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## Health minister: Statement on fees blown out of proportion

## 14 MPs to boycott government oath in Assembly

## Israeli appeals court ruling on **KAC travel ban**

BERLIN: An Israeli man appealed yesterday against a German court's ruling upholding Kuwait Airways' right to ban him from boarding a flight due to his citizenship, a legal decision that triggered sharp criticism from German officials and Jewish groups. The appeal argues that the ruling accepted a racist Kuwaiti law and allowed the airline to override German laws requiring that airlines transport any passenger with valid travel documents, according to the Lawfare Project, which filed the appeal.

'We cannot allow our laws to be subverted by the state-sponsored racism of other nations," said Nathan Gelbart, the German attorney for the group, which fights anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli discrimination around the world. He said the decision by the Frankfurt district court had allowed "anti-Semitic discrimination to be imported into our country and helped whitewash and sanitize it." Kuwait Airways has not commented on the decision.



weeks after protests that included the burning of Israeli flags. Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert said Germany had a historic responsibility to stand by Israel and Jews everywhere. Anti-Semitism remains a sensitive issue in Germany, one of Israel's closest allies, more than 70 years after the end of the Nazi-era Holocaust, in which six million Jews were killed.

The Frankfurt court last month ruled Kuwait Airways had the right to refuse to carry the Israeli man on a flight to Bangkok that began in Frankfurt and included a stopover in Kuwait City since it was abiding by the laws of Kuwait, a country that does not recognize the state of Israel. It said Germany's anti-discrimination law applied only in cases of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic background or religion, not citizenship.

#### By B Izzak

KUWAIT: New Health Minister Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah yesterday said that his statement on revising increased medical charges on expatriates was "blown out of proportion", insisting that he did not say anything about scrapping the decision. The minister said in a statement that his statement on Sunday was circulated in a wrong way and showed him as if he said he would consider scrapping the decision, which went into effect on Oct 1.

Sheikh Basel said he specifically mentioned that the decision to hike health charges on expatriates will be reassessed based on a statement made by the former health minister that the decision will be reevaluated three months after implementation.

A number of MPs had threatened to grill the minister if he studied the possibility of scrapping the increase in charges on expatriates, saying that the decision has already reduced the number of expatriate patients visiting health facilities, making way for Kuwaitis to secure better health services. The decision sharply raised the cost of medical services at public hospitals and clinics, in some cases several-fold. There were calls by some Kuwaitis to suspend the decision because many expatriates are unable to afford medical treatment now.

In another development, 14 opposition lawmakers said yesterday they will boycott the new ministers' oath taking in the National Assembly in protest against the jailing of three MPs with connection to the 2011 storming of the Assembly building. The lawmakers, all of them from the opposition, will boycott the period when the prime minister and the ministers will start taking the oath in the Assembly to become members, in accordance with the Kuwaiti law.

The new Cabinet was sworn in by the Amir last week, but under the law, they must take the oath in the Assembly too. The opposition lawmakers are expected to join the session after the government completes taking the oath. The opposition lawmakers are upset that three of their colleagues and dozens of opposition activists have been handed harsh jail terms and were sent to jail even before the sentences became final. Meanwhile, MPs Jamaan Al-Harbash and Waleed Al-Tabtabaei, who gave themselves up to authorities, issued a joint statement vesterday in which they held the speaker and MPs responsible for their



Sheikh Basel Al-Sabah

imprisonment. They said that jailing them is against the constitution and that putting them behind bars before a final court ruling is a very serious precedence.

Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem accused sides he did not name of trying to make personal gains from the court ruling and trying to disrupt the proceedings of the Assembly, warning that he will not tolerate them and will take stern action. Ghanem charged they are trying to keep Kuwait indulged in crises without any moral obligations. He said he will not allow any chaos inside the Assembly, adding that he will take action against these elements. The speaker also said that the Assembly will resume its sessions today after a long halt since the opening session on Oct 24. Sessions may be extended to Thursday in order to compensate for the missed sessions.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other top officials have vowed to fight anti-Semitism and xenophobia with the full force of the law in recent

Continued on Page 11

## **ANC elects** Ramaphosa as new head

JOHANNESBURG: South African deputy president Cyril Ramaphosa was narrowly elected head of the ruling ANC party yesterday, winning a bruising race that exposed rifts within the organization that led the fight against apartheid. "We declare comrade Cyril Ramaphosa the new president of the African National Congress," an election official told party delegates in Johannesburg. The victory puts Ramaphosa in line to succeed

Lebanese Uber

driver arrested

over killing UK

embassy worker

President Jacob Zuma, whose reign has been plagued by corruption scandals, economic slowdown and growing anger at the once-omnipotent party.

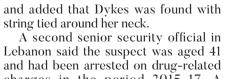
Thousands of raucous Ramaphosa supporters sang and chanted in the conference hall as rival backers of defeated candidate Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma appeared dejected. Ramaphosa won 2,440 votes to Dlamini-Zuma's 2,261. The vote was a long and acrimonious process. Delegates from around South Africa cast their ballots after repeated delays caused by disputes over who was entitled to vote.

Hundreds of attendees were banned

## from the poll, raising the possibility that supporters of Dlamini-Zuma, a former minister who is Zuma's ex-wife, could **Continued on Page 11**

**BEIRUT:** Lebanese police yesterday arrested a driver with a criminal record suspected of killing British embassy worker Rebecca Dykes after trying to rape her, according to officials and the national news agency. The Lebanese news agency said the Lebanese man, who works as a driver with ride-hailing giant Uber, had confessed to killing the young woman, who was employed at the UK embassy in Beirut. Dykes was last seen alive at a party in Gemmayzeh, a Beirut neighborhood popular with foreign residents, on Friday night and left in the suspect's car.

"He picked her up in Gemmayzeh on Friday night, took her to Achrafieh then to the Metn highway and tried to rape her," the news agency said, referring to an expressway north of Beirut. Her body was found dumped on the roadside there early the following evening. A senior security official had told AFP that strangulation was the likely cause of death



**Rebecca Dykes** 

charges in the period 2015-17. A spokesman for Uber said in an email: "We are horrified by this senseless act of violence. Our hearts are with the victim and her family. We are working with authorities to assist their investigation in any way we can."

The Lebanese news agency said the suspect was tracked down thanks to security cameras and confessed to

Continued on Page 11



JOHANNESBURG: South African deputy president Cyril Ramaphosa hugs Minister Lindiwe Sisulu after he was announced President of the African National Congress (ANC) yesterday. — AFP

## **Modi steers** party to state election wins

NEW DELHI: India's ruling party yesterday celebrated victory in two state elections, but saw its majority dip in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's stronghold of Gujarat, where the charismatic leader campaigned aggressively in a closely-fought race. The wins in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh further cemented Modi's dominance, with his Hindu nationalist party now ruling in roughly two-thirds of India's states ahead of a general election slated for 2019.

Modi, draped in a garland of flowers, thanked voters in Gujarat - his home state of 60 million people - for backing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to a sixth consecutive term. "The Gujarat election results are historic. In this day and age, for a party to keep winning for so long is unprecedented," he told cheering supporters at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi.

India's election commission said the party won 99 seats in the 182-seat Gujarat parliament, more than the majority mark of 92 needed to form government. But it lost 16 seats com-



#### Narendra Modi

pared to the 2012 polls. The party also wrested control of the northern Himalayan state of Himachal Pradesh from the main opposition Congress party, winning 44 out of 68 seats. The twin victories extended BJP's command to 19 of India's 29 states.

Congress, which has ruled India for much of its history but was thumped by Modi's BJP in the 2014 national poll, now holds just four states in the world's largest democracy of 1.25 billion. Modi's chief rival Rahul Gandhi, who recently replaced his mother Sonia at the helm of Congress, said he "accepts the verdict of the people".

Continued on Page 11

#### News in brief

#### **US vetoes Jerusalem resolution**

**UNITED NATIONS:** The United States yesterday vetoed a draft UN resolution rejecting President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital, after all 14 other Security Council members, including key US allies Britain, France, Italy, Japan and Ukraine backed the measure. The veto cast by US Ambassador Nikki Haley highlighted Washington's isolation over Trump's announcement that the US embassy will be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, effectively ignoring Palestinian claims on the city. "The United States will not be told by any country where we can put our embassy," Haley told the council after the veto.

#### Fatalities as US train derails

LOS ANGELES: "Multiple" people were killed early yesterday when an Amtrak passenger train derailed in Washington state near the city of Tacoma, sending cars flying off a bridge and onto a busy interstate, officials said. Pictures from the scene showed one train car overturned and crushed on the interstate highway and another dangling down from the overpass above. The train, which was carrying 78 passengers and five crew, was part of a newly expanded faster rail service along the route linking Seattle and Portland, Oregon - featuring new locomotives.

#### **Unease over Indian stance**

**NEW DELHI:** A dozen Arab ambassadors have asked India to clarify its position on the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, diplomatic sources said, after New Delhi's muted response suggested a shift in support for the Palestinian cause. The Indian foreign ministry, in a brief statement, said India's position was consistent and independent of any third party. The bland statement made no reference to Jerusalem and prompted criticism at home that it was insufficient, vague and anti-Palestinian. Last week, envoys from Arab states including Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Kuwait based in New Delhi met Indian junior foreign minister M J Akbar to brief the government about an Arab League meeting on Dec 9 condemning the US decision. The envoys also sought a more forthright Indian response.





## Global institutes affirm uniqueness of Kuwaiti economic status: KCCI

## Plan to hold an international economic forum in Kuwait

**Economy 'more** 

receptive' for

foreign

investors

KUWAIT: A number of international financial institutes Kuwait to display the economic and financial opportuniaffirmed the uniqueness of Kuwait's economic status, said ties in the country. With new laws and decrees, Kuwaiti

Industry (KCCI) Ali Mohammad Thunayan Al-Ghanem vesterday. After a meeting between His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan at Seif Palace, Ghanem said that most Kuwaiti banks as well as economic and shareholding companies

have gained regional and international recognition due to Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah has informed us on the their efforts.

Based on this fact, the KCCI, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and foreign investment authorities are eager to hold an international economic forum in such goal. —KUNA

## **Dubai hosts GCC** executive education program next month

KUWAIT: Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) Governor and Institute of Banking Studies (IBS) Chairman Mohammad Yousef Al-Hashel said yesterday that the ninth version of executive education program for banking and finance executives in the GCC region, and from other Middle Eastern countries, will be held in Dubai on January 27. The six-day program will be co-organized by the IBS and Harvard Business School for the Ninth year in a row, he said in a press release. As one of the strategic developmental projects organized by the IBS,

Chairman of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and economy will be more receptive for foreign investors, said the KCCI chairman who

affirmed that Kuwait's top authorities were in favor of holding the forum.

The event, scheduled for next year, will be attended by His Highness the Amir and will be held under his auspices, said Ghanem. Meanwhile Roudhan said that the forum, proposed for March of next year would be very beneficial for Kuwaiti economy. His

necessity of transforming Kuwait to a regional and international hub for business and economy, said Roudhan who affirmed that the forum would be geared toward

> the program aims to upgrade the skills of the Kuwait and GCC national workforce, of which executives comprise the key component, he said.

The program was conducted for the first time in 2010 as an exclusive event for the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwaiti banks. After the tremendous success of that first program and with the Harvard Business School showing interest in taking the program to the GCC level, the program continued to be run on an annual basis since then, alternately in one of the GCC states, he elaborated. Communication with Harvard Business School started in 2009 to organize the school's first custom program in the GCC region, he said, noting that the Harvard Business School is very selective in conducting custom programs, especially those beyond its campus in Boston, Massachusetts. The Governor explained that the title of the forthcoming 2018 program is 'Leading Strategy Execution in Financial Services,' and it consists of two integrated themes: 'Strategic Management' and 'Leadership' and will be held for six consecutive days from January 27 to February 1, 2018.

Executive education programs held by Harvard Business School in the GCC region adhere to the School's high standards thus ensuring that participants and their banks and organizations will be provided with the same quality of learning experience for which the school is so well known, Hashel pointed out.

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Chairman of the

Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Ali Mohammad Thunayan Al-Ghanem, in presence of

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

At the end of the program, participants will receive a Harvard Business School certificate, verifying that they have completed the program. The worldfamous Harvard Business School case studies will be the main learning tool in the program; these case studies are written by the school's faculty and are used in numerous universities and executive development centers, he added. Development of the talented and qualified nationals in the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Kuwaiti banks will remain a top strategic priority considering the role of executives in developing their organizations, he stressed. Collaboration amongst the GCC countries in areas of common interest such as training and development has always been and will remain an item of top priority, he concluded. ---KUNA



**Mohammad Al-Hashel** 



## Kuwait amongst most charitable worldwide: **Minister**

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait built a strong reputation as one of the world's most charitable countries, Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and



**KUWAIT: Minister of Justice and M** 

Islamic Affairs Dr Fahad Al-Afasi said yesterday. Delivering a speech to the 24th Awgaf forum held under the auspices of His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Afasi said that the UN recognition of His Highness the Amir as a 'Humanitarian Leader,' and Kuwait as a 'Global Humanitarian Center' was a clear indication of Kuwait's strong presence in the charitable scene all over the world.

He noted that securing a non-permanent seat at the UNSC between 2018-2019 would help Kuwait to further support charitable causes all around the world. On the current forum, the minister affirmed that Kuwait is aware of the importance of providing a helping hand to the poor and needy all over the globe, stressing that this would help push for worldwide development.

Afasi took the change to thank His Highness the Crown Prince for his generous sponsorship of the event, which was reflective of the top authority's keenness to support charitable efforts. Al-Afasi represented His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh

#### qaf and Islamic Affairs Dr Fahad Al-Afas delivers a speech during the 24th Awqaf forum. —KUNA

#### Nawaf at the event.

Meanwhile, Secretary General of the Awqaf Public Foundation Mohammad Al-Jalahma said that Kuwait had proven itself as a country keen on supporting the needy all over the globe. Building relationships through chartable is an integral part of a human being, affirmed Jalahma who expressed that the current event was held to support all those who are in need of charity and assistance.

In the meantime, former Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni delivered a speech during the event in which she lauded Kuwait's strong presence within the global charitable scene. The annual Awqaf forum is an indication that Kuwait was keen on continuing its charitable role, said Dr Moni. The two-day Aqwaf forum honored during its opening session Dr Waleed Al-Ali and Fahad Al-Hussein who were killed during a charity mission in Burkina Faso back in August. —KUNA

### Kuwait marks two years of continued aid for Yemen

**RIYADH:** Since December of 2015, the 'Kuwait By Your Side' campaign had been providing non-stop relief aid and humanitarian support to the Yemeni people after the war there crippled the country. The campaign issued a report from its headquarters in Aden, Yemen, recounting two years of humanitarian efforts. Despite the ongoing war as well as the huge natural and logistic obstacles, the campaign managed to deliver necessities in addition to food and water to the most devastated areas in Yemen.

The campaign distributed a sum of \$100 million worth of relief aid and materials in three phases with each costing \$17, \$23, \$53 million respectively. The current chair of the 'Kuwait By Your Side' campaign Raed Ibrahim said that the past two years saw the campaign aiding well-off Yemenis as

well as the poor, affirming that the current situation in Yemen had left everyone affected. In coordination with the legitimate Yemeni government in Aden, the campaign focused its efforts in providing water, education, health, refuge and food. The campaign was launched by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as part of various Kuwaiti groups providing relief aid to war-stricken Yemen.

In other news, Kuwait's Patients Helping Fund (PHF) on Sunday launched a clinic at Aden International Airport in Yemen, which aims to provide urgent healthcare to incoming and outgoing travellers. In a statement in Riyadh, PHF said the airport expressed gratitude for the initiative, which witnessed the construction of the clinic and stocking it up with necessary medicine and equipment. The Kuwait-established fund has made tangible contributions to healthcare facilities in the governorate of Aden, providing them with equipment and ambulances, mentioned the airport's director Tareq Abdo. —KUNA



## Amir meets former ministers, thanks them for their efforts

Top state officials receive new, outgoing ambassadors



Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with former Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with former Minister of Health Dr Jamal Al-Harabi.

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al- and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Seif Palace the previous cabinet's ministers. His Highness Sheikh Sabah met with former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, former Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, former Minister of State for Housing Affairs and Minister of State of Services Affairs Yaser Abul, former Minister of Health Dr Jamal Al-Harbi, former Minister of Public Works Abdulrahman Al-Mutawa, former Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq, former Minister of Justice and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Falah Al-Azb, as well as former Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Fares. His Highness the Amir thanked the ministers for their efforts during their tenures and wished them all success in their future endeavors. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah also met with the former ministers vesterday to thank them for their efforts.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received Sheikh Dr Ibrahim Al-Duaij Al-Sabah, who presented to him a copy of his book entitled 'Shariah, Democracy and the Kuwaiti Constitution.' Sheikh Dr Ibrahim later presented copies of the book to His Highness the Crown Prince

Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah as well. In the meantime, His Highness the Crown Prince also met with Health Minister Sheikh Dr Bassel Humoud Hamad Al-Sabah and chief of Kuwait National Security Bureau (NSB) Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

#### Ambassadors

In other news, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Prime Minister have separately received the outgoing Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Jusupbek Sharipov on the occasion of ending his tenure in the country. Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received the credentials of France's new ambassador to the State of Kuwait.

During the reception, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled wished the new ambassador best of luck and more developed relations between Kuwait and France. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled also met with the outgoing Australian Ambassador to Kuwait Warren Hauck. During the reception, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled lauded Hauck's efforts and contributions to the promotion and development of firm relations between Kuwait and Australia. The meetings were attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with the outgoing Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan Jusupbek Sharipov.

Office Sheikh Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah and several senior Foreign Ministry officials. Also yes-UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident of luck in her future ventures. — KUNA

Representative to Kuwait Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled thanked the UN official for her terday, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled received the outgoing efforts during her stay in Kuwait, wishing her the best



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah joins in cutting the cake during the Qatar Embassy's National Day ceremony. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

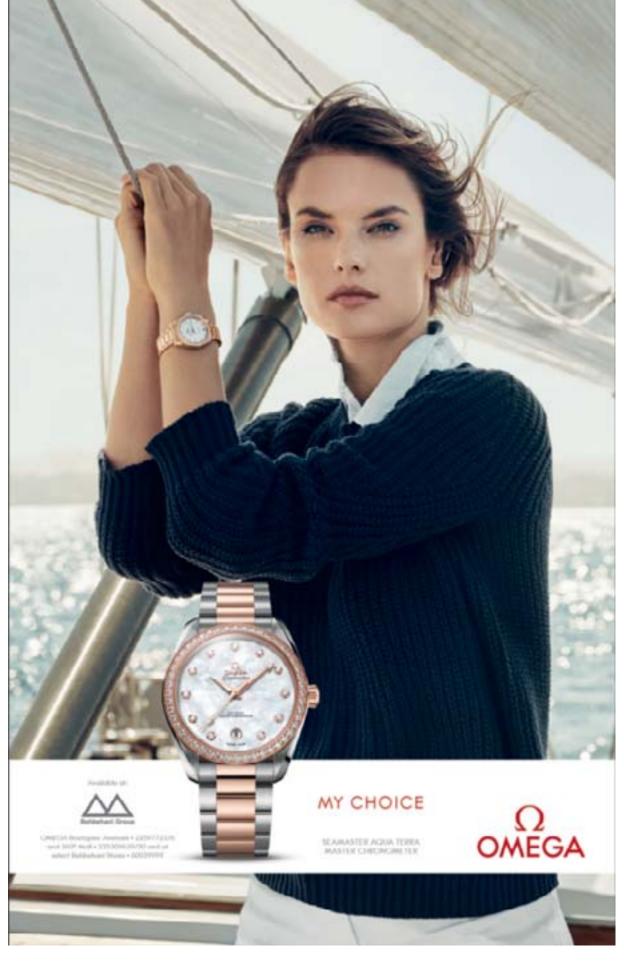
## Qatar embassy celebrates **National Day**

KUWAIT: Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem on Sunday congratulated Qatar on its National Day and hoped security and stability would be maintained across all Gulf states. During their attendance of Qatar's National Day celebrations at its embassy in Kuwait, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah also congratulated Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Father Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani and the Qatari people on the occasion.

For his part, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah underlined the strength of relations between Kuwait and Qatar. Speaking to reporters at the event, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said he was proud of Doha's achievements made on the scale of development along with various other regional and international accomplishments. Qatar's National Day on December 18 marks the unification of the state in 1878. — KUNA



Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzoug Al-Ghanem attends the ceremony.







Local

Tuesday, December 19, 2017

### Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: A colorful sunrise reflecting on clouds and water in Jahra Pools Nature Reserve. - KUNA

## Zain participates in Arab Day of People with Special Needs

## As part of its social responsibility strategy

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, participated in a special event organized by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor in celebration of the Arab Day of People with Special Needs. The event was held at the Ministry's Social Care Centers under the patronage and attendance of the Deputy Director of Medical, Psychological, and Social Services at the Public Authority of the Disabled Dr Nadia Abul and in cooperation with the National Assembly Speaker's Committee of people with Special Needs.

Every year, Zain is keen on participating in the activities organized by the Social Care Centers as part of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy towards people with special needs. The company will spare no efforts to take part in initiatives that celebrate the capabilities of people with special needs and their families and raise awareness about their cause within the community.

During the event, Zain organized a number of recreational activities to share the joys of this day with people with special needs and their families. The company was keen on contributing to making this event a success to celebrate the capabilities of people with special needs and empower them within the society.

Zain dedicates a great part of its Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy towards people with special needs. The company recently sponsored the seventh annual RunKuwait charity marathon organized by Fawzia Sultan Healthcare Network (FSHN) and aimed at supporting children with special needs in Kuwait. The company was also the strategic partner of the fifth consecutive edition of the Ideal Mother Award organ-



KUWAIT: Zain is honored for its participation.

ized by Al-Kharafi Activity Kids Center and aimed at shedding light on the distinguished efforts of mothers of children with mental disabilities. The company also regularly conducts visits to social care centers during multiple seasons all year round. Zain constantly finds ways to shoulder



A scene from the event.

initiatives that work towards enhancing the society's welfare. Zain's long-term cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor as well as other public entities

springs from its belief in the importance of having a positive print in the society by sponsoring and launching initiatives that cater to various interests of the community.

## **Gulf Bank holds** training session for Fikra Program

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank was pleased to lead a training session for participants of Fikra Program on non-financial analysis, session was conducted recently at Al-Hamra Business Tower. Omar Al-Muhaisen, Relationship Manager - Business Banking at Gulf Bank, led the training and focused on helping the participants understand techniques to conduct analyses of and make informed strategic decisions about how to establish their businesses.

The tools Al-Muhaisen focused on were Porter's five forces and SWOT analysis. Porter five forces are used to analyze the competitive environment within an industry, often focusing on external forces, while a SWOT analysis tends to look more deeply within an organization to analyze its internal potential.

Gulf Bank is proud to be a gold sponsor of the Fikra Program for the second consecutive year. Fikra Program is an intensive entrepreneurship training program that provides aspiring entrepreneurs with the technical skills and business knowledge needed to launch their own businesses such as leadership skills, comprehensive business plan design, mentorship, financial analysis, media exposure, investment opportunities, and others.

For this edition, over 350 applications were received and filtered to 30, before the actual interviews process. Meshari Shehab, Assistant General Manager for Priority and Wealth Management at Gulf Bank, was on the judging panel which then selected 15 business ideas to enter the program.

Fikra Program is held under the patronage of Khaled Al Roudhan, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of State for Youth Affairs and is proudly supported by Ministry of State for Youth Affairs; The National Fund for SME Development; Gulf Bank; Al-Hamra Real Estate Company; Ali Abdulwahab Al Mutawa Commercial Co; Markaz Financial Center; Lexus Kuwait as a part of Al Sayer Group; and Grand Cinemas. Fikra Program is managed by Cubical Services Business Incubator.





### Local

## **Investment authority pays 50 percent of** Dhaman Health Insurance Company's cost

Security considerations prevent transferring liabilities to roads authority

day received a memo including the Supreme Judicial Council's opinion about a proposal made by MP Waleed Al-Tabtabai suggesting extending

the grace period to file a contest before the court

of cassation from 30 to 60 days. The council ini-

tially accepted the proposal but limited the exten-

sion to 40 days so that defendants and their

lawyers could have enough time to study the ver-

dict and file their contests. The proposal suggests

amending the first clause of article 153 of decree

law number 38/1980 to define the contest grace period in letters to sixty days instead of only using

the digit '60,' and omitting the phrase 'effective as

of publication in the official gazette' to 'one month

Legislations

mentary legislation affairs committee MP

Al-Humaidi Al-Subai'e

stressed that the pro-

posal made on regu-

lating the appointment

of senior officials will

help limit favoritism

and deals made in such

cases. Following the

committee's meeting

Head of the parlia-

#### By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) has paid around KD 115 million as 50 percent of the cost for the public shareholding company that was established to build hospitals for expatriates covered by the health insurance system. This amount represents citizens' share in the Dhaman Health Insurance Company, and is expected to be offered to citizens in an initial public offering in 2018. The project will organize health services in Kuwait and mainly targets the benefit of expats who are expected to only pay a comprehensive annual insurance fee without paying any extra charges when they visits hospitals built and operated by Dhaman. The health insurance company's opera-

tional plan is expected to start in 2018 by launching a number of integrated primary health care clinics, before launching further primary and secondary services by 2020. The hospitals will be located in Al-Ahmadi, Al-Jahra, and Al-Farwaniya, providing surgery, internal medicine, pediatrics,

laboratories and radiology.

#### **Recruitment priority**

MP Saleh Ashour criticized the government for what he described as failure to implement a decree last January and prioritizes the recruitment of Kuwaiti women's children in state departments. In an inquiry addressing Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, Ashour pointed out that many Arab expats had been appointed in positions that could be filled by Kuwaiti women's children.

Grace period

#### The parliamentary legislation committee yester-

### **Court rejects petition** to expel expats from public schools

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**Special** services sought for martyrs' children

after publication.

held yesterday, Subai'e operating rooms, accident and emergency, central said that the committee has rejected a proposal to regulate private tuitions by building special private schools that will contradict with developing education. Subai'e added that bedoons' civil rights were one of the top priority proposals and that the committee will discuss it within a fortnight.

#### **Roads authority**

Head of the parliamentary budgets and final statements committee Adnan Abdulsamad said that the committee met with officials from the Interior Ministry, Ministry of Public Works, the Public Authority for Roads and Transport, the State Audit Bureau, the auditors apparatus and the Civil Service Commission to discuss transferring the liabilities of the newly-established roads authority



'Info' violations sent

to Public Prosecution



KUWAIT: Former health minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi participates in the Dhaman Hospital - Ahmadi Governorate groundbreaking ceremony, held in November 15, 2017. — KUNA

from various other state department as per the authority's founding law. Abdulsamad explained that the roads sector was transferred from the public works ministry to the authority with all its liabilities as per a meeting held with the prime minister on March 23, 2017 with the aim of avoiding contradiction of liabilities. He added that the interior ministry is yet to transferred some of its liabilities, such as technical vehicles' checkup and drivers' licenses, to the authority due to security considerations.

#### Martyrs' children

The Amiri Diwan undersecretary and director of Al-Shaheed (Martyrs) Bureau Fatima Al-Ameer said that extensive meetings was held with the

central apparatus for illegal residents' affairs to discuss the number of non-Kuwaiti martyrs' families registered in the bureau and not registered in the apparatus. Discussions in the meeting focused on finding ways to allow those families to receive health and educational services, she added. Speaking during a ceremony held to honor martyrs' creative children, Ameer said that the meetings discussed issuing a health card by which martyrs' families who are not registered with the apparatus could receive medical care. Ameer added that an agreement was made with the Interior Ministry to have relevant authorities study the files of martyrs during offensive operations pending granting them citizenship.

Tuesday, December 19, 2017



KUWAIT: The court of first instance rejected a petition demanding that enrollment in public schools is made completely exclusive for Kuwaitis. However, lawyers who forwarded the petition have already announced plans to appeal the verdict. The comprehensive court had ruled that this case falls out of its jurisdiction. Although expatriates are generally not allowed to enroll their children in public schools, exemptions are made to those working in certain departments such as the ministries of education and health.

#### Weather forecast

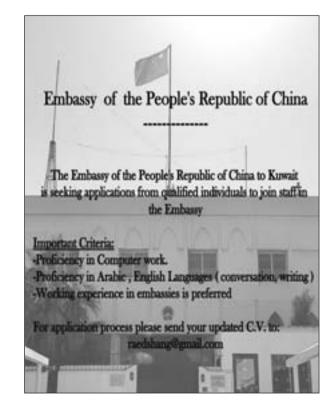
Meteorologist Essa Ramadhan said that the weather is expected to remain warm and moderate during the day and cool during the night this week. Scattered clouds, dry weather and southeasterly winds are expected from Thursday onwards following a drop in temperature, he added.

#### Lawyer acquitted

The appeals court exonerated a Kuwaiti lawyer of joining Hezbollah. However, the suspect remains in jail as he is serving a five-year sentence for spreading false news in which he claimed that a Bangladeshi cleaning worker has impersonated a Kuwaiti doctor in a local public hospital.

#### Allegations

Head of the teaching faculty society at Kuwait University Dr Ibrahim Al-Humoud said that an investigation must be launched into allegations made by a local newspaper, claiming that an unauthorized Indian magazine published papers based on which some of faculty members were promoted.



KUWAIT: Reports on violations and plunder of public funds at the Ministry of Information were referred to the Public Prosecution, Minister of Information Mohammad Al-Jabri said yesterday. Jabri said that the ministry would be focusing on transparency when it comes to expenditure, affirming that the ministry would work on measures to implement Kuwait's 2035 vision. Minister Al-Jabri added that a ministerial specialized committee would be looking into the parliamentary interpellations of the previous two ministers to prevent possible violations. --KUNA

#### No deal signed for smart driving licenses

KUWAIT: No deal was signed with any company to start issuing smart driving licenses, the Ministry of Interior said yesterday. The Interior Ministry's Public Relations department said that video clips circulating on social media regarding the deal were false. Currently there is no deal with any company to start issuing the smart licenses, said the ministry, adding the responsibility of striking a deal lies in the hands of Kuwait's General Secretariat for the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (SCPD) and the UN Development Program (UNDP). The statement said that if a deal was signed, the ministry will be only responsible for the technical aspects of issuing the smart driving licenses. -KUNA

## Addict stabs foe to settle old score

KUWAIT: A drugs user stabbed a citizen over an old dispute when he ran into him in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. The victim was taken to Farwaniya Hospital for treatment. Police also discovered that the suspect is wanted to serve four years in jail over a previous case.

Meanwhile, Mubarak Al-Kabeer police arrested a citizen who was caught while being under the influence of drugs. Police had headed to the Sabhan Bridge following a report about a driver obstructing traffic. The man was found sleeping in his car while drugs were found inside the vehicle as well. The man was arrested and sent to the Drugs Control General Department.

In a separate case, a Vietnamese man resisted arrest when caught selling liquor along with a Bangladeshi taxi driver in Farwaniya. When policemen asked a taxi driver to pull over, both the driver and the man accompanying him attempted to escape on foot, but were caught. Police found bags containing homebrewed liquor inside the vehicle. Both suspects were sent to concerned authorities. — Translated by Kuwait Times

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SUWAIT AL THURAYA CITY

## International TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2017



#### Militants storm Kabul spy training centre

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Page 7

## Rohingya families rescued from slavery in India



BENGHAZI, Libya: A Libyan armed forces cadet performs maneuvers during their graduation ceremony at the military academy in eastern Benghazi yesterday. —AFP

## Mayor of Misrata abducted, killed

## Libya strongman says UN-backed mandate has expired

TRIPOLI: The mayor of Libya's third-largest city Misrata has been killed by unidentified assailants who abducted him as he returned from an official trip overseas, a security Eshtewi. "He worked hard to serve his people," Millett of a tattered 2015 political deal. The UN-brokered agreesource said yesterday. Mohamad Eshtewi's body was found said on Twitter. Home to dumped in the street after he was kidnapped after leaving some 400,000 people, the airport in the western coastal city late on Sunday, the source said. The city hospital said it had received the mayor's body bearing gunshot wounds. His brother was with him in the car and was wounded in the attack, the security source said. Eshtewi was returning from an official visit to Turkey with other members of the city council, who were all elected in 2014 for four years. UN envoy for Libya Ghassan Salame on Twitter denounced the killing and expressed his "profound sadness" at the news. The Tripoli-based Government of National Accord deplored a "cowardly" and "terrorist act" that killed a "symbol of moderation and tolerance", vowing that those responsible would be brought to justice. France's foreign ministry said the killing confirmed "the urgency for a political solution" to the political and security problems plaguing the North African country.

Britain's ambassador to Libya, Peter Millett, said he Sunday that the mandate of the country's UN-backed govwas "deeply saddened by (the) senseless murder" of ernment has run out after what he said was the expiration

ment signed in Morocco

their legitimacy, which has been contested from the first day they took office," he said. The United Nations Security Council on Thursday insisted the 2015 deal remains the "only viable framework" to prepare for elections next year. on December 17, 2015 The UN in September launched a fresh push to agree a new accord aimed at bringing stability to Libya, which has been in chaos since the 2011 ouster of long-time dictator Muammar Gaddafi. One of the main stumbling blocks is the inclusion in any potential government of Haftar, whose Libyan National Army dominates the country's east. In a statement on Sunday the UN's special representative to Libva Ghassan Salame said Libyans were "fed up with violence" and hoped "for a political solution, for reconciliation and for harmony". "I urge all parties to heed their voices and refrain from any actions that could undermine the political process," the statement said. The foreign ministers of Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt after meeting in Tunis on Sunday, welcomed the UN Security Council declaration. They also reaffirmed their rejection of "any outside interference in Libya" and "any attempt by any Libyan party to derail the political process" there. — Agencies

Raising the bar: Local brews making a comeback in Syria

DAMASCUS: For years, Abu George's bar in Damascus's Old City served imported beers under portraits of famous foreigners Che Guevara and Marilyn Monroe-but the brews on offer now are Syrian-made. When war broke out in 2011, Syria's two main breweries halted production, leaving consumers sipping on foreign, and more expensive, beers. But as fighting has subsided across much of the country this year, a new pair of local lagers has hit the markets. Tiny pubs line a cramped alleyway in the historic heart of

Syria's capital, where a group of girls dressed in white distribute free bottles of "Afamia" to passers-by. Customers at Abu George's bar reach out for a few of the brown bottles, emblazoned with a blue and gold label proclaiming Afamia to be the "Beer of Syria"

"It's a lovely initiative," says Ghassan Salloum, who coowns the popular watering hole. "The beer will be wellreceived-people want a national brew." The bearded 61-yearold floats between tables to top up the bowls of salted peanuts that inevitably accompany chilled ales, as loud music drowns out the clinking of beer bottles. "I've been here for 20 years, since a time when the national beer was really in demand," Salloum says, and Syrian spirits have continued to be a favorite. Before 2011, two local brews dominated the Syrian market: Barada, produced at a brewery outside Damascus, and Al-Sharq, based in second city Aleppo.

Al-Sharq shuttered its doors as violence in Aleppo escalated. The Barada brewery was ravaged by fighting, with Syria's government blaming "extremists" and rebels accusing the army of shelling it. "I was very sad when the war destroyed the breweries, so today I'm happy to have Syrian beer again," said Elias, a 27-year-old customer at Abu George's. He sipped on a cool Afamia, named after the celebrated city of Apamea in central Syria. The Afamia brewery on the eastern edge of Damascus had been all prepped for production in 2010, but after Syria's conflict broke out early the next year, the factory shut down and the lagers never hit the stores. — AFP

Misrata is considered one of Libya's safest cities. Its powerful militias played a major role in expelling the Islamic State group from the coastal city of Sirte last year. In October, four people were killed in a suicide bombing claimed by IS at the main court building in Misrata. Libya has



that toppled and killed longtime dictator Muammar Gaddafi, with rival authorities and militias vying for control of the oil-rich country.

Meanwhile, Libyan strongman Khalifa Haftar insisted

## found dumped in the street

Eshtewi's body

Government of National Accord (GNA) for a oneyear period, renewable only once. Despite that deal, Libya has remained divided between the GNA government in Tripoli led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj and a rival administration backed by Haftar in the east

established Libya's

In a televised speech Haftar, who has never recognized the GNA's authority, said the "expiry of the Libyan political accord" marked a "historic and dangerous turning point". "All bodies resulting from this agreement automatically lose



MOSCOW: People stand at a bus stop next to an official poster announcing next year's presidential election in Moscow yesterday. — AFP

to represent Moscow's position abroad, especially on topics where Russia and the West clash such as the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria. "Russia spends a lot of money on this (information war) and we constantly see more players," said Russian investigative journalist Andrei Soldatov, editor of Agentura.ru, a website specializing in security issues.

In 2014, Russian media reported on a new, powerful Kremlin tool: a "troll factory" in Saint Petersburg. Officially called the "Internet Research Agency," it was reportedly linked to Russian security services and ran thousands of fake accounts on social media in an attempt to influence public opinion. According to sources interviewed by the RBK daily newspaper, it was first deployed to influence domestic politics. The trolls, the paper said, were then reorientated from 2015 to sow unrest in the US. Here they pretended sometimes to belong to one camp and sometimes to another, spreading false information and even organizing protests.

But Mark Galeotti, a security expert and researcher at the Institute of International Relations in Prague, wrote in Tablet magazine in June that the Kremlin's operation in 2016 "was about weakening Washington, not deciding who would sit in the White House" and aimed to "undermine the legitimacy of the American government, its capacity to act".

Despite these efforts, Moscow's ability to influence Western public opinion remains limited. American officials have said that content coming from Russia and the amounts spent on it were only a small portion of the total information flow and spending. The Kremlin nevertheless hugely increased the budget allocated to its cyber campaign during the 2016 presidential election. Russia spent \$50,000 on Facebook ads during the US election campaign compared to the whopping \$81 million that Trump and Hillary Clinton spent on their campaigns. — AFP

## been wracked by chaos since the 2011 uprising

Kremlin's cyber

weapons spark fears, fantasies

November to register as a "foreign agent" in the US.

