

Amir sails in Omani waters onboard royal yacht



Le Pen cancels meeting with Lebanon mufti over headscarf



AUB net profit surges by 6.2% to \$570.6m



Kuwait SC beat Kazma to clinch Amir Cup



## MPs THREATEN TO GRILL PM OVER HARBI 'RESIGNATION'

BAN ON PUBLISHING SUSPECTS' IMAGES



Min 07°  
Max 22°  
High Tide 10:05 & 19:53  
Low Tide 03:25 & 14:03

### KUWAIT TIMES FETES ART COMPETITION WINNERS



KUWAIT: Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Australian Ambassador to Kuwait Warren Hauck, Kuwait Times Deputy General Manager Adnan Saad, judges and winners are seen during the awards ceremony of Kuwait Times' student art competition "Colours of Australia" at Crowne Plaza Hotel yesterday. Complete coverage of the event and names of winners will be published in Kuwait Times from Monday, Feb 27, 2017. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: A number of opposition MPs yesterday warned they will grill HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah if the health minister is allowed to resign following a controversy over the minister's bid to sack top officials. MP Yusef Al-Fadhlah said on his Twitter account that he will file to grill the prime minister on March 5 if the government allows Health Minister Jamal Al-Harbi to quit, while leaving "suspected corrupt senior bureaucrats" in their positions.

The lawmaker said that he had learned that Harbi offered his resignation on Monday during the Cabinet meeting after his demand to sack the undersecretary and a number of senior officials was not accepted by the Cabinet. The controversy over the health minister has been growing even before the November election, after reports that the cost of sending Kuwaitis for treatment abroad skyrocketed to new highs. Some MPs put it as high as KD 750 million last year.

Opposition MPs have alleged that a majority of those sent for treatment abroad were in fact not patients but sent on what they described as "medical tourism or political medication", under which thousands of fake patients were sent abroad to appease certain MPs. Fingers were pointed at the former health minister, who was accused of sending around 10,000 patients as a favor for MPs to win their votes against his own grilling last year.

According to Fadhlah and other lawmakers, Harbi, a former ministry assistant undersecretary, wanted to sack the ministry undersecretary and several top officials over allegations of corruption and because he could not work with them. MP Jamaan Al-Harbash held the prime minister responsible for not supporting the minister against the health ministry's senior officials. Harbash slammed the reported resignation of the minister, adding that sacrificing the minister to keep unsuccessful officials in the ministry is another proof for the failure of the government and its inability to run the country.

Continued on Page 13

### EXPATRIATES RECALL STAYING THROUGH INVASION HORRORS

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The 1990-91 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was a traumatic event for residents of Kuwait, both citizens and expats. While large numbers of expats left the country to return to their homelands, often by treacherous land journeys before they could board a ship or plane to their destinations, many others remained, either voluntarily or because they couldn't find a way to leave.

Kuwait Times spoke to two expats who stayed through the nearly seven-month occupation of Kuwait to learn more about their experiences during this darkest period in Kuwait's history. Ghazi

Qaffaf, a Jordanian newspaper photographer, recalls the days of the invasion, and how he was forced to stay back to keep his family together. The electricity in his flat was cut, while food was reduced to soup and rice. He had to sell some of his family gold jewelry to survive.

Bong Pagutayao, a Filipino cashier at a grocery store, also remained back with his roommates, working in a meat factory in exchange for food to survive. The safety of residents in Kuwait worsened day-by-day, especially after the US-led coalition entered the fray. They tried to leave once via Iraq, but were turned back due to heavy bombardment. (Full story on Page 3)

### MCMASTER NAMED AS TOP TRUMP ADVISOR

PAGE 9

### UAE DEALS WITH DRONES AFTER AIRPORT CLOSURES

PAGE 14

## EXPATS BLAMED FOR STATE'S WOES

### KHAMENEI CALLS ISRAEL A 'FAKE' NATION, 'TUMOR'

TEHRAN: Iran's supreme leader yesterday used the podium of a pro-Palestinian gathering in Tehran to lash out at Israel, calling the Jewish state a "fake" nation in a "dirty chapter" of history. The remarks by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei were some of his most vitriolic against Israel, Iran's arch-enemy. Every four years since the early 1990s, Tehran has hosted a similar conference in support of the Palestinian cause, assembling foreign guests and those who oppose Israel.

Speaking to the gathering, Khamenei said Israel was created by bringing Jews from other parts of the world to the Mideast region to settle in the land of the Palestinians to replace its "true entity". The creation of Israel is "one of the dirty chapters of history that will be closed, with the grace of God," he added. Khamenei's speech lasted 33 minutes.

The supreme leader, who has final say on all state matters in Iran, also urged all Muslims to support the Palestinians and "resistance" movements - a reference to anti-Israeli groups such as Palestinian Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah. Iran has always been their staunch ally. The "resistance" movements should have all necessary instruments," Khamenei added and praised those who are part of it in allegedly succeeding in "preventing the domination of the Zionist regime in the entire region."

But he did not appear to endorse an all-out war on Israel, saying instead that it's a "cancerous tumor" that requires a "step by step" treatment. In 2015, Khamenei predicted that Israel would not exist after 25 years. Some 80 delegations, mainly from Islamic countries as well as pro-Palestinian activists, attended the two-day meeting. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and several government officials also attended the conference. — AP



Ali Khamenei

KUWAIT: Kuwait's first new government hospital in more than three decades will soon open its doors - but only to Kuwaiti citizens. It's the latest in a series of steps targeting foreigners, including laborers who build high-rise towers, sweep the roads and clean toilets in the state - a group that far outnumbers the native population. The KD 304 million (\$997 million) Jaber Hospital, about a 20-minute drive from downtown Kuwait City, is expected to open in the coming months. It will be the first government hospital built in Kuwait since 1984, taking some pressure off an overburdened public health system.

US ally Kuwait, like other oil-rich Gulf states, has for decades offered a free cradle-to-grave healthcare for its citizens, along with plenty of generous perks such as subsidized utility prices and housing grants. But services have been fraying in recent years - despite the cushion of several hundred billion dollars that Kuwait has been building since the 1970s, mostly in a fund for future generations. That money, which stays out of the state budget, is meant to provide for Kuwaitis when the oil

runs out. It carried Kuwait through the expenses of the seven-month Iraqi occupation and the 1991 US-led Gulf War that liberated it.

Expatriates with residency and work visas in Kuwait get subsidized healthcare. A foreign laborer - usually from another Arab country or an Asian migrant - pays KD 1 (\$3.2) to see a doctor at a public hospital. His employer would typically pay for him an annual health insurance to the government of KD 50, or about \$160.

Western expats who live and work in Kuwait tend to go to private hospitals as part of lucrative health care packages provided by their employers.

Many see the new, citizens-only hospital as a step too far. "They were granted their workers' visa. They deserve to be treated with dignity," Dr Yusef Al-Muhanna, a 34-year old general surgeon, said of the migrant workers. The discrimination goes against the Hippocratic Oath, he says. "We are not supposed to look at their passports - we are supposed to deal with their medical conditions."

Continued on Page 13



RIYADH: Saudi King Salman meets US Senator John McCain in the Saudi capital yesterday. — AFP

### TRUMP CRITIC MCCAIN MEETS KING SALMAN

RIYADH: Influential American Senator John McCain, a critic of President Donald Trump, held talks with Saudi Arabia's King Salman yesterday, official media said. McCain, who chairs the Senate Armed Services Committee, arrived in Riyadh after talks on Syria with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The Saudi Press Agency gave no details of McCain's meeting at Salman's office, except to say that the friendly ties between their two countries were discussed.

McCain's visit comes two days before

Syria's government and the opposition gather in Geneva today for a new round of United Nations-brokered talks aimed at ending six years of fighting. Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar have provided military and financial aid to rebels fighting Syria's President Bashar Al-Assad. All are also members of a US-led coalition battling the Islamic State militants there.

After his talks in Syria, the Republican senator from Arizona said on his website that Erdogan "submitted a proposal to

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: This Jan 25, 2017 photo shows the new KD 304 million (\$997 million) Jaber Hospital. — AP





MUSCAT: Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed of Oman decorates His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah with Al-Saeed Order. —KUNA



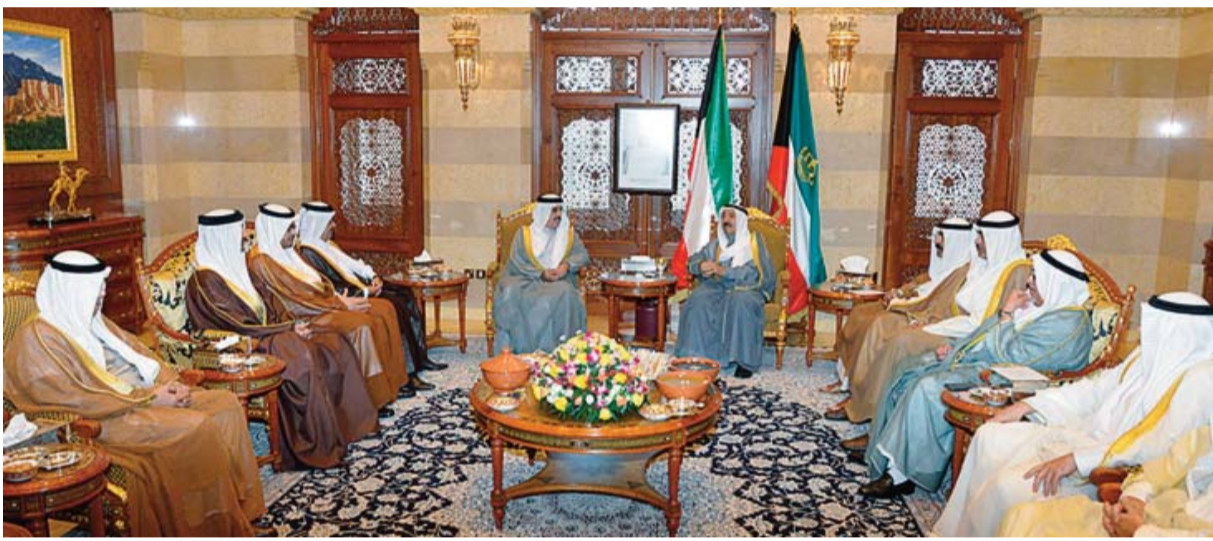
His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah presents two rare books about the history of Oman to Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed of Oman.



Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed of Oman gifts an Omani sword to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

## SHEIKH SABAH, SULTAN QABOOS EXCHANGE GIFTS

### AMIR SAILS THROUGH OMANI WATERS



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with ambassadors of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is seen during his sea journey.

MUSCAT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah gave Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed of Oman two rare books about the history of Oman on Monday. Sultan Qaboos decorated His Highness the Amir with Al-Saeed Order, Oman's highest order, and gifted him an Omani sword. Later, Sultan Qaboos held a dinner banquet in honor of His Highness the Amir and his delegation at Al-Alam Palace in Muscat.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir along with his accompanying delegation, embarked yesterday on a sea journey on board an Omani royal yacht, and that during his ongoing visit to the Gulf state. His Highness the Amir was accompanied on his journey by Oman's Minister of Heritage and Culture Haythem bin Tariq Al-Saeed.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Amir received in his accommodation in Muscat the Omani Deputy

Prime Minister Fahad bin Mahmood Al-Saeed, Minister of Heritage and Culture Haythem bin Tariq Al-Saeed, Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah, and a number of high Omani officials. In a separate meeting, His Highness the Amir met with ambassadors of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

Both meetings were attended by Kuwait's Deputy Chief of the Kuwait National Guard (KNG) Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Khaled Al-Saleh, and His Highness the Amir's accompanying delegation. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is seen during his sea journey.



KUWAIT: Romanian Ambassador to Kuwait Daniel Tanase visited Kuwait Times yesterday. He met with Editor in Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan and discussed with him matters of mutual concern. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

### SPEAKER ENDS BAHRAIN TRIP

KUWAIT/MANAMA: Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and his accompanying delegation have returned home yesterday from Bahrain where he was on a three-day official visit. The speaker was received at the airport by Deputy Parliament Speaker Isa Al-Kanderi and Minister of Justice and Minister of State for National Assembly Affairs Faleh Al-Azeb.

During his stay in Manama, the speaker met with Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa. He also held talks with Bahrain's top lawmakers, and Kuwaiti students in Manama.

Historic and deep-seated relations are what both Bahrain and Kuwait share and enjoy, the Bahraini King said on Monday. This came during King Hamad's reception

of Ghanem and his accompanying delegation, where the latter was tasked with conveying greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Commending the visit, King Hamad hoped its outcomes would have a positive impact on the level of parliamentary cooperation and democracy in both countries.

Meanwhile, Ghanem conveyed greetings of His Highness the Amir to the King and the Bahraini people, pointing out that rulers of Kuwait and Bahrain are "one family." The reception was attended by Kuwaiti MPs Faisal Al-Kanderi, Thamer Al-Suwait Al-Dhifeeri, Dr Humoud Al-Khudair, Osama Al-Shahin, Majed Al-Mutairi, Nasser Al-Dossari, Abdulwahab Al-Babtain, Alhumaidi Alsubaiee, National Assembly General Secretary Allam Al-Kandari, in addition to Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Azzam Al-Sabah. —KUNA

## KUWAITI EMBASSIES, DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS CELEBRATE NATIONAL, LIBERATION DAYS

KUWAIT: Kuwait's embassies and diplomatic missions around the world held ceremonies to celebrate the 56th National Day and 26th Liberation Anniversary late Monday. In Bahrain, the ceremony was attended by Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, Bahraini Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa, and senior officials.

Speaking at the event, the Prime Minister noted the strong historic ties between Kuwait and Bahrain. He congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Kuwaiti people on the occasion. Prince Khalifa also spoke of the important role of His Highness the Amir in resolving issues facing the Gulf countries and the Arab World. Kuwaiti Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Azzam Mubarak Al-Sabah said the wise leadership and humanitarian efforts of His Highness the Amir is well known around the world.

Meanwhile, the ceremony at Kuwait Embassy in Morocco was attended by senior Moroccan officials including Speaker of the House of Representatives of Morocco Al-Habib Al-Maliki. The officials congratulated Ambassador Abdullatif Al-Yahya for the national and liberation days, noting Kuwait's vital support for developmental projects in Morocco.

In the meantime, Minister of State at the Indian Ministry of External Affairs Mobashar Jawed Akbar announced that India and Kuwait's relations are poised to achieve new milestones in the days to come. In a statement on the sidelines of his participation in a function organized by Kuwait Embassy in New Delhi to celebrate national days, Akbar added that he is extremely happy to participate in the event marking the 56th Anniversary of the National Day and the 26th Anniversary of the Liberation Day of the



NEW DELHI: Kuwait's Ambassador in New Delhi Fahad Ahmad Al-Awadhi (right) and Minister of State at the Indian Ministry of External Affairs Mobashar Jawed Akbar attend a reception marking Kuwait's national days. —KUNA

friendly nation of Kuwait.

Kuwait's Ambassador Fahad Ahmad Al-Awadhi echoed the same view. He noted that the two countries would be setting up a joint committee to explore untapped potentials available and deepen and enhance bilateral ties in the economic, political, cultural and security fronts.

The ceremony saw participation of a large gathering consisting of government officials, parliamentarians, and an elite group of dignitaries working in cultural, academic, media and religious fields in addition to a number

of ambassadors and members in the diplomatic corps.

