a three-day visit intended to promote bilateral judicial cooperation. —KUNA

Amir receives Turkish Parliament Speaker

Kuwait, Turkey eye closer parliamentary ties



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the visiting Turkish Parliament Speaker Ismail Kahraman and his accompanying delegation. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Seif Palace National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, who was accompanied by the visiting Turkish Parliament Speaker Ismail Kahraman and his accompanying delegation. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and head of the accompanying Mission of Honor MP Abdullah Fahhad Al-Enezi.

Ghanem held a meeting later with his Turkish counterpart, during which they reviewed relations between Kuwait and Turkey and ways of promoting and developing them in various fields, mainly the parliamentary domain, as well as the latest regional and international developments.

The talks were attended by a host of Kuwaiti members of parliament and the Turkish guest's accompanying delegation. Following the talks, Ghanem held a luncheon banquet in honor of the Turkish parliamentary delegation members who arrived in Kuwait on Saturday on a two-day official visit. Kahraman also met with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-

Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak and First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak, Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh.

In other news, His Highness the Crown Prince is set to patronize today the 24th edition of Awqaf Forum themed 'charity work growth of international relations.' Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Dr Fahd Mohammad Mohsen Al-Afasi will attend the event on the behalf of His Highness the Crown Prince. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem greets his Turkish counterpart Ismail Kahraman during a visit to Kuwait's National Assembly in Kuwait City yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Turkish Parliament Speaker Ismail Kahraman.



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Local

Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A woman walks down an escalator inside a shopping mall in Kuwait City yesterday. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

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Ahli United Bank hosts Students from Bayan High School for Girls

KUWAIT: Within the framework of its continuous support for young Kuwaitis and its deep belief in the importance of their financial education, Ahli United Bank (AUB) has recently hosted a group of female students from Bayan High School at the bank's Head Office. This comes as part of AUB's comprehensive program of educational activities designed to convey information to students in a simplified and interesting manner about banking operations. This visit also was intended to promote the students' interest in banking alongside other preferred career choices.

The program started with an introductory tour for the students which included a visit to several departments of the bank with an explanation of the nature of business of each department. The students also had the opportunity to meet with AUB's CEO, Richard Groves, who was delighted to host them in his office. He had an open discussion with them about the nature of banking business and enquired about their preferred fields of specialization in their future studies and their career choices. Groves explained to the students the importance of the bank's activities, including its more than 75-year

history in Kuwait. He also emphasized that in choosing a university course or choice of career it is important to enjoy and be interested in what they do if they want to be successful and make a difference.

The visit ended with an interesting competition among the students to find out more about their aspirations and the banking services required by young people today. Being the customers of the future it is important to understand their needs so as to tailor new products and services. At the end, prizes were awarded to the winners of the competition and gifts were distributed to all of the students who expressed their happiness with this visit and thanked the bank for hosting them and giving them the opportunity to understand the various activities, banking services and the different types of work in the bank's departments. Many of them also expressed their fascination with banking work.

Commenting on this visit, AUB CEO, Richard Groves, said: "We are keen to sponsor these initiatives giving students the opportunity to understand firsthand how a bank works and its vital role in the country's economic development. Today's students are our customers and employees of the future and it is important that we make ourselves accessible to both as a provider of service excellence and an employer of choice." Groves added: "These visits are very much part of connecting with our community and I applaud and thank my colleagues who initiated and organized this student visit. I am sure it has made a lasting impression on both students and staff and I look forward to the next opportunity to host such a visit at Ahli United Bank."



Local

Ministry approves domestic helpers' recruitment fees

Unified rates to be announced by year's end

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has approved the average rates suggested by the foreign ministry for recruiting domestic helpers from a number of countries. This approval was made after the majority of domestic helper office owners had ignored cooperating with the foreign ministry on that matter. Only 10 percent of the offices cooperated with the ministry and a committee that includes representatives from the ministries of foreign affairs, commerce, interior, the manpower authority, Al-Durra Domestic Helpers Company and the domestic helpers offices union. The committee had studied obstacles standing in the way of Al-Durra company's operations and reported those obstacles to the commerce minister accordingly. The new recruitment fees will be declared before the end of the year to help fix the fees on local markets, after various recruitment offices were asked to provide the committee with their fares compared to the real cost. The committee has studied the real cost of hiring helpers from various countries and compared them to the fees collected by local offices, noticing that they were unjustifiably high.



Recruitment offices 'uncooperative' with studies

Detained lawmakers

MP Shuaib Al-Mowaziri urged his colleagues to contact the International Parliamentary Union concerning the detained lawmakers over charges of breaking into the parliament. Mowaziri added that the speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem has obligations towards the imprisoned MPs. "Contacting the international parliament and filing a complaint is not so hard," he added.

Commenting on the formation of the new cabinet, Mowaziri urged the new government to change its old methods that had been characterized by 'cruelty and rejecting opposing opinions.' "The people want the rights they have been deprived of for years and not declaring the government's agenda reflects its disrespect to the constitution," he added. Commenting on MPs' intention to grill Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh, Mowaziri said he awaits filing it in January.

Housing issue

Official sources at the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAWH) denied abdicating a 5,000-square-meter land plot to help solve the housing issue and that

90 percent of the land received from Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) and the Municipal Council had already been offered for planning, design or execution. The sources explained that the last piece of land abdicated by KOC was in August and that it was used in South Sabah Al-Ahmad project to build over 25,000 housing units and for signing a contract with a South Korean company to use the land in South Saad Al-Abdullah. KOC refused to abdicate a land plot located west of Hadiya, claiming that it includes main supply pipelines and that it will be used in future plans for the company. All the lands received since 2014 had not matched regulations and conditions in terms of including some obstacles and impediments that were removed by the housing authority despite the lack of budget to do so.

Credit Bank

Minister of State for Housing Affairs and Minister of State for Services Affairs Jenan Bushehri yesterday visited Kuwait Credit Bank where she met the bank's deputy chairman Salah Al-Mudhaf and top bank officials. While touring the bank's departments, Bushehri reviewed the procedures used on obtaining social, real estate and portfolio loans as well as the benefits of linking it with other relevant government bodies to ensure steady flow of information and respond to applications within minutes. Bushehri also met with the bank's top officials who briefed her about the bank's future strategy and goals. Bushehri hailed the substantial shift achieved by the bank, namely using online transactions and applications.



KUWAIT: This archive photo shows domestic helpers sitting inside a recruitment office in Kuwait. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

Minister vows 15% of power from renewable energy

KUWAIT: The Kuwaiti Ministry of Electricity is determined to produce 15 percent of power from renewable energy by 2030, the country's new electricity minister said. "The Electricity Ministry commits itself to generating 15 percent of power out of renewable energy by 2030," Bakheet Al-Rasheedi, who holds the oil, electricity and water portfolios, said while welcoming well-wishers. Renewable energy production will start at Dibdibah solar-power plant by generating approximately 1,500 megawatts in the initial stage and then the required output by 2030, the minister added.

On a plan to transfer the ministry into an institution, the minister hailed it as a "very significant project" that aims at boosting the efficiency of the ministry's operations in general. Meanwhile, the minister noted that negotiations for importing Iraqi gas has made some progress, expecting both sides to reach the final price within a couple of months' time. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Oil, Minister of Electricity and Water Bakheet Al-Rasheedi receives greetings yesterday. —Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

Officials discuss linking GCC, Iraqi power grids

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) Undersecretary Mohammad Bushehri met his Iraqi counterpart Adel Al-Dulaimi in the presence of executive director of the GCC power grid authority Ahmad Al-Ibrahim and other officials. The three sides discussed the possibility of linking both the GCC grid and the Iraqi power network.

No GCC poet prosecuted over 'praise' poem

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry denied reports stating that Assistant Undersecretary for Nationality and Passports Major General Mazen Al-Jarrah sent a Gulf poet to court after he praised him in hope of receiving Kuwaiti nationality. If the rumor was correct, it is for sure not linked with the poetry of praise and may be related to forgery and other violations of the law, a ministry source said.

Crackdown

Forty people were arrested by residency detectives in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh during a campaign for violating residency law, and will be deported. The campaign lasted for four hours and also covered Shuwaikh garages.

State of shock

Airport security sent a Russian man to the psychiatric hospital, after he became hysterical and started taking off his clothes at the terminal. The man had recently arrived to Kuwait on a job offer, but was shocked after learning that he will have to work in a Jahra garage, from where he escaped and slept on the streets for 48 hours before heading to airport. The Kuwaiti sponsor was summoned and told police he did not know the Russian had psychological problems, adding that he will pay for his return.

Environmental awareness

Head of Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) Faisal Al-Hasawi said that during the current camping season, the authority will distribute seedlings to campers in order to plant more trees and spread environmental awareness. He added that the campaign will start on Thursday in cooperation with the Environment Public Authority in Kabd.

Expiry date

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has asked companies that trade in eggs to comply with the law and place the expiry date on each egg with a stamp, adding that they should start complying by January 1, 2018. The validity date should be for four months.

Fatal accident

A citizen killed an Egyptian man after running over him at Sixth Ring Road. The newly married Egyptian, who was with his wife when the incident happened, went to check on his car after it malfunctioned and got hit by the citizen's vehicle. The citizen called paramedics who pronounced the victim dead, while police took the citizen to Sulaiyiya police station for questioning.

Smoke inhalation

Despite repeated warnings to not use charcoal in closed areas, a Sudanese man died after inhaling smoke from a charcoal heater kept inside his tent. After a citizen lost contact with the Sudanese guard of his farm, he later found him lying motionless near burning charcoal. Police and forensic experts went to the scene and found out the victim died of smoke inhalation.

Deported

Interior Ministry Acting Assistant Undersecretary for General Security Major General Ibrahim Al-Tarrah ordered a Pakistani man who illegally entered the country a few months ago to be deported. Police arrested the man in Shuwaikh for not having an ID or a fingerprint on the record. He then confessed to entering the country illegally.

Wife beater arrested

The public prosecution classified the attack of a citizen against his wife as a felony, as he caused her critical injuries and fractures. The citizen was arrested and taken to police station for legal action.

—Translated by Kuwait Times from Al-Anbaa

Legalese

Cryptocurrencies

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed



A cryptocurrency by definition is a virtual currency that is not issued by any central authority or governmental entity. The idea and effects of money have changed now that it is no longer tangible - it is faster to circulate, it is continuous with no fixed units (no KD 1 or KD 20 bills any longer), it is more accessible and it is private! These effects are making it challenging to work with legally. I can say this from experience as I am currently in Hong Kong advising on cryptocurrency legislations and bylaws.

For example, different countries are looking at bitcoin differently (the most popular cryptocurrency). EU has defined bitcoin as a currency, while the US also defines bitcoin as a currency - the IRS taxes it as property. But China has banned banks from dealing with it. So where does Kuwait or the GCC stand? I have been receiving many questions on the legality of cryptocurrencies, which I have put together and answered below.

Legality

Question: Can I purchase and sell bitcoins legally in Kuwait?

Fajer: As of today, the Kuwaiti regulator and other entities such as the Central Bank have been silent about cryptocurrencies, tokens and other blockchain innovations. As a general rule of law, if the law refrains from prohibiting an action, then that action is legal. This might be confusing to some because we are used to the idea of giving our money to a third party (a bank) to manage, or the idea that money has to be governed by a state. But this is a new era! We can now be responsible for our money.

This means that if you decide to purchase, you have to do your research. Unlike banks, if you transfer to, let's say the wrong wallet, there is no undo button! I know there are companies in Kuwait that claim to invest for you. Again, they are not illegal, but look into them first as there have been many scams. Make sure you know who you are asking to trade for you, whether a person or company.

There are not many places in Kuwait where you can buy cryptocurrencies, but one tech startup you should keep an eye out for is YallaBit. The CEO and co-founder Talal Alyaseen (who also co-founded Ajar Online) had the idea of making cryptocurrencies accessible for everyone to buy and sell easily. Although YallaBit has AML policies (anti-money laundering) and KYC policies (Know Your Customer) in place, you can easily purchase the currencies by just providing an ID, and unlike other providers, you can receive your cryptocurrency the same day.

Check them out on www.yallabit.com or support@yallabit.com. They are currently in their soft launch phase and will officially launch in two weeks, but are accepting orders through live chat. I am so proud to see startups like YallaBit in the region. We have many talented and innovative entrepreneurs in Kuwait who have been inspiring, and YallaBit is one of them!

Protection

Question: Does the government have any "protective" measures in place should you decide to "invest" in bitcoins?

Fajer: As I mentioned above, Kuwait has been silent about the matter. But I sometimes wonder why investors hoping to invest in a cryptocurrency that is completely unregulated and decentralized want it to be regulated locally? This is not the idea or the philosophy that the bitcoin was created on, but just like all great innovations, it changes with time and the needs of the people.

Question: Can the Kuwaiti government, just like other governments we have seen, ban cryptocurrencies?

Fajer: No country can take away a cryptocurrency from you - they can ban you from accessing certain websites or they can prohibit it legally, but they cannot take it away from you unless you personally hand it over to the government. Cryptocurrencies might be traceable, but they are completely anonymous, as your ownership through a wallet is not connected to your name. Therefore, technically no government can ban peer-to-peer transactions either!

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

News in brief

News website hacked

KUWAIT: A popular Kuwaiti news website was hacked yesterday by hackers who claimed to be Saudi and lamented the "poor protection" that Kuwaiti government websites have against cyber-attacks. Users trying to access Alaan.cc website yesterday were briefly met with a black screen instead with text saying that the page was hacked by a group of hackers led by a person identifying himself as 'Silver Hacker.' The hackers published information they claimed were taken from websites of various Kuwaiti state departments that they said they have also hacked, showing details about tenders awarded and their value.

Ministers assigned

KUWAIT: The cabinet's weekly meeting yesterday has assigned several ministers to take charge of several authorities and development projects in Kuwait. After the meeting headed by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh said that First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah was assigned as head supervisor of Al-Hariri City and Bubyah Island development projects. Minister of Finance Nayef Al-Hajraf was assigned to supervise over Kuwait Airways while the Minister of State for Services Affairs Jinan Bushehri was designated to run the affairs of the Directorate General for Civil Aviation (DGCA) and Kuwait international airports.

New livestock ship

KUWAIT: The Livestock Transport and Trading Company (Al-Mawashi) will receive in 2018 an 80,000-head-capacity tanker; a step which will contribute to the company's operations, said a statement yesterday. A statement by the Kuwaiti embassy in Australia, Al-Mawashi CEO Osama Boodai said that his meetings with senior officials at the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) had focused on the tanker acquisition deal, adding that the gathering also touched on bolstering cooperation between Al-Mawashi and ASMA. Mawashi, established in 1973, has been present in Australia since 1974 and ever since it has been providing the Kuwaiti market with topnotch meat products. —KUNA



Indonesians rally to support Palestinians

In Europe, US, homegrown jihadists the main threat



CALIFORNIA: A firefighter puts out hotspots on a smoldering hillside in Montecito, California as strong winds blow smoke and embers inland at the Thomas Fire. —AFP

California wildfire 'beast' rages

Forced evacuations turn neighborhoods into ghost towns

VENTURA: A raging California wildfire powered by fierce winds grew into the third-largest in state history on Saturday as forced evacuations turned neighborhoods into ghost towns and ash fell in some areas like heavy snow. High winds and dry conditions were expected to remain through the weekend to power the so-called Thomas Fire in Southern California. It has destroyed more than 1,000 structures and threatened 18,000 more since erupting on Dec 4, including homes in the wealthy enclave of Montecito just outside the coastal city of Santa Barbara.

"It is a beast," Santa Barbara County Fire Department Division Chief Martin Johnson told a news conference. "But we will kill it," he said. Nearly 8,500 personnel using nearly 1,000 engines and 32 helicopters were battling the blaze, which was 40 percent contained on Saturday evening. It has become the seventh-most destructive in state history, officials said.

A new evacuation order was issued for parts of Santa Barbara County on Saturday as high winds whipped the fire through bone-dry terrain. In

Montecito, smoke billowing from nearby canyons and pushed by the high winds choked the air, hindering aircraft from dropping flame retardant, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services said. The wildfire forced many schools to close for days, shut roads and drove hundreds of thousands from their homes. It was also responsible for poor air quality throughout Southern California.

An evacuation order for the city of Ventura, which was hit hard in the first days of the fire, was lifted on Saturday morning.

"Our backyard, it's like a rain of ash. I don't even want to step back there," said Janet Harrington, 56, an artist and writer who grew up and lives in Ventura. Her son Ryan said: "I can count 10 people

who lost their homes. My best friend from high school, his mom's house burned down." The total cost of fighting the fire had come to more than \$110 million by Saturday evening, as flames blazing over steep hills lit up the night skies.



Ash falling like heavy snow; buildings destroyed

'It's pretty crazy'

The 13 days of shifting winds and evacuations have taken their toll on a weary population. Paul Pineda, who lives in Fillmore, about 55 miles (90 km) northwest of Los Angeles and on the eastern flank of the fire, said he will flee if the blaze

gets too close. "It's pretty crazy. Went to sleep last night about midnight and then woke up to the roar of this fire coming through about 3 a.m." Pineda said.

This year has been unprecedented for California in terms of structures lost and the size of the wildfires, officials said. Five of 20 most destructive fires in recorded history ravaged the state in 2017, according to Cal Fire. The vast landscape charred by the blaze, centered fewer than 100 miles (160 km) northwest of downtown Los Angeles, reached 267,500 acres (108,253 hectares) late on Saturday. The largest wildfire in state history was the 2003 Cedar blaze in San Diego County that consumed 273,246 acres and caused 15 deaths.

The hot Santa Ana winds have propelled the fire's expansion, at times sending embers far ahead of its main flank. They were forecast to gust at up to 50 mph with critical fire conditions remaining through Monday, National Weather Service forecasters said. Cal Fire engineer Cory Iverson, 32, died on Thursday while battling the flames near the Ventura County community of Fillmore. Fire officials said Iverson, the blaze's first fatality, left behind a pregnant wife and 2-year-old daughter. He died of smoke inhalation and burns, the Ventura County Medical Examiner's office said. —Reuters

In Kashmir, Pakistan and India race to tap the Himalayas

MUZAFFARABAD: Several hundred meters underground, thousands of laborers grind away day and night on a mammoth hydroelectric project in contested Kashmir, where India and Pakistan are racing to tap the subcontinent's diminishing freshwater supplies. The arch rivals have been building dueling power plants along the banks of the turquoise Neelum River for years. The two projects, located on opposite sides of the Line of Control—the de facto border in Kashmir—are now close to completion, fuelling tensions between the neighbors with Pakistan particularly worried their downstream project will be deprived of much-needed water by India.

The Himalayan region of Kashmir is at the heart of a 70-year conflict between the nuclear-armed foes, with both sides laying claim to the conflict-riven territory. The rivalry on the Neelum is underlined by both countries' unquenchable need for freshwater, as their surging populations and developing economies continue to stress already diminished waters tables. This situation represents a serious challenge to Pakistan's food security and long-term growth, its central bank recently warned in a report. The geography of the wider region only exacerbates the problem. The Indus River—into which the waters of the Neelum ultimately flow—is one of the longest on the continent, cutting through ultra-sensitive borders in the region. It rises in Tibet, crosses Kashmir and waters 65 percent of Pakistan's territory, including the vast, fertile plains of Punjab province—the country's bread basket—before flowing into the Indian Ocean. The Indus Water Treaty, painfully ratified in 1960 under the auspices of the World Bank, theoretically regulates water allocation between the countries and is considered a rare diplomatic success story amid a bitter history. It provides India with access to three eastern rivers (the Beas, Ravi and Sutlej) and Pakistan with three in the west (the Indus, Chenab and Jhelum), while setting the conditions for water usage.

Underground cathedral

As a tributary of the Jhelum River, the Neelum theoretically falls into Pakistan's sphere, which launched the Neelum-Jhelum power plant project a quarter of a century ago to counter the legal, but competing Kishanganga project in Indian Kashmir. At the confluence of the Neelum and Jhelum, the gigantic underground cathedral



MUZAFFARABAD: Chinese engineers work on a power distribution point of the Neelum-Jhelum Hydropower Project in Chattrat Klass on the outskirts of Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan-administered Kashmir. —AFP

of concrete and steel is near completion—the four generators are in place, waiting for the transformers and the network to be connected. More than 6,000 Pakistani and Chinese workers busy themselves in the 28 kilometers of underground tunnels or in the power station itself, buried under 400 meters of rock in the heart of the Himalayas. After completion, the dam is expected to churn out 969 MW of electricity by mid-2018.

"It is a fantastic feeling to see the outcome of such a historic project," enthused Arif Shah, an engineer working on the site for eight years. "We hope to finish our hydroelectric plant before the Indians," he smiles, while acknowledging that the real pressure comes from Islamabad, which has promised to end the debilitating power cuts nationwide ahead of the 2018 elections. On the Indian side, the Kishanganga power station is also in its final phase, but has delayed its late 2017 completion date, according to an official, in part because of ongoing unrest in the Kashmir valley.

Water and blood

Pakistan has filed cases at the World Bank against India and the Neelum dam, which it says will unfairly restrict the amount of water headed downstream. According to the plant's director Nayyar Aluddin, the production of electricity could shrink by 10-13 percent because of the Indian project. But the hydroelectric projects on the Neelum River are only one of several points of friction between the two countries as the Indus Treaty faces increasingly pressing disputes. Beyond the technical bickering, Islamabad is especially afraid of India cutting into its precious water supplies during strategic agricultural seasons that are key to feeding the country's 207 million residents. The possibility of hitting Pakistan's food supply is regularly amped up by both Indian and Pakistani media, stretching perennially taut relations. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi hinted at such reprisals following an attack in Indian Kashmir blamed on Pakistani insurgents in September 2016. —AFP

In Jordan, Iraqi Christians dream of fresh start abroad

AMMAN: Inside a church in Jordan, a displaced Iraqi Christian mother dreams of a brighter future for her children far from the war-torn country they were forced to flee. She is among thousands of Iraqi Christians from the northern town of Bartalla to have sought refuge in neighboring Jordan after running for their lives from jihadists. "We've lost everything. Our houses have been pillaged and destroyed. There's nothing left over there to make it worth returning," said Walaa Louis, 40.

When the Islamic State group swept across northern Iraq in 2014 they told Christians to convert, pay tax, leave or die. Tens of thousands chose to flee. Baghdad has announced final victory over the extremist group, but Louis says she will not return to a country where she does not feel safe. She, her husband and three children—now aged 16, 15 and eight—fled Bartalla in August 2014, trekking for hours in the dead of night to the Iraqi Kurdish capital of Arbil.

They endured months of struggle in Arbil, including sleeping rough in parks or inside churches. Iraqi forces retook Bartalla from IS earlier this year, but when Louis returned to her hometown in August she found nothing but a home in cinders. She and her husband decided to head to Jordan, where they filed with the UN refugee agency for resettlement "in any safe country" to ensure her children's future. But as Christmas approaches, Louis said her family has received no financial aid and their money is running out. "We've spent everything we had," said Louis, who suffers from a heart condition. "I can't even see a doctor or buy Christmas presents for my children," she said. For now, her youngest son is among some 200 children aged 6 to 14 attending night classes at the Marka Latin Church in the Jordanian capital Amman. —AFP

International

South Africa's ANC set to elect leader to replace scandal-ridden Zuma

Graft allegations shadow Africa's economic powerhouse

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa's ANC is set to elect a successor to President Jacob Zuma in a leadership vote by a party that has ruled since the end of apartheid but lost its luster in a welter of scandal and corruption allegations. Whoever emerges at the helm of the African National Congress, a 105-year-old liberation movement that dominates Africa's most industrialized economy, is likely to become the next president after elections in 2019. After long delays on the first day of the ANC conference on Saturday, the leadership contest remained too close to call. Most grassroots delegates backed Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, 65, or Zuma's preferred candidate, his ex-wife Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, 68.

The election is perhaps the most pivotal moment for the ANC in its 23 years of power. Scandal and graft accusations have tainted Zuma's presidency and the party that launched black majority rule under Nobel Peace Prize laureate Nelson Mandela is now deeply divided, its image tarnished at home and abroad. Ramaphosa drew the majority of nominations from party branches scattered across the country. But the complexity of the leadership race means it is far from certain he will win when the votes are finally counted.

Owing to the delays, the final result is now expected only on Monday. "We hope to start voting at some point later this afternoon and have those results, as it now stands, possibly by tomorrow morning," ANC Deputy Secretary General Jessie Duarte. "We don't rush results; we would like them to do a thorough and proper job." ANC spokeswoman Khuleka Sangoni said the party had completed vetting the eligibility of roughly 6,000 delegates to decide who would take part in the voting.

The ANC said 4,776 delegates of the more than 6,000 attending the conference would be allowed to vote in the tight race. "Credentials are the make and break of the con-

ference," she said. As well as electing a new leader, the ANC will choose senior officials such as the secretary general and members of the National Executive Committee. It will also set policy priorities for the run-up to the 2019 election. Under ANC rules, a majority of nominations is not the same as the most votes at the conference and delegates are not bound to vote for a particular candidate.

How the delegates do cast their ballots may also be subject to vote-buying and intimidation - widely acknowledged to have swayed previous leadership contests. ANC Chairwoman Baleka Mbete, also speaker of parliament and running for the ANC's top seat, publicly endorsed Ramaphosa. "We publicly endorse comrade Cyril Ramaphosa," she told reporters after Saturday's opening session at the conference. Mbete said she had not held talks with Dlamini-Zuma. Stan Itshegetseng, chairman of an ANC branch in Soweto, said: "I believe Cyril will win this election because the majority of ANC branches endorsed him."

Neck-and-neck contest

Social Development Minister Bathabile Dlamini, who heads the influential ANC Women's League, endorsed Dlamini-Zuma. "We are ready for a female president," Carl Niehaus, a key

Winner likely to emerge as the next president



member of Dlamini-Zuma's campaign, said she would be propelled to victory by "the grassroots and the poor. That is important in South Africa because we have a huge gap between rich and poor."

Dlamini-Zuma pledged during her campaign to tackle the racial inequality that persists in South Africa since the end of white minority rule. Ramaphosa has vowed to fight corruption and revitalize the economy. That message has gone down well with foreign investors. Colin Coleman, managing director of Goldman Sachs in South Africa, described the two candidates as "quite divergent" in their views on how to revive a lacklustre economy. In a boost to

save money," the store owner said. Sales of the fossil fuel traditionally used in the Chinese countryside was banned in this district of Hebei in the summer.

Niezhuang is part of the Baoding municipality, one of 18 districts in Hebei with a "zero coal" designation, but the transition to gas has been difficult. Thin yellow pipes now snake along the walls of the homes in the village, spanning alleyways and shifting in the wind. They are marked by a sign: "Caution: Gas Pipes." The gas pipes came into operation in November. The heating is inconsistent, villagers said, and the bills costly. According to Qin, a family must spend at least 5,000 yuan (\$750) over the winter-compared with 2,000 yuan (\$300) for coal-not including the subsidized price of the gas heater that must be purchased.

'Incredibly dirty'

In some villages to the north of Baoding, households were cut off from coal without even being connected to gas heating, Caixin magazine reported. "There was a clear lack of communication and planning," Greenpeace energy campaigner Huang Wei told AFP, noting that authorities had months to prepare for the winter. One local government waited until October, right before the cold weather started, to begin the bidding process for the installation of a gas pipeline, Huang said.

Officials have been under pressure to deliver results in the fight against smog, which has become a health hazard across swathes of China. "The year-end evaluation of many local officials is now closely related to the environment and air quality. So this year, the coal-to-gas (policy) has been carried out more intensely," IHS



JOHANNESBURG: This photo taken in Johannesburg shows African National Congress (ANC) merchandise sold outside of the 54th ANC National Conference. —AFP

Ramaphosa, courts ruled that officials from some provinces seen as supporting Dlamini-Zuma had been elected illegally and were barred from the conference. The rand currency firmed more than 2 percent after that news on Friday.

ANC Youth League leader Collen Maine, who backs Dlamini-Zuma, said that meant 122 delegates would be prevented from voting, something he called "not significant". In his last speech as ANC leader on Saturday, Zuma announced plans to raise subsidies to tertiary colleges and universities, a move analysts said was timed to appeal to the more populist members of the party. He also lashed out at members of the ANC who turned to courts to resolve

party issued and called on the party to unite behind whoever is declared the winner, saying: "The movement (ANC) must be the winner and not individuals."

Zuma, who has been head of state since 2009 and ANC leader since 2007, has faced accusations that have damaged the ANC's stature and caused sharp internal rifts. The allegations have included undue influence in making cabinet appointments and awarding state tenders to his friends, the wealthy Gupta family. Zuma and the Guptas have denied any wrongdoing. In August, Zuma narrowly survived another attempt in parliament to force him from office after some members of his party voted with the opposition in a no-confidence vote. —Reuters

China shivers as shift from coal to gas sputters

BAODING: With temperatures dipping below freezing in a northern Chinese village, a group of parka-clad women tried to stay warm as they played mahjong around a small gas stove in a grocery store. Many in China have been shivering more than usual this winter as authorities have curbed coal heating to fight pollution and the switch to natural gas has been plagued by shortages. In northern Hebei province, even a hospital and schools have struggled to heat their frigid facilities, prompting some teachers to hold classes outdoors in the sunshine. "Of course we miss the coal," said a woman surnamed Qin, who had invited neighbors into her grocery store in Niezhuang village-about 150 kilometers south of Beijing-to play mahjong, a traditional Chinese game. Gas power is "completely unpredictable," Qin said. "One moment we have it, the next moment there's none. And then it's freezing."

The environment ministry has imposed tough anti-pollution targets on 28 cities around Beijing. At least three million homes must switch from coal to gas or electric heating. In Niezhuang, all the coal stoves have been destroyed, according to Qin. Some of their dismantled pieces lay scattered in people's backyards. "Coal was nice because it allowed us to stay warm and

In Europe, US, homegrown jihadists the main threat

WASHINGTON: Returning fighters from the vanquished Islamic State group pose a grave danger to Europe and the United States, but the primary extremist threat comes from people living and radicalized inside their country, US terror experts say. Even if they have no battleground experience, those who decide to undertake solo attacks, like the two recently in New York, in the name of the Islamic State group or Al-Qaeda are almost impossible to detect in advance. "In France, the US, or elsewhere, there certainly won't be any more large attacks planned from abroad like those of November 13, 2015 in Paris," said Marc Sageman, a former CIA agent and terror expert, referring to the multi-pronged IS operation that left 130 dead.

"Ever since then, attackers here or in Europe have not been guided by IS but acted on their own, imagining themselves to be soldiers of an imagined Islamic community which they want to defend or avenge." Neither Akayed Ullah, the Bangladeshi immigrant who tried to blow up a New York subway station last week, mainly wounding himself, nor Sayfullo Saipov, an Uzbek who mowed down people on a New York bike path on October 31, killing 8, had any evident contact with Islamic State jihadists aside from watching their propaganda videos. Experts say that kind of self-radicalized attacker, completely unknown to authorities, is the main threat countries face today. While returning IS fighters are definitely a threat, "it's not a primary concern," said Albert Ford of the New America think tank. "The attacks in this country were made by people who were in the country for years. The real danger is with these not very sophisticated but deadly attacks that we saw lately in New York." According to New America data, 85 percent of the 415 people accused of Islamist-related crimes in the United States since the September 11, 2001 attacks have been American citizens. Of them, 207 were born in the United States. They also were not known to law enforcement: only one fourth had a police record. —AFP

Fleeing Rohingya carry one key asset: Solar panels

UKHIYA: When Rohingya refugees began arriving in Bangladesh, after violence erupted in Myanmar's northern Rakhine State in August, local residents were puzzled to see some toting small solar panels on their shoulders. "When we saw they were carrying a solar panel with them, I was surprised. I would never do this in such a situation," Jashim Uddin, a tea stall owner in Ukhiya, in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Main Uddin, a government official in charge of Ukhiya sub-district during the Rohingya exodus, said the panels were being carried in despite the sound of gunfire on the border and reports of landmines.

More than 600,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled to Bangladesh from Myanmar's northern Rakhine State since August, when the Myanmar army launched a crackdown following attacks on police posts and an army base by Muslim militants.

Many reported making an arduous trek lasting between 5 and 15 days along hilly and waterlogged roads - but the hazardous journey did not prevent many of them from carrying a solar panel with them. "This solar panel saved my life," said Ayatullah, 18, once a shopkeeper in Myanmar's Mongdu township and now a resident of the Thaingkhali refugee camp in Bangladesh. He said he had to take care to avoid Myanmar's army when he fled the country. "They were killing everyone they came across. We had to depend on information from our people about the safe route, and a mobile phone was needed for that. This solar panel helped us to charge the mobile phone," he said. A top United Nations human rights official said last week that Myanmar's security forces may be guilty of genocide against the Rohingya. Mainly Buddhist Myanmar denies atrocities against Rohingya, and said in September that nearly 400 people died in the fighting, mostly Rohingya insurgents. Ayatulla said that he only brought some clothing to



BAODING: A woman commutes on a street on a cold day in Baoding. —AFP

Market analyst Zhou Xizhou said. In Baoding, long one of the most polluted industrial cities in the country, a resident surnamed Wang beamed up at the blue sky and said he did not miss the coal. "It was incredibly dirty and polluting," he said from the courtyard of his home where has been receiving gas since last year. —AFP

News in brief

Pope celebrates birthday

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis celebrated his 81st birthday yesterday with a hero cake and a message urging the world-and children in particular-to join in the holiday mood and be joyful. The Argentine pontiff thanked the crowds gathered in Saint Peter's Square for the Angelus prayer as they sang happy birthday, and was expected to slice into his birthday cake after lunch. It sports a picture of the pope carrying the world on his shoulders, designed by Italian graffiti artist MauPal. The artist-whose real name is Mauro Pallotta-famously depicted Francis as Superman in 2014 and has since begun supporting Vatican charitable projects by selling T-shirts bearing the flying pope.