A few weeks earlier, social media giant Twitter

announced it would stop distributing content sponsored

by RT and linked news agency Sputnik while Facebook

and Google promised to do more to fight Moscow's "dis-

information". Panic has spread across the Western world:

Madrid is worried about Russian-controlled "manipula-

tion" of the Catalan crisis, while British analysts see signs

of Russian influence in the Brexit vote and concerns are

growing in Germany and France over possible interfer-

tions as "hysterical" and "Russophobic," insisting there is

no hard evidence for any of the charges. Russia has

worked hard to increase its "soft power" following what it

perceived as a defeat in the "media war" during its brief

war with pro-Western Georgia in 2008. These efforts led

to the expansion of Kremlin-controlled media for a for-

eign audience. State broadcaster RT, formerly Russia

Today, and news agency Sputnik were assigned a mission

The Kremlin, meanwhile, has dismissed the accusa-

serve its interests.

ence in various polls.



## International

## Militants storm spy training centre

## Afghan president forces out powerful 'King of the North'

**Security forces** 

battle militants;

attackers killed

**KABUL:** Militants stormed an intelligence agency training centre in Kabul yesterday in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group, triggering an intense gunbattle with Afghan police. Security forces battled the militants, besieged in a construction site at the National Directorate of Security (NDS), for hours before killing at least two attackers. "They were well hidden in buildings under construction. We exploded their VBIED and killed two or three of them," a source with the NDS said on condition of anonymity, referring to a car bomb that attackers brought to the scene. Kabul police spokesman Basir Mujahid said two police officers were injured but there were no civilian casualties.

During the attack, roads to the area were closed and dozens of police and intelligence officers blocked access to the public. AFP reporters, who were held more than a kilometer away from the scene, saw ambulances and reinforcements headed towards the site. "I was going toward my school. It (the attack) happened suddenly... the police arrived in the area

fast and blocked the roads, not allowing anyone to get to their homes," Naweed, a student said. IS claimed responsibility for the attack through its propaganda arm. "Two IS attackers raid the Afghan intelligence centre in Kabul," the jihadists' Amaq outlet reported.

The Afghan capital in recent months has become one of the deadliest places in the war-torn country for civilians, as the resurgent Taleban and increasingly IS both step up their attacks on security installations and mosques. Security in Kabul has been strengthened since May 31 when a massive truck bomb ripped through the city's diplomatic quarter, killing about 150 people and wounding around 400 — mostly civilians. No group has officially claimed responsibility for that attack, which the government blamed on the Taleban-allied Haqqani Network.

Yesterday's attack represents another blow to beleaguered Afghan police and troops. The Taleban have targeted military installations in recent months, including a spate of attacks in October that killed around 150 people.

Afghan forces, already beset by desertions and corruption, have seen casualties soar to what a watchdog has US described as "shockingly high" levels since NATO forces officially ended their combat mission in 2014 and began a training and support role.

Morale has been further eroded by long-running fears that the militants have insider help-

everything from infiltrators in the ranks to corrupt Afghan forces selling equipment to the Taleban. IS, which has expanded its presence in Afghanistan since it first appeared in the region in 2015, has also scaled up its attacks in Kabul, including those on the country's Shiite minority. Last month a suicide attacker blew himself up outside a political gathering in Kabul, killing at least 14 people in an attack claimed by IS.



KABUL: Afghan National Army (ANA) arrive at the side of an ongoing attack in Kabul. Militants stormed an intelligence agency training facility in Kabul yesterday, triggering intense fighting with police in the latest attack to hit the Afghan capital. —AFP

#### 'King of the North'

In another development, Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani yesterday announced the resignation of a powerful politician nicknamed "King of the North", sidelining a rival but angering the politician's party who said he had been sacked. Atta Mohammad Noor, 54, had been governor of Balkh province since 2004 but had recently been critical of the National Unity Government led by Ghani. Noor has previously hinted that he may run for the presidency in an election in 2019. Ghani has not yet confirmed if he will run again.

The president's office in a statement said Noor, a senior

leader of the Tajik-dominated Jamiat-e Islami party, had resigned from his post. "President Ashraf Ghani has approved the resignation of the governor of Balkh Mr Atta Mohammad Noor," the statement said, adding that engineer Mohammad Daud has been appointed to take his place. Noor was not immediately available to comment. But Jamiat-e Islami in a statement strongly condemned what it called a "decision by the presidency", branding it "hasty, irresponsible, against the security... and in contradiction of the principles of the National Unity Government". — Agencies



## 61 killed as Ethiopia

do not know who ordered the deployment of the military. This illegal act should be punished," said Lema Megersa, the region's president. The clashes are likely to fuel fears about security in Ethiopia, the region's biggest economy and a staunch Western ally.

Lema's comments also illustrate growing friction within Ethiopia's ruling EPRDF coalition, since unrest roiled the Oromiya region in 2015 and 2016, when hundreds of people were killed. At that time, the violence forced the government to impose a nine-month state of emergency that was only lifted in August. The unrest was provoked by a development scheme for the capital Addis Ababa that dissidents said amounted to land grabs and turned into broader anti-government demonstrations over political and human rights. It included attacks on businesses, many of them foreign-owned, including farms growing flowers for export. —Reuters

# LAST OFFER. LAST CHANCE

Iran's death-row inmate confesses to 'spying for Israel' KD TEHRAN: Iranian public television has broadcast

images it says show the confession of an academic sentenced to death for spying for Israel during nuclear talks with world powers. In the video aired late Sunday and prepared by Iran's intelligence ministry, Ahmadreza Djalali says he worked with a foreign intelligence agency while studying in Europe. Djalali, an Iranian emergency medicine specialist resident in Sweden, was sentenced to death in the Islamic republic in October for spying for Israel.

The academic was a visiting professor at Belgium's Vrije Universiteit Brussel when he was arrested during a trip to Iran in April 2016. He was accused of passing information to Israel's Mossad intelligence service during the negotiations that led to Iran's nuclear deal with world powers in 2015. Djalali has said he is being punished for refusing to spy for Iran while working in Europe. In the 17-minute video, a narrator speaks over images of a purported "interview" with Djalali crosscut with archive footage, accusing him of being a "traitor" and of having been recruited by Mossad.

In the footage, Djalali says he gave information to foreign intelligence agents on two Iranian nuclear scientists, Majid Shahriari and Masoud Alimohammadi. The two were among five Iranian scientists-four of them involved in the country's nuclear program-killed in bomb and gun attacks in Tehran between 2010 and 2012. Iran has accused Mossad and the CIA of ordering the killings. The video comes just days after human rights group Amnesty International said Iran's Supreme Court had "run roughshod over the rule of law" by confirming Djalali's death sentence. —AFP





# Journalists accused of violating colonial-era Official Secrets Act

## Myanmar authorizes police to proceed with a case

**ICJ** demands

whereabouts

journalists'

**YANGON:** Myanmar's civilian President Htin Kyaw, a close ally of government leader Aung San Suu Kyi, has authorized the police to proceed with a case against two detained Reuters reporters accused of violating the country's colonial-era Official Secrets Act, a senior government spokesman said. Journalists Wa Lone, 31, and Kyaw Soe Oo, 27, were arrested last Tuesday evening after they were invited to dine with police officers on the outskirts of Myanmar's largest city, Yangon.

"The Ministry of Home Affairs has already submitted the case to the Office of the President," Zaw Htay, spokesman for

Aung San Suu Kyi, said by phone late on Sunday. He added that the president's office had given approval for the case to go ahead. Zaw Htay could not be reached yesterday to clarify whether Htin Kyaw or Suu Kyi had been personally involved in the decision, or if other officials had signed off on the president's behalf.

Suu Kyi, head of the ruling National League for Democracy (NLD), is

barred from the presidency under a constitution written by the military. But she effectively runs the country in the role of "state counselor". Approval from the president's office is needed before court proceedings can begin in a case brought under the Official Secrets Act. Section 13 of the Act states: "No Court shall take cognizance of any offence under this Act unless upon complaint made by order of, or under authority from, the President of the Union."

A number of governments, including the United States, Canada and Britain, and United Nations' Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, as well as Reuters Editor-in-Chief Stephen J. Adler and a host of journalists' and human rights' groups have criticized the arrests as an attack on press freedom and called on Myanmar to release the two men. Zaw Htay said the journalists' legal rights were being

respected. "Your reporters are protected by the rule of the law," he said. "All I can say is the government can guarantee the rule of law."

#### NLD figures join critics

But two senior figures in the NLD yesterday joined the criticism of how the two men are being treated. Nyan Win, a member of the NLD's central executive committee and one of Suu Kyi's defense lawyers during her years of house arrest under junta rule, said it was "unfair" that the families of Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo were not allowed to contact

them or be told where they are being held. He said the police were being "very secretive" and called for "openness", although said the NLD was unable to do anything about the issue as it was not being kept informed.

Although an NLD-led civilian government took office in April last year the police and home ministry, which are driving the

case, remain under the control of the military. Win Htein, another senior figure in the NLD, who was also critical of the journalists' detention, suggested they had probably been set up by the police. "In my opinion this is a trap," he said. "They met with two policemen and then they were arrested somewhere else with the documents." Asked on Mizzima Television what he would do for the detained journalists, Information Minister Pe Myint said: "When I know all the facts of the current case, I will work to do what I can."

Pe Myint is a former editor of the People's Age in Yangon and was Wa Lone's boss when the journalist worked at the paper in his first job as a reporter. The two journalists had worked on Reuters coverage of a crisis that has seen an estimated 655,000 Rohingya Muslims flee from a fierce military crackdown on militants in western Rakhine state. The Ministry

<image>

BAGAN, Myanmar: Buddhist monk novices prepare to wash their alms vases at the monastery after they walked through the streets of Bagan collecting alms from devotees. Buddhist tradition in Myanmar requires everyone to spend some time in a monastery or nunnery before the age of 18 in what is viewed as an important coming of age ritual. Others, however, are there for the long-term, destined for a monastic life.— AFP

of Information said last week that they had "illegally acquired information with the intention to share it with foreign media", and released a photo of the pair in handcuffs. It said they were being investigated under the 1923 Official Secrets Act, which carries a maximum prison sentence of 14 years.

The ministry said at the same time that two policemen, Police Captain Moe Yan Naing and Police Sergeant Khin Maung Lin, had also been arrested under the same act. No details have been released on whether a case against them

is also proceeding. The authorities have not allowed the journalists any contact with their families, a lawyer or Reuters since their arrest.

Tuesday, December 19, 2017

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) called on the authorities to immediately disclose the whereabouts of the pair. "All detainees must be allowed prompt access to a lawyer and to family members," said Frederick Rawski, the ICJ's Asia-Pacific Regional Director, in a statement yesterday. —Reuters

#### News in brief

#### 10 killed in stampede

**CHITTAGONG:** Ten people were killed and dozens injured in a stampede yesterday after tens of thousands of people gathered for a funeral feast in Bangladesh's southern city of Chittagong, police said. Police and hospital staff said they feared the death toll could rise. "So far we can confirm the death toll of 10 men," city police chief Iqbal Bahar said, adding it appeared to be an "accident". "The death toll could rise as 15 people are critically injured," said another police official, Mohammad Alauddin. Police staged baton charges to clear the crowd who packed community centers for the afternoon feast commemorating a popular former city mayor. Mohiuddin Chowdhury, a senior politician of the ruling Awami League party and a three-term mayor of the country's second largest city, died on Friday. He was 73.

## Rohingya families rescued from slavery in India

MUMBAI: Three Rohingya families from Myanmar comprising 13 people were rescued in the northern Indian city of Agra at the weekend after being enslaved for a year as rag pickers, authorities said. The three families came to India after an agent at a refugee camp in Bangladesh promised them jobs, but they worked long hours for no pay, according to activists who alerted the authorities. United Nations officials have warned that refugee camps in Bangladesh are fertile territory for human traffickers and the scale of a recent influx from Myanmar was putting more people at risk. "The employers had paid these agents money and did not pay them any wages saying the amount was being adjusted against the work they were doing," said Nirmal Gorana, convener of the National Campaign Committee for Eradication of Bonded Labor, that took part in the rescue. "They came to India thinking they would find a job and safety ... but they lived in a polythene hut, the rent for which was being deducted from their non-existent wages." Officials said no police case against the employer has been filed with an investigation underway but confirmed the refugees were enslaved. "The men collected plastic bottles from garbage piles. They were in a poor state when we went to rescue them," said Raju Kumar, a judicial magistrate in Agra. Almost 870,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh, including about 660,000 who arrived after Aug. 25, when Rohingya militants attacked security posts and the Myanmar army launched a counter-offensive. But their influx into India started years before with close to 40,000



#### Fire in Mumbai kills 12

MUMBAI: Fire tore through a sweet shop in the Indian city of Mumbai before dawn yesterday, sparking a building collapse which killed 12 sleeping workers, authorities said. Four others were injured but some saved their lives by scrambling out seconds before the collapse. Fire crews and other rescuers saved many trapped workers but 12 died of their injuries, said Tanaji Kamble, spokesperson for Mumbai's disaster management cell. "The casualties could have been much higher but luckily some workers managed to escape before the building collapsed," Kamble added. Authorities are looking into the cause of the blaze in the store in the suburbs of India's financial capital. Building disasters are common in Mumbai, especially during the monsoon season from late June to September. Millions live in cramped dilapidated properties because of high rental prices and activists say housing owners and builders often cut corners to save costs.

#### Philippine deadly storm

**MANILA:** Rescuers used bulldozers to dig through mountains of mud in the search for more than 40 people missing in the eastern Philippines after landslides triggered by a powerful storm which killed at least 31 at the weekend, authorities said yesterday. Tropical Storm Kai-Tak was heading out to the South China Sea yesterday afternoon after dragging its way across the archipelagic nation over the weekend, leaving at least 31 people dead, most of them from drowning and landslides, government officials said. President Rodrigo Duterte's spokesman Harry Roque also said 49 people were still missing. The island province of Biliran suffered the brunt of the storm as the heavy rains caused landslides that buried many homes and destroyed roads and bridges. Rescuers searching for survivors on the island were not optimistic.

#### Landslide kills 8 miners

JAKARTA: A landslide on the slopes of Indonesia's Mount Merapi volcano on Java Island yesterday killed at least eight people mining sand and stones and injured eight, the country's disaster mitigation agency said. The miners had been digging out sand and stones from a steep cliff when they were engulfed, Disaster Mitigation Agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho said in a statement. "There could be more miners buried by the landslide, but it's unclear because the number working at the mine is also unclear," said Nugroho, noting that despite previous landslides in the area the practice had persisted. Heavy equipment had been brought in to help search for victims at the site, about 50 km north of the city of Yogyakarta. In many parts of Indonesia, there is little or no regulation of socalled traditional mining, resulting in poor safety standards. Nugroho said mining had persisted in the area even though landslides had occurred there before. Sitting on the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire, Indonesia has nearly 130 active volcanoes, more than any other country.

SABRANG: Rohingya Muslim refugees sail a makeshift raft made from jerrycans and bamboo across the Naf River into Bangladesh at Sabrang, Teknaf district. —AFP

Rohingya Muslims living in India after fleeing Myanmar over the past decade. Officials said Agra, the home of the Taj Mahal, is densely populated and it is hard to identify the refugees among locals. Activists have called for a sur-

vey of Rohingya families in India to see if more people are trapped in similar situations and have demanded that India's laws against bonded labour be applied in these cases as well. —Reuters

### Billionaire Pinera returns as Chile president

**SANTIAGO:** Billionaire Sebastian Pinera will return to power as Chile's president next year, according to virtually complete results from a runoff election held Sunday. Electoral authorities said the 68-year-old conservative, who previously led the South American nation from 2010-2014, had 55 percent of the vote, with 98 percent of ballots counted. His leftist rival Alejandro Guillier, a 64-year-old TV presenter turned senator who ran as an independent backed by outgoing center-left President Michelle Bachelet, conceded after receiving 45 percent. "We have suffered a tough defeat." Guillier said. He called for the opposition to "defend" reforms started under Bachelet.

He said Pinera walked away with "a solid and impeccable triumph." Pinera will lead the country-the world's top copper producer-for four years starting in March 2018. He will once again take over from Bachelet, who was barred by the constitution from running for re-election. Bachelet and Pinera have tag-teamed the presidency since Bachelet first took office in 2006. Since then, they have alternated in power, switching Chile's politics between center-left and center-right each time. Pinera supporters were gathered outside his election headquarters in anticipation of his victory speech.

#### Uncertain race

The outcome of the runoff had been far

from certain after Pinera scored a much lower than expected 37 percent in the first round of the election held November 19. Analysts had speculated that Guillier could bolster his 22 percent from that round by getting votes from other leftist candidates who were defeated. But in the end, most voters appeared to come down in favor of the experience of Pinera, who is worth some \$2.7 billion and painted himself as a safe pair of hands for Latin America's fifthbiggest economy.

Voting had taken place under a somber cloud Sunday, following the deaths of five people and the disappearance of 18 more in a mudslide in the country's south. Both candidates had projected confidence, with Pinera stating as he cast his ballot: "I have the firm conviction that we are going to win these elections and that better times are going to come for all Chilean households." With no recent reliable voter surveys in the weeks before Sunday's runoff, however, the outcome had been seen as wide open. Marco Moreno, of Central University, had called it "the most uncertain election since the return of democracy" after the end of Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship in 1990.

#### Lower growth

Although copper exports, which contribute greatly to Chile's wealth, are increasing thanks to demand from China and from the burgeoning manufacture of electric cars, the country is struggling relative to previous years. Its GDP is forecast to expand a modest 1.4 percent this year, the slowest pace in eight years. Forecasts suggest it will grow 2.8 percent next year.



SANTIAGO: Chilean president elect Sebastian Pinera greets President Michelle Bachelet (left) upon arrival at his residence in Santiago yesterday.—AFP

Pinera and Guillier also promised to expand free university tuition brought in under Bachelet-a measure with historical resonance in Chile because paid tuition was introduced under Pinochet's 1973-1990 rule. For Pinera, the vow was a Uturn, contradicting an earlier statement he had made that "free things mean less commitment."

The president-elect was often accompanied by his wife Cecilia Morel while campaigning, and also by their four children and several of their nine grandchildren. Their presence softened his public character, according to a member of his entourage who requested anonymity. As much as he is known as a demanding businessman-who had to divest investments including an airline and a football team for his first mandate-he also has a reputation for being cultivated, humorous and full of ideas. He hasn't hidden his wealth, even wearing an ostentatious watch in the red of his campaign color. But he has also sought to project an image of someone concerned about injustice and ordinary people.—AFP



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requirements, solution development, and

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FAX



### Analysis

Tuesday, December 19, 2017

#### Kuwait times Times The First Daily in The Arabian Gult THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF ESTABLISHED 1961 Founder and Publisher YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN Editor-in-Chief ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN **EDITORIAL** : 24833199-24833358-24833432 **ADVERTISING** : 24835616/7 : 24835620/1 CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163 ACCOUNTS : 24835619 COMMERCIAL : 24835618 P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait. E MAIL :info@kuwaittimes.net Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

## Teacher sought in **Zambia:** Truants need not apply

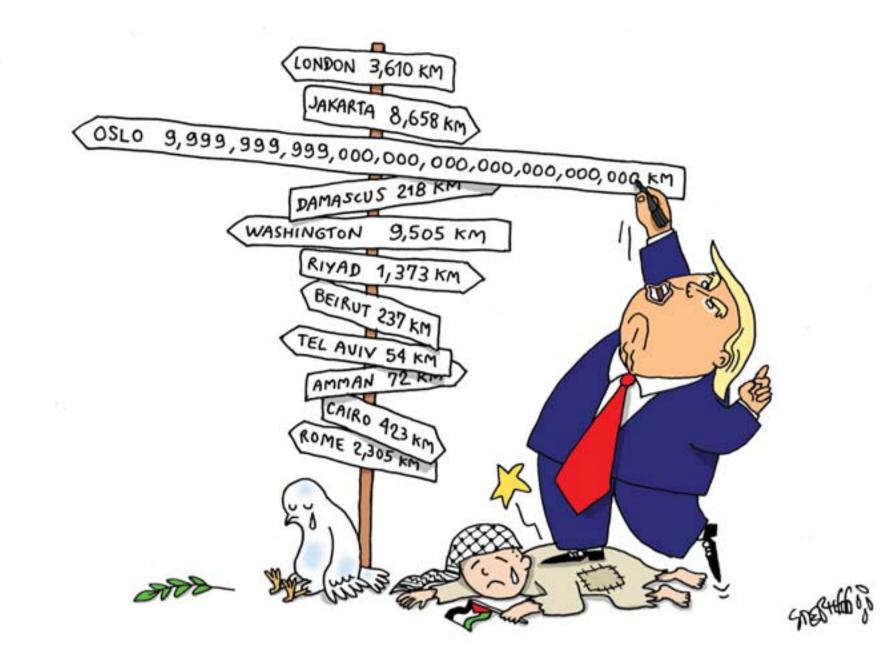
Sloppy spelling, frequent truancy and zero interest in education. And that's just the teachers. When it comes to education, children in Zambia's most far-flung villages are often sold short, lumbered with unqualified or absentee teachers who hamper their chances of escaping poverty for a better life. "When you compare the rural education on offer with urban - well, there is really a very big gap," said Kennedy Ng'andu who runs a college that trains teachers to work in rural Zambia. "That was the springboard for our college.

Mkushi College is part of a seven-nation initiative that aims to improve shoddy teaching standards and equip graduates with skills that go well beyond sums and spelling. Mkushi graduates can only take rural jobs and learn a multitude of practical skills, readying them to build toilets, paint classrooms, mentor parents - and even teach children, too.

They will, in essence, be community builders. "Training teachers for rural areas is sorely needed. We simply don't have many, as all the new graduates want to be in towns. So we need a different kind of teacher one who will live in the community," said Mwansa Katunga, director of programs for the Zambian NGO that runs the college.

Part of the international Humana group of charities, DAPP trains thousands of teachers in Malawi, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique, as well as running the Zambia program. So far, more than 35,000 teachers have been trained worldwide and the head of the inaugural Zambian college knows firsthand how a good teacher can change bad lives. "We go to school to change our life status. Teachers should be fighting shoulder to shoulder with the poor. We need their passion otherwise these rural places will stay the same," Ng'andu told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview.

#### No Hogwarts



## Europe far-right popular, but faces hurdles

They may have failed to actually clinch a victory in national elections, but 2017 has nonetheless proven a bumper year for Europe's far-right parties at the ballot boxes. Yet with success also come growing divisions, which could mar their future ambitions. Across the continent, eurosceptics peddling anti-migration agendas have reaped historic election results this year, tapping into unease about a mass influx of asylum-seekers many from Muslim-dominated countries.

"The far right in Europe is more popular today than it was at any time in postwar history," said Dutch expert Cas Mudde, an associate professor at the University of Georgia. The first boost to populists came in March when the Dutch anti-Islam Freedom Party of Geert Wilders became the second force in parliament. Then followed the French National Front (FN) of Marine Le Pen, which took nearly 34 percent of votes in the May presidential run-off won by Emmanuel Macron. This was double the score Le Pen's firebrand father and FN founder Jean-Marie obtained in the second round in 2002. September saw Germany's Islamophobic and antiimmigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD), founded in 2013, enter the Bundestag - the first far-right party to do so since the end of World War II. Last but not least, Austria's anti-immigration Freedom Party (FPOe) got a near-record result of 26 percent in October and on Friday became the junior coalition partner in the rightwing government of leader-in-waiting Sebastian Kurz, 31. Experts point out that far-right contenders don't need to come first to seriously bruise traditional parties. "The glass is clearly three-quarter full for nationalists right now," French analyst Patrick Moreau said.

far-right. Austria's Kurz opted for the two latter options to march his People's Party to victory. "Kurz has gone very far in his ideological rapprochement with the FPOe, a strategy which can work as long as he doesn't completely trade off his party's identity," noted Austrian analyst



Borisov in March entered a coalition with ultra-nationalists. And while France - like Germany and the Netherlands - refuses to rule with the far-right, its opposition veered distinctly right earlier this month after electing controversial rightwinger Laurent Wauquiez as its leader.

#### Opposition 'in the DNA'

However some experts say centrist parties imitating the far-right will only find short-term success. "A sizeable part of the electorate of populist radical-right parties are not only motivated by authoritarianism and nativism, but also by very strong anti-establishment sentiments, which make them sceptical toward all promises by establishment parties - even authoritarian and nativist one," said Mudde.

In addition, the real challenge for Europe's nationalist parties lies in keeping internal strife at bay. The FN and AfD have been riven by leadership issues in the aftermath of their ballot success. Similarly, Finland's ultranationalist Finns Party imploded over divisions in June, barely two years after entering a coalition gov-

The young Ng'andu was one of seven children - two of whom finished school and both now work. He cycled 30 km to attend class, carrying a week's worth of food on his back and sleeping on matting on the hard school floor. Ng'andu said he lapped up lessons as he envied the teacher his life - "he dressed nicely and drank tea. I wanted to be like him." But many teachers fail to inspire their pupils and are holding back one of the world's fastest growing and poorest populations. "If there is no heart, that teacher will not deliver," said the former science teacher. The rural classroom is worst served, he said.

Many teachers have zero qualifications. Though banned, corporal punishment persists, he said, and superstition can often trump knowledge in the classroom. As for a sense of calling? "Many teachers nowadays just go to class, get a salary then go home again. The result is seen in the quality of the education," he said. "Another big problem with these rural teachers is they run away. Give all sorts of excuses. 'Oh, the house is leaking.' Lame! They cite witchcraft, say they can't sleep at night, that they're being bewitched. Had strange dreams. Say there is no nearby market so they can't do their makeup or get their hair styled. Really not okav.'

Numbers are hazy when it comes to attendance, for staff and children alike. Rural pupils might rise at 4 am to walk 30 km to school; many arrive late, are whipped, or give up. The persistent nod off at their desk - earning a fresh beating - as they gather energy for the long trek home and their evening jobs. Admin is patchy. Ng'andu has visited schools where the wife wields the chalk while the teacher rests, and another with a class of 90 children taught by one man, all ages together. "It is not considered a profession," said Ng'andu of a job that earns about \$250 a month.

#### C is for Change

The government is aware of the poor record and promises change. "Our aim is to leave nobody behind," said Sinazongwe district commissioner, Protacia Mulenga, who runs a rural province with a population nearing 200,000. Deep in the southwest of Zambia, Sinazongwe has the sort of statistics nobody wants. Be it longevity or literacy, employment or earnings, the figures make for bleak reading. Which is why education is the best hope. "People shy away. They don't want to be in rural areas. It's a challenge " Mulenga told the Thomson Reuters Foundation at his district office.

City dwellers struggle to sleep under thatch on a dust floor, often without sanitation or electricity. Dirt roads turn into impassable mud baths in the rains, schoolrooms may not exist and the community can be hostile. Locals can be hostile and superstitious believing outsiders spell danger - and drive out newcomers with fear tactics or worse.

#### Meet the Head

Mkushi training college, in central Zambia, was opened in 2012 and has put 78 teachers to work. A further 116 trainees are in the pipeline and there is a deal with the government for the NGO in charge to open seven more colleges, creating 450 new teachers a year. Prisca Bwalya, a dynamo from the capital Lusaka, finishes her studies this month and can't wait to take register. She has taught at Sunday school for 13 years, has the passion of a preacher and all the makings of a future super-head. "I was born to be a teacher and I believe I'm a leader," said 26-year-old Bwalya.—AFP

#### Ostracize, copy or collaborate?

The migrant crisis has been a key factor in fuelling the rise of far-right populism. More than 1.5 million people, many fleeing the civil war in Syria, have landed on Europe's shores since 2015. Resentment toward these new arrivals has grown in wealthy nations like Germany and Austria, which have received among the bloc's biggest share of asylum seekers. Observers say far-right discourse seeks to conflate the issue of immigration with terror attacks carried out on European soil over the past two years.

According to US sociologist Mabel Berenzin, the far right plays on fears relating to "the economy, migration, and security, which all contribute to a global feeling of insecurity". Shock events like the 2016 election of US President Donald Trump and Britain's decision to leave the EU also revealed voters' frustration with the political establishment. Stemming the populist tide is a major headache for traditional parties, which are forced to decide whether to ostracize, copy or collaborate with the

Thomas Hofer. In neighboring Hungary, the ultra-nationalist Jobbik party has been outflanked by Prime Minister Viktor Orban's hardline anti-immigration stance.

Meanwhile Bulgaria's center-right government of Boiko

ernment with centrists. "Playing the opponent is in the DNA of populist parties," said Hofer, the Austrian expert. "It's not easy to reconvert that into a government mindset." — AFP



A protester stands with stickers depicting crossed out incoming vice-chancellor of the far-right Freedom Party (FPOe) Christian Strache and incoming Austrian Chancellor of the conservative People's Party (OeVP) Sebastian Kurz during a protest near the presidential palace during the inauguration of the new Austrian government in Vienna yesterday.— AFP

### Deep in mountains, Aran Valley resists Catalan independence

"This isn't Catalonia": Tucked deep in the snowy Pyrenees mountains, the Aran Valley appears far removed from the secession crisis rocking the rest of the region. Speaking a form of the Occitan language like some of their neighbors in southern France, with a distinct culture, many residents of this Catalan district have firmly resisted calls for independence. After crossing the Port de la Bonaigua mountain pass into this secluded area under heavy snowfall, the blue, red and yellow separatist flags hanging in other Catalan villages nearby are hardly anywhere.

"This isn't Catalonia, this is different," Amador Marques, a pastry chef who farms in his spare time, says at a small ranch that rears cows, geese, hens and baby goats. "Older people, my grandparents and myself have always said that we're Aranese first, then Spanish." With just 10,000 residents in an area roughly the size of Madrid, Aran lies on the French side of the Pyrenees mountain range, but in 1313 it became part of the Kingdom of Aragon, which would later e absorbed into the Spanish monarchy.

The Aranese, who were almost completely cut off from the rest of the country until the middle of the 20th century, have observed from afar the crisis between Catalonia's separatist leaders and Spain's central government. In the

last regional elections in 2015, they were the Catalan district that gave the least support to separatist parties, which nevertheless went on to win an absolute majority in the regional parliament. And Bosost, Marques's village, was the municipality which gave the most support to anti-independence groupings.

#### An independent Aran?

"Here, we know what it's like to live with borders. And we don't want any more," says Marques, 58. Having grown up just a couple of kilometres from France, he remembers with bitterness the times he needed to show his passport just to sell wool in neighboring villages on the other side of the border. In his village of 1,100 residents, with stone houses with black slate roofs and where the Garonne river snakes its way to France, there are only a few posters for the regional elections on Dec 21, and all are for parties against independence.

Called by Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy after Catalonia's parliament declared independence on October 27, the elections are an attempt to "restore normality" to a region deeply divided over whether to break from Spain. "Here, we're good the way we are, we don't mind being part of Spain. There is no Catalan feeling," says Juan Francisco Pedarros, a 60-year-old butcher.

#### 'Region within a region'

Much like Catalonia enjoys considerable autonomy within Spain, so the Aran Valley enjoys autonomy from the rest of Catalonia. In 2015 the Catalan parliament voted the so-called Aran law which recognizes that the district has the right "to decide its future". The Aran government manages its own health and social services, as well as environmental and tourism issues. Aranese, Catalan and Spanish, meanwhile, are all taught in schools.

'We're basically a region within a region," Carlos Barrera, head of the Aran government, says in his office in Viella, the local capital. He says he believes that the Aran Valley's future goes hand-in-hand with that of Catalonia. Some go even further, backing Catalonia's independence drive with the hope of one day securing independence for themselves. "If we were selfishly intelligent, the valley would grab the opportunity of Catalonia becoming a state so that we could become one in the future," says Alex Moga, Viella's former mayor.

#### Economic worries

Still, there is concern that independence would leave the valley isolated again and would cause it to lose the economic benefits of the past decades, earned in large part through winter tourism. "I don't think that the valley would want to continue as part of an independent Catalonia," says Isabel Vivar, 59, in Gausac, a village next to Viella. "Closing yourself in, as an area that is already closed in, isn't very appealing." She and her daughter work in the Baqueira-Beret ski resort, the area's main economic driving force.

Thanks to the resort, Aran went from having a subsistence economy to becoming one of Catalonia's richest districts. King Felipe VI learned to ski on its slopes, and the area is popular with the Madrid jet set. "We're very concerned," its commercial director Xavi Ubeira says. "We depend on Catalonia but we also depend on Spain and our main customers come from there, from Madrid. We can't disregard one or the other." —AFP



### News

Tuesday, December 19, 2017



People walk along a street decorated for the holidays in downtown Moscow yesterday. —AFP

## Israeli appeals court ruling...

#### **Continued from Page 1**

The ruling was sharply criticized by German government officials and the Central Council of Jews in Germany, which said the Kuwaiti law was reminiscent of Nazi policies. Three German state parliaments in Bavaria, Hesse and North Rhine-Westphalia, have passed resolutions condemning the airline for its policy. Acting Transportation Minister Christian Schmidt also raised concerns about the issue in a

## Modi steers party to state...

letter to Kuwaiti officials, saying it was "fundamentally unacceptable to exclude citizens because of their nationality," according to the Lawfare Project.

No comment was immediately available from Schmidt's office. A foreign ministry spokesman said Germany's ambassador to Kuwait had met Kuwaiti officials on Nov 28 to deliver the letter and discuss the issue. A spate of anti-Semitic acts in Germany in recent weeks, including the burning of Israeli flags, have triggered concern and calls by top officials to put more emphasis on the Holocaust in integration courses for migrants. Rights groups say anti-Semitism and violent acts have increased in recent years amid growing support for far-right political groups and the influx of over a million migrants from Syria and other countries that are at war with Israel. — Reuters

ing in the BJP heartland, inviting ridicule from detractors who accused him of trying to lure Hindu voters. Congress, a secular party, gained 17 seats this election, taking its total to 77. Campaigning in Gujarat took ugly turns as the battle intensified. Modi, who thundered from the pulpit at BJP rallies across Gujarat, accused senior Congress figures, including a former prime minister, of colluding with India's archrival Pakistan to meddle in the state vote. A Congress party veteran was suspended after using a Hindi slur to describe Modi as low class, remarks the BJP seized to cast Congress as elitist. In declaring victory, BJP chief Amit Shah credited Modi for prevailing over "family politics" - a thinly-veiled sleight against Rahul and the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty that has led Congress for generations. As the results trickled in, BJP supporters danced, threw rose petals and chanted "Long live Modi" in Delhi. "This (victory) was expected... It is a tremendous victory and Modi has come out as the single most popular leader," BJP supporter Sandeep Kapoor told AFP. Îndia's Sensex plunged in opening trade vesterday but recovered throughout the day as results turned in favor of the BJP. — AFP

## Lebanese Uber driver arrested...

#### **Continued from Page 1**

killing Dykes after she resisted when he sexually assaulted her, it said. A senior official in the judiciary said that she had booked her vehicle using the Uber app, whose driver identification and rating system is seen by many, especially women, as offering better safety guarantees than when hailing a cab off the street in Lebanon. The driver "tried to rape her and when she resisted he strangled her... took her wallet and threw her in a dump-

### **ANC elects**

ster," the official said.

Such crime is rare in the Lebanese capital, a city which is considered generally safe, including for tourists and foreign residents. A senior official had stressed that the murder was "not politically motivated". A picture of the young woman, who worked at the British government's Department for International Development (DFID), was on the front pages of many UK papers yesterday.

The British ambassador in Beirut, Hugo Shorter, expressed his grief in a statement and messages of support for her family and colleagues poured in from Beirut's shell-shocked diplomatic and aid community. "We are devastated by the loss of our beloved Rebecca. We are doing all we can to understand what happened," the family said in a statement passed on by the Foreign Office. — Agencies

deputy since 2014.

Dlamini-Zuma was head of the African Union com-

#### **Continued from Page 1**

"I thank the people of Gujarat and Himachal with all my heart for the love they showed me," tweeted Rahul, the sixth member of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty to head Congress.

The BJP has ruled Gujarat for 22 years – more than half under Modi as state leader. Some experts had forecast a backlash against Modi over unpopular economic reforms that hit Gujarati businesses hard, including a controversial cash ban and roll out of a national goods and services tax. "They have certainly lost a lot of ground, but Congress should have actually won this election, given the anger in the state against the BJP," political commentator Manisha Priyam told AFP.

Rahul made frequent stops at temples while campaign-

## Ramaphosa...

#### Continued from Page 1

launch legal appeals against the result. "I hope you will cooperate with the new leadership... as we move to the 2019 elections" Baleka Mbete, party chairwoman, told delegates.

The ANC, which has ruled since 1994 when Nelson Mandela won the first multiracial vote, could struggle to retain its grip on power in the 2019 election due to falling public support. Ramaphosa, 65, is a former trade unionist leader who led talks to end white-minority rule in the early 1990s and then became a multi-millionaire businessman before returning to politics. He is often accused of failing to confront Zuma while serving as his mission until earlier this year and a former interior, foreign affairs and health minister. She had four children with Zuma before divorcing in 1998. Allegations swirled of delegates being targeted with bribes, but ANC spokesman Khusela Sangoni earlier told reporters that the process had proceeded "smoothly". Zuma, who could face prosecution for corruption charges, will step down as party chief at the conference but will remain as head of state ahead of the 2019 vote.

"I'm bowing out very happy because I think... I made my contribution, so I'm very happy," said Zuma on Monday as he walked around the vast conference center hosting the event. Soaring unemployment and state corruption have fuelled frustration at the ANC among millions of poor black South Africans who face dire housing, inadequate education and continuing racial inequality. — AFP







## Ex-France fly-half Michalak says ending career at season's end

### Wasps take revenge, Saracens beaten again

I am 35 and it is

getting more and

more difficult

**LYON:** Former France international fly-half Frederic Michalak said yesterday he would retire from rugby at the end of the season. The 35-year-old, who made 77 appearances for France and currently plays for Top 14 side Lyon, said he was no longer confident that he could withstand the rigours of top-class rugby.