Ambassador Al-Awadhi, his wife Tasneem Al-Abduljader and the diplomats in the embassy exchanged warm greetings with the participants. Awadhi congratulated His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah as well as government and people of Kuwait on the national celebrations. —KUNA

### ENDEAVOR LEADS STUDENTS TO ROSE-COLORED WORLD

KUWAIT: Chairperson of Al-Nuwair Positive Initiative (NPI) Sheikh Intisar Salem Al-Sabah launched yesterday a project that aims to instill in students a sense of optimism. The initiative, titled 'A Brighter Future', is sponsored by Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Fares. In a speech to kick off the program, Sheikh Intisar noted that three years after NPI's inception, the initiative seeks to secure a solid future for the nation's youth.

On the endeavor, she said it is the first of its kind in the history of the Middle East and

fits into global plans that revolve around the youth's increasingly significant contributions to sustained development. Moreover, Sheikh Intisar pointed out that the project, which coincides with Kuwait's national celebrations, was carried out in three different schools with staggering results. Furthermore, she noted it comprises research that will induce data and information to be promulgated in international conferences and magazines.

Meanwhile, the program's director, Ruqaya Hussein, said that 69 teachers have

been instructed to espouse the merits of optimism, adding that it has been proven through years of studies that an optimistic disposition leads to better health. In a statement to the press, the Minister of Education said that this endeavor will prove beneficial to the students and nation as a whole, expressing his support of efforts to reinforce humanitarian and national values. The brainchild of Sheikh Intisar, NPI is a non-profitable initiative formed in March 2013, as Kuwait became the first Arab nation to launch the initiative. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Chairperson of Al-Nuwair Positive Initiative (NPI) Sheikha Intisar Salem Al-Sabah poses with students. —KUNA



# NOT AN ORDINARY DAY: EXPATS NARRATE INVASION'S AGONY

WHEN LEAVING IS NOT AN OPTION, SURVIVAL BECOMES A DAILY STRUGGLE

By Ben Garcia

**KUWAIT:** At 6:00 am, Ghazi Qaffaf was woken by the frantic ring of his home telephone. It rang and rang, forcing Qaffaf out of bed to answer the call. It was a friend from his homeland, Jordan, who was checking in; he had heard that the Jordanian International

*People from the newspaper were telling everyone that nothing serious was going to happen*

Airport had cancelled flights to Kuwait because of an invasion. Qaffaf assured his friend that nothing was happening in Kuwait. Then he got another call, this time from his cousin in America, wanting to know if the Iraqis had indeed breached the border. "[I was] in shock," Qaffaf said. "My manager called, [and] his voice was in panic mode. I only remember his urgent call to report immediately, [and] left home without washing my face."

Qaffaf was 28 when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The night before the attack, then Crown Prince His Highness Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah A-Sabah was in Saudi Arabia for a meeting. Qaffaf, now 55, was working as a photographer for Al-Watan newspaper at the time. "The night before the invasion, I was assigned to take photos of that meeting from a live TV feed from Saudi Arabia broadcasted by Kuwait Television (KTV)," he said. "At that time [there was] no internet, no cable to carry the important meetings like that, so normally we took pictures from the official KTV footage."

There was no hint that something big was going to happen the following day. "I went home just the same. [There was] no serious scenario except the lingering noise about Iraqis preparing to invade Kuwait. That had become normal in the heads of many here."

Before Qaffaf left at around nine that evening, he saw a Reuters report reading "Urgent ... urgent ... urgent," but did not fully appreciate its significance; similar messages had arrived "many times" before. "People from the newspaper were telling everyone that nothing serious was going to happen, that we should go home and get a good night's sleep," he recalled. "During the night, I was watching Iraqi TV and heard strong messages. But to me, it was the same noise I had heard many times before. It was a normal night, and I slept with my family."

#### Panicked faces

Early that morning, the phone rang. On the way to work, Qaffaf remembers the panicked faces of the people he passed. "I saw people weeping, people running. I heard people cursing Iraqis ... When I reached [the office] I saw my editor crying. People in the newspaper were in total shock," he said. Word was going around that the Ministry of Information had fallen, and Qaffaf decided to contact a friend who worked there. "The telephone was answered by an Iraqi soldier who told me that they were now in control of Kuwait."

*When I reached [the office] I saw my editor crying. People were in total shock*



Then Crown Prince His Highness Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah A-Sabah cheers with Kuwaiti soldiers following Kuwait's liberation.

Qaffaf's instinct to take photos pushed him to head to the army headquarters located just a few kilometers away. On route, he heard a heavy bombardment that turned out to be targeting his destination. "The headquarters were on fire, I could see the smoke billowing from that direction," he recalled. "At the same time, Kuwaiti military planes were hovering above." He heard that there were Iraqi forces at the headquarters, some on the Jahra road, but that all were heading towards Kuwait City. He quickly took a few pictures and retreated to the office in Al-Watan.

On arrival, he was met with an entirely empty workspace, save for his supervisor. There would be no newspaper the following day, he was told, so he should leave. Qaffaf described it as the saddest moment in his career; the photos of the burning headquarters were worthy of running on the front page the following day. He went straight to develop the negatives from his camera, then headed home. "On my way home, I saw cars abandoned in the street. People were in a hurry, some were crying out to Allah ... There were very few private vehicles on the road, but I noticed several Iraqi tanks on the streets."

Qaffaf's arrival calmed his family's panic. They were listening to every piece of news they could access over the radio, and Qaffaf heard Sheikh Saad's call to defend the homeland. But he also remembers the high spirits of the Iraqi soldiers on television. "They were dancing in front of the camera and declaring that they had already conquered Kuwait and liberated its people. Kuwait, they said, was now under the control of the Iraqis."

#### Not an option

In the days and months that followed, Qaffaf and his family mainly stayed indoors. He briefly attempted to return to the office, but there was no hope of publishing anything. Friends from Jordan called and tried to convince him to leave Kuwait, his birthplace, but despite holding Jordanian citizenship, a move would be impossible. He had two children at the time, as well as his mother and father to think of. Splitting the group up was not an option, and he could not simply uproot to begin a new life elsewhere.

Qaffaf's money was in the bank, and inaccessible. He had around KD20 in cash, so as the invasion continued, the family's chance of survival grew slimmer. "We had to sell some of our gold and everything we had so we could eat," he recalled.



Ghazi Qaffaf

The situation deteriorated from there. Six months after the Iraqis arrived, the family's electricity was cut, while food was reduced to soup and rice. Qaffaf had to brave queues that stretched for hours to pick up minimal supplies. It was the only way to survive.

*Kuwait was in complete darkness at that time because the oil fields were on fire*

Qaffaf heard that Iraqi soldiers were looking to kill Kuwaiti nationals. "Many Kuwaitis were afraid, but some expats protected them," he recalled. Then, a month later, he heard the news he had been waiting for. Everyone could come out of hiding, the radio said. Kuwait was free. No one from Qaffaf's family had been harmed.

He returned to the office two days later, only to find it badly damaged. "Documents were ransacked, papers were spewed all over," he said. "Everything was destroyed ... It was like a hell, but I was overwhelmed by the fact that Iraqis had left Kuwait."

He and his colleagues began the process of cleaning up, and published their first post-invasion copy ten days after the liberation. The same impulse to photograph events took over. "I started taking pictures of the Iraqi damage. Everything was black. The sky was black because of the burning oil refinery at Mina Abdullah. Then, slowly, everything went back to normal."



Iraqi forces completely destroyed the Ramada Al-Salaam Hotel; a passenger/cargo ship-turned-five-star hotel in Kuwait City.



Bong Pagutayao

#### Very strange environment

On the morning of August 2, Bong Pagutayao, a Filipino cashier at a grocery store, set out for work, ignoring news that something was terribly wrong in Kuwait. He thought it was going to be a regular day. As

flatmates had other ideas. "In my mind I said, I will stay whatever happens. No-one from our flat left, we all stayed until the war's end."

After 30 days, the 20 Filipinos who lived in Pagutayao's flat had run out of food. The only way to survive was to accept temporary work offered by the occupying forces. "Some of us quickly accepted the job and were working," he said. Pagutayao, however, was more hesitant, but eventually accepted work in exchange for food. They rotated shifts in a meat factory, some working during the day, others during the evening.

#### Evacuation plan

The safety of expats in Kuwait worsened day-by-day, especially after the US-led coalition entered the scene. News about people being killed in the fighting also continued apace. "We thought that going home is the only way to survive," Pagutayao said. "All of us in the flat decided to leave Kuwait. We went to our embassy in Jabriya and the officials were preparing to evacuate most Filipino nationals. Cars were parked in front of the embassy waiting for the go signal to leave."

On the road to Abdaly, the group was stopped by an Iraqi commander who warned them that there were heavy bombardments on the border and it was not safe to cross it. Their chance to leave Kuwait had gone. They returned to Adailiya, still without a steady supply of food. Adailiya was mainly populated by Kuwaitis, many of whom were afraid to leave their homes, which meant that the Filipino group were able to exchange food for favors.

Things remained that way until they heard Kuwait had been liberated. "Kuwait was in complete darkness at that time because the oil fields were on fire, but we joined in the joy of the liberation," he recalled. "Then, jobs were offered in abundance. Money was easily earned and people were kind and gracious." After the liberation, Bong went on to work in a travel agency, a cargo forwarding company, and then with the KTV2 marketing team, where he remains today.

*Many Kuwaitis were afraid, but some expats protected them*



KUWAIT: This file photo shows destruction at Kuwait Airway's head office building in Kuwait City during the 1990/91 Iraqi Invasion. — KUNA



Damage left by the invading Iraqi forces on Seif Palace.



Heavy damage inside the National Assembly's building.



Fire and smoke coming out of burning oil fields.





# OFFER OF THE WEEK

Get **two smartphones** when you subscribe to the new Postpaid Plan



**KD40 / Monthly**

- FREE** Platinum number
- 1TB**
- Unlimited** Local Calls
- Unlimited** Local SMS
- 1 Smartphone**
- 1 Entertainment Device or Smartphone**
- 1 Internet Device**

**Call 107** to learn more  
Limited time offer

Terms & Conditions Apply

February offers  
#يازين\_الكويت



## SAWABER COMPLEX VALUED AT KD 110 MILLION

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The Finance Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Expropriation Affairs Fahd Al-Sholah said the total cost of repossessing Al-Sawaber complex in downtown Kuwait City is KD 110 million. Sholah added that the complex's total area is 22,800 sq m and contains 528 apartments, of which the owners of only 15 have not yet finished transfer procedures.

### No strike

Chairman of Kuwait Nursing Association Bandar Nashmi Al-Enezi denied any strike action among nursing staff and stressed that all nurses' demands would be made through legal channels, leaving strikes as the last resort. Enezi also hailed the Ministry of Health's (MoH) Undersecretary for the support he showed

to the nursing profession, such as the decision of giving them two-day weekends. He also noted that Kuwait Nursing Association will soon meet MoH officials to discuss various problems.

### Road projects

The Ministry of Public Works' (MPW) Assistant Undersecretary for Road Engineering Ahmad Al-Hassan said 23 partial road openings would be made until the end of 2017, and that the ministry will coordinate with the traffic department over all openings so as to ensure the safety of road users. Meanwhile, MPW's Director of the First Ring Road Development Project Khaled Al-Salem said around 20 percent of the project has been completed and that construction works were going according to schedule despite some obstacles, adding that it is

set to be concluded by the end of 2019. Salem explained that the road, also known as 'Sabah I Road,' includes three tunnels.

### Court orders

The appeals court yesterday fined cleric Hussein Al-Maatouq KD 20,000 in a state security case filed against him over charges of violating the national solidarity law. Maatouq had brought up in a Friday sermon the topic of investigations with the suspects arrested in the Abdaly cell case. He was accused of instigating sectarian tumult that could have prompted some youth to commit illegal acts.

Meanwhile, the administrative court yesterday ordered Kuwait University to appoint a female citizen as a teaching assistant at the College of Science and temporarily compensate her with KD 1,001 for rejecting her appointment.

### Foreign Ministry

Chairman of the parliament's budgets and final statements committee Adnan Abdulsamad said the committee's meeting with the foreign minister was adjourned because First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah is accompanying His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah during his current state visit to Oman. "The foreign ministry did not inform us of its wish to postpone the meeting to enable the minister to attend it, although it was notified of the committee's wish to meet with the minister early enough," Abdulsamad said, noting that the meeting was scheduled to discuss the ministry's final statement for 2015-2016 and related State Audit Bureau's remarks about violations that have continued without rectification for years.

## KPC EYES DIMINISHED SALES OF CRUDE OIL BY 2040: OFFICIAL

**LONDON:** Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) is looking to diversify investments in the oil sector and curb its reliance on the sale of crude oil by the year 2040, a KPC official said yesterday. KPC's Managing Director for International Marketing Nabil Boursely made the remarks in a statement on the sidelines of an annual reception the corporation holds for its European clientele. Moreover, he noted that the future of oil production lies in the emerging petrochemical industry, on which KPC's future strategy is based.

On the plan, the KPC official said it centers on methods to ramp up oil production to 4.75 million barrels per day and to produce local petrochemical products, which in turn, would lure foreign investment. On a related note, Boursely assured that Kuwait "is very committed to an OPEC decision to reduce oil production," noting that KPC expects an increase in profits despite the measure. Speaking on the future of crude oil in the global market, he said there appears to be a "consensus over increasing demand for crude oil, which could last for another 30 years." He also touted KPC's efforts to recruit youth employees, noting that some 2,000 youths were hired by the corporation last year.

### Vietnam refinery

Meanwhile, Kuwait Petroleum International's (KPI) CEO Bakheet Al-Rashidi said that establishing a joint oil refinery in Vietnam by will provide further opportunities to market Kuwaiti oil. Speaking on the sidelines of the same reception, Rashidi said that the new refinery with a production capacity of 200,000 barrels per day is part of KPI's strategy to expand the marketing of its products. The refinery will be fully launched by next July. Meanwhile, the CEO noted that the company is also planning to invest in the petrochemicals field, which is vital to face the unstable oil prices. Rashidi said the company's office in London has put great efforts to increase its sales rates in Europe within the last three years. KPI saw a rise in profits by 15 percent annually. The rate rose from 319,000 barrels per day in 2013-2014 to 450,000 barrels per day by now, he added. — KUNA

## INDIAN NURSE STABBED IN JLEEB ROBBERY ATTEMPT

By Sajeev K Peter

**KUWAIT:** A 27-year-old Indian nurse was brutally stabbed by an unknown assailant yesterday morning during an apparent robbery attempt in her apartment building in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. The nurse who sustained stab wounds in her abdomen, leg and face, underwent an emergency surgery after being admitted in Farwaniya Hospital, according to neighbors. Her condition is reported to be stable.

According to the neighbors, she was accosted by the assailant from behind in an attempt to rob her as she tried to enter her second-floor apartment on

returning from night duty. As she resisted the robbery attempt, the assailant stabbed her repeatedly and fled the scene. In spite of severe wounds and profuse bleeding, she reportedly managed to climb down the stairs to inform the neighbors on the ground floor who in turn called the police and ambulance.

The horrifying incident that took place around 8:30 am yesterday is the latest in a series of armed robberies and attacks that target expat residents in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh area. Though the police have intensified patrols in Jleeb area following regular complaints from resident associations, criminals continue armed attacks and mugging, the residents complain.