Algeria Xmas market

ALGIERS: A small Christmas market has opened in Algeria's capital, catering to a rising number of Christian African migrants as well as diplomats and locals in the overwhelmingly Muslim country. Around 99 percent of Algeria's population is Sunni Muslim but the number of Christians has been rising due to an influx of migrants from sub-Saharan countries such as Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. The market, organized by the Caritas charity, is also a sign of stable security in a country that has rebounded from a decade of Islamist militant violence during which 200,000 people died. Diplomats used to hunker down in fortified embassies, rarely venturing out, but now live alongside Algerians in residential quarters.

Mudslide kills five

SANTIAGO: A mudslide on Saturday tore through a small village in southern Chile near a popular national park, leaving five people dead and at least 15 missing after a night of torrential downpours, authorities said. A video taken from a helicopter by Chilean police showed a vast swath of the remote town of Villa Santa Lucia, near Chaiten in coastal Patagonia, buried beneath the mud as the landslide plowed its way down a flooded river valley. Four Chileans and a male tourist whose name and nationality have not been disclosed were died in the mudslide, authorities said. Rescue workers were continuing to search through the debris for at least 15 people. The mudslide also destroyed a school and several homes and roadways as well as a voting center ahead of Chile's presidential election.

Helicopter crashes

TEGUCIGALPA: A sister of Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez died Saturday when the helicopter she was riding in crashed into a mountain near the capital, in an incident that killed five others. "God has in his bosom Hilda Hernandez, tireless fighter of the National Party," the ruling party's president Reinaldo Sanchez tweeted in confirming the tragedy. The AS35 B-3 Honduran Air Force helicopter had taken off from the capital's Toncontin airport and it went off the radar due to adverse weather conditions. "No survivors were found" at the crash site on Yerbabuena Mountain, the armed forces said in a statement. The other victims of the crash were pilot lieutenant Ivan Vasquez Portillo, co-pilot second lieutenant Gerson Diaz Nolasco, Army captain Patricia Valladares and two members of the minister's security detail: Nahum Lagos and Marcos Banegas.

International

Security Council weighs measure rejecting US' Jerusalem decision

Tens of thousands rally in Indonesia to support Palestine

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Security Council is considering a draft resolution affirming that any change to the status of Jerusalem has no legal effect and must be reversed, in response to the US decision to recognize the city as Israel's capital. Egypt circulated the draft text on Saturday, and diplomats said the council could vote on the proposed measure as early as today. Breaking with the international consensus, US President Donald Trump this month announced that he would recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital and move the US embassy there from Tel Aviv, sparking protests and strong condemnation.

The draft resolution obtained by AFP stresses that Jerusalem is an issue "to be resolved through negotiations" and expresses "deep regret at recent decisions concerning the status of Jerusalem," without specifically mentioning Trump's move. "Any decisions and actions which purport to have altered the character, status or demographic composition of the Holy City of Jerusalem have no legal effect, are null and void and must be rescinded," it said. Diplomats said they expected the United States to use its veto power to block the measure while most, if not all, of the 14 other council members were expected to back the draft resolution.

US Vice President Mike Pence will visit Jerusalem on Wednesday, wading into the crisis over one of the most controversial issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel seized control of the eastern part of the city in the 1967 Middle East war and sees the whole of

Jerusalem as its undivided capital. The Palestinians view the east as the capital of their future state. Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon "strongly condemned" the draft, dismissing it as an attempt by the Palestinians "to reinvent history." "No vote or debate will change the clear reality that Jerusalem has and always will be the capital of Israel," Danon said in a statement.

No embassies in Jerusalem

The draft resolution calls on all countries to refrain from opening embassies in Jerusalem, reflecting concerns that other governments could follow the US lead.

It demands that all member-states not recognize any actions that are contrary to UN resolutions on the status of the city. Several UN resolutions call on Israel to withdraw from territory seized during the 1967 war and have reaffirmed the need to end the occupation of that land. The Palestinians had sought a toughly-worded draft

resolution that would have directly called on the US administration to scrap its decision.

But some US allies on the council such as Britain, France, Egypt, Japan and Ukraine were reluctant to be too hard-hitting and insisted that the proposed measure should reaffirm the position enshrined in current resolutions, diplomats said. Backed by Muslim countries, the Palestinians are expected to turn to the UN General Assembly to adopt a resolution rejecting the US decision, if, as expected, the measure is vetoed by the United States at the council. Aside from the United States, Britain, China, France and Russia can veto any



US Vice President to visit Jerusalem on Wednesday



JAKARTA: Indonesians attend a protest against US President Donald Trump's recent decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital city of Israel, at the US embassy in Jakarta yesterday. — AFP

resolution presented at the council, which requires nine votes for adoption.

Rally in Indonesia

Meanwhile, tens of thousands of Indonesians protested yesterday against the US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, the latest show of support for the Palestinians in the country with the

world's largest Muslim population. The rally was organized by the top Islamic authority the Indonesian Ulema Council and supported by the government as well as several other Islamic organizations. Police said 80,000 protesters gathered at the National Monument, a tower that looms over central Jakarta, waving the Palestine flag and banners reading "Free Palestine" as they chanted "God is greatest!" — Agencies

North Korea 'agent' charged with WMD sale plot in Australia

SYDNEY: A Sydney-based "loyal agent of North Korea" has been charged with trying to sell missile parts and technology on the black market to raise money for Pyongyang in breach of international sanctions, Australian police said yesterday. The 59-year-old naturalized Australian citizen of Korean descent, named in local media as Chan Han Choi, was descending to broker illicit deals that could have generated "tens of millions of dollars" for North Korea, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) said.

Choi was involved in discussions to set up a ballistic missile production facility and the supply of missile construction plans in addition to components, software and the transfer of technical expertise from Pyongyang, police alleged. AFP Assistant Commissioner Neil Gaughan told reporters the case was "like nothing we have ever seen on Australian soil", alleging that the man was in contact with high-ranking North Korean officials. "This man is a loyal agent of North Korea, believing he was acting to serve some higher patriotic purpose."

The alleged agent's plans did not involve other governments or officials, police said. Authorities did not reveal which individuals or entities the man was allegedly trying to trade with. North Korea is under tough United Nations sanctions aimed at choking off revenue to Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs. "This is a very important arrest, the charges laid are of the greatest nature," Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull told reporters in Sydney. "North Korea is a dangerous, reckless, criminal regime threatening the peace of the region. It sup-



PYONGYANG: North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un attends the 8th Conference of Munitions Industry in Pyongyang. — AFP

ports itself by breaching UN sanctions.

"It is vitally important that all nations ... enforce those sanctions because the more economic pressure that can be brought on North Korea, the sooner that regime will be brought to its senses," Choi, who has lived in Australia for three decades, allegedly used encrypted communication services to facilitate the attempted trades, which included the transfer of coal from North Korea to entities in Indonesia and Vietnam. Choi was refused bail on Sunday after being arrested in the Sydney suburb of Eastwood on Saturday. He faces a total of six charges, with maximum penalties of up to 10 years in jail.

Police starting looking into his activities earlier this

year after a tip-off from a "foreign law enforcement partner", Gaughan said without giving further details. Police would not rule out further charges, and were probing other attempted commodity trades involving oil and gemstones, as well as investigating Choi's activities as far back as 2008. This is the first time charges have been laid for breaches under Canberra's Weapons of Mass Destruction Act and for violating UN sanctions against North Korea in Australia. Global anxiety about North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un's authoritarian government has steadily risen this year, with Washington calling on other UN members to cut ties with Pyongyang in order to squeeze the secretive regime. — AFP

South China Sea's buildup continues amid distractions

WASHINGTON: While attention in Asia has been distracted by the North Korean nuclear crisis in the past year, China has continued to install high-frequency radar and other facilities that can be used for military purposes on its man-made islands in the South China Sea, a US think tank said on Thursday. Chinese activity has involved work on facilities covering 72 acres of the Spratly and Paracel islands, territory contested with several other Asian nations, according to the Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative of Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies. The report cited satellite images.

The United States and its allies oppose China's building of artificial islands in the South China Sea and their militarization, given concerns Beijing plans to use them to deny access to strategic routes. "It's completely normal for China to conduct peaceful construction and build essential defense equipment on its own sovereign territory." China's foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a regular press briefing on Friday, in response to a question about the report.

"We believe certain people who have ulterior motives are making mountains out of molehills and stirring up trouble." The report said that in the last several months China had constructed what appeared to be a new high-frequency radar array at the northern end of Fiery Cross Reef in the Spratlys. Subi Reef had seen tunnels completed that were likely for ammunition stor-



NANJING: People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers participate in a ceremony at the Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall in Nanjing. — AFP

age and another radar antenna array and radar domes, the report said. Construction on Mischief Reef included underground storage for ammunition and hangars, missile shelters and radar arrays. Smaller-scale work had continued in the Paracel Islands, including a new helipad and wind turbines on Tree Island and two large radar towers on Triton Island. It said the latter were especially important as waters around Triton had been the scene

of recent incidents between China and Vietnam and multiple U.S. freedom-of-navigation operations, which the US navy has used to assert what it sees as its right to free passage in international waters. Woody Island, China's military and administrative headquarters in the South China Sea, saw two first-time air deployments "that hint at things to come at the three Spratly Island air bases farther south," the report said. — Reuters

News in brief

Gabon knife attack

LIBREVILLE: An attacker wielding a knife and crying "Allahu Akbar" has wounded two Danish journalists in Gabon's capital Libreville, the Gabonese defense minister said. The two reporters for the National Geographic channel were in a popular market for tourist souvenirs on Saturday, when a Nigerian national living in Gabon lunged at them with the knife. Defense Minister Etienne Kabinda Makaga said in a statement on Gabonese television. After his arrest, the 53-year-old suspect, who has lived in Gabon for two decades, told authorities he was carrying out a revenge attack against America for recognizing Israel's capital as Jerusalem. Makaga said, giving no further explanation.

11 Afghan police killed

KANDAHAR: At least 11 Afghan police officers were killed yesterday when Taliban fighters assaulted their checkpoints in volatile Helmand province in southern Afghanistan, authorities said. The assaults on two police posts are the latest in a series of deadly attacks on Afghan security forces claimed by the Taliban. Taliban insurgents launched the attacks in the early morning in the Qalai Sang area of the provincial capital Lashkar Gah. "Our police fought them back, but unfortunately 11 of our police were martyred and two wounded," provincial governor Hayatullah Hayat said, adding that the militants fled after the attack.

Palestinian with explosive

JERUSALEM: Israeli police yesterday arrested a Palestinian carrying an explosive device as he approached a military court in the occupied West Bank, security officials said. Specialists examined the device, which did not explode, the Israeli police said, without providing further details. Local media said the military court was located in the Nablus area in the north of the occupied Palestinian territory. Israeli public radio said the Palestinian hailed from the Jenin refugee camp further north in the West Bank. A second explosive device was discovered inside his coat, the radio added, but there was no confirmation of this from the Israeli police. Tensions have been high in the Palestinian territories since US President Donald Trump on December 6 recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital. On Saturday, thousands of Palestinians took part in funerals for four men killed Friday in clashes with Israeli forces during protests against the decision in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Japan sex service fire

TOKYO: Four people were killed and seven injured yesterday in a fire at an establishment near Tokyo offering sexual services, Japanese police said. Aerial footage on public broadcaster NHK showed grey smoke pouring from a concrete building in the city of Saitama, 25 kilometers north of Tokyo, as dozens of firefighters battled the blaze. It took about five hours to extinguish the fire. "A man who appeared to be in his 40s and two women who appeared to be in their 20s died after being sent to a hospital," a police spokesman said. "We also found a body whose gender is undetermined inside the establishment," he added. The seven people were slightly injured and treated in hospital.

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Analysis

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Hoping to extend maritime reach, China lavishes aid on Pakistan town

China is lavishing vast amounts of aid on a small Pakistani fishing town to win over locals and build a commercial deep-water port that the United States and India suspect may also one day serve the Chinese navy. Beijing has built a school, sent doctors and pledged about \$500 million in grants for an airport, hospital, college and badly-needed water infrastructure for Gwadar, a dusty town whose harbor juts out into the Arabian Sea, overlooking some of the world's busiest oil and gas shipping lanes.

The grants include \$230 million for a new international airport, one of the largest such disbursements China has made abroad, according to researchers and Pakistani officials. The handouts for the Gwadar project is a departure from Beijing's usual approach in other countries. China has traditionally derided Western-style aid in favor of infrastructure projects for which it normally provides loans through Chinese state-owned commercial and development banks.

"The concentration of grants is quite striking," said Andrew Small, an author of a book on China-Pakistan relations and a Washington-based researcher at the German Marshall Fund think tank. "China largely doesn't do aid or grants, and when it has done them, they have tended to be modest." Pakistan has welcomed the aid with open hands. However, Beijing's unusual largesse has also fueled suspicions in the United States and India that Gwadar is part of China's future geostrategic plans to challenge US naval dominance. "It all suggests that Gwadar, for a lot of people in China, is not just a commercial proposition over the longer term," Small said.

Beijing and Islamabad see Gwadar as the future jewel in the crown of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship of Beijing's Belt and Road initiative to build a new "Silk Road" of land and maritime trade routes across more than 60 countries in Asia, Europe and Africa. The plan is to turn Gwadar into a trans-shipment hub and megaport to be built alongside special economic zones from which export-focused industries will ship goods worldwide. A web of energy pipelines, roads and rail links will connect Gwadar to China's western regions.

Port trade is expected to grow from 1.2 million tonnes in 2018 to about 13 million tonnes by 2022, Pakistani officials say. At the harbor, three new cranes have been installed and dredging will next year deepen the port depth to 20 m at five berths. But the challenges are stark. Gwadar has no access to drinking water, power blackouts are common and separatist insurgents threaten attacks against Chinese projects in Gwadar and the rest of Baluchistan, a mineral-rich province that is still Pakistan's poorest region.

Security is tight, with Chinese and other foreign visitors driven around in convoys of soldiers and armed police. Beijing is also trying to overcome the distrust of outsiders evident in Baluchistan, where indigenous Baloch fear an influx of other ethnic groups and foreigners. Many residents say the pace of change is too slow. "Local people are not completely satisfied," said Essar Nori, a lawmaker for Gwadar, adding that the separatists were tapping into that dissatisfaction. Pakistani officials are urging Gwadar residents to be patient, vowing to urgently build desalination plants and power stations.

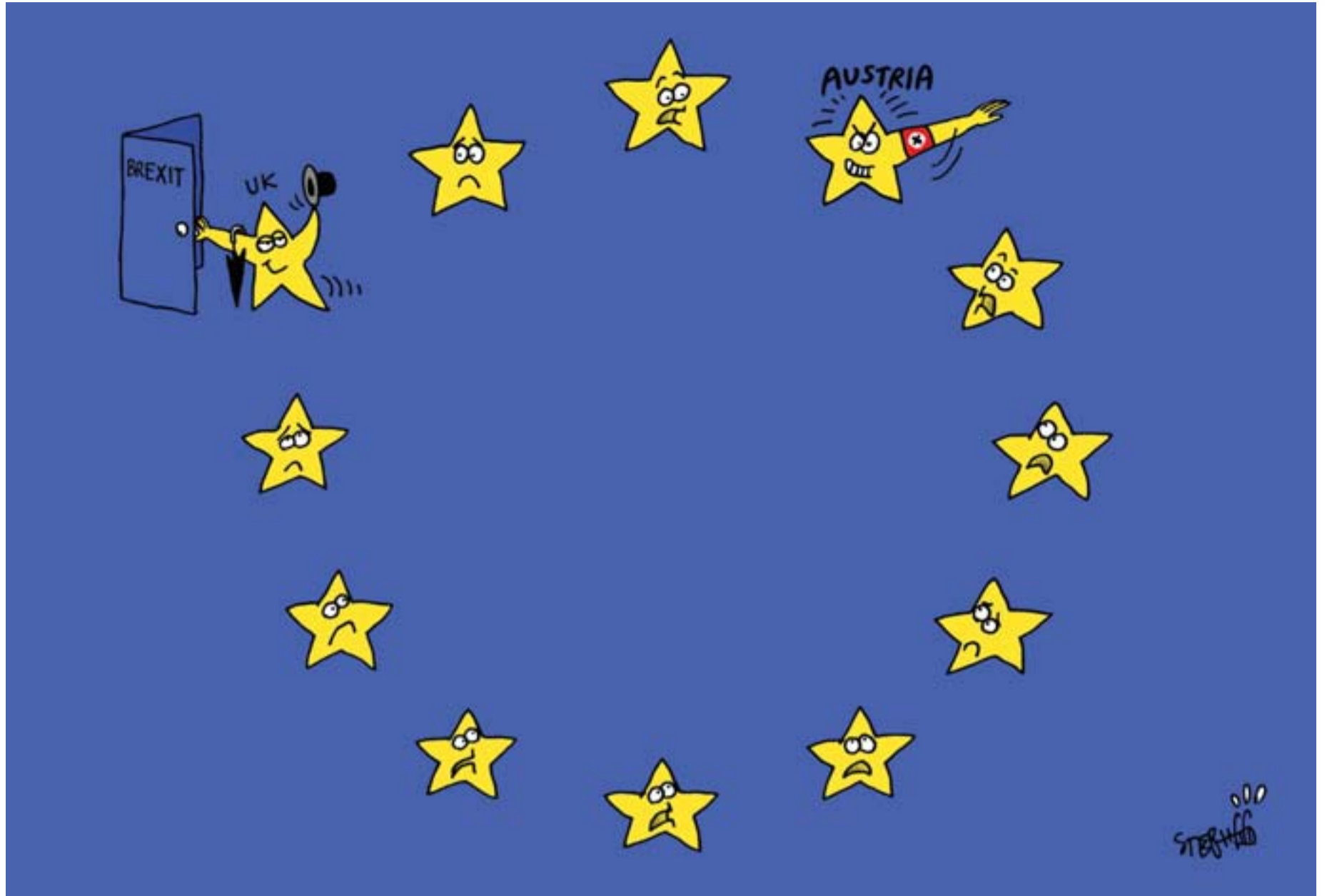
Cautionary Tale

China's Gwadar project contrasts with similar efforts in Sri Lanka, where the village of Hambantota was transformed into a port complex - but was saddled with Chinese debt. Last week, Sri Lanka formally handed over operations to China on a 99-year lease in exchange for lighter debt repayments, a move that sparked street protests over what many Sri Lankans view as an erosion of sovereignty.

The Hambantota port, like Gwadar, is part of a network of harbors Beijing is developing in Asia and Africa that have spooked India, which fears being encircled by China's growing naval power. But Pakistani officials say comparisons to Hambantota are unfair because the Gwadar project has much less debt. On top of the airport, Chinese handouts in Gwadar include \$100 million to expand a hospital by 250 beds, \$130 million towards upgrading water infrastructure, and \$10 million for a technical and vocational college, according to Pakistani government documents and officials.

"We welcome this assistance as it's changing the quality of life of the people of Gwadar for the better," said Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, chairman of the parliamentary committee that oversees CPEC, including Gwadar. China and Pakistan jointly choose which projects will be developed under the CPEC mechanism. Sayed added. When China suggested a 7,000 m runway for the new airport, Pakistan pushed for a 12,000 m one that could accommodate planes as large as the Airbus 380 and be used for military purposes, according to Sajjad Baloch, a director of the Gwadar Development Authority.

The scale of Chinese grants is extraordinary, according to Brad Parks, executive director of AidData, a research lab at the US-based William and Mary university that collected data on Chinese aid across 140 countries from 2000-2014. —Reuters



Saudi hopes purge will help it join FATF

Saudi Arabia has high hopes that a campaign of arrests to crack down on corruption will improve its chances of joining the Financial Action Task Force, a global body dedicated to combatting illicit money flows. The kingdom, one of only two G20 nations along with Indonesia which is not a FATF member, has tried for years to shake off a reputation as a breeding ground for corruption and terror financing. Its last attempt to join the inter-governmental body, which has 37 members, was unsuccessful in 2010 and some lobbyists may oppose the new Saudi push before an expected vote mid next year.

But achieving membership offers the possibility of strengthening Riyadh's international standing at a time when it wants foreign investors to back its multi-billion dollar transformation plan, as well as improving global financial ties for its banks. Spearheaded by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom detained dozens of senior business people and government officials last month, accusing them of crimes including money laundering although not of terror financing. Political analysts say the future king has also tried to tighten his grip on power through the purge. The crackdown - which involved the freezing of more than 2,000 bank accounts and liaising with central banks in among others Switzerland, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates - stress-tested the Saudi anti-money laundering system and found it largely effective, say sources familiar with the matter. The system will undergo further tests in the coming weeks as Saudi Arabia targets around \$100 billion of settlements with some of those detained.

"This will strengthen Saudi Arabia's position as a reformer and its efforts to move closer to a corruption-free society," said Jaspal Singh, who advises on anti-money laundering in the Middle East and North America. "Joining FATF sets the 'tone at the top' in generating the necessary political will under Prince Mohammad to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in the

anti-money laundering and governance space." Saudi efforts to join the body are at a critical stage. In the last few weeks it hosted a visit by officials - including FATF staff and members of the body - assessing its bid. The delegates visited public and private sector institutions. A final decision on the bid, known as the mutual evaluation, is expected when existing members vote in June 2018. "How soon Saudi Arabia can obtain full membership will depend on the outcomes of the mutual evaluation," FATF said in a statement sent to Reuters. "If the mutual evalua-



Membership offers possibility of strengthening Riyadh's standing

tion is not satisfactory, then the country must agree to an action plan to address the weaknesses identified by the assessment team."

Top Table

Saudi Arabia has struggled with allegations that some of its banks have helped to fund terrorists. Its two largest banks, National Commercial Bank and Al Rajhi Bank, were sued in New York as recently as April, along with companies affiliated with Osama bin Laden's family and several charities, for at least \$4.2 billion over the Sept 11, 2001

attacks on the United States. At the end of 2013, JPMorgan Chase & Co cut its correspondent banking relationship with 500 foreign lenders including Al Rajhi, Reuters previously reported, citing sources.

Al Rajhi has previously said it "has no links to terrorism" and is "committed to operating at the highest levels of compliance" with applicable rules. In response to a Reuters query, it said on Thursday: "JP Morgan re-established its relationship with Al Rajhi Bank in 2017." National Commercial Bank did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment. While the central bank has maintained Saudi banks have not experienced a dip in correspondent banking relationships, it has said it remains vigilant as any decline could hurt the stability of the financial system and economic growth.

"If you want to eat at top table you have to have top table manners," said a financial sector source. "The benefits from a banking perspective will be stronger correspondent banking ties." Saudi Arabia's last attempt to join failed when it fell short in its ability to test a relatively new risk framework - the kingdom criminalized money laundering in 2003. The process also exposed a general lack of awareness about illicit financial flows, especially among non-bank financial institutions. But since then Riyadh has made strides to improve its level of compliance. For one, Saudi Arabia has massively increased its rate of convictions for terrorist financing. Between 2010 and 2015, it topped the table with 863 convictions, compared with around 100 for the next highest-ranked country, the United States, according to FATF data. In recent weeks, Saudi Arabia has also published new versions of its anti-money laundering and anti-terrorism laws, strengthening due diligence requirements for financial institutions and toughening criminal penalties. Both laws were revised to bring Saudi Arabia more in line with FATF requirements, said a source familiar with the matter.—Reuters

Brazilian tycoon leaves prison, enters family feud

The good news for Marcelo Odebrecht, the tycoon at the center of Brazil's biggest ever corruption scandal, is he'll be out of prison Tuesday, in time for Christmas. The bad news: Not all his family is celebrating. The former CEO of Latin America's biggest construction company, the family firm Odebrecht S.A., will leave prison in the southern city of Curitiba after serving two and a half years of a 10-year sentence for money laundering and bribery. For the remainder, Marcelo Odebrecht will be under house arrest in Sao Paulo.

But while the courts have finished with Odebrecht for now, a feud with his father and other members of the powerful family looms, raising questions over the futures of the man once known as "the prince" and the giant company that once embodied Brazil's rise. Building everything from the Miami Heat basketball arena to a hydro-electric dam in Angola, Odebrecht SA is no ordinary company. At the peak of his powers as CEO, the wiry, intense-looking Marcelo Odebrecht was one of the most influential people in Brazil.

But in 2015 he was arrested and later convicted for his central role in the "Car Wash" embezzlement and bribery scandal that three years later continues to shake Brazil's elite. The revelation that he'd been greasing the palms of politicians to obtain contracts in a string of countries triggered the "prince's" brutal downfall. And when the full scope became clear - Odebrecht SA even had a dedicated corporate department of bribes - the company itself was thrown into peril.

Swapping cell for condo

Odebrecht's Curitiba lock-up has been relatively cushy. Cell doors are left open,

there's a microwave, fridge and television, and the 49-year-old ex-CEO has reportedly become something of a fitness fanatic during his incarceration. However, house arrest will be a lot pleasanter. According to Brazilian press reports, Odebrecht and a police escort will likely fly to Sao Paulo on a private jet. He will then check into his house in the ultra-posh Morumbi neighborhood, where he lives with wife Isabel and their three daughters.

A spokeswoman for the "Car Wash" probe's headquarters confirmed that Odebrecht must spend the next two and a half years at home with a monitoring anklet. Another two and a half years will follow with daytime excursions allowed, before a final period in which he needs to be at home only on weekends. The home is in one of Sao Paulo's most exclusive and heavily guarded gated communities and sprawls across 32,292 sq ft, with a huge swimming pool, according to local media reports. As far as golden cages go, this one glitters.

Family feud

What Odebrecht won't get is back to business as usual. Much of his family's construction behemoth was dragged into the "Car Wash" pay-to-play scandal. However, Odebrecht is the one accused of ramping up graft to industrial levels upon taking over in 2008. When investigators closed in, he defiantly tried to prevent a plea bargain. However, his father Emilio spearheaded negotiations with prosecutors, according to Globo and other local media, and eventually 77 company executives, including Marcelo, spilled the beans on their mass bribery of politicians.

The company ended up agreeing to pay a whopping \$2.6 billion in fines to the Brazilian, Swiss and US governments. In return, the judge gave Marcelo a reduction in his original 19 year sentence to 10 years, lenient treatment for his father and a chance for the company to recover. That surrender, say multiple Brazilian media reports, left the family bitterly split.—AFP

UN court exposes uneasy legacy of Croatia's Tudjman

When tourists fly into Croatia's capital, they land at the gleaming new Franjo Tudjman airport, named after the "father of the nation" - a figure now implicated by a damning UN war crimes verdict. Last month's final ruling at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) was overshadowed by the dramatic death of Bosnian Croat Slobodan Praljak, who drank cyanide in court after judges upheld his sentence for 1990s war crimes.

But of arguably greater significance to Croatia was the judges' censure of Tudjman, the country's first president, who died in 1999 but remains a hero to many Croats for winning independence, despite the flaws of his autocratic rule. The appeal judgement handed to six Bosnian Croats at the court in The Hague, said Tudjman had shared their "ultimate purpose" of ethnically cleansing Bosnian Muslims in an attempt to unite the region's Croats.

Around 100,000 people died in Bosnia's 1992-1995 conflict between Croats, Muslims and Serbs as Yugoslavia collapsed into several wars. Croatian people were "rightly outraged" by the court's ruling, fumed a comment piece the next day in the Novi list newspaper, saying the stain on the country's 1990s leadership "brings into doubt all we think about ourselves". Despite the verdict, the 18th anniversary of Tudjman's death was marked on Dec 10 with the usual nationwide commemorations. Top officials laid wreaths in the color of the national flag by his imposing black marble grave in Zagreb.

Tudjman "was a statesman... he knew exactly his goal and he achieved it, and that was to create Croatia," said pensioner Katarina Hrkac, 66, at a memorial ceremony for Praljak the following day. The Vecernji List daily, Croatia's most popular newspaper,

on Saturday published a magazine dedicated to the "father of the Croatian state".

Tudjman as Croatia

Tudjman, a communist general turned nationalist dissident, led Croatia through its declaration of independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 and its subsequent four-year conflict with rebel Serbs backed by Belgrade. Jadranka Kosor, a former prime minister from Tudjman's conservative HDZ party, told AFP that the late leader's "strength and skill" lay in gathering support to oppose "one of the biggest military forces in Europe, the Yugoslav People's Army". The view of Croatia's own war as a liberation struggle against Serb aggressors is widely shared at home, but opinions are less clear-cut over Tudjman's role - underlined by the tribunal - in the concurrent Bosnian conflict.

Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic, also from the HDZ, slammed November's verdict, insisting that "Tudjman's policy towards Bosnia was 'always directed towards maintaining its territorial integrity'. But "there is no doubt that the military and political leadership of Croats in Bosnia... was under the direct influence and control of officials in Zagreb," said historian Iliroje Klasic at the University of Zagreb. He warned against "some kind of personality cult or taboo topics" regarding Tudjman. "Any criticism of Tudjman and Tudjman's politics is, in a way, considered as criticism of Croatia itself, which is catastrophic." Former ICTY prosecutor Carla del Ponte said in 2001 that the court was ready to issue an indictment against Tudjman when he died of cancer at the age of 77.

Despite his successful independence movement, Tudjman's iron-fisted rule was marked by corruption and fraudulent privatization processes that further damaged an economy already devastated by war. His disregard for democratic reforms left him internationally isolated - foreign leaders were noticeable in their absence at Tudjman's state funeral, which was attended by tens of thousands of Croats.—AFP

26 dead in landslides after Philippine storm

MATNOG, Philippines: Landslides triggered by Tropical Storm Kai-Tak have killed 26 people and 23 more are missing in the eastern Philippines, authorities said yesterday. The deaths were reported in the small island province of Biliran, a day after the storm pounded the east of the archipelago nation. Kai-Tak tore across the major islands of Samar and Leyte on Saturday, toppling power lines in 39 towns or cities and damaging roads and bridges, the national disaster agency said. Some 87,700 people were forced from their homes in the region. But the previous death toll had stood at just three.

Sofronio Dacillo, provincial disaster risk reduction and management officer, told AFP the deaths occurred in four towns in Biliran at the weekend. "Rocks as big as cars fell on concrete houses after three days of continuous, heavy rain," chief inspector Lilibeth Morillo, Biliran police information officer, told AFP as she described a landslide in the mountainous district of Lucsoon. "There were six families living there but they did not evacuate," she said, adding seven bodies were recovered in the area. Gerardo Espina, governor of the island province just east of Leyte, gave the same overall death toll of 26 in an interview on ABS-CBN television. He said 23 people were missing.

The national disaster risk reduction agency could not immediately confirm if the 26 deaths included the initial three fatalities it announced on Saturday. Kai-Tak weakened yesterday afternoon, with gusts of up to 80 km an hour, and was downgraded to a tropical

depression, state weather forecasters said. President Rodrigo Duterte yesterday said he would soon fly to the storm-hit areas. "There is so much destruction there. There are places where the bridge was destroyed and I would like to see for myself what government can do better," Duterte said in a speech.

Thousands stranded

Disaster officials warned that more floods and landslides were possible and said 15,500 passengers were stranded because ferry services remained suspended in parts of the region. "I've been stranded for three days, sleeping in the bus, and I just want to get home to my family for Christmas," Eliaquin Pilapil, a 55-year-old farmer, told AFP from a port in the town of Matnog in the eastern province of Sorsogon. The Christmas holidays are a busy travel season in the mainly Catholic Philippines, with people heading home to the provinces.

The nation is battered by about 20 major storms each year. Samar and Leyte bore the brunt in 2013 of Super Typhoon Haiyan which left more than 7,350 people dead or missing. In the Leyte city of Tacloban, Saturday's storm brought flash floods of up to 1.5 m and strong winds that left the city without power and water, according to its disaster office chief.

"The storm moved so slowly that it brought so much rain to our city. The floods resulted from four days of rain," Ildebrando Bernadas, head of Tacloban's disaster risk reduction office, told AFP. Bernadas said 82 per-



NAVAL, Philippines: Police and civilian volunteers work through boulders as they look for survivors after a landslide hit this town in Biliran province. — AFP

cent of Tacloban's districts were flooded. The storm also damaged farms and crops, bringing more misery to people who had been recovering from Haiyan's destruction. "We had a phobia from (Haiyan) which

destroyed our coconut trees. We planted lettuce and eggplant but the new storm took them away too. It's devastating," said Remedios Serato, a 78-year-old farmer in Leyte. — AFP

Heavy air pollution shuts schools in Iran

TEHRAN: Iran shut schools around Tehran yesterday and cancelled sporting events as thick smog blanketed the capital despite curbs on road traffic and industrial activity. The authorities shuttered primary schools in the province of Tehran, home to 14 million residents, before ordering them to remain closed today. All sports competitions set for today were also cancelled, as restrictions on road traffic were stepped up, including a ban on trucks.

Airborne concentration of fine particles (PM2.5) hit

185 microgrammes per cubic metre in the south of Tehran and 174 in its centre on Sunday morning, local authorities said. That is far above the World Health Organization recommended maximum of 25 microgrammes per m3 over a 24-hour period. The microscopic particles lodge deep in the lungs and are harmful to human health.

"Tehran is suffocating (but) hundreds of thousands of cars are built each year," said Hossein, a man in his sixties who did not give his surname. "They're building in the mountains, they're destroying our forests. We don't want any more oil, we don't want any more petrol," he added. Every year, Iran's sprawling capital suffers some of the worst pollution in the world when cool temperatures cause an effect known as "temperature inversion". The phenomenon creates a layer of warm air above the city

that traps pollution from its more than eight million cars and motorbikes.