"After thinking long and hard about an offer from the club (to stay), I will end my career at the end of the season," Michalak said. "I still have that love for the game but this is a sport where you have to be at 200 percent physically. "I am 35 and it is getting more and more difficult, so I said this would be a good year to stop." Despite his age Lyon have benefitted from Michalak accelerating their game both this season and last, with his experience and class helping them establish their Top 14 status since promotion in 2016.

Michalak began his career in 2000 at his home town club, French powerhouses Stade Toulouse where he played over 600 games over seven years and played a key part in their 2001 French championship win and two European Champions Cups triumphs in 2003 and 2005. Michalak is France's all-time international top point scorer with 436 and he was part of four Six

Nations winning teams, including three Grand Slams.

But he will be forever remembered in France for his quarter-final substitute appearance in the 2007 World Cup when he set up the winning try for Yannick Jauzion in a landmark defeat of New Zealand in Cardiff. The fly-half's speed took him away from the All Black players in pursuit before he off-loaded to Jauzion to touch down. France eventually lost in the semi-final to England, meaning Michalak's ecstatic 40 yard burst and pass for the winning try against the All Blacks turned out to be the abiding moment of glory for the French.

In Paris, Elliot Daly starred as Wasps gained revenge for last week's thrashing at La Rochelle by beating the French side 21-3 on Sunday to boost their European Champions Cup hopes, while free-falling holders Saracens were beaten by Clermont.

Wasps throttled French Top 14 leaders La Rochelle in Coventry to gain some payback for a 20-point loss last weekend. "If we can win our two games we have a chance of squeaking through as we have given ourselves a fighting chance," said Wasps director of rugby Dai Young.

"We possibly missed out on a bonus point today as we controlled the match but

not the scoreboard and didn't turn our pressure into points, especially in the first half." La Rochelle kicked off the game on maximum points after three consecutive bonuspoint wins.

Last week the French side produced a brilliant attacking display, but on Sunday they were pinned back by a Wasps team seeking a victory that would keep alive their

hopes of advancing. England winger Daly smashed over in the corner to give Wasps the lead after 11 minutes. He converted the try and did the same after touching down again in the 47th minute.

Wasps never allowed the visitors to develop their attacking game and La Rochelle scored their first and only points when Brock James kicked a penalty on the hour mark. The hosts had the last word when replacement hooker Tom Cruse powered over after a lineout. Danny Cipriani converted but Wasps could not add a fourth try to collect a bonus point.

Despite leaving the Ricoh Arena without even a losing bonus point, La Rochelle remain top of Pool 1, two points ahead of Ulster, who crushed Harlequins on Friday, and five clear of third-place Wasps.

#### SARACENS LOSE AGAIN

Saracens, who were hammered by 32 points at home by Clermont in a weather-delayed game on Monday, saw their poor recent form continue with an agonising 24-21 loss in the second repeat of last year's final in less than a week. The reigning European champions have now lost seven matches in a row in all competitions. Smarting Saracens raced to a 13-0 lead with a try by Ben Spencer and a conversion and two penalties from Owen Farrell. Morgan Parra responded with six straight penalties to put the home team five points ahead, but Farrell replied with three points of his own and Alex Lozowski scored an unconverted try to put Sarries back in front.

But in a chaotic and error-filled final 15 minutes, Parra kicked two more penalties to secure the victory which lifted the French club five points clear at the head of Pool 2 and dropped Saracens to third. "We didn't make a good start and they took us by the throat," said Clermont coach Franck Azema.

"We didn't panic, we came back into the game by focusing on simple things." Ospreys backed up last weekend's narrow win over Northampton by running in four tries to claim a 32-15 victory in Swansea to pile more misery onto the English sides.

All seven Premiership clubs were beaten last week, and Munster won 25-16 at Leicester in Sunday's final match. The Irish outfit are now four points clear of Racing 92, who beat Castres on Saturday, at the top of Pool 4, with Leicester rooted to the foot of the table.—AFP



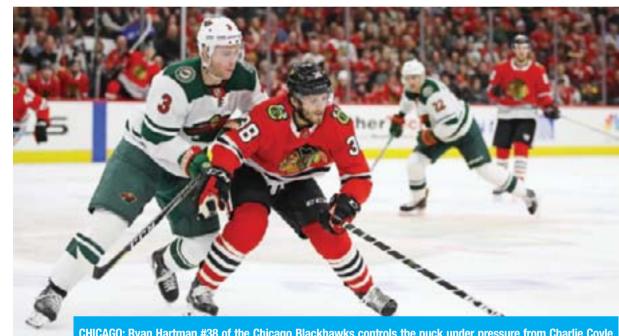
Frederic Michalak

## Egypt's Mohamed Elshorbagy beats brother to win world title

#### MANCHESTER: Mohamed Elshorbagy of

## Hellebuyck stops 24 shots as Jets blank Blues 4-0

**ST LOUIS:** Adam Lowry scored the winner for Winnipeg against St. Louis. Patrik Laine, Mark Scheifele and Josh Morrissey also had goals and Connor Hellebuyck stopped all 24 shots he faced for his second shutout of the season. Jake Allen stopped 42 shots for the Blues (22-11-2), who shut out the Jets 2-O on Saturday night despite being out-



Egypt predicted a new era for squash after beating his younger brother Marwan on Sunday in the first final between siblings in the men's world championship.

British-based Mohamed, 26, twice had to fend off brilliant comebacks from 24-year-old Marwan in their 'home' final to win 11-5 9-11 11-7 9-11 11-6 and land his first world title after narrowly finishing runner-up twice in the last six years.

"We are giving something unique and different to the sport," Mohamed said after his 71minute victory. "Hopefully this is the start of all the great battles between us."

Mohamed's success is likely to propel him back to world number one after a season in which he has now won five titles, playing 31 matches with one defeat.

The rollercoaster final was watched by the brothers' parents sitting in the front row.

Their Alexandria-based mother Basma, who could barely watch at times, has been ever-present throughout their careers with roles such as part-time coach on tour, manager and travel agent.

After waving his parents onto the court and presenting them with the trophy, Mohamed added: "This victory is for them."

Despite a plethora of talent emerging from Cairo, Mohamed decided to travel to Millfield School in the west of England aged 15 to be trained by former squash great Jonah Barrington.

His brother followed two years later and the pair still live in the region.

"England has given us so much," said Mohamed, who had to beat three former champions - compatriot Ramy Ashour, England's Nick Matthew and Gregory Gaultier of France in succession to reach the final.

"To play the final in the country where we live is a dream come true," he added.

The pair had been training together under Hadrian Stiff in Bristol but Mohamed's switch to David Palmer, the former Australian great, paid off after a torrid season in which he lost the world number one ranking to Gaultier.

During the week he has taken coaching advice from his U.S.-based coach Palmer on the phone in between games.

Marwan was upbeat despite this first fraternal final defeat. "I'm not going to stop playing squash until I get that title," he said.

Siblings had met before in the women's world final when Australia's Rachael Grinham beat her sister Natalie in 2007.

In the first of Sunday's all-Egyptian finals, Raneem El Welily denied Nour El Sherbini a hat-trick of women's world titles by winning 3-11 12-10 11-7 11-5 in 43 minutes.

"This is incredible for Egypt," said twice runner-up El Welily. "I hope we stay on top of the world for as long as possible." — Reuters shot, 48-30.

#### **GOLDEN KNIGHTS 5, PANTHERS 2**

Jonathan Marchessault had a goal and two assists, and Erik Haula scored the game-winner with 8:20 remaining as the Vegas Golden Knights moved back into a tie for first place in the Pacific Division with a 5-2 victory over the Florida Panthers on Sunday night at T-Mobile Arena. Nate Schmidt, Colin Miller and James Neal also had goals for Vegas, which improved to 13-2-1 at home this season. The Golden Knights, New York Rangers and Tampa Bay Lightning share the NHL lead with 13 home wins. Malcolm Subban stopped 16 shots for the Golden Knights, who joined the Los Angeles Kings atop the Pacific Division standings.

#### BLACKHAWKS 4, WILD 1

Patrick Kane scored the first two goals of the game, and Chicago held on for a win over Minnesota. Ryan Hartman and Tommy Wingels also scored as the Blackhawks

## Toyota GAZOO racing takes victory at World Endurance Championship

**BAHRAIN:** Toyota GAZOO Racing has won for the fifth time in the nine-race 2017 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) season with an impressive victory in the Bapco 6 Hours of Bahrain. The #8 TSO50 hybrid electric vehicle (HEV)of Sebastien Buemi, Anthony Davidson, and Kazuki Nakajima won by more than a lap in a race which marked one of the competitor's final LMP1 appearance in WEC.

Victory for the #8 drivers marked the first time since 1990 that a car crew has won five races during a season of WEC or its predecessor, the World Sportscar Championship.

Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, said: "There is no better reason to rejoice than our region witnessing Toyota GAZOO Racing's historic achievement with five wins in a season. Our experienced and dedicated teams of drivers, engineers, pit crew and all other support staff have showcased a phenomenal performance to manifest and emphasise Toyota cars' unmatched endurance and reliability. The remarkable victory of our teams gives us extra motivation to innovate and create 'ever-better cars' to surpass expectations of our loyal customers. I cannot thank our fans enough for their amazing support throughout the series, which helped tremendously in achieving this decisive victory."

Commenting on the team's achievement, Hisatake Murata, Team President, said: "It is fantastic to finish the season with a victory. I am proud of the team for their work to prepare a competitive car for this race and then to finish the job in the race. At the end of a long season, I want to say thank you to all the competitors, officials, and fans who are part of our WEC family. I also would like to thank our competitors for being strong. We have enjoyed CHICAGO: Ryan Hartman #38 of the Chicago Blackhawks controls the puck under pressure from Charlie Coyle #3 of the Minnesota Wild at the United Center in Chicago, Illinois. The Blackhawks defeated the Wild 4-1. —AFP

increased their season-best winning streak to five games. Chicago improved to 10-5-2 on home ice. Matt Dumba scored the lone goal for the Wild, who have lost back-toback games after winning the previous four in a row.

**FLAMES 6, CANUCKS 1** British Columbia-Mark Giordano scored two of Calgary's four second-period goals in a win over Vancouver. Sam Bennett had a goal and three assists, and Mark Jankowski had a goal and two assists for the Flames. Matthew Tkachuk and Micheal Ferland also scored, and David Rittich made 16 saves for Calgary, which snapped a three-game skid. — Reuters



fighting with them over the last four seasons, and I hope the fans have enjoyed it too."

An unfortunate contact with a competitor car took the #7 TS050 hybrid electric vehicle of Mike Conway, Kamui Kobayashi, and Jose Maria Lopez out of the victory fight and they finished fourth. The race began in daylight, and Sebastien led the Toyota challenge after moving into third on the first lap in the #8, with Mike running fourth in the #7 and both cars putting pressure on other competitor cars. After 30 minutes, Sebastien took the lead from the #1 competitor car, and Mike also got past to establish a Toyota one-two.

At the first pit stops, the two TS050 hybrid electric vehicles chose different strategies: Jose Maria took the wheel of the #7 on new tires while Sebastien stayed in the cockpit of the #8 and only refueled, retaining his lead.

After an hour, darkness fell, and the differing tire strategies began to play out. Just before one-third distance, Kazuki took over the #8 with fresh tires and dropped to second, although within a few laps he overtook Jose, on used rubber, for the lead.

The team was pushing for a one-two finish until the #7

car, with Kamui at the wheel, fell out of contention with three hours completed. Kamui and the #92 rivalcar made contact at turn one, causing a right rear puncture and bodywork damage to the #7.

During the resulting safety car, the mechanics worked quickly to repair the #7 and return it to the race, having lost six minutes. It dropped to fourth place, two laps off the lead held by Kazuki.

With the four-hour mark approaching, an alternative pit strategy gave the #1 rival car a temporary advantage, but Anthony, now at the wheel of the #8, was in hot pursuit and his pressure paid off when the leader hit a competitor car and pitted for repairs. That left the #8 car with a lead of more than one minute going into the final two hours, and Anthony recorded impressive lap times to extend the advantage, lapping competitor cars in the process.

At the final driver change, the #8 car was comfortably in the lead, so Sebastien took over with a no-risk approach and safely took the chequered flag for Toyota's 16th win in its 48th WEC race. Mike brought the #7 home, after a stop-go penalty for the earlier collision, in fourth, three laps behind.



## 'Exceptional' Australia claim Ashes as Smith seeks whitewash

'Credit to the umpires for making the right call on the start of play'

PERTH: Steve Smith praised his "exceptional" team as Australia reclaimed the Ashes with an innings win over England in the third Test in Perth yesterday, and set his sights on a series whitewash. Australia dismissed England for 218 in their second innings after rain delays and a pitch controversy on the final day in Perth to win back the urn in the last Ashes Test to be played at the WACA Ground.

That gave the home side an innings-and-41run win and an unbeatable 3-0 lead in the fivematch series, having won the opening two Tests in Brisbane and Adelaide. "It's been an amazing couple of weeks," said Smith. "What the boys have delivered has been

exceptional. England have had their foot in the door in a couple of games and we've been able to claw our way back to get back in the game, and then keep the foot on the throat."

Having confirmed his status as the world's best batsman with a match-winning double century, Smith added victorious Ashes captain to his ever-expanding resume.

That CV also includes a role in the 5-0 whitewash of England on their last tour to Australia, and Smith said his team would now seek to repeat that achievement. "It'd be fantastic to do that and we'll talk about Melbourne when we get there," he said.

"Right now, I'm just really satisfied with what we've achieved in these first three Test matches. I'd love to do that again, but we will just take it one step at a time." England captain Joe Root said the gap between the sides was not as stark as the scoreline suggested.

"It's bitterly disappointing, one of the most frustrating things is we haven't been blown away, we haven't been completely outplayed," he said. "We've put up some good performances, just not for long enough. In all three games there have been periods we have matched and outplayed the Australians. "These three games are not a fair reflection of how we have played and what we are capable of, so we need to do ourselves justice."

While it was a comfortable win for the home side in Perth in the end, there was high drama on the final day courtesy of yet another WACA pitch controversy. Victory seemed assured for



the dismissal of England's Craig Overton in the third Ashes cricket Test match between England and Australia in Perth yesterday. — AFP

Australia when they had England 132 for four at the conclusion of the fourth day, still 127 runs behind, but a rain-damaged pitch threatened to foil the home side.

Showers had caused play to be abandoned early on the fourth day and they continued through to yesterday morning, with Australia needing just six more wickets to win.

Complicating matters further was a damp spot on the pitch, just outside the popping crease at the southern end of the ground. WACA staff worked furiously with leaf blowers to try to dry the patch out as more showers passed through. Umpires Chris Gaffaney and Marais Erasmus would not allow play to resume until they believed the pitch had been returned to the same condition as at the end of day four, which ended up being after lunch.

"It was a shame that was some water was able to get through the covers in the first place at an international venue," Smith commented. "The umpires made the right call to get us back on to play the game." Root agreed with Smith, saying: "Credit to the umpires for making the right call on the start of play." "They gave it time to dry out as when we got to the ground it wasn't fit to play on," he added.

Wickets tumbled quickly for England upon the delayed resumption, with Jonny Bairstow bowled for 14 by the first delivery he faced for the day from Hazlewood, which kept low. Hazlewood also removed England's last hope Dawid Malan-who backed up his first innings century with a fighting 54 before being caught behind-to finish with figures of 5-48

Malan's first day heroics, which helped England a dominant position at 368-4 from which an innings defeat would have appeared almost impossible, seemed a distant memory as he trudged from the field. Only seven sides in Test history have been beaten by an innings after scoring 400 in their first innings, and it has happened to England three times in its last 12 matches. — AFP



#### **SCOREBOARD**

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

England 1st innings 403 (D. Malan 140, J. Bairstow 119, M. Stoneman 56; M. Starc -91) Australia 1st innings 662 for 9 decl (S. Smith 239, M. Marsh 181, U. Khawaja 50; J. Anderson 4-116)

England	2nd	innings	(Overnight:	218
10)				

A. Cook c&b Hazlewood	14
M. Stoneman c Paine b Hazlewoo	d 3
J. Vince b Starc	55
J. Root c Smith b Lyon	14
D. Malan c Paine b Hazlewood	54
J. Bairstow b Hazlewood	14
M. Ali lbw b Lyon	11
C. Woakes c Paine b Cummins	22

C. Overton c Khawaja b Hazlewo	od 12
S. Broad c Paine b Cummins	0
J. Anderson not out	1
Extras (b-6 lb-11 nb-1)	18
Total (all out, 72.5 overs)	218
Fall of wickets: 1-4 M. Stonema	n, 2-29
A. Cook, 3-60 J. Root, 4-100 J.	Vince,
5-133 J. Bairstow, 6-172 M. Ali,	, 7-196
D. Malan, 8-210 C. Overton, 9	-211 S.
Broad, 10-218 C. Woakes	
Dowling M. Stone 17 5 44	1. I

Bowling:M. Starc 17-5-44-1; J.
Hazlewood 18-6-48-5; M. Marsh 3-1-
14-0; P. Cummins 19.5-4-53-2(nb-1); N.
Lyon 15-4-42-2.
Result: Australia won by an innings and
41 runs

## Windies pin hopes on Gavle force for New **Zealand ODIs**

would need time to adjust to local conditions in the opening ODI at Whangarei's Cobham Oval. He said New Zealand's new-ball com-

bination of Tim Southee and Trent Boult



WELLINGTON: The West Indies will hope short-form master Chris Gayle can inspire a misfiring batting line-up in the one-day international series against New Zealand starting tomorrow. The tourists meekly surrendered with the bat as they slumped to a 2-0 Test series whitewash against the Black Caps, and need a major improvement in the three ODI games.

Gayle, arriving fresh from a record-breaking stint in the Bangladesh Premier League, promises to inject the aggression and confidence lacking so far during the tour of New Zealand.

He smashed a record 18 sixes in an unbeaten 146 off 69 balls in the BPL final to add to the slew of titles he already holds in the ultra-short form of the game. Afterwards, the 38-year-old told ESPNCricinfo he was "the greatest batsman of all time". His self-assessment may be debatable but New Zealand paceman Lockie Ferguson said the hosts were well aware of the threat the left-hander from Jamaica poses. Ferguson said Gayle

would be aiming for an early breakthrough. "Our opening bowlers are extremely good at swinging the ball, so I think there's definitely a challenge for him there," Ferguson told Radio Sport. "Of course, if he gets going then he's one of those world-class batters who can go a long time and score lots of runs."

The West Indies, who are ninth in the ODI rankings, will be without batsmen Marlon Samuels (finger) and Sunil Ambris (broken arm) as well as bowler Alzarri Joseph (back).

The fifth-ranked New Zealanders are missing two of their biggest hitters in Martin Guptill (hamstring) and Colin de Grandhomme, who pulled out of the series after the death of his father.

They will also rest captain Kane Williamson and Southee after Wednesday's first ODI as a busy season looms with home matches against Pakistan, Australia and England. New Zealand: Kane Williamson (capt, first ODI only), Todd Astle, Trent Boult, Doug Bracewell, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Tom Latham (capt, second and third ODIs), Adam Milne, Colin Munro, Henry Nicholls, Tim Southee (first ODI only), Ross Taylor, George Worker, Neil Broom (second and third ODIs), Mitchell Santner (second and third ODIs).

West Indies: Jason Holder (capt),

**Chris Gayle** 

Ronsford Beaton, Shannon Gabriel, Chris Gayle, Kyle Hope, Shai Hope, Sheldon Walton, Kesrick Williams. — AFP

Jason Mohammed, Shimron Hetmyer, Cottrell, Evin Lewis, Nikita Miller, Ashley Nurse, Rovman Powell, Chadwick

## **Senior England** players have done 'next to nothing'

PERTH: Former England spinner Graeme Swann was critical of England's senior players who have done "next to nothing" as Australia regained the Ashes in Perth yesterday.

Australia strolled to victory in the third test at the WACA, winning by an innings and 41 runs to take a unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match Ashes series, with England's batting line-up again putting up meagre resistance as they were bowled out for 218 in their second innings. While rookie Dawid Malan has made 302 runs in the series, former captain Alastair Cook has struggled with the bat in Australia, as has Moeen Ali, and Swann believes that England's troubles

are down to these underperforming senior players, and the absence of one key batsman in particular.

"England do have a settled side if Ben Stokes is around but when he's not, this team came over very weak," Swann told the BBC. "The senior guys who you expect to stand up and outshine the rookies have done the exact opposite. Joe Root and Alastair Cook have done next to nothing. The shining lights have been Rocky (Mark) Stoneman and Dawid Malan.

"I'm proud of the way some of the guys have played. Dawid Malan was sensational, James Vince was only dismissed by the best ball I've ever seen in a game. There are positives, I expected to be 3-0 down after three games once Stokes wasn't coming." Stokes was omitted from England's touring party following his arrest on suspicion of causing actual bodily harm in an incident outside a Bristol nightclub in September.

He remains suspended by the England and Wales Cricket Board pending the result of a police investigation. Michael Vaughan also questioned the longevity of certain members of the England



squad, with the former England opener er. I do think they can all play a part in believing the next Ashes series in England may come too soon for some.

"England have three legends of the game in Alastair Cook, Stuart Broad and Jimmy Anderson," Vaughan added. "It depends how they manage their retirements. It's coming sooner rather than latthe series of 2019 but you don't see many fairytales in sport.

"England have to manage the senior core of the side and make sure that if they are all to go together in 2019 they are playing well enough to be in the team." — Reuters

### **Bash season set** for greater heights

Australia's Big

SYDNEY: Australia's high-octane Big Bash League launches its seventh season today with the whiz-bang Twenty20 cricket league looking to build on attendance and television ratings successes, with Perth Scorchers favourites to win another crown. More than one million people went to BBL matches last season with average crowds topping 30,000.

While it trails the Indian Premier League (IPL) in overall attendance and financial clout, officials claim it was the fifth-biggest league in the world last season in terms of people turning up to watch. Big Bash head Kim McConnie said Cricket Australia had even higher expectations for the fast-paced, family-friendly competition that sold out 35 matches last year.

There will be eight more fixtures, up to 43, and four new venues around the country. "We believe this is going to be one of the most exciting BBL seasons to date," said McConnie, just two months into her job as the new BBL chief. "Sport is entertainment. So what we're seeing, even from a cricket purist who loves to watch the Big Bash because they love the competition, they also like the entertainment and the fact they can bring their kids. "They want to be entertained and make sure they're getting more for their dollar.

In glitzy style, BBL has led the way with LED stumps and bails flashing on impact. They also have helmet cameras on batsmen and in recent seasons players have been worn microphones to talk to commentators during play. Former England captain Kevin Pietersen got himself into trouble last season when he was charged and fined for criticising an umpire's decision while wearing a microphone on-field.

#### **EXPLOSIVE HITTERS**

Reigning champions Perth Scorchers are hot favourites for their fourth crown, while Melbourne Stars, featuring polarising batsman Pietersen, are chasing their elusive first title after several years of near misses. The Scorchers have maintained the bulk of their squad from last year's triumphant season and are likely to again contend for glory with coach Justin Langer again at the helm and English allrounder David Willey as their overseas import.

Brisbane Heat, who finished second in the regular competition last season, possesses two explosive hitters with local Chris Lynn, who leads the BBL's six tally with 94, and retired New Zealand star Brendon McCullum. The Sydney Sixers, crushed by the Scorchers in last season's final, again have big-hitting Englishman Jason Roy as their overseas player along with Test bowlers Mitchell Starc and Nathan Lyon.

Skipper Aaron Finch leads the under-performing Melbourne Renegades, who have boom-hitting West Indian Kieran Pollard on their books. Pollard will miss the first seven games of the tournament due to international commitments and Afghanistan off-spinner Mohammad Nabi fills his place. Sydney Thunder have former Australian all-rounder Shane Watson backing up for another season aged 36, while overseas import Jos Buttler has the three quickest ODI centuries for England, including a 46-ball effort against Pakistan. —AFP





## James sparks Cleveland Cavaliers to win over Washington Wizards

### Pistons forward Bullock saves his best for Orlando

#### **NBA result/standings**

Indiana 109, Brooklyn 97; Cleveland 106, Washington 99; Detroit 114, Orlando 110; Toronto 108, Sacramento 93.

		Eastern Conference	e	
		Atlantic Division		
	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	25	7	.781	-
Toronto	20	8	.714	3
NY Knicks	- 16	13	.552	7.5
Philadelphia	14	14	.500	9
Brooklyn	11	18	.379	12.5
		Central Division		
Cleveland	23	8	.742	-
Detroit	17	13	.567	5.5
Indiana	17	13	.567	5.5
Milwaukee	15	13	.536	6.5
Chicago	8	20	.286	13.5
		Southeast Division	n	
Washington	16	14	.533	-
Miami	15	14	.517	0.5
Orlando	11	20	.355	5.5
Charlotte	10	19	.345	5.5
Atlanta	6	23	.207	9.5
		Western Conference		
		Northwest Divisio		
Minnesota	17	13	.567	-
Portland	16	13	.552	0.5
Denver	16	13	.552	0.5
Oklahoma City	14	15	.483	2.5
Utah	14	16	.467	3
		Pacific Division		
Golden State	23	6	.793	-
LA Clippers	11	17	.393	11.5
LA Lakers	10	17	.370	12
Phoenix	10	21	.323	14
Sacramento	9	20	.310	14
		Southwest Divisio		
Houston	24	4	.857	-
San Antonio	20	10	.667	5
New Orleans	15	15	.500	10
Memphis	9	21	.300	16
Dallas	8	22	.267	17

LOS ANGELES: LeBron James registered his fourth triple-double in five games with 20 points, 12 rebounds and 15 assists as the streaking Cleveland Cavaliers beat the Washington Wizards 106-99 on Sunday night. Kevin Love led the Cavaliers with 25 points, while Jeff Green had 15 points. Cleveland has won 18 of 19 games, including the past five. Little separated the Eastern Conference contenders for much of the game as the teams were tied at the end of the second and third quarters. James's 3-pointer early in the fourth quarter put the Cavaliers in front for good and sparked an 8-0 run. Green's three-point play capped the surge as Cleveland led 95-89 with 6:55 remaining. Bradley Beal



scored 27 points for the Wizards, who had won two in a row. John Wall had 15 points and 10 rebounds. Washington made 12 3-pointers but finished 9 of 16 on free throws.

#### PISTONS 114, MAGIC 110

Reggie Bullock scored a career-high 20 points, and Detroit held off a late surge by undermanned Orlando. Bullock, who was inserted into the starting lineup four games ago, made 8 of 10 field-goal attempts. His previous scoring high was 17 points last season, also against the Magic. Tobias Harris, Reggie Jackson and Anthony Tolliver scored 17 points apiece for the Pistons, who have won three straight following a seven-game losing streak. Mario Hezonja scored 28 points to led Orlando, which got 24 points and 14 rebounds from Nikola Vucevic.



WASHINGTON: Markieff Morris #5 of the Washington Wizards shoots the ball against the Cleveland Cavaliers on Sunday at Capital One Arena in Washington. —AFP

#### RAPTORS 108, KINGS 93

DeMar DeRozan led a balanced offense with 21 points as Toronto defeated Sacramento. The Raptors also defeated the Kings last Sunday in Sacramento. Kyle Lowry scored 16 points and added seven assists and five rebounds for the Raptors, who have won nine of their past 10 games. Garrett Temple and Bogdan Bodganovic each scored 18 points for the Kings.

#### **PACERS 109, NETS 97**

Victor Oladipo scored 26 points as Indiana beat Brooklyn. Oladipo led the Pacers in scoring for the 21st time this season and produced his 26th game with at least 20 points. After shooting a combined 35.4 percent (17 of 48) in Indiana's losses to Oklahoma City and Detroit, Oladipo went 9 of 14 on Sunday. Five Indiana players reached double figures as the Pacers shot 56.6 percent and won for the fifth time in seven games. Allen Crabbe scored 17 points for the Nets. —Reuters

Mandanda blunder helps Lyon beat

## Suarez, Paulinho move Barca 11 clear of Real



#### Marseille 2-0

**PARIS:** A howler from goalkeeper Steve Mandanda helped Lyon beat fellow European rivals Marseille 2-0 on Sunday and move clear of their opponents in third place in Ligue 1. Visiting keeper Mandanda gifted Nabil Fekir an early opener, before Mariano Diaz headed in the second shortly after half-time.

The victory gave Lyon a three-point lead over fourth-placed Marseille and drew them level on points with second-placed Monaco, nine points adrift of runaway leaders Paris Saint-Germain. Marseille showed plenty of fight but were made to pay for missed chances as a 12-match unbeaten run in the league was brought to an end. "I take full responsibility for this defeat. I should not be conceding that type of goal," Mandanda said. "The difference was the two goalkeepers. Today we saw (Lyon keeper) Anthony Lopes be decisive and Steve Mandanda who was not good, which meant that Marseille lost this game."

Lyon made a dream start as Fekir put them ahead in only the sixth minute with his 12th league goal of the season. But the forward was indebted to France international Mandanda, who somehow contrived to drop a tame free-kick into the corner of his net.

Marseille almost levelled soon afterwards though, but Lopes pulled off a wonderful reflex save to keep out Adil Rami's header after the centre-back was left unmarked at a Dimitri Payet corner. Lyon were shaky at defending set-pieces and were given another let-off as Portuguese defender Rolando headed over when he should have scored.

Bruno Genesio's men were living dangerously and needed the best of Lopes again when he got down quickly to thwart Lucas Ocampos.

#### DIAZ STRIKES AGAIN

But they came out after the break with renewed vigour and doubled their advantage in the 51st minute. Fekir's corner found its way through a crowd of defenders to Diaz, and although the Spaniard's first attempt was well saved by Mandanda, he met Maxwel Cornet's cross from the loose ball to head in from close range. Visiting coach Rudi Garcia threw on Kostas Mitroglou, Maxime Lopez and Morgan Sanson as Marseille looked for a way back into the game. Sanson came close to pulling one back only two minutes after coming off the bench, but the midfielder's fierce drive from the edge of the area crashed into the base of the post.

Greece striker Mitroglou headed over late on and Lopes flew to his left to deny Luiz Gustavo, but Lyon closed out their third win in four games. Earlier on Sunday, Nantes coach Claudio Ranieri was sent to the stands for manhandling the fourth official, but an Emiliano Sala penalty still saw the Canaries strengthen their grip on fifth spot with a 1-0 win over Angers.

Nice are four points behind in sixth after Mario Balotelli's eighth goal in as many games saw Lucien Favre's men beat Bordeaux 1-0 to make it four wins on the spin. PSG maintained their nine-point lead at the top of the table with Saturday's straightforward 4-1 win at Rennes, as Neymar scored two goals and created another two for Kylian Mbappe and Edinson Cavani. Monaco made it three straight wins with a 4-0 thrashing of struggling Saint-Etienne on Friday. — AFP **MADRID:** Barcelona opened up an 11-point La Liga lead over Real Madrid ahead of next weekend's Clasico between the Spanish giants as Luis Suarez and Paulinho each scored twice in a 4-0 thrashing of Deportivo la Coruna on Sunday.

Lionel Messi also saw a penalty saved and hit the woodwork three times as Barca regained their six-point lead over Atletico Madrid in second place. Real remain down in fourth, but do have a game in hand on their rivals as they missed out on domestic action this weekend to win the Club World Cup in Abu Dhabi on Saturday.

"I know people fixate on the difference between us and Real Madrid, but Atletico are just six points behind," said Barca boss Ernesto Valverde. "No matter what happens on Saturday, there is still a world of a way to go in La Liga."

The only drawback for Barca as they extended their unbeaten run in all competitions to 24 games since they were beaten by Real on their last visit to the Santiago Bernabeu in the Spanish Super Cup back in August, was a muscle injury to Paco Alcacer that will keep the forward out for three weeks.

Messi paraded his fourth golden boot award-after being the leading scorer in Europe last season-before kick-off and could barely believe his luck as he failed to add to his 18 goals already this term.

The Argentine has now hit the woodwork 14 times this season, but still had a huge role to play in three of Barca's four goals. Only a series of saves from Ruben Martinez to deny Messi and Aleix Vidal delayed Barca until the 29th minute from going in front when Messi presented Suarez with an early Christmas present to tap in from close range.

#### MORE GOAL-LINE CONTROVERSY

Messi then smashed against the bar, but the woodwork wasn't so forgiving for Deportivo when Messi's

BARCELONA: Barcelona's Uruguayan forward Luis Suarez (L) vies with Deportivo La Coruna's Brazilian defender Sidnei (R) during the Spanish league football match FC Barcelona against RC Deportivo de la Coruna at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona.— AFP

next attempt came off the post and into Paulinho's path to make it 2-0 before half-time. Suarez thought he had his second of the night moments later when the ball looked to have crossed the line.

However, for the second time in less than a month Barca were foiled by La Liga's lack of goal-line technology as the goal wasn't awarded. "I could see clearly from my position after shooting because I was right by the goal line," Suarez told BeIN Sports Spain.

The Uruguayan, though, had to wait just two minutes into the second half to net his fourth goal in three games by sweeping home Sergi Roberto's cross. Messi hit the woodwork for a third time and then saw Martinez brilliantly save his effort from the spot after Suarez was upended inside the area.

But Martinez was helpless as Paulinho profited from a repeat of his first goal when he rolled into an empty net on the rebound after Jordi Alba also hit the frame of the goal.

Earlier, Villarreal bounced back from three straight defeats as Pablo Fornals grabbed the only goal in a 1-0 win at Celta Vigo. Victory allowed Villarreal to leapfrog back above Girona into sixth after the Catalans had edged the battle of the high-flying newly-promoted sides over Getafe 1-0 thanks to Cristhian Stuani's early goal. Managerless Las Palmas struck twice in the last 10 minutes to snatch a 2-2 draw with Espanyol, but remain rooted to the foot of the table. — AFP

## Mourinho won't give up on catching City

**WEST BROMWICH:** Jose Mourinho insisted Manchester United will not give up on the Premier League title race after his side cut Manchester City's lead back to 11 points. Mourinho's side won 2-1 at West Bromwich Albion on Sunday with goals from Romelu Lukaku and Jesse Lingard before Gareth Barry replied for the hosts. And Mourinho is adamant United will keep going until the end of the season despite their Manchester rivals' huge lead at the top. "I know that the questions are always coming in the same direction and I keep saying the same," Mourinho said.

"Our last match in the Premier League is Watford at Old Trafford, in mid-May, and until then in every match we go - every match we will try to win. "If people ask that question to us and then you do it to the third team and the fourth and to the fifth and to the sixth, probably they will disappear. "Probably they want to go on holidays. We don't want to go on holidays. We want to play until the last match."

Mourinho refused to be drawn on the leaked video which emerged on social media before United's victory at the Hawthorns, showing City players celebrating Saturday's win against Tottenham by taunting United over their cautious style of play with the words "park the bus". "I didn't see, I didn't watch," Mourinho said. "I am not interested in doing that.

"You are the ones to make your evaluations, your comments. For me, nothing." United are set to check on the fitness of captain Antonio Valencia after he limped off with a sore hamstring after 66 minutes at West Brom. The full-back will be assessed ahead of the League Cup trip to Bristol City on Wednesday and next Saturday's Premier League game at Leicester.

#### PARDEW ERRORS

"The Valencia injury is what I call a December injury," said Mourinho. "It is an injury of the accumulation of fatigue. It is a muscular one – hamstring. Big, small, medium? I don't know. "He is an experienced guy who will know not to let it go to difficult limits.

"But it is an injury of fatigue - everyone in the Premier League, especially the ones with more accumulation of cups and European cups, are at risk." Meanwhile, West Brom are still without a win in four games under new boss Alan Pardew despite an improved second-half display against United. And Pardew admitted his own errors after the game. "We were disappointed in the first half and I think I picked the wrong team," he said.

"The boys gave me so much at Liverpool, obviously I'm getting to know them, but I didn't think we had that energy in the first half that we need against Man United. It was too comfortable for them. "Second half, we had some experience in Gareth Barry, I thought he made a big difference when he came on.

"And then Chris Brunt came on and suddenly we looked threatening from the moment he entered the pitch. "It was a lesson for the other players in having confidence in what you're doing. "There are some good managers at the bottom of the league and some good squads and we're not going to make it up playing like we did in the first half." —AFP



## Suarez and Ronaldo hit top form in time for Clasico

## Clasico showdown between the two heavyweight clubs

Cristiano is

**Cristiano and** 

you must never

doubt him

**MADRID:** Barcelona striker Luis Suarez and Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo were heavily criticised during the opening phase of the season but the two forwards have hit their strides ahead of Saturday's Clasico showdown between the two heavyweight clubs.

Ronaldo rifled in the only goal against Brazilian side Gremio to help Madrid lift the Club World Cup on Saturday, while Luis Suarez struck twice as Barcelona

thumped Deportivo La Coruna 4-0 on Sunday, stretching their lead at the top of the table.

When the bitter rivals meet at the Santiago Bernabeu, Barcelona will be looking to increase their 11 point lead on fourth-placed Madrid, who have played one match less. Madrid's disappointing start to the league season was influenced by Ronaldo's poor form although he has now tu

form, although he has now turned a corner. The Portuguese scored just one goal in his first eight league games, but has hit form at the right time, scoring eight goals in his last seven matches across all competitions.

"Cristiano is Cristiano and you must never doubt him," said defender Raphael Varane after the Club World Cup triumph in Abu Dhabi. Ronaldo, who turns 33 in February, insisted he is responding to criticism with his performances and he is desperate to catch Barcelona at the top of the table.

"I hope we win that game so that the league is still right time. —Reuters

alive for Real Madrid," said Ronaldo. "I'm having a great season. I talk on the pitch, I try to give my best so people enjoy my football."

In contrast to Madrid, Barcelona are flying. Unbeaten in La Liga and the Champions League, the Catalans made light work of Deportivo in one of their best performances of the season.

Although the team has been carried by Lionel Messi for much of the season, Suarez was a crucial component of this victory, netting twice, hitting the post and being denied his hattrick when his rabona shot appeared to cross the line but was not awarded as a goal.