## EMBASSY ADVISES US CITIZENS TO AVOID CROWDS DURING NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS

**KUWAIT:** The United States Embassy in Kuwait issued the following message for US citizens in the country, including safety instructions to follow during Kuwait's upcoming national holidays:

"The Kuwait National and Liberation day holidays will begin on Thursday, February 23, but the main holiday activities will be Saturday, February 25, and Sunday, February 26. Festive celebrations, large crowds, and heavy traffic congestion are expected in downtown areas.

There will be heavy traffic congestion and pedestrian traffic from early afternoon to evening hours on and around Gulf Road and in Salmiya. In the past, the police have

blocked U-turn lanes and intersections on Gulf Road, forcing northbound traffic to travel the entire length of Gulf Road to turn around. Many celebrants engage in water gun fights, throw water balloons, and set off fireworks as part of these national holidays.

While the US Embassy in Kuwait is not aware of any specific security threats, US Mission personnel have been instructed to practice good personal security and traffic safety measures. Avoid crowds, be vigilant of surroundings, and keep vehicle doors locked at all times. It is also a good idea to carry a mobile phone and civil ID or passport at all times. Contact Kuwait Emergency Services at 112 for emergencies."

## TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT READY FOR NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Maj Gen Fahd Al-Shuwaie said the traffic department is ready to carry out its duties as part of the security plan for the celebration of National and Liberation Days. He said the plan was set on the instructions of Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah to deal with traffic jams and maintain traffic flow. Shuwaie said bad behavior must be avoided during driving as streets will see a large number of pedestrians, children and families, so all efforts should be made to avoid any accident.

### Gas cylinder thieves caught

Farwaniya detectives solved several theft cases registered against unidentified persons, after they arrested an Asian gang that stole gas cylinders. Farwaniya detectives received several complaints about thefts of gas cylinders from homes and restaurants when residents and owners were not around. Detectives intensified their investigations and identified the main suspect, who is a Bangladeshi. The suspect told police about the whereabouts of his partners, and they were all arrested in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh (two Indians, two Pakistanis and a Bangladeshi). Seventy cylinders were found. The suspects used to sell the cylinders to restaurants.

### Fire drill

Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) carried out an exercise at Olympia Tower, simulating a fire on the 18th floor of the 22-storey building, with people injured. The



**KUWAIT:** Gas cylinders stolen by a number of suspects arrested yesterday in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh.

building was evacuated and the injured people were handed to paramedics, as firefighting began. Separately, KFSD's Director General Lt Gen Rakan Al-Mikrad honored the leading teams in the comprehensive training contest. Deputy Director General for the Firefighting Sector said the contest was held on the instructions of the director general following the comprehensive exercises that were held in Dec 2016 in Julaia.



## FUNERAL SERVICE

**Lissy Joseph, 68 years**  
(W/o. Joseph M P) went to be with the Lord on 18.02.20

17. The funeral service will be held at the National Evangelical Church in Kuwait, Kuwait City on Wednesday, 22.02.2017 at 1:30 - 3:30 PM followed by the burial at Sulaibikhat cemetery.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/Kuwaitindianstv/live>  
[https://youtu.be/V1g5HiDGy\\_o](https://youtu.be/V1g5HiDGy_o)

Please find above link for viewing of funeral service of Lissy Joseph on 22 February 2017

at 01:30 PM -Kuwait Time [04:00 PM - Indian time]

Audi Vorsprung durch Technik

# Intelligence creates beauty.



## The all-new Audi A5.

The breathtaking curves highlight an iconic and legendary design. Developed with the 252hp TFSI quattro engine and the Driver Assistance Systems, the all-new Audi A5 provides an uncompromising driving experience.

For more info visit [audi-kuwait.com/a5](http://audi-kuwait.com/a5) or call us on 1811118

شركة فؤاد الغانم وأولاده للسيارات  
Fouad Alghanim & Sons Automotive Company





Al-Anbaa

'PAID MPS' AND POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS

By Tha'ar Al-Rasheedi

The so-called 'Paid MPs' scandal toppled the 2011 government and led to the dissolution of the 2009 cabinet and parliament. Important files showing MPs with enlarged bank accounts were deliberately brought to light, exposing the role of 'political funds' and their impact on politics. Public rage followed, causing parliament to be disbanded, the cabinet to be dismissed, and an attempt to defuse the situation by a call for early parliamentary elections that would see a new prime minister and cabinet appointed.

That happened in 2011, but people are still talking about the same issue today. The question is whether reopening those files would have a significant political impact. The topic has been discussed many times in the political, public and media arenas. We all know the ins and outs of the issue by now; there is nothing surprising about it and it has become something normal to talk about. Reopening that topic will not do our political life

After 2011, political money is no longer a secret that would topple cabinets or parliaments

any good because, after 2011, political money is no longer a secret that would topple cabinets or parliaments. At most, it would lead to the formation of a special parliamentary committee to discuss the legal amendments needed to close political loopholes. Bringing those proposals to the forefront again will not reactivate the opposition, nor will it bring even a quarter of what used to be known as 'A Nation's Dignity March'. It will never move public opinion and the status quo will remain the same. Whether the topic is discussed or not, nothing will change as long as we have no law to regulate and monitor political funds. Under the current system, everyone is innocent by law.

So, before filing a list with 'paid MPs' names, someone must propose a bill preventing the expansion of political money and turn it into a law the public prosecution can use. We need a bill that questions all public officials' financial disclosure statements and holds them legally accountable. As we do not have such a law, talk about paid MPs remains talk of the impossible.

— Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Jarida

الجريدة

Al-Jarida

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GRILLINGS?

By Mudaffar Abdullah

The interpellation recently filed against former Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah was chronically the 84th in 54 years, starting from 1963. The figure is very large, but scientific studies revealing seriousness in using the constitutional tool of interpellation are very few. However, without going into the details of each grilling motion, this number indicates the following:

- 1- The clear wish of various parliaments to achieve reform.
- 2- The government's evident unwillingness to deal with the parliament's wish towards achieving reform, and this was very clear in the results of every grilling motion.
- 3- For over half a century of parliamentary life, the government's administrative performance has showed no significant improvement. Moreover, the state's rank on international, and even Arab, corruption indices has drastically fallen.
- 4- There is no real sociopolitical wish to combat corruption and reform the administration, and this is very clear in attitudes towards the Public Anti-Corruption Authority and State Audit Bureau reports.

5- The development of nominal foundations needed to meet international demands without actually activating them (such as the Human Rights Diwan and the Public Anti-Corruption Authority).

So, in conclusion, what are the benefits of interpellations? The answer is nothing, but changing faces of some ministers in what appears to be corruption-motivated temporary revenge expressed emotionally. It is noteworthy here to release the parliament from blame, because most of the development keys are in the government's hands, that "owns" people, capital and decision-making. So to say that corrupt and pro-government MPs exist seems more like an insignificant detail.

Therefore, parliamentary monitoring will gain nothing, unless the government administration develops and intends to use true accountability regardless of personal loyalty to senior officials. The parliament will go on using its constitutional tools in monitoring, but we will remain going round and round in circles gaining nothing but sociopolitical tension and gridlock that no one can predict how it might be expressed, and this is the real danger.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

Crime

Report

COUPLE ARRESTED FOR TORTURING MAID

KUWAIT: The appeals court ordered the arrest of a citizen and his pregnant wife, who are on trial on charges of torturing their maid and imprisoning her at their home. The couple had tied the maid, tortured her and deprived her from food. This continued until she managed to escape and seek help of people on the street, who took her to her country's embassy. The court decided to look into the case on March 6.

Porn site owner arrested

A man who ran a pornographic site was put under the arrest of e-crimes detectives, who put an end to his activities. The suspect, a citizen, said all clips he published were real and were sent to him, except for one that showed a policewoman, which he confessed was made up by a student.

Search for harasser

A man groped a British girl in a Salmiya mall before fleeing. The victim was at the mall when she was surprised by a person fondling her. When she sought help, he ran away. The girl lodged a complaint at Salmiya police station.

KD 5,000 stolen

A Jordanian woman left KD 5,000 in cash inside her car, which was stolen by a thief who broke the car's window. The woman told police about what happened, and a case was filed for investigations to identify and arrest the suspect.

Retiree mugged

A retired citizen was robbed by two men and a woman after he withdrew KD 500 from an ATM in Naem. The citizen told police about what happened, and a case was filed for investigations to identify and arrest the robbers.

Apology not accepted

A Gulf national beat up an Egyptian man, causing injuries to his head. The Gulf national was crossing a road in Jabriya when he was almost hit by a car, whose driver came out to apologize, but the man answered back with insults and blows. Passersby called police and paramedics, who took the injured man to Mubarak Hospital. The attacker was detained and charged with insult and assault. — Translated from the Arabic press



Group photo of the trainees and Gulf Bank representative.

GULF BANK GOLD SPONSOR OF INTENSIVE YOUTH FINANCIAL TRAINING INITIATIVE PROGRAM CELEBRATES FIRST CLASS OF GRADUATES

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank is proud to be a gold sponsor of the Kuwait Economic Society's first youth financial training initiative. The program, 'Investing in Our Youth is Unique' under the broader theme of 'Our Gulf Deserves,' seeks to train youth in the fields of investment, financial stock trading, as well as technical and news analysis.

Gulf Bank was represented by Khaled Al-Otaibi, Manager - Corporate Communications, at the awards ceremony for the first group of trainees. Otaibi said: "Gulf Bank strongly believes in supporting educational initiatives to help prepare our youth for successful careers. It has been a pleasure to see the students' positive response to the trainings. The initiative was launched in November 2016 and runs until May 2017 and several groups will be taking part in the training.

We thank the Kuwait Economic Society for creating this interesting and useful program."

This unique investment development program is for college students who are enrolled in their third or fourth year of study in the fields of finance, accounting, business management, economics, and industrial engineering. Additionally, recent graduates in these fields are also eligible to apply to the program. The objective of this initiative is to prepare youth for successful careers, develop talent, as well as exchange experiences and improve teamwork.

This program is comprised of a series of practical and consultative sessions over a period of seven months. Three different classes of students have participated in the intensive investment training program. Participants are appraised on qualitative and quantitative evaluations, they

are given a trial account of \$50,000 for to engage in simulated trading. Those who excelled in the program and the trading are then selected to move onto a regional trading simulation exercise. Forty participants will be selected from Kuwait and those who excel will be awarded with a trip to the UAE or Qatar to share experiences and enhance their skills.

Each training session culminates in a forum to measure participants' performance and to award the top performers. The first forum was conducted in January and focused on ways to invest in financial markets, with a focus on how to minimize risk. The second forum was conducted in February and explored investment opportunities to support youth in international markets. The third forum recently concluded and shed light on investment strategies in financial markets.

Kuwait Economic Society was founded in 1970 as a civil society institution and partner in the economic development process of the country. The Kuwait Economic Society works on reforming policies of the state, improving the competitiveness and transparency of the Kuwaiti economy. It also offers consulting, economic services, in addition to financial studies for public and private sectors. The Society also promotes cultural and economic awareness among members of the society, and enables generations of business professionals with the skills to build a knowledge-based society. The Kuwait Economic Society also focuses on the role of human capital in the development of civil society activities, particularly in the economic and financial fields; it also builds bridges with the international institutions and economic organizations. Gulf Bank is strongly committed to supporting educational and entrepreneurial initiatives for youth to help them build successful careers.

ZAIN MAIN SPONSOR OF KUWAIT INVESTMENT FORUM

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its main sponsorship of the fourth edition of the Kuwait Investment Forum. The event was held throughout two days at JW Marriott Hotel under the patronage of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh.

Zain's support to the forum came in line with its developmental strategy that closely focuses on contributing to the further progress of National economy and its belief in the importance of collaborating with the public sector, as it is considered one of the leading private sector companies in the country.

The fourth edition of the forum witnessed special participation from Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and acting Minister of Information Sheikh Mohammed Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah who participated in a session titled "Achievements and Challenges of SMEs in Kuwait," as well as the Minister of Commerce and Industry and acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Roudhan who took part in

a brainstorming session about the main challenges and obstacles that face the Kuwaiti economy. The forum also hosted many young Kuwaiti entrepreneurs who had the opportunity to learn from the attending experts to develop and grow their own businesses.

Kuwait Investment Forum is one of the most prominent events in Kuwait that cater to finding the best solutions to economic challenges in the investment sector. The event witnesses the participation of many government officials, heads of corporations, businessmen, and other experts who jointly discuss the challenges that face National economy.

Zain's support to this forum came to highlight its keenness in supporting the various developmental projects and initiatives in the country, as such partnerships showcase the collaborative spirit between the public and private sectors. The company is also keen on contributing to the further progress of national economy and developing the talents within the local investment sector.



The first place winner receives his certificate.



KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's Acting Assistant Undersecretary for General Security Affairs Major General Ibrahim Al-Tarrah honored a number of Farwaniya police officers for distinguished efforts they have exerted as of late.





Seven killed; three suicide bombers hit Pakistan court

ON COLLISION COURSE? WORKING OUT RULES FOR DRONES

LE PEN SPARKS LEBANON CONTROVERSY BY REFUSING TO DON VEIL

**BEIRUT:** France's far-right presidential candidate Marine Le Pen sparked controversy yesterday during her brief visit to Lebanon when she refused to wear a veil to meet the country's top Sunni Muslim cleric. On her last day in the small Mediterranean country, Le Pen arrived at Sheikh Abdellatif Deryan's office in Beirut and was offered a white shawl to cover her blonde hair.

The National Front candidate promptly refused and made a brief statement to journalists before leaving. "The highest Sunni authority in the world had not had this requirement, so I have no reason to," Le Pen said, referring to her 2015 visit to Al-Azhar, the prestigious Egyptian institution of Sunni Islamic learning.

She said she had told Deryan's office on Monday that she would not don a veil: "They did not cancel the meeting, so I thought they would accept that I will not wear the scarf." "They wanted to impose this on me, to present me with a fait accompli. Well, no one presents me with a fait accompli," the candidate said.

Deryan heads Dar al-Fatwa, the highest Sunni authority in Lebanon. In a statement yesterday, the body said "its press office had informed the presidential candidate, through one of her assistants, of the need to cover her head when she meets his eminence, according to the protocol assumed by Dar Al-Fatwa".

"Dar Al-Fatwa officials were surprised by her refusal to conform to this well-known rule," the statement said. Fewer than a dozen protesters gathered near Lebanon's Zaytuna Bay yesterday afternoon to protest against Le Pen's visit. "From Beirut to Damascus to Paris to Washington, fascists flock together," one placard read.

**'Lesser evil'**

One banner read "Fascists out!", and demonstrators carried pictures of Le Pen



**BEIRUT:** Lebanese communist protesters hold placards with Arabic that read, 'You are not welcome' during a protest against France's far-right presidential candidate Marine Le Pen's visit, in Beirut yesterday. — AP

and US President Donald Trump. Yesterday is Le Pen's last day in Lebanon, where she met a foreign head of state for the first time-President Michel Aoun.

The FN leader, whose party takes an anti-immigrant stance, also met Prime Minister Saad Hariri, a Sunni Muslim, and Foreign Minister Gebran Bassil. Islamic dress is a hot-button issue in France, where the full-face veil is banned in public places. Le Pen's deputy Florian Philippot swiftly lauded her controversial move. "A magnificent message of liberty and emancipation sent to the women of France and of the world," Philippot wrote on Twitter.

Shunned by European leaders over her party's stance on immigration and its anti-EU message, Le Pen's meeting with Aoun aimed to boost her international credibility. France had mandate power over both Lebanon and Syria during the first half of the 20th century.