Authorities also ordered mines and cement factories to close, and called on the elderly, children, pregnant women and people with heart problems to stay indoors. Residents who ventured out wore face masks while others chose to remain at home. Ali Ebrahimian, a retiree, told AFP he only stepped outside to sort out "an urgent matter". Fatemeh Assadi, a woman in her sixties, accused the authorities of failing to prevent the pollution. "The government's not doing anything," she said.

Iran is expected to produce 1.5 million new vehicles by the end of this Persian year which ends in March, according to official figures, in a country where some 20 million cars and trucks are already on the roads. In October,

Tehran mayor Mohammad Ali Najafi said he wanted to develop public transport and help reduce traffic in the capital, which lies at between 1,400 and 1,800 m above sea level. But he warned that a solution would take time.

In the northwestern cities of Tabriz and Urmia, schools remained closed for the second day straight yesterday, official news agency IRNA said. While atmospheric pollution in Iran is not as severe as in India or China, it endangers the health of its residents. In 2014, almost 400 people were hospitalized with heart and respiratory problems caused by pollution in Tehran. Nearly 1,500 others required treatment. The health ministry estimated that pollution in 2012 contributed to the premature deaths of 4,500 people in Tehran and about 80,000 across the country. — AFP

Nine killed in IS bombing...

Continued from Page 1

Pakistani Christians, who number around 2 million in a nation of more than 200 million people, have been the target of a series of attacks in recent years. Baluchistan, a strategically important region bordering Iran as well as Afghanistan, is plagued by violence by sectarian groups linked to the Taleban, Al-Qaeda and Islamic State. It also has an indigenous ethnic Baloch insurgency fighting against the central government.

Middle East-based Islamic State has created an active branch in Pakistan and Afghanistan in recent years mostly by recruiting among established militants, and its followers have claimed some of Pakistan's most deadly attacks in recent years. A suicide bomber killed 52 people and wounded over 100 at a Baluchistan Sufi shrine in November last year, in an attack claimed by

Islamic State. In February, Islamic State attacked a Sufi shrine in Pakistan's southern Sindh province, killing 83 people.

Violence in Baluchistan has fuelled concern about security for projects in the \$57 billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor, a transport and energy link planned to run from western China to Pakistan's southern deep-water port of Gwadar. The church attack came a day after the third anniversary of a Pakistani Taleban attack on an army-run school that killed 134 children, one of the single deadliest attacks in the country's history.

Pakistan's army chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, condemned the attack. "Quetta church attack targeting our brotherly Christian Pakistanis is an attempt to cloud Christmas celebrations," he said. "We stay united and steadfast to respond against such heinous attempts." Last year's Easter Day attack in a public park that killed more than 70 people in the eastern city of Lahore was claimed by a Taleban splinter group previously associated with Islamic State. The United States strongly condemned "the shocking and brutal attack on innocent worshippers," US Ambassador to Pakistan David Hale said in a statement. — Agencies

French sailor pulverizes solo...

Continued from Page 1

days have been shaved off. The debut record holder was Frenchman Francis Joyon who completed the odyssey in 72 days and 22 hours. British female sailor Ellen MacArthur took to the seas a year later, racing against the clock to break that record by just a day and a half (71 days, 14 hours). She remained undefeated until 2016 when Coville set a new record of 49 days and three hours which many predicted would be difficult to topple.

Gabart, who embarked on Nov 4, was on a two-year-old state of the art 30 m long new generation MACIF maxi-trimaran comfortably carved its way through the waves and into the record books. Helped by good weather throughout much of the voyage, particularly during the long and arduous

Pacific section, it clocked up jaw-dropping speeds of up to 35 knots (65 km an hour). He set a number of new solo race records along the way, including the fastest navigation of the Pacific (7 days, 15 hours, 15 minutes) and the longest distance covered in 24 hours (1,576 km).

Gabart first circumnavigated the world during the 2013 Vendee Globe race - which he won. He immediately set his sights on breaking the solo non-stop record. Coville congratulated his record vanquisher. "He's an incredible strategist. He already showed that during the Vendee Globe," he told AFP. Of the four solo record holders, Gabart is the only one to have also won a competitive round the world race.

Another illustrious sailor Michel Desjardes said there was no surprise in the feat. "The one thing we can be sure of is that Francois has a faster boat than Thomas," he told AFP by telephone. "And he has spent a great deal of time on a multi-hull and is completely unafraid of high speeds, he's fundamentally at ease in that environment." Coville's boat was a ten-year-old craft that had been reconditioned rather than built to purpose. — AFP

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Sports

Veith wins first race since injury, Lindsey Vonn pulls out

Austrian's 15th victory on World Cup circuit and third in super-G

VAL-D'ISERE: Austria's defending Olympic champion Anna Veith won yesterday's World Cup super-G, but American Lindsey Vonn withdrew with knee pain just 24 hours after winning the first race in Val d'Isere.

Veith, who has twice had surgery since injuring her knee in October 2015, was timed at 1min 05.77sec down the OK course in bitterly cold, but bright conditions. It was the Austrian's 15th victory on the World Cup circuit and third in super-G.

The timing of her return to form could not be better for the 28-year-old who was overall World Cup champion in 2014 and 2015, and is also a three-time world gold medalist. "I'm very happy, it was a pretty emotional day for me," said Veith, whose last World Cup win came in Meribel in March 2015.

"For me it's very important to get back to that feeling that I can do it in the race. "I didn't race so much over the last two years, so it's a good day!" Liechtenstein's Tina Weirather finished second, at 0.48sec, with Italy's Sofia Goggia following up on Saturday's second place with a third, a further three-hundredths of a second adrift.

Just weeks ahead of the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, Vonn opted to play it safe by pulling out of the super-G and also Tuesday's giant slalom in neighbouring Courchevel. "She did the pre-race inspection this morning, but decided against racing," a

US team spokesperson said of Vonn.

"She's packed up and already left Val d'Isere. She won't race in Courchevel. "She will now head home to the US to spend Christmas there." The 33-year-old star of the circuit who won Saturday's super-G said the move had been a precaution, having also withdrawn from a super-G in St Moritz last weekend with a back injury, for which she had treatment in Austria.

"Knee is a bit sore from yesterday so to be on the safe side I'm going to give my body some rest. My focus is on the Olympics so no need to risk anything now. Still going home very happy after my win yesterday," Vonn wrote on Twitter.

Ironically her withdrawal came after she said she was due some "good karma" after criticism of her form and a vicious backlash against comments she made about the US government and President Donald Trump.

"I guess I'm not a washed-up old hag," Vonn said in a US team statement overnight in response to what it said were "numerous social media comments this week regarding her form as she prepares for the 2018 Olympic Winter Games". Vonn added: "I think I proved myself, and karma definitely comes back around. I've got some good karma coming my way." Her victory on Saturday took her World Cup tally of wins to 78, one closer to the all-time mark of 86 wins held by Swedish great Ingemar Stenmark. — AFP

“For me it's very important to get back to that feeling”



VAL-D'ISERE: Austria's Anna Veith (R) poses with a cheese after winning the women's Super-G race at the FIS Alpine Skiing World Cup in Val-d'Isere, French Alps, yesterday. — AFP



Group photo of winners in women's championship.



Group photo of winners in men's championship.—Photos by Majdi Al Dakroury

Late Sheikh Fahad Al-Salem shooting tournament concludes

KUWAIT: A shooting tournament of late Sheikh Fahad Al-Salem Al-Sabah concluded competitions on Saturday, ending three days of tough competitions by shooters from Kuwait and Gulf countries.

Duajj Al-Otaibi, Presidents of Kuwait and Arab shooting federations, told reporters the tournament witnessed "fierce competitions" from shooters from Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar.

He said Kuwait shooting club would continue its support for its shooters to compete in international and continental championships, like the olympic games in Tokyo 2020. Kuwait's Mansour Al-Rashidi won the Skete competition while Khaled Al-Kaabi of the UAE won the Trap event. Saad Al-Mutairi, of Kuwait, won the double-trap competition while Abdullah Al-Harbi, also from Kuwait, won the shot-gun competition. Saad Al-Ajmi, from Kuwait National Guard (KNG), won the pistol shoot-out. Khaled Abdulsalam of KNG won the rifle prone 50-meter shoot-out, while Mohammad Adel, of Kuwait, won the rifle 50 meters in all three positions. Eman Al-Shamma' of Kuwait won the women Skete championship while teammate Shahad Al-Hawal won the Trap.— KUNA



UAE Shooter Al-Kaabi receiving his trophy.



Sheikh Mohammad Fahad Saad Al-Bdallah receiving the shooting club plaque.

David won't give up quest for more glory

MANCHESTER: Former world champion Nicol David believes she can still win another major title despite being well into her 35th year. David lost a recent World Championship quarter-final to the second-seeded Egyptian Raneem El Welily in four games.

But the Malaysian, an eight-time world title winner, believes she is still gradually adapting to the profound changes in tactics and techniques in the women's game in the last two years.

David's last big title was the Hong Kong Open in December 2015, since when her superbly athletic and subtly patterned game has been rendered less effective by a lowering of the tin by two inches to the 17 inches used in the men's game.

David does not believe age is the main factor in a failure to add to her 81 titles, and thinks a world ranking at six

still provides an adequate platform from which to tackle younger, more naturally aggressive players. "It's just that I've had to learn so much in the last few years," she said. "The game is really different and you have to change with the times, and add to what you have. I am doing that more and more - though I keep saying that."

David has been adjusting to the need to make the first attacking move - a tight drop shot, an attacking side-wall angle, or changes of pace and direction. "Though her ability to do this has increased, it has required psychological changes to make use of that."

"You still have to get that confidence," she said. "It's getting better and better each tournament and each match. Consistency is needed. It's a question of getting a balance. "I still have ambitions to win a big title. I have been looking forward to that. "It's disappointing when you put in the hard work, and play good squash at times, but falter."

David still moves so athletically that some people wonder if she might compete till she is 40, like Heather McKay, the Australian who was world champion at 39.

"I'm looking forward to the Commonwealth Games, the Asian Games and the World Championships next year," David said. "And I'll work towards all the big tournaments - the British Open, the US Open. As I said, I think I can win another big title. "After that, if my performances are going well, I will keep pushing." — AFP

Russia making progress over doping, says Coe

LONDON: IAAF chief Lord Sebastian Coe believes Russia is showing a significant change in its attitude to tackling the doping scandal that saw the nation exiled from world athletics. Russia has been banned from international athletics competition since November 2015 after doping issues.

The country's anti-doping agency, RUSADA, is also yet to be declared fully compliant by the World Anti-Doping Agency. Russian athletes have also effectively been banned from next year's Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, unless they can satisfy stringent drug-testing regulations in order to com-

pete as neutrals. Coe indicated there are reasons for hope that Russia is finally dealing with the problem, but he said the IAAF would still resist setting any time-scale for the nation's reintegration into athletics.

"We made a decision that in a way was quite different to the one the IOC was confronted with," Coe told BBC Radio Five Live yesterday. "I've had 149 or 150 positive tests in the sport, from Russia within a three or four year period."

"It was very clear as far I was concerned and the Council of the IAAF was concerned that nobody else was going to come to our rescue here. We had to take the appropriate action. "We set up the task force which created the five-step criteria by which they would be judged - and actually they're moving in the right direction and we've got some significant change. "The task force reports back to the Council once or twice a year and each time they come back and say there's still more to do. "But some of the challenges that we were being appraised of just a few months earlier have actually moved.—AFP

Sports

England pray for day five rain as Australia sniff Ashes win

Australia move within six wickets of reclaiming the urn

PERTH: Australia moved within six wickets of reclaiming the Ashes at the close of a rain-hit day four of the third Ashes Test yesterday, with England still 127 runs short of making the hosts bat again. The tourists were 132 for four when a rain-shower brought stumps an hour early at the WACA, with Dawid Malan (28 not out) and Jonny Bairstow (14) tasked with an improbable rescue mission following their defiant 237-run stand in the first innings.

Australia had declared at 662 for nine after lunch, their highest ever Ashes total at home, with captain Steve Smith finally dismissed for 239 from 399 balls. Trailing 2-0, England must cobble a draw to keep the five-test series alive to Melbourne and their hopes may rest on the weather, with more showers forecast on day five.

"I think we're in a pretty good position obviously," Australia paceman Josh Hazlewood told local radio, after dismissing both of England's openers. "I think we would have loved one more (wicket) today but they've lost the wickets at the tail pretty quickly throughout the whole series."

Even with the chance of rain interruptions, it still looked bleak for the tourists, with cracks opening up on a pitch and variable bounce likely to play a part on day five. One large fissure at the southern end of the wicket opened up to swallow England number three James Vince for 55 when a Mitchell Starc ball jagged viciously back to rip out his off-stump. "I think we try and put the rain to the back of our minds," Vince told reporters. "We've got to have belief that we can save the series and get over the line tomorrow. It's going to be tough. I'm sure there's going to be some good balls flying around out there."

"But these two especially showed in the first innings that they can occupy the crease for a long time, so hopefully they get off to a good start in the morning," Vince had at least shown determined application, a quality sorely missed in his top order colleagues.

Alastair Cook's miserable series continued as he threw away his wicket for 14, having



PERTH: Australian bowler Josh Hazlewood (C) celebrates with teammates after dismissing England's Mark Stoneman on day four of the third Ashes cricket Test match between Australia and England in Perth yesterday. — AFP

managed only seven in the first innings of his 150th Test. Joe Root, his successor as captain, was equally culpable in his own 14, with opener Mark Stoneman out for three, as England staggered to 60 for three.

England's 'Barmy Army' danced in the terraces as rain brought tea five minutes early and again when it returned midway through the final session to see play abandoned. Vince and first innings centurion Malan dug in for 40 runs before the pitch claimed the number three. Bairstow and Malan added another 32 in a watchful stand to survive until the rain fell. Australia's pacemen stuck to their task but the match is likely to be remembered for their captain's batting masterclass which yielded a second double-century against the same foes.

He was finally dismissed leg before by paceman James Anderson (4-116) in the morning. All-rounder Mitchell Marsh was also trapped lbw by the veteran quick without

adding to his overnight 181.

Australia lost three wickets for 12 runs in the mini-collapse but wicketkeeper Tim Paine (49 not out) and Pat Cummins (41) steadied the home side with a 93-run stand. Facing a 259-run deficit, England's chase began disastrously with Stoneman caught behind for three in the second over, seemingly hypnotised into a lead-footed push away from the body by metronomic seamer Josh Hazlewood.

Six overs later, Cook was sent packing when he spooned a leading edge low and straight back to Hazlewood who took a brilliant reflex catch to dismiss him. With England desperate for a captain's knock, Root joined Vince in the middle and the pair added 31 runs to prompt a bowling change.

Lyon was introduced and had Root caught at slip with his first delivery, the skipper playing a loose drive away from the body and Smith snaffling the chance when it pinged off Tim Paine's gloves. — Reuters



SCOREBOARD

PERTH, Australia: Scoreboard at stumps on day four in the third Ashes Test in Perth yesterday:

England first innings 403

Second innings	
A. Cook c and b Hazlewood	14
M. Stoneman c Paine b Hazlewood	3
J. Vince b Starc	55
J. Root c Smith b Lyon	14
D. Malan not out	28
J. Bairstow not out	14
Extras (lb4)	4
Total (for four wickets: 38.2 overs)	132
Fall of wickets: 1-4 (Stoneman), 2-29 (Cook), 3-60 (Root), 4-100 (Vince)	
Bowling: Starc 10-3-32-1, Hazlewood 9-3-23-2, M Marsh 3-1-14-0, Cummins 8.2-2-31-0, Lyon 8-3-28-1	

Australia first innings

C. Bancroft lbw b Overton	25
---------------------------	----

D. Warner c Bairstow b Overton	22
U. Khawaja lbw b Woakes	50
S. Smith lbw b Anderson	239
S. Marsh c Root b Ali	28
M. Marsh lbw b Anderson	181
T. Paine not out	49
M. Starc run out	1
P. Cummins lbw b Anderson	41
N. Lyon c Ali b Anderson	4
Extras (b4, lb16, nb1, w1)	22
Total (for nine wickets: 179.3 overs)	6 6 2
Fall of wickets: 1-44 (Warner), 2-55 (Bancroft), 3-179 (Khawaja), 4-248 (S Marsh), 5-549 (M Marsh), 6-560 (Smith), 7-561 (Starc), 8-654 (Cummins), 9-662 (Lyon)	
Bowling: Anderson 37.3-9-116-4 (Inb), Broad 35-3-142-0, Woakes 41-8-128-1 (Iw), Overton 24-1-110-2, Ali 33-4-120-1, Root 3-0-13-0, Malan 6-1-13-0.	

Dhawan, spinners lead India to series-clinching win over S Lanka

VISAKHAPATNAM: Opener Shikhar Dhawan's blazing century and a decisive spell by their wrist spinners powered India to a series-clinching eight-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the third one-day international yesterday. Chasing 216 for victory, India rode on a 135-run partnership between Dhawan (100 not out) and Shreyas Iyer (65) to romp home in 32.1 overs in Visakhapatnam. Dhawan completed his 12th ODI hundred in 85 balls, his knock laced with 13 fours and two sixes, before taking India to their eighth consecutive ODI series victory since June 2016.

But it was Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal who set up the comprehensive victory after taking three wickets each to help restrict the visitors to 215 all out in 44.5 overs. "They haven't bowled much together as bowlers, but whenever they have played, they bowled really well. They put us in the driver's seat," India skipper Rohit Sharma said of his spinners.

"The youngsters bring a lot of energy, enthusiasm and talent to the group and it's a perfect time to try them," Sharma added. The hosts lost Sharma early after he was bowled by off-spinner Akila Dananjaya for seven but it was only a minor blemish in an otherwise comfortable chase.

Iyer, who registered his second successive half-century in just his third ODI, combined with Dhawan to take the attack to the opposition bowlers. Starting with a fast-spin combination of Suranga Lakmal and Akila Dananjaya from either end, the visitors built up some early pressure only to lose steam against the in-form batsmen. Iyer, who made 88 in the Mohali ODI, hit eight fours and a six during his 63-ball knock before falling to skipper Thisara Perera. The batsman mistimed a pull to be caught at mid-on.

'PLENTY OF CHARACTER'

The left-handed Dhawan, who was named man of the series for his 168 runs in three matches, stayed firm with Dinesh Karthik, who made 26, for company as India bounced back with two straight wins after losing the opener in Dharamsala. "Terrific comeback after the first game. We showed plenty of character. Even today at one point they were going at six an over and to pull the game back from there is magnificent," Sharma said.

Earlier Sri Lanka had got off to a strong start with opener Upul Tharanga making a 82-ball 95 after the visitors were invited to bat first. Tharanga's 121-ball second-wicket partnership with Sadeera Samarawickrama, who made 42, was the highlight of the Sri



VISAKHAPATNAM: Indian cricket team pose as they hold the One Day series cup after winning the third One Day International (ODI) cricket match between India and Sri Lanka at the Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy ACA-VDCA Cricket Stadium in Visakhapatnam yesterday. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

VISAKHAPATNAM, India: Completed scoreboard of the third and final one-day international between India and Sri Lanka in Visakhapatnam yesterday:

Sri Lanka		Bowling: Kumar 6.5-0-35-1, Bumrah 8-1-39-1, Pandya 10-1-49-2 (w1), Yadav 10-0-42-3 (w2), Chahal 10-3-46-3 (w1)
D. Gunathilaka c Sharma b Bumrah	13	
U. Tharanga st Dhoni b Yadav	95	
S. Samarawickrama c Dhawan b Chahal	42	
A. Mathews b Chahal	17	
N. Dickwella c Iyer b Yadav	8	
A. Gunaratne c Dhoni b Kumar	17	
T. Perera lbw b Chahal	6	
S. Pathirana c Chahal b Pandya	7	
A. Dananjaya b Yadav	1	
S. Lakmal lbw b Pandya	1	
N. Pradeep not out	0	
Extras (lb4, w4)	8	
Total (all out, 44.5 overs)	215	
Fall of wickets: 1-15 (Gunathilaka), 2-136 (Samarawickrama), 3-160 (Tharanga), 4-168 (Dickwella), 5-189 (Mathews), 6-197 (Perera), 7-208 (Pathirana), 8-210 (Dananjaya), 9-211 (Lakmal), 10-215 (Gunaratne)		

Lankan innings that fell apart from a commanding 136-1.

Leg-spinner Chahal got Samarawickrama, who was included in the XI in place of Lahiru Thirimanne, caught at deep cover to end the stubborn stand. The in-form Tharanga, who registered his 36th ODI fifty, kept up the pressure with an attacking innings as he passed 1,000 runs in 2017. But Yadav, who got the man of the match award for his bowling figures of 3-42, checked Sri Lanka's surge in the 28th over after denying Tharanga a hundred and then sending Niroshan Dickwella (8) trudging back to the pavilion. Tharanga, who hit 12 fours and three sixes,

was beaten by a tossed-up delivery from the left-arm wrist spinner and wicketkeeper Mahendra Singh Dhoni pulled off a sharp stumping. Chahal soon joined in to take the key wickets of Angelo Mathews, for 17, and skipper Thisara Perera, for six, as Sri Lanka slipped to 197-6 and failed to survive their full quota of 50 overs. "We have to think about the T20s, everything is past, we have to think about the present," Perera said.

Meanwhile veteran fast bowler Lasith Malinga continued to be kept out of Sri Lanka's Twenty20 squad that will play three matches against India starting Wednesday in Cuttack. —AFP

T20 Premiere League concludes in grand style!

KUWAIT: On the weekend of Dec 7, Kuwait Cricket held the grand domestic finals upon the completion of all the league matches of the first edition of the top 2 leagues of the 2017-18 season. KC T-20 Premier League and Kuwait Veterans MG7 Cup. The grand finals along with the presentation ceremony was held at the picturesque Entertainment City ground in a magnificent style on a highly entertaining and chilly Friday evening. Spectators enjoyed the thrilling finals from all 4 (A,B,C & D) divisions of Kuwait Cricket on an action packed weekend. The finals were streamed live on the Kuwait Cricket official Facebook page (@kuwaitcricketofficial) which received an overwhelming response from more than 30,000 viewers online across Kuwait.

Kuwait Cricket Council led by the Chairman Mahmood Bastaki was the dignitary for the occasion along with Sajid Ashraf, Rishi D Jayan (Director of Seniors Cricket & IT), and Robert (Director of Facilities and Logistics) who were present for the occasion throughout the weekend and awarded all the trophies, medals and cash prizes (\$10,000 across all the divisions) for the winners, runners-up and top individual performers for all the divisions of the concluded tournaments. The presentation ceremony was conducted professionally by Umer Slahuddin.

The spectators and guests at the venue witnessed and enjoyed the highly thrilling and nail biting contests between all the finalists and the evening was further spiced up with complimentary refreshments for the entire audience that included tea, chicken karahi and chana masala with a live tandoor being setup for the entire audience that touched almost 500 people on the ground at

peak time along with live DJ, music and entertaining commentary by KC marketing team (Sami, Sibtain, Naem Jan, Umer and Husnain etc) for all the matches that kept everyone present at the ground on their toes.

Match Briefs

The highlight of the grand finale was undoubtedly the clash for the Division A title between Aroma CC and Artech CC and both sides filled with talent, passion and the "never give up" attitude really rose to the occasion. Artech CC elected to bat on a batting paradise wicket. Explosive opener Rahul Dev began the innings in fine fashion and Artech cruised to 53 runs in 4.3 overs. Rahul smashed 35 runs from 18 balls. Arjun Mahesh played the anchor role and batted brilliantly for a match winning knock of 78 off just 55 balls complimented by Aphasal Ashraf who chipped in with a valuable 31 off 28 that helped Artech post a very good total of 190/4 in their allotted 20 overs. Left arm spinner Mohammed Aslam was the pick of the bowlers with 2 wickets for Aroma CC.

In their pursuit of 191 as the target, Aroma CC's experienced campaigner Kashif Sharif rolled back the years with some excellent stroke play. At one stage Aroma were cruising with 124/2 but right after losing Kashif, they lost 4 wickets in quick succession which proved out to be the turning point of the match. Arjun Mahesh who enjoyed an excellent time with the bat proved out to be the hero with the ball too. Kashif's magnificent knock of 78 off 45 balls went in vain as Aroma fell short by 7 runs. Senior cricketer Mohammad Ahsan played a fantastic cameo towards the end that had a couple of huge hits and boundaries but not enough to cross the finishing line. Artech CC clinched the trophy and Arjun Mahesh was elected as the Man of the Finals for his excellent all round performance.

The Division B finals matched it toe to toe in terms of excitement. Stack CC elected to field first. Diju Xavier who hardly put a foot wrong throughout the tournament continued his excellent form and lit up the occasion with another Century. Diju scored 108 from 63 balls and was a one-man army in terms of runs scored.



Division A champions, Aartech CC

Sports

Beasley bags 30 points as Knicks spoil Anthony's Garden party

James's 60th career triple-double lifts Cavs over Jazz

NEW YORK: Michael Beasley had 30 points on 11-of-18 shooting from the field to lead six New York players in double figures as the Knicks spoiled Carmelo Anthony's return to Madison Square Garden with a 111-96 victory over the Oklahoma City Thunder on Saturday night. Anthony, who was with the Knicks for nearly seven seasons and ranks as the seventh-leading scorer in franchise history, finished with 12 points—including zero in the second half—on 5-of-18 shooting in his first game back in New York since being traded during the offseason for Enes Kanter, Doug McDermott and a second-round draft pick. Anthony received a mostly warm reception from the MSG crowd during a highlight video played during introductions. While there were loud cheers for Anthony, who averaged nearly 25 points during his nearly seven-year run but had little playoff success, there was also a smattering of boos.



Aldridge hits a turnaround jumper

HEAT 90, CLIPPERS 85

Erik Spoelstra became the Miami franchise leader for coaching victories in a win against Los Angeles. Spoelstra passed current Heat president Pat Riley to set the record with 455 wins. Miami climbed above .500 for the first time in December. Josh Richardson sank a career-high six 3-points and scored a career-high 28 points to lead the Heat. Clippers center DeAndre Jordan notched a double-double with 12 points and 20 rebounds. He has four consecutive double-doubles—his longest streak of the season—and seven double-doubles in his past eight games.

Rockets 115, Bucks 111

James Harden scored a game-high 31 points and Chris Paul produced 23 of his 25 points in the second half as Houston extended its winning streak to 13 games with a victory over Milwaukee. Paul had just two points on 0-of-5 shooting before the intermission but opened the second half by drilling three consecutive 3-pointers.

He was just as lethal down the stretch, nailing back-to-back mid-range jumpers off screens to lift the Rockets (24-4) to a seven-point lead with 33.7 seconds left. The Rockets improved to 14-0 with Paul in the lineup.

CAVALIERS 109, JAZZ 100

LeBron James passed Larry Bird for sixth place in career triple-doubles and Cleveland beat Utah. James' 60th triple-double in 15 seasons included 29 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists. It was his third triple-double in a now-completed four-game homestand—each game won by the Cavaliers. James scored 10 points in the fourth quarter. He was 9 of 15 from the field and 10 of 10 from the free-throw line.

TRAIL BLAZERS 93, HORNETS 91

CJ McCollum scored 25 points and Portland held on for its third straight victory with a win over Charlotte. The Blazers led by 16 points early in the fourth quarter but had to go back to work after the Hornets fought back to tie at 87 in the final five minutes. Ultimately, Portland held on when Charlotte's Kemba Walker missed a 3-pointer at the final buzzer. The Trail Blazers didn't make a field goal in the final four minutes. Portland has defeated Miami, Orlando and Charlotte in the last four days on a five-game road trip. They are now 9-5 on the road for the season.

SPURS 98, MAVERICKS 96

Manu Ginobili hit a running left-handed layup with 3.1 seconds to play for the deciding basket as San Antonio scored the final 13 points to roar from behind and beat Dallas. The Mavericks led 96-92 after the Spurs' Bryn Forbes poured in 3-pointer from the corner with 2:13 to play. After a pair of empty possessions from both teams, LaMarcus Aldridge brought San Antonio to within 96-94 on short jumper with 58.6 seconds to play. Aldridge then hit a contested turnaround jumper in the lane



NEW YORK: Carmelo Anthony #7 of the Oklahoma City Thunder stands alongside Michael Beasley #8 of the New York Knicks in the fourth quarter during their game at Madison Square Garden in New York City. — AFP

with 23.4 seconds remaining to tie the game.

and Rozier added 10 points off the bench.

CELTICS 102, GRIZZLIES 93

A great first quarter and a solid burst to start the fourth kept Boston from back-to-back embarrassments, coming away with a victory over struggling, but still scrappy, Memphis. Al Horford and Terry Rozier sparked a 16-0 run at the start of the fourth as the Celtics erased a 73-71 Memphis lead built largely on a third-quarter explosion from Marc Gasol, who had 21 of his game-high 30 points during the stretch. Kyrie Irving led Boston with 20 points, rookie Jason Tatum had 19 points, nine rebounds and two blocked shots. Horford had 15 points and seven boards. Aron Baynes added 13 points and six rebounds while Marcus Smart scored 11

SUNS 108, TIMBERWOLVES 106

Phoenix overcame 27 turnovers to grind out a hard-fought win over Minnesota. The Suns helped themselves with another dominating performance from their bench. One game after putting up 55 points on the Toronto Raptors, Phoenix's reserves outscored the Timberwolves' bench 69-20, led by 17 points apiece from Dragan Bender and Troy Daniels. Isaiah Canaan's 15 points, and 12 points and a career-high 19 rebounds from Alex Len. The Suns led 103-98 with 3:33 to play but consecutive baskets by Jimmy Butler, Jeff Teague and Taj Gibson put Minnesota back on top by one with 1:22 to go. — Reuters

Khalid Al-Roudhan, Fulaiteh honoured

KUWAIT: Commerce and Industry Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Roudhan said a local sports conference will be held to unify opinions through attracting all opinions and avoid any misunderstandings to bring sports back to its right path.

Al-Roudhan who spoke during an honoring ceremony for him and for President of Public Authority for Sports Dr Humoud Fulaiteh said the conference organization will be the responsibility of Kuwait Club board member Maan Al-Rahsed due to his vast experience in this regard. Al-Roudhan said Kuwait was in a joyous mood these days especially after lifting the ban on football, that was followed by deciding to hold the 23rd Gulf Cup here in Kuwait at the wish of

HH the Amir. He added that organizing such an event in nine days remains difficult but Kuwaitis are used to such challenges. Meanwhile, Acting Director General of PAS Dr Humoud Fulaiteh said Kuwait was the only loser during the past disputes, and this calls everyone to forget internal differences and concentrate on serving Kuwait. Fulaiteh thanked all those who contributed to lifting the ban be them MPs through approval of the new law, adding that the most important role was that of the clubs administrations who re-wrote things as required. He said all to concentrate on what is coming for the future of Kuwait sport through positive interaction with the Gulf Cup tournament. Meanwhile Deputy Chairman of Kuwait Football Association Sheikh Fawaz Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah said everybody suffered from the ban especially at the football level, which restored its life after the cruel ban was lifted, then the approval of organizing the Gulf tournament. He said Kuwait sports is now on the right path after approving the new sports law, which should make positive changes at the development of clubs and players, under the "professionalism" system that it introduced.



KUWAIT: Minister of Commerce and Industry, State Minister for Youth Affairs Khalid Al Roudhan (left) and Acting Director of PAS Dr Humoud Fulaiteh (centre) and other officials.

Inspire race series holds sold out 'Road Run'

KUWAIT: The third race of the 'Be Inspired Series' hosted by Inspire Sahara and sponsored by Gulf Bank took place on Dec 2 at Sahara Golf Club. The Road Race had two distance categories (7.2 km and 14.4km) to appeal to different fitness enthusiasts and was sold out days before the event. Three hundred people participated in the event which was organized by Pro-Vision Sports Management.

Post-race, three winners of both male and female categories were announced. Ahmad Bakri and Taiba Al Nouri were announced as the first-place winners of the 7.2 km race while Abdul Rahman Al Kandery and Renata Hoppova were announced the first-place winners of the 14.4 km. Commenting on the race and the Inspire Series, Ms Laila Al-Qatami, Assistant General Manager for Corporate



Communications at Gulf Bank said: "We are proud to be part of the Be Inspired series and to see Kuwait's growing fitness community come out for the day. With such high rates of obesity and diabetes in our country, it is heartening to see people from all different backgrounds participating in fitness and exercise events. Only in its second year, the

BeInspired Series continues to grow in size and stature, we are pleased to be partnering with Inspire Gym in this unique series of events. Congratulations to the winners and we look forward to welcoming you to the next event, a Mud Run on 27 January." Promoting health and fitness is a key pillar of Gulf Bank's corporate social responsibility strategy.



Al Sayer announce Motul as title sponsor of Kuwait Drift Champion

KUWAIT: Al Sayer Engineering, a subsidiary of Al Sayer Holding, recently held a signing ceremony as part of its sponsorship agreement for Motul, their franchise brand of lubricants from France. The event was attended by Bader Mused Al Sayer Business Director Al Sayer Holding, Ali Maksheed Kuwait Drifting Champion, Vivek Kohli Senior Manager Oil and Paints, Mohamed Nasimi Senior Manager after Sales Marketing. Speaking during the occasion Bader Mused Al Sayer said "Al Sayer is pleased to introduce Motul brand's presence to the exciting circuits of drift

racing through our sponsorship contract with Ali Maksheed Kuwait Drift Champion. Motul is partnering with world's leading racing teams and we aim to reflect the same spirit here".

One of the world's leading brand of lubricants Motul is a world-class French company specialized in the formulation, production and distribution of high-tech engine lubricants. It is the first lubricant manufacturer to use the ester technology for the formulation of its 100% synthetic car oils by capitalizing on an innovation first invented for the aeronautical industry.