"The rabona goal was clear. It went in. I saw it clearly because I was right there," said Suarez, who, like Ronaldo, is only thinking

about a Clasico victory. "It would give us a boost in the competition, although there are other rivals like Atletico and Valencia," he added.

After a lean spell of scoring two goals in eight games in all competitions at the start of the season, Suarez now has six in his last seven.

The Uruguayan's fortunes changed after his national team agreed to give him a rest in November, not calling him up for the international break. With Messi misfiring against Deportivo, hitting the woodwork three times and missing a penalty, Suarez has come into form at the right time. —Reuters



ABU DHABI: File photo shows Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (L) is awarded the 2017 FIFA Club World Cup Silver Ball by FIFA President Gianni Infantino. —AFP

## Klopp sets sights on top four finish

**BOURNEMOUTH:** Jurgen Klopp admits Manchester City will be almost impossible to catch at the top of the Premier League, but the Liverpool boss would happily settle for a top-four finish as a lucrative consolation prize. Goals from Philippe Coutinho, Mohamed Salah, Dejan Lovren and Roberto Firmino sent the free-scoring Reds up to fourth place. They are 18 points behind runaway leaders City, but Klopp is happy with his team's current form as they chase a place in next sea-



## Kuwait receives trophy of Gulf Cup from Qatar

KUWAIT: Kuwait Football Association said yesterdayit received the trophy of the Gulf Cup from Qatar, the winner of the 22nd tournament, part of KFA preparations for the 23rd Gulf Cup, to be held in Kuwait next Friday. KFA Secretary General and 23rd Gulf Cup Director, Mohammad Khalil, received the trophy from Hamad Al-Mannae, chairman of competitions committee at Qatar's football association, KFA said in a statement. Khalil thanked Al-Mannae for bringing the trophy from Doha. The Gulf Cup will begin with a clash between Kuwait and Saudi Árabia at Jaber International Stadium. The game will be followed by an encounter between Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Defending champion, Qatar, will start its matches against Bahrain on Saturday. Meanwhile, President of Kuwait Football Association (KFA) said the higher committee tasked with organizing the 23rd Gulf Cup was exerting every possible effort to bring about success for the tournament, fully backed by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Sheikh Ahmad Yusuf Al-Sabah said the committee members, chaired by Deputy Premier and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Anas Al-Saleh, have been meeting regularly to remove all hurdles facing teams preparing for the Gulf Cup, which would begin on December 22. The committee's vice-chairman is Minister of Commerce and Industry, and Minister of State for Youth Khaled Al-Roudhan. Sheikh Ahmad, in an interview with Kuwait TV, said Al-Saleh and Al-Roudhan were facilitating all procedures that would pave way for a successful tournament, which would conclude on January 5. Al-Saleh, in a statement earlier, announced that His Highness the Amir has decided to personally bear the costs of the Gulf Cup. Sheikh Ahmad, meanwhile, said the GCC countries, Iraq and Yemen sent their approvals to participate in the Gulf Cup two days after His Highness the Amir instructed that Kuwait host the event. Sheikh Ahmad thanked Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for visiting the players yesterday, which had positive impacts. He added that more than 20 TV channels and over 3,000 journalists would be in Kuwait to cover the Gulf Cup. Sheikh Ahmad said His Highness the Amir would attend the opening game between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, which would be held at Jaber International Stadium. — KUNA

son's Champions League.

"Can City be caught? I don't know. I don't have a crystal ball. But if they struggle, like maybe nobody with their quality has struggled before, then someone should be there to use it," Klopp said. "I don't see it but if I stopped working hard the

"I don't see it but if I stopped working hard the moment I couldn't be a league champion, I wouldn't be here. "We have so many things to play for. It's really hard, really intense in this league, and it'll be unbelievable the number of points you'll need at the end of the season to get anything.

"A lot of teams are in good shape, but City are winning all their games." Liverpool's win over Bournemouth, their fourth consecutive victory on the road, leaves Klopp's side only four points adrift of third-placed Chelsea.

They now have 34 points from 18 games, largely on target to match the 76 points they reached last season to finish fourth.

#### **RESPECT FOR SALAH**

Egypt winger Salah has been a revelation since arriving from Roma, but Klopp is reluctant to talk up individuals. "He's got 20 goals but what happens if he doesn't score from now on? He didn't score against West Brom, when we needed it more than today," Klopp said.

"You always talk about Mo. He knows how much I respect and like him. But I don't go home and think: 'How good is he?' That's not how it works. "He's a very important player for us, like the others. But I'm very satisfied with how we played in this game."

## Red-hot City chase League Cup glory

**LONDON:** With Manchester City romping away with the Premier League title race, this week's League Cup quarter-final action offers Pep Guardiola's side the chance to remain on course for a domestic treble.

City head to Leicester hoping to reach only the second semi-final of Guardiola's 18-month reign after losing in the FA Cup last four against Arsenal in April. The League Cup also provides hope of silverware for the teams trailing in City's wake.

Holders Manchester United travel to Bristol City to face the only team from outside the top flight still alive in the competition. Arsenal host London rivals West Ham, while Chelsea take on Bournemouth.

Guardiola learns lesson of Leicester loss Pep Guardiola's first experience of Leicester's frenetic style of play memorably prompted the Spaniard to declare he "didn't coach tackles" after City were roughed up in a 4-2 defeat at the King Power Stadium 12 months ago. Guardiola has heeded the lesson of that chastening experience, assembling a City side now more than capable of slugging it out

BOURNEMOUTH: Liverpool's German manager Jurgen Klopp (L) and Liverpool's English midfielder Adam Lallana embrace on the pitch after the English Premier League football match between Bournemouth and Liverpool. —AFP

Bournemouth manager Eddie Howe, whose team are in 16th place and only one point above the relegation zone, said: "There's not been many times since I've been Bournemouth manager that I've felt quite like this after a match. It was a disappointing watch.

"I have to say we were well off it. We looked flat in every way. Credit to Liverpool because they played well but we're disappointed with ourselves."— AFP

with opponents intent on trying to intimidate them.

They proved that point with a 2-0 win at Leicester earlier this season and will be expected to repeat that victory if Guardiola fields a strong team in Tuesday's Cup tie following a 4-1 rout of Tottenham on Saturday that made it 16 successive league victories.

With the League Cup final scheduled for February 2018, the tournament gives Guardiola his earliest chance this season to get his hands on the first silverware of his City reign. Leicester, three-time League Cup winners, last made the final in 2000, but their boss Claude Puel knows how to mastermind a run in the competition after leading Southampton to last season's final.

United face unfamiliar foe on road to Wembley Forced to play second fiddle to their hated neighbours this season, Manchester United need to amass as much silverware as possible outside the Premier League to stop City taking all the bragging rights. Jose Mourinho's side, 2-1 winners at West Bromwich Albion in the league on Sunday, lifted the League Cup last season and the next stop on their road back to Wembley will be an unfamiliar one.

For the first time since 1979, United travel to Ashton Gate to face a Bristol City side who haven't beaten the Manchester giants for 39 years. City are on the up in the Championship, sitting in third place after beating Nottingham Forest for their fourth successive second-tier win on Saturday.

A sell-out crowd awaits United in the west country

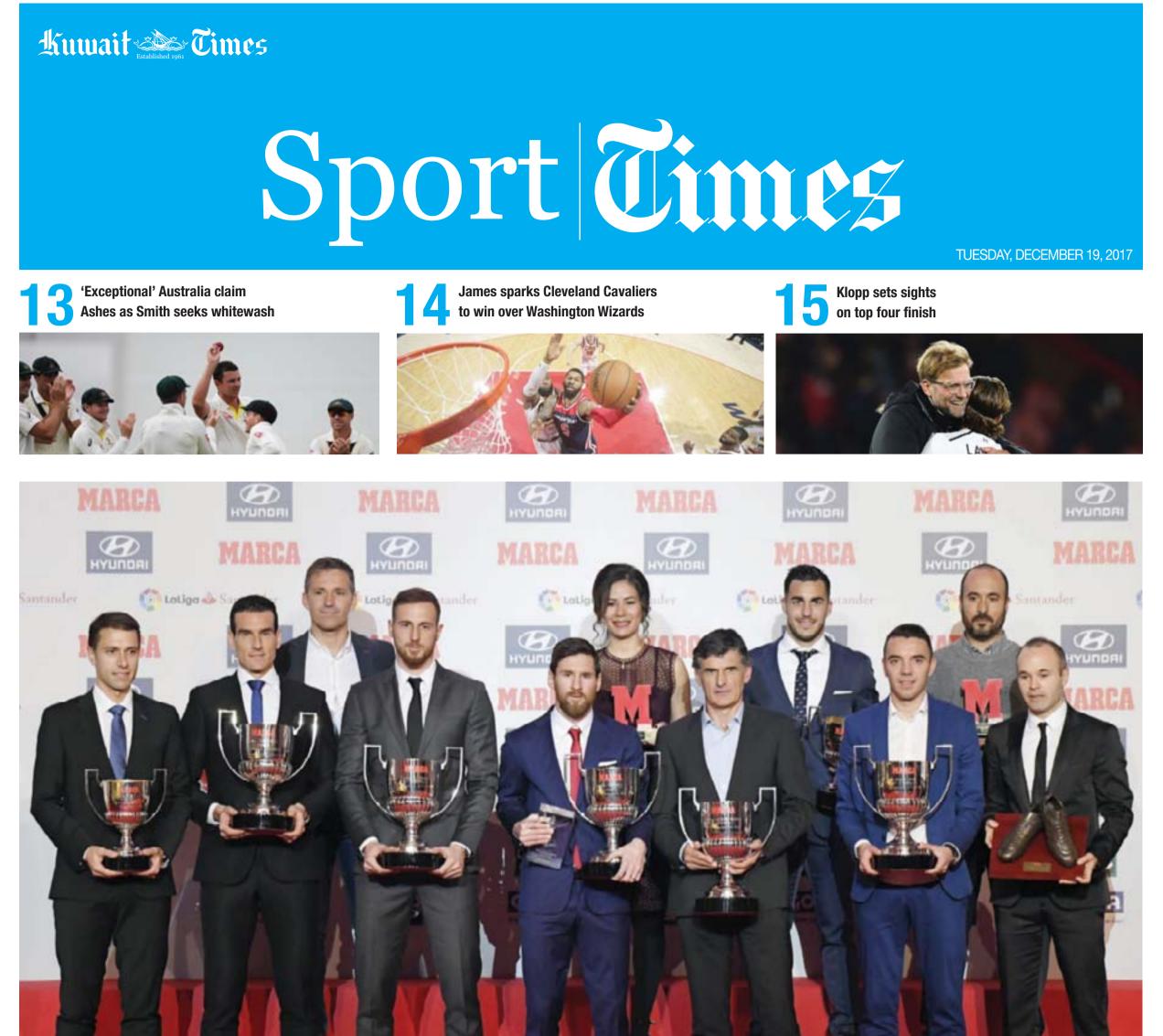
and City assistant manager Dean Holden said: "Manchester United at home doesn't happen too often does it? "It's going to a fantastic night for the whole city of Bristol." Arsenal eye League Cup redemption

For a club with such an illustrious history, the League Cup has been barren territory for Arsenal, who have won the competition just twice and not since 1993. The Gunners, who last made the final in 2011, haven't been helped by boss Arsene Wenger's habit of using the League Cup as a proving ground for his club's emerging youngsters.

West Ham's visit to the Emirates Stadium is unlikely to be treated so lightly by Wenger, who knows trophies are essential to placate a fanbase frustrated by another failed challenge in the league. He might find room in the team for 20-year-old Ainsley Maitland-Niles after the midfielder's impressive showing during Saturday's 1-0 win over Newcastle. "That's just the start of what's to come for us," Maitland-Niles said. Chelsea want Cup consolation Aware that City's dominance makes a repeat of last season's title triumph unlikely for Chelsea, Blues goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois has called on his team to sweep up the rest of the silverware this season. That mission starts at home to Bournemouth and, speaking after Saturday's 1-0 league win over Southampton, Courtois said: "It's important to win in the League Cup, to go through to the semi-final. "The FA Cup will start in January. We have chances to win and go further."- AFP



ENGLISH LEAGUE CUP Arsenal v West Ham United	22:45
beIN SPORTS HD 1 Leicester City v Manchester City beIN SPORTS HD 2	22:45
ITALIAN CUP Napoli v Udinese Calcio beIN SPORTS	23:00
SPANISH LEAGUE Levante v Leganes beIN SPORTS HD 3	23:30





BARCELONA: Barcelona's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi (C) poses with the rest of award winners after receiving the Alfredo Diestefano award for the 2017 leading goalscorer 'Pichichi' of the Spanish league, in Barcelona yesterday. —AFP

## Messi picks up Pichichi, Stefano trophy

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona star Lionel Messi has added even more trophies to his massive collection after receiving two awards from Spanish sports newspaper Marca yesterday.

The Argentine, following the Catalan giants' 4-0 victory over Deportivo on Sunday, was pictured celebrating with the Pichichi award and the Alfredo Di Stefano award at a ceremony in Barcelona.

The Pichichi trophy, named after the Athletic Bilbao striker Rafael 'Pichichi' Moreno Aranzadi, is awarded by Marca to the top goalscorer of each La Liga season.

Messi added to his trophy haul after scoring a remarkable 37 goals in 34 league games last season, two more than Barcelona team-mate Luis Suarez.

Meanwhile, the 30-year-old also picked up the

Alfredo Di Stefano award yesterday, which is won by the best player in La Liga.

Messi was also pictured posing with team-mate Andres Iniesta, who won Spain's Most Valuable Player award, at the Marca Sports Journal Award ceremony.

The Argentine star and the other award winners show off their prizes in Barcelona. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner has enjoyed a successful couple of

days after helping Barcelona thrash Deportivo 4-0 in La Liga on Sunday at the Nou Camp.

The victory has ensured Ernesto Valverde's side sit six points clear of second-placed Atletico Madrid in the Spanish top flight ahead of their highly anticipated clash with arch rivals Real Madrid on Saturday afternoon. The Catalan giants, having played a game more, currently lie 11 points clear of the Bernabeu outfit.



BOGOTA: Millonarios players celebrate with the trophy after winning their Colombian Football League final match against Santa Fe and becoming champions at Nemesio Camacho El Campin stadium in Bogota, Colombia. — AFP

## Millonarios win 15th Colombian title

**BOGOTA:** Millonarios have won their 15th Colombian league title after a 2-2 draw against their Bogota city rivals Santa Fe in a playoff. Henry Rojas scored the

decisive goal for Millonarios in the 85th minute on Sunday after Santa Fe had gone into a 2-0 lead with two goals from Wilson Morelo before Andres Cadavid pulled a goal back.

Millonarios, who celebrate their first title since 2012, had won the first leg 1-0. The club now qualify for the group phase of the 2018 Copa Libertadores, the South American equivalent of the Champions League. They are now one title away from equalising the record of 16 won by Medellin-based Atletico Nacional. — AFP

## Farah shock winner of BBC award

**PARIS:** Britain's four-time Olympic gold medallist Mo Farah was named BBC sports personality of the year for the first time on Sunday, edging out motorcycling champion Jonathan Rea to the award. Farah, 34, successfully defended his 10,000-metre title at the World Championships in August, although he missed out on another distance double after taking silver in the 5,000m.

He retired from the track later that same month to focus on road racing and has said he could run the marathon at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. Farah earned 83,524 votes — 2,957 more than Northern Irishman Rea, who became the first rider to win three consecutive World Superbike titles, while double Paralympic champion Jonnie Peacock came third.

Heavyweight boxer Anthony Joshua, the bookies' favourite to land the prize, finished fourth in a year that saw the 28-year-old defeat Ukraine's Wladimir Klitschko in an epic world title fight. "It is pretty amazing and hard to think about," Farah, who was not present at the awards ceremony in Liverpool, told those in attendance via video link.

"I didn't imagine I was ever going to win this but anything can happen. If you work hard you can achieve your dreams. "I just cannot believe I have won." Roger Federer was voted BBC overseas sports personality of the year for a record fourth time earlier in the week after an astonishing season during which he picked up two more Grand Slam titles. — AFP



Mo Farah



# **JUSINESS**

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2017



Atlanta airport, world's busiest, struggles after major power cut







KUWAIT: Investment Studies Institute (ISI) in collaboration with EY holds a seminar on VAT. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## Kuwait poised to introduce VAT

## Govts in Mideast toying with idea of new taxation methods: Expert

#### By Faten Omar

**KUWAIT:** Governments in the Middle East and North Africa are experimenting with new taxation methods in a bid to ratchet up their assets and maintain economic stability, an international tax expert said vesterday at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce. The tax advisory service agent at Ernst and Young (EY) Alok Chugh said Kuwait will start preparations to impose value added tax (VAT).

Speaking at a seminar organized by the Investment Studies Institute (ISI) in collaboration with EY about VAT, Chugh explained that EY is the tax advisor on VAT for GCC states and that the new tax would be in effect by the beginning of 2018, with educational and banking services and basic foodstuff exempted, adding that the law is to be referred to parliament today.

The GCC unified VAT agreement was published on April 21, 2017, which forms the basis of national VAT legislation in the six GCC member states. Considering KSA and UAE will implement VAT from January 1, 2018, the GCC will witness a new tax landscape. This evolving landscape brings in queries and uncertainties in the mind of business owners and new taxpavers across Kuwait and abroad, directly and indirectly.

Chugh noted that there are some very important and bold regulatory changes in Kuwait. Some of the

agreement for implemen-

were recently updated

and the Ministry of

Finance has set up a Tax

Development Follow-Up

tation of VAT in the GCC. "Based on our understanding from discussions with government officials, the 5 percent GCC VAT will be applicable on goods and services by 2018," he said. "The tax registration number and forms

hottest topics for discussions include VAT, where all is our current understanding that BPT is not likely to the six countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council be approved before 2019," Chugh pointed out. He stat-(GCC) have signed the master framework for the ed that the Kuwaiti authorities are working on the

implementation of an economic diversification strategy. This task has become quite pressing, **ISI holds** taking into account the current financial position of Kuwait. A number of seminar on fiscal and regulatory reforms being impletaxation mented aim at reducing the economic burdens of doing business in Kuwait. The two new regimes: Kuwait direct

investment promotion

law and institutionalized public-private partnerships may contribute to this process both in terms of attracting foreign investment into the country and for the diversification of the economy.

Director of Union Investment Companies (UIC) Fadwa Darwish said the seminar was organized to shed more light on how VAT would be imposed on investment companies and financial establishments in Kuwait.

## Saudi budget deficit narrows after oil income recovers

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia appears set to post a lowerthan-expected budget deficit this year as oil revenues rebounded and the kingdom kept public spending in check, official figures showed yesterday.

Faced by a persistent budget shortfall, the world's largest oil exporter has embarked on an ambitious reform program to curb expenditure and lessen its dependence on crude.

The kingdom will today announce the financial results for 2017 and next year's budget, with experts predicting the Saudi economy has shrunk for the first time since 2009. Slightly rosier finance min-

istry data Monday put the shortfall for the first nine months of 2017 at \$32.4 billion, just 61 percent of the \$52.8 billion deficit projected for the whole year. That was thanks to revenues in the first nine months rising to \$120 billion, a 23 percent surge compared to last year, while public spending remained unchanged at \$152.4 billion.

Unit (TDFU) within the Department of Inspection and

Tax Claims (DIT). Kuwait is also looking to introduce

new business profit taxes. Based on our understanding,

all Kuwaiti and foreign companies operating in Kuwait

may be subject to 10 percent business profit tax under

the proposed Business Profit Tax (BPT) law. The BPT

is yet to be approved by the Kuwait parliament.

However, considering the recent developments in the

GCC relating to the introduction of value added tax, it

The revenue boost was mainly due to a 33 percent jump in oil income to \$82 billion as crude prices rebounded to above \$60 a barrel thanks to an output cut by major OPEC and non-OPEC producers.

Non-oil income rose six percent to \$38.1 billion, but there was a massive third quarter surge of 80 percent after the introduction of fees on the dependents of expatriates and duty on cigarettes, power and soft drinks. Riyadh's reform program has already cut fuel and power subsidies as the authorities seek to contain spending. To further boost income the kingdom plans to introduce a five-percent value-added tax (VAT) in the new year. — AFP

## **IMF** hails Iran recovery, calls for bank reform

DUBAI: Iran's economy is starting to recover more rapidly from years of international sanctions but the country urgently needs to shore up its banks, a senior International Monetary Fund official said yesterday.

Gross domestic product growth soared to 12.5 percent in the year through last March 20, but that was almost entirely due to a leap in oil exports, after most sanctions were removed under a deal with world powers on Tehran's nuclear program. Oil exports are no longer growing nearly as fast. But the economic recovery is now beginning to extend to non-oil areas, said Catriona Purfield, head of an IMF team which held annual consultations with the Iranian government this month.

"Growth has begun to broaden to the non-oil sec-

Alok Chugh tor," Purfield said in a statement, predicting GDP would

expand 4.2 percent in the current fiscal year and that growth could rise towards 4.5 percent in subsequent years with financial reforms. Official statistics in Iran are often incomplete and released only slowly, and the policy-making process can be opaque, so Iran's consultations with the IMF provide one of the clearest glimpses into its economy.

The country's recovery has been slowed by tensions with the United States, where President Donald Trump has raised the possibility that sanctions could be reimposed or new sanctions introduced. This has deterred many banks and other foreign companies from operating in Iran.

Purfield said that given such uncertainty and the increasing vulnerability of Iran's financial system, the government urgently needed to restructure and recapitalize banks and credit institutions.

"An asset quality review, related-party lending assessment, and a time-bound action plan to recapitalize banks and address non-performing loans should start immediately," she said, adding that the cost of recapitalizing banks could be covered with long-term government bond issues.-Reuters





## Japan's exports boom, but inflation not following script

## Inflation expectations key to BoJ's stimulus program

November, yet again pointing to growing momentum in the world's third-biggest economy. There was just one catch: inflation remained stubbornly low and well off the central bank's 2 percent target.

The combination of steady growth and benign con-sumer prices mean the Bank of Japan will lag other major central banks in exiting crisis-era monetary stimulus, with analysts widely expecting BOJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda to keep the liquidity tap wide open at a meeting later this week.

"Inflation expectation is in a gradual recovery trend, but a gap between firm economic indicators and weak price indexes remains wide open," said Yuichiro Nagai, economist at Barclays Securities.

Indeed, a BOJ survey vesterday showed companies' inflation expectations heightened only a touch in December from three months ago, despite a tight labor market and business confidence at over a decade high.

The persistently low inflation - with core prices running at an annual pace of 0.8 percent - was also hard to square off with the robust performance of Japan Inc., which has benefited from booming exports thanks to upbeat global demand. Separate data from the Ministry of Finance showed exports grew 16.2 percent in the year to

**TOKYO:** Japanese exports accelerated sharply in November, beating a 14.6 percent gain expected by economists in a Reuters poll and accelerating from the prior month's 14.0 percent increase, led by a stellar sales to China and Asia. Economists expect brisk Asia-bound shipments of electronics and solid capital investment in advanced economies will underpin Japan's export performance in coming months.

> "The global economic outlook by IMF and OECD suggests the world economy will remain resilient for the time being, which will provide favorable export conditions," said Takeshi Minami, chief economist at Norinchukin Research Institute. That upbeat outlook was highlighted in the BOJ's tankan survey on business sentiment last week, which showed big manufacturers' optimism hit an 11-year high. All of this has helped Japan's economy score its second-longest run of postwar growth. That marked a feather in the cap of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe whose 'Abenomics' stimulus policies have put the nation on the cusp of vanquishing nearly two decades of deflation.

#### Inflation, anyone?

Many economists, however, are skeptical that consumer price gains will keep up with growth in overall economic activity. And earlier this month, Kuroda signalled the BOJ may edge away from its crisis-mode stimulus, saving keeping it for too long could undermine regional banks' health.

"The BOJ will likely be forced into cutting its price projections once again in its quarterly outlook report in January. That will highlight a distance to an exit from the BOJ's monetary stimulus," said Barclays' Nagai.

The BOJ quarterly "tankan" survey on corporate inflation expectations survey showed companies expect consumer prices to rise 0.8 percent a year from now, slightly ahead of their projection for a 0.7 percent increase three months ago. The marginal nudge up in expectations underscored why inflation is still well off the BOJ's target, with firms expecting consumer prices to rise an annual 1.1 percent three years from now and 1.1 percent five years ahead, unchanged from three months ago, the survey showed.

On the external front, the news continued to look up for Japan, offering hope that a much-anticipated virtual circle of private sector-led growth will boost consumption and prices. The value of exports to China, Japan's largest trading partner, rose 25.1 percent year-on-year in November to 1.38 trillion yen (\$12.24 billion), the highest monthly amount on record, led by equipment to manufacture liquid crystal displays (LCD).

Shipments to Asia, which account for more than half of Japan's exports, grew 20.4 percent in the year to



**BoJ Governor Haruhiko Kuroda** 

November to 3.89 trillion yen, the record amount. Exports to the United States rose 13.0 percent in the year to November, led by cars and excavators, following a 7.1 percent gain in the previous month. "The upshot is that net exports should have provided another boost to GDP growth in the current quarter," said Marcel Thieliant, senior Japan economist at Capital Economics. —Reuters

### **Tunisia expects** surge in olive oil production in fillip to economy

BENI HASSEN, Tunisia: Trucks loaded with boxes full of olives were queuing at a press plant in this small Tunisian town as the North African country sees a surge in olive oil production in a badly-needed boost to its ailing economy. Tunisia, one of the world's top three olive oil producers, expects olive production to jump by 160 percent to between 1.5 million tons and 1.6 million tons in the 2017 season which started in November, the agriculture ministry says.

That will translate into up to 280 million tons of olive oil, about 80 percent of which will be exported, helping to generate hard currency needed to stabilize its battered dinar.

Tunisia has been in economic crisis since a popular uprising in 2011 ousted autocrat Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali. The crisis has deepened as militant attacks took their toll on the tourism industry and weakened the dinar against hard currencies. "It will be an exceptional (olive) season thanks to much better rainfall than last year," said Hamdi Khalifa, owner of an olive oil press in Bani Hassen, one of the main production areas located a two-hour drive south of the capital Tunis

## Rohde & Schwarz, **Gulfsat hold demo** on UDH-HDR and **HD** solutions

KUWAIT: Within the scope of its strategic partnership with Gulfsat Communications Company, the well-known German company Rohde & Schwarz, held at the headquarters of Gulfsat a special demonstration attended by a number of the ministry's senior officials. The demo highlighted some advanced solutions to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information which included UDH-HDR and HD solutions that enhance High Definition broadcasting services, as well as other solutions including VENICE Playout, PRISMON Multiviewer, AVHE100 Headend, DVB-S2 and DVB-T2 solutions. Other developed solutions that contribute to enhancing satellite broadcasting services were also demonstrated at an interactive session that raised the engagement of attendees. The session also evolved a discussion of DVB-T2 solutions.

On this occasion, Mohammed Al-Haj, Chairman and CEO of Gulfsat Company, stated that the Company was keen to provide state-of-the-art technological solutions in the field of TV broadcasting and re-broadcasting and communications designed to enhance the quality of media content for the Kuwaiti recipient in particular. This explains why, over a short period of time, Gulfsat succeeded in entrenching itself as a key player in this field, particularly at the Middle East and North Africa level. Gulfsat's presence, he added, was strengthened by a specialized technical team whose members possess the right field experience and knowledge that enable them to support and manage those technological solutions at the highest levels of professionalism and competence. Rohde & Schwarz has a long experience in installing and operating DVB-T2 networks, having already worked with several customers and institutions at the regional level, including the Kingdom of Bahrain, State of Qatar, Jordan and the Emirate of Sharjah. It is currently supervising the execution of an HEVC DVB-T2 network that is the first of its kind in the Middle East, in the Sultanate of Oman. Established in 1995, Gulfsat Company is specialized in providing communication, TV broadcasting and re-broadcasting services to TV satellite channels. Within a short period, Gulfsat gained a strong presence and entrenched itself as a major player in the field, particularly at the Middle East and North Africa level. The company provides a sophisticated platform through satellite technologies capable of offering creative solutions in the field of communications in the Middle East. Furthermore, Gulfsat owns state-of-the-art advanced technologies capable of effect-





His workers produce 90 tons of olive oil each day in the press compared to 40 tonnes a year ago, he said. Prices have shot up with 10 liters of oil now selling for 90 dinars.

Last year's production had been hit hard by a drought. The production boom has helped ease unemployment in rural areas with farmers complaining that they are struggling to find enough farm hands. Some 135,000 workers were needed for this year's season for up to three months, the agriculture ministry said in a statement. "I'm paying now (workers) 35 dinars a day but its not easy to find workers," said Sabri Barki, a farmer who owns 100 olive trees in the Bani Hassen area. "Prices have gone up."

The olive oil industry relies on 70 million olive trees that cover around 1.7 million hectares. They provide a living for at least 500,000 families in the North African country of 11 million. It hopes that rising olive oil exports will help reduce its record trade deficit, which hit \$4.61 billion in the first nine months of this year. Last month, the agriculture ministry said Tunisia aimed to export about 220,000 tons of olive oil this season compared with about 75,000 tons last season that brought in \$320 million.

World olive production is seen rising by 14 percent to 2.9 million tons in the 2017/18 season with Tunisia posting the highest gain with a 120 percent rise, according to the International Olive Council, an industry body. Top producer Spain, which has been hit by a severe drought this year, is expected to post a 15 percent drop in output.—Reuters

ing an efficient transmission from one point to another of any audio and visual content and any data at the highest levels of quality, thereby enabling it to broadcast the content through points strategically located in several continents, in conformity with the highest quality standards.

Gulfsat has adopted a strategy through which it has always sought to keep pace with the latest technological developments in the fields of satellite broadcasting. This is augmented by efforts designed to preserve the intellectual property rights in satellite broadcasting by combatting piracy, supported in this regard by a group of exceptionaly competent personnel with a long experience and impressive competence, most of whom have been with the company through its various phases of development.

For more than 80 years, the name of Rohde & Schwarz has been synonymous with the highest levels of quality, accuracy and innovation in all aspects of radio communication. The company is a leading manufacturer of testing, measurement, communication and broadcasting equipment. With more than 9300 employees and representatives in more than 70 countries worldwide, it has more than \$ 1.9 billion in annual sales and enjoys a massive ability to provide all types of customer service at the local and international levels.

Rohde & Schwarz offers a whole portfolio of testing and measuring equipment for the various sectors of radio business operations and testing of mobile communication networks. The Group offers T&M equipment specifically designed for the car, space, military equipment, industrial electronics, research and education. In the field of radio and media, Rohde & Schwarz serves consumer electric equipment networks and manufacturers as well as content providers. The group is one of the most prominent leaders in the global market for T&M and transmission equipment

Furthermore, Rohde & Schwarz is active in the area of enhancing information technology and network security. Thanks to its satellite network security solutions, the Group provides industries and government authorities with protection against cyber-attacks and spying. The communications and security solutions provided by Rohde & Schwarz are used in highly sensitive infrastructures. In addition, the company offers detection and surveillance equipment for national and external security as well as communication and detection equipment for the armed forces.

### **EXCHANGE RATES**

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.	Canadian dollar Turkish lira Swiss Franc	237.000 80.050 307.910	Malaysian Ringgit Chinese Yuan Renminbi	75.070 46.220		Chinese Yuan Hong Kong Dollar	0.044365 0.036850	0.0478
ASIAN COUNTRIES	Australian Dollar	231.190	Thai Bhat	10.295		Indian Rupee	0.004133	0.0047
panese Yen 2.672	US Dollar Buying	301.800	Turkish Lira	78.790		Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000
dian Rupees 4.700						Japanese Yen	0.002618	0.002
kistani Rupees 2.852		GOLD	BAHPAIN	EXCHANGE COM	DANIV	Korean Won	0.000268	0.000
ilankan Rupees 1.976	20 Gram	249.070	DAITRAIN		AINI	Malaysian Ringgit	0.070263	0.076
epali Rupees 2.941	10 Gram	127.450		510/		Nepalese Rupee	0.003023	0.003
gapore Dollar 225.110	5 Gram	64.570	CURRENCY	BUY	SELL	Pakistan Rupee	0.002611	0.002
ngkong Dollar 38.817			Date by David	Europe	0.406200	Philippine Peso	0.005936	0.006
ngladesh Taka 3.647			British Pound	0.398806	0.406308	Singapore Dollar	0.219771	0.229
ilippine Peso 6.009 ai Babt 9.317	DOLLARCO	d Exchange Co. Ltd	Czech Korune	0.005910	0.017910	Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001698	0.002
ai Baht 9.317			Danish Krone	0.043962 0.351504	$0.048962 \\ 0.359004$	Taiwan	0.010009	0.010
GCC COUNTRIES	Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate	Euro	0.351504 0.134933		Thai Baht	0.008970	0.009
udi Rival 80.854	US Dollar	302.600	Georgian Lari Hungarian 0.001141	0.134933	0.134933			
atari Riyal 83.276	Canadian Dollar	235.965	Norwegian Krone	0.032552	0.037752		Arab	
mani Rival 787.420	Sterling Pound	404.655	Romanian Leu	0.064839	0.081689	Bahraini Dinar	0.796799	0.805
ahraini Dinar 805.100	Euro	357.095	Russian ruble	0.005167	0.005167	Egyptian Pound	0.014522	0.020
AE Dirham 82.550	Swiss Frank	301.335	Slovakia	0.009032	0.019032	Iranian Rival	0.000084	0.000
	Bahrain Dinar	803.125	Slovakia Swedish Krona	0.031912	0.036912	Iragi Dinar	0.000186	0.000
ARAB COUNTRIES	UAE Dirhams	83.600	Swiss Franc	0.299921	0.030912	Jordanian Dinar	0.422684	0.431
gyptian Pound - Cash 20.240	Qatari Riyals	83.535	Swiss Franc	0.299921	0.510921	Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000
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emen Riyal/for 1000 1.217	Jordanian Dinar	428.080	Australian Dollar	0.223675	0.235675	Moroccan Dirhams	0.022153	0.046
nisian Dinar 123.670	Egyptian Pound Sri Lankan Rupees	17.098 1.977	New Zealand Dollar	0.205877	0.235675		0.0780465	0.786
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vrian Lira 0.000	Bangladesh Taka	3.670	Canadian Dollar	0.230397	0.239397	Saudi Riyal	0.079700	0.081
orocco Dirham 32.581	Philippines Pesso	5.996	US Dollars	0.230397 0.298850	0.239397 0.303270	Syrian Pound	0.001284	0.00
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	Cyprus pound	18.005	US Dollars US Dollars Mint	0.298850		Tunisian Dinar	0.117368	0.125
Dollar Transfer 303.000	Japanese Yen	3.685	US Dollars Mint	0.299350	0.303270	Turkish Lira	0.073531	0.083
1001111 Transfer 303.000	Svrian Pound	1.590		A		UAE Dirhams	0.081057	0.082
erling Pound 405.720	Nepalese Rupees	2.957	Bangladesh Taka	<b>Asia</b> 0.003301	0.003885	Yemeni Riyal	0.000985	0.001



Business

## Atlanta airport, world's busiest, struggles after major power cut

## Electricity out for 11 hours; thousands stranded

Those

stranded

were not

amused

**WASHINGTON:** The world's busiest airport, in the US city of Atlanta, struggled to resume normal operations yesterday, facing criticism after a power cut stranded thousands of passengers.

With electricity out for about 11 hours, some passengers were unable to disembark from their planes after landing, while those already inside the terminal crowded the darkened concourses where even some water fountains had reportedly stopped working.

"Still on plane for going on 5th hour," tweeted Anthony Foxx, former transportation secretary under president Barack Obama. "Whatever the cause, it feels like this one was compounded by confusion and poor communication.'

US carrier Delta, whose largest hub is in the south-

ern city, said it expected 300 more flight cancellations yesterday, mostly morning arrivals, "to give the operation there an opportunity to more quickly return to normal."

Delta said it had to scrap about 900 flights on Sunday but expected its Atlanta schedule would return to normal by yesterday afternoon.

Another carrier, Southwest, said it planned on operating a regular Atlanta schedule yesterday after it, and all other carriers using the airport, were affected by the power cut. Flightview.com, which tracks air travel data, listed hundreds of flights as delayed, canceled or diverted during the outage, but yesterday it showed an increasing number of scheduled departures as well as arrivals.

"Power has been restored on all concourses," the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport said on its Twitter account, about 11 hours after first

reporting the electrical disruption.

Giving an idea of how many people were affected, the airport added: "5,000+ meals are being delivered to passengers." The Georgia Power company, in a statement, said "power had been restored for all essential airport activities including all concourses and flight operations."

It described the outage as "very rare." Although the exact cause is not yet known, Georgia Power said preliminary investigation suggested that a fire damaged cables in the backup power system. "No personnel or passengers were in danger at any time," the company said.

Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed issued an apology "to the thousands of passengers whose day has been

disrupted," The Atlanta Constitution Journal reported on its website. Photos and videos from the airport showed people walking or sitting in crowded airport corridors, with windows only partially cutting through the gloom. Numerous airplanes could be seen parked on the airport tarmac. A woman said she was

waiting in the security line when "they turned off the lights-a few times they went off, and then finally they shut off completely." One passenger, Mike Vizdos, told AFP that he and others got trapped on their aircraft because the power went out just as it reached the terminal gate after arriving from Costa Rica. "Sat on the plane for six hours and then cleared customs and immigration," Vizdos said, still hoping to reach his home in Richmond, Virginia the following day.

"There are thousands of stories," he said. The air-



ATLANTA: This picture obtained on the twitter account of Mike Vizdos and taken on Sunday shows passengers waiting in the terminal of the Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson airport in Atlanta, Georgia. — AFP

port earlier announced that it "sustained a power outage shortly after 1:00 pm today (Sunday)."

That led the Federal Aviation Administration to place a "ground stop" on flights inbound for Atlanta, meaning they were held at the airports from which they were to depart. "The FAA Tower can operate normally, however, departures are delayed because airport equipment in the terminals is not working," it said.