Le Pen has met few top foreign officials since taking control of the FN in 2011. German Chancellor Angela Merkel has refused to meet with her. After leaving Deryan's office, Le Pen headed to Bkerkeh, north of Beirut, to meet Maronite Catholic Beshara Rai.

She is also set to meet Samir Geagea,

who heads the Lebanese Forces party and is a fierce opponent of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad.

In an interview with Lebanon's L'Orient-Le Jour, Le Pen called Assad "the lesser evil" compared to the Islamic State jihadist group in Syria.

She has also criticized the EU's calls for Assad to stand down after nearly six years of war that have left more than 310,000 people dead. "Marine Le Pen's statements in Lebanon are an insult to the Lebanese people and the Syrian people," wrote Lebanese Druze chief Walid Jumblatt on Twitter. — AFP

KTMCC (Kuwait Town Malayalee Christian Congregation) expresses its heartfelt Condolences to Mr. Joseph M. P & Family on the Demise of Mrs. Lissy Joseph (68 Years) Funeral Service will be held at National Evangelical Church, Kuwait City, at 1:30pm on Wednesday 22nd February 2017.

الكويتية KUWAIT AIRWAYS

"لَجِنُ الْكُوَيْتِ فِي حُبِّ الْكُوَيْتِ يَطْرُزُونَ الزَّمْنَ أَنْجَارَ" - بدر بورسلي

"For the love of Kuwait, weaving achievements through time" -Bader Bouresli

سماؤنا كويتنا #SamaNaKuwaitiya

kuwaitairways.com



## MIDEAST HELPS DOUBLE KALASHNIKOV'S SALES

**ABU DHABI:** Russian weapons maker Kalashnikov Group's sales doubled last year, helped by demand in the Middle East for its drones, missiles, rifles and military vehicles, making up for US sanctions that cost it its largest market, its chief executive said. Kalashnikov, whose AK47 assault rifles have armed Russian forces for 70 years, embarked on a modernization program and targeted new markets after it was ousted from the United States due to sanctions for Russia's role in the Ukraine conflict.

It invested 10.5 billion roubles (\$182 million) over 2014 to 2017 and targeted new markets for its lines of assault and sniper rifles, guided artillery projectiles and precision weapons. It plans to invest more than 10 billion roubles over the next two years, Alexey Krivoruchko said. The program has paid off and the Middle East is now its largest market, accounting for the bulk of its exports, he told Reuters on the sidelines of the International Defense Exhibition (IDEX) in Abu Dhabi.

"Sales have doubled in 2016 with demand growing for weapons, drones and other products," Krivoruchko said, declining to give figures or further details. Military products now account for 80

percent of sales with civilian sales accounting for the rest, unlike before US sanctions when it was the reverse, he said. Its civilian products include hunting shotguns and sporting rifles. To keep up with orders it is hiring 1,500 more people to staff its factories 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as its expands operations across its companies, Krivoruchko said.

It is also in advanced talks with a partner in India to start producing assault rifles there, possibly this year. "India is a very big market and we like the 'Make in India' program," he said, adding Kalashnikov is also in talks with two other countries to set up similar joint ventures. Krivoruchko and investor Andrei Bokorev bought a 49 percent stake in Kalashnikov from state-owned holding company Rostec in 2014. Three weeks ago, they bought another 25 percent stake from Rostec, taking their ownership to nearly 75 percent, he said. "We have more flexibility in making speedy decisions now for faster growth of the company," he said. Kalashnikov is keen to return to the US market, but there are no indications yet from the new administration that sanctions will be lifted, he said. —Reuters



**A masked fighter of the Hashed Al-Shaabi (Popular Mobilization) paramilitaries poses for a picture carrying a Kalashnikov assault rifle by defensive positions near the frontline village of Ayn Al-Hisan, on the outskirts of Tal Afar west of Mosul, where Iraqi forces are preparing for the offensive retake the western side of Mosul from Islamic State (IS) group fighters. —AFP**



**AL-BAB:** Rebel fighters, part of the Turkey-backed Euphrates Shield alliance advance towards the city of Al-Bab. — AFP

## CIA-BACKED AID FOR SYRIAN REBELS FROZEN AFTER ATTACK

### US TRIES TO STOP ARMS, CASH FALLING INTO MILITANT HANDS

**BEIRUT:** CIA-coordinated military aid for rebels in northwest Syria has been frozen since they came under major Islamist attack last month, rebel sources said, raising doubts about foreign support key to their war against President Bashar Al-Assad. Rebel officials said that no official explanation had been given for the move this month following the jihadist assault, though several said they believed the main objective was to prevent arms and cash falling into Islamist militant hands. But they said they expected the aid freeze to be temporary.

The halt in assistance, which has included salaries, training, ammunition and in some cases guided anti-tank missiles, is a response to jihadist attacks and has nothing to do with US President Donald Trump replacing Barack Obama in January, two US officials familiar with the CIA-led program said. The freeze reflects the troubles facing Free Syrian Army (FSA) rebels in the almost in

the almost six-year-old revolt against Assad, who now appears militarily unassailable in his core western region largely thanks to direct intervention on his side by Russia and Iran.

"The reality is that you have changes in the area, and these changes inevitably have repercussions," said an official with one of the affected FSA rebel groups. He said no military assistance could "enter at present until matters are organized. There is a new arrangement but nothing has crystallized yet". The support funneled to vetted FSA factions has included contributions from Turkey, Qatar and Saudi Arabia - states that have opposed Assad. It is one of several foreign aid channels to rebels. Others still function.

The CIA declined comment on the reported freeze in support. A Qatari official said his government had nothing to say on the matter. Turkish officials said only they could not discuss "operational details". There was no word from Saudi

Arabia. Reuters confirmed the freeze with officials from five of the FSA groups that have been recipients of financial and military support from the so-called "MOM operations room". It was also confirmed by two other senior FSA figures briefed on the matter.

They spoke on condition of anonymity given the covert nature of the CIA-backed program and the sensitivity of the subject. Several rebels believed the aid halt was temporary, with new arrangements expected, but there was no clarity yet. Confirming the freeze, two senior FSA sources said donor states were aiming to send the aid to one, unified fighting force - a coherence that has eluded rebels throughout Syria's civil war. One of the FSA officials said he did not expect the rebels to be abandoned as they represent the best hope for blocking a further expansion of Sunni jihadist influence in Syria, and to fight back against the growing role of Iran there.

#### Declining rebel fortunes

Idlib and nearby areas of Aleppo, Hama and Latakia provinces are among the last footholds of the anti-Assad insurgency in western Syria - the part of the country where he has shored up his rule by holding onto the main cities and the coast. Islamists have long been seen as the more formidable insurgent force in the northwestern Idlib area though a dozen or more US-vetted FSA groups have also operated there and nearby.

Last month's militant assault on the FSA groups was launched by a group formerly known as the Nusra Front, Al-Qaeda's official affiliate in the war until last year when it formally cut ties and renamed itself Jabhat Fateh Al-Sham. The jihadist onslaught led several FSA groups to merge with the powerful Islamist faction Ahrar Al-Sham, widely believed to be backed by Assad's foreign adversaries in the region. That will likely give pause to foreign donors: Ahrar Al-Sham is set apart from the FSA factions by a strongly Sunni Islamist ideology and it has previously fought alongside the Nusra Front. Military aid to rebel groups has ebbed and flowed throughout the life of the program, US officials said, as Washington and its allies have kept a close eye on any leakage to more militant factions, something one official called "a constant problem".

#### Trump's Syria policy

Before assuming office, Trump suggested he could end support for FSA groups and give priority to the fight against Islamic State (IS), whose well-armed jihadists hold large tracts of eastern and central Syria. But Trump's administration has yet to declare a firm policy towards Syria and Iraq, despite his repeated vows to eradicate IS, so it has been "business as usual" with covert and overt training and military support programs, one US official said.

Some FSA groups hope Trump's animosity towards Iran could yet result in enhanced US support. Jihadist forces attacked while FSA envoys attended Russian-backed Syria peace talks in Kazakhstan, accusing the rebels of conspiring with Moscow and Washington against Jabhat Fateh Al-Sham. The United States has carried out a deadly series of air strikes against Fateh Al-Sham in Idlib this year. MOM-backed rebels had suffered a heavy blow in December when Syrian government forces ousted them from eastern Aleppo with decisive help from the Russian air force and Iranian-backed militias. Eastern Aleppo had been seen as an FSA stronghold. —Reuters

## YEARS OF FAILED EFFORTS TO END SYRIAN CONFLICT

**BEIRUT:** Since the start of Syria's war in 2011, several diplomatic initiatives have stumbled over the future of President Bashar Al-Assad. Here is a recap:

#### End of Arab solutions

In January 2012, two months after an initial bid to end the violence, leading Arab diplomats adopt a fresh plan that would transfer power from Assad to a coalition government. The Damascus government rejects the proposal and vows to crush rebel movements.

#### Geneva I, ambiguous formula

On June 30, 2012 in Geneva, global powers draw up a plan that would install a transition government, but which does not spell out what would happen to Assad. Among those drafting the proposal are the five permanent members of the UN Security Council-Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States-along with representatives from the Arab League, Turkey and the European Union. Members of the so-called Action Group for Syria differ over what the plan really means however, with the US saying that it paves the way to a "post-Assad" period. China and Russia, which are allies of Assad, insist it is up to Syrians to decide their future.

#### Geneva II, no agreement

In January 2014, the first talks between Syrian opposition groups and the government are held in Geneva under the auspices of Russia and the US. On February 15, UN mediator Lakhdar Brahimi calls an end to the talks after a second fruitless session, and resigns.

#### Russian offensive/Vienna process

On October 30, 2015, a month after Russian forces launch an intervention to support Assad, several countries meet in Vienna to explore the chance of a political solution. They include France, Russia and the US, and also, for the first time, Iran. In November, a transition outline is drawn up

but the question of Assad's future is still not resolved. On February 27, 2016, a ceasefire is imposed by Russia and the United States. But on April 22 the truce is shattered by the fierce bombardment of Aleppo by regime forces. In March and April, three rounds of indirect talks take place in Geneva between Syrian rebels and the government under UN auspices. They are stymied by questions regarding a political transition, and ceasefire violations.

#### Moscow, Ankara, Tehran

On August 9, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan meets with Russia's Vladimir Putin to cement closer ties between the two countries. Turkey backs some Syrian rebel groups and had shot down a Russian jet in late 2015. Two weeks later, Turkey launches an operation in the northern Aleppo province to battle Islamic State jihadists and Kurdish militia. On December 22, Syrian forces regain control of Aleppo with backing from Russia, after an operation in which tens of thousands of civilians and rebels are evacuated under an accord sponsored by Moscow, Iran and Turkey. The three players effectively take over the Syrian dossier, imposing on December 30 a ceasefire between the government and rebels. They organize on January 23-24, 2017, and then on February 16 peace talks in Astana, Kazakhstan, bringing together representatives of the regime and a small rebel delegation. However, the meetings, organized for the first time without US involvement, end without major progress.

#### Fourth round in Geneva

Representatives from the opposition and of the regime are due to gather in Switzerland from Thursday for another attempt under UN auspices to end the war. However, government forces have over the past days escalated their bombing campaign around Damascus, in what the opposition calls a "bloody message" aimed at sabotaging the peace talks. —AFP



**AL-BAB:** A Rebel fighter, part of the Turkey-backed Euphrates Shield alliance, walks past a burnt bus as they advance towards the city of Al-Bab, some 30 kilometers from the Syrian city of Aleppo. —AFP

## WHERE DOES SYRIA'S OPPOSITION STAND?

**BEIRUT:** Syrian opposition figures will return to Geneva tomorrow for new UN-sponsored talks with President Bashar Al-Assad's regime on their country's six-year conflict. Since the delegations last gathered in Switzerland in April 2016, rebels have lost their bastion in east Aleppo and seen a new partnership form between their main ally Turkey and government backer Russia.

#### Where opposition stand

The High Negotiations Committee (HNC) delegation will be led by opposition figure Nasr al-Hariri, with lawyer Mohammad Sabra replacing rebel figure Mohammad Alloush as chief negotiator. Less than a year after the last round of talks in Switzerland, the HNC is returning to Geneva in a much weaker position, said Aron Lund, a fellow at The Century Foundation. "With East Aleppo gone, Donald Trump in the White House, jihadis in charge of much of rebel-held Syria, and Turkey in talks with Russia, the Syrian opposition is now stuck with a really bad hand to play," Lund said. Karim Bitar at the French Institute for International and Strategic Affairs said rebel factions "have pretty much lost all leverage" heading into the talks. How are rebels doing on the ground?

The fall of Aleppo in December was the single biggest blow-militarily and in terms of morale-to the rebel movement since the conflict erupted in 2011. Rebels now hold just 13 percent of Syria, according to Fabrice Balanche, a geographer at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. That is down from 20 percent in 2015. By comparison, regime forces and allied militia now hold approximately 34 percent of Syrian territory, where more than 10 million people live, Balanche estimates. The Islamic State jihadist group comes at a close second with 33 percent of Syria, and Kurdish groups hold about 20 percent.

#### Rebel fighting

While the rebel movement has long been fractured, new fissures erupted last month in northwest Syria that have forced opposition

factions to choose between jihadists and other Islamist hardliners. The infighting "diminishes the credibility of the opposition delegation", Lund said, and is a distracting backdrop to the talks. "Opposition negotiators will constantly have to watch their back to see how the (hard-liner) Salafi groups in Syria react to their actions in Geneva. That isn't very helpful," he added.

#### Can oppn score any gains?

Given the Syrian army's gains and the growing momentum of parallel talks sponsored by Russia and Turkey in Astana, the opposition is unlikely to score any major wins at Geneva. "Theoretically, the UN-led Geneva diplomatic process has much more legitimacy than the Astana talks, which risked turning Syria into a Turkish-Russian condominium," Bitar said. "But in both negotiation tracks, the principal stumbling block is the same: Assad feels emboldened by recent events and is unlikely to make any significant concessions." Opposition figures have continued to demand greater humanitarian access, an end to bombardment and sieges and Assad's departure at the beginning of any transition period. But Lund cast doubts on the possibility of a meaningful transition process in Geneva. "In my view, talks about a root-and-branch transition away from the current regime were always destined to fail," he said.

#### Where does IS fit in?

The Islamic State jihadist group-designated by the United Nations as a "terrorist" entity-has been excluded from all peace talks and ceasefire deals. Notorious for its brutal tactics, IS is currently facing simultaneous offensives by Syrian rebels, regime forces and Kurdish militia. Syria's representative to both the Geneva and Astana talks, Bashar Al-Jaafari, has suggested that rebel groups engaging in negotiations should commit to "fighting terrorism" alongside the regime's army. "Given the current balance of power, the rebel contribution to the fight against IS is likely to be symbolic at best, even if some parties in Geneva end up paying lip service to the idea of a joint effort," Bitar said. —AFP

## REGIONAL RIVALS TURKEY, IRAN TRADE SYRIA BARBS

**ISTANBUL:** Diplomatic tensions escalated between Turkey and Iran yesterday as the regional powers traded accusations over their roles in the Syria conflict and the Middle East. The pair have been rivals for centuries but have sought to forge a pragmatic relationship in recent years, with the Islamic Republic strongly supporting Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan after last year's failed coup. But mainly Sunni Muslim Turkey and Shiite Iran have been on opposite sides of the conflict in Syria, with Ankara seeking the ouster of President Bashar Al-Assad and Tehran, along with Russia, his key backer.