Being an official supplier to many of the racing teams, which includes the "Toyota Racing Division" and other leading European automobile manufacturers, Motul is collaborating with them to further technological development. "I highly appreciate the support from Al Sayer in making Motul my partner brand for the upcoming Middle East drift season. My main goal in an event is to give everyone a good show. My career goal is to be a Formula Drift pro driver and this season I will be on step closer to this goal" said Ali Maksheed.

Al Sayer partnership comes as a title sponsor featuring Motul logos on Ali Maksheed's customized and

fine-tuned drift racing car Toyota FT 86. With a racing history spanning 6 years Ali Maksheed has participated in over 25 regional events finishing with exceptional results. Upcoming Middle East Drift season is expected to attract large number of motoring enthusiasts for popular races such as Formula Drift Pro 2, Kuwait Drift Championship, Qatar Drift Championship, Drift Alstars Middle East and UAE Drift Championship".

Technologically advanced for all types of engines. As a specialist in synthetic oils, Motul has become the partner of many manufacturers and sports teams for its technological developments in mechanical sports, car and motorcycle racing. Motul is present in many international competitions as official team supplier: MotoGP, Road racing, Trial, Enduro, Endurance, Superbike, Supercross, Rallycross, World Rally Championship, FIA GT, Le Mans 24 Hours, Spa 24 Hours, Le Mans Series, rally raid, Paris-Dakar, F3, etc. Motul lubricants are available for customers through Al Sayer Engineering's wide network of five centers for tires, oils and paints as well as in authorized dealers, co-ops, garages and Auto-repair shops across the State of Kuwait.



Sports

Torres lifts Atletico in La Liga above beaten Valencia

Alaves remain three points off safety in 18th

MADRID: Atletico Madrid leapfrogged Valencia into second in La Liga thanks to Fernando Torres's first goal at the Wanda Metropolitano to edge out Alaves 1-0 on Saturday. Valencia remain five points off leaders Barcelona in third after falling to a second defeat in three matches 2-1 at Eibar.

Barca can regain their six-point lead over Atletico and open up an 11-point gap over Real Madrid ahead of next weekend's El Clasico between the two with victory over Deportivo la Coruna yesterday.

Atletico remain unbeaten in La Liga this season, but had to wait until 16 minutes from time to breakdown a dogged Alaves, who had won their first two matches since Abelardo Fernandez was named the club's third coach of the season earlier this month.

Torres had only been on the pitch six minutes when he stretched to fire home Sime Vrsaljko's cross for his first league goal of the season. "I'm very happy to get the goal. When you score you always have the feeling that you have done a good job," Torres told BeIN Sports Spain. Torres has started just one league game this season and is hoping his winner might encourage Diego Simeone to give him more opportunities. "I just have to keep fighting for more minutes and score decisive goals," he added.

Simeone hailed not only the impact of Torres, but also Angel Correa and Yannick Carrasco from the bench as his side moved within three points of Barca and opened up a five-point lead over city rivals Real Madrid in fourth. "The introduction of Correa, Carrasco and

above all Torres in the second half gave us that extra impetus the game was crying out for," said Simeone. At the other end of the table, Alaves remain three points off safety in 18th.

VALENCIA FALTER

As Atletico's title charge gains momentum with a fourth straight win, Valencia's unlikely challenge is beginning to falter. Los Che missed the firepower offered by suspended top scorer Simone Zaza up front and even the return of playmaker Goncalo Guedes from injury as a second-half substitute failed to inspire Marcelino Garcia Toral's side. Eibar also took advantage of some meek Valencia defending as a poor clearance teed up Takashi Inui perfectly on the volley to smash home the opener at the near post four minutes after the break.

Valencia reacted well to that blow, though, as a dangerous low cross from Manchester United loanee Andreas Pereira evaded two Eibar defenders and fell perfectly for Santi Mina to tap home his sixth goal of the season. However, Eibar weren't to be denied as they moved up to seventh with a fourth win in five games when Joan Jordan rose highest to head home Ivan Alejo's cross.

Eibar are now top dogs in the Basque country as the region's two traditional powerhouses Athletic Bilbao and Real Sociedad played out a 0-0 draw at San Mames to remain mired in 13th and ninth respectively. —AFP

“ I just have to keep fighting and score decisive goals ”



MASRID: Alaves' Spanish midfielder Alvaro Medran (BOTTOM) vies with Atletico Madrid's Spanish midfielder Koke during the Spanish league football match Club Atletico de Madrid against Alaves at the Wanda Metropolitano stadium in Madrid. — AFP

Milan hit new low, Juventus go second

MILAN: AC Milan's miserable season hit a new low when they slumped to a 3-0 loss at struggling Verona in Serie A yesterday, two days after UEFA expressed concern over the club's financial situation.

Juventus had no such problems as they won 3-0 at Bologna to overhaul Inter Milan and go second, one point behind leaders Napoli who won 3-1 at Torino on Saturday.

Antonio Caracciolo, Moise Kean and Daniel Bessa scored for Verona who are 17th in the table and had previously won only two league games this season. Milan's bad day was completed when Suso was sent off in the last minute. Milan, who beat Verona by the same score in a Coppa Italia match four days ago, have managed one win, one draw and one defeat in their three games league since former midfielder Gennaro Gattuso was appointed as coach. Seven-times European champions Milan, under Chinese ownership since April, spent over 200 million euros in the last transfer window in an attempt to re-establish themselves as a force in Serie A.

The defeat came two days after UEFA had rejected Milan's request for a voluntary agreement that would have temporarily exempted the club from European football's breakeven rule known as Financial Fair Play. UEFA said there were "still uncertainties in relation to the financing of the loans to be paid back in October 2018 and the financial guarantees provided by the main shareholder".

Caracciolo was given far too much freedom by the Milan defence as he headed in from Romulo's corner in the 24th minute, the ball hitting the bar and going in off goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma.

Kean scored the second after Bessa pulled the ball back 10 minutes after halftime and Bessa added the third in the 77th minute, stroking the ball home from Romulo's



Bologna: Juventus's forward from Brazil Douglas Costa (L) fights for the ball with Bologna's defender Erick Pulgar from Chile during the Italian Serie A football match Bologna vs Juventus yesterday at Renato Dall'Ara stadium in Bologna. — AFP

pass after the Brazilian burst down the right unchallenged. Suso was sent off for kicking Daniele Verde, who was on the ground, in a decision made with the help of the video replay. Miralem Pjanic put Juventus ahead against Bologna in the 27th minute when he curled a free kick over the wall and into the top corner at the near post.

The Bosnian also set up Mario Mandzukic for the second nine minutes later and Blaise Matuidi completed the scoring with a half-volley from the edge of the area in the second half, the Frenchman's first goal for the club.

Juventus have 41 points, one more than Inter who lost their unbeaten record in a 3-1 home defeat by Udinese on Saturday. Fiorentina missed a chance to go above Milan when they were held 0-0 at home by Genoa.

An early goal by Arlind Ajeti gave Crotone a 1-0 win over Chievo, their first under Walter Zenga, to end a run of four successive league defeats. Sassuolo snatched a last-minute win at Sampdoria through Alessandro Matri, seven minutes after team mate Matteo Politano had a penalty saved by Samp goalkeeper Emiliano Viviano. — Reuters

Community service is 'relaxing', says Rooney

LONDON: Wayne Rooney admits he made a mistake over his drink-driving charge, but the Everton star says his community service in a garden centre is "relaxing". Rooney was ordered to complete 120 hours unpaid work after admitting being nearly three times the legal limit while at the wheel of a woman's car.

The former England and Manchester United captain was also banned from driving for two years. Rooney regrets a mistake he said hurt his children, but he has found redemption in his community service.

"I knew straight away I had made a stupid mistake and I have to move on," Rooney told TalkSport. "It is not nice, obviously. I've got children and it's not nice for them to see that and I try and move on and learn from it which I feel I am doing." Rooney said he is about halfway through his community service, adding: "I've really enjoyed doing it. It's been working with adults with learning difficulties in a garden centre. "Especially around this period, this Christmas period, going in and helping them with different things they're making over Christmas."

"I think it's a place now where I'll certainly keep in touch with when obviously my hours are over. "Seeing what they do, obviously they need support in what they do, there are a lot of adults with learning difficulties who just need a little bit of help and a bit of guidance and someone there to help them."

Asked if he gets any "stick", Rooney said: "No, not at all. We actually don't even talk about football in there. "It's a refreshing place to go and it's relaxing, you're working with people, doing different things which I wouldn't have done if I didn't go there, so it's been great going there."

The 32-year-old pleaded guilty to drink driving at Stockport Magistrates' Court following an incident in the early hours of September 1. Rooney, a married father of three children, had reportedly left a cocktail bar in Cheshire in a taxi with 29-year-old Laura Simpson and later went on to take the wheel of her vehicle.

Police on mobile patrol stopped Rooney after they noticed a rear tail-light out. After failing a roadside breath test Rooney was taken to a local police station where he produced a reading of 104 microgrammes per 100 millilitres of breath, the legal limit in England and Wales being 35 microgrammes. — AFP

Gulf Cup technical committee releases games schedule

KUWAIT: The Technical Committee of the Gulf football Cup released yesterday the schedule of the matches of the tournament, to be held between December 22 and January 5. The committee said the eight teams taking part in the Gulf Cup would be divided into two groups: the first consisted of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, while the second included Qatar, Yemen, Iraq and Bahrain.

The tournament opener, to be held at Sheikh Jaber International Stadium, will be between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. It will be followed by a clash between Oman and the UAE, said the committee. Qatar will meet Yemen on December 23 at Kuwait Sport Club stadium, and will be followed by Bahrain and Iraq.

Meanwhile, the national football teams of Kuwait and Bahrain will face-off today in a friendly match ahead of the prestigious Gulf 23 football tournament, said an official yesterday.

The Kuwaiti national team's media coordinator Farouq Al-Awadhi told KUNA that this was the first match for the Kuwaiti team since lifting the FIFA ban. The Kuwaiti team, which consists of 26 players, will return home tomorrow. — KUNA



Group Stage				
Day and Date	Matches	Venue	Time	Group
Friday December 22, 2017	Opening ceremony	Jaber Al-Ahmad Stadium	17:30	
	Kuwait vs Saudi Arabia	Jaber Al-Ahmad Stadium	18:30	A
	Oman vs the UAE	Jaber Al-Ahmad Stadium	21:00	A
Saturday December 23, 2017	Qatar vs Yemen	Kuwait SC Stadium	17:30	B
	Bahrain vs Iraq	Kuwait SC Stadium	20:00	B
Monday December 25, 2017	UAE vs Saudi Arabia	Jaber Al-Ahmad Stadium	18:30	A
	Kuwait vs Oman	Jaber Al-Ahmad Stadium	21:00	A
Tuesday December 26, 2017	Yemen vs Bahrain	Kuwait SC Stadium	17:30	B
	Iraq vs Qatar	Kuwait SC Stadium	20:00	B
Thursday December 28, 2017	Saudi Arabia vs Oman	Kuwait SC Stadium	18:30	A
	Kuwait vs UAE	Jaber Al-Ahmad Stadium	21:00	A
Friday December 29, 2017	Qatar vs Bahrain	Jaber Al-Ahmad Stadium	17:30	B
	Iraq vs Yemen	Kuwait SC Stadium	20:00	B
Semifinals				
Day and Date	Matches	Time	Venue	
Tuesday January 2, 2018	Group A winner vs Group B runner-up	To be determined	later	
	Group B winner vs Group A runner-up	To be determined	later	
Final				
Day and Date	Match	Time	Venue	
Friday January 5, 2018	Winners of the two semifinal matches	To be determined	later	

Live

Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Everton v Swansea City 23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 2

SPANISH LEAGUE

Malaga v Real Betis 23:00
beIN SPORTS HD 3

12 Veith wins first race since injury, Lindsey Vonn pulls out



13 Dhawan, spinners lead India to series-clinching win over S Lanka



15 Milan hit new low, Juventus go second



WEST BROMWICH: Manchester United's Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku is chased by West Bromwich Albion's English defender Kieran Gibbs during the English Premier League football match between West Bromwich Albion and Manchester United at The Hawthorns stadium in West Bromwich, central England, yesterday. — AFP

Lukaku, Lingard lift nervy Man Utd

United 11 points behind City in Premier League title race

WEST BROMWICH: Goals from Romelu Lukaku and Jesse Lingard gave Manchester United a 2-1 win over West Bromwich Albion yesterday as Jose Mourinho's men kept their faint title hopes alive.

Lukaku put United ahead at the Hawthorns and Lingard netted with the aid of a deflection to double the visitors' lead before half-time. But what looked destined to be a comfortable win became tense when Gareth Barry prodded home a second-half goal for the hosts.

And United ended the game defending for their lives before claiming the win that kept them 11 points behind neighbours Manchester City in the Premier League title race. "I think we deserved the win. We were the best team. We controlled the game for a long time," Mourinho said.

"The intensity in the first half maybe we didn't have in the second half. West Brom are really powerful in the air. But after their goal we controlled it again." United made a

dominant start with West Brom guilty of squandering cheap possession on a frequent basis. Yet it was the hosts who threatened first in the ninth minute courtesy of a clever backheel from Salomon Rondon to release James McClean on the left. He crossed towards the far post for Oliver Burke, but the winger could not control a difficult ball on his full Premier League debut.

United's first sight of goal came on 14 minutes when Ashley Young angled a dangerous cross from the left towards Lukaku at the far post. Baggies defender Kieran Gibbs made an important header and Lukaku was penalised for handball as he tried to keep the move alive. West Brom enjoyed a handy spell of possession midway through the opening half as United lost their way following a decent start. The home side forced two corners on the left but both were poorly directed by Grzegorz Krychowiak. But United opened the scoring on 28 min-

utes as Lukaku returned to haunt his former club. Burke lost the ball cheaply on the Albion right. Marcus Rashford was given too much space and his cross was glanced home by Lukaku, who had ghosted between Jonny Evans and Gibbs. There was a glimmer of hope for Albion on 34 minutes when Allan Nyom crossed towards Rondon at the near post but he was denied by Chris Smalling's interception. But a minute later it was 2-0 to United as Lingard struck. He was set up on the edge of the area by Juan Mata after good work by Lukaku, and Lingard's low shot struck the leg of defender Ahmed Hegazi and looped past helpless goalkeeper Ben Foster.

West Brom already looked beaten but just before half-time Jake Livermore did at least draw a save from goalkeeper David de Gea with a low shot that the keeper held well. There was a heated start to the second half when Rashford went down holding his face after a collision with

Hegazi. Replays showed there had been little contact but the United player was booked after leaping up and confronting Hegazi head to head.

But that clash did not provide the spark for a fiery second half as United sat back on their lead and Albion were unable to pose any consistent threat. They had a rare chance when Rondon forced De Gea into a routine save with 17 minutes remaining before substitute Chris Brunt fired over the crossbar from the edge of the area.

But with 13 minutes to go Albion did grab the goal that gave them hope. Brunt delivered a corner from the left. United failed to clear and Barry profited from an ugly scramble to poke home the club's first goal under Alan Pardew and his first for Albion. Things might have got worse for United in the closing stages but Brunt's superb left-wing cross was headed wide of the near post by fellow substitute Jay Rodriguez. —AFP

Ruthless Reds put four past Bournemouth

BOURNEMOUTH: Mohamed Salah and Philippe Coutinho inspired Liverpool to a 4-0 victory at Bournemouth as the Reds powered back into the Premier League's top four yesterday. Egyptian winger Salah is the first Liverpool player since Luis Suarez and Daniel Sturridge in 2013-14 to hit the 20-goal mark in all competitions, and he has done it in only 26 matches. Brazil forward Coutinho moved into double figures for the campaign despite only playing his first game of the season in mid-September because of injury.

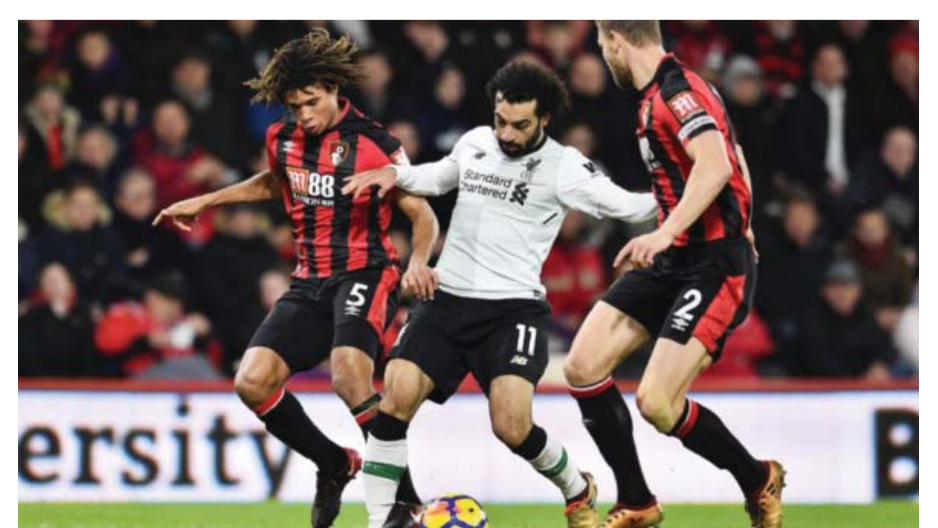
Both Salah and Coutinho scored wonderful individual goals to put Liverpool in control at

Dean Court. Dejan Lovren was also on target as Liverpool swept to a victory which was confirmed by a second-half Roberto Firmino header. The result lifted Jurgen Klopp's side above Arsenal into fourth place. It also erased memories of this fixture last season when Liverpool famously surrendered a 3-1 lead with 15 minutes to go to lose 4-3. Klopp surprisingly left out Sadio Mane as he made four changes to his line-up after drawing 0-0 with West Bromwich Albion in midweek.

Despite that, Liverpool made a bright start and almost took the lead after 11 minutes when Coutinho's curling free-kick came back off the upright. Nine minutes later they made their domination count with a wonderful solo goal from the same man. Coutinho raced away down the left, weaving past two players with exquisite balance before cutting the ball into the net past goalkeeper Asmir Begovic. Firmino almost doubled that lead with an effort which deflected wide after excellent work by the ever-dangerous Salah.

From the resulting corner, Lovren dived to head home after Firmino had somehow kept the ball in play. Two down with only 26 minutes on the clock, Bournemouth were already on the ropes. Junior Stanislas set up a good chance for Jermain Defoe before half-time, sending the striker clean through on goal - only to see him shoot against the left-hand post rather than into the net. Begovic then denied Liverpool what would have been a stunning goal when Coutinho flicked a ball over the defence for Salah, who shot straight at the goalkeeper.

But there was no keeping Salah out for long. A minute before the break the 25-year-old conjured up his own solo goal, turning his man inside the area and firing home left-footed to underline his importance to the team since signing from Roma last summer. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain almost added to the score with a shot which cannoned back off a post in the second half before Firmino glanced home a header from another excellent Coutinho cross to confirm victory. —AFP



BOURNEMOUTH: Liverpool's Egyptian midfielder Mohamed Salah (C) vies with Bournemouth's Dutch defender Nathan Ake (L) and Bournemouth's English defender Simon Francis (R) during the English Premier League football match yesterday. —AFP

Business

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2017

19 US Fed hikes rates as expected;
tax plan moving towards approval**21** flydubai touches down at
Kilimanjaro Int'l Airport**22** Two rookie astronauts,
cosmonaut blast off to ISS

The Boeing 747, the original jumbo jet that was the favourite American presidents and key to affordable mass market air travel in the United States, will pass into aviation history this week.

Boeing 747 to fly into aviation history

Most-favored jumbo jet takes last US commercial flight this week

NEW YORK: The Boeing 747, the original jumbo jet that was the favorite for American presidents and key to affordable mass market air travel in the United States, will pass into aviation history this week.

Nearly 50 years after its debut, the 747 will take its final commercial flight with an American carrier tomorrow on Delta Air Lines' Seoul-to-Detroit route.

It "made flying available for everyone," said Boeing chief company historian Michael Lombardi said of the iconic jet. "The 747 gave wings to the world." Aerospace consultant Michel Merluzeau said the plane changed travel. "All of a sudden, you could go from Singapore to London in less than 24 hours. It made everything more accessible."

Delta's sendoff for the storied aircraft includes special flights on Wednesday for employees and top customers. Ticket prices for these "farewell tour" flights have soared owing to demand from nostalgic consumers. The 747 will still be in the skies for Lufthansa, British Airways and Korean Air Lines.

And Boeing also will still build the jet as a freight

carrier and for a few unique clients, including the US president, who has used a specially-outfitted 747 as Air Force One since 1990. But the American aerospace giant has been shifting to more fuel-efficient models for commercial travel.

Original 'jumbo jet'

"The 747 was a major milestone in the history of flight," said Bob Van der Linden, curator of the aeronautics department at the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. "It's big, very comfortable, beautiful, it has a staircase on it," Van der Linden added. "It's a symbol of economic power."

Nicknamed the original "jumbo jet" because of the

huge hump, the plane is able to carry upwards of 600 passengers. Its origins date to the early 1960s when Boeing's then chief Bill Allen

Trippe, head of now-defunct Pan Am Airlines, to build a bigger plane to address the growing problem of airport crowding.

Boeing originally considered a double-decker aircraft, but the companies concluded that it would be difficult to evacuate passengers in case of an emergency, opting instead for a twin-aisle "wide body"

design. The next challenge, Lombardi said, was to commit enough resources to the program at a time when Boeing already was building other aircraft such as the

707 and the new 727, while also working on the Apollo space program. Lacking construction capacity to manufacture the new behemoth, Boeing built a new assembly plant in the northwestern state of Washington state. "There is always a calculated risk launching a new commercial plane," Lombardi said. "The customer was interested and the leader here at Boeing saw that there was a future for this plane."

Since its debut in February 1969, more than 1,500 of the 747s have been delivered, and 500 are still in service, according to Flightglobal Ascend.

As it began to phase out the 747, Boeing has downsized its aircraft. The 777, introduced in 1995, is smaller, seating up to 550 and requires less fuel because of its two engines. "Frankly we really don't see much demand for really big airplanes," Randy Tinseth, Boeing vice president of marketing, said in June.

"There will be just a handful moving forward. Things we do for VIPs, things we do for the president, military operations, but we don't see a significant demand for passenger 747s." — AFP



Delta's sendoff for the storied aircraft marks end of an era

Trump calls tax overhaul 'Christmas gift' for middle class

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said Saturday that the sweeping tax overhaul set to be adopted next week in Congress would be a "great" gift for the middle class.

Passage of the measure would mark a massive win for a leader who has yet to notch any major legislative victory after nearly a year in office. The Democratic minority has repeatedly denounced the measure as benefiting companies and the wealthiest Americans, including Trump himself, the most.

Trump has promised Americans that the legislation would pass before Christmas, so that it would take effect from the beginning of 2018. "The Democrats have their soundbite, the standard soundbite before they

even know what the bill is all about. They talk about 'for the wealthy,'" Trump told reporters as he left the White House for the Camp David presidential retreat for the weekend.

"But this is going to be one of the greatest gifts for the middle income people of this country that they've ever gotten for Christmas." The president said the changes would boost employment, adding that it was essential for US growth. "The economy now has hit three percent (growth). Nobody thought it would be anywhere close. I think we could go to four, five or even six percent, ultimately," Trump said.

"We are back. We are really going to start to rock. We need this as our final push. And you're going to see some numbers that are great. You're going to see great job numbers. Jobs are going to come pouring back into this country." Asked about the increase in the national debt that the reform will trigger, Trump stressed that the measure would also generate extra revenues as growth increases. According to the final text, the federal tax on businesses would drop from 35 to 21 percent, while the top income tax will fall from 39.6 to 37 percent, with the number of tax brackets remaining the same. —AFP

Oxford bond debut success good news for UK universities

LONDON: The success of Oxford University's \$1 billion bond, the first in its 1,000-year history, is good news for Britain's top academic institutions at a time of anxiety over Brexit-related funding shortfalls and calls to scrap student tuition fees.

The 100-year bond, launched on Dec. 1 with a 2.5 percent coupon, has taken the market for deals for UK universities and colleges to a new level on a par with such big US names as Harvard and Yale.

Technically, the bond was the biggest from any university in the world. Buying interest equalled \$2 billion or double its face value. The day after its launch, it was among the top 20 traded issues in the whole of Europe, according to Trax, a subsidiary of debt trading platform MarketAxess. That is cause for celebration for

peers contemplating bond sales, even if their credit scores are less impressive than Oxford's gold-plated triple-A rating. The oldest university in the English-speaking world, Oxford topped a global ranking by the Times newspaper for the first time last year.

It's an uncertain time for Britain's academic institutions. The cost of student tuition fees, which make up almost half of UK universities' revenues, has been catapulted to the top of the political agenda by young voters who deserted Britain's ruling Conservative party in a snap election in June.

Universities expect these fees - currently 9,250 pounds (\$12,424) a year - to be reviewed in the new year, meaning they are unlikely to rise further and could even be cut. "I think the whole higher education sector is worried about the debate around tuition fees," Oxford's Pro-Vice-Chancellor for planning and resources David Prout told Reuters after the bond sale earlier this month.

Britain's plan to leave the European Union in March 2019 is also weighing heavily. UK universities are already finding it harder to attract and retain EU-born students and staff, with official figures showing undergraduate course applications from EU students fell 7 percent this year. The other countries in the EU send around 58,000 students, or 8 percent of under-

graduates and 15 percent of postgraduate students, to the 'Russell Group' comprising 24 top tier universities in the United Kingdom. Around 25,000 of their staff come from other EU countries, too.

Once Britain leaves, these institutions could also lose their places on EU-funded research projects after 2020. A big worry is how Brexit will affect the UK's ability to borrow from the European Investment Bank, UK universities' biggest source of lending.

The bank, the European Union's main development lender, stopped support in March after London triggered the Article 50 clause to formally start the EU withdrawal process.

Learning the curve

Some 36 British universities, including University College London, Edinburgh, Swansea, Bangor, Newcastle and Oxford, have borrowed almost 3 billion euros (\$3.52 billion) from the EIB over the last decade to fund campus upgrades.

That's more than any other country and almost double the 1.7 billion that went to Germany and 1.5 billion to France. Last year alone, the EIB lent 671 million euros (590.21 million pounds) to UK universities. But unless EU treaties are amended, Britain will have to leave the EIB after Brexit. —Reuters

Business

Kuwait International Bank wins 'Best Sharia-compliant Bank MENA' award

KIB accorded 'Fastest Growing Islamic Bank MENA' award

KUWAIT: In recognition of its commitment to offering outstanding Islamic banking solutions and its exceptional growth over the recent years, Kuwait International Bank (KIB) was awarded "Best Sharia-Compliant Bank MENA 2017" and "Fastest Growing Islamic Bank MENA 2017" by Capital Finance International (CFI.co); an organization specializing in the finance and banking sectors.

KIB received the "Best Sharia-Compliant Bank MENA 2017" award for the third consecutive year from CFI.co, as a result of the Bank's exceptional performance in the Islamic banking sector, its continued growth and strong financial performance, and its commitment to offering products and services in full compliance with the principles of Islamic sharia; all of which have made KIB a trustworthy financial institution amongst customers. This also marked the second year that KIB received the "Fastest Growing Islamic Bank MENA 2017" award, in recognition of the Bank's dynamic business strategy and approach. This strategy has been a key component driving the Bank's fast-paced growth and expansion in the banking sector, propelling KIB to the forefront of the sector locally and regionally.

On this occasion, Sheikh Mohammad Jarrah Al-Sabah, Chairman of KIB, said: "These awards serve as a testament to KIB's commitment to offering its clients a diverse and comprehensive range of innovative Sharia-compliant banking solutions. They are

also a testament to KIB's continued strong performance amidst declining oil prices and numerous economic challenges facing local and regional markets. These circumstances have allowed us to adopt a strategic expansion plan as we continue to effectively respond to the dynamic needs of the market." Al-Jarrah further added: "KIB has made remarkable achievements in the implementation of its comprehensive strategic plan in order to become the 'Islamic Bank of Choice in Kuwait'. This strategic development plan focuses on enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Bank's overall performance, as well as developing our customer experience - as we actively strive to cement our prominent position in the market."

He also pointed out that KIB has continued to achieve positive results across all its key performance indicators, resulting in a strong financial standing and a growth in shareholder equity. Furthermore, Fitch Ratings recently reaffirmed the Bank's long-term credit rating at A+ with a stable outlook.



Sheikh Mohammed Jarrah Al-Sabah



Moreover, Al-Jarrah lauded the efforts of the Bank's Fatwa & Sharia Supervisory Board, which plays a key role in overseeing all internal and external operations, in addition to monitoring all of the Bank's products and services, in order to ensure complete



compatibility with Islamic Sharia regulations. It serves to note that CFI.co is considered to be one of the most prominent international, independent organizations specializing in finance and banking in London. Over the years, CFI.co's judging panel has closely

monitored KIB's growth, as the Bank managed to occupy a leading position within the market, even amidst a highly competitive banking sector. Accordingly, the Bank has been a recipient of CFI.co's awards in 2015 and 2016.

Zain offers 50% off on int'l calls to all GCC states on Qatari National Day today

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced the offering of a special 50 percent discount on international calls to all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries today (December 18). The special offer comes on the occasion of the celebration of the state of Qatar's National Day.

On this special occasion, Zain expressed its sincere congratulations to the people of Qatar, represented in its leadership, embassy, and Qatari citizens residing in Kuwait. The company took the opportunity to share this special occasion with its customers, becoming the first telecom company in the country to offer such discounts.

Zain's prepaid and postpaid customers initiating international calls to any GCC country, including the State of Qatar, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Sultanate of Oman, will receive a 50 percent discount on December 18.

As a leading telecommunications company in the region, Zain is keen to participate in the celebrations of different nations. The company considers itself as a core entity within the communities in which it operates, and strives to share the joys of special occasions in its customers' lives.



French aerospace giant Thales acquires SIM maker Gemalto

PARIS: French aerospace and defense group Thales said yesterday it has bought European SIM manufacturer Gemalto in a bid to become a global leader in digital security.

The aerospace giant paid 51 euros (\$60) a share for Gemalto, a premium of 57 percent over the closing price on December 8, Thales said in a statement.

The price was also higher than a 46-euro a share bid offer from French tech firm Atos which Gemalto rejected on Wednesday. The Thales offer showed that it valued the world-leading chipmaker at about 4.8 billion euros. Gemalto chief executive Philippe Vallee said in the statement that favouring Thales over Atos was

"the best and the most promising option for Gemalto and the most positive outcome for our company, employees, clients, shareholders and other stakeholders".

"We share the same values and Gemalto will be able to pursue its strategy, accelerate its development and deliver its digital security vision, as part of Thales."

Thales CEO Patrick Caine said the merger marked "a key milestone" in implementing the firm's digital security strategy, in which it has invested one billion euros in the past three years and acquired three other companies.

"Together with Gemalto's management, we have big ambitions based on a shared vision of the digital transformation of our industries and customers."

The French company, which is worth about 18 billion euros, said that with the merger, the Thales group will rank among the top three players worldwide, with 3.5 billion euros in revenue in the fast growing digital security market. The new division will focus on security software, biometrics, multifactor authentication and issuing secure electronic and physical ID cards. The deal is expected



This file handout photo released by the European Space Agency shows the Sentinel 3A satellite at the Thales Alenia Space facility in Cannes, southern France. —AFP

to close in the second half of 2018, but can be terminated before then if Gemalto receives a bid that is at least nine percent higher than Thales's offer price. —AFP

Vietnam to name buyer of up to \$5bn stake in top brewer Sabeco

HO CHI MINH CITY/SINGAPORE: Vietnam is set to auction an up to \$5 billion stake in top brewer Sabeco yesterday, with Thai Beverage the only potential bidder to have expressed interest in a majority stake. The keenly anticipated sale of the state-owned maker of Bia Saigon gained momentum in recent months after being hampered for years by political resistance, fickle policy-making and complications over valuations.

The government has set a minimum sale price of 320,000 dong or \$14.10 a share for Saigon Beer Alcohol

Beverage Corp (Sabeco), whose shares have nearly trebled to 309,200 dong since its listing a year ago. Thai Beverage, through a partly-owned Vietnam unit, is the only company which has expressed interest in owning more than 25 percent of the company, which has roughly 40 percent of the beer-loving Vietnamese market.

So far no formal bid had been made. Vietnam's young population and booming economy should make Sabeco an attractive asset for global brewers hoping to expand in Southeast Asia, but a high minimum bid price and foreign ownership limits appear to have turned off potential buyers. Sabeco's foreign ownership is capped at 49 percent. With 10 percent already in foreign hands, that leaves only 39 percent on the table for overseas buyers at yesterday's auction. Local bidders can bid for a majority stake of up to 54 percent. Heinken holds a 5 percent stake.

"There's a disconnect between what the government wants to achieve and how international brewers view this auction," said one person familiar with the matter.

"In a normal auction, bidders are fully aware of what stake they'll end up owning and bid for it accordingly,"

said the person, who was not authorized to speak to the media. Unlike similar sales in developed markets, where investors are whittled down over several rounds and offers can be adjusted, Sabeco bidders need to submit a single offer for a specific number of shares in a sealed envelope in one round.

Thai Bev, controlled by tycoon Charoen Sirivadhanabhakdi, was keen to acquire Sabeco as part of a strategy to expand outside its home market, sources told Reuters. The company had already lined up bank guarantees to support the bid by its Vietnam unit, sources said.