Those stranded were not amused. "I haven't eaten since 8AM central," one person tweeted. Others said they were waiting on the tarmac: "Atlanta airport doesn't have power. I'm trapped on the runway, I'm hungry, and slightly buzzed..... Send help!!!" Some said people were not being permitted to leave the airport, including a mother who tweeted: "My kid is trapped with the others at the Atlanta airport. No one is allowed to leave." —AFP

To thwart Amazon, **Kroger and Walmart** lure shoppers with curbside pickup

## **ThaiBev buys** majority stake in Vietnam's biggest brewer

HANOI: ThaiBev took a majority stake worth \$4.8 billion in Vietnam's largest brewer, Sabeco, at a highlyanticipated auction yesterday for shares of the stateowned beer behemoth. Through its domestic unit Vietnam Beverage, Thai Beverage was the only company to bid for 343.662 million shares, or a 53.59 percent stake, in the company, the Ministry of Industry and Trade said earlier. An unnamed domestic individual also bid on 20,000 shares, it added. They were the only two investors listed. The Ho Chi Minh City Stock Exchange confirmed in a report after the sale yesterday the sole investors were "successful" in their bids. Sabeco, the country's largest brewer which produces the popular Saigon Special and 333, announced late last month it would sell off a nearly 54 percent stake in the company for \$14.10 per share, and that foreign ownership would be capped at 49 percent. The company is already 10 percent foreign-owned.



LOS ANGELES: As Amazon.com looks to upend the US grocery market with home delivery, some veteran supermarket operators are betting on a different strategy: curbside pickup. Americans have long loved the convenience of drive-through service for burgers and coffee. Kroger Co and Walmart Inc are tweaking that formula for groceries.

The companies have invested heavily in online systems that allow customers to order ahead from their neighborhood store. Workers pick and pack the products, then run them out to shoppers in the parking lot, the grocery version of carry out pizza. For the retailers, the service is cheaper than delivery, because customers do the driving. For shoppers, it means skipping crowds and queues at their local market, and no worries about missing packages or melted ice cream if they are not at home to meet the delivery guy.

Tony Sacco, who lives in the Los Angeles beach community of Playa Del Rey, is a regular user of the service at a nearby Ralphs supermarket, owned by Cincinnati-based Kroger. Each pickup costs \$6.95, but the time-crunched married father of three says it is worth it.

"This is easy. Time is money," said Sacco, 47, as a worker loaded bags into his SUV on a recent morning. Retaining customers like Sacco is critical for traditional grocery retailers as they battle an array of upstarts bent on turning groceries into the next home-delivery juggernaut.

New entrants such as meal-kit company Blue Apron and organic food seller Thrive Market are peeling off coveted slices of their business. Amazon, the nation's largest online retailer, has amassed an 18 percent share of the \$12.6 billion US online grocery market mainly through the sale of packaged goods such as pasta and diapers. It is the largest player in a sector that is expected to grow to \$41.7 billion by 2022, according to market research firm Packaged Facts.

But even mighty Amazon has struggled with the trickiest part of the trade: delivering fresh produce, meat, dairy and other perishables. Its AmazonFresh service started more than a decade ago, but has yet to make a major mark. Amazon is making another run at it with its \$13.7 billion purchase of upscale grocery chain Whole Foods earlier this year. Amazon has said little about its plans. But analysts expect it will use Whole Foods' 450 locations as distribution hubs for home delivery, opening a new front in its campaign to disrupt the \$700-billion US grocery industry.

Old-line players are responding with some new moves of their own. Kroger and Walmart are experimenting with delivery. But they are wagering that pickup is the true sweet spot in the industry's online evolution. Both are rolling out the service in thousands of their stores.

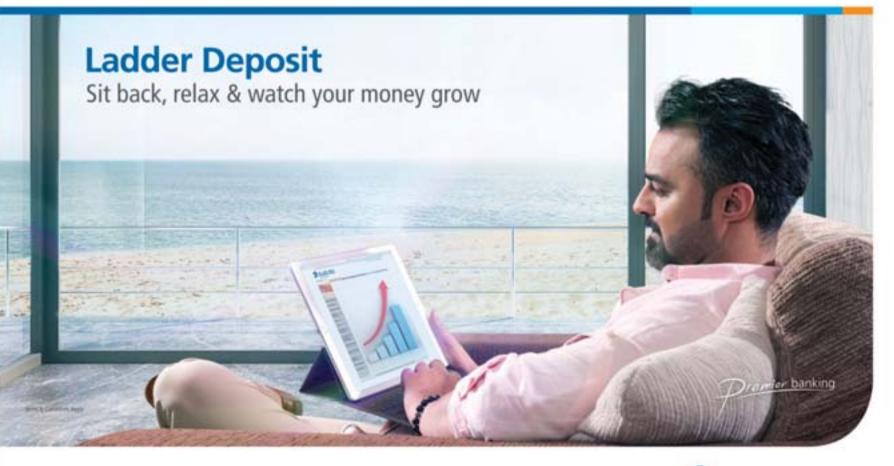
"The way people are going to shop for groceries is going to be curbside, not delivery," said Jason Goldberg, a senior vice president at digital marketing firm SapientRazorfish. -Reuters

The majority of ThaiBev's recently-established

HO CHI MINH CITY: Members of Sabeco's management board attend the auction of the brewer's shares at the Ho Chi Minh City stock exchange yesterday. —AFP

Vietnam Beverage is domestically owned, and it is considered a local company. Analysts said the share price, foreign ownership cap and a short time span likely turned off potential international bidders who were given less than three weeks to conduct due diligence. The Vietnamese government may have also tapped ThaiBev for the sale, said Kevin Snowball, CEO of PXP Vietnam Asset Management in Ho Chi Minh City. "I think that they preferred ThaiBev, I don't think it was a particularly open auction," he told AFP.

Sabeco shares closed at \$13.60 yesterday, down slightly from earlier in the day. The much-delayed sale comes as Vietnam's cash-strapped government is seeking to raise funds by "equitising" hundreds of stateowned enterprises-its term for privatization-including its crown-jewel beer makers. —AFP



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### Business

## US tax cut outlook propels stocks

**NEW YORK:** The major US stock indexes hit record highs in a broad rally yesterday as the long-awaited bill to lower taxes looked set to be passed into law and buoyed by about \$11 billion in corporate dealmaking. More US Republican Senators on Sunday said they expected Congress to pass the tax bill this week, with a Senate vote set for today and President Donald Trump expected to sign the bill into law by the end of the week.

US stocks have enjoyed a near year-long rally, of late powered by increasing expectations of the promised tax overhaul, which aims to lower corporate taxes to 21 percent from 35 percent, coming to fruition. The benchmark S&P 500 has gained about 20 percent so far in 2017, set for its best year since 2013, as investors bet that lower taxes could boost corporate profits and trigger share buybacks and higher dividend payouts.

"The market is going to continue its rally based on the belief that we're going to see the Congress pass tax reform," said Robert Pavlik, Chief Investment Strategist at SlateStone Wealth in New York. "People are a bit wary about how long the rally will last, but earnings continue to grow, (the) tax package should help and the economy is doing well," Pavlik said. "I'm very positive about the overall market."

The pan-European Stoxx 600 index was up 0.9 percent, less than 2 percent off a two-year high hit at the start of November.

Germany's DAX index rose 1.6 percent, with the UK's FTSE 100 up 0.4 percent.

With little in the way of major economic data this week, the tax bill was likely to remain in focus for stock market investors, according to Mike van Dulken, head of research at Accendo Markets.

"Ahead of bill being signed into law, any more updated guidance from US corporates, showing potential

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earnings improvement from the reform, will be closely watched," he said. The dollar index fell 0.2 percent against a basket of major currencies, however, with strategists saying forex traders had adopted more of a wait-and-see attitude to the bill.

#### Portugal in demand

In fixed income markets, Portuguese bonds were the stand-out performers, with yields hitting their lowest since early 2015 after an unprecedented two-notch sovereign credit upgrade from Fitch.

Friday's shift means the country now holds an investment grade from two of the three major rating agencies and could soon return to major bond indices. Portugal's ten-year bond traded decisively below its Italian equivalent yesterday. The last time it did so for a sustained period was in early 2010.

"There is very much a shift in the architecture in the European government bond market," said DZ Bank rates strategist Daniel Lenz.

Futures of soaring cryptocurrency bitcoin received a lukewarm reception at their launch on the CME Group exchange late on Sunday. The front-month contract dropped as much as 6 percent before recovering to trade up 1.3 percent.

Indian stock markets opened weaker, with the 50share NSE index down almost 2 percent as early trends showed a close contest in Gujarat.

But stocks reversed the losses later - the 50-share NSE index was trading up 0.7 percent at 0455 GMT.

The partially convertible rupee was trading at 64.32/33 to the dollar versus its previous close of 64.04. The rupee had dropped to a low of 64.74 in early trade.

Oil prices rose amid an ongoing North Sea pipeline outage and as a strike by Nigerian oil workers threatened the country's crude exports. — Reuters



MUMBAI: An Indian stock dealer trades shares during intra-day trade at a brokerage house in Mumbai yesterday.—AFP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report Monday 18 December 2017												C	Glo	ہوں ba	î (	Ş	3
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IPG .	0.0	0.0			0	410	-	0.0	BOROUK	48.2	47.0	77161	3.654	7	48.1		-0.1
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ENERGYH	29.0	29	0 1,5	00 44		29.0	-	0.0	URC	73	69	9,574	669	3	72		-0.4
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### From worm toilets to solar lamps, social innovations keep women safer

**MUMBAI:** Going from village to village in India to promote the use of toilets that use worms to break down fecal matter, the team from the Institute for Transformative Technologies (ITT) found young girls to be their biggest champions. The girls, who came with their mothers, quickly understood the merits of these so-called Tiger Toilets, and were eager to have them installed in their homes for privacy and safety.

"We found the family is very influenced by the girl child's opinion on these toilets, and that they are also instrumental in changing the family's behavior, which is key to their use and adoption," said Nupur Kapoor, head of ITT's India operations. "Young girls are better able to communicate how the toilets address their concerns of privacy and safety, which older women may be shy or ashamed to talk about," she said.

178

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Hundreds of Tiger Toilets have been installed in rural homes in India. They are among several social innovations that are benefiting villagers while also empowering women and making them feel safer, even if these are not the primary goals. About 60 percent of India's population of 1.25 billion people does not have access to adequate sanitation. This has led to open defecation, which causes tens of thousands of diarrhoeal deaths and millions of cases of chronic malnutrition every year. It also poses the risk of sexual and physical attack for women and girls when they go out in the fields to relieve themselves, particularly in villages which also lack lighting.

among the poorest states.

Solar mini-grids can improve electricity access in villages more quickly and cheaply than extending the main grid, the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP) said in a report this month. They are also more environmentally-friendly – mitigating climate change and improving quality of life, it said.

#### Snakebites

Children studied longer and businesses made more money in villages with minigrids, REEEP said, citing the Rockefeller Foundation's data from Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, where less than 10 percent of homes are connected to the main grid. In addition, nearly 87 percent of women said they were less apprehensive about their safety after dark, it said.

This is significant, as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar accounted for the most number of assaults, kidnappings and rapes of women last year, according to government data. "The lack of electricity creates a multitude of problems for women, ranging from snakebites and sexual assaults when going out, to noxious fumes from kerosene lamps at home," said Viraj Gada of the Global Off-Grid Lighting Association. "Even a small solar lamp improves the mobility and safety of women, who can also work longer hours and earn an additional income. This benefits the family, with more spent on children's education and healthcare, and better nutrition," he said. India tops countries including Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia in sales of solar lamps and home lighting systems, Gada said. Solar lamps are particularly suited for women, as they are largely sold with microfinance initiatives through self-help groups, where women are more empowered to take decisions, he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Innovations such as smokeless stoves that use biomass or household water pumps have also helped reduce women's burdens and improve their health and safety, as they need not go long distances to fetch firewood or water. "Designing appliances with women's preferences in mind" is essential to the well-being of the entire family, and having women involved in the sale and maintenance of these appliances increases their adoption by other women, the ICRW report said. In the villages that Kapoor and her team have visited to talk about Tiger Toilets, a toilet for the home does not rank as high on the wishlist as a television or a mobile phone. — AFP

PCEM PAPER MRC ACRCO HCC HCC HCC HCC SOUPMENT SAUSOKH AGLTY EDU CLEANING KOL KOL KOL HUMANSOFT NAFAIS	228 940 299 70 253 0.0 202 24.8 0.0 0.0 0.0 63 709 54	220 938 256 70 253 0.6 202 34.0 0.0 0.0 49.6	86,478 9,000 4 4,000 97 0 50 101,918 0	19,490 8,452 1 280 25 0 10	12 2 4 9 1 0 2	225 940 299 70 253 170	*	-9.0 35.0 -1.0 -4.9 8.0	AAYAARE AQAR ALAQARIA MAZAYA	0.0 77 0.0 32.5 112	0.0 74 0.0 32.5 110	0 50,100 0 1,050 38,964	0 3,708 0 34 4,320	0 2 0 3 6 2	34.0 77 75 32.5 112 57	1 + 1 + 1 +	0.0 -0.1 0.0 3.9 0.0
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AGLTY EDU CLEANING KGL KGPC HUMANSOFT NAFAIS	799 300	49.0	271.021	13,568	18	82	*	2.1	MUNSHAAT	71	70	73,400	5,142	6	71		4.4
EDU CLEANING KOR KCPC HUMANSOFT NAFAIS	300	7962	225,530	179,708	29	793		-2.0	FIRSTDUBAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	44.0	-	0.0
CLEANING KOI, KOPC HUMANSOFT NAFAIS		300	2.200	660	2	300		-4.0	KIIT	45.5	45.0	380.750	17,175	28	45.1		-0.3
KOL KOPC HUMANSOFT NAFAIS		54	1.000	54		54		1.5	REAM	300	200	26	8	6	300		80.0
KCPC HUMANSOFT NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	69	-	0.0	MENA	16.6	15.2	1,045,814	10.413	41	15.7	*	-0.5
HUMANSOFT NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	145	-	0.0	ALMUDON	34.3	33.5	21,187	1.068	2	34.3		0.4
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	D	3,740	-	0.0	MARAKEZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	33.0	-	0.0
	850	800	659	531		850	-	0.0	REMAL	39.9	36.0	3,739,303	138.003	155	39.0		4.0
GFC	65	65	1,450,000	\$4,900	16	45		-6.5	Mashaer	72	72	1.000	72	1	12	-	4.0
	19.9	18.7	69,252	1,305	6	19.5		1.0	Real Estate			12,860,399	416,276	473	901.77		11.00
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	476	-	0.0							-	-	
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	58	-	0.0	KINV	116	115	259.990	29,899	24	115	*	-1.0
			0	0	0	670						105.359	18,199		175		
	0.0	0.0	72.015				-	0.0	FACIL	175	171 29.2			11		*	2.0
	380			26,907		375		-6.0	IFA NING			599.010	17,642	25	29.2		-0.6
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	-	0.0	NINV	101	98	871,223	87,122	18	100		0.7
	40.8	48.0	106,508	5,214	10	48.0	*	-0.5	KPROJ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	293	-	0.0
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	92	-	0.0	COAST	33.0	32.7	313.362	10.325	13	33.0	-	0.3
OCEM	79	79	10,006	790	- 2	79	-	0.0	SECH	50	54	1,519,598	82,787	45	55	*	4.8
DIC	80	65	50.000	3,715	4	80	-	0.0	ARZAN	31.4	30.0	240,824	7,231	10	30.0	*	-1.0
	77	75	4,762	364	2	77	*	1.9	MARKAZ	109	106	36,907	3,921	4	109	*	2.0
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	-	0.0	KMEFIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	23.0	-	0.0
SPEC	73	73	400	29	2	73		2.5	ALAMAN	55	54	20,000	1,083	2	55	-	0.0
industrials		1.0	2,484,919	362,909	180	1866.83	*	0.60	ALOLA	40.0	39.3	185,730	7,304	6	39.8	*	-0.5
		11.27	and the second second						ALMAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	27.0	-	0.0
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	-	0.0	GPI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	-	0.0
	0.0	0.0	8	0	0	230	-	0.0	AAYAN	37.4	36.5	4,845,179	179.890	123	36.9	-	0.0
	70	68	589,516	40.713	22	70		0.3	BAYANINV	49.5	47.2	7,302	352	4	45.3	٠	-0.2
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,139	-	0.0	OSOUL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	87		0.0
Consumer Goods		10.00	589,518	40,713	22	830.91	Ψ.	-4.90	KFIC	45.0	45.0	5.000	226	1	45.0	٠	-0.4
iles		3.2.11.02							KAMOO	0.0	0.0	0	Ó	0	63	-	0.0
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	-	0	NH	54	52	431,510	22,803	22	54	*	0.8
and the second se	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	-	0	UNICAP	43.9	43.0	3,000	132	1	43.9		1.4
Nealth Care			0.0		0	1510.51	-	0.00	MADAR	25.2	24.1	151.850	3,061	7	34.1	٠	-0.1
11									ALDEERA	26.9	26.9	150	4	1	26.9	٠	-0.7
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,300	-	.0	ALSALAM	40.7	40.7	67,000	2,727	6	40.7		0.0
OIOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	D	175	-	0	EKTTITAB	31.0	30.5	300.120	0,174	4	30.7	٠	-0.6
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	-	0	ALMADINA	38.0	34.0	3,291,600	116,357	147	34.4		-3.2
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	14.8	-	0	NOOR	62	60	84,000	5,118	8	62		-0.8
FAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	D	299	-	0	TAMINV	300	240	2.522	756	5	300	-	0.0
OULAFUEL	110	110	7,271	800	10	110	-	0	EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158		6.0
MUNTAZAHAT	79	72	177,916	12,818	11	72	*	-3	KSHC	28.7	28.3	244,600	0.005	11	28.6	*	0.4
JAZEERA	005	650	0.573	5.094	6	665			ASIXA	40.0	36.7	23.530	923	16	39.0	*	-1.0
	111	110	04.041	7,124	13	111	-	0	GNAHC	36.0	36.0	289,404	10.251		36.0		0.5
	0.0	0.0	0	0	Ď	100	-	0	AMAVAL.	34.9	33.8	385.560	13,130	21	34.0		-0.5
	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	113	-		ALIMTIAZ	101	160	303.980	40,773	14	161		1.0
llyad	72	70	4.335.626	307.306	120	72		1	MANAZEL	30.7	29.1	315,200	9,430	13	30.1	-	0.1
	775	767	631	408	2	767	÷		NND	149	148	668,710	99,358	38	148	÷	-1.0
Consumer Services	100	20100	4,594,558	334,148	162	919.40		-4.00	BIHC	37.5	37.5	200	8	2	37.5		1.0
and a second		-					-		SENERGY	35.5	34.9	705	25	3	34.9	÷	-1.1
CAIN	435	425	5.300.505	2,264,513	324	425		-8	AGHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	88	-	0.0
a first set of a set	4.00	1,000	37.657	38,274	40	1,028	÷	14	KPPC	53	6.0	717,125	37,496	17	53	÷	-0.4
	30.0	28.8	48,152	1.367	5	30.0		0	TAHSSILAT	26.0	20.0	1.510	30	3	26.0		1.0
	785	772	120.643	93,451	44	775	-	-24	EKHOLDING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	-	6.0
Telecommunications	100	114	8.506.957	2,397,625	413	546.12		-34	OFH OCONG	131	126	357,970	45.810	29	126	Ŧ	-3.0
				and a state of the		248.18		2.00	INOVEST	62	81	857.057	69,793	44	82	-	1.4
iθK.	726	718	1,855,140	1,338,355	126	719		-3	Financial Bervices			17,806,787	948,793	700	420.99		-1.80
	241	240	805.120	217,234	30	241		1	Contraction and a solution			11,000,000	1.001 P.0.	100		-	
	400	400	69.518	27,807	3	400	-	0	Investment Instru	mante		0	0	0	1081.87	1	0.00
	305	290	29,358	8.530		294	-	-4	The second second second						1001.03	-	
	361	347		14.300		348			ASC	0.0	0.0				167	-	0.0
			41,289		14		-	0			0.0	0	0	0	152	-	
	232	228	691,092	158,282	32	230	-	0	0905	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	94	-	0.0
	305	304 582	40,077	12,183	4	304	-	0	HAYATCOMM	73	63	37,000	2,535	11	489.58		5.0
			780,366	455.510	82	585		4	Technology			20,000	2,535	11	494.56	-	0.00
	425	421	136,610	58.832	27	425	-	0									
	206	204	1,089,250	223.367	66	206		- 2	SANAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	-	0.0
	39.0	36.0	1,963.657	74,503	68	37.6		0	APAG	93	83	19,000	1,765	3	93	٠	-23.1
period theory is much started as a second seco	233	231	494,409	114,782	84	231		0	EFFECT	27.9	23.0	61,123	1,412	4	27.8		0.4
lariks			8,098,092	2,701,774	541	904.00		0.90	AJWAN	24.7	24.0	9.091,103	220.023	139	34,0	٠	43
200 L		1.11					_		MASAKEN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	-	0.0
ONS	260	200	55,000	14,300	6	260	٠	-4	DALQAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	360	-	0.0
SINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	696	-	0.0	ALEID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	80	-	0.0
ANS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	-	0.0	MIDAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,220	-	9.0
	65	61	41,158	2,520	8	65		-2.8	THURAYA	0.0	0.0	0	D	0	204	-	0.0
	0.0	0.0	6	0	0	187	-	0.0	AMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	49.0	-	0.0
TI	60	\$7	84.000	4,855	11	59	-	0.9	Parallel Market	- celette		9,171,226	234,100	146	967.34		-12.1
	43.5	43.5	500			43.5		4.5								-	
				22													
INCIRCIVIT	0.0	0.0	0 180,658	21,697	26	355	-	14.10									

#### Lighting

Rural electrification can improve the safety of women who avoid moving around after dark for fear of violence. It can also free up time for activities that generate income by reducing the amount of time women spend on domestic chores and by lengthening their day, according to a report from the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW). But when it comes to energy access, women are more likely to be excluded, said the report released last week in partnership with The Rockefeller Foundation.

Nearly a fourth of India's population has no electricity, while many more Indians - particularly in rural areas - don't have reliable access to power. Extending the main grid to rural areas is a challenge. But falling costs of solar power and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pledge to supply power to every citizen by 2019, have encouraged the spread of solar mini-grids in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand,



CHENNAI: An Indian laborer paints iron rods at an under-construction site yesterday. — AFP



## Business

## Tuesday, December 19, 2017

## Zain Group, Cisco blaze innovation trail to drive network transformation

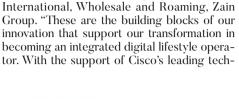
## Collaboration supports next wave of innovation for Zain Group

KUWAIT: Zain Group and Cisco announced yesterday that they have successfully achieved a key milestone in expanding the telecommunications operator's IP/MPLS network with cutting edge technologies, setting the groundwork for new opportunities and business models to be developed.

As a telecommunications operator serving over 45 million customers across eight countries in the Middle East and North Africa, Zain Group's network infrastructure faces an increase of expectations and workloads driven by the growth of devices and connections. The annual Cisco Visual Networking Index (Cisco VNI) forecast projects a 12-fold increase in Middle East and Africa mobile data traffic from 2016 to 2021, a compound annual growth rate of 65 percent.

This unprecedented growth requires service providers to transform their networks. Zain Group is leveraging Cisco advanced segment routing platforms and WAN automation to bring the benefits of distributed intelligence and centralized control to its network. Cisco's industry leading innovation around cloudscale and automation will deliver next-generation network capabilities to Zain Group to enable simplification, scalability and open innovation that drive business results.

"The demands of the digital era means that we must prioritize improving speed and efficiency, defining a growth strategy based on



new services, and ensuring security," said

Henri Kassab, Managing Director,



nology, our future-ready network architecture positions us well to drive tangible business outcomes and meet the evolving demands of our customers.

The deployment is a bold move toward network automation and represents a significant step towards a more resilient network that delivers high bandwidth, enhanced application intelligence for 5G, and a significantly

improved end user experience that defines the network of the future. Cisco's technology will also help Zain Group optimize network operations and offer a richer suite of differentiated services.

"The capabilities of Cisco's segment routing, automation and our best of breed routing engines enable Zain Group

> to implement a programmable network that allows them to rapidly adapt to future customer needs," said Ali Amer, Managing Director, Global Service Provider Sales, Cisco Middle East and Africa. "By fast tracking their network automation, Zain Group are future-proofing their network with an agile, scalable and secure architecture that supports their growth strategy and enhances their competitive-

ness." Other benefits Zain Group will gain by modernizing their global IP/MPLS architecture include simplified operations, programmability, scalability and increased network availability.

network

The Cisco Visual Networking Index (Cisco VNI) forecasts that by 2021, the Middle East and Africa will have 2.4 billion networked devices (up from 1.7 billion in 2016) and 1.4

**ZOIN** 

KUWAIT: Jihad Khoueiry, Regional Sales Manager, Head of Sales for Zain Group at Cisco shakes hands with Henri Kassab, Managing Director, International, Wholesale and Roaming, Zain Group.

networked devices per capita, while 75 percent of all networked devices will be mobileconnected in 2021.

Cisco is leading the disruption in the industry with our technology innovations in systems, silicon, optics, services and security, and

our unrivalled expertise in mass-scale networking, automation, optical, cable access, video, and mobility. This enables service providers, media and web companies to reduce cost and complexity, help secure their networks, and grow revenue.

### Honda Alghanim partners with INJAZ Kuwait in Job Shadow program

KUWAIT: Following the start of its partnership with the non-profit youth development organization INJAZ Kuwait, Honda Alghanim hosted the Job Shadow program in its showroom, training 21 students from the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) on customer service and the operations of the service center and showroom sales.

The students, who are majoring in Business Management, received hands-on training and experience from the professionals at Honda Alghanim who maintain an advanced level of service from sales to after-sales following international servicing standards and provide a smooth and unique experience in line with Honda's customer service culture.

With the completion of the first program in its partnership with INJAZ Kuwait, Honda Alghanim continues to commit to supporting the youth in the country, contributg to the promotion of knowledge, professional growth



### **Ithmaar Bank wins Best Innovation in Retail Banking and** Best Islamic Bank awards

KUWAIT: Ithmaar Bank, a Bahrain-based Islamic retail bank, received awards in two categories, Best Innovation in Retail Banking (Bahrain) and Best Islamic Bank of the Year (Bahrain) at UK-based International Banker's 2017 Banking Awards. Standout institutions working within retail, commercial, investment and private banking in the Middle East an



skills and career development.

The Job Shadow program also held a brainstorming session where students developed new innovative ideas on how to improve the quality of work and service.

The partnership with INJAZ Kuwait comes as part of Honda's philosophy "Power of Dreams", which reflects the belief that dreams should be combined with skill in order to be achieved. Honda was fond of saying "If you can dream it, you can build it. If you use your imagination and pair that with sound and innovative engineering, you can achieve what other people can only dream about." The partnership with INJAZ is a means to cultivate that same power of dreams to empower the youth to achieve their goals.

As part of the partnership, Honda Alghanim will also

host the rest of the organization's programs throughout the year and focus on providing participating students with the opportunity to learn more about entrepreneurship and acquire the knowledge and skills to prepare them for their future career.

Honda Alghanim's commitment to supporting initiatives that benefit different segments of the society comes in line with its commitment to offering the high level of technology and design, giving customers the opportunity to enjoy a car that meets their lifestyle while maintaining the highest levels of safety and technology.

Customers can take any of Honda's wide range of cars on a test drive by visiting one of the two Honda Alghanim showrooms located in Al-Rai and Shuwaikh. The Honda Alghanim showroom in Al-Rai area operates from 9 am to 10 pm, Saturday to Thursday, and from 9.30 am until 10 pm on Fridays. The Shuwaikh showroom operates from 9 am to 10 pm. The cars service center waiting lounge offers entertainment and comfort for customers, digital satellite TV, free wireless internet and relaxing massage chairs.



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## Burgan Bank announces 3 winners of **Youth Account**

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank recently announced the names of the three lucky winners of its Youth Account quarterly draw. First place winner, Mariam Eissa Hasan Dashti, took home a cash prize of KD 1,000, while second and third place winners, Azbi Nayef Ahmad Sheshtar and Dhari Majeed Awdh Aldhafeeri, each received a remarkable gift of an "unlimited access" voucher to Grand Cinemas for one year.

Customers transferring their Student allowances to the bank will automatically be enrolled into the draw and with every KD 20 in their Youth account they will get one chance to enter the quarterly draw.

The Youth Account is designed for young

customers, between the ages of 15 - 25, who seek to attain a successful future. There is no KD limit to open an account, and no minimum balance required to maintain it. Furthermore, account holders will receive free prepaid card and an ATM card which entitles them to discounts at selected merchants along with an exclusive discount at Grand Cinemas Theatres in Al-Hamra Mall and The Gate Mall



### **VIVA covers** 'More' with its retail expansion

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the continuation of its expansion plan to open new locations mainly in the cooperative societies, to be closer to its customers.

VIVA has recently inaugurated 24 new branches in the cooperative societies throughout all Kuwait's governorates and a new branch at Sultan Center at The Promenade Mall in Hawally area. All these new branches joined VIVA's new branch network in Kuwait to cover all residential areas.

Commenting on this occasion, Abdulrazzaq Bader Al-Essa, Corporate Communications Director at VIVA said: "For us at VIVA, we differentiate ourselves by maintaining superior levels of customer experience, customer service and continued expansion of our network Our strategy revolves around relevance and convenience to our customers. This specific achievement is part of our per-

sistent focus on expansion and investment in the right areas."

Abdulrazzaq

He added: "VIVA aims through these new branches to be closer to its customers and provide them convenience, satisfy their needs and requirements and keep them posted regularly with the latest VIVA products and services.'

In addition to our branch services, VIVA's customer care line at 102 is ready round the clock and up to public holidays, to provide outstanding service to our valued customers through a team of specialties."

Africa compete for the prestigious annual prizes. The two awards were received on behalf of Ithmaar Bank by Chief Executive Officer, Ahmed Abdul Rahim, who said that this high level industry recognition is further evidence of the soundness of the Bank's strong customer focus.

"In line with our vision to become the region's premier Islamic retail bank, Ithmaar Bank's business model is customer-centric with an ongoing objective to exceed expectations by offering innovation and a high level of efficiency," said Abdul Rahim. "We have invested in new technologies that have reduced waiting times for customers and turnaround times for financing requests, while implementing state-of-the-art security systems that maintain the confidentiality of private information," he said.

"Winning these awards is evidence that this strategy, which was spelled out by our Board of Directors, led by the Chairman, Prince Amr Al-Faisal, are being translated into a tangible reality," said Abdul Rahim. "Customers have also recognized these enhancements, rewarding us with continued growth in our core retail banking business," he said.

The Banking Awards honor institutions that have set the bar for industry excellence by driving global economic commerce, creating capital and opportunities for economic growth, and setting benchmarks for technological advancement and customer service, while at the same time maintaining high levels of regulatory compliance and corporate governance. Finance Publishing Editor-in-Chief, Simon Brown congratulated Ithmaar Bank on winning the award, wishing the Bank continued success in helping to raise regional banking standards.

"A review of Ithmaar Bank's performance during 2017 is highlighted by the launch of many new and innovative banking products and services, as well as a clear enhancement in its speed of delivery. Ongoing improvements of processes and technology have reduced waiting periods, with customers being provided with a range of service delivery channels, including a 24-hour a day, 7 days a week call centre, eBanking and convenient payments solutions, such as EasyPay, Mobile banking and MobiCash. The turnaround time for approval of financing requests is ensured to be the shortest possible, albeit with comprehensive underwriting of risks," he said. International Banker is the flagship brand of Finance Publishing, one of the world's leading sources of authoritative analysis on finance, international banking and world affairs.

### China opens major economic conference

BEIJING: China opened a major economic planning conference yesterday as the country tries to pivot away from its noholds-barred growth model. The annual Central Economic Work Conference gives leaders the opportunity to review past economic policy and plan for 2018.

The pursuit of high growth propelled China to the number two spot on a list of the world's largest economies, but led to eavy pollution, rampant waste, and a mountain of debt.

President Xi Jinping has indicated the country would move in a new direction, telling the Communist Party Congress in October that China needs to shift from high growth to high quality development. Implementing Xi's new approach will be the focus of the behind-closed-doors meeting, state news agency Xinhua said. The 'three tough battles' for 2018 will be curbing major risks, eradicating poverty and pollution control, Xinhua reported, repeating Xi's directions to the party congress. —AFP

**Bader Al-Essa** 





## **Ooredoo initiates partnership** with Al-Zayani for 'Nukhba'

Exclusive collaboration first of its kind in Kuwait



**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, announced their exclusive partnership with Al-Zayani Company, official dealer of Bentley, Bugatti, Ferrari, Maserati and Jaguar cars in Kuwait, which took place last week when representatives from Al-Zayani officially visited and toured Ooredoo's Nukhba VIP lounge in the head office. Under this partnership, Ooredoo's Nukhba customers will

receive exclusive offers and discounts on the latest cars offered exclusively by Zayani, aiming to enrich the customers' experience in line with their expectations, needs and VIP lifestyle.

Commenting on the partnership, Jasem Abdulrahim, Director of VIP and Direct Sales at Ooredoo, said: "This partnership demonstrates the company's commit-

ment to enriching our customers' experience and offering the customers' experience. Customers can benefit from them tailored to what they desire, driven by the company's core values of which is aligned with our core values of caring, connecting and challenging. We are also proud to be the first telecommunication company to initiate this December 1999 when it launched wireless services as

one of a kind partnership with a rooted company that needs no introduction such as Al-Zayani, aspiring for further cooperation in the near future."

Abdulrahim added, "We have seen great similarities in the type of services that we aspire to offer to our customers through the Nukhba Program that strives to provide a VIP experience tailored to a particular kind cus-

Al-Zayani reps

visit Ooredoo's

Nukhba VIP

lounge

tomer that are looking for quality services that match their extravagant lifestyle. In which we found Al-Zayani to be the most fitting partner to achieve this shared goal of building a truly luxurious and exclusive customer experience.'

Ooredoo offers exclusive benefits to Nukhba customers with the Shamil Premium postpaid package, believing in enriching

exclusive offers, as well as getting latest smart phones with Nukhba premium packages.

Ooredoo's operations in Kuwait date back to



the second operator. The company today provides mobile, broadband internet and corporate managed services tailored to the needs of customers and businesses. Ooredoo Kuwait -which is an enlisted company





## 001010101010

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

## Huawei hosts ICT industry leaders at Kuwait Huawei Day



## Huawei key player in digital transformation: **KDIPA** official

#### By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Mohammed Yacoub, Assistant Director General for Business Development, Kuwait Direct Investment Public Authority (KDIPA), said that activities of Huawei



great to see that Huawei Technologies, despite being a for-eign company, is holding all these useful activities including the ICT Skill Competition, that helps in digi-tal transformation. This is one of the main goals of KDIPA," he told the Kuwait Times yesterday. This event gathered many

Technologies are impressive. "It's

med Yacoub

experts from the public and private sectors under one roof. "These experts can discuss the future of technology in Kuwait. Also the programs hosted by Huawei,

served as a model for other companies in terms of transforming and localizing technology," he added.

"Such activities and programs encourage young people to invent in new enterprises. All three programs held by Huawei including establishing the technology center at the Hamra Tower, holding Seeds program in cooperation with the Kuwait University, and the ICT Skill Competition, encourage young people to be creative and improve their skills. This will result in a completely new generation of technology experts," explained Mohammed Yacoub. Today, technology is critical to all investments. "Huawei is excelling in all kind of technologies and is motivating the youth. It plays a key role in the market as a foreign investor in Kuwait," he concluded.



KUWAIT: Huawei Technologies Kuwait, a leading global Information and Communication Technology solutions provider, held Kuwait Huawei Day, a high level forum under the theme 'Leading New ICT: The Road to Digital Transformation' aiming to raise awareness of the role of ICT in driving digital transformation across a number of key industries and showcase Huawei's latest solutions.

Huawei dedicated the day to showcasing the role of innovation, exploration, and openness in creating advanced knowledge-based economies, in line with Kuwait's national development agenda. Industry partners and business experts joined forces to discuss Kuwait's digitization strategy, trends and the future of the ICT sector, innovative solutions for Smart and Safe Cities, Agile Network, Cloud Datacenter, the future of IoT, and best practices for digital transformation in the government and Oil & Gas sector.

Commenting on Kuwait Huawei Day, Trevor Liu, Huawei Kuwait CEO said: "Digital transformation is a government priority and we remain committed to working with government authorities to drive this forward, in collaboration with our partners. Digitization will bring exciting opportunities, as well as new challenges, to all industries and will create new impetus for sustainable growth and enhanced efficiency. Public safety, banking, Oil & Gas, education, government and others are all beginning to feel the full effects of what it means to be better connected and smart, so we must continue to harness the power of emerging technologies. Platforms such as these are imperative to unfold areas of potential partnerships to achieve shared successes."





The event also served as a platform to announce the winners of Huawei's coveted ICT Skill Competition, a global nation-wide championship launched for the very first time in Kuwait this year, in strategic partnership with KDIPA. Aimed at increasing the digital fluency of the young technological leaders of tomorrow, the ICT competition enables Kuwait's finest ICT talent to learn about the latest technology innovations and compete globally. Zainab Al Baqsamiof Kuwait University, Saad Al Sheetanand Khaled Al-Metairiof American University of Middle East are the Kuwait's finalists who will now compete in the global championship that takes place at Huawei's Headquarters in Shenzhen, China between 23 to 27 December 2017.

Winners of the Kuwait Finals will also be granted traineeship or employment opportunities with Huawei, as part of its Enterprise Business Group, where they will be exposed to a combination of innovative technologies, including cloud computing, Software-Defined Networking (SDN), Big Data, and Internet of Things (IoT) and interact with ICT experts from different industries such as government, oil & gas and banking. All competition winners will be rewarded with Huawei's latest laptops and smartphones.