The tensions come with UN-backed peace talks for Syria due to restart on Thursday and Turkey engaged in fierce fighting inside Syria to capture the town of Al-Bab from jihadists. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu lashed out at Iran in a speech to the Munich Security Conference at the weekend, saying some of its actions had undermined security in the region and urging Tehran

to promote stability. "Iran wants to make Syria and Iraq Shiite," he was quoted as saying by Turkish state media.

Erdogan has also in recent weeks accused Iran of promoting a "Persian nationalism" that had damaged the Middle East. The Iranian foreign ministry on Monday summoned the Turkish envoy to issue a protest after Cavusoglu's comments while spokesman Bahram Ghasseini warned that Tehran's patience "has limits". "We hope that such statements are not made again. If our Turkish friends continue with this attitude we will not remain silent," he added.

Turkey's foreign ministry spokesman Huseyin Muftuoglu hit back by saying it was "incomprehensible" to receive such accusations from Tehran who he charged with "not hesitating to push into war zones refugees sheltering from regional crises." "Instead of accusing countries that have criticised Iran, it should take constructive steps and review its own regional policies." —AFP



# ON COLLISION COURSE? WORKING OUT RULES FOR DRONES

**PARIS:** As drones increasingly crowd the skies, the risk of collision with other aircraft has come to the fore. Here's an overview of international regulation aimed at limiting the dangers.

### How many incidents?

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), which sets global standards for the aviation industry, counted 856 cases worldwide between January 2013 and August 2015 of a drone getting too close to a plane for comfort. "The analysis showed a significant increase in the monthly number of reported drone encounters," Rob Eagles, IATA's director for air traffic management

and infrastructure said. "Drones or unmanned vehicles provide endless innovative business opportunities," he said. "However, we do have concerns about the potential safety and security risks that could result from the irresponsible use of drones in close vicinity of airports and aircraft." There have been no collisions to date, according to the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). "But we still have to take the risk of collision seriously," EASA consultant Yves Morier said.

### Are there worldwide rules?

According to IATA, 65 countries currently

have rules for the use of small drones. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is trying to establish a global framework for the future use of drones. But for now, the body is simply helping out governments in countries where regulation is slow in coming.

### What about Europe?

There is no Europe-wide legislation concerning drones. "All the countries have different approaches," said EASA's Morier. "Some are not very active, including some eastern European countries. Others are more pro-active, like Switzerland and

France." However, for larger drones weighing more than 150 kilograms (330 pounds) EASA has the power to legislate, according to French aviation authority DGAC.

Talks are ongoing within EU institutions to extend EASA's drone regulatory powers by the summer of this year, which would allow it also to set rules for drones weighing less than 150 kilos. Among EU countries, France is a pioneer. Government decrees already regulate drone use and parliament has voted in a law coming into force next year that will punish users of drones flying over airports and other sensitive areas with fines or prison.

### And the US?

The United States has flagged new rules for commercial drones under 25 kilos (55 pounds) which will in future have to remain within sight of their operators at all times. Drones will not be authorized to fly above an altitude of 122 meters (400 feet) or go faster than 161 kilometers (100 miles) per hour.

Night flights will be banned unless a drone is equipped with special lights. Rules governing deliveries by drone have yet to be worked out. The new American rules also do not deal with the impact of drones on privacy. — AFP



**PALM BEACH, Florida:** US President Donald Trump shakes hands with H R McMaster as his national security adviser at his Mar-a-Lago resort on Monday. — AFP

## TRUMP NAMES MCMMASTER AS NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

FLYNN FORCED TO RESIGN AFTER QUESTIONABLE KREMLIN CONTACTS

**WASHINGTON:** Donald Trump tapped respected Army lieutenant general H R McMaster as his national security advisor Monday, hoping to course correct after his first pick resigned and his second turned down the vital post. Flynn announced the counterinsurgency strategist's appointment at his Florida estate Mar-a-Lago, ending a one-week search to replace Michael Flynn, who lasted less than a month on the job. Flynn was forced to resign on February 13, after questionable contacts with the Russian government and revelations that he lied about them to the vice president and the FBI.

Trump scrambled to replace Flynn after retired vice admiral Robert Harward turned down the post, amid a wrangling over lower-level National Security Council appointments and a meandering Trump press conference. The White House said that Trump "gave full authority for McMaster to hire whatever staff he sees fit."

The 54-year-old McMaster is known for his criticism of the US military's handling of Vietnam War and his own service as a commander in northern Iraq in 2005. A 1997 book he authored is pointedly titled "Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Lies That Led to Vietnam."

### Tremendous talent

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes was prompt to praise McMaster's "history of questioning the status quo and infusing fresh thinking and new approaches into military affairs." His experience in Iraq's Tal Afar is likely to come in useful as US and allied forces attempt to

retake nearby Mosul from the Islamic State group. McMaster, still dressed in uniform, appeared with Trump on a sofa in the glitzy living room of Mar-a-Lago as music played overhead. Trump described McMaster as "man of tremendous talent and tremendous experience." "He is highly respected by everyone in the military and we're very honored to have him."

McMaster is another name on the long list of Trump advisors who have been plucked from the military. Among others, Trump has named retired officers as his defense secretary and homeland security secretary. McMaster was most recently the deputy commanding general of the Futures Center at US Army Training and Doctrine Command at Fort Eustis. Trump said McMaster would work in a "very, very special" collaboration with Keith Kellogg, a retired three-star general who had served as acting national security advisor since Flynn resigned a week ago. Kellogg will act as NSC chief of staff. Former president Barack Obama's last national security advisor, Susan Rice, congratulated McMaster on his appointment. "I wish you every success," she said.

### In the path of Kissinger

The post of national security advisor is a crucial, if discreet, engine for White House power and the smooth functioning of government. Henry Kissinger and Colin Powell are among those who previously held the post. The national security advisor manages hundreds of staff members, arbitrates between sometimes feuding government departments, balances foreign policy and military policy and ensures the president's national security agen-

da gets implemented. Current and former staffers fear that under Trump the council is currently being bypassed as political aides like strategist Steve Bannon seize the agenda.

They point to an ill-conceived ban on travelers from seven majority-Muslim nations that further complicated counterterrorism partnerships in the Middle East and sullied America's image abroad, but was ultimately struck down by US courts.

If policy is "being done over dinner with the president, or in Steve Bannon's office or haphazardly via email or phone calls" said Loren DeJonge Schulman—a veteran of Barack Obama's NSC—then "they are shooting themselves in the foot because you can't implement foreign policy from the White House." "This is something that President Obama learned, this is something that every administration goes through," she said. "Being on Fox News and announcing a policy doesn't mean that policy is going to be executed."

Current NSC spokesman Michael Anton said that although the full NSC—chaired by Trump—had not met since he became president, the deputies and principals committee had. Peter Feaver, a veteran of George W Bush's national Security Council, said that under current circumstances the administration could struggle to handle crises that have both diplomatic and military components. "Some kind of crisis will be more challenging for this team until they fix their process," he said. The more difficult potential problems "that would stress them would be (those where) you have to integration across cabinet, departments and agencies," Feaver added. — AFP

## WORLD'S OLDEST LEADER TURNS 93, NO RETIREMENT IN SIGHT

MUGABE DISMISSES CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS

**HARARE:** As he celebrated his 93rd birthday yesterday, Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe brushed aside persistent allegations of corruption against senior officials, saying rumor-mongers were merely targeting "big fish" in his administration. In comments to be aired on state media yesterday, the world's oldest leader said he would act if shown evidence—even though graft scandals involving ministers and even members of his own family are regular fare in local newspapers.

"I think the big fish, more of it has been talk, talk and talk. People have not come out and actually said here is a case against a big fish," Mugabe said in the pre-recorded interview.

"Or are people afraid to come out and even come to us and say 'This one is stealing so much, investigate the person?' If there is evidence, we will pursue that evidence and certainly we will deal with those persons." Despite the almost daily slew of scandals involving state tenders and contracts reported in Zimbabwe's free-wheeling private media, investigations are rare and arrests even rarer. The anti-corruption commission is currently fighting the higher education minister and his deputy, who are accused of embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars from a state fund. They deny the charges.

Parliament has also penned several reports recommending investigations into irregular tender allocations, including at several state-owned



**HARARE:** Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe speaks during a private ceremony to celebrate his 93rd birthday in Harare. — AFP

firms. The reports have been ignored. Transparency International said in October Zimbabwe ranked poorly on corruption and was losing at least \$1 billion annually to graft, with police and local government officials among the worst offenders. The opposition says corruption has flourished under the leadership of Mugabe, whom they accuse of running a patronage network that rewards supporters and turns a blind eye to graft.

Mugabe, who has maintained a tight grip on power in the southern

African nation since independence from Britain in 1980, is due to stand for re-election next year, saying the ruling party has no viable alternative candidates. Employees in Mugabe's office held a small birthday party for him on Tuesday, ahead of a weekly cabinet meeting. A bigger celebration is set for Saturday in Matopos, 500 km southwest of Harare. The state-owned Herald newspaper carried a 24-page birthday supplement, packed with goodwill messages from government departments. — Reuters

## Celebrate Kuwait National and Liberation days with "BuBa"

### Play at Trampo for free!

On the occasion of National and Liberation days your kids can enjoy free entry at Trampo Hawalli – Promenade Mall. To avail the offer just present your BuBa ATM card.

**Date:** February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
**Timings:** 10:00am to 11:00am, or 11:00am to 12:00pm  
**Location:** Trampo – Promenade Mall - Hawalli

\*Offer is available for the first 100 customers each hour

follow us on Borgan Bank Official page @Borganbankgroup Borgan Bank @Borganbankkuwait

For more information call 1804080, or visit [www.borgan.com](http://www.borgan.com)

**رأس غاز RasGas Company Limited Tender Advertisement**

Has the following Tender:

TENDER NO.	DESCRIPTION	Tender Bond	Tender Closing Date and Time
ITT/RG35/G091/16	Long Term Contract for Provision of Marine Survey and Underwater Inspection Services on Call-Off basis	(US\$) 1,000,000.00	14 <sup>th</sup> March, 2017 11:00 a.m. (Qatar Time)

Companies who wish to register their interest and obtain Tender documents for the above Tender are required to register with RasGas as detailed below:

Date and Time of Registration and Issue	Between 09:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. from 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> , 27 <sup>th</sup> and 28 <sup>th</sup> February, 2017
Place of Registration and Issue (For companies based in Qatar)	RasGas Company Limited, RasGas Headquarters Building, Mail Room, Ground Floor, West Bay, Doha, State of Qatar. Tel: 4453 1032, Fax: +974 4492 3598 At the time of registration and collection, interested parties' representative must: a) Provide a copy of valid commercial registration certificate. b) Provide an original letter clearly authorizing the person to register and collect the documents on behalf of the Tenderer and produce an identity card for verification.
For Companies based outside Qatar only	Company must send a Fax to +974 4492 3598 and E-mail to Contracts-RL2@rasgas.com.qa showing the Expression of Interest to participate in the subject Tender by providing contact details of Company name, contact person name, title, postal address, Tel No., Mobile No., Fax No., E-mail address along with a copy of valid Commercial Registration. RasGas will then verify the credentials and issue an ITT document by either courier or E-mail.

At the time of registration and collection interested parties' representative must adhere to the below:

a) The ITT package contains the Confidentiality Agreement in Part A. Tenderers who submit the fully executed Confidentiality Agreement shall be issued with the "RasGas Marine Operation Manual" which forms an integral part of the Invitation to Tender documents.  
b) Mid Tender Meeting is organized on 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2017. All the registered tenderers shall receive an Invitation accordingly. It is imperative that Tenderers who attend the meeting have fully read the ITT document.

**COMPANIES WHO FAIL TO FORMALLY REGISTER AT THE DATE AND TIME STATED ABOVE WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED AS A REGISTERED TENDERER.**



## SCHULZ LAUNCHES 'SOCIAL-POPULIST' ATTACK ON MERKEL

**BERLIN:** The leader of Germany's Social Democrats, Martin Schulz, is seen beating Chancellor Angela Merkel in September elections according to several recent polls, thanks to an unapologetically leftist program that has earned him accusations of veering toward populism. After years of languishing in Merkel's shadow, Germany's traditional workers' party is almost giddy with excitement these days, hoping their new leader can end the decade-long reign of the "queen of Europe".

Schulz, the former president of the European Parliament, on Monday attacked a holy cow of his party, criticizing the sweeping labor and social welfare reforms pushed through under former SPD chancellor Gerhard Schroeder between 2003 and 2005. The so-called "Agenda 2010" reforms included lower social benefits and increased pressure on the unemployed to return to work. They brought down unemployment—which in January stood at its lowest rate since the country's 1990 reunification, at 5.9 percent—and gave a shot in the arm to an economy then labeled the "sick man of Europe".

But they also widened the wealth gap and helped create millions of "working poor", who often hold multiple part-time or contract jobs and struggle to pay the bills, a group sometimes called the "precariat". Many rank-and-file working-class SPD supporters have turned their backs on the party. "We have also made mistakes," Schulz told a meeting with trade unionists about the controversial reform package, adding: "the important thing is when we recognize we have made mistakes, they have

to be corrected". Schulz has promised to extend unemployment benefits for elderly jobless and the virtual elimination of open-ended temporary contracts in favor of fixed-term contracts.

### 'Robin Hood'

Many see Schulz's move as a frontal assault on the Schroeder reforms pushed through at the beginning of the century. "The Robin Hood of the SPD", ran a comment in business daily Handelsblatt. "Martin Schulz changes the course of the Social Democratic Party to the left". With these proposals, Schulz unashamedly shifts the SPD—the party more than 150 year old and now a junior partner in a "grand coalition" government with Merkel's conservatives—to the left, more in line with Britain's Labor Party under Jeremy Corbyn or the French Socialists under presidential hopeful Benoit Hamon.

Schulz has been applauded by the German far-left party Die Linke. It has signaled it is now far more open to entering a left-wing coalition with the SPD after the September election, which would likely also have to include the ecologist Greens party. Criticism has rained down all the harder from the right. One of the leaders of Merkel's Christian Democrats, Michael Fuchs, has accused Schulz of employing "social-populism". Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble accused the SPD candidate of using "demagoguery" by depicting as catastrophic the situation of workers in Germany while making fiscally irresponsible promises. —AFP



**BIELEFELD:** Martin Schulz, former European parliament president and candidate for Chancellor of Germany's social democratic SPD party, waves as he attends a conference of his party in Bielefeld, northwestern Germany. — AFP



**LONDON:** French presidential election candidate for the En Marche! movement Emmanuel Macron arrives outside 10 Downing Street in central London yesterday, ahead of his meeting with British Prime Minister Theresa May. — AFP

## FRANCE'S SOCIALIST MINISTER MAY BACK CENTRIST MACRON

### POLLS SHOW LE PEN HOLDING ONTO GAINS

**PARIS:** A senior Socialist minister said yesterday he might back centrist Emmanuel Macron in France's presidential election, a blow to his party's official candidate and a potential boost for Macron, who is battling to stay favorite in opinion polls. A daily survey by Opinionway pollsters showed the tight, multi-faceted race was still wide open with less than nine weeks to go. Macron was neck-and-neck with conservative rival Francois Fillon as favorite for the presidency, but far-right National Front leader Marine Le Pen was holding on to recent gains that have rattled investors.