There was no immediate response from Thai Bev to a query from Reuters. Reuters previously reported that the auction was drawing the interest of brewing groups such as Anheuser-Busch InBev, Kirin Holdings, Asahi Group Holdings and San Miguel, but there is no clear sign of whether they have participated in the auction so far. The government's minimum price for the 54 percent stake on offer valued Sabeco at about 36 times core earnings, more than double the trading multiples of around 15 for some global peers, according to Reuters data. —Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.672
Indian Rupees	4.700
Pakistani Rupees	2.852
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.976
Nepali Rupees	2.941
Singapore Dollar	225.110
Hongkong Dollar	38.817
Bangladesh Taka	3.647
Philippine Peso	6.009
Thai Baht	9.317

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.854
Qatari Riyal	83.276
Omani Riyal	787.420
Bahraini Dinar	805.100
UAE Dirham	82.550

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.240
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.986
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.217
Tunisian Dinar	123.670
Jordanian Dinar	427.300
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.020
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.581

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	303.000
Euro	357.990
Sterling Pound	405.720

Canadian dollar	237.000
Turkish lira	80.050
Swiss Franc	307.910
Australian Dollar	231.190
US Dollar Buying	301.800

GOLD

20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.600
Canadian Dollar	235.965
Sterling Pound	404.655
Euro	357.095
Swiss Frank	301.335
Bahraini Dinar	803.125
UAE Dirhams	83.600
Qatari Riyals	83.535
Saudi Riyals	81.550
Jordanian Dinar	428.080
Egyptian Pound	17.098
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.977
Indian Rupees	4.726
Pakistani Rupees	2.763
Bangladesh Taka	3.670
Philippines Peso	5.996
Cyprus pound	18.005
Japanese Yen	3.685
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.957

Malaysian Ringgit	75.070
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.220
Thai Bhat	10.295
Turkish Lira	78.790

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
Europe		
British Pound	0.398806	0.406308
Czech Korune	0.005910	0.017910
Danish Krone	0.043962	0.048962
Euro	0.351504	0.359004
Georgian Lari	0.134933	0.134933
Hungarian O.001141	0.001331	
Norwegian Krone	0.032552	0.037752
Romanian Leu	0.064839	0.081689
Russian ruble	0.005167	0.005167
Slovakia	0.009032	0.019032
Swedish Krona	0.031912	0.036912
Swiss Franc	0.299921	0.310921
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.223675	0.235675
New Zealand Dollar	0.205877	0.215377
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.230397	0.239397
US Dollars	0.298850	0.303270
US Dollars Mint	0.299350	0.303270
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003301	0.003885

Chinese Yuan	0.044365	0.047865
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036850	0.039600
Indian Rupee	0.004133	0.004774
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002618	0.002798
Korean Won	0.000268	0.000283
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070263	0.076263
Nepalese Rupee	0.003023	0.003193
Pakistan Rupee	0.002611	0.002901
Philippine Peso	0.005936	0.006236
Singapore Dollar	0.219771	0.229771
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001698	0.002278
Taiwan	0.010009	0.010189
Thai Baht	0.008970	0.009520
Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.796799	0.805299
Egyptian Pound	0.014522	0.020240
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000186	0.000246
Jordanian Dinar	0.422684	0.431684
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000156	0.000256
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022153	0.046153
Omani Riyal	0.0780465	0.786245
Qatar Riyal	0.078923	0.083863
Saudi Riyal	0.079700	0.081000
Syrian Pound	0.001284	0.001504
Tunisian Dinar	0.117368	0.125368
Turkish Lira	0.073531	0.083831
UAE Dirhams	0.081057	0.082757
Yemeni Riyal	0.000985	0.001065

Business

NBK Money Markets Report

US Fed hikes rates as expected; tax plan moving towards approval

Three more rate hikes likely in 2018

KUWAIT: Markets had a highly eventful week as the three major central bank meetings took place, important economic figures were released and more details on the US tax plan developed. The US FOMC raised the federal funds rate by 0.25 percent to 1.50 percent as had been widely expected. The main updated policy signal from the Fed was the plan to stick to gradual rate hikes in the coming years. The updated median dot plot projections revealed that the Fed still plans to raise rates by a further three times in 2018 and two times in 2019. Furthermore, the potential impact of the planned tax overhaul was factored into most Fed officials' growth forecasts. The median projection for growth next year was raised by 0.4 percent to 2.5 percent and by 0.1 percent to 2.1 percent in 2019. However, it is worthy to note that the longer run growth forecast (4+ years) remained unchanged at 1.8 percent indicating the Fed's skepticism that the tax cuts might only provide a short-term boost to the economy. Despite the increased growth projections, core inflation forecasts remained unchanged echoing the Fed's recent concerns of an extended soft patch. Indeed, November's Consumer Price Index released this week, showed the seventh weak monthly core CPI reading this year. Nevertheless, the FOMC reiterated their position that economic conditions will evolve in a manner that will warrant gradual rate increases while the actual path of the federal funds rate will depend on the economic outlook based on incoming data.

The US tax reform bill ran into some unexpected issues after two Republican senators sought changes in the final House-Senate bill as it was being finalized. Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate tax committee and one of the bill's chief authors, said the Senate could probably vote on a final Senate-House measure as near as the December 18. Senators Marco Rubio and Mike Lee were seeking for a change in the child tax credit that is meant to lower the tax bills of working families with children. Rubio stated he would vote "no" if the changes were not made while Lee said he was undecided on the bill in its current form. Republicans have a 52-vote Senate majority. As such, they can lose no more than two of their own votes and still win approval. In case of a tie, Vice President Mike Pence would be able to vote to pass the bill. Late Friday however, republican negotiators said they were able to reach a deal with the requested adjustments to please both senators adding

to prospects of having the bill passed. The US dollar continued its 13 day rise heading into the FOMC meeting December 13. However the high was short-lived as the dollar index reversed course falling 0.76 percent at the conclusion of the meeting. Most



ECB keeps policies unchanged

participants saw the meeting more dovish than they expected and the soft inflation figures released the same day added to their concerns. The index managed to rebound late Friday after republicans said they managed to reach an agreement over the tax reform bill. The US dollar index opened the week at 93.928 and closed at 93.948.

The Euro was little changed throughout the week trading in a tight range. The dip in the USD after the Fed meeting saw the EUR/USD move slightly higher before returning to previous levels after a dovish European Central Bank signaled it will continue to maintain stimulus for as long as needed. The EUR/USD opened the week at 1.1767 and closed at 1.1766.

The Pound Sterling, which has been gaining steadily as of late due to the positive progression of Brexit negotiations, traded cautiously heading into the Fed, Bank of England, and ECB meetings at the end of the week. After rising against the USD after the Fed meeting the GBP/USD pair was unable to maintain the new levels as the BoE gave a fairly muted response and Brexit uncertainties returned regarding the next stage of negotiations due to start in January. The GBP/USD opened the week at 1.3390 and reached a high of 1.3462 and closed at 1.3319.

The Japanese yen was in consolidation reacting to the developments happening in the west. General weakness saw the yen appreciate around 1.20 percent against the US dollar. The new complications regarding the US tax bill and the US Fed's concerns over low inflation were some of the main factors. The USD/JPY opened the week at 113.47 and closed at 112.57.

In commodities, oil prices had volatile

movements last week after reaching a 2 year high and then quickly dropping afterwards. Early in the week, the closure of the North Sea pipeline had Brent crude reach a high of \$65.83 per barrel. However, prices rebounded after US crude stockpiles were offset by a larger-than-forecast rise in gasoline inventories and as US crude output continued to grow to record highs. Gasoline stocks rose by 5.7 million barrels, compared with analysts' expectations in for a 2.5 million-barrel gain. Meanwhile, weekly US crude production jumped by 73,000 barrels a day to 9.78 million barrels a day. American output is approaching the all-time high of roughly 10 million barrels reached in 1970. Brent Crude opened the week at \$63.29 reached and closed at \$63.23.

US inflation

Consumer prices rose 0.4 percent in November in line with forecasts while underlying US consumer inflation slowed 0.1 percent. The CPI was boosted by the rebound in energy prices while the core figure held down by weak healthcare costs and the biggest drop in apparel prices in nearly two decades. Inflation has moderated for much of this year, leading to concern among some Fed

Rates - 17 December, 2017

Currencies	Previous Week Levels				This Week's Expected Range		3-Month Forward
	Open	High	Low	Close	Minimum	Maximum	
EUR	1.1767	1.1862	1.1716	1.1752	1.1415	1.1725	1.1843
GBP	1.3390	1.3462	1.3300	1.3319	1.2870	1.3185	1.3386
JPY	113.47	113.74	112.01	112.57	113.00	116.15	111.90
CHF	0.9935	0.9943	0.9838	0.9903	0.9925	1.0205	0.9817

officials that the factors holding back price pressures could prove more persistent. As a result, year on year, headline inflation increased to 2.2 percent while the underlying decreased to 1.7 percent.

Producer prices also rose 0.4 percent for the third month in November as energy prices helped drive up business costs. Stripping out more volatile items like food and energy, inflation at the wholesale level was up 0.3 percent also ahead of economists' forecasts. Year on year, the PPI for is now 3.1 percent while the core figure reached 2.4 percent.

US retail sales

US retail sales increased more than



expected in November as the holiday shopping season got off to an early start. The Commerce Department said retail sales rose 0.8 percent last month, with households buying a range of goods even as they cut back on purchases of motor vehicles. Data for October was revised to show sales gaining 0.5 percent instead of the previously reported 0.2 percent increase. Consumer spending, which accounts for more than two-thirds of US economic activity, is being supported by

and 1.7 percent, respectively. Higher energy prices led to inflation forecasts being revised higher to 1.4 percent in 2018 while remaining the same at 1.5 percent in 2019 and higher again at 1.7 percent for 2020. The projections show the ECB believes it will fall short of its 2 percent goal in 2020 signaling the euro-area economy isn't strong enough to warrant reductions in monetary stimulus. President Mario Draghi also made it clear not to expect any changes to monetary policy for some time when he said, "It's quite early before we talk about change in our monetary policy support, though in the presence of an expansion which is gaining momentum, our confidence towards this objective is increasing and is certainly greater than it was at the last monetary policy meeting."

Eurozone Index

The Eurozone economy picked up further momentum at the end of 2017, with December seeing the fastest growth of business activity for nearly seven years. The headline IHS Markit Eurozone PMI rose to its highest since February 2011 at 58.0 in December according to the 'flash' estimate. Activity rose in response to higher inflows of new orders, which showed the biggest monthly increase for just over a decade. In manufacturing, the largest upturn in new orders since April 2000 was boosted by export orders rising at a rate only marginally below November's record high. Growth of new business in the service sector was meanwhile the highest in over a decade, highlighting the broad-based improvement in demand.

Kuwait

Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30210

America's missing workers: Matching jobs to the jobless

WASHINGTON: A few years ago, Derek Hobbs could not find a job. He had three strikes against him: his age, 55, a criminal record, and a drug addiction that kept him out of the formal workforce for more than 25 years. When he decided to turn his life around, most employers dismissed him without a thought. Determined to succeed, Hobbs turned to an innovative program specializing in matching people facing employment challenges, to available jobs.

"They actually give people with those strikes against them a chance," he told AFP. Hobbs is just one example of a growing problem in the US economy: companies unable to find workers with the right skills to fill open positions, and workers who can't find a job because they have the wrong skills.

The program Hobbs attended is in an impoverished area of Philadelphia, the neighborhood featured in the popular Will Smith sitcom from the 1990s, "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air": an area so dangerous his mother sent him to live with wealthy relations in California. The West Philadelphia Skills Initiative (WPSI) is unique among employment training programs. It has a hyper-local focus, with workers coming only from the area known as University City, and it trains workers for jobs that already exist in the area.

This 2.4 square mile area houses two prestigious universities, research hospitals and numerous businesses. But 31 percent of residents live below the poverty line.

While Hobbs had a good work history as a young adult, "from the early 90s through 2012 I was an addict," he told AFP. Like him, many West Philadelphia residents do not have a solid habit of work. A key challenge is to loosen the "glue" that holds them in place,



WASHINGTON DC: Tess Finnegan poses with her children in Washington, DC. The US economy is nearing full employment, with its jobless rate the lowest in almost 20 years, but women in the workforce don't fully benefit. —AFP

surrounded as they are by friends and neighbors who don't work, according to Sheila Ireland, who ran the WPSI program for many years.

Worker shortage?

With the US economy creating new jobs at a solid pace of close to 175,000 a month, and with unemployment at 4.1 percent, lower than it has been in 17 years, companies nationwide complain they cannot fill openings, even for jobs that do not require advanced skills. The country has over six million unfilled jobs, the most since the government first began collecting data in December 2000, and yet many workers have given up looking and left the workforce, or are working part time because they cannot find a full-time position.

The typical response when workers are hard to find is to raise wages and benefits, but wage growth has been stagnant or tepid at best, just slightly higher than inflation. Economists disagree on the primary cause of this mismatch between skills and available jobs — and some say companies simply need to raise wages to attract older or discouraged workers back into the labor force.

But new programs have sprung up to resolve the disconnect.

Traditional unemployment and retraining centers offer courses in things like computer skills, and then send workers out into the

market in the hope they will find a job. But more programs like WPSI are being developed to give workers the exact skills employers need. Many partner with community colleges to tailor the training to specific fields where openings already exist, such as nursing and health care.

Economic drag

The lack of workers is a drag on the US economy that could get worse. Economist David Wiczer of the St Louis Federal Reserve Bank said having workers poorly matched to jobs mean lost wages and lost growth that accelerates over time. Poorly matched workers "are paid less, their pay grows less, and they are more likely to leave," he told AFP. These mismatches "tend to persist quite a long time," and over 15 years they are getting paid \$120,000 less, which is \$120,000 they are not spending in the economy.

Companies historically used in-house training or apprenticeship programs to make sure they had workers specifically trained for their jobs. But labor unions traditionally ran those programs and American unions have been in decline for years, leaving workers to find their own training.

"We have to convince industry that there are strategies and methodologies that work, but there are costs," says Ireland, based on time at WPSI. — AFP

Delta orders 100 Airbus planes in blow to Boeing

NEW YORK: Delta Air Lines announced that it has ordered 100 Airbus planes with an option to buy 100 more, in a blow to Airbus' American rival Boeing.

Delta said it was buying the A321neo aircraft to renew its narrow-body fleet, which have 197 seats and are used for domestic or short international flights.

The Airbus order comes amid public friction between Delta and US giant Boeing over a trade dispute involving a separate Delta deal to buy planes from Canadian company Bombardier.

Airbus deliveries to Delta will begin in 2020 and go through 2023 under the order, worth an estimated \$12.7 billion based on the aircraft catalogue price.

Delta said in an investor presentation that the new planes would result in 40 percent fuel savings compared with the jet they are replacing. "This is the right transaction at the right time for our customers, our employees and our shareholders," Delta CEO Ed Bastian said in a statement.

US built planes

Airbus in 2015 opened a manufacturing plant in Mobile, Alabama to build single-aisle planes with an eye towards competing more aggressively in the US market. Toulouse, France-based Airbus highlighted its growing connection to the US in the announcement, saying

most of the new planes would be delivered from Mobile.

"This purchase furthers our commitment to US aviation — a commitment that has never been stronger," said John Leahy, chief operating officer for customers at Airbus Commercial Aircraft.

"Today, there is more US content in Airbus aircraft than from any other country, with more than 40 percent of our aircraft-related procurement coming from the United States."

Delta also announced that it picked United Technologies' Pratt & Whitney as the engine provider, and for engine maintenance. Delta also selected Pratt engines for the Bombardier order, which is at the heart of the Boeing trade dispute. Boeing has argued Delta's planes were underpriced due to illegal Canadian government subsidies to Bombardier.

"Delta remains a valued customer, and we'll continue exploring ways to best meet their needs in the future," a Boeing spokesman said.

"We competed with a strong but disciplined offer in the Delta campaign. While Delta has chosen to go with Airbus and Bombardier in recent single aisle campaigns, we are proud of the 737 MAX family's superior value and performance."

Canada-based Bombardier in October unveiled a production alliance with Airbus that granted the European company a stake in the Bombardier C-Series program. Delta has said it will not pay for any punitive tariffs sought by the US government in response to Boeing complaints.

Boeing's actions in the trade dispute has done "significant damage to its relationship with Delta for sure," said Jim Corridore, an analyst at CFRA Research. —AFP

Business

Wall Street Week Ahead

Investors wary as another election year looms

NEW YORK: With another election year looming, investors in the healthcare sector are wary the coming months could reopen wounds suffered during the 2016 US presidential race.

Healthcare becoming as a hot issue in the 2018 midterm elections as it was two years earlier could threaten the sector. A big risk stems from voters giving majorities to Democrats in the US Senate and House of Representatives, in a rejection of President Donald Trump's Republican party.

Investors worry that shift would pressure the industry, including through a greater focus on

prescription drug prices, even if Trump's grip on the presidency tempers any regulatory changes.

In 2016, similar scrutiny had plagued the healthcare sector, particularly pharmaceutical and biotechnology shares. "If we woke up tomorrow and it was a given fact (the Democrats) were going to take over the House and the Senate, healthcare would be one of the worst-performing sectors of the market," said Walter Todd, chief investment officer at Greenwood Capital Associates in Greenwood, South Carolina. Momentum behind such a shift appears to be building after Democrat Doug Jones on Tuesday

won a special Senate election in Alabama that cut the Republicans' Senate edge to 51 seats against 49 Democrat seats.

Even so, healthcare shares would likely stand up better to election risk in 2018 than they did to the scrutiny of the sector in 2016. For one, the sector is cheaper relative to the broader market following 2016's struggles. Investors also say it could benefit from a potential boost in merger activity if drugmakers and other multinational companies bring back cash held overseas under the tax overhaul bill moving through US Congress. The stocks also may be less vulnerable

now to news about high drug prices and other healthcare developments, having already weathered those headlines in 2016, investors say.

And some investors are also less concerned that healthcare will be a significant topic on the campaign trail this time around, given other issues that have come to the forefront since Trump's election. "I think there will be fears. Do they come in March? Do they come in May? I don't know when they come, but yes there will be fears of the election," said Teresa McRoberts, a portfolio manager who focuses on healthcare at Fred Alger Management in New York.

Still, McRoberts added: "The downside in the group - it's hard for me to see that it is going to be as much as it was in '16." Healthcare shares had struggled for most of 2016, undermined by investor fears about new drug pricing rules or other regulations, especially should Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton have won.

The sector declined 4.4 percent that year, making it the worst performer of all major sectors, while the overall S&P 500 rose 9.5 percent. Biotech and pharmaceutical shares were hit particularly hard.

Healthcare's underperformance in 2016 was its worst since 1999, and its worst in an election year since 1992. On balance, however, midterm election years have treated healthcare stocks well.

According to Thomson Reuters data dating back to 1990, the sector's annual performance on average topped the broad S&P 500 by 2.7 percentage points. But in the seven midterm years over that time, it outperformed by 6.2 percentage points on average, with the sector outperforming in five of those years. To be sure, certain healthcare issues, including the cost of medicine, have drawn broad attention as a populist issue, including from some Republicans



like Trump himself. But Democrats as a whole are seen as more likely to push for changes, such as the ability for the US government to negotiate drug prices through the Medicare health program. "If the 2018 elections were to see a change of leadership ... then I think the drug pricing issue would be very much back in the picture for all of the pharmaceutical and biotech companies," said George Strietmann, portfolio manager with Cincinnati investment advisory firm Bahl & Gaynor.

Healthcare stocks rebounded by 21.5 percent so far in 2017, but that was nearly matched by the 19.3 percent rise for the S&P 500. The sector, at 16.4 times forward earnings estimates, trades at a roughly 10 percent discount to the 18.2 price-to-earnings ratio for the S&P 500, according to Thomson Reuters Datastream. That stands out especially when compared with the sector's nearly 18 percent premium to the S&P 500, historically, as well as its 4 percent premium in late 2015, before election-related concerns spiked.

"It's still reasonably cheap," said Nathan Thoft, co-head of global asset allocation, Manulife Asset Management in Boston, which is overweight the healthcare sector.

Healthcare becoming a campaign issue is "definitely a risk," Thoft said. "I just don't think it's going to be the prominent debate of the midterm election." —Reuters

What's in the final US Republican tax bill

WASHINGTON: Republicans in the Senate and House of Representatives are expected to vote within days on sweeping legislation that would overhaul the US tax system for the first time in more than 30 years. President Donald Trump wants to sign tax legislation before year-end to notch the first major legislative win for majority Republicans since January when they gained control of the White House as well as Congress.

The following are key parts of the final bill, estimated to add just under \$1.5 trillion to the US national debt over the next decade, or roughly \$1 trillion after accounting for economic growth:

Business

CORPORATE TAX RATE: Cuts corporate income tax rate to 21 percent from 35 percent, beginning Jan. 1, 2018.

PASS-THROUGHS: Creates a 20 percent deduction for the first \$315,000 of qualified business income for joint filers of pass-through businesses such as partnerships and sole proprietorships. For income above that threshold, the legislation phases in limits that produce an effective marginal tax rate of no more than 29.6 percent.

CORPORATE MINIMUM TAX: Repeals the 20 percent federal corporate alternative minimum tax, which was set up to ensure that profitable corporations pay at least some tax.

TERRITORIAL SYSTEM: Exempts US corporations from US taxes on most of their future foreign profits, ending the present worldwide system of taxing profits of all US-based businesses, no matter where the profits are earned.

REPATRIATION: Sets a one-time mandatory tax of 8 percent for illiquid assets and 15.5 percent for cash and cash equivalents on \$2.6 trillion in US business profits currently held overseas. That foreign cash pile was created by a rule that allowed foreign profits to be tax deferred if they were not brought into the United States, or repatriated, a tax rule that would be rendered obsolete by the territorial system.

ANTI-BASE EROSION MEASURES: Includes provisions to prevent companies from shifting profits out of the United States to lower-tax jurisdictions abroad. These include an alternative minimum tax on payments between US corporations and foreign-related companies and limitations on the shifting of corporate income through transfers of intangible property, including patents.

CAPITAL EXPENSING: Allows businesses to immediately write off, or expense, the full value of equipment for five years, then gradually eliminates 100 percent expensing over a five-year period beginning in year six.

INTEREST DEDUCTION LIMIT: Caps business deduction for debt interest payments at 30 percent of taxable income, without regard to deductions for depreciation, amortization or depletion.

CLEAN ENERGY: Leaves in place tax credits for producing electricity from

wind, biomass, geothermal, solar, municipal waste and hydropower.

CARRIED INTEREST: Largely leaves in place the "carried interest" loophole that benefits private equity fund managers and some hedge fund managers, despite pledges by Republicans including Trump to close it. These financiers can now claim a lower capital gains rate on much of their income from investments held more than a year. The new legislation would extend that holding period to three years, putting the loophole out of reach for some fund managers, but preserving its availability for many.

Individual

BRACKETS: Sets seven tax brackets: for married couples filing jointly, 10 percent up to \$19,050; 12 percent up to \$77,400; 22 percent up to \$165,000; 24 percent up to \$315,000;

32 percent up to \$400,000; 35 percent up to \$600,000; and 37 percent over \$600,000. For unmarried individuals and married couples filing separately, 10 percent up to \$9,525; 12 percent up to \$38,700; 22 percent up to \$82,500; 24 percent up to \$157,500; 32 percent up to \$200,000; 35 percent up to \$500,000; and 37 percent over \$500,000. These brackets expire after 2025.

STANDARD DEDUCTION: Gives taxpayers a tax break without having to claim itemized deductions. For eight years beginning in 2018, the standard deduction increases to \$12,700 from \$6,350 for individuals and to \$24,000 from \$12,000 for married couples under the legislation.

CHILD TAX CREDIT: Doubles the child tax credit to \$2,000 per dependent child under the age of 17, with a refundable portion of \$1,400. The refundable portion allows families to lower their tax bills to zero and receive a refund for the remaining value.

PERSONAL EXEMPTION: Ends \$4,050 individual personal exemption.

INHERITANCES: Increases the exemption for estate and gift taxes to \$10 million from \$5 million per person and indexes the new exemption level for inflation after 2011. That means even fewer Americans would pay the estate tax, but it would stay on the books.

MORTGAGES: For residences bought from Jan. 1, 2018, through Dec. 25, 2025, caps the deduction for mortgage interest at \$750,000 in home loan value. After Dec. 31, 2025, the cap will revert to \$1 million in loan value. Suspends the deduction for interest on home equity loans.

Other provisions

OBAMACARE MANDATE: Repeals a federal fine imposed on Americans under Obamacare for not obtaining health insurance coverage.

ANWR DRILLING: Allows oil drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. —Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report									
Saturday 17 December 2017									
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing						
Price Index	▲ 24.18	6,355.90	6,331.72						
Weighted Index	▲ 0.54	400.32	399.78						
KXS 15	▼ -0.37	909.70	910.07						
Trades									
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change		
IPG	410	410	20,000	8,200	1	410	▲ 38.0		
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	818	— 0.0		
ENERGYH	29.0	28.0	30,090	853	7	29.0	— 0.0		
GPI	30.9	29.7	1,138,444	34,223	56	30.0	▲ 0.5		
ABAR	86	84	1,284,224	108,561	59	86	▲ 2.0		
Oil & Gas			2,472,768	151,967	123	991.70	▲ 23.90		
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	261	— 0.0		
BPCO	636	629	54,698	34,453	6	636	▲ 8.0		
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	586	— 0.0		
ALQURAN	320	318	66,710	21,264	10	318	▼ -1.0		
Basic Materials			121,408	55,717	25	1227.45	▲ 2.50		
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	474	— 0.0		
CABLE	428	425	6,001	2,550	4	428	— 0.0		
SHIP	235	230	56,545	13,096	12	234	▲ 1.0		
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	905	— 0.0		
PAPER	300	241	1,321	354	6	300	▲ 15.0		
MRC	75	70	12,030	847	6	75	▲ 2.9		
ACICO	253	242	92,500	23,123	6	248	▼ -3.0		
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	170	— 0.0		
NICBM	213	210	208,000	43,814	16	213	— 0.0		
EQUIPMENT	54.1	53.2	83,100	2,773	7	54.1	▲ 1.5		
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	— 0.0		
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0		
SALBOOKH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	49.7	— 0.0		
AGLTY	799	791	108,963	86,207	22	795	— 0.0		
EDU	304	302	3,495	1,060	2	304	▲ 4.0		
CLEANING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	52	— 0.0		
KDL	89	89	913	62	3	89	▲ 1.8		
KCPK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	145	— 0.0		
HUMANISOFT	3,740	3,550	11,296	42,046	7	3,740	— 0.0		
NAFAS	960	940	1,107	894	21	950	▲ 50.0		
GFC	71	71	10,000	705	1	71	▲ 8.0		
SHOOTING	20.0	18.3	152,912	2,858	15	18.5	▼ -0.9		
CGC	478	478	100	48	1	478	▼ -2.0		
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0		
UFAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	670	— 0.0		
ALAFKO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	— 0.0		
MUBARRAD	72	70	112	8	2	70	▲ 1.1		
LOGISTICS	49.2	48.5	385,400	18,720	18	48.5	▲ 0.3		
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	92	— 0.0		
GCEM	80	79	27,257	2,160	4	79	▼ -0.5		
OIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	— 0.0		
FCEM	75	75	21,501	1,613	3	75	▼ -1.9		
RWGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	— 0.0		
SPEC	73	69	194,150	13,414	8	70	▼ -2.0		
Industrials			1,378,273	296,353	164	1856.34	▲ 22.00		
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	— 0.0		
CATTL	234	230	7,002	1,617	8	230	▼ -15.0		
DANAH	70	68	112,001	7,873	5	70	▼ -0.2		
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,139	— 0.0		
Consumer Goods			119,003	9,490	13	831.83	▼ -20.70		
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	— 0		
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	— 0		
Health Care			0	0	0	1610.51	— 0.00		
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,200	— 0		
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	— 0		
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	— 0		
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	14.8	— 0		
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	299	— 0		
OULAFUEL	111	110	94,770	10,490	20	110	— 0		
MAINTAZAHAT	75	75	105	8	1	75	▼ 4		
JAZEERA	665	650	4,292	2,834	5	660	▲ 5		
SOOR	111	110	14,095	1,562	11	111	▲ 1		
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	— 0		
ALRAI	113	113	425	48	1	113	▲ 3		
Jyad	71	69	2,711,700	191,305	119	71	— 0		
Mazzan	778	766	27,480	21,050	6	774	▼ 4		
Consumer Services			2,852,868	227,297	163	923.44	▼ -3.10		
ZAIN	438	432	4,376,229	1,899,205	262	433	▼ 4		
QOREDOO	1,055	1,003	72,724	73,484	69	1,014	▼ -41		
AAN	30.0	28.5	860,417	25,592	33	30.0	▲ 0		
VIVA	800	795	114,556	91,081	36	799	▲ 44		
Telecommunications			5,423,926	2,089,361	420	555.14	▲ 9.40		
NBK	720	720	2,030,593	1,486,277	117	722	▼ -2		
GBK	241	239	239,501	57,421	20	240	— 0		
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0		
ABK	305	290	36,039	7,665	9	298	▼ -2		
ALMUTAHED	351	346	26,861	9,368	10	348	▲ 4		
KIB	232	229	1,300,355	299,983	91	230	— 0		
BURG	305	301	265,181	80,302	23	304	▼ -1		
KFIN	590	579	3,735,759	2,174,143	262	591	▲ 4		
BOUBYAN	428	421	368,965	156,891	54	425	▲ 4		
ITMB	206	203	3,888,926	795,602	92	204	▲ 1		
AUHR	39.0	35.7	8,106,025	299,519	136	37.7	▲ 2		
WARBANK	235	227	678,874	156,875	81	231	▲ 5		

Business

Flydubai touches down at Kilimanjaro Int'l Airport

First UAE airline to provide direct air links to Kilimanjaro



KUWAIT: Dubai-based flydubai's inaugural flight touched down yesterday at Kilimanjaro International Airport (JRO), increasing capacity to Tanzania and further expanding its network in Africa to twelve destinations. flydubai will offer six flights a week to Kilimanjaro, three of which are via a stop in the capital, Dar es Salaam and will increase the total number of flights to Tanzania to 14 flights a week.

The aircraft touched down at 07:45 (Kilimanjaro local time) and on board the flight was a delegation led by Sudhir Sreedharan, Senior Vice President, Commercial Operations (GCC, Subcontinent and Africa) for flydubai. The delegation was met on arrival by Hon Prof Makame Mbarawa MB, Minister for Works, Transport and Communication, Mr Gregory George Teu, Chairman of the Board of Kilimanjaro Airports Development Company (KADCO), the Board of Directors of the KADCO, the Regional Commissioners for Kilimanjaro and Arusha, representatives of the District Commissioners, Members of Parliament, Tanzania Tourist Board, together with representatives of the local tourism industry.

As part of the inaugural program, flydubai showcased its new Boeing 737 MAX 8 aircraft which it unveiled for the first time at the Dubai Airshow in November 2017.

The service to Kilimanjaro sees the total number of flydubai's destinations in Tanzania

increase to three, along with Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar. The carrier began operations to Tanzania in 2014 and has become increasingly popular among travellers from Dubai and the GCC as a tourist destination, and is seeing a steady growth in passenger numbers.

Kilimanjaro International Airport is located

Ghaith Al-Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer of flydubai, commented on the inaugural: "With our service to Kilimanjaro, we are responding to a growing demand for travel between the UAE and Tanzania. flydubai is the first UAE airline to offer direct air links to Kilimanjaro with the aim to connect this market to Dubai and beyond, and offer travellers more choice and flexibility. Passengers will have the opportunity to connect from Dubai onwards to more than 250 destinations."

Hon Prof Makame MB, Minister for Works, Transport and Communication, said: "I'm very glad to welcome flydubai to our 'Gateway to Africa's Wildlife Heritage'. On behalf of the Government and the KADCO

Management we would like to thank you for working tirelessly together to make this new service possible and no doubt this route will be a success."

Sudhir Sreedharan, Senior Vice President Commercial (GCC, Subcontinent and Africa) at flydubai, who led flydubai's inaugural delegation, said: "We are delighted to see our service to Kilimanjaro take off today, as it marks our



twelfth destination in our network in Africa and the third point in Tanzania. Our service to Kilimanjaro follows an increase in passenger demand and reflects flydubai's commitment to open up underserved markets. We look forward to offering six weekly flights on this route and to connecting travellers from across flydubai's network with the Kilimanjaro region and vice versa." Emirates will codeshare on

this route and as part of the Emirates flydubai partnership, passengers will have greater choice for onward travel from Dubai to hundreds of destinations across the world. flydubai operates flights to twelve destinations in Africa, including Addis Ababa, Alexandria, Asmara, Djibouti, Entebbe, Hargeisa, Juba, Khartoum and Port Sudan, as well as Dar es Salaam, Kilimanjaro and Zanzibar.



Dubai-based carrier expands network in Africa to 12 destinations

between the regions of Kilimanjaro and Arusha in Northern Tanzania. The airport is the major gateway to the Kilimanjaro region, a main international tourism destination that includes Mount Kilimanjaro, Arusha National Park, Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti National Park. Only a few international carriers operate to Kilimanjaro and flydubai will be the first airline to provide direct air links from the UAE.

Saudi riyals are now available at NBK multi-currency ATM at Nuwaiseeb border

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait now makes it even easier, more convenient and safer for you to withdraw Saudi riyals when crossing at the Nuwaiseeb border with a newly installed multi-currency ATM.

Both NBK and non-NBK customers can withdraw Riyals for their trip into Saudi Arabia and upon returning to Kuwait, withdraw Kuwaiti dinars. Starting in early 2018, the Nuwaiseeb ATM will also offer Bahraini Dinars for withdrawal. "NBK makes travel convenient with initiatives like our multi-currency ATMs," said Mohammed Al Othman, Deputy General Manager- Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait.

NBK's Multi-currency ATMs provide convenient

access to fast cash 24 hours, 7 days a week in the 6 different currencies. Customers and non-customers can access several currencies at NBK's multi-currency ATM at Kuwait International airport - US dollars, euros, British pound sterling, UAE dirhams, Saudi riyals and Kuwaiti dinars.