Kuwait Huawei Day, that took place at Four Seasons Hotel in Kuwait City, brought together senior government officials, industry leaders, business experts, foreign dignitaries and media representatives, including: Mohammed Yacoub, Assistant Director General for Business Development, KDIPA; Qusai Al-Shatti, Acting Director, Central Agency for



Information Technology (CAIT);AbdulkarimTaqi, Acting General Manager, Public Authority for Industry; Abdulaziz Alduaij, Manager - Information Technology, Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC), Ălaa Ali AliElshimy, Managing Director and Vice President, Huawei Enterprise Business, Middle East Region; Sanjay Kumar Sainani, Vice President, Data Center Solution, Huawei Middle East Region; Hazem Mahmoud Mostafa Bazan, VP Channels & Commercial Sales, Enterprise Business, Huawei Middle East Region; and Trevor Liu, CEO Huawei Kuwait.

The event is a first of a series as Huawei remains committed to encouraging further dialogue with industry partners and government stakeholders about the crucial role of ICT in securing economic growth through advancement of critical industries with the ultimate goal of to enriching societies and achieving Kuwait's vision of becoming a Smart City.



## Tiny stem cell companies close in on major heart disease goals

## This would be considered one of the big advances of this century

make the paralyzed walk, the blind see and cure diabetes have given way to a long list of failures, highlighted by early stem cell champion Geron Corp abandoning the field in 2011. But two small companies, Athersys Inc and Mesoblast Ltd, are beginning final stage trials in hundreds of patients that they - along with loyal investors - say could change the course of devastating stroke and heart failure. Both have overcome major hurdles to manufacturing stem cell treatments on a large scale that are off-the-shelf products derived from healthy donor bone marrow and do not face immune system rejection issues.

Cleveland-based Athersys, with a market value of about \$200 million, demonstrated evidence in a midstage trial that its therapy may be able to expand the emergency treatment window for major strokes to up to 36 hours, compared with about four hours with current drugs, potentially allowing many more patients to avoid crippling disabilities. Australia's Mesoblast, with a market value of about \$500 million, is attempting to alter advanced heart failure, a leading cause of hospitalizations and deaths and an enormous cost burden.

They are among the farthest along in the stem cell industry at a time when Wall Street investors have focused on potentially big payoffs from immune-system based cancer therapies and rare disease treatments. Perception of the field has also been hurt by unscrupulous actors selling unap-

**NEW YORK:** The early hope that stem cell therapy would proved, possibly unsterile cell therapies for everything from cancer to lung disease and ALS, prompting a US crackdown this past summer.

The market tends to test these companies sometimes to the brink," said Tom Dobell, who manages a fund for UKbased M&G Investment Management that specializes in supporting promising companies during difficult periods. 'We're comfortable that the progress that's going on is going to be worth it." M&G is a long-time holder of Mesoblast, with about a 15 percent stake, and Athersys, with about 4 percent. Athersys's experimental Multistem treatment was one of the first companies to be designated by the US Food and Drug Administration as a promising cell-based therapy with potential to address unmet needs for serious or life threatening conditions, potentially easing the approval process

FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb said in a recent interview the agency is seeking an approval pathway for legitimate stem cell therapies "that's not overly burdensome." 'The regenerative medicine space has been a tough road clinically and Athersys is one of the bright, shining stars," said Steven Martin, managing member of Chicago-based Aspire Capital and a long-time holder of Athersys shares.

#### Reducing the risks

Athersys believes Multistem - 1.2 billion cells delivered via simple intravenous drip - dampens the immune system's

hyper-inflammatory reaction to signals that the brain is under attack during stroke, and promotes healing. The body's reaction to stroke may also severely deplete the immune system, leading to later complications beyond paralysis or speech impairment. In the Phase II trial, Multistem patients had significantly fewer incidents of pneumonia, acute pulmonary distress and other serious complications.

That trial, attempting to extend the treatment window to 48 hours, failed. But researchers were encouraged by patients treated up to 36 hours post stroke. "It's reason to be cautiously optimistic," said Dr Ken Uchino, a leading Multistem investigator from Cleveland Clinic. The company plans to begin a 300-patient Phase III study of Multistem in early 2018, aiming for US and European approval after regulators agreed to protocols for one pivotal trial.

"This reinforces and cements an efficient path forward for us," Athersys Chief Executive Gil Van Bokkelen said. A separate 220-patient Multistem trial in Japan for thatmarket began enrolling patients through partner Healios KK. "Of the many entities in this field, they have been careful and deliberate in their movement forward" and do not engage in "overwrought claims," said Dr S. Thomas Carmichael, codirector of UCLA Broad Stem Cell Center, who was not involved in Multistem trials

Mesoblast's MPC-150-IM therapy aims to mitigate advanced heart failure, a progressive condition in which the heart cannot pump enough blood to efficiently serve the body. The company believes the therapy reduces inflammation, increases blood flow and spurs blood vessel formation that helps repair the heart muscle. A single dose consists of 150 million highly purified stem cells delivered directly to the heart's left ventricle by injection or catheter.

An ongoing Phase III trial of 600 advanced heart failure patients is currently enrolling. Reducing the severity of a patient's heart failure "would give them back potentially many years of good quality life," said Mesoblast CEO Silviu Itescu. Independent monitors who oversee and can halt blinded clinical trials for futility gave a green light to continue the Mesoblast study in April after a review of the first 270 treated patients, suggesting the therapy might be effective.

A separate US National Institutes of Health-sponsored Phase II study of 159 end-stage heart failure patients dependent on an implanted pumping assist device completed enrollment in September, with results expected in the first quarter of 2018. Some 250,000 people in the United States alone have been diagnosed with most serious class IV heart failure, and only about 9,000 receive a transplant or left ventricular assist device (LVAD) each year, Itescu said. If such patients can recover enough to again rely on their own heart, said Dr Joseph Woo, a heart surgeon at Stanford University and an investigator of the NIH trial, "this would be considered one of the big advances of this century."-Reuters

### Baby panda makes press debut at Japan zoo

TOKYO: A baby panda born six months ago made its debut before the cameras in Japan yesterday, a day before a doting public gets an eagerly-awaited glimpse of the cuddly animal. The panda named Xiang Xiangderived from the Chinese character for "fragrance" — has sparked a media frenzy since its birth on June 12 at Tokyo's Ueno Zoo. Broadcasters aired live footage of the cub nimbly climbing a tree and chomping on bamboo in a special cage. Along with local schoolchildren, selected media were permitted to watch and film the panda through a glass shield.

The public will get their first chance to see Xiang Xiang tomorrow, the zoo's first baby panda exhibition since 1988. "Xiang Xiang has been thriving with the loving nurturing by mum Shin Shin," Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike said at a ceremony, describing the baby as "a new treasure of Tokyo". The panda cub weighs 12.3 kilos (27 pounds) and is the size of a medium-sized dog, zoo officials said, adding that it is in good health. In order to reduce stress on the panda and avoid crowds, the zoo will limit the maximum number of visitors to 2,000 a day for a oneto two-minute slot until the end of January.

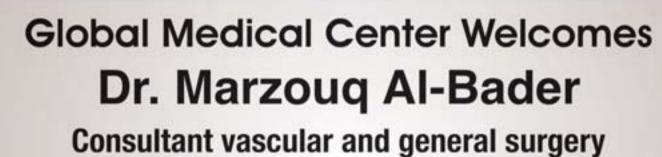
The zoo received nearly 250,000 applications for a lottery to see Xiang Xiang. For avid panda fans who miss out, the zoo will offer a live stream of Xiang Xiang's daily life from tomorrow for a year. Mum Shin Shin, which mated with Ri Ri in February, had previously given birth in 2012 — the zoo's first panda delivery in 24 vears-only for the cub to die from pneumonia six days later. Zookeepers have since given the adult pandas some private space in a bid to create an environment for the bashful creatures to mate successfullya notoriously difficult process. Until recently considered an endangered species, it is estimated that around 2,000 giant pandas remain in the wild, in three provinces in central China.—AFP



TOKYO: Baby panda Xiang Xiang plays at its enclosure during a press preview at Ueno Zoo in Tokyo yesterday. – AFP







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## Jumeirah Group to enter three new markets with extensive global expansion plans for 2018

At least five new hotels including debut properties in Bahrain, Oman and Bali



umeirah Group, the global luxury hotel company, yesterday announced widespread expansion plans for 2018 which will see the brand enter three new narkets and open further properties in the UAE and China. The announcement was made to partners and stakeholders at its annual Middle East Roadshow held at Burj Al-Arab Jumeirah, Dubai in collaboration with Emirates, Dubai Parks and Resorts and Royal Caribbean.

Jumeirah's ambitious expansion plans will feature at least 5 new luxury hotel openings in addition to the refurbishment and re-opening of Jumeirah Beach Hotel ahead of its 21st birthday in late 2018. New properties include:

• Jumeirah Royal Saray, Bahrain

### **English Language** Unit holds professional development day



• Jumeirah Sa'adiyat Island, Abu Dhabi

- Jumeirah Bali, Indonesia
- Jumeirah Nanjing, China
- Jumeirah Muscat Bay, Oman

The news followed Jumeirah Group reporting a strong performance in 2017, with an overall 5 percent increase in the number of room nights and 6 percent increase in room revenues compared to the same period last year. The hotel group also maintained stable year on year occupancy matching the same period in 2016. The GCC region accounted for 21 percent of the overall occupancy throughout the year.

Linda Lewis, Vice President Global Sales MEASA and ASPAC for Jumeirah Group commented: "Jumeirah continues to strengthen its position as one of the most successful, UAE home-grown brands on a global scale. Our strong performance in 2017 is evidence of our robust and forward-looking business strategy and we are confident of continuing the success story in new markets in 2018. We believe that our strength lies in our ability to understand the needs of our guests and in creating bespoke luxury inspired by Arabic hospitality and charm. This achievement comes with the support and vision of the UAE's leadership whose continued focus on building the tourism and hospitality sector has helped us to deliver business success.

This year also saw Jumeirah Hotels and Resorts receive more than 75 prestigious accolades. Amongst

the most coveted awards were: Jumeirah Group being named Best Employer in UAE by AON; and a number of awards at the World Travel Awards including Middle East's Leading Luxury Hotel Brand 2017, World's Leading MICE Hotel 2017 for Madinat Jumeirah, World's Best Resort Spa for Jumeirah Zabeel Saray, World's Leading Luxury Hotel 2017 for Burj Al-Arab, Indian Ocean's Leading Luxury Hotel Villa 2017 for Jumeirah Vittaveli and Middle East's Leading Business Hotel 2017 for Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa in Kuwait. Jumeirah Al-Naseem won the Hot List of the World's Top Hotel Openings award of Conde Nast Traveler 2017 and Shang-high restaurant at Jumeirah Himalayas Hotel Shanghai has been awarded a coveted 1 Michelin star.

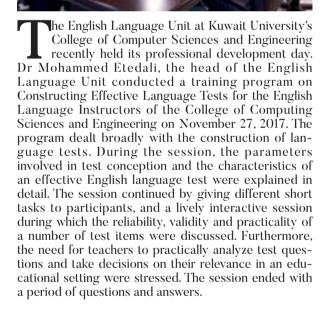
## KGL, AWL celebrated Thanksgiving with **US** Army personnel

awrence Silverman, Ambassador of the United Sates to Kuwait reaffirmed the long standing cooperation between Kuwait and the US, and expects this cooperation to grow further in the coming period.

On the sidelines of the Thanksgiving Ceremony organized by the American Women's League and Kuwait and Gulf Link Transport Company (KGL), to honor some members of the US Army in Kuwait for their efforts in defending and protecting Kuwait, the US Ambassador said that the cooperation between two countries aims to achieve security for both Americans and Kuwaitis through the war against ISIS, and the prevention of terrorist financing in Kuwait. He praised the Thanksgiving ceremony for gathering families under one roof. He noted that families gather for Thanksgiving, just like they do on a weekly basis in Kuwait, is a good tradition. He also praised the humanitarian activities of the American Women's League in Kuwait, noting that the conference, which was held about a month ago to create awareness about cancer, has had good results. KGL's Chairman Office Manager and Head of Communication and Public Relations, Toufic Jawhara, reaffirmed KGL's keenness, for the third year in a row, to support the AWL in Kuwait in organizing the Thanksgiving dinner with the participation of a large number of US military personnel, who were spending this very special occasion away from their families and loved ones for the sake of their duty. He also noted the strong relationship that KGL has with the US government and with the US army, which are present in the region since the 1990s, where the company has and still is working on several projects and contracts with the US



ture of the State of Kuwait in general. KGL thrives to





military. He also announced the offering, by KGL, of an annual scholarship The "KGL Veterans Endowed Scholarship" that is offered to US soldiers who served in Kuwait to pursue their education at University of the Pacific in California. For more than 60 years, KGL has played a major role in the development of the various sectors it operates in, especially in the field of transportation, logistics, and supply chain management, which contributed to the development of the economic struc-

develop its business and expand in Kuwait and the Gul countries, to support projects aimed at Kuwait's development, and to create more work opportunities for Kuwaiti nationals. KGL's corporate social responsibility strategy is aimed on focusing all its activities and commercial projects to serve the different segments of the Kuwaiti society. In addition, it sponsors many of the social, educational and sports activities, environmental, cultural and health initiatives. This comes from the company's belief in the importance of the private sector's role in serving the society to achieve sustainable development and to support government efforts and civil society institutions as well as NGOs. In the same context, Nadya Mayyahi, the president of the American Women's League in Kuwait, thanked all the participants, 200 of whom were AWL members; she also added that AWL had organized an awareness campaign about cancer.

Meanwhile, the Managing Partner of Activate Event Marketing Company Camille Bacha said that they started organizing this ceremony in 2015 with 100 US soldiers attending; in 2016, that number reached 200 US Soldiers only to reach 250 soldiers participating in this year's celebration.

### **Center for Continuing Education receives** international recognition

The Center of Continuing Education (CCE) at AUK has obtained international certification from the HR Certification Institute (HRCI), and accreditation from the Cambridge Assessment International Education in October and November 2017, respectively. Obtaining international recognition comes as part of CCE's vision to create partnerships and collaborations that aim at developing Kuwait's professional society.

Headquartered in the USA, the HRCI, is the premier credentialing organization for the human resources profession, setting the standard for HR mastery and excellence around the globe for over 40 years. The recently acquired HRCI certification authorizes CCE to add to their Career Development courses the HRCI's Professional in Human Resources International (PHRi), an international exam preparation course for HR professionals.

"This American international certification presents the latest development opportunity for modern HR professionals, who seek a career advancement and professional credibility in the organization that they work for," said Buthaina Al-Khubaizi, Director of CCE.

The Cambridge Assessment International Education, part of the University of Cambridge, is a non-profit organization that offers programs and qualifications that set the global standard for international education. They also offer Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications for teachers and trainers. Through this accreditation, CCE has added to their Teacher Development courses the Cambridge International Certificate in Teaching and Learning, which explores different aspects of educational practice, from designing a curriculum to improving the quality of classroom activity. According to Khubaizi, Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications are internationally recognized as a mark of excellence for individual teachers or leaders, helping to improve their professional profiles and career devel-



Heather Rennison (CCE Training Operations Manager) presenting CCE's international programs.



(From Left) Buthaina Al-Khubaizi (CCE Director) Raed Brahedni (Senior Manager - Cambridge Assessment International Education), and Heather Rennison (CCE Training Operations Manager), during the certification visit in Kuwait.

opment. "The Cambridge International Certificate in Teaching and Learning helps teachers and leaders improve the quality of their practice by engaging with international best practices and teaching principles to apply new ideas and approaches, develop reflective practice and employ a wide range of active learning strategies," she said. In addition to CCE's diverse signature courses, the two new courses are now available for registration through the CCE website www.auk.edu.kw/cce

### **Oriental, Western arts meet in LAPA concert**









riental and Western creative arts were both featured in a concert organized at Abdul Hussein Abdul Redha Theatre by LOYAC's Academy of Performance Arts (LAPA) in collaboration with the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) and the French Institute in Kuwait.

The concert, titled 'Oriental-Western,' witnessed outstanding performances from LAPA musical band and the French Arties band. The concert was attended by officials from LOYAC, the French Institute in Kuwait and NCCAL, including in-charge of the music and heritage department Reem Al-Ahabash. The concert started with a performance by Arties band, who played three pieces by Gotai Herman,

Matilda Charlotte, Hugh Michael and Roman Fredrick. Next, the Arabic heritage band joined Arties in an exceptional performance of brothers Rahbani's music, led by maestro Yousif Bara. Commenting on the event, LAPA's music department manager Nisreen Nasr said that a it took a year to prepare for the event and come up with an idea on how to mix classical western and oriental music. She added that further cooperation would take place between LAPA and Arties on the one hand, and between NCCAL and the French institute on the other. Also speaking on the occasion, the French cultural attache Zilda Wahbe said that the concert was the result of fruitful cooperation between LOYAC and the French Institute in Kuwait.



### ΤV

MOVIES ACTION 01:00 Taxi 02:50 Iron Man 2 05:05 Street Fighter Beyond Redemption 06:55 08:30 Taxi 10:10 Iron Man 2 Street Fighter 12:20 14:05 The Veil 15:40The Tower Iron Man 3 17:45 20:00 Shanghai Knights 22:00 Never Back Down: No Surrender 23:45 Company Business



00:50 Untamed & Uncut 01:45 Treehouse Masters 02:40 Cats 101 Shamwari: A Wild Life 03:35 04:25 Monsters Inside Me 05:15 Alaska Monsters 06:02 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory Untamed & Uncut 06:49 Meet The Penguins Shamwari: A Wild Life 07:36 08:25 Treehouse Masters 09:15 10:10 Cats 101 Life On Earth: A New 11:05 Prehistory Shamwari: A Wild Life 12:00 12:55 Monsters Inside Me 13:50 Alaska Monsters 14:45 Cats 101 15:40 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory 16:35 Untamed & Uncut 17:30 **Treehouse Masters** 18:25 North Woods Law Australia Doesn't Just Want To 19:20Kill You Cats 101 20:15 Shamwari: A Wild Life 21:10 The Wild Life Of Tim Faulkner 21:38 22:05 North Woods Law Australia Doesn't Just Want To 23:00 Kill You 23:55 Life On Earth: A New Prehistory



00:00 Ss-Gb 01:00 Death In Paradise 02:00 Line Of Duty 03:10 Ss-Gb Ss-Gb 04:10 05:10 Casualty 06:00 Doctor Who: The Return Of Doctor Mysterio 07:00 Death In Paradise 07:50 Doctors 08:20 Casualty 09:10 Doctor Who: The Return Of Doctor Mysterio Death In Paradise 10:10 11:05 New Tricks 12:00 Doctor Who Stella 12:50 13:35 Doctor Who: The Return Of Doctor Mysterio Death In Paradise 14:35 15:30Doctor Who 16:25Stella New Tricks 17:15 Holby City Death In Paradise 18:15 19:05 20:00 Five By Five Silent Witness 20:10 Silent Witness 21:10

17:20 Friends 17:45 Disaster Date 18:10 Ridiculousness Arabia 18:35 Frankenfood 19:25 Impractical Jokers 19:50 Real Husbands Of Hollywood 20:12 Friends The Daily Show With Trevor 21:00 Noah Idiotsitter 21:30 22:00 Broad City 22:25 23:15 Another Period Real Husbands Of Hollywood The Daily Show With Trevor 23:40 Noah



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00:30 Destroyed In Seconds Destroyed In Seconds 00:55 Tethered Somebody's Gotta Do It 01:20 03:00 Ultimate Šurvival 03:50 Destroyed In Seconds Destroyed In Seconds 04:15 04:40 How It's Made 05:05 How It's Made North America 05:30 06:20 Nextworld Destroyed In Seconds 07:00 07:25Destroyed In Seconds 07:50 North America How It's Made How It's Made 08:40 09:05 09:30 Nextworld 10:20 Ultimate Survival React To That React To That Kids Do The Craziest Things 12:00 Kids Do The Craziest Things How It's Made How It's Made Nextworld Destroyed In Seconds Destroyed In Seconds North America Ultimate Survival React To That 17:00 React To That 17:50 Kids Do The Craziest Things Kids Do The Craziest Things Nextworld How It's Made How It's Made Destroyed In Seconds 20:20 Destroyed In Seconds 20:45React Ťo That React To That 22:00 Kids Do The Craziest Things 22:25 22:50 Kids Do The Craziest Things Ultimate Survival 23:40 North America 

00:50 Murder By Numbers Casey Anthony: Killer Mom? 01:45Deadline: Crime With Tamron 02:40 Hall 03:35 I Speak For The Dead 04:30 Murder By Numbers 05:25 The Locator The Locator 05:50 I Almost Got Away With It 06:20 American Monster 07:1008:00 The Locator 08:25 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall 09:15 The Locator 09:40 The Locator Evil Online 10:10 I Am Homicide 11:05 Murder Calls 12:00 12:55 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall 13:50 I Almost Got Away With It 14:45 American Monster 15:40 Forbidden: Dying For Love 16:35 Gone 17:30 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall 18:25 The Locator 18:50 The Locator I Almost Got Away With It 19:20American Monster 20:15 Forbidden: Dying For Love 21:10 22:05Murder Chose Me 23:00 Guilty Rich 23:55 American Monster HD Disner 00:05 Disney Mickey Mouse Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage 00:10 Witch Binny And The Ghost 00:35 01:00 Hank Zipzer 01:25Alex & Co. 01:45 Disney Mickey Mouse 01:50 Evermoor Chronicles Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage 02:15 Witch Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage 02:40 Witch Binny And The Ghost 03:05 03:30 Binny And The Ghost Hank Zipzer Disney Mickey Mouse 03:55 04:15 04:20 Hank Żipzer 04:45 Alex & Co. 05:10 Alex & Co. Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage 05:35 Witch Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage 06:00Witch Binny And The Ghost 06:25Disney Mickey Mouse 06:45 06:50 Rolling With The Ronks 07:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir 07:25 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir Tsum Tsum Shorts 07:50 Frozen Northern Lights 07:55

And Cat Noir 20:35 Disney The Lodge 21:00 Alex & Co. 21:25 Alex & Co. 21:50 Lolirock 22:15 22:40 Lolirock Evermoor Chronicles Rolling With The Ronks 23:05 23:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir 23:45 Lolirock





06:30 Henry Hugglemonster Loopdidoo 06:4507:00 Henry Hugglemonster 07:15 Calimero Loopdidoo 07:30 Henry Hugglemonster 07:4508:00 P-King Duckling Puppy Dog Pals Mickey And The Roadster 08:30 09:00 Racers Sofia The First 09:30 The Lion Guard: Return Of 10:00 The Roar Minnie's Bow-Toons 10:45 Sheriff Callie's Wild West 11:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West 11:30 12:00 The Lion Guard 12:30 The Lion Guard 13:00 Sofia The First 13:30 Sofia The First PI Masks 14:00PJ Masks 14:30 P-King Duckling Goldie & Bear And The Magic 15:0015:30 Map 15:35 Sofia The First 16:00 PI Masks 16:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racer Doc McStuffins 17:0017:30 Vampirina 18:00 Mickey's Pirate Adventure 19:00Sofia The First Mickey And The Roadster 19:30 Racer The Lion Guard 20:0020:30 P-King Duckling Doc McStuffins 21:00 21:30 PI Masks 22:00 The Lion Guard: Return Of The Roar 22:45 Minnie's Bow-Toons 23:00 P-King Duckling Puppy Dog Pals 23:30



00:20 Street Outlaws 01:05 Gold Rush 01:50 Gold Divers

20:45 Supa Strikas 21:10 Supa Strikas Marvel's Rocket And Groot 21:35 21:40 Disnev Mickey Mouse 21:45 Lab Rats Elite Force 22:10 22:35 Lab Rats Elite Force Phineas And Ferb Programmes Start At 6:00am 23:00 KSA



00:10 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian 01:00 So Cosmo 01:55 So Cosmo Celebrity Style Story 02:50 03:20 Celebrity Style Story 03:50 So Cosmo 04:40 So Cosmo 05:30 Celebrity Style Story 06:00 EJ NYC 06:55 E! News 07:10 EJ NYC 08:10 E! News: Daily Pop 09:10 Hollywood Medium With 08:10 Tyler Henry 12:00 E! News 12:15 WAGs La 13:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry 14:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry 15:00 E! News 15:15 Botched 19:00 E! News 20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 22:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians'



23:00 E! News

23:15

WAGs La

Restaurant: Impossible 00:00 01:00 Mystery Diners 01:30 Mystery Diners 02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 03:00 Man Fire Food 03:30 Man Fire Food 04:00 Chopped Junior Guy's Grocery Games 05:00 06:00 Barefoot Contessa 06:25 Barefoot Contessa 06:50 Bake With Anna Olson 07:15 The Kitchen The Pioneer Woman 08:05 08:30 The Pioneer Woman 08:55 Siba's Table 09.25 Siba's Table Bake With Anna Olson 09:55 10:25 Bake With Anna Olson The Kitchen Cooking For Real 10:55 11:45 The Pioneer Woman 12:10 12:35 The Pioneer Woman 13:00Siba's Table Siba's Table 13:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 14:0014:30Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 15:00 Chopped The Kitchen 16:00Bake With Anna Olson 17:0017:30 Bake With Anna Olson Chopped Junior 18:00 Holiday Baking Championship 19:00Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 20:3021:00 Man Fire Food Man Fire Food 21:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 22.00 22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 23:00 Chopped

02:00 Swamp People 02:50 Counting Cars 03:15 American Pickers 04:05Time Team 05:00 Counting Cars Counting Cars Ultimate Wheels 05:25 06:00 06:50 American Pickers Counting Cars 07:4008:05Counting Cars 08:30 Pawn Stars 08:55 Pawn Stars 09:20 Aussie Pickers 10:10 Ax Men Ultimate Wheels 11:00 11:50 American Pickers 12:40 Counting Cars 13:05 Counting Cars 13:30 Time Team 14:20 Swamp People 15:10 Alone American Pickers 16:00 16:50 Counting Cars 17:15 Counting Cars 17:40 Swamp People 18:30 Alone Mountain Men 19:20 20:10 Pawn Stars 20:35 Pawn Stars 21:00 Ice Road Truckers 21:50Forged: Iron & Fire 22:15 Milwaukee Blacksmith 22.40Time Team 23:30 Alone



Miguel's Feasts 00:45 01:10 Food School Tom's Istanbul Delight 01:40 David Rocco's Dolce Vita 02:05 02:35 What's For Sale? 03:00 What's For Sale? Valentine Warner Eats 03:30 Scandinavia 03:55 David Rocco's Dolce India 04:25 Wineroads 04:50 Wineroads 05:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces 06:15 Carnival Eats 06:40 Stepping Out 07:10 Tom's Istanbul Delight 07:35 David Rocco's Dolce Vita 08:05 What's For Sale? What's For Sale? 08:30 09:00 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia 09:25 David Rocco's Dolce India 09:55 Wineroads 10:20 Wineroads George Clarke's Amazing 10:50 Spaces Carnival Eats 11:45 Stepping Out Fish Of The Day 12:10 12:40 Fish Of The Day 13:05 13:35 What's For Sale? 14:00 What's For Sale? 14:30 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia 14:55 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia 15:25 India's Mega Kitchen 16:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces 17:15 . Carnival Eats 17:40 Stepping Out Miguel's Feasts 18:10 18:35 Maximum Foodie 19:05 India's Mega Kitchen 20:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces 21:00 Carnival Eats 21:30 Stepping Out Miguel's Feasts 22:00 22:25 Maximum Foodie 22:55 Fish Of The Day

03:00 Harvey Beaks 03:24 Harvey Beaks 03:48 The Loud House 04:12 The Loud House Breadwinners 04:36 05:00 Breadwinners 05:24 Get Blake SpongeBob SquarePants 05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants 06:12 Teenage Mutant Ninia Turtles 06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 07:00 07:24 Rabbids Invasion 07:48 Get Blake 08:12 Harvey Beaks 08:36 Sanjay And Craig SpongeBob SquarePants 09:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 09:24 Henry Danger 09.4810:12 Game Shakers 10:36 Regal Academy 11:00 Liar, Liar, Vampire 12:12 The Loud House Rabbids Invasion 12:36 13:00 Breadwinners 13:24 Saniav And Craig Hunter Street 13:48 I Am Frankie 14:12 14:36The Thundermans 15:00 Rufus 15:48 Rufus 2 The Loud House 16:36 17:00 Sanjay And Craig I Am Frankie 17:24 17:48 Hunter Street 18:12 Henry Danger 18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn 19:00School Of Rock 19:24 Game Shakers 19:48 The Thundermans 20:12 Ride 20:36 Ride 21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 21:24 Saniav And Craig Rabbids Invasion 21:48 22:12 22:36 Breadwinners Harvey Beaks 23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants SpongeBob SquarePants 23:24 23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 00:16 Shimmer And Shine

West 00:39 Shimmer And Shine 01:02 Max & Ruby Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom 01:25 01:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom 01:47The Day Henry Met 01:51 The Day Henry Met 01:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines 02:20 Blaze And The Monster Machines 02:42 Zack & Quack 02:53 Kid-E-Cats 02:58 Kid-E-Cats Shimmer And Shine 03:03 Nella The Princess Knight 03:25 03:38 Paw Patrol 04:00Little Charmers Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom 04:12 04:24 Dora The Explorer 04:47Max & Ruby 05:09 The Day Henry Met 05:15 Nella The Princess Knight Shimmer And Shine 05:37 06:00 Wallykazam! Zack & Quack 06:22 The Day Henry Met Blaze And The Monster 06:33 06:39 Machines 07:00 Rusty Rivets Paw Patrol 07:13 07:37 Dora The Explorer Nella The Princess Knight 08:00 06:24 08:11 Kid-E-Cats 07:12 Kid-E-Cats 08:16 08:00 How Do They Do It? 08:22 Bubble Guppies 08:2608:45 Blaze And The Monster 09:14 Machines 10:02 09:08 Paw Patrol Shimmer And Shine 09:31 09:54 Nella The Princess Knight 10:15 The Day Henry Met 10:21 Paw Patrol Rusty Rivets 10:4411:06Wallykazam! **Bubble Guppies** 11:30 11:53 Team Umizoomi 12:16 Shimmer And Shine Max & Ruby Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom 13:02 13:25 The Day Henry Met The Day Henry Met Blaze And The Monster 13:4613:51 13:57 Machines Zack & Quack 14:42 14:53 Kid-E-Cats 14:57 Kid-E-Cats Shimmer And Shine 15:03 15:25 Nella The Princess Knight 15:37 Paw Patrol 16:00 Little Charmers Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom 16:12 16:24 Dora The Explorer 16:46Max & Ruby 17:08 The Day Henry Met 17:14 Nella The Princess Knight Shimmer And Shine 17:37 Wallykazam! 17:59 18:22 Zack & Ouack The Day Henry Met Blaze And The Monster 18:33 18:39 Machines 19:00 **Rusty Rivets** 14:45 Paw Patrol 16:30 19:12 19:37 Dora The Explorer 18:15 Nella The Princess Knight 20:00 19:59 21:45 20:10 Kid-E-Cats 20:16 Kid-E-Cats 23:15**Bubble Guppies** 20:22 20:45 Blaze And The Monster Machines Paw Patrol 21:08 Shimmer And Shine 21:31 Nella The Princess Knight The Day Henry Met 21:55 22:16 22:22 Paw Patrol 22:44 Rusty Rivets 23:07 Wallykazam! 23:31 **Bubble Guppies** Team Umizoomi

05:15 Six Dance Lessons In Six Weeks Down To Earth 07:05 Undercover Brother 08:40 10:10 Sneakers 12:15 Six Dance Lessons In Six Weeks Down To Earth 14:05 15:40 17:25 My Bakery In Brooklyn Kindergarten Cop 2 19:10 Hello Carter 20:35 22:30 Pitch Perfect 2 Ioshv own MOVIES

#### FESTIVAL

00:55 One True Thing 03:05 The Yellow Handkerchief Every Thing Will Be Fine 04:5006:55 Far From Men Lawrence Of Arabia 08:45 12:25 The Yellow Handkerchief 14:10 Jappeloup XV: Beyond The Tryline 16:25 18:05 A Country Called Home 19:50 Memoria 21:20 99 Homes 23:20 Electricity MOVIES HD

#### KIDS

01:20 Simba The King Lion 03:25 Elias And The Royal Yacht 04:50 The Secret Of Kells 06:20 Louis & Luca And The Snow Machine 07:45 Moomin And Midsummer Madness 09:30 Freddy Frogface The Wheelers 11:00 12:25 Dinofroz The Origin 14:00Simba The King Lion 16:05 Elias And The Royal Yacht 17:30 An American Tail: Fievel Goes West 18:55 The Wheelers 20:20 The Wish Fish 21:45Help And Freedom 23:25 An American Tail: Fievel Goes

#### O/N MOVIES HD

00:00 The Big Lebowski 02:00 Unbroken 04:25 The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge Out Of Water 06:05 Twins 08:00 Dreamgirls Mr. Popper's Penguins Miss You Already 10:10 11:50 13:40 Baby Mama 15:20 Dreamgirls 17:30 Oleanna 19:05 Hot Pursuit 20:35Ouija Boyz In The Hood 22:10 DISCOVERY SC science 00:40 Mythbusters 01:30 How Do They Do It? Food Factory USA 01:55 02:20 X-Machines 03:10 Strip The Cosmos The Big Brain Theory 04:00Mythbusters 04:48How Do They Do It? 05:36 Food Factory USA 06:00 X-Machines

Strip The Cosmos

Mythbusters

The Big Brain Theory

Line Of Duty 23:05 Orphan Black 23:50 Class



00:00 Crimes That Shook Britain 01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos 02:00 It Takes A Killer 02:30 It Takes A Killer The Eleven Crimes That Shook Britain 03:00 04:00 05:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos 06:00 It Takes A Killer It Takes A Killer 06:30 07:00 Homicide Hunter 08:00 Nightmare In Suburbia 09:00 It Takes A Killer 09:30 It Takes A Killer 10:00 Homicide Hunter Cold Case Files 11:00 Escaping Polygamy 12:00 13:00 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath 14:00 It Takes A Killer 14:30It Takes A Killer Homicide Hunter 15:00 16:00 Cold Case Files 17:00The First 48 It Takes A Killer 18:00 18:30 It Takes A Killer 19:00 The First 48 20:00 The First 48 22:00 Cold Case Files 23:00 The First 48 COMEDY CENTRAL

00:05 Nightcap 00:30 Comedy Central Roast: Justin Bieber Chappelle's Show 02:10 Real Husbands Of Hollywood The Daily Show With Trevor 02:3503:00 Noah 03:25 Tosh.0 Chappelle's Show Kroll Show 03:50 04:15 04:40 Key And Peele 05:05 Important Things With Demitri Martin Impractical Jokers 05:30 Disaster Date 05:55 Ridiculousness Arabia 06:20 06:50 Frankenfood 07:15 Frankenfood 07:40 I Live With Models 08:05 Impractical Jokers 08:30 Disaster Date 08:55 Workaholics 09:20 Kroll Show 09:45Kev And Peele 10:10 Important Things With i Martin I Live With Models Demitri 10:35 11:00 Impractical Jokers 11:25 Disaster Date Ridiculousness Arabia 11:50 Impractical Jokers 12:15 12:40 Frankenfood 13:05 Frankenfood 13:30 Important Things With Demitri Martin 13:55 Friends 14:20 Friends 14:45 Workaholics 15:10 Key And Peele Kroll Show 16:00 Comedy Central Presents Comedy 3alwagef Impractical Jokers 16:30 16:55 Friends

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And Cat Noir

And Cat Noir

Northern Lights

K.C. Undercover

Austin & Ally

That's So Raven

That's So Raven

Disney Mickey Mouse

Tangled: The Series

K.C. Undercover

Bizaardvark

Elena Of Avalor

Stuck In The Middle

Tangled: The Series

Disney Mickey Mouse

K.C. Undercover

K.C. Undercover

Liv And Maddie

Bunk'd

Star vs The Forces Of Evil

Bunk'd

Bunk'd

Jessie

02:35 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune 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 Street Outlaws 06:45 Misfit Garage Deadliest Catch 07:30 08:15 Container Wars 09:00 How Do They Do It? How Do They Do It? 09:25 09:47 Gold Rush 10:12 10:57Gold Divers Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt 11:42 Secret Fortune How Do They Do It? For A 12:25 12:48 Extreme Collectors 13:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier (Season Specials) Deadliest Catch 13:55 Gold Divers 14:40 15:25Misfit Garage Street Outlaws 16:10 17:00 How Do They Do It? 17:25How Do They Do It? 17:50 Extreme Collectors Container Wars 18:20 18:50 Deadliest Catch How Do They Do It? 19:40 How Do They Do It? 20:10 20:35How Do They Do It? 21:00 Madiba Bushcraft Build-Off 21:50 22:40Ed Stafford: Left For Dead 23:30 Misfit Garage



06:00 Disney11 Supa Štrikas 06:25 06:50 Marvel's Spider-Man 07:15 Right Now Kapow 07:40 Disney Mickey Mouse 07:45Walk The Prank 08:10 Phineas And Ferb 08:35 Mech-X4 09:00 Marvel's Spider-Man 09:25 Lab Rats 09:50 Star Hotel Transylvania: The Series Tangled: The Series Adventures In Babysitting Frozen: Magic Of The Adventures Gravity Falls 10:20 Kid vs. Kat 10:45 11:10 Milo Murphy's Law 11:35 12:00 12:47 12:55 Disney Xd F.C Pair Of Kings 13:20 Pair Of Kings 13:45 Phineas And Ferb 14:10 Hotel Transylvania: The Series Phineas And Ferb 14:15 14:40Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug Cody 15:05 Cody 15:3Ò Gravity Falls Gravity Falls 15:55 16:20 Two More Eggs Lab Rats 16:25 16:50 Lab Rats 17:15 Kirby Buckets Descendants Wicked World 17:40 Kirby Buckets 18:05 Supa Strikas Hotel Transylvania: The Series 18:30 Marvel's Ant-Man 18:35 Disnev11 19:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug 19:25 19:50 Descendants Wicked World Walk The Prank 19:55 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug 20:20 Walk The Prank

CHOICE

Coronation Street

Coronation Street

Emmerdale

The Chase

04:20 Tracey Ullman's Show 04:50 Raised By Wolves

The Chase

The Chase

Emmerdale

The Chase

Duke & Duchess Of Windsor

Emmerdale

The Chase

Duke & Duchess Of Windsor

23:15 Coronation Street

22:50 Emmerdale

Of Dogs At Christmas

Murdoch Mysteries

Tracey Ullman's Show

Raised By Wolves

Murdoch Mysteries

Coronation Street

The Royal Good Guys

Murdoch Mysteries

Coronation Street

00:00 Smartest Guy In The Room

Ancient Discoveries

Brad Meltzer's Decoded

03:50 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate

04:40 10 Things You Don't Know

05:30 Smartest Guy In The Room

Ancient Discoveries

The Universe

09:00 Brad Meltzer's Decoded

10:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate

11:00 10 Things You Don't Know

Ancient Discoveries

Brad Meltzer's Decoded

16:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate

17:00 10 Things You Don't Know

Brad Meltzer's Decoded

22:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate

HISTORY

American Pickers

The Universe

19:00 Ancient Discoveries

20:00 Clash Of Warriors

00:21 Ultimate Wheels

Clash Of Warriors

Smartest Guy In The Room

08:00 Clash Of Warriors

Clash Of Warriors

The Royal Good Guys

HD

Of Dogs At Christmas

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Evidence

About...