Socialist Benoit Hamon, elected as candidate in a Party primary in January, remained in a distant fourth place, still struggling to make an impact on the two-stage election set for April 23 and May 7, but with a distant possibility that a deal with a rival could yet give him a chance. Hamon is pushing a hard-left program that divides his party and competes for votes with another leftist, Communist-backed Jean-Luc Melenchon.

Melenchon is in fifth place, but a combined Hamon-Melenchon vote would theoretically put them into first or second and therefore into a second round instead of Fillon or Macron and against Le Pen. But in a blow to Hamon, Socialist agriculture minister and government spokesman Stephane Le Foll on Tuesday became the second minister to suggest he might defect to Macron. "I support the man who has been

chosen (by the Socialists), but the moment comes for political responsibility with regard to what is at play, with regard to Marine Le Pen and with regard also to the program of Francois Fillon," Le Foll said on BFM TV.

Asked whether this meant his backing would depend on who was best placed to prevent a Le Pen versus Fillon runoff, he said: "Exactly!" Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, No 2 in the cabinet rankings, has also said he might back Macron. Political analysts are also eyeing an imminent decision from veteran centrist Francois Bayrou on whether to stand or not. If he stands, that could hurt Macron, but backing from Bayrou could be a further boost for the 39 year-old's battle with Fillon, whose campaign is trying to recover from a fake work scandal surrounding his wife.

### Le Pen holds gains

Opinionway's polls yesterday put Le Pen on 26 percent in the first round with Macron and Fillon both on 21, Hamon on 15 and Melenchon on 11, little changed from recent days. But it is in the second round where the Le Pen vote has been advancing. Opinionway showed her losing there with 42 percent of the vote, holding onto the gains she has made, particularly in a Macron contest, in recent days.

The anti-immigration, anti-European Union Le Pen meanwhile caused controversy on a trip to Lebanon where her plans to meet a senior

Muslim figure were cancelled after her refusal to wear a headscarf. Macron was due to be campaigning in London, home to a large expatriate French community yesterday.

### Left talks founder

The left still looked split despite news last week that Melenchon and Hamon were in discussions. The talks between Melenchon, a veteran campaigner, and Hamon, an ex-education minister, were tentative from the start and both have acknowledged wide policy differences. Hamon yesterday gave the latest indication they were unlikely to be joining forces. "There is a desire on Melenchon's part to go on right to the end," Hamon said on Europe 1 radio. "I respect that...in any case, I will work on right to the end."

News of the talks raised investor worries about a hard-left, hard-right choice in the second round last week. These have since subsided, but Le Pen's showing the polls has kept investors nervous. The premium investors demand to hold French bonds instead of German debt fell slightly on Tuesday from Monday's near four-year high. The spread was last at 78 basis points, after widening out to as much as 85 bps on Monday. Looking to put a brave face on his prospects on Tuesday, Hamon hailed a likely electoral pact with the tiny green party under which candidate Yannick Jadot could withdraw his candidacy and join forces with Hamon in the election. — Reuters

## CIVILIANS IN THE CROSSFIRE OF BOKO HARAM AND MILITARY

**MONGUNO:** The four women lay dazed on the beds of the clinic. The face of one of them was burnt. Another broke her leg during the Nigerian army offensive against Boko Haram Islamists in their village. Civilians have often been collateral damage in the conflict that has raged in remote northeast Nigeria for nearly eight years, leaving at least 20,000 dead and more than 2.6 million homeless. The women wait for their wounds to heal in the suffocating heat. "Boko Haram fighters would come to their village to steal food and hide," a nurse explained.

"The army went there and put the women in a truck to evacuate them. "The military set the village on fire, so the insurgents couldn't hide anymore. But the fire 'jumped' in the truck." The women, with their heads covered and gold nose rings in the tradition of the ethnic Kanuri group, still look terrified. They stare at the walls and ignore visitors, afraid that questions will focus too much on the circumstances of the "liberation" of their village.

### Fighters easily blend in

The nurse says there are no more men left. They were either killed in the fighting, drafted into the civilian militia or forced to join the ranks of Boko Haram. Some may even be at so-called "screening" centers, where soldiers pass judgment on whether the local men have been involved in the insurgency. Such checks, free from any oversight, can take weeks or months, especially if the men are Kanuri like the majority of Boko Haram.

James Adewunmi Falode, a security analyst at the University of Lagos who tracks the conflict, said Boko Haram's resemblance to "ordinary citizens" was making the fight against them harder. "They are not a military adversary that can be easily iden-

tified and destroyed on the battlefield. These people can easily blend into the general population when the situation demands," he said. Even women and children, who have been repeatedly used by the group as human bombs, are a potential threat, explaining the tensions between the military and the public.

### 'Just criminals'

Around Dikwa and a dozen or so other secured major towns, villages have been emptied to prevent them being used by the jihadists as hideouts or resupply points. The military also wants to stop the mass kidnapping of their inhabitants. "Before, they (Boko Haram) would read the Koran and try to change us," said Bulama Goni, a former village chief with a white beard in long, flowing robes. "Now, they are just criminals, asking for money, looking rough and disgusting." Boko Haram fighters are also starving: Nigerian army tactics have been to slowly choke the rebels, cutting off their supplies of arms and food. The strategy appears to be working. Boko Haram used to attack major towns and cities in northeast Nigeria and in 2014 controlled territory as big as Belgium.

But now it is limited to sporadic suicide bomb attacks and ambushes of military convoys and check-points. The military's isolation strategy, however, has not seen everywhere secured and has had an effect on the daily life of civilians. More than five million people are in desperate need of food, according to the United Nations. "In liberated areas there is no fuel, no communication, no public transport... even the food it's all controlled by the army," said one security operative for a major international aid agency. "This is a classical counter-insurgency strategy left over from the Vietnam war. It hasn't changed but it's not sustainable," he added. —AFP



**MONGUNO:** An aerial picture taken at Monguno district of Borno State shows a camp for internally displaced people. —AFP

## CZECHS, TIRED OF BEING 'EUROPE GARBAGE CAN'

**PRAGUE:** The Czech Republic will push for the European Union to ban the sale of inferior food in eastern European under the same brand name as better food sold in the west, the country's agriculture minister said. The Czechs are joining Slovakia and Hungary, who also say multinational food companies sell worse food in the poorer and less competitive eastern market. "With some products, we are in fact Europe's garbage can," said Agriculture Minister Marian Jurecka. Czech consumer groups have long complained about lower-quality food sold by large companies. But they have lacked leverage, because such sales are legal in the EU as long as the food's packaging identifies all its ingredients.

Jurecka said he had ordered a study of food quality, to be concluded by June. That data, along with data from Slovakia and other countries, will then be used for a push to change EU rules. Items besides food, like detergent, will be included. "Our primary aim is to change the EU legislation, so that if an item has the same producer, the same packaging with the same font, so it is the same item at first sight, then it has the same ingredients," he said.

He did not give any examples. A 2015 test led by the University of Chemistry and Technology said instant coffee, yoghurt, margarine and some processed meat sold in the Czech Republic were made with different ingredients. Food is about 25 percent cheaper overall in the Czech Republic than in neighboring Germany, according to Eurostat. That partly reflects lower local costs and living standards. But Czech shoppers often flock abroad for sales and to get higher quality items.

Jurecka said products should be consistent inside the EU's single market. "If there is the single market, then let's have the same access to the same quality of products, if they look the same, for all customers," he said. Companies have said they cater to local tastes by using various recipes. Jurecka rejected that argument, pointing out that for centuries all the central European countries were part of the same empire. "I really don't think that Czechs and Austrians have such different tastes," he said. "When you look at our menu, thanks to the Austrian-Hungarian empire we have really similar tastes." — Reuters

## 74 BODIES OF MIGRANTS WASH ASHORE IN LIBYA

**CAIRO:** Scores of bodies of African migrants washed ashore in Libya's western city of Zawiyah on the Mediterranean, the Libyan Red Crescent said yesterday - the latest tragedy at sea after migrant deaths rose to record levels along the key smuggling route over the past months. At least 74 bodies were found in Zawiyah, according to Red Crescent's spokesman Mohammed Al-Misrati, who feared an even higher death toll. He said that a torn rubber boat was found nearby

and that he expected more bodies to surface as such boats usually carry up to 120 people.

Al-Misrati said that the bodies were found on Monday morning and that the Red Crescent workers retrieved them between 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. The aid agency posted on its Twitter account photographs of dozens of bodies in white and black body bags, lined up along the shore. Al-Misrati said the local authorities would take the bodies to a cemetery in the capital of

Tripoli that is allocated for unidentified persons. Libyan coast guard spokesman Ayoub Gassim said over 500 migrants were rescued at sea on Friday and Saturday off the shore of Sebratha, a city to the west of Zawiyah. The migrants' boats were about 5-7 miles from the coast of Libya.

Gassim's aid the coast guard is seeing the smugglers use larger rubber boats in order to pile more migrants into the weak vessels - some taking on 180 people - and dramatically increasing the risks to the migrants. "We are seeing the new boats, which are not equipped with anything, but they carry more people," he said. "This is going to be even more disastrous for the migrants." Last week, Fabrice Leggeri, director of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, said the Libya-Italy smuggling route across the Mediterranean has seen record numbers of migrant drownings in 2016.

According to Leggeri, migrant deaths along the central Mediterranean route stood at 4,579 for last year, which still might be much less than the true loss of life. That's compared to 2,869 deaths in 2015 and 3,161 in 2014. There is little sign of the surge abating, even during winter-time. There were 228 recorded deaths in January, by far the biggest monthly toll in recent years. Leggeri blamed the small dinghies and poor vessels used by the smugglers for the high death rate. Overall, central Mediterranean migrant crossings increased by 17 percent last year to 181,459 people, according to statistics. — AP



**Libyan Red Crescent workers recovering bodies of people that washed ashore, near Zawiyah, Libya. — AP**



News

in brief



**BARCELONA:** Police officers stand next to a butane gas delivery truck against which police had to shoot to stop it in Barcelona yesterday. — AFP

**Spanish security forces fire on suspicious truck**

**BARCELONA:** Spanish police said yesterday they fired on a truck loaded with butane gas bottles which was driving the wrong way down a road in Barcelona, managing to stop it and detain the Swedish driver. "We detained a person who was of Swedish nationality," a spokesman for police in the popular Spanish Mediterranean resort city said. Barcelona's city hall said the small white truck which had dozens of orange gas bottles stacked on the back in plain view had been stolen. There was no indication as yet whether this was an attempted attack or just a plain robbery. Mireia Ruiz, a woman who saw the truck from her home nearby, said the driver ignored people screaming at him to stop as he sped down the wrong side of a ring road. "When people shouted at him, he would laugh and make offensive gestures with his hand," she said. Police did not say whether there were any injuries.



**JAKARTA:** An Indonesian man sits on a raft at a flooded neighborhood in Jakarta, Indonesia, yesterday. — AP

**One dead as flooding hits Indonesia capital**

**JAKARTA:** Widespread flooding hit the Indonesian capital yesterday after hours of torrential rain, with thousands of homes inundated, cars stranded and at least one person killed. Water up to 1.5 meters deep swamped parts of the Indonesian capital and nearby commuter towns after a thunderstorm overnight. People were forced from their houses in some places, with authorities setting up evacuation centers. The disaster agency said it had received more than 400 reports of floods across Jakarta. In Bekasi, a city within the Jakarta metropolitan area, one person drowned while about 280 others were forced to evacuate, the agency said. Images of the flooding showed major roads inundated in parts of the megacity of 10 million, people wading through deluged streets and cars in water up to their headlights. Drains were unable to cope with the torrents of water unleashed by the storm and rivers burst their banks, said disaster agency spokesman Sutopo Purwo Nugroho.

**Japan kindergarten apologizes after slurring Koreans, Chinese**

**TOKYO:** A Japanese kindergarten known for its nationalist curriculum has apologized after coming under fire for hostile comments about Korean and Chinese parents. The operator of Tsukamoto Kindergarten in the western city of Osaka was questioned by local education authorities last month after complaints from parents in December. Kyodo news agency reported last week that the school had handed parents copies of a statement which described the parents of Chinese and Korean children as having "evil thoughts." The private pre-school had also posted a statement on its home page referring to "delinquent" South Korean and Chinese parents. But it has now deleted that from its website and replaced it with another expressing remorse. "We apologize for our expression about foreigners that led to misunderstanding," it said. The kindergarten previously had said the insults were provoked by criticism it had received from Chinese and South Korean parents.

**China's court jails former head of safety watchdog**

**BEIJING:** China has jailed the former head of its safety watchdog for 15 years for graft, the state broadcaster said, wrapping up an inquiry launched after deadly blasts in 2015 killed nearly 170 people in the city of Tianjin, where he worked. Regular mishaps, from factory fires to mine cave-ins, have boosted public concern about China's relatively lax safety standards, which the government has pledged to improve. Yang Dongliang, former head of the State Administration of Work Safety, who spent much of his career in the port city, was suspected of violating law and party discipline and sacked days after the blasts in a warehouse storing hazardous chemicals. A court in Beijing found Yang guilty of abusing his position, including when he was former vice mayor of northeastern Tianjin, by accepting bribes to grant contracts to companies, China Central Television (CCTV) said. In 1999, a property developer gave Yang an apartment in a new development complex that he failed register with the authorities.

**Seven Maoist rebels killed in central India gunfight**

**NEW DELHI:** At least seven suspected Maoist rebels were killed yesterday in a gunfight with police in the remote forests of central India, an officer said, the latest deadly encounter in the country's long-running insurgency. Police ambushed a group of heavily armed rebels passing through the dense forests of a Maoist stronghold in Chhattisgarh state, triggering an hours-long gun battle before the suspected guerrillas fled. "So far we have recovered seven dead bodies along with some arms and ammunition. We may find more bodies as the combing operation is on," D M Awasthi, head of the Chhattisgarh anti-Maoist unit said. He said they launched the assault after receiving information about the movement of 30 to 40 armed rebels near Narayanpur district, some 350 kilometers from the state capital Raipur. "Few policemen were also injured," he added. One paramilitary trooper was also critically injured yesterday after he stepped on a landmine planted by suspected Maoist rebels in Sukhma district, also in conflict-torn state, police said.

**AZERBAIJAN STRONGMAN APPOINTS WIFE VICE PRESIDENT**

**BAKU:** Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev yesterday appointed his glamorous wife as first vice president, the latest move seen as tightening the family's iron grip on the oil-rich Caspian nation. Mehriban Aliyeva "is appointed the first vice president of the Republic of Azerbaijan," the leader said in a decree published on his website. Prominent socialite Aliyeva, 52, has been a ruling Yeni Azerbaijan party lawmaker since 2005 and head of the influential Heydar Aliyev Foundation named after her father-in-law and former president.

Born into the powerful Pashayev family, she has sometimes been seen as a possible successor to her husband, who took over in 2003 after the death of his father Heydar, a former KGB officer and Communist-era boss. The appointment follows constitutional changes made after a tightly-managed referendum last year that introduced the powerful position of first vice president. Such steps were denounced by regime opponents as a ploy to cement the Aliyev family's dynastic rule. Azerbaijan's embattled opposition angrily criticized Aliyeva's elevation as undemocratic. "The move throws Azerbaijan back to medieval, feudal times," opposition leader Isa Gambar of Musavat party said. "Family rule has no place in the 21st century," he added.