Al-Othman said "Road trips are a fun family activity and many Gulf nationals travel back and forth between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia via the Nuwaiseeb border. NBK recognized the need for a multi-currency ATM to make these trips more convenient for our customers and other travelers. We know they will find it helpful. Both NBK and non-NBK customers can withdraw funds from the multi-currency ATMs.

NBK also provides access to US Dollars at five Multi-currency ATMs, linked to its branches, around Kuwait. These branches are in the following locations: Head Office branch, Salmiya branch, Fahed Al-Salem branch, Ahmadi branch and Cinema Salmiya branch.



Mohammed Al-Othman

New Oman Air manager for Kuwait appointed

KUWAIT: Oman Air, the national airline of the Sultanate of Oman commenced operations in 1993 and one year later began its service to Kuwait, making it one of the first airlines to fly to the destination. Oman Air now flies three times daily between Kuwait and Oman.

The airline has recently appointed a new Country Manager in Kuwait, Mustapha El Hamoui, who said: "Kuwait is an increasingly important market for us and the results in 2017 have been excellent.

The growth in passenger numbers is a testimony to the quality of our product and services, the ability of our staff to deliver under difficult market conditions and the ongoing support of our guests.

Historically Oman and the Indian subcontinent have been a key area of focus, however more recently Oman Air has expanded with additional services to the Far East and Europe. Kuala Lumpur is fast emerging as one of the hot leisure destination and the airline connects ten times weekly to Kuala Lumpur International Airport with its wide body aircraft via Muscat."

Oman Air has consistently won many accolades, the most recent additions are the two World Travel Awards Middle East 2017. For four years running the airline has taken the titles 'Middle East's Leading Airline - Business Class' and 'Middle East's Leading Airline -



Mustapha El Hamoui

Economy Class,' voted for by travel and tourism professionals from around the world.

CBK announces winners of Al-Najma Account

KUWAIT: Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the daily draw on Al-Najma Account yesterday at the Bank's head-office to select four winners to win a cash prize of KD 7,000 for each. The draw was held in the presence of Abdulaziz Ashkanani, representative of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

The following names were announced as winners of the prizes:

1. Ghadeer Ahmad Majed Al-Shawwa
2. Abdulaziz Saleh Al-Mekhlaf
3. Qaiser Mahood Inayat Hussain
4. Ghulam Mustafa Bashir Ahmed
5. Fatemah Aswad Al-Enezi

Al-Najma Account allows its customers to win a daily prize of KD 7,000 which is the highest daily prize in Kuwait. In addition, the Account offers quarterly draws that provide customers with opportunity to get their dreams turned to reality by winning great prizes starting from KD 100,000 for the first quarter escalating



thereafter by KD 50 thousand for each quarter to reach KD 250,000 in the last quarter. Customers can enjoy additional benefits including obtaining ATM card and a credit card against the customer's account along with enjoying all other banking services.

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

Burgan Bank announces winners of Yawmi account draw

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

The lucky winners are:

1. Adel Fouad Mahmoud Alhaj
2. Hussein Ali Sarab Mohamed
3. Savio Sebastian Gomes Peter
4. Mohammad Medhat Nabeeh Suwaifi
5. Ali Fadi Ibrahim Awada

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

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

Malabar Gold & Diamonds opens outlet in Vijayapura

BIJAPUR: Film Star Srimurali inaugurated Malabar Gold & Diamonds 197th global showroom in Vijayapura (Bijapur), Karnataka, India on December 9 in the presence of Asher O, Managing Director - India Operations, Malabar Gold &

Diamonds, Iflu Rahman, Regional Head, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, management team members of Malabar Gold & Diamonds, media and well-wishers. This is the 20th showroom of Malabar Gold & Diamonds in Karnataka.



Technology

Ooredoo Kuwait sponsors IoT Conference and Expo 2017

Event in collaboration with CAIT, IoT Asia and Vigor Events

KUWAIT: Reiterating its leading position as a supporter of telecommunication technology, Ooredoo is sponsoring the Internet of Things (IoT) Conference and Expo 2017 which will be taking place from 19th to 21st December at Jumeriah Hotel Kuwait. The event is an initiative led by Ooredoo Business, and organized and managed by Vigor Events and is in collaboration with the Ministerial Council's Central Agency of Information Technology and IoT Asia.

The event aims to shed light on the challenges and obstacles that come with the emerging new technology of Internet of Things, which is projected to have substantial leading growth by the year 2020. The technology is expected to play an integral part in a variety of sectors, such as healthcare, transportation, and services sector.

The conference is also aiming to pose solutions for the various logistic and security solutions that are

expected to materialize with the leading of this technology. Over the span of three days, the event will feature talks and discussions led by a consortium of professionals and entrepreneurs, to shed light on their experience and the different ways to overcome obstacles in this thriving mode of usage for information technology. Speakers will also highlight the ways different sectors collaborate to better serve individuals and users of this technology.

An Ooredoo business initiative

Commenting on this conference, Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Director Mijbil Alayoub said: "We are very eager to lead the discussion of IoT in Kuwait today, as the Kuwaiti market is one of the fastest markets to adopt the latest trends in technology. This echoes our core values of caring, connecting, and challenging, and we strongly believe that it is important for all telecom service providers to innovate within the modes of usage of telecommunications today,



namely the IoT which will play a vital part in the near future." Ooredoo Kuwait is committed to bringing users the best and most advanced services, to fulfil its mission of enriching people's lives through technology and embracing digitalization.

Ooredoo's operations in Kuwait date back to December 1999 when it launched wireless services as the second operator. The company today provides mobile, broadband internet and corporate managed services tailored to the needs of customers and busi-



Mijbil Alayoub



nesses. Ooredoo Kuwait -which is an enlisted company in the Kuwait Stock Exchange Market - operates a number of telecom service providers in the region, such as Ooredoo Algeria, Ooredoo Tunisia, Ooredoo Maldives, and Wataniya Palestine. Ooredoo Kuwait is a member of the international Ooredoo Group based in Doha, Qatar.

Faring badly: Uber struggles to make inroads in Japan

TOKYO: Uber may be shredding business models for taxi firms the world over but it is struggling to make inroads in Japan, where risk-averse passengers prefer to stick to their high-quality traditional taxi service. Japan, with its wealthy customer base and megacities like Tokyo, should represent rich pickings for Uber. In 2015, the national market for taxis had a turnover of 1.73 trillion yen (\$15.2 billion), according to transport ministry data.

There are 50,000 taxis in Tokyo alone-instantly recognisable with their impeccable polished exteriors and doors that open automatically to let valued customers board effortlessly.

And with hailing a taxi rarely taking more than a few seconds in the major cities, there has been sluggish take-up of Uber, where consumers order an unlicensed car via smartphone. "Japanese people don't like taking risks, they are risk averse. They are quite strict when it comes to the quality of service," said Ichiro Kawanabe, CEO of Nihon Kotsu, the main Tokyo taxi firm founded by his grandfather in 1928.

Given this, "when Uber tried to messily enter the market, no one wanted them", Kawanabe, who is also chairman of the Japanese taxi federation, told AFP. Uber also ran up against local legislation — it is strictly forbidden to operate a taxi without a license. So it tried to enter the Japanese market via another route, setting up a pilot car-sharing service in 2015 in the western city of Fukuoka.

Uber said it was a study into the needs of the local community but authorities quickly slammed on the brakes, saying it could be considered an unlicensed taxi service and raising questions of safety. —AFP

Two rookie astronauts, cosmonaut blast off to ISS

BAIKONUR, Kazakhstan: A three-man space crew featuring American and Japanese rookie astronauts as well as an experienced Russian cosmonaut blasted off yesterday for a six-month mission at the International Space Station.

Scott Tingle of NASA, Anton Shkaplerov of Roscosmos and Norishige Kanai of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency powered into the sky in a Soyuz MS-07 spacecraft from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan at 1:21 pm (0721 GMT). NASA TV footage from inside the Soyuz capsule showed a toy poodle made by Shkaplerov's cousin and modelled on the cosmonaut's family dog floating around the capsule as the spacecraft entered zero gravity.

Roscosmos confirmed the Soyuz crew had launched "successfully" in a Sunday statement on the space agency's website. While most flights to the ISS now take around six hours, the trio are taking the more circuitous two-day route due to the lab's position in space at the time of the launch. Docking is expected tomorrow at 0843 GMT. Both Tingle, 52, and Kanai, 40, are first-time flyers but flight commander Shkaplerov, 43, is an experienced hand. The former Russian military pilot has spent exactly a year in space over two missions and will mark his birthday in orbit for the third time in February next year.

Voting from space

Shkaplerov told journalists at a pre-flight press conference on Saturday that he intends to vote from space in Russia's March presidential election, which incumbent Vladimir Putin is widely expected to win. "We (cosmonauts), like all conscientious citizens of Russia, participate in the presidential elections," he said. Kanai is the youngest astronaut in the history of the Japanese space agency, and the last of a trio of Japanese astronauts who were certified for travel to the ISS back in 2011. Japan is not training any more astronauts for ISS missions but announced plans earlier this year to send its first astronaut to the moon by 2030 as part of a NASA-led mission.



Member of the International Space Station (ISS) expedition 53/54, Roscosmos cosmonaut Anton Shkaplerov reacts as his space suit is tested in the Russian-leased Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan early yesterday. —AFP

US Navy captain Tingle is a graduate of Purdue University in Indiana, which also counts space legend Neil Armstrong among its alumni. Earlier this week the mechanical engineer tweeted a photo of a rosy dawn emerging over the frosty Kazakh steppe in Baikonur as he prepared for his debut mission. "Sunrise at Baikonur as we head out to the Vehicle Assembly building for our second, and last, fit check!" he wrote.

20 years in orbit

The space travellers will join Russia's Alexander Misurkin and NASA pair Mark Vande Hei and Joe

Acaba currently aboard the ISS. Tomorrow's docking will mark a prompt crew rotation after Sergei Ryazansky of Roscosmos, NASA's Randy Bresnik and European Space Agency astronaut Paolo Nespoli returned to earth on Thursday. NASA stopped its own manned launches to the ISS in 2011 but recently moved to increase the crew complement on the US section of the ISS to four as the Russians cut theirs to two in a cost-saving measure announced last year. The ISS laboratory, a rare example of American and Russian cooperation, has been orbiting Earth at about 28,000 kilometers per hour since 1998. —AFP

Canon Mideast showcases innovative solutions through purpose-built expo

DUBAI: Canon Middle East (CME), a leader in imaging solutions, hosted its regional partners, where they witnessed the latest innovative imaging products and solutions that are to transform and support the growth of their businesses in a fast-paced, technologically-enabled future. Held in Dubai over two days, the Annual Partner Conference aimed at further cementing Canon's role as a partner of choice for organizations within the evolving world of business.

Highlighting Canon Inc.'s 80-year imaging history and marking Canon Europe's 60-year anniversary, the conference engulfed a "Be future ready" theme. In line with promoting Open communication, New possibilities and Extended horizons (ONE), the conference featured an exhibition-like flow which demonstrated the full Canon Eco system range for consumers and businesses alike. Thus, allowing its partners to experience Canon's journey throughout its decades long history and encounter the progression and projection of how technologies can be used in the future.

Anurag Agrawal, Managing Director of CME, said: "The Annual Partner Conference is a flagship event for CME, and this year we are also celebrating Canon Inc.'s 80th year of operation and Canon Europe's 60th year anniversary. We embarked on this journey to not only showcase our achievements, but to also focus on what we can offer businesses and consumers in the decades to come. We are looking to the future as it eminently approaches and we want to equip our partners with the best possible agile and seamless solutions that deliver maximum efficiency levels, increase productivity and enhance their competitive advantage."

Canon's products and solutions were not mere stand-alones, but part of a journey to emphasize oneness. Interactive walls and tunnels displayed fantastic imagery



as the partners walked through the various zones, which were also combined with immersive projection experiences and multi-dimensional holograms to create a visually compelling, intriguing and futuristic experience for the visitors. The live demonstration of Canon's consumer products and solutions working together seamlessly followed the "Live for the story" theme and incorporated the "Shoot-Remember-Share" ecosystem which is tied to Canon's consumer-bound range of products.

The Partner Conference exhibition also combined several elements that brought Canon's story of the past and future to life. Emphasizing the importance of standing out from the rest of the competition, Canon's range of business solutions embodied an "Evolve-Inspire-Improve" ecosystem which was accompanied by the live demonstration of 5 value propositions "Differentiate, Transform, Accelerate, Simplify and Evolve". All of which would trigger higher efficiency levels, growth rates, and profitability levels; ultimately allowing the partners to witness hands-on what Canon is all about: innovation.

"During this year's Partner Conference, Canon was able to truly demonstrate how our products and serv-

ices work together to form a whole new concept. Culminating the exhibition with 'Elemental' - a fictitious beauty brand campaign developed from scratch by Canon with photographer and filmmaker Clive Booth to highlight the power of print for businesses. The campaign followed Canon's ethos of storytelling through compelling imagery; whether it is for individuals or businesses communicating their brand. Further demonstrating how our innovations are interconnected to better serve our customers, and showcases to our partners what opportunities lie for their businesses," added Agrawal.

At the Conference, Agrawal also highlighted the path-breaking initiatives taken by Canon in 2017 which included opening the first Innovation Centre in the region, serving as a live showroom for businesses to view and test Canon's products and solutions first hand. In addition, Canon hosted the second 'Frontiers of Innovation Forum' in partnership with MEED earlier this year. The forum provided a platform for driving innovation, sharing ideas, and gaining insights and experiences between the public and private sectors

to generate solutions for the future of industries and societies.

"As we celebrate our achievements, Canon also aims to discuss alternate business growth opportunities and strengthen our association with our partners, who contribute significantly to our success. We live in a world where the future will be reliant on technology and where our cities will be smart; and we must be prepared to welcome these changes and adapt to them. If businesses don't evolve today and adopt digital transformation solutions, they will not be able to compete in an environment which will be very different to today's - especially as digitally-savvy consumers of the future seek a more connected, seamless world."

The Annual Partner Conference served as a key platform for the company to highlight its achievements over the past 80 years and address what the future of imaging holds for its partners in the region. Hosting the entire Canon Eco system, concluded with a series of organized excursions, an exclusive gala dinner and an awards ceremony to acknowledge the top performing partners for the year.

Health

Italy bakes world's biggest panettone Christmas cake

The 2-metre high marvel cake weighs 140kg

MILAN: Forget mistletoe, Christmas is not Christmas in Italy without a slice of panettone and festivities kicked off in Milan yesterday with free slices of the biggest Italian candied cake in the world. Weighing in at 140 kilograms (308 pounds), the two-metre (over six foot) high marvel was sliced up into 1,200 pieces for sweet-toothed tourists and locals at the Victor Emmanuel II shopping gallery near the city's Gothic cathedral. "Panettone is the Christmas dessert par excellence. Fashions may change, but panettone remains an unshakable tradition," Angelo Bernasconi, owner of the San Gregorio patisserie behind the giant dome-shaped delight said.



Panettone an unshakable tradition

The Milanese factory makes the traditional cake with its candied fruits and raisins not just for Italy but around the world, with some 200 of the golden buns headed to a New York caterer alone each week. In the run-up to Christmas "we never stop," says Bernasconi's partner Savino Moretti, who is retired but comes twice a week

to pass on his 50 years of experience to the pastry team. The pair, aged 67 and 68, say the secret to their success lies in the mother dough, which they inherited along with the shop from the master baker, who made it—so legend has it—by adding a dash of horse urine to the mix for acidity.

It takes 36 hours to turn out a panettone, with raisins and candied peel added to the mix of water, sugar, flour, eggs, butter and vanilla. Once baked, the cakes are hung upside down for 10 hours to allow the butter to drop. The giant version had to be cooked in a special oven and was baked "a lot longer and more slowly," Bernasconi says. "It tastes

good, but a little different from usual. It's a little dry, otherwise it would collapse," he added. According to the Italian agricultural association Coldiretti, three quarters of Italians will have a slice of panettone at some point over the Christmas holidays — perhaps with a dollop of mascarpone cream or washed down with a sweet liqueur.—AFP



MILAN: Policemen in high uniform pose next to a giant 'Panettone' yesterday in the Vittorio Emanuele II gallery in Milan. The Panettone, a typical brioche of Christmas in the Lombardy region, is traditionally stuffed with raisins, candied fruits and citrus zest. —AFP

Blind women 'seeing' cancer with fingertips

CALI: Leidy Garcia awoke one morning in 2011 to discover she could no longer see. By then, Francia Papamija was already blind. Disease swept away one sense but sharpened another, and their heightened sense of touch has become a valuable weapon in Colombia's fight against breast cancer. Garcia and Papamija are two of five women who are blind or visually impaired who have been specially trained to use their fingertips to detect breast cancer, one of Colombia's biggest killers. The disease is responsible for 2,500 deaths annu-

ally in Colombia, where 7,000 new cases are detected each year in a country where sophisticated detection equipment is rare.

They are among the latest practitioners to use a method made popular a decade ago by German doctor Frank Hoffman, who noted that the blind have an innate facility to detect nodules—groupings of cells—which may be the first signs of the disease. "People with visual impairment have an increased sensitivity," said Luis Alberto Olave, a surgeon and coordinator of the Hands Save Lives project at Cali's San

Juan de Dios hospital. "There is a greater sense of touch and greater discrimination of the elements." Hoffman's method was tested in Germany and Austria and was brought to South America with support from Latin American bank CAF.

Five women between the ages of 25 and 35, free of vascular or neurological problems that could impede their sensitivity, were chosen. After training, they graduated as tactile examining assistants. Since then, they have evaluated more than 900 patients, their fight against cancer a simultaneous battle against discrimination. "We are breaking a paradigm where people believe that because we have a disability, we cannot think or do things for ourselves," said Papamija, 35, who lost her sight at age seven when she suffered a detached retina.

'Better' results

At the hospital, physicians found that checks carried out by the blind auxiliary assistants had "better" results than those with the regular evaluation. "The clinical examination performed by them is a more elaborate examination and requires more time," Olave said. "This generated in our patients a sense of well-being and comfort that they did not find with the case with a doctor using traditional methods."

While clinical trials show that a woman performing self-examination can detect masses of between 15-20 millimeters and a doctor can find one of 10 millimeters, the blind can find nodules as small as eight millimeters. Regular mammograms are widely available in the developed world and recommended for women over

the age of 40, but such services are not widely available in Colombia where sophisticated medical facilities are relatively rare, making the Cali hospital's "hands on" approach all the more vital. "In developing countries, where we have certain limitations in technology to diagnose breast cancer, manual examination continues to be of great importance," said Olave.

Garcia went almost totally blind six years ago after suffering a cerebral thrombosis, a trauma which forced her to cut short her engineering studies. "People who see well are very visual—that is, they let themselves be guided by what they see. I locate myself a lot by touching and hearing," the 26-year-old said. Garcia palpates patient's breasts for cysts or lumps, highlighting possible nodules by marking them with yellow and red tape.—AFP

CLINIC

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What's On

Uzbek cultural exhibition held at Ahmad Al-Adwani Art Gallery



Officials inaugurate the Uzbek cultural exhibition at Ahmad Al-Adwani Art Gallery. — Photos by Joseph Shagra



By Faten Omar

The National Council for Culture, Arts, and Letters (NCCAL) inaugurated yesterday the Uzbek cultural exhibition. Held at Ahmad Al-Adwani Art Gallery in Abdullah Al-Salem, the event took place in cooperation with the Embassy of Uzbekistan, as part of the Uzbek cultural week. Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Kuwait Dr Bakhromjon Alov and NCCAL Secretary General Ali Al-Yoha, cut the ribbon to officially open the exhibition in presence of ambassadors, officials and the media.

Ambassador Alov announced that this is the first 'Uzbek Week' event in Kuwait, which concludes today. "It is with great satisfaction that we launch this initiative this year when Kuwait is the

capital of the Islamic culture, and thanks to the vision of His Highness the Amir, great importance is being given to the development of cultural relations," the envoy said. Art and culture are the link that connects countries to each other, he noted, adding that the event aims to bring more Uzbek culture to Kuwait, concentrating during a week on a range of art exhibitions, concerts, lectures, and several activities to increase the excellent relations between Uzbekistan and Kuwait.

"We wish that this initiative will attract the enthusiastic participation of our Kuwaiti friends," Alov said. "Special thanks go, first of all, to the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, for the important support in the organization of three beautiful concerts. Then to our generous sponsors, who helped us make this Uzbek Week come true."



The Sheraton Kuwait wins 3 prizes at 2017 World Luxury Hotel Awards

The Sheraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel continues to offer award-winning standards of excellence and hospitality since its inception in 1966 and providing the widest selection of accommodations. The property has established over half a century collection of achievements and accomplishments and now with the recent 'World Luxury Hotel Awards' ceremony which was held at the Kulm Hotel St Moritz in Switzerland, we were awarded as Country Winner for three categories, our second time to win as Luxury Historical Hotel for 2016 and 2017 respectively. The hotel won the prizes for the following categories: Luxury Historical Hotel, Luxury Hotel and Luxury Country Hotel.

With a proven track record of achieve-

ments enforcing its presence over many years in the industry supported by the loyalty of its guests and as well as all the major companies that continues to trust us, more than anything else, we consider this as the real honor, the continued patronage of our clientele.

More to offer, the Sheraton Kuwait, a Luxury Collection Hotel adds value to its high-end services from the extraordinary weddings being held in its great ballrooms especially the Diamond Grand Ballroom throughout the generations, exceptional celebrations done at the majestic Crystal Ballroom, intimate gatherings at the Coral Ballroom and fully-equipped function rooms are also available for corporate events.

Never ending choices for our restaurant patrons to choose from: Italian, Indian, Persian, Lebanese and International cuisine. The Riccardo, Bukhara, Shahrayar, Le Tarbouche, Al-Hambra and the English Tea Lounge continues to mesmerize guests with refined taste and more importantly we have branched out to the Avenues Mall, bringing these incomparable restaurants closer to the people's heart, where they can enjoy shopping and dining at the same time. Fahed Abushaar - General Manager of Sheraton Kuwait stated "I am extremely honored for the awards and I would like to thank each member of our hotel family for their out-



standing diligence and the loyalty of our guests as we could not have received these awards without their trust and validation. We shall maintain the highest standards of excellence in service and hospitality adding that these awards and the continuing trust of our guests are the true symbol of success - as the social enduring icon of Kuwait.

Coffea Cafe now in Al-Hamra Mall

Coffea Cafe, a renowned coffee chain, announced the opening of its first branch in Kuwait at the Al-Hamra Mall in Sharq. The event was attended by the cafe team, media representatives, and coffee lovers in Kuwait, where everyone enjoyed the rich and finest coffee taste. The cafe is setting new standards in Kuwait, giving the opportunity to everyone to enjoy their favorite coffee from the world's rarest, most exalted options.

Coffea coffee is distinguished by its unique, rich taste that is prepared by the well-trained baristas who are inspired by Sasa Sestic- The Coffee Man World Barista Champion. The Coffea team believes that coffee lovers in Kuwait deserve the best, that's why Coffea has collaborated with the world's most famous baristas to train its team, as well as to provide high-quality whole bean coffees that are brought from the best roasteries in the world.

Expect more than coffee! Coffea offers a wide selection of handcrafted coffee that is imported from around the world, starting from espresso to iced coffee. If you pay a visit to Coffea cafe, the coffee aroma will definitely lead you to the place that offers an experience found nowhere else in the world.



Magical festive celebration at Marriott Hotels in Kuwait

The tree, the glittering decor, the fun and festive ambience all combine to make Marriott Hotels in Kuwait the perfect venues to celebrate the Christmas and New Year in style. The festivities begin with a grand Christmas celebration, diners visiting Kuwait's best steakhouse 'Terrace Grill' at the JW Marriott Kuwait City can enjoy an unforgettable holiday dining experience accompanied by the finest certified US Angus beef, wagyu beef cuts and mouth-watering seafood dishes for lunch and dinner. Meanwhile, guests visiting the Crossroads Restaurant will be treated to an elegant international buffet featuring traditional Christmas dishes including roasted turkey with cranberry sauce, stuffed turkey, Christmas cake and a lot more.

Furthermore, guests visiting the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel's renowned "Soul and Spice" Restaurant on Christmas can enjoy an exceptional lunch and dinner filled with Christmas cheer. At the Atrium Restaurant, located in the heart of the hotel's stunning lobby, diners can feast on a huge selection of international Christmas dishes including roasted turkey with cranberry sauce, Yorkshire pudding, special Christmas desserts and much more.

To top off the captivating Christmas mood, guests are invited to ring in the New Year with live entertainment and a wide range of gastronomic delights at Marriott properties to Bid Adieu to 2017 in style. The JW Marriott Kuwait City is set to be transformed into the trendiest place in town, with the lively ambience at Crossroads Restaurant complete with music and sensational dEcor, including party poppers, hats and horns. The Terrace Grill Steakhouse will offer mesmerizing live music



and a delicious five-course menu.

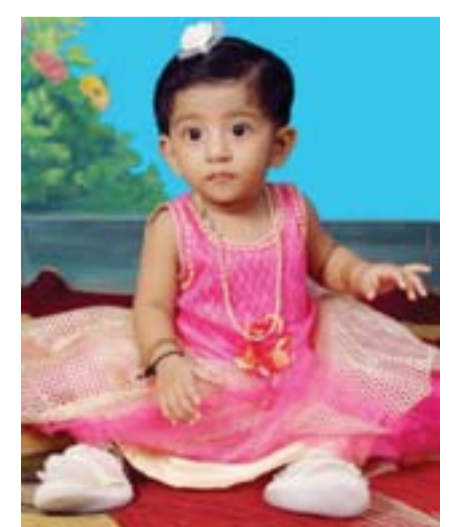
In addition, guests at the Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait City will celebrate the countdown to 2018 with elegance and style as three of Kuwait's finest restaurants share their cuisine to create an extravagant evening of delicious food, live music and general merriment. Blendz Restaurant at the Residence by Marriott Kuwait City will also be offering

special a la carte menus throughout the Festive Season.

"We would like to take this opportunity to wish our guests and their families a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year," Said George Aoun, the hotels' Cluster General Manager. "This year we have upgraded our food & beverage menus to provide a high level of guest satisfaction" Aoun added.

TIES hosts Tafseer class

You are cordially invited to our Tafseer class (Divine Wisdom from the Last Testament) today at 7:00 pm. In this class, we will focus on Surat Al-Mulk (The Dominion) from verse 12 till 15. We will discuss revering Allah (SWT) with awe and fear, and its great reward. We will also ponder some bounties conferred upon us, our subsequent responsibilities and why Allah defers punishment until an evil intention is acted upon. Finally, we will describe the people who will be in the shade of Allah's throne on Judgment Day and the reason for that distinction.



Happy first birthday to Kabira, our precious gift from Almighty Allah. May Allah bless you with good health, wealth, love and happiness forever. Wishes from family and friends.

TV



01:30 Iron Man
03:40 Rise Of The Planet Of The Apes
05:30 Batman: The Killing Joke
06:50 Rampage: President Down
08:30 Iron Man
10:35 Rise Of The Planet Of The Apes
12:20 Misfire
13:55 Beyond Redemption
15:30 Taxi
17:10 Iron Man 2
19:20 Street Fighter
21:05 Terminator Genisys
23:15 The Green Inferno

18:35 Punk'd (Bet)
19:00 Punk'd (Bet)
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 Jeff Ross Roasts America
22:50 Teachers
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:30 Ultimate Survival
01:20 North America
02:10 North America
03:00 Origins
03:25 Origins
03:50 Destroyed In Seconds
04:15 Destroyed In Seconds
04:40 Destroyed In Seconds
05:05 Destroyed In Seconds
05:30 Destroyed In Seconds
05:55 Destroyed In Seconds
06:20 How It's Made
06:40 How It's Made
07:00 Destroyed In Seconds
07:25 Destroyed In Seconds
07:50 North America
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 Nextworld
10:20 Ultimate Survival
11:10 Racers
12:00 Somebody's Gotta Do It
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 Tethered
17:50 Somebody's Gotta Do It
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 Tethered
22:00 Somebody's Gotta Do It
22:50 Ultimate Survival
23:40 North America

23:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
23:45 Lolorock



00:00 PJ Masks
00:30 Vampirina
01:00 The Hive
01:15 Calimero
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Loopdidoo
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopdidoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopdidoo
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 Loopdidoo
07:00 Henry Hugglemonster
07:15 Calimero
07:30 Loopdidoo
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 Mickey's Monster Musical
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
15:55 Sofia The First
16:00 PJ Masks
16:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
17:00 Doc McStuffins
17:30 Vampirina
18:00 Frozen In Time
19:00 Sofia The First
19:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers

00:00 Bakers vs. Fakers
01:00 Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy
01:30 Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy
02:00 Private Chef
02:30 Private Chef
03:00 Chopped
04:00 Bakers vs. Fakers
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
18:00 Chopped Junior
19:00 Holiday Baking Championship
20:00 Restaurant: Impossible
21:00 Mystery Diners
21:30 Mystery Diners
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped



00:20 Street Outlaws
01:05 Diesel Brothers
01:50 Supertrucks
02:35 What On Earth?
03:20 Misfit Garage
04:05 Deadliest Catch
04:50 Alaska: The Last Frontier (Season Specials)
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Gold Divers: Under The Ice
06:45 Street Outlaws
07:30 Misfit Garage
08:15 Deadliest Catch
09:00 Container Wars
09:25 How Do They Do It?
09:47 How Do They Do It?
10:12 Street Outlaws
10:57 Garage Rehab
11:42 Misfit Garage
12:28 How Do They Do It?
12:48 Extreme Collectors
13:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier (Season Specials)
13:55 Deadliest Catch
14:40 Gold Divers: Under The Ice
15:25 Misfit Garage
16:10 Street Outlaws
17:00 How Do They Do It?
17:25 How Do They Do It?
17:50 Extreme Collectors
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 Gold Rush
21:50 Gold Divers
22:40 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune
23:30 Misfit Garage



06:00 Disney11
06:25 Supa Strikas S5
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 & Ferb: Night Of The...
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 Suite Life Of Zack & Cody. The...
15:30 Gravity Falls
16:20 Two More Eggs
16:25 Lab Rats
16:50 Lab Rats
17:15 Kirby Buckets
17:40 Kirby Buckets
18:05 Supa Strikas
18:35 Disney's Ant-Man
18:35 Disney11
19:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
19:25 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot
19:55 Walk The Prank
20:20 Walk The Prank
20:45 Supa Strikas
21:10 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



00:00 WAGS La
00:50 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
01:50 E! News

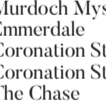
02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:20 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
04:40 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
06:55 E! News
07:25 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
08:20 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
09:15 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian
10:10 E! News
10:40 Celebrity Style Story
11:10 WAGS La
12:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
14:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
15:00 E! News
15:30 Celebrity Style Story
16:00 WAGS La
17:00 WAGS La
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21:30 Mystery Diners
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
23:00 Chopped



00:00 Who's Doing The Dishes?
01:00 Emmerdale
01:30 Emmerdale
02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 The Chase
03:25 The Family Chase
04:25 5 Star Family Reunion
05:15 Murdoch Mysteries
06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
07:05 The Chase
08:00 The Family Chase
08:50 5 Star Family Reunion
09:35 Tracey Ullman's Show
10:05 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 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs At Christmas
16:55 Tracey Ullman's Show
17:25 Raised By Wolves
17:50 Murdoch Mysteries
18:45 Emmerdale
19:15 Coronation Street
19:45 Coronation Street
20:10 The Chase
21:00 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs At Christmas
21:55 Tracey Ullman's Show
22:25 Raised By Wolves
22:50 Emmerdale
23:15 Coronation Street
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Cities Of The Underworld
01:00 UFO Files
02:00 Hangar I: The UFO Files
03:00 Hangar I: The UFO Files
03:50 Hangar I: The UFO Files
04:40 Ancient Top 10
05:30 Cities Of The Underworld
06:20 Ancient Impossible
07:10 The Universe
08:00 UFO Files
09:00 Ancient Impossible
10:00 Ancient Discoveries
11:00 Hangar I: The UFO Files
12:00 Hangar I: The UFO Files
13:00 Hangar I: The UFO Files
14:00 UFO Files
15:00 Ancient Top 10
16:00 Ancient Impossible
17:00 Ancient Discoveries
18:00 Hangar I: The UFO Files
19:00 Ancient Discoveries
20:00 Clash Of Warriors
21:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded
22:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence
23:00 10 Things You Don't Know About...