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Evidence

About..

18:00

21:00

Evidence

01:11

23:00 UFO Files



23:20

23:50

Fish Of The Day

What's For Sale?

CHANNEL III Who's Doing The Dishes? 00:10 Dian Fossey: Secrets In The Mist 01:00 Live Free Or Die Supercar Megabuild Locked Up Abroad 03:25 Paul O'Grady: For The Love 02:00 03:00 04:00 Dian Fossey: Secrets In The Mist 05:00 Building Wild Who's Doing The Dishes? 06:00 Route Awakening 06:30Route Awakening 08:00 Paul O'Grady: For The Love 07:00 Bad Trip 08:00 Air Crash Investigation 09:00 Building Wild 10:00 Yukon Gold Cold Water Gold 11:00 Who's Doing The Dishes? Brain Games 12:00 How To Win At Everything 12:30 Bad Trip Science Of Stupid 13:00 14:00Who's Doing The Dishes? Science Of Stupid 14:30 15:00 Fish Tank Kings 16:00 Yukon Gold The Secret Photos Of The Cold Water Gold 17:00 18:00 Air Crash Investigation 19:00 Seconds From Disaster Yukon Gold 20:00 Cold Water Gold 20:50 21:40Air Crash Investigation Seconds From Disaster 22:30 The Secret Photos Of The 23:20 Brain Games How To Win At Everything 23:45



00:20 Storm Cats 01:10 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions 02:00 Predator Battleground 02:50 Monster Fish Cameramen Who Dare 03:45 04:40 Animal Fight Club 4.5 05:35 Predator Battleground Monster Fish 06:30 Cameramen Who Dare 07:25 08:20 Animal Fight Club 4.5 09:15 Savage Kingdom: Uprising Deadly Instincts 10:10 11:05 Secret Life Of Predators 12:00 Fish Tank Kings Wildebeeste: Born To Run 12:55 13:50 Monster Fish Cameramen Who Dare 14:45 Animal Fight Club 4.5 15:40 16:35 Savage Kingdom: Uprising 17:30 Sahara Secret Life Of Predators 18:25 Cameramen Who Dare Animal Fight Club 4.5 19:20 20:10 21:00 Savage Kingdom: Uprising Sahara Secret Life Of Predators 21:50 22:4023:30 Fish Tank Kings



Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Rabbids Invasion 00:12 00:36 01:00 Rabbids Invasion 01:24 Sanjay And Craig 01:48Sanjay And Craig 02:12 Winx Club 02:36 Winx Club



23:54

00:50 True Heart 02:25The Good Dinosaur 04:00 Zootropolis A Simple Wish 05:50 07:25True Ĥeart 09:00 Pirates Code: The Adventures Of Mickey Matson The Good Dinosaur The Tale Of Despereaux 10:35 12:10 13:45 Curious George The Kids From 62-F 15:15 17:05 The Dog Lover The Adventure Club 18:50 20:20 The Tale Of Despereaux 21:55 Curious George 23:25 The Dog Lover



00:10 Scouts Guide To The Zombie Apocalypse 01:50 Nina Forever 03:30 K-9

Strip The Cos 10:50 How Do They Do It? 11:14 Food Factory USA 11:38 X-Machines 12:26The Big Brain Theory 13:14 Mythbusters How Do They Do It? 14:02 14:26Food Factory USA Strip The Cosmos 14:50 15:38 The Big Brain Theory 16:26X-Machines Mythbusters 17:1418:02 Strip The Cosmos 18:50The Big Brain Theory 19:40 Mythbusters How It's Made 20:30 How It's Made 20:55How Do They Do It? 21:20 21:45 Food Factory USA 22:10 Strip The Cosmos 23:00 How It's Made How It's Made 23:25 The Big Brain Theory 23:50 T A RLD HD 01:15 Shanghai 03:00 House Of D 04:45 Traffic 07:00 If Only Suite Francaise 08:45 The Alamo 10:45 13:00



What Maisie Knew Shanghai Employee Of The Month Noel Get Low Heartlands Edmond



00:20 Big & Little Suddenly Rich 01:05 01:50 Return To Amish 02:35 The Spouse House 03:20 Little People, Big World 04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras 04:50 Dare To Wear Say Yes To The Dress UK 05:35 06:00 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners 06:45Say Yes To The Dress UK 07:07 Say Yes To The Dress UK 07:30 The Spouse House Little People, Big World 08:15 09:00 Cake Boss Toddlers & Tiaras 09:25Obsessive Compulsive 10:10 Cleaners 10:55 Too Ugly For Love? Say Yes To The Dress UK 11:40 Say Yes To The Dress UK Outdaughtered: Busby Quints 12:02 12:25 13:10 Big & Little 13:55 Toddlers & Tiaras Little People, Big World 14:40 Too Ugly For Love? 15:25 16:10 Love At First Swipe Cake Boss 16:35 Meet The Putmans 17:00 17:50 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners 18:50 Dare To Wear Say Yes To The Dress UK Cake Boss 19:40 20:10 Cake Boss 20:35 21:00 My Giant Life 21:50 Fat Chance Monsters Inside Me 22:40 23:30 90 Days To Wed



Wars Freemaker Right Now Kapow Lab Rats vs Mighty Med Disney Mickey Mouse The Suite Life Of Zack & The Suite Life Of Zack & Penn Zero: Part Time Hero Penn Zero: Part Time Hero Marvel's Rocket And Groot





## Stars

#### **CROSSWORD 1788**

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#### ACROSS

1. Characteristic of a mob. 4. The face veil worn by Muslim women.

11. Area around the altar of a church for the

clergy and choir. 15. Any of various primates with short tails

or no tail at all. 16. A member of the Caddo people who

formerly lived in the Dakotas west of the Missouri river.

17. A material effigy that is worshipped as a god.

18. Having leadership guidance.

19. The pilot who positions his aircraft outside and behind (on the wing of) the leader of a flying formation.

20. A beautiful and graceful girl.

21. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.

23. A chronic inflammatory collagen disease affecting connective tissue (skin or joints). 24. A railroad employee responsible for a

train's brakes. 26. Again but in a new or different way.

28. Breed of large wiry-coated terrier bred in Yorkshire. 29. Forming viscous or glutinous threads.

32. A small cake leavened with yeast. 33. Extremely exciting as if by alcohol or a

narcotic. 36. The mission in San Antonio where in 1836 Mexican forces under Santa Anna besieged and massacred American rebels who were fighting to make Texas independent of Mexico.

40. An elaborate song for solo voice. 41. Armor plate that protects the chest.

43. A conspicuous disparity or difference as between two figures. 44. A broad flat muscle on either side of the

back. 46. (Greek mythology) The rarified fluid

exit.

#### DOWN

1. A master's degree in library science. 2. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the

sale of petroleum. 3. English monk and scholar (672-735). 4. An erratic deflection from an intended

course. 5. (botany) Of some seeds.

6. (of meat) Full of sinews.

7. Hormone produced early in pregnancy by the placenta.

8. Arboreal snake of central and southern Africa whose bite is often fatal.

9. Brazilian tree with handsomely marked wood.

10. A historical region of southwestern India on the west coast.

11. Having two feet.

12. Swelling from excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue.

13. Relating to principles of right and wrong.

14. Place in a line or arrange so as to be

parallel. 22. English monk and scholar (672-735). 25. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked

on a skewer usually with vegetables. 27. A negative.

30. (formal) A person who announces important news.

31. An Indian side dish of yogurt and chopped cucumbers and spices.

34. A genus of temperate and arctic evergreen trees (see spruce).

35. A law passed by US Congress to prevent employees from being injured or contracting diseases in the course of their employment.

37. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.

38. Produced by a manufacturing process. 39. Affording unobstructed entrance and

#### **STAR TRACK**



Work ethics are very important to you and should you choose to take time away from work today, you might allow yourself the time and call it a vacation day. Keep a good attitude about competition and prepare for some extra projects. This is a very busy time in your professional life. At home this afternoon, you also enjoy staying busy. Just whiling the time away is not your bag! It should be a good time to really look at yourself and understand what is really important. Writing efforts can be a spectacular success. Don't hesitate if a travel opportunity arises-a journey begun this afternoon can be joyful and romantic. Do something fun with a good friend. You have a good attitude and this evening you are expressive.

## Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find a physical move or some other type of major change is being discussed today. This may mean that higher-ups in your workplace are looking for a place to relocate the company. You will ponder many questions by analysis and deep, penetrating thoughts. This could all be temporary if the company building is in need of being refurbished. You could be asked to do some location research at this time. Putting yourself in a position to gather and share more information seems most important to you at this time. Many obstacles and responsibilities are about to dissolve. Someone close to you may come to you for your psychological perceptiveness and comprehension. Expressing your insights through poetry or song becomes impressive.

## Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Watch out-an independent streak seems to be surfacing at this time. Others will admire your unique and rather unusual way of perceiving things. Your sense of humor simply shines and added to your rather eccentric behavior, should set you apart from the crowd. You find the benefits from new insights into your living situation or life conditions. Your friends or associates may come to you for help today as you have advanced teaching qualities and can patiently instruct those that have a hard time understanding some code or technique. This should all go rather smoothly. Your more reserved qualities may make others wonder what you have been up to lately-as you are not always so quiet. Keeping people guessing is a fun pastime for now.

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

You may be feeling very good about yourself just now and appreciating your own better qualities. Creative writing projects can be used in the workplace to introduce better advertising jingles. You may see value in or feel love for an older person or someone in authority. You seem to appreciate feelings and movement in general, and could possibly find yourself looking for a little romance. You may just want to get out and about and walk or exercise. It's just a wonderful time to be in the company of others in play or work. A particular job may be just right for someone with your credentials. You certainly know how to manage and direct others. Your particular ideas and thoughts are exceptionally good today; they have not gone unnoticed.

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

Now is a good time for that one-on-one with a higher-up, or supervisor. This is the time that you can express your desire for a new position within the company. Perhaps you could be in management. It's a period when you can put your practical insights into words and convey them to others. Taking care of business is a major theme where your emotional orientation is concerned. You crave organization and you want to get things accomplished. You aim to have a place for everything and everything in its place. Health and work goals take on greater importance now. You can demonstrate much understanding of and sensitivity to other's needs at this time. A romance in your life becomes more stable. There is a deeper sense of intimacy.

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

Expect some challenges in the workplace from time to time. You find you are appreciated for your talent in getting things done. It would be appropriate to ask for help. You are disciplined, work hard and are good at getting others to work with and for you. You have a fantastic appetite for detail work and can take it all in and still look for more. Willing and able to respond to almost any emergency-you are responsible and always ready. Being successful in life is easy; you have a built-in sense of how to approach and unravel even the most difficult problems. Helpful advice comes from a trusted confidante. You and another family member decide to visit an ill or elderly person

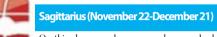


#### Libra (September 23-October 22)

Taking the novel approach, trying out new ideas and breakthroughs in thinking could be what life is all about. You just simply feel like being different, trying out something new and unusual. Perhaps you feel that you are too complacent, or are you getting bored with the status quoadding a little variety to your life will give it a little extra spice and adds interest. You may want to go where no one has gone before, or may just want to travel a less traveled path. Growth comes from allowing yourself to make changes, allowing yourself to see things through different eves, so to speak, and being unafraid of taking a completely unfamiliar path or journey into the unknown. If you are reasonably prepared, you will be pleased with the outcome.



You may have to use a great deal of diplomacy around others. There may be some problems with a negotiation, but the event will end positively. You would just love to be out and about and enjoying the company of your friends. Unfortunately, however, you may find yourself working inside four walls. This time will pass-patience. It may be a good time to think about the vocational or career decisions you will want to change. This afternoon you look for a belated gift or two that expresses your gratefulness. Home is likely to be a very nice place this evening! This is a great time to spend with loved ones and family. Nostalgia and domesticity could begin emphasizing a need for security and a sense of roots.



On this day, your humor may be overshadowed, but only by your rather eccentric behavior. Your independence and unique qualities are appreciat-

ed by those around you. Some days are so busy you may feel like you would be right to hire some kind of temporary help. You dive in and find shortcuts and schedules and new ways to complete the projects of today with a little time for cleanup and thanks to others for lending a helping hand. Make a note to be available when the others may need your help. Maybe a good book or movie will take on that more than real dimension after work this afternoon. Pat yourself on the back and know that the decisions you made today may have helped the team you worked with, the customer and your own standing.



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

You may find yourself working extra hard to get things and people organized. Wanting and needing to feel respected is an emotionally charged issue in your life. Achieving things, working especially hard and having a strong ambition are all things that are important this day. A good understanding of those around you can almost assure you of a successful outcome. Perhaps you are coaching a sports team or you are getting paid to take a family member's wedding pictures. Great feelings and knowing how much you are appreciated makes this a very happy time. Some very important matters may be on the mind of someone younger than you, and you may be asked to give advice. If you have time, consider taking a gift for the host of a party coming up soon.

## Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You should find yourself in top condition when it comes to any kind of mental activity. You are full of wit and sharp ideas. This could be a time when you find some real discoveries in the idea department. Having a clear-cut idea of what the public wants and needs at this time is an important factor when making decisions with regard to group issues. Expect to make some crystal-clear decisions that affect others. You may find yourself moving cautiously through some difficulties, blocks or hot spots but the results will be positive. Someone may not share your point of view or your life situation may not be exactly as you would like for it to be; however, all will work out just fine in the end-so relax. Family members enjoy games tonight-togetherness.



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

Extra support comes your way now. You may have the feeling that you are very much in touch and have a good connection with those around you; conversations have never been so interesting. All of the support that you need will be there for you. There is very little time to complete unfinished business before the year ends, but you manage to do it. Legal matters are concluded successfully today. Your taste in art and your creative thinking is heightened. Maybe this is the perfect time to pick out furnishings, colors and so forth-the more elegant things in life-or at least to communicate your ideas with loved ones. Also-this is a wonderful time to be around friends and associates and to work together. Healing is accelerated by your peaceful ways.

said to flow in the veins of the Gods. 50. Tropical American tree grown in southern United States having a whitish pinktinged fruit.

52. An area of sand sloping down to the water of a sea or lake.

53. A primeval personification of air and breath.

54. A public promotion of some product or service.

55. Frogs, toads, tree toads.

57. Leafless East Indian vine.

60. (computer science) A standardized language for the descriptive markup of documents.

63. A natural elevation (especially a rocky one that juts out into the sea).

66. A port city in southwestern Iran. 68. Trade name for an oral contraceptive

containing estradiol and norgestrel. 69. Lacking sufficient water or rainfall.

72. A quantity of no importance.

73. A zodiacal constellation in northern hemisphere between Cancer and Virgo. 74. Made more desirable or valuable or

profitable. 78. A widely distributed system consisting

of all the cells able to ingest bacteria or colloidal particles etc, except for certain white blood cells.

79. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.

80. A pocket-size case for holding papers and paper money.

81. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.

42. United States writer (born in Lebanon) (1883 - 1931).45. A crystalline compound found in vanilla beans and some balsam resins. 47. United States newspaper publisher (1858-1935). 48. Cracks or fissures in the skin (especially around the mouth or anus). 49. (Arthurian legend) The battlefield where King Arthur was mortally wounded. 51. A Dravidian language spoken in south central India. 56. A benevolent aspect of Devi. 58. The executive agency that advises the President on the federal budget. 59. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934). 61. Having lost freshness or brilliance of color. 62. Squash bugs. 64. At any time. 65. A challenge to do something dangerous or foolhardy. 67. An Iranian language spoken in Afghanistan. 70. Mythical bird of prey having enormous size and strength. 71. Any of various coarse shrubby plants of the genus Iva with small greenish flowers. 75. A polyvalent metallic element that resembles chromium and tungsten in its

properties. 76. A heavy precious metallic element. 77. A Mid-Atlantic state.

### Yesterday's Solution

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#### Wordsearch Puzzle

Easter

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid.

The remaining 34 letters spell a secret message

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FRIDAY

FASTING

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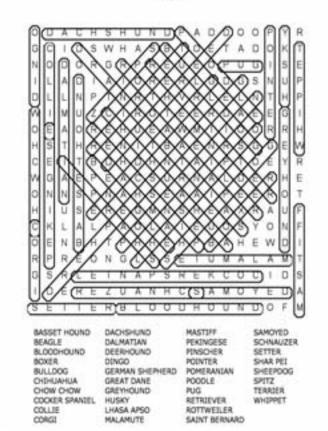
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PRAYER RESURRECTION

#### **Yesterday's Solution**

#### Dogs



The hidden sentence is: A DOOR IS WHAT A DOG IS PERPETUALLY ON THE WRONG SIDE OF.

y SuDoku	

NEW TESTAMENT

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

#### OHUROH CROSS CRUCIFIXION CUSTOM



## Lifestyle Features

## How to make a beautiful bow

#### Make your gifts stand out with a proper topper

showed us a bow that is voluminous,

textured and pretty, yet also simple to make. Wire ribbon gives the bow structure, and sheer and silky rib-

bons add texture. You can add

bons so many ways using this technique," Conway said.

more ribbons or take some away

depending on the size of the gift. "You can manipulate your rib-

Plan ahead when shopping, picking up rib-

bon in addition to your wrapping paper. Conway recommends investing in at least one

roll of pricier wire ribbon to add some struc-

But be a little forgiving, too. Everyone

thinks his or her bows don't look good, she

said. Just keep tweaking and practicing, and you'll soon find yourself making ones worthy

Here, Conway shows step-by-step how

#### BY NICOLE TSONG The Seattle Times

premade, self-adhesive bow fished out of a plastic bag just doesn't impress in the age of Martha Stewart. Although most wrappers are guilty of slapping on a stiff, awkward bow in a last-minute frenzy, making a beautiful bow is possible even for the least crafty among us.

Simple bow solutions abound. The easiest one is to tie a bow the way you tie shoelaces, then add a novelty ribbon in contrasting colors, like stripes or polka dots, to make your present pop, said Ann Conway, owner of Swee Swee Paperie & Studio in Seattle. Other ideas include adding a small ornament for dimension or even making a bow out of newspaper by pleating it accordion-style.

But for a slightly more ambitious project, we enlisted Conway's gift-wrapping expertise. She

#### **CREATING A BOW**

#### **Supplies**

Ribbon to tie around the box

Two 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-yard-long ribbons or three 1-yard-long ribbons for the bow, including at least one wire ribbon

ture.

of Martha.

to create a bow.

- A twist-tie or wire
- Scissors



Tie a piece of ribbon around the package to cover the seam, knotting it on top. You also can do a more traditional criss-cross pat-



Set the ribboned box aside. Cut the two ribbons for the bow into 11/2-yard-long pieces, then match up the ends and hold them in

## Stock up on paper this is one big gift

Figuring out how to wrap unwieldy gifts is a time-honored tradition in households that like to give big. Big as in a plasma-screen TV, big as in a bicycle, big as in a canoe.

But some of us are new to big, or not so good at it.

So we asked some gift-wrapping experts for their help on some cumbersome gifts. For these massive gifts, Andie

Wurster, assistant manager at Paper Source in Bellevue, Wash., suggests:

**Canoe:** For the most ambitious, connect several boxes to cover the entire canoe, then wrap it in traditional paper and add a bow. For those with less time, find some cheap fabric in a good pattern to cover up the canoe, and add a bow.

**Dollhouses:** For an innovative wrap job, find or sew a red Santa bag

tern, tying it together on top.



Anchor the ribbons in your hand and loop them evenly two to three times until you run out of ribbon, making sure not to tangle them. The loop for this bow measured 8 inches in length.

one hand.



Fold the bow in half to measure the center; cinch the middle with your fingers.



Secure the center with flexible wire or a twist-tie.



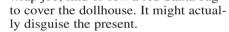
Tie the bow to the box with ribbon.



Fluff the bow, pulling out loops one at a time and twisting one forward then one back. Repeat. Tweak until the bow looks right.



Voila!





If you're trying to surprise the recipient, swaddle a recliner in glossy metallic fabric.

**Recliner:** Swaddle the chair in glossy metallic fabric, then add a huge bow.

If you don't care about the element of surprise, just add a generous bow. Try burlap bows if you can't find wide ribbon.

Ann Conway, of Swee Swee Paperie & Studio in Seattle, offered these additional suggestions:

**Television:** Keep it in the box, and wrap that. For another twist, make the gift into a treasure hunt. Wrap related items sepa-

rately, like popcorn, a DVD, a television guide and the remote control, mak-



ing sure they open the remote control last. Keep the TV out of sight until the last moment.

**Sleds:** Pop a sled in one of the brown bags sold for leaves and other yard waste. The bags can be found at hardware stores. Let the sled stick out the top with a bow on top

**Bicycles:** Buy some inexpensive fabric in a good pattern, drape it over the bicycle and add a bow. Alternatives: Buy lightweight painter's canvas at an art store, paint on a bow and wrap the present; or try bubble wrap or paint tarps with large red bows on top.



Bicycles can be covered by patterned fabric or painter's canvas.





## Lifestyle Gossip



## David **Guetta's** song wish

avid Guetta wants his own ong to be played at his watching and the first audio file didfuneral. The 50-year-old DJ produced the Black Eyed Peas' 2009 single 'I Gotta Feeling' and says the track is so special to him, that its release was one of the happiest moments of his life and he wants it played when he died. When asked by The Guardian 'What song would you like played at your funeral?', he replied: "I Gotta Feeling".

And in response to the question, "When were you happiest?", he said: "When I had my first kid and when I had my first big success with "I Gotta Feeling'." David is also proud of himself for "giving DJ cul-ture more respect", something he calls his "greatest achievement". However, his career has not been all positive; he admitted that his most embarrassing moment was when he did a live stream to launch one of his albums. David explained: "When I was doing a live stream to launch my album. Millions of people were n't work. I was the biggest DJ in the world and I couldn't even play one record. It was horrible." And he revealed that he takes criticism of his work badly. The star - who admits "losing inspiration" is his biggest fear - said: "Every time I put out a record, I feel like it's the best. So when a record is not successful it's very painful."

## Shinoda rules out Bennington hologram show

performing with a hologram of Chester Bennington. The 'Numb' hitmakers were left devastated when their friend took his own life in July aged 41, and the 40-year-old musician insists it would be "awful" to take to the stage with a hologram version of the singer. In an Instagram Live, he said: "I can't even wrap my head around the idea of a holographic Chester. I've actually heard other people outside the band suggest that, and there's absolutely no way. I cannot deal with that. "I can't do a hologram Chester; that would be the worst. For any of you guys who have lost a loved one, best friend, family member, can you imagine having a hologram of them? Ugh. [It would be] awful. I can't do it." Mike also recently admitted he "doesn't know what comes next" for Linkin Park - who are also made up of Rob Bourdon, Brad Delson, Dave Farrell and Joe Hahn - following the release of 'One More Night Live' last week, their first record since Chester's passing. He told Billboard: "It's a really nice way to showcase what a special experience each night was. And while I don't know what comes next for us

ike Shinoda has ruled out Linkin Park ever together or individually, this album is certainly a beautiful way of looking back at the body of work we created with Chester. "Grief is a non-linear process. It doesn't have 'stages' that go in order, it has phases that come and go at random. Some people are having sad days, others are having good days, others are having angry days...add the constant stress and fear of things like the news cycle, and you've got some exceptional chaos on your hands. "So I've tried to make it a point to share how I'm doing, mostly on Instagram and sometimes Twitter, especially when I feel like I'm making progress. "Coping with the end of this chapter is obviously devastating, but at the same time, it's also the beginning of the next story." Mike was forced to leave an Instagram Live listening party early because he couldn't carry on hearing the rocker's vocals without getting upset. He wrote on Instagram: "I did a listening party on Instagram Live today for the new album. I left early, and didn't really give a reason. To be honest, it was because it's hard for me to listen to Chester's voice for that long. I'm fine, I just wanted you to know. Thanks for understanding. (sic)



Grimes teases new music is coming 'soon'





## Smith to perform at first ever Global Awards

**Smith** and Kasabian will perform at the inaugural 2018 Global Awards. Launched this week by radio brand Global, igcup the new ceremony will combine its diverse roster of stations -Capital, Capital XTRA, Heart, Classic FM, Smooth, Radio X, Gold and LBC - to create a platform to recognise the best in music, entertainment and news. The 'Too Good At Goodbyes' hitmaker and the indie rock band - fronted by Tom Meighan - have already been confirmed for the event, which will take place on March 1, 2018 at London's Hammersmith Eventim Apollo. The likes of Rita Ora, Andrea Bocelli and Martin Garrix are also on the star-studded bill. Ashley Tabor OBE, Global's Founder & Executive President, said: "At Global, we've built some of the UK's biggest radio stations and media brands. "Through their reach, we're in the privileged position of entertaining and engaging more than half the UK population every single week. "This means we're perfectly placed to create the biggest and best music and entertainment awards the UK has ever seen, supported by Global's incredible listeners who will be voting for some of their favorite artists in popular categories." Recipients of Global Awards will be voted for by both the public and a panel of industry experts, with the full categories and longlists for the public vote being announced on Wednesday. Tickets for the bash go on sale in January 2018 from global.com/awards.

**Charli XCX unsure about** releasing more albums

## Stormzy wants Stevie Wonder duet

with Stevie Wonder. The 'Big For Your Boots' rapper has given up hope on duetting with Adele because she never does feature tracks, but he'd love to get into the studio with the 67-yearold Motown legend. The 24-year-



old grime star - whose real name is Michael Omari Owuo, Jr. thinks Adele should carry on not having other artists on her tracks to continue her "phenomenal legacy". When asked about working with the 'Hello' hitmaker - who dedicated 'Make Me Feel My Love' to him at her London show last year - Stormzy said: "The

tormzy wants to collaborate reason why I say no is because she doesn't do features - and she needs to keep it like that. "I am rooting for her legacy to stay as phenomenal as possible. "She hasn't got to worry about what her next album does. "All she has to do is go to the studio, lay down whatever pain or emotion or feeling she's got and the rest will service itself." And on who else is on his wish list, he told the Metro newspaper: "Stevie Wonder ... That would be ... " Meanwhile, Stormzy - who has won countless awards thanks to his criticallyacclaimed LP 'Gangs, Signs & Prayers' - says the most important thing looking forward is ensuring he maintains being at the "top of [his] game". He said: "I've got to worry about making music and staying at the top of my game ... focusing on what my actual trade is, being a musician and delivering incredible art." The 'Blinded By Your Grace' star is expected to sweep up plenty of prizes at 2018's BRIT Awards. He will reportedly be joined by the likes of Ed Sheeran and Sam Smith at the annual ceremony at London's The O2 in February. A source said recently: "Show chiefs were desperate to secure Ed, Sam and Stormzy as they're the biggest names in UK music right now. "The combined record and streaming figures are insane and the booking is bound to add numbers on the viewing figures too. "It's shaping up to be a top night." The 2017 bash, sponsored by Mastercard, saw Stormzy and Ed perform together, with the grime star joining his pal for a remix of the 26-year-old singer's hit single

'Shape Of You'.

**rimes** has teased new music is coming 'soon". The 29-year-old pop star - real Jame Claire Boucher - has kept her fans waiting two years for the much-anticipated follow-up to 2015's 'Art Angels', but she has now revealed she has played new material to her record label, and they "really dig it". Replying to a follower on Twitter over the weekend, she wrote: "just played label new music they rly dig it so hopefully smthn soon (sic)." In August, the 'Venus Fly' singer said reassured fans that she was spending "every day" working on her fifth studio album. The singer/songwriter said at the time that she just needed a bit more time for "pure unadulterated creativity". She wrote on Instagram: "I kno i've been quiet lately - in the studio every day trying to legit make something you've never heard before. unexplored sonic landscapes. i need another month or 2 of pure unadulterated creativity at which point i will begin finishing tracks. won't let u down (sic)" Grimes gave the album update in a social media post announcing she'd been included in Harper's Bazaar's Icons list. She posted a short video revealing the news and added the caption: "moving up in the world guys! tomorrow Grimes will be included in the #bazaaricons list! (sic)" Meanwhile, the 'Oblivion' hitmaker previously insisted being a famous artist is mostly down to luck, and even if she wasn't well-known she would still be making music. She said: "For anyone who is successful in art, it's 90 per cent luck and chance. "If you're talented and you're not getting anywhere, you shouldn't feel bad. It's not just hard work and talent. "I'd still be able to make records because I own all the equipment and I have all the skills.'

harli XCX isn't sure if she will release any more albums. The 'Boys' singer has just dropped the mixtape 'Pop 2', which features Carly Rae Jepsen, Tove Lo, Caroline Polachek, Cupcakke, Mykki Blanco and Jay Park and she admitted she prefers the immediacy of a mixtape, over the long drawn-out process of creating an album. She told Vulture: "With the album, I don't really know when I'm gonna put it out. Or even if I'm gonna put out an album. I just don't know. And I think that's what leads me toward making mixtapes. The way that I work and write is so fast, and releasing these mixtapes is very beneficial to that. I get so frustrated having to sit on music. I've been sitting on music for my album for so long now that people hacked me and leaked some music. For me to keep on being creative, doing these mixtapes is good. Generally, I don't even really tell people when I'm working on it. It just happens. I'll tell fans the week before the release, and I'll tell the label two months before." And Charli revealed her latest mixtape only took two weeks to make. She explained: "This one started happening just before I went on tour with Halsey when I was in London. Me and [producer] A.G. Cook do so much work together now and he's so fast, so we were just like, 'we should do another mixtape.' We had this studio session where we made a few ideas, and then we went out and partied at this PC Music night. We didn't do anymore work, but we knew we had some good ideas and we should probably finish them. He flew over to New York for these really hectic, mental four or five days where we would stay in the studio until 4 a.m. It was all being done while I was still on tour. In total, it took maybe two weeks. I would go into studios in LA, Boston,



Chicago, Austin, wherever and cut vocals. At the same time, I was sending s\*\*t to other artists asking them to jump on songs. I guess it was a longer period than No. 1 Angel just because there are more features. Honestly, I feel really sorry for A.G. He kept killing himself trying to finish this back in London, staying up for 24 hours for a week. He's really the hero of this mixtape."

## **Robbie Williams** couldn't stay retired

**obbie Williams** soon realized he'd made a mistake when he retired from music more Athan a decade ago - because his brain was turning to "Swiss cheese". The 'Let Me Entertain You' hitmaker decided to call it quits following the release of his flop sev-

enth studio album

'Rudebox' in 2006, but

after spending a lot of

time sitting on the sofa

watching bad TV he

decided he had to come

back and did so in 2009

with his LP 'Reality

Killed The Video Star' -

produced by Trevor



Horn. Speaking to The Sun newspaper, he admitted: "Yeah, 2006 happened, I went on tour and that just fried my brains and I decided that I retired. I didn't tell anybody because I knew I'd possibly been lying to myself. I took to my home, stayed there and grew a beard, chased UFOs, watched 'The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills', Orange County, New Jersey, Atlanta,

even Dallas ... And in those three years off my brain turned to Swiss cheese. A man needs a purpose, which is why I came back." Robbie - who has spent time in rehab on numerous occasions throughout his career for alcoholism, substance abuse, depression and even an addiction to energy drinks Lucozade and Red Bull - has previously credited meeting his wife Ayda Field in 2006 with putting him back on track. The pop star launched his career as a member of Take That and after quitting in 1995 he joined the boys in 2010 for a new album 'Progress' and tour. Robbie, 43, is open to rejoining the band - which now tours as a trio, Gary Barlow, Howard Donald and Mark Owen following Jason Orange's departure - in the future because he had so much fun with the guys, even though it is hard work being part of their all-action shows. Asked if he'd return to Take That, he said: "Yeah I would. Don't know when that would be. I'm constantly having ideas about my own stuff that I want to fulfil. It's a big commitment to re-join the band, go and promo the album for months then go on tour - it's a whole 18 months out of my life. Last time was the perfect storm in the best way.



## Lifestyle Gossip



## **Kevin Lima has no plans** for Enchanted sequel

**EXAMPLE EXAMPLE EXAMP** reportedly has signed up to reprise her role as Princess Giselle. However, Lima has stepped away from the sequel and said he thinks his original movie is "complete in and of itself". Speaking to Den of Geek, Lima said: "I always find that I'm heading off into the world looking for new adventures. The idea of making a sequel isn't the most intriguing for me. At the same time, I haven't been able to even suggest a sequel to them. 'Enchanted' feels like a movie that's complete in and of itself. I'm sure if I was forced to stick my nose to the grindstone I could work something out. I don't have a story that feels compelling, though. Nothing's come to me. I tend not to dwell on it. "I

keep thinking what's next? What other stories can I tell?" The follow up - known as 'Disenchanted' - will be set 10 years after the original and feature Giselle "questioning her happily ever after, and accidentally triggering events that make everyone's lives turn upside down in both the real world and in the animated kingdom of Andalasia". In the first movie Gisele rejected Prince Edward (James Marsden) in order to remain in New York with Robert Phillip (Patrick Dempsey), a divorce lawyer she fell in love with, and his daughter Morgan. It is not yet clear if Dempsey or Marsden will return for the sequel. The sequel was originally due to be filmed in 2010 and is now set to begin filming in 2017, 10 years on from its original release. 'Rock of Ages' director Adam Shankman will helm the project, while David Stem and David Weiss have written the script.

## Spurlock's film dropped from Sundance

organ Spurlock's 'Super Size Me 2: Holy Chicken!' has been dropped from the Sundance Film Festival. The 47-year-old filmmaker's former company Warrior Poets have pulled the documentary movie from the schedule at the upcoming event after the screenwriter admitted he is "part of the problem" of sexual misconduct. The company said in a statement: "Due to Morgan Spurlock stepping down from Warrior Poets, we, the partners, have decided that this is not the appropriate time for Super Size Me 2: Holy Chicken! to premiere at the Sundance Film Festival. "Therefore, we will be removing the documentary from the festival's slate." The Sundance Institute added in a statement: "We fully support these decisions by the film's teams. We were saddened to read Morgan Spurlock's recent admissions. "We empathize deeply with the many people affected - especially the women who were impacted." Last week, Morgan admitted the current climate in Hollywood has left him wondering about his own past, because he is not an "inno-



cent bystander". He explained: "As I sit around watching hero after hero, man after man, fall at the realization of their past indiscretions, I don't sit by and wonder 'Who will be next?' I wonder, 'When will they come for me?' "You see, I've come to understand after months of these revelations, that I am not some innocent bystander, I am also a part of the problem." The CNN presenter admitted he had paid to settle a "verbal" sexual harassment allegation from his former assistant. He admitted: "I would call my female assistant 'hot pants' or 'sex pants' when I was yelling to her from the other side of the office. 'Something I thought was funny at the time, but then realized I had completely demeaned and belittled her to a place of non-existence. "So, when she decided to quit, she came to me and said if I didn't pay her a settlement, she would tell everyone. Being who I was, it was the last thing I wanted, so of course, I paid. "I paid for peace of mind. I paid for her silence and cooperation. Most of all, I paid so I could remain who I was." The Sundance Film Festival 2018 will take place from January 18-28 in Park City, Utah.





## **Kidman can't** bear rejection

**Ticole Kidman** still finds younger. She said: "It blows my has no "control" over her career now. I'm so much more appreciative because it's entirely reliant on other than I was about success in my people deciding she is right for a twenties. "Because of the rollerparticular project, and even after several decades in Hollywood, she still gets upset if casting directors are not "interested" in her. She said: "Any actor will tell you that as much as we'd love to say we're in control of our own destiny, we're not. "So much of our time is still spent asking, 'Are they interested in me?' And most of the time, your agent will say no. You learn about rejection early, and it's personal and it hurts." But the 'Big Little Lies' star - who has kids Isabella, 25, and Conor, 22, with ex-husband Tom Cruise, and Sunday, nine, and six-year-old Faith with spouse Keith Urban - has had an incredibly successful 2017, and she is much more "appreciative" of that now than she was when she was

rejection hurtful. The 50- mind actually, because it's all so year-old actress admits she unexpected. "And it means more coaster life I've had, with ups and downs and contrasts, I know more of what life deals you at different times. "But it's also important not to be attached to the success. That's the kiss of death." The 'Killing of a Sacred Deer' actress admitted there is a lot of "fear" attached to her work but she likes to push through and make bold choices without worrying about the consequences. She said: "There's an enormous amount of fear. It's just whether I can overcome the fear or push through it. But I probably don't think of consequences. I don't play things out. I like to jump off the cliff. "I just say to myself, 'What is the worst that can happen?' So people don't like it, so I fall flat on my face - that's OK."