**First lady of fashion**

Known for her lavish tastes, Aliyeva featured prominently in US diplomatic cables published by Wikileaks, one of which dubbed her "a first lady, too, in fashion." "First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva appears to have had substantial cosmetic surgery, presumably overseas, and wears dresses that would be considered provocative even in the Western world," the leaked 2010 cable said.

An eye doctor by training, she has also authored a dissertation on the ethical aspects of mercy killing. The Aliyevs have two socialite daughters Leyla, 32, and Arzu, 27, a student son, Heydar, 19, and four grandchildren. The president, 55, cruised to a third five-year term against limited opposition in 2013, extending his family's rule into a third decade. Supporters have praised the Aliyevs for turning a republic once considered a Soviet backwater into a flourishing energy supplier to Europe.

But critics argue they have crushed all opposition and used their power to amass a fortune that funds a lavish lifestyle for the president and his family. Activists have raised concerns over Azerbaijan's poor rights record, with Human Rights Watch in May blasting the country for a ruthless crackdown that has seen political activists and critical journalists jailed. "President Ilham Aliyev is the



**BAKU:** Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev and his wife Mehriban Aliyeva watch the last minutes of the Formula One Grand Prix of Europe at the Baku Circuit in this file photo. — AP

person most responsible for Azerbaijan's appalling human rights record of the last decade," Freedom House, a pro-democracy watchdog, has said. — AFP

**PHILIPPINES' DUTERTE A SERIAL KILLER: SENATOR**

**SENATOR LEILA DE LIMA INVOKES 'PEOPLE POWER' REVOLUTION**

**MANILA:** Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte is a "serial killer" who should be forced out of office, one of his chief critics said yesterday, as she faced arrest on drug charges which she insisted were meant to silence her. Senator Leila de Lima invoked the famous "People Power" revolution that toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos three decades ago, in her strongest comments yet against Duterte and his war on drugs that has claimed thousands of lives.

"There is no more doubt that our president is a murderer and sociopathic serial killer," De Lima told reporters, as she called on Duterte's cabinet to declare him unfit to lead and urged ordinary Filipinos to voice opposition to his rule. De Lima said the constitution allowed for a majority in his cabinet to force him to step down by ruling that he was mentally incapacitated, and urged members to do so.

If they did not, she referred to the mass uprising that in 1986 ended the "iron fist" of Marcos's dictatorship. "Now the time has come again for us to be brave and stand up to another criminal dictator and his evil regime," De Lima said. She also compared Duterte to Batman's foe, the Joker, saying the president was also a "psychotic murderer" who led other villains in committing crimes. The government last week charged De Lima, a former national human rights commissioner, with orchestrating a drug trafficking ring when she was justice secretary in the previous administration.

**Intimidation**

De Lima, 57, her supporters and rights



**MANILA:** Philippine Senator Leila De Lima gestures as she speaks during a press conference at the senate in Manila yesterday. — AFP

groups have said the charges against her are manufactured to silence her as well as intimidate other people who may want to speak out against the president. "The prosecution of Senator Leila de Lima is an act of political vindictiveness that debases the rule of law in the Philippines," Human Rights Watch deputy Asia director Phelim Kine said this week. "The Duterte administration seems intent on using the courts to punish prominent critics of its murderous

'war on drugs.'" De Lima could be detained anytime, although the courts hearing the cases must issue an arrest warrant.

When asked about De Lima's comments yesterday, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella simply described them as "colorful language" and pointed out that Duterte would allow public demonstrations against him. Duterte, 71, won the presidential election last year after promising during the campaign to eradicate

drugs in society by killing tens of thousands of people.

He immediately launched the crackdown after taking office in June and police have reported killing 2,555 drug suspects since then, with about 4,000 other people murdered in unexplained circumstances. Amnesty International has warned that police actions in the drug war may amount to crimes against humanity. Duterte has at times insisted he and his security forces are not breaking any laws in prosecuting the drug war. On other occasions he has boasted of killing people to set an example for police and said he would be "happy to slaughter" three million drug addicts in the Philippines. Late last month Duterte ordered police to halt involvement in the drug war after the media revealed that anti-drugs officers had kidnapped and murdered a South Korean businessman as part of an extortion racket.

But he has vowed to continue the drug war with the military's support, while rights groups say extrajudicial killings of drug suspects by unknown attackers are continuing. The powerful Roman Catholic Church, which helped lead the People Power revolution, has in recent months begun speaking out against the drug war and on Saturday held a rally against the killings, attracting thousands of people. But Duterte remains popular with many Filipinos, who see him as the strongman needed to fight drugs and corruption, and there is little expectation of a popular uprising against him in the near future. — AFP



**TANGI:** A Pakistani army helicopter patrols over the site of a court complex after multiple Taliban suicide bombings in the Tangi area of Charsadda district said. — AFP

**SEVEN KILLED AS THREE SUICIDE BOMBERS HIT PAKISTAN COURT**

**TANGI:** At least seven people were killed when multiple Taliban suicide bombers attacked a court complex in northern Pakistan yesterday, the latest in a series of assaults which have raised fears militants are regrouping. One bomber was briefly on the loose inside the busy complex in the Tangi area of Charsadda district but was killed by police some 20 minutes after the attack began, officials said. A second bomber was shot dead by security forces and a third died when he detonated his vest outside the main gates of the facility in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, according to police.

The attack was claimed by the Jamaat-ul-Ahrar (JuA) faction of the Pakistani Taliban, which carried out a series of apparently coordinated assaults last week including a powerful bomb blast in Lahore which killed 14 people. Earlier this month the group vowed a fresh offensive on targets in Pakistan including the judiciary. "So far seven people have been killed and 15 wounded," Suhail Khalid, district police chief said, adding that a lawyer was among the dead. Prime

Minister Nawaz Sharif's office condemned the latest assault. "We are a steadfast nation and will not be deterred by such attacks. Our government will continue to fight against terrorist elements and we will succeed," a statement said.

**Bloodstained books**

The three attackers had opened fire on police and thrown grenades as they tried to battle their way into the complex, Khalid said. "Bomb disposal experts told us that each bomber was wearing seven to eight kilograms of explosives," he told reporters. Hundreds of people including lawyers, judges and citizens normally attend the court complex. An AFP reporter at the scene said the area was littered with human remains, while a pile of law books stained with blood and riddled with bullets lay strewn outside an office. Police scoured the area for evidence as military helicopters whirred overhead. An old man whose four-year-old grandson died in the attack wept. Another man who witnessed the attack,

Muhammad Hussain, said he was about to enter the complex when he heard the blast.

"When I looked up I saw three armed men, hurling grenades and opening fire," said the 35-year-old civil servant, adding he sought shelter in a nearby police barracks from where he heard the gunbattle. "This continued for some minutes and then I heard another big bang. Some minutes after a policemen told me that it's all over." Lawyers and the judiciary are frequent targets in Pakistan. Among last week's assaults was a bomb blast targeting a van carrying judges in Peshawar, which killed their driver.

Last August JuA along with the Islamic State group claimed a suicide bombing in Quetta that killed 73 people, including many of the southwestern city's legal community. Police and troops had been on high alert in Pakistan after last week's wave of attacks, which killed more than 100 people. Most, including the Lahore bomb, were claimed by JuA, a faction of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP, or Pakistani Taliban) group. — AFP

**AFTER EPIPHANY IN US, WOMAN FORGES PEACE AMONG INDIAN, PAKISTANI YOUTH**

**BANGKOK:** Aliya Harir was an impressionable teenager who soaked up the patriotic propaganda from her schoolbooks and the one TV channel that served her town in the mountains of northern Pakistan. So she feared, and hated, India. "There were always rumors that India's going to attack Pakistan soon, and I was always worried: Where would I hide if an Indian soldier comes?" Harir, now 25, said as she laughed, embarrassed at her younger self. Then in 2011, she was accepted into an exchange program to spend six months at Troy University in the southern US state of Alabama.

As she settled into school, a Nepali student drove her to Walmart and brought along a friend. Exchanging pleasantries, Harir asked the friend where he was from and was shocked to find out he was Indian. "I had never thought I would meet Indians - I only thought I would meet Indians if there was a war, if the Indians came in to kill us. But the Indian I met was a human being, just like me," she said in Bangkok on the sidelines of a UN-supported conference aimed at supporting women peacebuilders.

Pakistan and India have been locked in acrimonious conflict and border skirmishes for decades, since partition and independence from Britain in 1947. The fighting and animosity infuse the countries' politics, as well as films and nationalistic TV programs. Harir's epiphany in the United States led her on a quest - to promote India-Pakistan peace by connecting children from both countries, both online and in person. Upon her return to Pakistan, Harir found like-minded people in Delhi and Islamabad and launched Aaghaz-e-Dosti, a "friendship initiative" focused on conflict resolution.

Aaghaz-e-Dosti, meaning "beginning of friendship", brings Indian activists, teachers and journalists to classrooms in Pakistan, and pairs up children on both sides of the border to be online buddies for eight-week peace-building courses. Harir, who now lives in the Pakistani capital Islamabad, said the initiative works with young children to counter state propaganda and negative stereotypes. "We are focused on children and young students from primary to secondary grades because that is the critical and formative stage of the development of a child," she said.

**Don't eat with infidels**

Harir - the second of four children in a family from the minority Shiite Ismaili Muslim sect - faced discrimination herself growing up in a predominantly Sunni Muslim Pakistan. "When this debate of Sunnis versus Ismailis came up, I used to feel ashamed. I used to cry, 'Oh God, why was I born an Ismaili?' I never discussed it with my parents. I didn't have the courage to," she said. Her father, who had lived in Australia and Britain, owned a tourism company and used to host foreigners, so one of Harir's teachers once asked her if she shared meals with "infidels". — Reuters



# ROMANIA'S HAVE-A-GO HEROES FIGHT CORRUPTION

**BUCHAREST:** Romanian architect Serban Marinescu never thought he'd come up against such brazen corruption. And when a city mayor demanded a backhander, he plucked up his courage and reported him. Traffic cop Marian Godina came under pressure from superiors over a traffic incident involving a local official. But Godina turned to social media and heads rolled.

Their bravery is typical of what observers say is a changing attitude to corruption in Romania. It also helps explain the biggest protests since the fall of communism in 1989 in recent weeks. These demonstrations, peaking on February 5 with an estimated half a million people nationwide, came after the left-wing government tried, as critics saw it, to ease up on graft. "Romanian society has reached saturation point with regard to corruption," said Godina, 30, the policeman from Brasov in the central Transylvania region.

### Facebook hero

His fame began a year ago when he pulled over a car that had nearly run



**BUCHAREST:** Romanian architect Serban Marinescu posing for a picture at his office in Bucharest, Romania. Traffic cop Marian Godina came under pressure from superiors over a traffic incident involving a local official. But Godina turned to social media and heads rolled. — AFP

someone over. A local official in the passenger seat got out and told him to let it drop. She "knew his superiors". But he stood firm and posted his experiences on social media. His superiors were livid, with Brasov's chief of police and other superiors ordering him to close his

Facebook page. But in the end he won, with the official resigning and the chief of police taking "early retirement".

Today Godina still posts his daily experiences and has 500,000 followers on Facebook. He has also written a book, put out by publisher Curtea

Veche, about other similar incidents. Godina says that the younger generation has abandoned the defeatist attitude, prevalent under communism, to "stay in your place and keep your mouth shut." Laura Kovesi, the head of Romania's powerful National Anti-Corruption Directorate (DNA), also hails what she calls a "change in mentality" among ordinary Romanians.

Since its creation in 2002 the DNA has been given serious teeth to tackle corruption, long the scourge of 20-million-strong Romania, which joined the European Union a decade ago. Between 2014 and 2016 the DNA launched legal proceedings against more than 1,150 people who between them had allegedly misappropriated more than a billion euros (\$1.06 billion). And almost 90 percent of the DNA's current cases were opened after complaints from civil servants or private citizens, Kovesi said in an interview earlier this month.

### You've been framed

Father-of-two Marinescu, 37, is another of these have-a-go heroes. In

2012 he and some colleagues won an international architecture competition to revamp the central square of the city of Ramnicu Valcea in the foothills of the Carpathians. They duly completed the project but just as they were about to be paid the mayor asked for a "commission". The mayor was well connected and Marinescu wasn't sure whether to pay up, as many of his friends suggested, or to blow the whistle.

"Both options were scary. We didn't know anyone who had reported anyone (to the authorities). It was unknown territory," he recalled. But he took the plunge and went to the DNA. Armed with a secret camera and hidden microphone provided by investigators, one of his colleagues met the mayor in a Bucharest hotel lobby. The official put before him a document to sign stipulating that he gets a 10-percent cut. "It was humiliating. He (the mayor) felt like the nobleman lordling it over the serfs and their land," Marinescu said. At a follow-up meeting, the mayor was arrested red-handed and given a suspended jail sentence of four years. — AFP

# ISRAELI SOLDIER SENTENCED TO 18 MONTHS FOR KILLING PALESTINIAN DECISION TO COURT-MARTIAL CONSCRIPT DIVIDED ISRAELIS

**TEL AVIV:** A young Israeli soldier convicted of killing a Palestinian assailant lying wounded on the ground was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment yesterday, far less than prosecutors requested, in one of the most divisive cases in Israel's history. The decision to court-martial Sergeant Elor Azaria, who shot the Palestinian after he had stabbed another soldier in the occupied West Bank last March, stirred controversy in Israel from the start, with opinion polls showing strong support for the army medic.

A military court last month found Azaria guilty of manslaughter, a crime that carries a top punishment of 20 years in jail. With the 50th anniversary of Israel's wartime capture of the West Bank approaching, the trial has generated debate about whether the military, long seen as a melting pot for Israelis, was out of touch with a public that has shifted to the right in its attitudes towards the Palestinians. The prosecution asked that Azaria be sentenced to three to five years behind bars, far below the maximum term, noting that he had shot a Palestinian who only minutes earlier had carried out an attack.

Passing an 18-month sentence that Israeli media commentators described as lenient, the court said that Azaria had not expressed regret for his crime but it noted that his army record had been unblemished up until the shooting and that his arrest had caused his family deep distress. Palestinians had called for a life term. But there was little sign the sentencing would lead to any significant outbreak of violence by Palestinians. They have long accused Israel of using excessive force against lightly armed assailants and harbored few expectations soldiers would be held accountable.

It was not immediately clear if Azaria's lawyers, who had said after the verdict last month that they intended to appeal his conviction, would still proceed along that path. Eleven months ago, Azaria, then 19, was serving in the town of Hebron when two Palestinians carried out the stabbing. Hebron has been a longtime flashpoint of violence, and the incident occurred during a wave of Palestinian street attacks on Israelis. One of the two assailants was shot dead by troops. The other was shot and wounded. Eleven minutes later, as the wounded man, Abd Elfatah Ashareef, 21, lay on the ground incapaci-

tated, Azaria shot him in the head with an assault rifle.

### 'Deserves to die'

At the trial, Azaria said he believed the Palestinian, though motionless, still posed a danger because his knife was nearby, and that he might have been carrying explosives. "He deserves to die," Azaria was quoted in the verdict as telling another soldier after pulling the trigger. At the sentencing, Chief Judge Maya Heller said that Azaria "took upon himself to be both judge and executioner". Surveys detected significant popular support for Azaria, and Netanyahu took the unusual step of calling the soldier's parents to express his sympathy after he was arrested. In one poll, nearly half of Israeli

Jews said any Palestinian who carries out an attack should be killed on the spot.