00:21 Ultimate Wheels
01:11 American Pickers
02:00 Swamp People
02:50 Counting Cars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Time Team
03:48 The Loud House
04:12 The Loud House
04:36 Breadwinners

06:50 American Pickers
07:40 Counting Cars
08:05 Counting Cars
08:30 Pawn Stars
08:55 Tbc
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 America's Greatest Prison Breaks
21:50 WW2 Treasure Hunters
22:40 Time Team
23:30 Alone



00:45 Maximum Foodie
01:10 Food School
01:40 Places We Go
02:05 Places We Go
02:35 Miguel's Feasts
03:00 Jose Andres: Dinner In Haiti
03:55 The Food Files
04:25 The Food Files
04:50 Eat Street
05:20 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
06:15 A Is For Apple
06:40 A Is For Apple
07:10 Places We Go
07:35 Places We Go
08:05 Miguel's Feasts
08:30 Jose Andres: Dinner In Haiti
09:25 The Food Files
09:55 The Food Files
10:20 Eat Street
10:50 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
11:45 A Is For Apple
12:10 A Is For Apple
12:40 Places We Go
13:05 Places We Go
13:35 Confucius Was A Foodie
14:30 Miguel's Feasts
14:55 The Food Files
15:25 The Food Files
15:50 Eat Street
16:20 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
17:15 A Is For Apple
17:40 A Is For Apple
18:10 Poh & Co.
18:35 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
19:05 The Food Files
19:30 Eat Street
20:00 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
21:00 A Is For Apple
21:30 A Is For Apple
22:00 Poh & Co.
22:25 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
22:55 Places We Go
23:20 Places We Go
23:50 Confucius Was A Foodie



00:10 Cold Water Gold
01:00 The Long Road Home
02:00 Heroes Of The Long Road Home
03:00 Hubble's Amazing Journey
04:00 Cold Water Gold
05:00 Caught In The Act
06:00 Born To Ride
07:00 Hard Time
08:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware
09:00 Caught In The Act
09:40 Facing...
11:00 Live Free Or Die
12:00 Brain Games
12:30 How To Win At Everything
13:00 Born To Ride
14:00 Uncensored With Michael Ware
15:00 Locked Up Abroad
16:00 Dian Fossey: Secrets In The Mist
17:00 Live Free Or Die
18:00 Supercar Megabuild
19:00 Locked Up Abroad
20:00 Dian Fossey: Secrets In The Mist
20:50 Live Free Or Die
21:40 Supercar Megabuild
22:30 Locked Up Abroad
23:20 Brain Games
23:45 How To Win At Everything



00:20 Savage Kingdom: Uprising
01:10 Deadly Instincts
02:00 Return Of The Lion
02:50 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
03:45 Secret Brazil
04:40 Secrets Of The Giant Manta Ray
05:35 Return Of The Lion
06:30 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
07:25 Secret Brazil
08:20 Secrets Of The Giant Manta Ray
09:15 Incredible Insects
10:10 My Life Is A Zoo
11:05 Animal ER
12:00 When Sharks Attack
Compilations
12:55 Storm Cats
13:50 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
14:45 Secret Brazil
15:40 The Naked Superhero
16:35 World's Weirdest: Funny Farms
17:30 My Life Is A Zoo
18:25 Animal ER
19:20 Secret Brazil
20:10 The Naked Superhero
21:00 World's Weirdest: Funny Farms
21:50 My Life Is A Zoo
22:40 Animal ER
23:30 When Sharks Attack
Compilations



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

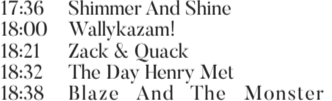
05:00 Breadwinners
05:24 Get Blake
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
07:24 Rabbids Invasion
07:48 Get Blake
08:12 Harvey Beaks
08:36 Sanjay And Craig
09:00 SpongeBob SquarePants
09:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
09:48 Henry Danger
10:12 Game Shakers
10:36 Regal Academy
11:00 Splitting Adam
11:24 Rabbids Invasion
11:48 Breadwinners
12:24 Sanjay And Craig
13:00 Hunter Street
13:48 Hunter Street
14:12 I Am Frankie
14:36 The Thundermans
15:00 One Crazy Cruise
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 Ride
20:36 Ride
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



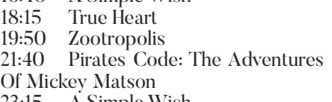
00:15 Shimmer And Shine
00:39 Shimmer And Shine
01:01 Max & Ruby
01:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:47 The Day Henry Met
01:52 The Day Henry Met
01:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:41 Zack & Quack
02:52 Kid-E-Cats
02:58 Kid-E-Cats
03:04 Shimmer And Shine
03:26 Nella The Princess Knight
03:38 Paw Patrol
04:01 Little Charmers
04:13 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
04:24 Dora The Explorer
04:46 Max & Ruby
05:06 The Day Henry Met
05:13 Nella The Princess Knight
05:35 Shimmer And Shine
05:59 Wallykazam!
06:21 Zack & Quack
06:32 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
08:11 Kid-E-Cats
08:16 Kid-E-Cats
08:22 Bubble Guppies
08:45 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:07 Paw Patrol
09:31 Shimmer And Shine
09:54 Nella The Princess Knight
10:15 The Day Henry Met
10:20 Paw Patrol
10:43 Rusty Rivets
11:06 Wallykazam!
11:29 Bubble Guppies
11:53 Team Umizoomi
12:16 Shimmer And Shine
12:30 Shimmer And Shine
13:02 Max & Ruby
13:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:35 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:46 The Day Henry Met
13:51 The Day Henry Met
13:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:41 Zack & Quack
14:52 Kid-E-Cats
14:57 Kid-E-Cats
15:03 Shimmer And Shine
15:25 Nella The Princess Knight
15:37 Paw Patrol
16:00 Little Charmers
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22:21 Paw Patrol
22:44 Rusty Rivets
23:07 Wallykazam!
23:30 Bubble Guppies
23:53 Team Umizoomi



00:15 Natural Born Killers
02:15 Blown Away
04:20 I'll See You In My Dreams
06:00 The Theory Of Everything
08:10 In The Heart Of The Sea
10:20 The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out Of Water
12:00 Blown Away
14:10 Twins
16:00 Mr. Popper's Penguins
17:40 Unbroken
20:00 Dreamgirls
22:10 LA Bamba



00:00 Black Box
01:00 Black Box
02:00 Cougar Town
03:00 Cougar Town
04:00 Who Lives Here?
04:30 Who Lives Here?
05:00 House Of DVF
06:00 Black Box
07:00 Black Box
08:00 Cougar Town
08:30 Cougar Town
09:00 Fashion StartUp
10:00 Who Lives Here?
10:30 Who Lives Here?
11:00 House Of DVF
12:00 Black Box
13:00 Black Box
14:00 Cougar Town
14:30 Cougar Town
15:00 Fashion StartUp
16:00 Who Lives Here?
16:30 Who Lives Here?
17:00 House Of DVF
18:00 Project Runway
19:00 Project Runway
20:00 Wedding Band
21:00 Fashion StartUp
22:00 Who Lives Here?
23:00 Who Lives Here?
23:00 House Of DVF



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

Halloween
11:40 Men At Work
13:25 Daddy's Home
15:10 Sneakers
17:15 Six Dance Lessons In Six Weeks
19:05 Down To Earth
20:40 The Last Shot
22:15 Middle Men



00:45 Requiem For A Dream
02:30 No God No Master
04:15 Healing
06:15 Fort McCoy
08:05 No God No Master
09:50 Healing
11:50 Every Thing Will Be Fine
13:55 Far From Men
15:45 Lawrence Of Arabia
19:25 The Yellow Handkerchief
21:10 Hidden Agenda
23:10 Crisscross



01:00 Amila's Secret
02:15 DinoFroz - An Island In The Sky
03:50 The Incredible Adventures Of Professor Braneastawn
05:00 Ghosthunters On Ice Trails
06:45 The Fairy Tales Tree
08:20 Moomins And The Comet Chase
09:55 Moomin And Midsummer Madness
11:30 The Secret Of Kells
13:00 DinoFroz - An Island In The Sky
14:35 The Incredible Adventures Of Professor Braneastawn
15:45 Louis & Luca And The Snow Machine
17:10 Moomin And Midsummer Madness
18:55 Simba The King Lion
21:00 Elias And The Royal Yacht
22:25 Louis & Luca And The Snow Machine
23:50 Moomins And The Comet Chase



00:15 Natural Born Killers
02:15 Blown Away
04:20 I'll See You In My Dreams
06:00 The Theory Of Everything
08:10 In The Heart Of The Sea
10:20 The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out Of Water
12:00 Blown Away
14:10 Twins
16:00 Mr. Popper's Penguins
17:40 Unbroken
20:00 Dreamgirls
22:10 LA Bamba



00:40 Space Voyages
04:00 Mythbusters
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:26 The Big Brain Theory
09:14 Mythbusters
10:02 Space Voyages
10:52 How Do They Do It?
11:14 Food Factory USA
11:38 How The Universe Works
12:26 The Big Brain Theory
13:14 Mythbusters
14:02 How Do They Do It?
14:26 Food Factory USA
14:50 Space Voyages
15:38 The Big Brain Theory
16:26 How The Universe Works
17:14 Mythbusters
18:02 Space Voyages
18:50 The Big Brain Theory
19:40 Mythbusters
20:30 X-Machines
21:20 How Do They Do It?
21:45 Food Factory USA
22:10 Strip The Cosmos
23:00 X-Machines
23:50 The Big Brain Theory



00:00 Black Box
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04:00 Who Lives Here?
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14:30 Cougar Town
15:00 Fashion StartUp
16:00 Who Lives Here?
16:30 Who Lives Here?
17:00 House Of DVF
18:00 Project Runway
19:00 Project Runway
20:00 Wedding Band
21:00 Fashion StartUp
22:00 Who Lives Here?
23:00 Who Lives Here?
23:00 House Of DVF



00:20 Meet The Putmans
01:05 Hair Goddess
01:50 Promzillas
02:35 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
03:20 Little People, Big World
04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras
04:50 Designer Darlings
05:35 Say Yes To The Dress UK
06:00 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
06:45 Meet The Putmans
07:30 Mormon Half Love
08:15 Little People, Big World
09:00 Cake Boss
09:25 Toddlers & Tiaras
10:10 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
10:55 Too Ugly For Love?
11:40 Meet The Putmans
12:25 The Spouse House
13:10 Sister Wives
13:55 Toddlers & Tiaras
14:40 Little People, Big World
15:25 Too Ugly For Love?
16:10 Love At First Swipe
16:35 Cake Boss
17:00 Say Yes To The Dress UK
17:25 Say Yes To The Dress UK
17:50 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
18:50 Dare To Wear



00:00 The Good Karma Hospital
00:50 Death In Paradise
01:45 Doctor Foster
02:40 New Tricks
03:30 Doctors
04:10 Doctors
04:40 Eastenders
05:10 The Good Karma Hospital
06:00 Eastenders
06:30 Death In Paradise
07:25 I Want My Wife Back
07:55 Doctor Who
08:55 Doctors
09:25 Eastenders
09:55 Death In Paradise
10:50 New Tricks
11:45 Doctor Who
12:45 Stella
13:30 Doctors
14:05 Eastenders
14:35 Death In Paradise
15:30 Doctor Who
16:35 Stella
17:15 Casually
18:05 Doctor Who: The Return Of Doctor Mysterio
19:05 Death In Paradise
20:00 Call The Midwife: Christmas Special 2016
21:30 The Detectivists: Christmas Special 2015
22:00 Line Of Duty
23:00 Ss-Gb



00:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
01:00 The Jersey Slayings
02:00 Homicide Hunter
03:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
04:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
05:00 The Jersey Slayings
06:00 Homicide Hunter
07:00 The First 48
08:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
09:00 It Takes A Killer
09:30 It Takes A Killer
10:00 Homicide Hunter
11:00 Cold Case Files
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 Cold Case Files
17:00 The First 48
18:00 It Takes A Killer
18:30 It Takes A Killer
19:00 Evil Up Close
20:00 Evil Up Close
21:00 Evil Up Close
22:00 Cold Case Files
23:00 The Eleven



0:05 Comedy Central Roast: Justin Bieber
01:40 Jeff Ross Roasts America
02:35 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
03:25 Tosh.0
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 Catch A Contractor
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 Catch A Contractor
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 Comedy Salwagef
16:30 Impractical Jokers
16:55 Friends
17:20 Friends
17:45 Disaster Date
18:10 Ridiculousness Arabia



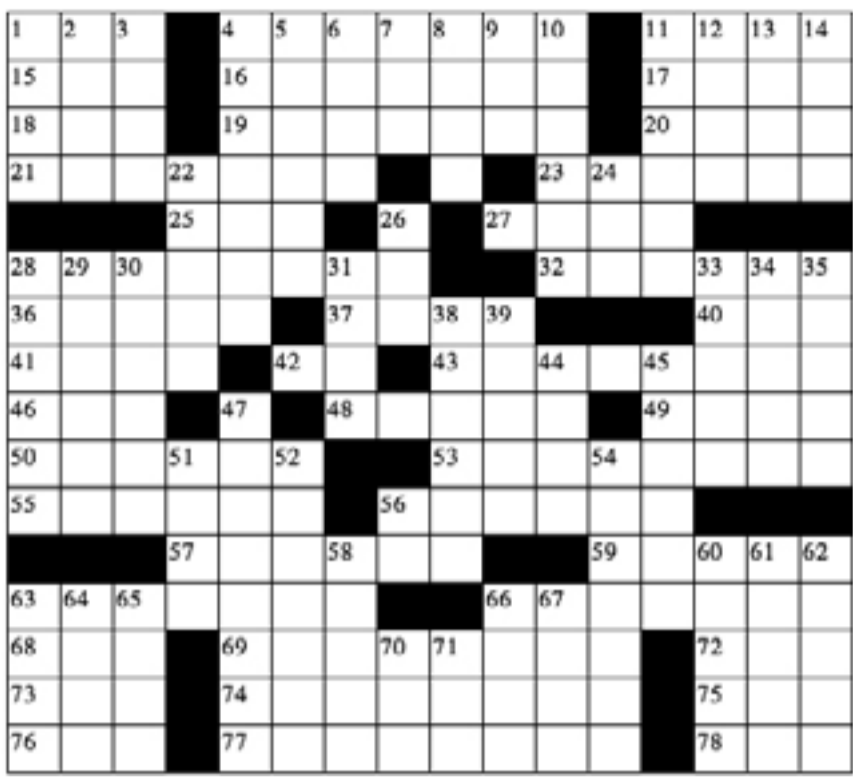
00:50 American Monster
01:45 Ghost Stalkers
02:40 Paranormal Lockdown With Nick Groff
03:35 I Speak For The Dead
04:30 American Monster
05:25 Murder By Numbers
06:20 Reasonable Doubt
07:10 Who Killed Angie Dodge: Keith Morrison...
08:00 The Locator
08:25 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
09:15 The Locator
09:40 The Locator
10:10 Evil Online
11:05 I Am Homicide
12:00 The Perfect Murder
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 Calls
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 American Monster
21:10 Forbidden: Dying For Love
22:05 Gone
23:00 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
23:55 I Speak For The Dead



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
01:50 Evermoor Chronicles
02:15 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 Cloud 9
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 Duck The Halls: A Very Mickey...
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

Stars

CROSSWORD 1787



ACROSS

1. A spring-flowering shrub or small tree of the genus Crataegus.
4. Someone who drinks liquor repeatedly in small quantities.
11. The first of three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures comprising the first five books of the Old Testament considered as a unit.
15. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
16. Subdue, restrain, or overcome by affecting with a feeling of awe.
17. A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
18. A legal document codifying the result of deliberations of a committee or society or legislative body.
19. A person who owns or operates a ranch.
20. A sensation (as of a cold breeze or bright light) that precedes the onset of certain disorders such as a migraine attack or epileptic seizure.
21. (heraldry) In walking position with right foreleg raised.
23. A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
25. The capital and largest city of Japan.
27. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
28. Made more desirable or valuable or profitable.
32. A character used in printing to indicate a cross reference or footnote.
36. Ox of southeast Asia sometimes considered a domesticated breed of the gaur.
37. The compass point that is one point south of southeast.
40. Fermented alcoholic beverage similar to but heavier than beer.
41. Antibacterial agent (trade names Mandelamine and Urex) that is contained in many products that are used to treat urinary infections.
42. An uproarious party.
43. Not healed.
46. A unit of pressure.
48. Low-growing tropical perennials grown for their stingless foliage.
49. Area around the altar of a church for the clergy and choir.
50. A family of fish in the order Zeomorpha.
53. Gum resin used especially in treating skin irritation.
55. Move out of a curled position.
57. Having or covered with or abounding in plumes.
59. A dialect of Chinese spoken in southeastern China.
63. Painted beauty and red admiral.
68. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
69. Resembling a fork.
72. A master's degree in business.
73. Automatic data processing in which data acquisition and other stages or processing are integrated into a coherent system.
74. Italian physicist noted for his work on gases.
75. A decree that prohibits something.
76. Inflammation of the urethra of unknown cause.
77. A corticosteroid drug (trade names Decadron or Dexamethasone Intensol or Dexone or Hexadrol or Oradexon) used to treat allergies or inflammation.

78. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

1. A collection of objects laid on top of each other.
2. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
3. Telephone line (Wide Area Telephone Service).
4. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade names Acular and Toradol) that is administered only intramuscularly.
5. Russian choreographer (1834-1905).
6. Closely confined.
7. A communist nation that covers a vast territory in eastern Asia.
8. A Loloish language.
9. A member of a people living in southern Benin and Togo and southeastern Ghana.
10. Read anew.
11. At risk of or subject to experiencing something usually unpleasant.
12. Wild sheep of northern Africa.
13. Notify of danger, potential harm, or risk.
14. An unforeseen obstacle.
22. A tranquilizing drug (trade name Serax) used to treat anxiety and insomnia and alcohol withdrawal.
24. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
26. A lyric poem with complex stanza forms.
29. Agile slender-bodied arboreal mustelids somewhat larger than weasels.
30. Of or relating to pyemia.
31. A program under which employees regularly accumulate shares and may ultimately assume control of the company.
33. Capital of the state of Oregon in the northwestern part of the state on the Willamette River.
34. Fragrant resin obtain from trees of the family Burseraceae and used as incense.
35. A car that is closed and that has front and rear seats and two or four doors.
38. Having a bulb.
39. A facial expression of contempt or scorn.
44. A Loloish language.
45. A port city in southwestern Iran.
47. A town in southeastern New Mexico on the Pecos River near the Mexican border.
51. A person who is tricked or swindled.
52. Difficult to describe.
54. English writer and lexicographer (1709-1784).
56. The 17th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
58. Of or relating to or characteristic of Morocco or its people.
60. A Bantu language spoken by the Kamba people in Kenya.
61. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
62. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
64. Acute lung injury characterized by coughing and rales.
65. Chevrotain somewhat larger than the kanchil.
66. A blind god.
67. The basic monetary unit of most members of the European Union (introduced in 1999).
70. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
71. (informal) Roused to anger.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This may not be the most appropriate time to make important decisions that could change your living situation or life circumstances. Today seems to be more of a pay-attention sort of day. However, it would be best for you to live your day as easily as possible—move with the flow of the day. You will find the best surprises through the adventures you choose to take. New discoveries this afternoon may create the need to change some schedules for the better. If you want a date for dinner tonight, you will have to be the resourceful one and ask or create the opportunity. You may decide to cook or pick up some preferred food for the evening. Be open to a different idea for dinner—the subject is the date, not necessarily the dinner.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You should find it quite easy to have good conversations with those you love this morning. Perhaps in having pre-prepared for the week ahead, you can relax and spend the day as you like. Extra time around a breakfast table this morning may give you inspiration for a new routine or any number of activities that are possible for this day. This is a very happy, emotionally settled time in your life. This is also a great time to think about your own situation, your past successes and planning your future goals. There is an opportunity to wash the car and visit with friends this afternoon. A shop you don't usually enter has a special appeal and you may find a gift or some special item that would be helpful toward game night with friends.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Laugh timidly and make someone else laugh. You may find that you enjoy your job or the responsibility it holds more than usual. Time flies! Gentleness and a feeling that you belong are very important issues in your life, and so is needing emotional security. You need to feel attachments and you crave a sense of the intimate life. Having your own home may be foremost on your mind; patience. In social circles your mannerism puts you in a popular situation—remember that networking is a grand way to open doors of opportunity. Opportunity may come as a better job, perhaps at a different company, or a hobby or other subject that holds your attention. Perhaps someone knows of a house for sale or a car barely used; go hunting.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may find yourself temporarily blocked this morning. Remember the defining word is "temporarily" so back away from whatever is causing the mind blockage and come back to the topic in a little while. You may soon find exactly what is needed to smooth out all the frustrations. Your ability to take action and get things accomplished is valued. Most of the important action coming from you just now is that you exercise patience. After the noon meal, a co-worker may want to walk a little before heading back to work and you may be fortunate to have a bookstore or some other shop nearby that will create fun conversations and a little laughter. Gaining things materially may brighten your mood this evening—a lucky time.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your talent for understanding and being sensitive to other people's needs puts you in a likely position of communicating regarding groups and society. Collecting and sharing information with those around you assumes more emotional significance. Impatience and edginess can be eliminated through some form of exercise. Take your breaks and do some walking or climbing stairs. Admit occasionally that you can be just as confused and frustrated as anyone else. There is a tendency to be too strict with yourself. Your ambition is intensified. New professional directions are within reach, but it is important tonight, to bring your focus to those you love before they begin to think they have been replaced.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may need to tenaciously hang on to your wallet today, as a spending spree may wipe you out, basically, because of your appreciation of the beauty and value of everything that you encounter at this time. You feel loving to those around you and you are appreciative of your own life and self, in general. This may be an exceptional day for anything job-related. There is a more energetic and outgoing quality to your lifestyle now. Besting others in the heat of competition and taking on a leadership role mean more to you now than in the past. Second best will not cut it with you now. You have a need to be the center of attention. This urge takes hold in your life—a craving to be appreciated for your gifts and who you are is strong.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

An unfinished project needs your attention this morning. Clear determination affecting others could be made now. Someone that you are close to, knowing of your ability to guide and give good sound advice, could come to you with the need for a better understanding to a personal and emotional problem. Feeling more introverted and more like sharing some time with your lover or with close friends is what guides you. This may not be a time when you feel very outgoing or would care to present yourself to the outside world. Your feelings are much more reflective than expressive. Making good decisions that revolve around others' needs is valued. You just naturally seem to know what the community at large wants and needs at this time.



Scorpio (October 23-November 19)

There is a good possibility of a career turning point that may require some careful thought and good judgment on your part. A turn of events in the workplace could give you a real breakthrough. The current flow of events may dictate a few careful moves but you can do it. You have much energy to accomplish what is needed at this time. Appreciating things of value is easy for you now, even the idea of value itself. You may find yourself gaining materially at this time, as it is certainly a time when material things have a great deal of importance. You feel a big need for emotional security and you may have to make your wishes known by speaking up to those that need to know. Offer your assistance where you see that you could be helpful.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Complete insight into your own inner self or psychology could come to the surface soon but do not fear, all of this is quite manageable. You may, however, find yourself in the mood for acute and penetrating conversations or thoughts. Solving problems or making important decisions should be easy for you most any time. You will find a way around just about any obstacle and should be able to guide yourself with ease. Your sense of inner direction is good and should lead to opportunities. Wanting to expand your horizons and trying to be the best that you can be could have you exploring some interesting places. Your attention may be sparked in areas such as politics, education, travel, religion or law, to name a few of the possibilities.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Being with others and working together should be a pleasant experience. Someone in authority may seek you out for a particular job. Your managerial and directorial ability should serve you well. Use your charm for all it is worth and drop a few compliments in the right place. Health factors in the environment need attention. Pure water and fresh foods are essential. If you sit in on city council meetings in the future, you will be able to make some brilliant suggestions. Now is a good time to take a look at upkeep, particularly regarding these necessities of life. Organizing your affairs or rearranging your living situation should be good activities for you to tend to at this time. Setting your future goals out on a calendar will work to your advantage.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

Allowing yourself to trek into the future with new concepts in your work, you can leave some of the old patterns behind. There are many new and exciting years ahead of you in the business you have chosen and the business will be lucky to have you and your skills. Dare to be different and allow your aesthetic and perceptive side to emerge. Going out and about to gather and exchange information becomes a more progressive part of your life. This is a very mental as well as social time. Much of your emotional support and feeling of security comes from your many past accomplishments... Of course, friends, family and social standing are also a positive. Be watchful of the old ideas and make your way into the future with new and positive thoughts.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Some may see you as a bit on the restrained side; this works to your advantage when there is a necessity to trust that you will be silent in matters of importance. Your friends may have a very special use for your many talents. You have a good memory and you are trustworthy and inventive whenever you or someone near you needs help with most anything. Today there will be several opportunities to verbalize your enthusiasm for helping others. Tonight there are opportunities to catch up with family matters and talk about genealogy as well as professional hopes and dreams. Some fun conversations with children bring family together. There is time to play a fun game together or watch the latest movie this evening. Everyone can relax and relate.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Dogs

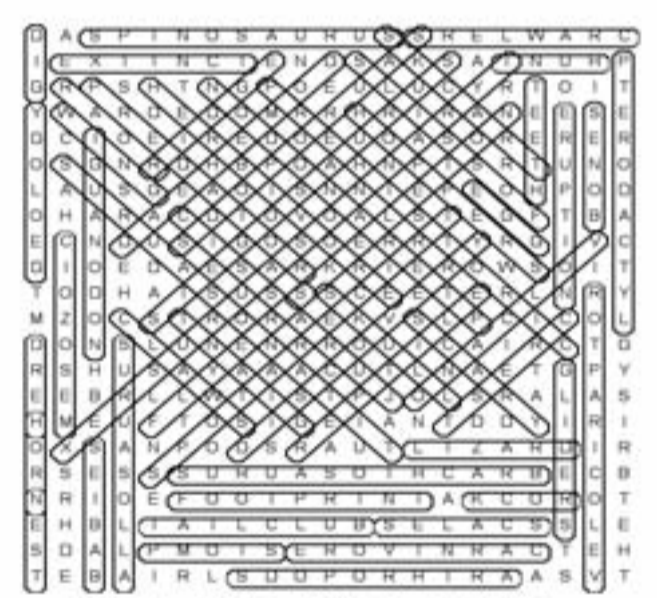
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 44 letters spell an Ogden Nash quotation.



- | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|
| BASSET HOUND | DACHSHUND | MASTIFF | SAMOYED |
| BEAGLE | DALMATIAN | PEKINGESE | SCHNAUZER |
| BLOODHOUND | DEERHOUND | PINSCHER | SETTER |
| BOXER | DINGO | POINTER | SHAR PEI |
| BULLDOG | GERMAN SHEPHERD | POMERANIAN | SHEPPOOD |
| CHIHUAHUA | GREAT DANE | POODLE | SPITZ |
| CHOW CHOW | GREYHOUND | PUG | TERRIER |
| COCKER SPANIEL | HUSKY | RETRIEVER | WHIPPET |
| COLLIE | LHASA APSO | ROTTWEILER | |
| CORGI | MALAMUTE | SAINT BERNARD | |

Yesterday's Solution

Dinosaurs



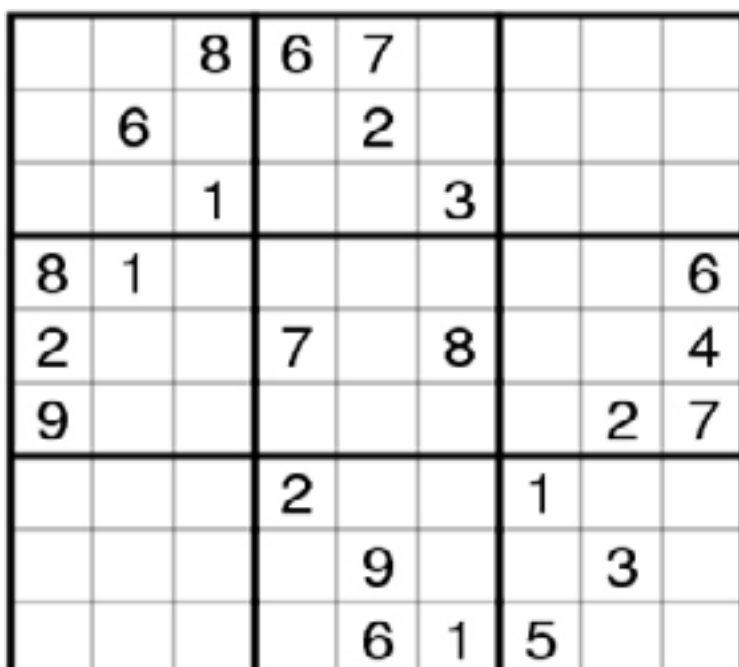
- | | | | |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| ALLOSAUURUS | FLYERS | MESOZOIC | SPINOSAURUS |
| ARCHOSAURUS | FOOTPRINT | NEST | STEGOSAURUS |
| BONES | FOSSILS | PREDATOR | STOMP |
| BRACHIOSAURUS | GEOLOGY | PREHISTORIC | TAIL CLUB |
| CANNIBORE | GLANT | PTERANGON | TEETH |
| CLAWS | GLIDERS | PTERODACTYL | TRICEROSAURUS |
| CRAWLERS | HERBIVORE | REPTILE | TRACKS |
| CREST | HERD | RIDGE | TRICERATORS |
| DIG | HOPPER | ROAR | TYRANOSAURUS |
| DISCOVERY | HORN | ROCK | VELOCIRAPTOR |
| DROME HEAD | HUNT | SAUROPODS | VOLCANO |
| EGG | IGUANOON | SCALES | WING |
| ERUPTION | JURASSIC | SCARY | |
| EXTINCT | LIZARD | SKELTON | |
| | | SKULL | |

The hidden message is: AN ASTEROID CRASHED WITH A HIGHTY BLAST AND DINOSAURS BREATHED THEIR LAST

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



'Titanic' keeps that sinking feeling alive, 20 years on

Part saturnine elegy to doomed youth, part exaltation of the transcendent power of love, blockbuster disaster movie "Titanic" is delivering that sinking feeling to a whole new generation of fans. Tomorrow marks two decades since Rose vowed to Jack she'd "never let go" - before spectacularly renegeing on her promise, sending her frozen-to-death paramour to a watery grave and leaving "Titanics" worldwide sobbing into their popcorn. The anniversary has been celebrated with screenings across the United States, and audiences are still swooning over the young lovers played by Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet - now both Oscar winners and Hollywood A-listers.

"The Titanic story itself has a timeless quality. It seems to exist outside our daily lives. As this straight moral lesson, it's something that fascinates us," director James Cameron told fans at a Los Angeles screening to mark the milestone. Winslet's love-struck socialite and DiCaprio's artistic drifter were fictionalized characters in a dramatization of the real-life sinking in 1912 of history's most famous ship after it hit an iceberg on its maiden voyage across the Atlantic.

The film, distributed by Paramount at home and Fox abroad, entered into movie history when it picked up 11 Oscars, including best picture and best director for Cameron. With a worldwide gross of \$2.2 billion, it was the most successful movie ever made until Cameron's "Avatar" (2009)

took \$2.8 billion at the box office. At an intimidating 195 minutes, the movie can feel in parts as long as the voyage on which it is based, but it earned mostly glowing reviews, and the theme song "My Heart Will Go On" became a global success for Celine Dion.

Five-word pitch

Cameron, 63, says he sold the idea to Fox executives with "probably the shortest pitch for a major movie in Hollywood histo-

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The Titanic story itself has a timeless quality
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ry.” “I whipped open this book and in the center is a beautiful double-truck spread right across both pages of a painting by Ken Marschall, the best artist of the subject of the Titanic,” he recalled. “It was a beautiful shot of the rocket going off and lighting up the ship, and lifeboats rowing away as it went down in the more sedate, quiet part of the sinking. I said, ‘Romeo and Juliet on that.’ Five words.”

DiCaprio and Winslet - then 21 and 20,

respectively - began filming in September 1996, their first scene together the moment in which the actress appears nude for him to paint. Any awkwardness was short-lived and the pair quickly became close friends, reuniting onscreen a decade later for Sam Mendes's fraught love story "Revolutionary Road." "They really bonded and they were there for each other through a long, difficult, grueling shoot. They were there to support each other," Cameron said.

Bloated production

The epic proportions of the \$200 million production, with its 1,000 extras and crew of more than 800, can hardly be overstated. Cameron had a full scale model of the ill-fated luxury liner constructed on 40 acres of Mexican waterfront bought by Fox, after receiving the blueprints from the original ship builder. The rooms were meticulously recreated from old photographs, as was RMS Titanic's first class staircase, mahogany woodwork and gold-plated light fixtures, all of which was destroyed in the sinking scene.

Such was the perceived folly of the bloated production - then the costliest ever that Variety began a daily "Titanic Watch" column, ridiculing what was expected to be the biggest flop in Hollywood history. A despondent Cameron kept a razor blade taped to the screen of his video editing equipment with an inscription written in pen: "Use in case film sucks."



'Rules of gravity didn't apply'

The movie test-screened to rapturous applause in Minneapolis, however, and Cameron was reassured that he'd actually made a decent movie. It opened with a domestic haul of \$28.6 million and was expected to follow the normal pattern for blockbusters, dropping by 40-50 percent in its second weekend. Instead, it made another \$28 million, and \$32 million on the third weekend, eventually securing the top spot for 15 consecutive weeks. "It just went down by like two percent a week and everybody just felt like we were in this alternate universe where the rules of gravi-

ty didn't apply," said Cameron. Experts theorized that the numbers were being boosted by groups of young teenage girls watching multiple times, but Cameron believes "Titanic" did so well because the love story appealed across generations. "With all due respect to Kate and Leo, and they're both good friends of mine, it's not Kate and Leo anymore - it's Jack and Rose," said Cameron. "And it will always be Jack and Rose. I guess that's what I'm proudest of, that we've created something that has its own reality, that's outside of time, and theoretically that could still be enjoyed indefinitely." — AFP

With new album, Eminem finds political voice



This file photo shows Eminem performing at Samsung Galaxy stage during 2014 Lollapalooza Day One at Grant Park in Chicago, Illinois. —AFP

Just how much has America changed since Donald Trump's election? Eminem, knee-deep in controversy a generation ago for misogyny and homophobia, is back as a self-styled moral conscience. The top-selling rapper in history rips into Trump on "Revival," his first studio album in four years, in which Eminem openly muses on whether he can stay relevant as his career enters its third decade. "Revival," which came out Friday, returns to Eminem's musical tropes as he recrafts pop tunes into quick-tongued raps and taps some of the biggest names in music as collaborators, including Beyonce, Ed Sheeran, Alicia Keys and P!nk.