### Doug Liman crashed wedding to secure rights for The Bourne Identity

oug Liman crashed a wedding when try-ing to secure to film rights to 'The Bourne Identity' franchise. The 52-year-old filmmaker directed the first installment of the Matt Damon franchise back in 2002 and although the 'Bourne' franchise spawned four subsequent films, Liman didn't act as the director but instead as executive producer. In a recent interview, Liman has spoken on the lengths he went to in order to secure the rights to the book - which was written by Robert Ludlum - which included crashing a wedding to try and speak to Terry Semel of Warner Bros. Studios. Speaking to Den of Geek, Liman said: "I'd loved 'The Bourne Identity' since high school. After 'Swingers' was a pretty big hit, people were asking me what movie I want to make. I said 'The Bourne Identity'. And Hollywood said, no, what kind of small comedy do you want to make? I really wanted to make 'The Bourne Identity' and Hollywood was not ready to give me the opportunity. I never stopped pursuing the chance to do the book myself. I crashed a wedding where Terry Semel of Warner Bros was because I thought Warner Bros had the rights. I was shameless in my pursuit of the rights, and I eventually found Ludlum's lawyer and he told me the rights were about to revert to Ludlum from Warner Bros." Liman arranged to meet him in Glacier National Park after just becoming a pilot and buying himself an airplane. After spending a weekend with the spy author, Liman won him over and eventually secured the rights to the now successful movie franchise. Liman also recently spoke about how he was worried he was making a "poor man's spy movie" and didn't think it would be as successful as Tom Cruise's 'Mission: Impossible'. He said: "I felt so insecure



while I was making 'The Bourne Identity' that I was making a poor man's spy movie. "There was someone of the set who had the 'Mission: Impossible' ring tone on his phone, and every time his phone rang it drove me nuts because I was afraid my movie was never going to be as good as 'Mission: Impossible'. "It was never going to be as good as James Bond. So it was really surreal afterwards to go and see the next James Bond film, and be like, 'Oh, I did make a James Bond film, because now the James Bond film looks like 'The Bourne Identity'.'



## The Addams Family

**scar Isaac** is in line to voice a starring role in the new animated movie adaptation of 'The Addams Family'. The 'Star Wars: The Last Jedi' actor will lend his vocal talents to the head of the family, Gomez Addams, if talks with MGM are successful, according to Variety. The studio has just confirmed the latest big-screen incarnation of the comedy horror clan is going ahead, announcing a release date of October 11, 2019. Conrad Vernon - director of the Seth Rogen adult animation 'Sausage Party' - is on board to helm the new Addams Family project from a screenplay by Pamela Pettler, who worked as a writer on Tim Burton's 'The Corpse Bride'. Oscar, 38, made his Hollywood breakthrough in the award-winning Coen Brothers' movie 'Inside Llewyn Davis' and is now best known for his role as X-wing pilot Poe Dameron in the new 'Star Wars' franchise. The new movie will be based on Charles Addams' original cartoons of 'The Addams Family' - a spooky and eccentric family - which were published in The New Yorker between 1938 and 1988, when the artist died. 'The Addams Family' have appeared on the big and small screen several times over the years, first being made into a hit TV sitcom in 1964 starring Carolyn Jones and John Astin as Morticia and Gomez Addams. A live-action film titled 'The Addams Family' was released in 1991 starring Anjelica Huston and Raul Julia as Morticia and Gomez, and a young Christina Ricci as their daughter Wednesday. Gomez and Morticia Addams live in a haunted mansion with their children Wednesday and Pugsley, Uncle Fester, Grandmama, their butler Lurch, a disembodied hand called Thing, and their hairy Cousin Itt.

## **Mark Hamill voices an alien** in Star Wars: The Last Jedi

Tark Hamill voices an alien in 'Star Wars: The Last Jedi' as well as playing Luke Skywalker. The 66-Lyear-old actor appears as the Jedi Master in the eighth installment of the popular sci-fi franchise but he also lent his voice to a CGI character known as Dobbu Scay. However, Hamill has refused to give any more details about his new character because he loves "the mystery of it all". Speaking at a post-screening on the movie, Hamill said: "I don't know what you're talking about. I'm not telling. I like playing the mystery of it all. I said I'd love to do a CGI thing and he said sure. And I got to go to the set of the casino and see in detail 150 extras in jaw-dropping costumes." Hamill is a veteran voice actor having won numerous plaudits for voicing The Joker in 'Batman: The Animated Series' and numerous feature length animations based on DC Comics stories, including 'The Killing Joke'. Although Hamill shot to fame in the original 'Star Wars' trilogy as Luke

Skywalker, he recently admitted it may have been more fun to play Darth Vader or Han Solo, although he likes playing "bland" Luke because he is the "one centered character" to be a contrast to all the other characters in a galaxy far, far away. He said: "When I first read the screenplay of 'A New Hope', I felt it would be much more fun to play the cynical pirate who's always making wisecracks or Darth Vader, who has such an interesting role, or C-3PO, who is hilarious. Luke is so bland! He doesn't have as much color as the other characters. "But it's like Dorothy in 'The Wizard of Oz' - there has to be one centered character to provide contrast to all the other characters around them, even if I would rather play the Cowardly Lion or the Tin Man or even The Wizard than Dorothy. "And Luke makes people feel at ease. He's not scary like a pirate. He's not spectacularly talented or super intelligent, he is just an average farm boy. And that is a nice thing."

### Fisher's death almost changed The Last Jedi

changing 'Star Wars: The Last Jedi' following the shock death of Carrie Fisher. The 44-year-old filmmaker wrote and directed the eighth installment of the sci-fi franchise, which sees the return saga legends Fisher and Mark Hamill as sister and brother



General Leia Organa and Luke Skywalker. Last December, Fisher died at the age of 60 and although she had shot all the scenes for 'The Last Jedi', Johnson admitted he was unsure about whether to change the movie's plot following her passing as she would no longer be able to be part of 'Episode IX'. Speaking to lowing Colin Trevorrow's depar-Entertainment Weekly, Johnson ture from the project.

ian Johnson considered said: "That was the very first conversation I had with Lucasfilm head Kathleen Kennedy after we came back, after New Year's. I kind of looked through the footage. That was the very first question. I felt really strongly that what we have here is so beautiful and the way that the character develops, the way it's paid off, and not only that, the horror of trying to manufacture something that - I don't even know what it would have been, but something for the end of this movie that leaves it in a place where the transition is easier, the idea of, 'Oh God, how would you fake something like that and how would it not be terrible? "Given that we have a beautiful, complete performance from her that I think audiences deserve to see, and I think it will mean a lot for them, that ray of hope from Leia. For all of those reasons I felt really strongly that we had to let this fly. Luckily we have a fantastic storyteller in J.J. Abrams who is going to figure out a way to bring it home in the end, that's going to be satisfying, I know he's going to. "With this movie I just wanted audiences to have this performance." Abrams, 51, directed and co-wrote the first film in the new trilogy, 'The Force Awakens', and has been brought back to create the final part of the new story fol-





## Lifestyle Music & Movies



(From left) Actors Jeremy Strong, Bill Camp, Poker player **Molly Bloom, Michael** Cena, Jessica **Chastain, Director** Aaron Sorkin, and **Madison McKinley** attend "Molly's Game" **New York Premiere at** AMC Loews Lincoln Square in New York City.

## Chastain on the rise and fall of Hollywood's 'poker princess'

essica Chastain struggled initially to relate to Molly Bloom, the former ski champion turned "poker princess' nostess to the rich and famous at Hollywood's most exclusive high stakes card tables. It wasn't until Chastain met Tinseltown's goddess of gambling as part



halt to her dreams and she turned her attention to underground poker.

She earned a fortune hosting illegal gambling for Hollywood stars like Leonardo DiCaprio and Matt Damon, as well as politicians and Wall Street titans, taking eye-watering stakes from her illustrious clientele, fueled by cocaine. At her height, Bloom claimed to be making \$4 million a year, but things fell apart when she made the mistake of insisting on a cut of the pot, rather than just making her living from tips, which pushed her activities into the bracket of organized crime. Her dealings also came to the notice of Mafia mobsters, who began demanding their own share, before one of her games was raided by FBI agents and all her possessions were seized.

"To understand how she got trapped by these people, this was hard and I think I was guilty of some judgment," California native Chastain told AFP. "We as a society have fallen to the pattern of blaming women for things, the way they look, dismissing them, shaming them for revealing their bodies. I absolutely had that judgment before I met her."

#### Uncompromising

Chastain, 40, nominated for a best actress Golden Globe for her turn as the hostess, said she came to see Bloom as simply in stylish gray pants and a white

secrets of the rich and famous.

The movie, due for release on Christmas Day, does not name or represent onscreen any specific personalities, but Bloom's 2014 memoir shocked and amused Hollywood with its tales of A-list poker parties. Charmed by Ben Affleck-'he's nice to everyone," she says-Bloom was less impressed by Spider-Man actor Tobey Maguire, describing him as "the worst tipper, the best player and the absolute worst loser." Bloom wrote that the "Seabiscuit" star once told her to "bark like a seal who wants a fish" for a \$1,000 chip. She refused. Dressed

"

Be visible, to be heard in a man's world

vocal proponents of the #MeToo social media campaign against sexual assault, set up after veteran producer Harvey Weinstein was brought down by more than 100 allegations of misconduct. Sweetly-spoken but iron-willed, the tenacious graduate of prestigious New York performing arts conservatory the Julliard School says she learns her lines methodically until they flow "like music." Chastain says "Molly's Game" direc-

tor Aaron Sorkin, celebrated for his sharp, back-and-forth dialogue in "The West Wing," "A Social Network" and "Steve Jobs," may well be the best screenwriter in Hollywood. "I studied the classics-Shakespeare, Chekhov and Ibsen-and he has this way, he has a rhythm just like Shakespeare had," said Chastain. "Aaron's dialogue is like that. So if you drop the ball on that pace, you lose it. So I wanted to be word perfect on his script." At the heart of the "Molly's Game" is the relationship between Molly and her lawyer Charlie Jaffey (Idris Elba), who encourages her to cooperate with the police and give up her celebrity former clients. "She gives away piece after piece of who she is and she goes to Charlie Jaffey's office and you kind of see this shell of this person: They took all my money so they could give it back to me for all this gossip,"

## MARIAH CAREY XMAS SONG IS MOST STREAMED ON SPOTIFY

**Ariah Carey's** 'All I Want For Christmas Is You' is Spotify's most streamed Christmas song of all time. The 46-year-old singer's 1994 single - which she wrote and produced with Walter Afanasieff - has been streamed globally over 217 million times, and is followed close behind by Wham!'s 'Last Christmas' in second place, with Michael Buble's 'It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas' third. Festive hitreleasing machine Buble features five times, with his covers of 'White Christmas' (Featuring Shania Twain), 'All I Want For



Christmas Is You', 'Holly Jolly Christmas' and 'Santa Claus Is Coming To Town' also dominating the list.

'Mistletoe' by Justin Bieber and Ariana Grande's 'Santa Tell Me' are also popular Yuletide tracks. Mariah recently said she had no idea she'd be able to build an empire around 'All I Want For Christmas'. The 'Hero' singer has been "surprised" by how well the track has stood the test of time, and how it becomes more and more popular each year around the festive period. Asked if she knew the hit would bring her so much success and revenue, she said: "Oh my gosh, no no, never, no. I feel like this is something small compared to the rest

of my catalogue. This song just continues to surprise me." Mariah - who has six-year-old twins Moroccan and Monroe with exhusband Nick Cannon - loves it when she hears how the song has resonated with her fans. She said: "I'm very thankful that people seem to still have an attachment to it. "It makes me feel good when people tell me that it's part of their lives."

**Spotify's Top 20 Christmas songs globally are as follows:** 1.Mariah Carey - 'All I Want for Christmas Is You' 2.Wham! - 'Last Christmas' 3.Michael Buble - 'It's Beginning To Look A Lot Like Christmas' 4. Justin Bieber - 'Mistletoe' 5.Ariana Grande - 'Santa Tell Me' 6.Andy Williams - 'It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year' 7.Band Aid - 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' (1984 Version) 8. The Pogues - 'Fairytale of New York' (feat. Kirsty MacColl) 9.Bing Crosby - 'White Christmas' 10.Frank Sinatra - 'Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!' 11. Michael Buble - 'White Christmas' (Duet With Shania Twain) 12.Bobby Helms - 'Jingle Bell Rock' 13.Michael Buble - 'All I Want For Christmas Is You' 14.Elvis Presley - 'Blue Christmas' 15.Jose Feliciano - 'Feliz Navidad' 16. Michael Buble - 'Holly Jolly Christmas' 17.Coldplay - 'Christmas Lights' 18.Chris Rea - 'Driving Home For Christmas' 19.Nat King Cole - 'The Christmas Song (Merry Christmas To You)' 20.Michael Buble - 'Santa Claus Is Coming To Town' – Bang Showbiz

#### Actress Jessica Chastain attends "Molly's Game" New York Premiere at AMC Loews Lincoln Square on December 13, 2017 in New York City. — AFP photos

of her research into playing Bloom in upcoming biopic "Molly's Game" that she began to understand the high-rolling impresario's motivations. Growing up in Colorado, Bloom seemed destined to follow her Olympian brother Jeremy into elite level skiing, until an injury brought a

a creation from this patriarchy" who did what was necessary to "be visible, to be heard" in a man's world. "It comes from her childhood. Her dad made it clear that he made the rules," the actress said in an interview in Beverly Hills. "She would have to follow them until she makes her own money. So she goes for an industry where she feels she can get that liberty." Valued for her discretion and able to earn millions of dollars a year at her peak, Bloom was privy to some of the darkest and most valuable shirt, her porcelain features a study in placid composure, Chastain exudes a personal style that is the antithesis of the brash outfits and thick makeup Bloom wears in the film.

#### Iron-willed

The flame-haired actress, who already has a Golden Globe for military thriller "Zero Dark Thirty" and two Oscar nominations, made her name in 2011 with "The Tree of Life" and "The Help." She has been one of the most

Bloom stopped cooperating but avoided jail time when she was sentenced in 2014 to a year probation after admitting to being a key player in an illegal \$100 million gambling ring. "She goes, 'My name is Molly Bloom-this is who I am-' and it's the first time in the movie she does that," said Chastain, explaining Bloom's change of heart. "I don't see it as protecting others, I see it as, for the first time, protecting herself and her integrity."-AFP

## 'In the Fade' star **Diane Kruger** on her real-life agony

t is the most intense, critically-acclaimed role of her career, but Diane Kruger hardly had to act at all to play a grief-stricken woman robbed of her family in a bombing. Kruger was filming "In the Fade"-Fatih Akin's German thriller about a woman who seeks revenge on the neo-Nazis who killed her husband and son-when she was told her stepfather had died. Wolfgang Bieneck-her mother's longtime partner since Kruger's parents divorced when she was a teenagerhad been a crucial part of her life, often pictured with her on



the red carpet. She channeled her grief into the role.

"I felt like I was drowning in sorrow and grief. It just felt like there was no way out, ever," the German-born 41-year-old, best known for blockbusters such as "Troy' and "Inglourious Basterds," told AFP. "In the Fade" was filmed chronologically, allowing Kruger to tap into her character's fluctuating state of mind, and her own

fraught emotions were heightened by visiting grieving relatives of real-life murder victims. "I never felt like that tension, those feelings, like I could push them aside at night, or on weekends," Kruger said in an interview at the plush Four Seasons hotel in Beverly Hills. Kruger's work as the tattooed, drug-taking Katja has earned her critical acclaim and the best actress award at the Cannes Film Festival in May. The movie was nominated for best foreign language film at the Golden Globes, and three days later it was named among nine overseas films advancing to the next round of voting in the Oscars.

#### 'Dream director'

Kruger was on the Cannes jury in 2012 when she met Akin, an acclaimed German-Turkish auteur known for hits such as "Head On" and "Edge of Heaven," at a beach party. "He was definitely my dream director, I'd seen all of his movies. I went up to him and said, 'If you ever have anything, please remember me.' It took five years but he did," she said. Kruger moved to Hamburg a few months before shooting, contributing to the casting process and meeting two dozen people who had lost a loved one, mostly families of murder victims, in special workshops. - AFP

## **Ridley Scott** knew he had to reshoot All the Money in the World

said Chastain.

ir Ridley Scott knew within "36 hours" he needed to reshoot 'All the Money in the World'. The 80-year-old filmmaker has helmed the new John Paul Getty biopic which original starred Kevin Spacey as Getty Oil Company magnate J. Paul Getty. In the past several weeks, Spacey, 58, has been accused by multiple men of sexual harassment and assault and as soon as Scott became aware of the scandal he came to the decision to drop the actor from his project and recast

Christopher Plummer in the role. Speaking to 'Entertainment Tonight', Scott said: "I knew as soon as they hit Kevin it was going to blow wide open and I contacted my partners and said, 'We should recast this right now. We shoot right now, we'll be out the same day.'

Within 36 hours, I knew what I was going to do. Once I got his [Plummer] agreement, everything else was a matter of efficiency. I got a really efficient group." The motion picture tells the story of his character, oilman John Paul Getty, who

refused to pay a ransom after his grandson, John Paul Getty III, was kidnapped. Fortunately for Scott most of the scenes in the thriller film involve Getty III's mother Gail Harris (Michelle Williams), and Getty's advisory (Mark Wahlberg) rather than Getty himself. Spacey is said to have worked around eight to 10 days on the movie set.

#### \$2.9 million to free him

Plummer - who is best known for starring as Captain Von Trapp in 'The Sound of Music' agreed to join the movie because he "wanted to

work" with Scott. The 88-yearold actor said: "I really would have said yes anyway if I hadn't read it, because I wanted to work with him very much. I did read it, and said yes, and boom we were off to the races."

John Paul Getty III was just 16 when he was grabbed during a night out in the Piazza Farnese in Rome, Italy, on 10 July 1973 and then kept chained in a cave for six months with a ransom note demanding \$17 million delivered to the family.

Initially his grandfather believed that his grandson may have staged the kidnap himself and refused to pay anything, also fearing if he paid up then all of his other grandchildren would be targets.

He also ignored the pleas of his own son, John Paul Getty Jr to free him, and the pleas of John Paul's mother Gail as she had divorced his son and had refused his money to raise her family alone, however, when one of his ears was sent through the post to a newspa-per along with a lock of his hair

the tycoon eventually paid \$2.9 million to free him. Nine of the kidnappers were eventually arrested and two were sent to prison. But John Paul - whose son is actor Balthazar Getty - never fully recovered from the harrowing ordeal becoming an alcoholic and drug addict. He eventually died at the age of 54 following a long battle with ill health which began when he took a cocktail of Valium, methadone and alcohol in 1981 which caused liver failure and induced a stroke which left him a quadriplegic and nearly blind. — Bang Showbiz

### **Gallagher** joined by ex-Oasis guitarist Bonehead at Manchester Arena

iam Gallagher performed with his former Oasis bandamate Paul 'Bonehead' Arthurs at his hometown show at the Manchester Arena on Saturday night. The Britpop group's former frontman wrapped up his UK headline solo tour, in support of his debut LP 'As You Were', by bringing out the 52-year-old guitarist at Manchester Arena for the encore of 'Cigarettes & Alcohol', 'Wonderwall' and an acoustic rendition of 'Live Forever'.

Bonehead's appearance was no doubt a surprise as the night before the concert, Liam tweeted a fan to say the 52-year-old musician is "too old" for rock 'n' roll and has bad hearing. In response to a follower who posted, "Get Arthurs onstage with you again (sic)", Liam replied: "He's too old for all this RnR he's deaf as well (sic)" Having Bonehead on stage brings the tour full circle as the original Oasis member played 'Be Here Now' with Liam, 45, at his debut solo gig at Manchester's O2 Ritz venue, a benefit gig held to raise money for the victims of the terror attack at Ariana Grande's concert back in May.

The pair were reunited back in October 2013 when Bonehead joined Liam and his former band Beady Eye to perform at the 'A Night For Jon Brookes' tribute concert at The Royal Albert Hall, organised by The Charlatans to pay tribute to their late drummer. Whilst Liam has occasionally brought out original strummer Bonehead, his estranged brother and former bandmate Noel has had Bonehead's replacement Gem Archer performing in his High Flying Birds group.

Gem, 51, joined the 'Supersonic' rockers in 1999 after Bonehead quit and had been a member of Beady Eye, which Liam formed formed with other members of Oasis, including Andy Bell and Chris Sharrock, after Noel, 50, quit the band in August 2009 following a backstage row with his younger sibling. Beady Eve eventually disbanded in October 2014 after releasing two albums, 'Different Gear, Still Speeding' and 'BE'. As



Liam Gallagher

well as playing guitar in Oasis, Gem also contributed several songs, including 'Hung in a Bad Place' from 2002 album 'Heathen Chemistry', which was the first track not penned by a Gallagher brother to feature on one of the group's LPs.

#### Liam Gallagher's Manchester Arena setlist was as follows:

'Rock 'n' Roll Star' 'Morning Glory' 'Greedy Soul' 'Wall of Glass' 'Paper Crown' 'Bold' 'For What It's Worth' 'Rockin' Chair' 'Some Might Say' 'Slide Away 'D'You Know What I Mean?' 'I'm Outta Time' 'Come Back to Me' 'You Better Run' 'Universal Gleam' 'Supersonic' 'Be Here Now'— Bang Showbiz





## Lifestyle Features



This file photo shows men belonging to historical groups dressed as centurions walking by Rome's statue of emperor Augustus to mark the anniversary of the legendary foundation in 753 BC of the eternal city on April 21, 2014. — AFP

## Exiled for his sense of humor, poet Ovid has last laugh

We thousand years after being banished from Rome, Ovid has been rehabilitated in a victory for the famous poet whose check riled one of history's most powerful emperors. The Rome city council unanimously approved a motion to "repair the serious wrong" suffered by Ovid, best known for his "Metamorphoses" and "Ars Amatoria", or the Art of Love, who was exiled by the Emperor Augustus to Romania in the year AD 8. The reason for his banishment to the town of Tomis on the Black Sea coast is one of literature's biggest mysteries, as there are no surviving contemporary sources which give details about it, so all historians have is Ovid's word.

The poet rather cryptically claims it was due to "carmen et error", or "a poem and a mistake"-the poem being the Ars Amatoria, a subversively witty poem instructing men how to get and keep a girlfriend. Augustus is assumed to have been less than pleased, having recently passed a series of laws against adultery.

#### Scandal in the senate

"Although the poem doesn't overtly advocate adultery, it sails quite close to the wind," Rebecca Armstrong, a Fellow in Classics at Oxford University, told AFP. "It definitely displays an irreverent tone towards traditional moral attitudes as well as the emperor and his family. "For example, Ovid recommends several of the public monuments built by Augustus and his family as excellent spots to pick up girls," she said. It is unlikely to have been the poem alone that angered Augustus enough to drive Ovid out, as it was published several years before he was sent away.

But after irritating the emperor, experts believe the poet's mysterious "error" was the last straw. "It's quite often suggested that it might have been something to do with the scandal surrounding Augustus's granddaughter, Julia, who was exiled in AD 8 for an adulterous affair with a Roman senator," Armstrong said. The writer hated the "wild frontier" of Tomis and pleaded endlessly to be allowed to return to Rome-to no avail.

#### 'Would have been pleased'

He did not help himself by partly apologizing for the Ars Amatoria in the poem Tristia II, but "making it clear that he believes Augustus to be an unsophisticated reader of poetry and someone who can't take a joke." "An interesting strategy for someone hoping to be recalled!" Armstrong said. The decision to revoke Ovid's exile comes on the 2,000th anniversary of the poet's death in AD 17. He is not the only famous figure to whom Italy has recently apologized: In 2008 Florence asked forgiveness for persecuting the poet Dante, who fled into exile after he was sentenced to death for his political beliefs. Armstrong said she thought Ovid "would have been pleased" by last week's council ruling, particularly "by the knowledge that people care who he was and are still reading his poetry so many years later". And not only has his jocular guide to dating been avenged, he may also have pulled one of the biggest pranks in history. Most critics are dubious, but "on the basis that there is so little evidence available, some have even argued that Ovid was never exiled at all, and that his exile poetry is, rather, a kind of experimental literature". — AFP

This picture shows a Pakistani smoker holding a match to a clump of hashish to soften it before mixing it with cigarette tobacco in Peshawar. — AFP photos

# High and dry: Pakistan's penchant for hash

hashish-lots of it. Despite it being forbidden by his faith, the 50 year-old estimates he spends about 30 percent of his earnings as a cab driver on the habit. His love affair with cannabis began as an occasional puff with friends when he was a teenager, but has since morphed into a full-blown addiction for the father-ofnine. "It is a sacred plant. A sacred intoxication," says Ali, who asked to use a pseudonym, after taking a fresh rip off a hookah packed with pungent hash in Pakistan's bustling northwestern town of Peshawar.





This picture shows Maulana Mohammad Tayyab Qureshi (right), the imam of the main Peshawar mosque, teaching with an Islamic book to his son at the mosque in Peshawar.







This photo taken at an undisclosed location shows manuscripts, historic letters, notes and musical scores of the Aristophile collection, before the collection is to be liquidated through a process of hundreds of auctions over at least the next six years.

### France dubs '120 Days of Sodom' a national treasure to stop sale

The French government stepped in yesterday to declare the manuscript of the Marquis de Sade's "120 Days of Sodom" a national treasure as it was about to be sold at auction in Paris. Officials ordered that the 18th-century erotic masterpiece be withdrawn from the sale, along with Andre Breton's "Surrealist Manifestos", banning their export from France, the Aguttes auction house told AFP. They were part of a vast sale of historic documents owned by the French investment firm Aristophil, which was shut down in scandal two years ago, taking (\$1 billion) of its investors' money with it. "120 Days of Sodom" was expected to go for up to six million euros, while Breton's highly influential manifestos on modern art were estimated at around four million euros.

Sade wrote the controversial work about four rich libertines in search of the ultimate form of sexual gratification on a roll made from bits of parchment he had smuggled into his cell in the Bastille. When the Paris prison was stormed at the beginning of the French revolution on July 14, 1789, the famously dissolute aristocrat was freed, but he was swept out by the mob without his manuscript. Sade believed it had been lost to the looters and wept "tears of blood" over it, but the unfinished manuscript turned up decades later. Even so, the book languished unpublished for more than a century and was banned in Britain until the 1950s. — AFP

A Pakistani man smoking hashish in a chillum pipe near a shrine in Peshawar.

"It's like a second wife, this addiction," he sighs. While Ali freely acknowledges using hash runs counter to the tenets of Islam, he insists it has its advantages. "We know that it is haram but it's an intoxication that doesn't harm anyone else," he explains. In conservative Pakistan, an Islamic republic, the consumption of alcohol is strictly forbidden for Muslims. Any semblance of a sybaritic nightlife takes place at home behind closed doors, where the country's elite have been known to quaff booze.

But many Pakistanis are surprisingly open to using cannabis, with the spongy, black hash made from marijuana grown in the country's tribal belt and neighboring Afghanistan the preferred variant of the drug. Whereas alcohol is explicitly forbidden in Islamic scripture, hash seemingly straddles a theological gray zone, which could explain its popularity in the country. Even if most observant Muslims in Pakistan scoff at the idea of drinking, a prod into their feelings on marijuana often triggers a wry smile followed by a trite maxim about how good it makes food taste or how restful sleep can be after a toke.

#### 'No compromise on hash'

People have been smoking hash on the subcontinent for centuries. It predates the arrival of Islam in the region, with reference to cannabis appearing in the sacred Hindu Atharva Veda text describing its medicinal and ritual uses. According to a 2013 UN survey, cannabis was the most widely consumed drug in Pakistan with around four million users, representing 3.6 percent of the population-a figure that has drawn skepticism in a country where reliable data can be hard to come by. "It's an underestimation," says Dr Parveen Azam Khan, president of the Dost Welfare Foundation, a nonprofit that treats drug addicts in Peshawar. Despite its widespread consumption, not all are happy about hash's prevalence in the so-called "Land of the Pure". "There is no compromise with hashish," says Maulana Mohammad Tayyab Qureshi, the imam of the main Peshawar mosque. According to Qureshi, anything that causes intoxication or bodily harm is strictly forbidden in the faith. He chalks up marijuana's popularity in Pakistan as a law enforcement issue. Public health experts also warn the ubiquitous availability of cheap hash in Pakistan's northwest has been especially harmful to impoverished children, who increasingly use the drug to deal with the hardships of poverty and trauma from years of militant violence.

"For children, it's the drug of choice," says Dr Khan, blaming the vicious nexus between the region's narcofunded insurgencies and widespread drug use for the scourge. Pakistan also remains wholly unequipped to handle the problem, with the UN survey saying a dearth of treatment clinics and prohibitive costs keeps users from seeking help.

#### 'Wakes up your mind'

But in Islamic shrines salted across the country others see cannabis as more benign. At the Bari Badshah shrine in the heart of Peshawar, followers of the Sufi sect of Islam gather in a small courtyard nightly, where they smoke copious amounts of hash and listen to devotional music while draining tea by the kettle. Conversations are fluid, only to be inter-

A Pakistani

the kettle. Conversations are fluid, only to be interrupted by hard drags off hash pipes with the occasional song performed by one of the devotees. "The basic work of hash... it wakes up new corners in your mind," says Mohammed Amin, 50.

According to Sayeed Asjid, 27, such shrines are welcome to members of any faith and in Peshawar are frequented by high-level bureaucrats, police officers and members of security agencies. "It's a deep relaxation," says Asjid of the cannabis high as he exhales clouds of marijuana smoke. But Sufi shrines have been the frequent target over the years by Taleban militants and sectarian extremists like the Islamic State group, who view the mystical sect as heretical.

"That was only to spread fear and havoc," says Asjid of the attacks, while expressing his faith in the power of the shrine to protect. The herb is not only enjoyed by free-spirited Sufi mystics. Mehwish, a single mother of three, says the occasional joint helps manage the stress that comes with the daily grind. "You can use hash when you are alone... then you can think in a relaxed way," says Mehwish, whose name has been changed on request. Although she admits most of her family are unaware of her habit, the 26year-old is a firm believer in its benefits. She adds: "When you feel good and you're active and it puts a smile on your face then nobody minds." — AFP



A Pakistani woman smoking a hashish cigarette in Peshawar.



A Pakistani smoker putting hashish into a chillum pipe before smoking in Peshawar.

Kuwait and Times

# Lifestyle





An artist draws the Palestinian flag on a wall on the southern Lebanese border with Israel near Fatima's Gate, in response to the United States' decision to recognize Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel.—AFP

## Nigeria turns the page on literary past

rention Nigerian literature and the first country has changed. "We are looking for an alternative value of the literary revolution with other local alternative way to tell African stories, funny, sub-publishers such as Farafina and Bookcraft. In just



Fall Apart", or the venerable Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka. But Africa's most populous nation has a new crop of writers whose work is a far cry from the post-colonial era of their esteemed predecessors. Olumide Popoola's novel "When We Speak Of Nothing", for example, tells the story of a gay teenager seeking the father he never knew in the southern oil city of Port Harcourt.

The book, which was published earlier this year, is written in a language mixing African pidgin with London slang, and includes comical descriptions and textspeak. For Emeka Nwankwo, from Nigerian publisher Cassava Republic, breaking conventions and expectations about literature is a way of reflecting how the

versive stories," he said at the launch of Popoola's novel. "What's going on now in Nigeria is very fascinating. New voices are coming out after a long period of quiet."

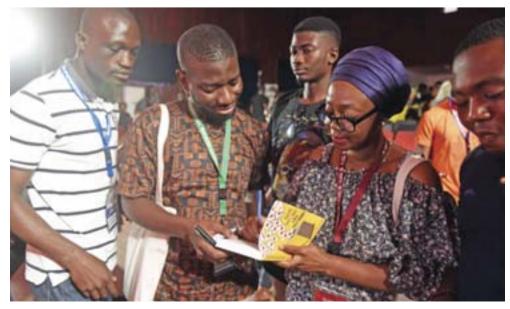
The most famous voice to emerge in recent years is the novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, who made her name with "Half of a Yellow Sun" (2006) and "Americanah" (2013). Both stories have since been translated into dozens of languages while the first was adapted for cinema in 2013, starring Hollywood actors Thandie Newton and Chiwetel Ejiofor.

#### 'Thirst for literature'

Cassava Republic, which was launched in 2006 in Abuja and now has an office in London,



This file photo taken in Abeokuta, southwest Nigeria shows Moderator Molara Wood (center) flanked by authors Ayisha Osori (left) and Bisi Adeleye-Fayemi, posing with their books after a discourse on "Disrupting culture: women in politics" during the Ake Arts and Book festival. — AFP photos



This file photo in Abeokuta, southwest Nigeria shows author of book "Love Does Not Win Election" Ayisha Osori (right) signing autographs during the Ake Arts and Book festival. — AFP

publishers such as Farafina and Bookcraft. In just over a decade, it has published some 50 books. The bestseller, "In Dependence", by Sarah Ladipo Manyika, has sold 1.7 million copies in Nigeria and overseas. No genre is excluded from Cassava Republic and it has published books from science fiction and crime to homosexuality and eroticism.

Abubakar Adam Ibrahim's "Season of Crimson Blossoms" tells the story of an improbable affair between an ageing widow and a petty drug dealer in the conservative, Muslim-majority north. Instead of provoking a scandal, the novel won last year the country's top literary award, the Nigeria Prize for Literature and the author \$100,000 (85,000 euros). In another category entirely is "Longthroat Memoirs: Soups, Sex and Nigerian Taste Buds", an eccentric ode to local cuisine and its supposed aphrodisiac properties.

With evocative chapter headings such as "Afang Soup and Hairy Legs" and "Eating Dog", the author Yemisi Aribisala reveals the sensual power of yams and well-cooked fish beloved of Nigerians. Others such as Leye Adenle ("Easy Motion Tourist") take the reader on a heartstopping journey to the beating heart of Nigeria's sprawling megacity, Lagos, and encounters with corruption, prostitution and drugs. The literary revival in Nigeria has seen more bookshops springing up in working-class areas and shopping centers across the country.

It is also taking off online. E-book application Okadabooks has some 200,000 users and one million downloads. "There is a thirst for literature in Nigeria and publishers are now responding," said Lola Shoneyin, who organizes the Ake Festival every November. The event, held in the southwestern city of Abeokuta, has become a must for booklovers, many of them under the age of 30.

#### 'Anti-intellectual policies'

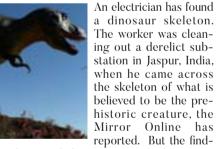
The expansion of literature in Nigeria in the 1960s and 70s was driven by British publishers, said Shoneyin, who is also a poet and writer. But successive military governments in that time "frustrated the book industry", stifling creativity with "anti-intellectual policies", she added. The current challenges faced by Nigerian publishers today are different but no less daunting. Most printing, for example, is done at low cost in China or India, although some publishers are starting to bring production back home because of improved quality.

Books are not immune from the huge bootleg industry that affects Nigeria's entire cultural sector from cinema to music. Badly photocopied books are hawked on the streets or in markets. Distribution-from transporting books to finding reliable points of sale also remains "a challenging experience", said Bibi Bakare-Yusuf, the founder of Cassava Republic.

But she views the situation with an unswerving Nigerian optimism. "A lack of infrastructure can also be an opportunity, as it allows you to think more creatively and flexibly about how to meet challenges, rather than being hampered by existing and often outdated structures that struggle to move with the time and respond to new buying and consumption patterns," she said. — AFP



## An electrician finds dinosaur skeleton



reported. But the finding has puzzled scientists as the bones are surrounded by flesh, which has sparked a debate among researchers who claim that it is not possible for skin to remain considering dinosaurs became extent over 60 million years. Speaking about the sighting, Dr Parag Madhukar Dhakate - who is a Conservator with the Indian Forest Service said: "It looks like a dinosaur, but we can't say anything until all the tests are done."

## Pub turns into gingerbread house

A village pub has been transformed into a giant gingerbread house to celebrate Christmas, although the ornaments are not edible. The Queen Victoria Inn, in Somerset, has been designed with giant candy canes, sherbet, lollipops, liquorice allsorts, the ginger-flavored biscuit, as well as other sweet

treats to bring a smile to the faces of guests who enter and even passersby, the Metro newspaper has reported. The venue's landlord, Mark Walton, came up with the idea after having a few drinks with

some friends in January this year. And though the owner decided on the idea month's in advance of the festive period, he only put his plan in action recently, which took almost four weeks to install. Speaking about the ornate decorations, Mark said: "My electrician – who did the lights – was hanging off the roof for a whole day. "We've got the lot – giant candy canes, sherbet, Quality Street, bubble gum, lollipops and even the occasional drumstick and it's all made out of polystyrene, drain pipes, beach balls – everything. "So no, it's not edible but it is amazing and it looks fantastic."

#### Man distributes business cards to people questioning him on his height



A man has created business cards to distribute to people who question him about his height. A male, who is six foot 10 inches, has revealed his height is a regular topic of conversation, but being asked whether he has clothes to fit his

long frame has started to wear thin on him, which is why he has printed a card with his personal details on for those who stop him and pose irritating queries. A photograph of the note, which has been shared on Reddit, reads: "Yes I am tall. I am 6' 10" (No I'm not kidding. Yes, That is tall.) "No I do not play basketball, I play volleyball. "Yes, seeing the tops of everyone's head is weird "Yes, the weather is nice up here "this has been a great conversation (sic)".

## Gran decorates Christmas tree with glittery G-strings

A woman was left in hysterics after finding out her grandmother decorates her Christmas tree with baubles filled with Gstrings. Alex Bermingham, from Ireland, helped her grandparent to put the festive ornaments on the tree and around the house when she discovered what the items contained. And upon further inspection Alex noticed the circular objects were actually festively-packaged underwear. She posted pictures of the decoration on Twitter, which she captioned: "My 74-year-old grandmother bought Christmas baubles in Dunnes Stores, which I have just realized upon decorating her tree that unbeknownst to her upon purchase, they are in fact, lavender glitter G-strings. "She relied with 'Jesus Al yer man in the shop must have thought I was very kinky sure I bought six of them'. Crying. "Wishing everyone a kinky Christmas this holiday season. (sic)."