But the 45-year-old also shows a new side - a politically sensitive Eminem, woke and alarmed at the direction of the United States a year into Trump's presidency. "Someone get this Aryan a sheet / Time to bury him, so tell him to prepare to get impeached," Eminem raps on "Like Home," juxtaposing the imagery of death and the racist Ku Klux Klan. "He's trying to divide us," Eminem warns, taking the language of a street activist, while vowing, "He'll only unite us." Eminem - who has faced criticism throughout his career for employing a homophobic slur, although he insists it is just a narrative device - also attacks Trump for seeking to ban transgender people from the military.

Familiar beats

"Revival" opens on a fresh note for Eminem - "Walk on Water," the album's first single, a piano ballad about self-doubt that features a Gospel-tinged chorus by Beyonce. But the 19-track album quickly returns to more familiar territory. "Believe" and "Chloraseptic," which is assisted by the up-and-coming New York rapper Phresher, are backed by minimal, ominous beats with nods to horrorcore.

"Remind Me" refashions the singalong chorus of "I Love Rock and Roll," the boisterous classic by Joan Jett and the Blackhearts, while "In Your Head" builds off a riff in The Cranberries' "Zombie."

On "Untouchable," Eminem - who has brought hard-edged hip-hop to a white audience like no one else - embraces the slogans of the Black Lives Matter movement as he voices outrage at police brutality. "I admit there have been times when it's been embarrassing to be a white boy," he raps, as he offers solidarity with quarterback Colin Kaepernick and other American football players who have kneeled during the national anthem as a protest over racial injustice.

Not all of the political bent on "Revival" is likely to sit comfortably even with Trump's opponents. Eminem, whose songs have often imagined violence against women, depicts Trump's daughter and adviser Ivanka inside his car's trunk on "Framed."

Passionate opponent of Trump

Eminem's political passion appears deeply felt, with the rapper going public with harsh denunciations of Trump even before "Revival." While Trump enjoys little celebrity support, Eminem's hostility is notable as the two share much of the same demographic base. Eminem hails from Michigan and has personally struggled with some of the afflictions of working-class white Americans from the Rust Belt - addiction to painkillers and junk food and, to put it mildly in Eminem's case, complicated family relationships. — AFP

Eminem - who on his last album apologized to his mother whom he once spoke of raping and killing - on "Revival" offers his regrets to Kim Mathers, his high school sweetheart whom he married and divorced twice. "I loved you, but I hated that 'me' / And I don't want to see that side again / I'm sorry, Kim," he raps on "Bad Husband."

Eminem's oldest child - Hailie, who turns 22 on Christmas Day - makes a cameo in "Bad Husband" and also inspires one of the strongest songs on "Revival" - "Castle," written around a series of letters addressed to his daughter over the years. "Things that should have been private with me and your mother is public," Eminem raps ruefully of his past songs. And the song may draw a curtain. With the track, Eminem rapped that he is "100 percent finished" with airing family baggage. — AFP

Parallel geniuses? Composer mashes up Beethoven and Kanye

The orchestra charges into the furious opening notes from the last movement of Beethoven's String Quartet No. 14. A drum-set kicks in, giving way to a new melody. The violins are still in charge. But suddenly the theme isn't Beethoven but a symphonic take on "On Sight," the abrasive starting salvo of Kanye West's "Yeezus" album. The crowd, standing close-up, more like in a rock concert than a classical hall, nods in approval.

Welcome to "Yeethoven," a musical experiment that mashes up the works of artists two centuries apart who on the surface may appear to have little in common. But creators of "Yeethoven," whose second edition recently took place in Los Angeles, see similarities between Ludwig van Beethoven and Kanye West. Whether in orchestral music or hip-hop, both have been controversial figures in their day who challenged convention. "A lot of classical musicians, and I'm one of them, have been interested in Kanye's music," said Yuga Cohler, conductor of the Debut Chamber Orchestra of the Young Musicians Foundation, which presents "Yeethoven." "And that is because he uses a lot of similar devices and tools that classical composers use in making their music original and compelling," he said.

Two figures of influence

"In my mind, it was a pretty obvious comparison to use Kanye and some classical element, because they are so similar." Beethoven is widely accepted as one of the most influential figures in musical history, helping create the modern symphony and Romanticism, inserting his personal voice like no composer before him. West, one of the most accoladed rappers in history, has redefined what constitutes a song or album and offered fresh takes on hip-hop form, including with the dense electronic structure of "Yeezus."

The two might also be seen as facing some similar personal struggles. Beethoven was



Yuga Cohler, Music Director of the Young Musicians Foundation (YMF) Debut Chamber Orchestra leads the orchestra during a performance of Yeethoven II in Los Angeles, California. —AFP photos

tormented by depression, while West was hospitalized a year ago after a mental breakdown. Johan, a composer who goes by one name and who arranged "Yeethoven," acknowledged that orchestra initially thought the idea was "a bit crazy." "A lot of them told us this - they were worried it was going to get a little bit simplified or cheesy maybe," Johan said. But in the end, "They said, 'You guys really took it seriously. You made it into something that is really sort of profound,'" Johan said.

Bringing new audiences

Differences, of course, also abound between Beethoven and West. Beethoven was known for his intense shyness and romantic failures. West, married to reality television



Yuga Cohler (left), Music Director of the Young Musicians Foundation (YMF) Debut Chamber Orchestra and Johan (right), composer and arranger, are seen moments before going on stage for Yeethoven II.



Yuga Cohler (center), Music Director of the Young Musicians Foundation (YMF) Debut Chamber Orchestra and Johan (left), composer and arranger, leave the stage after the Yeethoven II performance.

star Kim Kardashian, is hardly known for his modesty and has likened himself, if not to Beethoven, to Michelangelo. After premiering to an enthusiastic crowd in 2016, the second "Yeethoven" in Los Angeles expanded its scope to include music from West's last album "The Life of Pablo." "Yeethoven," with which West is not directly involved, will also take place on January 18 in New York at Lincoln Center.

The creators of "Yeethoven" credit the mash-up with bringing an unusually diverse crowd to an orchestra performance - a constant challenge in classical

music in the United States, where audiences are overwhelmingly older and white. Jack Taylor, one of some 1,500 people who attended "Yeethoven" in Los Angeles, said he was "taken aback" but found the mixture of Beethoven and West "amazing." "I didn't know what to expect when I got here and it just turned out to be a really, really transformative experience for me," he said. — AFP

Peru recovers 79 pre-Hispanic textiles from Sweden



People look at textiles belonging to the pre-Inca Paracas culture, dating to 700 BCE-100 BCE, on display in Peru's Culture Ministry in Lima. — AFP photos



People look at textiles belonging to the pre-Inca Paracas culture.



Textiles belonging to the pre-Inca Paracas culture, dating to 700 BCE-100 BCE, are shown at Peru's Culture Ministry in Lima.

Peru has recovered 79 pre-Hispanic textiles that have been illegally located in Sweden since 1935, the ministry of culture said. In 1935, Swedish ambassador to Peru Sven Karrell acquired the fabrics hailing from the Nasca and Paracas cultures and took them to Sweden illegally-anonymously donating them to The Museum of Gothenburg, according to the Peruvian government. "Thanks to the collaboration between the foreign minister, the culture minister and the city of Gothenburg, we are celebrating the arrival of the second of the three scheduled deliveries, made up of 79 textiles," said Jorge Arrunategui, deputy minister of cultural heritage and cultural industries.

The delivery included wraps, cloths and decorative textile borders from the pre-Hispanic Paracas culture, an Andean society known for their unique composition, colors and weaving techniques using cotton and wool from vicuñas-the national animal of Peru, related to the llama. The textiles, repatriated on December 7, were made between 700 BC and 200 AD and are among items the Swedish government promised to return to Peru in a 2014 agreement.

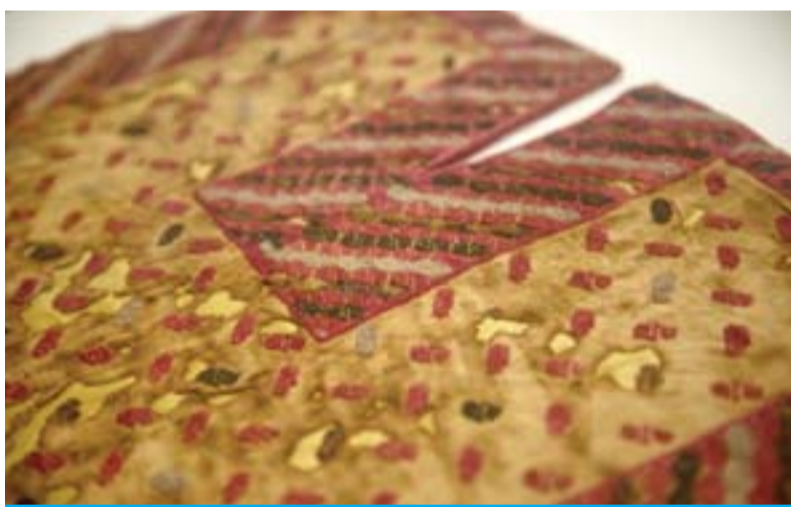
In 2008, the Gothenburg Museum of World Culture held the exhibition "Paracas: A Stolen World," prompting Peru to begin investigations and in 2013 begin the process of recovering the items. The recovered goods will be kept by the Ministry of Culture's General Directorate of Museums for conservation, and displayed in 2018. — AFP



Textiles belonging to the pre-Inca Paracas culture.



Textiles belonging to the pre-Inca Paracas culture.



Textiles belonging to the pre-Inca Paracas culture.



Textiles belonging to the pre-Inca Paracas culture.

Vatican returns shrunken 'warrior' head to Ecuador

The Vatican museum has returned a shrunken head to Ecuador, relinquishing the wizened cranium of an Amazon warrior nearly 100 years after it was taken by a missionary. The grisly body part-which belonged to the Shuar indigenous people-was handed over during Ecuadorian President Lenin Moreno's visit to Pope Francis on Saturday after months of negotiations, the Vatican said. It is very rare for a historical artifact to be returned by the Vatican museums, which boast one of the largest collections of art and archaeology in the world.

The fist-sized capitulum, which never went on show, is believed to have been a war trophy for the Shuar,

who mummified and kept the heads of their warrior enemies, as well as their heroes. The Shuar are still one of the most important ethnic groups in the Amazon region. In recent years they have hit the headlines for attempting to resist government-authorized large-scale mining on land they claim as their own. They used to be best known in the West for their shrunken heads-called "tsantsa". Removing the skull, boiling the flesh then sewing up the eyes, nose and mouth is believed to have trapped avenging souls inside, or stored the wisdom of their elders. The head, brought to the Vatican by a missionary in 1925, will be given to the Pumapungo ethnographic museum in Cuenca. — AFP

US returns to Lebanon relics stolen during civil war

The United States on Friday returned to Lebanese officials three relics stolen during Lebanon's civil war, including a statue once exhibited at New York's premier museum, officials said. The ancient artifacts included a bull's head, which was recovered this summer from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where it had been on loan. Believed to be of Greek origin, the marble head dates to around 360 BC and has been valued at around \$1.2 million.

The museum said it handed the head over to the Manhattan district attorney's office after a curator

discovered that it may have been stolen during Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war. The other relics-two marble torsos dating to the 4th and 6th century BC-were excavated in the 1970s from near Sidon, in southwestern Lebanon. The items were subsequently stolen during the war, US officials said. The Manhattan district attorney, who attended the repatriation ceremony with Lebanon's consul general to New York, says his office has recovered several thousand trafficked antiquities since 2012, valued at more than \$150 million. — AFP

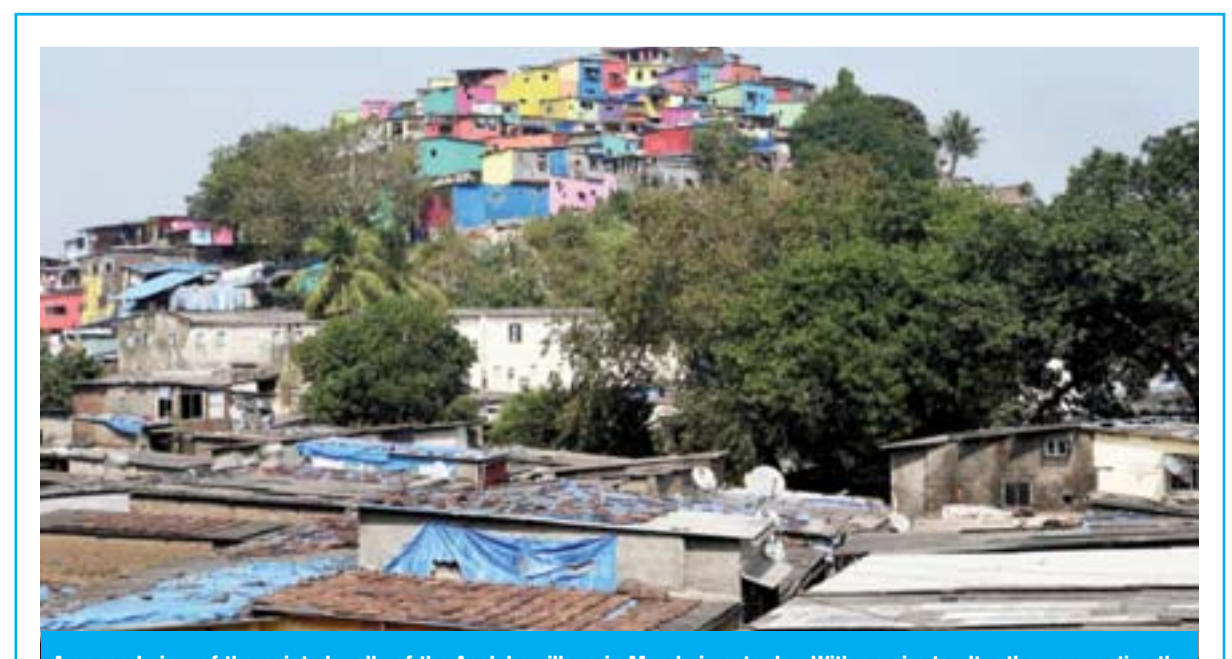
Scottish designer Saunders resigns from NY label DVF



Scottish fashion designer Jonathan Saunders.

Scottish fashion designer Jonathan Saunders has resigned as chief creative officer at Diane von Furstenberg after little more than 18 months at the iconic New York label, the company announced Friday. Neither Saunders nor the label offered reasons for his departure, which follows reports that Von Furstenberg plans to sell a stake in her company, which shot to global fame in the 1970s with the creation of the wrap dress. Saunders, who became famous in London for his eponymous womenswear label, joined DVF in May 2016 and had been responsible for all product categories, store design, website design, a new corporate brand identity, marketing and advertising campaigns.

"I am grateful for Diane's support and for the opportunity of guiding this iconic brand. I am so proud of everything we have accomplished," he said in a statement. "I am so thankful for Jonathan's beautiful work and the effort and dedication he has put into DVF," said Von Furstenberg. "He will leave an important and lasting heritage." Saunders launched his womenswear label in 2003 to critical acclaim in London but resigned in 2015 and shuttered the company, citing "personal reasons." He has worked with a slew of fashion masters, including under Alexander McQueen, and consulted for Christian Lacroix at Pucci, Phoebe Philo at Chloe and Paul Smith. Saunders also collaborated with high street retailers including Target and Topshop. His last collection for DVF was pre-fall 2018, which was unveiled last week. — AFP



A general view of the painted walls of the Asapha village in Mumbai yesterday. With an aim to alter the perspective the world has of urban slums city artists from Chal Rang De (Come Lets Paint) - plan to paint over 120 hutment walls in 3 days and turning them into an outdoor art gallery. — AFP

Indonesia: Palembang to host the 18th Asian Games

Al-Quran Al-Akbar one of the most glorious experiences I felt throughout my visit

By Sahar Moussa

From Puncak we proceeded to Halim Perdana Kusuma Airport and flew to Palembang. We reached Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II International airport and checked in at the five-star Arista Hotel Palembang. Palembang is the second largest city on Sumatra Island after Medan, and is the capital city of South Sumatra province. It is considered to be one of the oldest cities in Indonesia, and has a history of being the capital city of the Kingdom of Srivijaya. It is located on the Musi riverbank on the east coast of southern Sumatra.

Palembang's main landmarks include Ampera Bridge and Musi River, which divides the city into two. The first thing you notice in Palembang when you reach there is the construction work in preparation for the 18th Asian Games, which is going to be held in the city along with Jakarta. The second thing you notice is the Dutch influence on the architecture of the buildings.

Palembang is different in its structure and architecture from Jakarta and Puncak. The houses are like small villas with triangular red roofs, and some of the houses' foundations are elevated from the ground for protection from wild animals. Their facades are painted in bright colors. The houses or villas are next to each other - it is a cozy place to visit.

Economy and the 18th Asian Games

During our visit to this exceptional city, we were honored to meet the Governor of South Sumatra Alex Noerdin in his office. After welcoming us, we were sent to the conference room, where we watched a presentation about the history of Palembang in general, the preparations for the 18th Asian Games, the strength of its economic growth and future plans.

The governor started his speech by briefing us about South Sumatra. The city has a developed economy and strong population growth. It's a unique and historical province with delicious food and great sports facilities.

"South Sumatra Province is divided into four cities and 17 regions separated by water and rivers. It is a great investment destination, with abundant natural resources all over the region



A photo shows the Governor of South Sumatra Alex Noerdin posing with the media delegation.

and a large and growing domestic market, combined with an improving infrastructure and investment climate. It also has a higher global profile - these are just a few of South Sumatra's salient strengths," the governor said.

Two economic driving forces surround South Sumatra - the first is Singapore as the biggest regional hub and key trading partner, and Java as the biggest regional market. "South Sumatra has many natural resources that make it very productive, such as coal, natural gas, petroleum, oil and rice. We are preparing a rice

project by 2021 that can supply all of Indonesia. It also has rubber (considered to be the largest producer in the world) and coffee (also considered to be the best coffee in the world), among others," Noerdin added.

South Sumatra is the largest province on the island, covering up to 92,000 sqkm. It is three times bigger than any province in Java. But South Sumatra's population is only a fifth of West Java, which makes it more flexible for spatial planning. As for hosting the 18th Asian Games, the governor had many interesting

things to highlight, especially that this phenomenal project took two years to complete at a cost of more than 72 trillion rupiahs for the infrastructure and refurbishment of the airport and roads. "We started to build the Jakabaring Sport Complex in August 2016 and we are proud to say it is almost finished today. We are very pleased to host the 18th Asian Games in South Sumatra, and we are completely ready for it. We have more than 2,000 workers ready to help round the clock. There are 30 public toilet facilities, the swimming pool is made of

stainless steel and is 25 meters long, a shooting range, a water polo building, eight tennis courts with around 7,000 individual seats, a gymnasium building and three buildings that can accommodate 8,500 athletes," Noerdin said.

The governor continued to describe this extraordinary sport complex and the efforts that the city and government are exerting. "It's 44 km from the airport to Jakabaring Sport Complex, and we have built a special light rail that connects it from the airport for the tourists, athletes and anyone that is interested to visit and be part of it," he said. He ended his speech

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To boost tourism to Indonesia, nationals of around 90 countries have been granted visa-free facilities valid for 30 days
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by saying: "We might not be the largest, nor the biggest, but we have the strongest motivation."

Our trip ended in Palembang. We then proceeded to the new airport skytrain, then to Doha and back to Kuwait. It took us nine hours and 15 minutes. So back to the question: Is it worth it? Yes, it is definitely worth it. It is worth it because of the friendly and genuine people, the amazing and authentic food, the divine nature that they are blessed to have and their efforts to save it, for their love and compassion for animals which is seen through their zoos and animal reservations, for their colorful and outstanding batik outfits that differentiate them from other cultures, exceptional handmade wood carving, for their appreciation of education, their love for music, and last but not the least, it is worth it for their generous and spiritual nature.



Jakabaring Sport City



Al-Quran Al-Akbar



The media delegation in the Al-Quran Al-Akbar

One of the most glorious experiences I felt throughout my visit to the three cities was when visiting the Al-Quran Al-Akbar, which is also called the Giant Quran. It is located at the Al-Ihsaniya Pesantern Gandus Palembang. It is considered as the largest wooden base Quran in the world. Thirty verses of the Quran have been carved in the

style of Palembang on a rotating wooden tablet. Fifteen verses are exhibited, while the other 15 will be exhibited in another building that is temporarily under construction.

The feeling you get when you see this spectacular handmade work of art is simply humbling and overwhelming. Can you imagine the thousands of hours, days and

years it took to finish this masterpiece to carve the word of Almighty God? The road to the building is a bit rocky and unsteady, but we have been told it is going to be fixed before the Asian Games. I really hope they will fix the road, because in my opinion, it is an important religious and Islamic destination to visit.



With Indonesian students in Palembang



Friendly Indonesian woman with her child



The media delegation in the Al-Quran Al-Akbar



Jakabaring Sport City

Kampung Arab/Arab village

The Arab community in Palembang is considered to be the biggest in South Asia



Photo shows the Arab community in the Arab village in Palembang

The Kampung Arab is located in Kecamatan Seberang Ulu II. Assegaf, Al-Habsy, Al-Kaaf, Hasny, Syahab (Shyhab), Al-Munawwar, are some of the well-known families from the Arab community that still reside in this village. The community that originated from Yemen (Hadramout) has been living in Palembang for 300 years. Their villages are spread across Musi River in Ulu and Ilir. The Arab community in Palembang is considered to be one of the biggest communities in South Asia. They are called as Palembangvas or Hadramawt.

The government of South Sumatra considers the Arab Village as one of the cultural heritage village which attracts tourists from other countries. The Arab community in Palembang rarely speak Arabic, but they still preserve their heritage through food, wedding ceremonies, music, education, etc. Our tour guide on this trip was Syech Razie Ali Maula Dawilah, an Indonesian Hadhrami who speaks fluent Arabic with a Yemeni accent. Razie was an extraordinary tour guide who made our journey simply unforgettable with his sense of humor, humbleness, astonishing knowledge, patience and wit. He was not only the best tour guide I have



Photo shows the houses in the Arab village in Palembang

ever met, but he was also a very talented top class musician that plays the oud with his band and travelling the world to promote the Adani and Indonesian music at the same time.



Our talented tour guide Syech Razie Ali Maula Dawilah entertaining us on oud

KUWAIT, INDONESIA TO CELEBRATE BILATERAL DIPLOMATIC RELATION



(From left) Photo shows Ahmad Al-Failakawi, Ambassador of Kuwait to Indonesia Abdulwahab Al-Sager, Sahar Moussa, Ibrahim Abdalla and Reaven D'Souza after the interview.

By Sahar Moussa

Kuwait and Indonesia will celebrate their golden jubilee of a bilateral diplomatic relation on February 28, 2018, marking 50 years of distinguished and developed friendship between the two countries, said Kuwaiti Ambassador to Indonesia Abdulwahab Al-Sager during an Interview with the media delegation recently in Jakarta.

Ambassador Al-Sager expressed his interests in witnessing the convening of the Higher Joint Committees of Kuwait and Indonesia, which is slated to be held next year. The first session of the Committee will be held in Kuwait under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, with the aim of fulfilling the desired objectives of the two countries through signing economic agreements and contracts of investment.

Al-Sager said that although Indonesia is a state with the largest Islamic population and has many tourist attractions, it is not a favored destination for Kuwaitis. He added that Indonesia could easily become a preferred destination for Kuwaiti families given how, in addition to its numerous scenic sites and the fact that it is generally a conservative Islamic society; Indonesia has many attractions that lure Kuwaitis including family shopping and entertainment venues.

Ambassador Sagar revealed that, "Kuwait is also in need of Indonesian tourists. When they visit Doha, Dubai and Saudi Arabia for religious tourism, they often overlook Kuwait for the same," referencing to the lack of a direct flight between the two countries, especially since Kuwait Airways has now stopped flying to Jakarta and Malaysia, he said, promoting more bilateral agreements and introducing a direct flight route is a crucial step to influence a change.

Regarding the volume of bilateral trade between the two countries, the ambassador said there is plenty of scope for further increasing the numbers. He added that direct investments accounted to around \$500,000 and indirect investments amounted to roughly \$2 billion dollars, while the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development has provided soft loans totaling over \$200 million to Indonesia.

Indonesia is famous for a number of goods exchanged between the two countries to meet Kuwait's needs, said Ambassador Al-Sager. "Indonesia is a large country that is rich with resources imported by Kuwait, including palm oil, auto parts and furniture, especially its famous local furniture industry and high quality timber."

Ambassador Al-Sager announced that, "Kuwait and Indonesia would require a greater consolidation of economic relations, but we lack the financial agreements

and memorandums of understanding to promote investor protection and capital. "Signing an agreement or memorandum of understanding to encourage and protect Kuwaiti investment in Indonesia will help further investments in Indonesia."

Kuwait, being an oil state desires to work in the field of exploring and drilling oil fields in Indonesia, the ambassador pointed out that the Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUPPEC), which has been in Jakarta for the last 15 years has sadly encountered a number of obstacles and limitations in their work as a result of bureaucracy and red-tape.

"Indonesia has a large development plan that includes six major oil refineries and needs Gulf Oil companies, such as those in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. However, the country lacks the necessary incentives to encourage such companies to work with them." He further stressed that, "It is in the interest of the Arab oil-producing countries to work and invest in Indonesia and its development plans for the future, especially due to their strong Islamic population and the wonderful relations between Indonesia and Arab countries."

In regards to education, Ambassador Al-Sager stated, "There are a number of scholarships provided by the University of Kuwait and Public Authority for Applied Education to Indonesian students who seek education in Kuwait. Incidentally, the Indonesian interpreter in the Kuwait Embassy in Indonesia studied in Kuwait for 13 years, and now works for the Kuwait government." Although he noted that there are no scholarship opportunities for Kuwaiti students to study in Indonesia, especially as there is a condition to learn the local language before you can enroll in Indonesian universities.

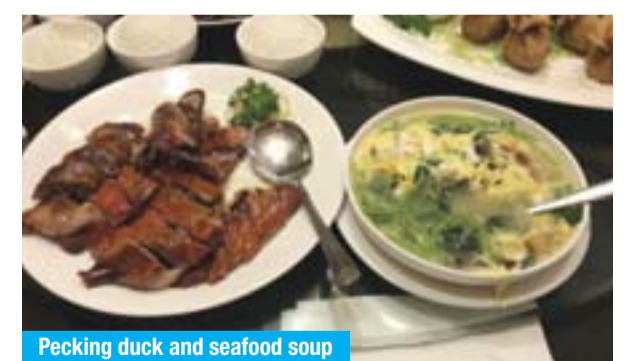
The envoy also announced that, in the past 13 years, Kuwait has provided humanitarian aid to Indonesia adding up to about KD 50 million (\$150 million). "Through the international cooperation and development, the Kuwait Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides official assistance for humanitarian work and charity. Ambassador Al-Sager also suggested regulating the donations and ensuring the funds were directed to those who deserve them," he said.

Ambassador Al-Sager noted that the Kuwait Red Crescent association, which established a fund for the victims of the tsunami that hit the Indonesian provinces in 2004, on behalf of Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, has so far provided aid to almost 50,000 people. Moreover, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, has funded the rebuilding of an entire village while two other villages are being constructed in the vicinity of Jakarta in the name of Sheikh Ali Sabah Al-Nasser.

Kuwait is also in need of Indonesian tourists



Sweet and sour fish



Pecking duck and seafood soup

Food

The food in Indonesia is simply yummy and luscious. The Indonesian cuisine is filled with intense flavors and diverse dishes due to the diverse ethnic groups that live there. It includes rice, noodle, soup dishes and a lot of sea food. I have enjoyed every single restaurant that I

have visited in Indonesia. These are some of the food that are my personal favorites: Pecking duck and seafood soup, shark fin soup, fu yang hai, sweet and sour fish, fright dim sum, beef balada, presmol fish and my favorite breakfast dish that gives you energy through the day is the rice

soup with meat gravy sauce. Let's not forget the tropical fruit that they are well known for such as the dragon fruit. And of course Indonesia is not known throughout the world as the "Spice Islands" for nothing. Its exceptional different spice mixture really brings out the flavor in their food.



Daging balado, Kan Pasmol (fish curry), sauted long bean



Fright dim sum



Rice wrapped with banana leaves

Lifestyle

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2017



A man dressed as Father Christmas aka Santa Claus poses on the top of the Kollhoff tower in front of a Berlin skyline, yesterday as part of a yearly stunt before the festive season. — AFP

Nelly raps for Saudis as Travolta talks Tinseltown

IN FINNISH LAPLAND, TOURISTS FILL SANTA'S SACK WITH CASH

In the run up to Christmas tourists from around the world flock to the Santa Claus Village, an amusement park in Finnish Lapland, where temperatures can hit nearly -15 degrees Celsius (5 Fahrenheit). They buy soft toys and souvenirs from pricey gift shops while a bearded Santa receives hundreds of admirers a day throughout December before embarking on his world tour from the valleys of Finland to the skyscrapers of New York and beyond to deliver gifts. Holding their winter beanie hats in their hands, visitors wait patiently in line for a brief encounter with "Joulupukki"—the Finnish word for Santa Claus—and a photo opportunity in exchange for hard currency.

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But what if it wasn't the real Santa Claus?

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“We've seen other Santas but that wasn't the real one. But we're told that is the real one,” said Mary Gleadall, an eight-year-old tourist from Southampton in the UK, visiting the amusement park with her parents, brother and sister. According to Christmas lore, Santa lives in a secret place in the middle of the snowy pines of the North Pole. But the question is where? Since 2010, Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland, has marketed itself as Santa's “official home”.

Situated a few miles from the city, the Santa Claus Village is located in front of a huge gas station. Tourists rush to cross the Arctic Circle, marked by a white line, to meet Santa Claus in his wooden home with a pointed roof.

But entering his private cottage is out of the question as Mother Claus is reportedly protective of their privacy. In a large room, the white-bearded old man sits in an armchair next to a chest

full of letters. Each year, he receives more than 300,000 visitors, a deluge he embraces with humility.

“I'm very happy. I'm not exhausted but, of course, I get tired once in a while” he says. And how does Santa Claus regain his energy? “I love to take nap every once and then. Fifteen minutes sleeping and then all is very good,” he says.

Exalted tourists

Shizuka Kawahara and Saki Itoi, Japanese tourists in their thirties, flew for more than 24 hours to hug Santa for a few seconds in a precious moment immortalized with a photograph taken by an elf. The price for one shot starts at 30 euros (\$35). Photographing with one's own camera is forbidden as it would ruin the magic of the moment, says the staff of the house. Four-year-old Harry Gleadall, Mary's brother, approaches Santa without fear.

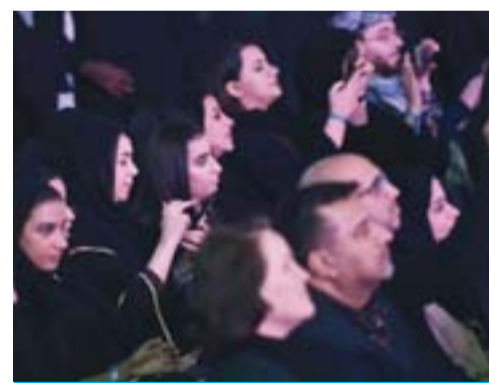
He quickly states his list of what he wants for Christmas: Transformers and some more Transformers before he skeptically shakes Santa's hand. “But what if it wasn't the real Santa Claus?” Harry asks with concern. Eager to set the record straight—and justify the long trip—his mother quickly assures him that the chubby red-clothed man is indeed the real deal. After a tour around the shop which sells hand-made “Lapland” emblems and tons of souvenirs, the family is back in the village square, surrounded by wooden homes, Christmas carols piped out of nearby speakers.

Polar safari

In this winter wonderland, tourists have the opportunity to go on a reindeer sleigh ride. A snow “safari” of 400 meters costs 14 euros per child and 18 euros per adult, an exotic experience for many foreigners who seek to discover the arctic landscapes steeped in pink light. The -13 degrees Celsius does not discourage the plucky visitors bundled up in their ski suits. “Everything that have been told to me during childhood, it's come true,” said Perpetua, a tourist from Dubai, describing the break from the year round desert climate as “heaven”. — AFP

American entertainers actor John Travolta and singer Nelly are in Saudi Arabia as the ultra-conservative Gulf kingdom undergoes a vast “modernisation” plan launched by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Travolta was in the capital Riyadh for a discussion Friday on “the secrets of Hollywood”, and rapper Nelly gave a concert Thursday in Jeddah on the west coast. Only men were allowed admittance to Nelly's performance, for which US media had reported he would not rap about women or marijuana. As part of the crown prince's modernisation drive, the kingdom has recently organised artistic events open to both sexes and has also announced the forthcoming reopening of previously banned cinemas.

“It's amazing to have your music transcend and be accepted globally, not just by where you come from but also by people who have never met you or seen you before,” the 42-year-old Nelly told reporters before his performance. “This experience is probably bigger for me than it is for you guys, so it feels great to be here.”



People listen to US actor John Travolta speaking during a panel discussion at the Apex Convention Center.



US actor John Travolta (left) attends a panel discussion at the Apex Convention Center in the Saudi capital Riyadh on December 15, 2017. — AFP photos

Nelly is a three-times Grammy winner known for such hits as “Hot in Herre”. He was arrested in early October in the United States in connection with a rape case but denied the allegation and was later released without charge.

Hollywood star Travolta was in Riyadh Friday to meet fans and talk about his artistic career and Tinseltown. Half of the Saudi population is aged

under 25, and both events are being held under Prince Mohammed's drive to modernize the kingdom, enshrined in the “Vision 2030” plan unveiled in April last year. In addition to diversifying an economy still too dependent on oil, the plan provides for developing tourism, sports and entertainment, despite the opposition of some religious circles. — AFP



US actor John Travolta (second from right) arrives to attend a panel discussion at the Apex Convention Center.



US actor John Travolta (right) arrives to attend a panel discussion at the Apex Convention Center in the Saudi capital Riyadh.