Rallies for Azaria, some backed by rightist politicians and pop singers, gathered momentum as the trial progressed. But members of Israel's military establishment argued that the shooting violated rules stating that soldiers can open fire only in life-threatening situations, and the three-judge panel rejected Azaria's argument. "One cannot use this type of force, even if we're talking about an enemy's life," the court said in its verdict. Video footage of the shooting, taken by a Palestinian human rights activist, showed the knife was not within Ashareef's reach, and no bomb was found. The video was distributed to news organizations, ensuring that the incident drew international attention. — Reuters



**TEL AVIV:** Israeli soldier Elor Azaria is embraced by his mother at the start of his sentencing hearing in Tel Aviv, Israel yesterday. — AP



**CAIRO:** Jordan's King Abdullah II reviews the honor guard alongside Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi during a meeting in Cairo. — AFP

# SEEKING TO SECURE SINAI, EGYPT BUILDS CLOSER TIES WITH HAMAS EGYPT EASES BORDER RESTRICTIONS

**CAIRO:** After years of strained relations, Egypt is moving closer to Hamas in Gaza, offering concessions on trade and free movement in return for moves to secure the border against Islamic State fighters who have killed hundreds of policemen and soldiers in northern Sinai. Egypt has been at odds with Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip, since a crackdown by Cairo on the armed group's Islamist allies. Egypt closed the border, opening it only rarely.

But in recent weeks Egypt has eased restrictions, allowing in trucks laden with food and other supplies, and providing relief from an Israeli blockade that has restricted the flow of goods into the coastal territory. The relaxation follows high-level Hamas visits to Cairo, which wants to restore its role as a regional powerbroker and crush Islamic State followers in the Sinai Peninsula, a strategic area bordering Gaza, Israel and the Suez Canal.

It builds on what Egyptian and Palestinian sources say are efforts by Hamas to prevent the movement of militants in and out of Sinai, where they have killed hundreds of Egyptian soldiers and police since general-turned-president Abdel Fattah El-Sisi overthrew the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013. Egyptian and Palestinian officials say the changes could signal a new era of closer cooperation after years of tension. "We want cooperation in controlling the borders and tunnels, the handover of perpetrators of armed attacks and a boycott of the Muslim Brotherhood. They want the crossing to be opened and more trade," one senior Egyptian security source said.

"This has actually begun, but in a partial way. We hope it will continue." While it doesn't engage directly with Hamas, Israel is working with Egypt on border security and monitoring of Gaza. Military officials have voiced support for any steps that bring greater stability to northern Sinai and Gaza. Hamas has increased security along its side of the border with Sinai over the past year, deploying hundreds of security forces and erecting more watchtowers. The group has also moved to round up Salafi Jihadists, who oppose an Egyptian-brokered 2014 ceasefire with Israel.

Hamas, whose charter calls for Israel's destruction but which has no ambitions for global jihad, has not said how many militants it has captured and refuses to call them jihadists. Egypt has given Hamas a list of about 85 fugitives, who it says are implicated in attacks and wants extradited, the Egyptian security source said. Hamas denied links with some of them and sources in the group said extraditions were unlikely though it might make its own inquiries. Hamas has however let Egypt know that it has no interest in stoking unrest in an Arab neighbor that has mediated several truces with Israel and among rival Palestinian factions.

"If we compare it with a year ago, the situation or the relationship is better but it is not yet what is needed," Mahmoud Al-Zahar, a senior Hamas official said. "The needs of our people are great, their need to travel, pursue education or treatment, attend to their businesses and families abroad, and also the need for open trade with Egypt." — Reuters

# WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT KIM'S 'ASSASSINATION'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A week since news broke that the half-brother of North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un had been assassinated, a clearer picture is emerging of the Cold War-style killing in Kuala Lumpur's international airport. But rumors still abound about the bizarre attack, and Malaysian police are keeping their cards close to their chest when it comes to their ongoing investigation. Here is what we know-and what we still don't know-about the death of Kim Jong-Nam.

### What happened?

Last Monday morning Kim Jong-Nam was at the budget terminal of Kuala Lumpur's main airport preparing to fly to Macau. He was approached by two women, one of whom grabbed him from behind and sprayed his face

with an apparently poisonous liquid, according to police and leaked CCTV footage. Jong-Nam then approached airport staff, gesturing to his face in a bid to explain what happened, footage showed. The staff later led him to the airport clinic, where a picture released in Malaysian media shows him slumped in a chair. Jong-Nam suffered a seizure and was rushed to hospital but died before he arrived.

### The first suspects

In the days following the attack, police announced they had arrested a 28-year-old Vietnamese woman called Doan Thi Huong, as well as 25-year-old Indonesian Siti Aishah and her Malaysian boyfriend. Huong—who is shown in CCTV from the airport wearing a t-shirt

emblazoned with the word "LOL"—worked at an "entertainment outlet" and Aishah was a masseuse at a spa, police said. Aishah had been duped into believing she was taking part in a TV prank show, the head of police in Indonesia said, citing information from Malaysia. Residents of the rice farming village in Vietnam where Huong grew up said she was very fashionable, often changing her hair color and returning each Lunar new year with a different foreign boyfriend.

### The Pyongyang trail

Later police arrested a 46-year-old North Korean called Ri Jong-Chol, who they said lived in Kuala Lumpur and worked in IT. They are currently seeking four more North Korean men, who entered the country on different dates in the fortnight running up to the assassination, and all left on the day it was carried out. The men returned to Pyongyang on a convoluted route via Indonesia, Dubai and Vladivostok, immigration officials and sources said. Seoul cited these developments as proof that the North Korean regime was behind the attack. But Pyongyang hit back, accusing the Malaysian investigation of being politically motivated.

### The motive

If Pyongyang were behind the killing, a number of reasons have been put forward as to why the regime might have wanted Jong-Nam out of the way. One theory said he was a marked man since he criticized the country's system of hereditary succession to a journalist in 2011, when he said North Korea would need to reform and liberalize like China. Another said Jong-Un was paranoid about the slim chance his older sibling posed a threat to his leadership, providing a liberal alternative within the Kim family. Other analysts said the assassination could have been ordered over reports Kim was readying to defect. One suggestion that does not assume the regime's involvement is that a hit was ordered in connection to alleged shady business dealings in the region. — AFP



**This undated picture shows North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un (4th left) visiting the Samchon catfish farm in Samchon, Hwanghaenamdo. — AFP**

# ASEAN UNSETTLED BY CHINA WEAPON SYSTEMS, TENSION IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

**BORACAY:** Southeast Asian countries see China's installation of weapons systems in the South China Sea as "very unsettling" and have urged dialogue to stop an escalation of "recent developments", the Philippines said yesterday. The region's foreign ministers were unanimous in their concern over China's militarization of its artificial islands, but were confident a framework for a code of maritime conduct could be agreed with Beijing by June, Philippine Foreign Secretary Perfecto Yasay said.

Yasay did not say what developments provoked the concern, but said the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) hoped China and the United States would ensure peace and stability. He said demilitarization would be a key component of any ASEAN-China code of conduct, but it was too soon to say whether Beijing's dismantling of its weapons installations would be a prerequisite. "The ASEAN members have been unanimous in their expression of concern about what they see as a militarization of the region," Yasay told reporters after a ministers' retreat on the Philippine island of Boracay.

Referring to China's manmade islands in the Spratly archipelago, Yasay said ASEAN countries had "noticed, very unsettlingly, that China has installed weapons systems in these facilities that they have established, and they have

expressed strong concern about this." With the Philippines chairing the bloc this year, Yasay's comments signal a rare, firm position by a grouping that often struggles to achieve consensus, due to its contrasting opinions on how to respond to China's assertiveness. ASEAN's statements of concern often avoid mentioning China by name. Much is at stake from upsetting China, as ASEAN members, to varying extents, are under its influence and need its trade, investment and tourists.

### Trump uncertainty

Regional geopolitics has become more uncertain since the election of US President Donald Trump, particularly over his administration's role in a region strongly courted by Washington during the "pivot" of predecessor Barack Obama. Friction between the United States and China over trade and territory under Trump has fuelled worry that the South China Sea could become a flashpoint. China claims most of the waters, through which about \$5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes every year. Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also have claims. China on Friday completed war games with an aircraft carrier that unnerved neighbors. A day later the US navy said its aircraft carrier strike group had started routine patrols in the South China Sea, a step China had warned against. — Reuters



## PLANE CRASHES INTO MELBOURNE MALL

MELBOURNE: A light aircraft smashed into shops and exploded into a "massive fireball" killing all five on board, including four American passengers reportedly golfers on the trip of a lifetime, officials in Australia said yesterday. The twin-engined Beechcraft plane veered just after take-off into a shopping center, that was still closed, next to Essendon Fields airport near Melbourne.

"Five on the aircraft and looks like no one has survived the crash," said Victoria Police Assistant Commissioner Stephen Leane. Premier Daniel Andrews described it as "the worst civil aviation accident that our state has seen for 30 years". The private charter from Essendon, north of Melbourne, to King Island, 55 minutes to the south, came down just short of a major motorway packed with the heavy traffic of early morning commuters.

Live television footage showed burned out wreckage, flames and major damage at the shopping centre and adjacent buildings. A column of thick black smoke rose into the air as witnesses spoke of an explosion. "The pilot unfortunately attempted to return to Essendon but as crashed into the DFO (Direct Factory Outlet) at Essendon Fields," Leane told reporters. The center was not due to open for another hour and the authorities confirmed no one inside was hurt.

A taxi driver called ABC radio and told of the "massive fireball" and a landing wheel bouncing onto the motorway. "I saw this plane... when it hit the building there was a massive fireball," said the man called Jason. "I could feel the heat through the window of the taxi, and then a wheel - it looked like a plane wheel -

bounced on the road and hit the front of the taxi as we were driving along."

Victoria Police Superintendent Mick Frewen said investigations centered on a "catastrophic engine failure". The highly experienced 60-year-old Australian pilot made a May-Day call before crashing. A shopworker called Ash told Sky News he saw "the fireball go up into the air", adding it "felt like a bomb had gone off". "The fire was just so hot we could not get anywhere near it," he said. "We could see the wreckage, or what was left of it."

The US embassy in Canberra said the four passengers were American citizens. "We extend our deepest condolences to the families and loved ones of those who died in today's tragic crash," a spokeswoman said. Melbourne's Herald Sun identified two of the dead as Greg De Haven, 70, a retired FBI agent and lawyer Russell Munsch, both from Texas, who were travelling with two unnamed friends, the daily said.

Plumber Michael Howard, 29, told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation he saw a "blue flash". "I was... just looking out the window... and then all of a sudden I just saw a blue flash come down and then all of a sudden there was a massive fireball." "It was like something from a movie," Howard said. Melbourne fire brigade chief Paul Stacchino tweeted that "more than 60 firefighters have worked hard to bring the fire... under control. Crews to remain on scene for some time". Essendon Fields was closed and all traffic diverted to Melbourne's two larger airports Tullamarine and Avalon. — AFP



MELBOURNE: This frame grab taken from video shows smoke and flames after a twin-engined Beechcraft plane crashed into a shopping center just after take-off from Essendon Fields airport yesterday. — AFP

## MPS THREATEN TO GRILL PM OVER HARBI...

Continued from Page 1

Liberal MP Rakan Al-Nasef also held the prime minister responsible for the resignation of the health minister, adding that the government refused to dismiss senior officials involved in corruption cases shown by the minister to the Cabinet on Monday. He charged the government of protecting corrupt officials, and accused the entire government of being involved in corruption, adding he will start consultations with other MPs to contemplate the next step in this issue.

MP Mohammad Al-Dallal said he signed a request

calling to ask the Assembly's public funds protection committee to investigate suspected violations in the health ministry. MP Safaa Al-Hashem advised the minister not to quit but freeze all powers entrusted to the ministry's undersecretary. She criticized several MPs who still defend the undersecretary.

Meanwhile, the legislative committee approved a proposal calling to ban the publication of suspects' images without a decision by the public prosecution. MP Saleh Ashour proposed an amendment calling against detaining defendants in expression of opinion cases without a final verdict from the court.

## TRUMP CRITIC MCCAIN MEETS KING SALMAN

Continued from Page 1

establish safe zones in Syria and retake Raqqa that should receive serious consideration by the United States". He was referring to the IS base in Raqqa, Syria. Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir has expressed optimism that the Trump presidency will be more engaged in the region, particularly in containing Iran which backs the

Assad regime and rebels in Yemen.

Assad's other main ally is Russia, against which McCain takes a hard line. Trump, in contrast, has faced allegations of improper Russian influence on his administration, something he denies. The New York Times on Sunday called McCain "critic in chief" of the Trump presidency, partly for his defense of traditional Republican foreign policy positions that contrast with those of the president. — AFP

## EXPATS BLAMED FOR STATE'S WOES

Continued from Page 1

The shift started sometime last year, when hospitals and clinics in Jahra and the Amiri Hospital in Kuwait City began barring expatriates from morning visits for non-emergency services. Recently, lawmaker Safaa Al-Hashem told the media at the National Assembly that "expats are crowding our hospitals and competing with us for the air we breathe in hospital waiting rooms".

She complained that many foreigners bring families on visitor visas to enjoy Kuwait's healthcare benefits, including deliveries, gastric bypass surgeries, cancer treatment, and other procedures. "Isn't time for us to put an end to this? We must reform the current system; we must impose taxes on expatriates, not on Kuwaitis," she said.

It's not just the healthcare. Kuwait's government and politicians have grown more wary of foreigners in other sectors as well in recent years, adopting or promoting a series of policies that target the roughly 3 million expats living and working here. Legislation last April increased the price of electricity and water in all residential buildings, but exempted Kuwaiti nationals. Social media posts and tweets by Kuwaitis and even statements from officials blaming expats for everything - from traffic congestion to the raiding of open buffets by wedding crashers - are becoming all too common.

Earlier this month, when Egypt beat Burkina Faso in the first semifinals match of the soccer African Cup of Nations, Kuwait's ministry of interior warned Egyptian expats - one of the largest Arab communities here - against celebrating their team's win with car parades. The traditional parades are a raucous event, with football fans driving around honking their cars, music blasting and flags waving from car windows.

The ministry said it would immediately deport anyone who takes part in "illegal parades" - so the Egyptians kept their partying off the streets. "As an Arab expat, when you go to the West, they call you a terrorist or refugee," said

Egyptian architect Waleed Shalaan, who has been living in Kuwait since 1999 and considers it his home. "You go to the Gulf states, they call you a leech or a parasite."

Recent law changes require foreigners to have a minimum monthly salary of KD 400 (\$1,309), and spend two years in Kuwait before applying for a local driving license - with the exception of some professions such as doctors, journalists, university professors, and engineers. Housewives and students may not drive, and anyone caught driving without a license can be deported. Only tourists and others on a visitor's visa can drive with an international license.

After Hashem's "air we breathe" comment, fellow lawmaker Abdulkarim Al-Kandari called for a special session of parliament to discuss what he called the "alarming increase in the number of expats versus Kuwaiti nationals". "We refuse to be a minority in our own country," he said - though Kuwaiti nationals already are, with foreigners making up about 70 percent of the population of 4.2 million.

Several lawmakers demanded the government deport 100,000 expats annually to balance the country's demographics. Without offering details, Hind Al-Sabeeh, the minister of social affairs, promised a plan to "balance the demographics of the country over the next five years, without disrupting the balance of work". Hind Francis, an analyst at the Rai Institute think tank, said xenophobic sentiments have been on the rise in Kuwait as a way to deflect blame from the authorities. "Many big problems that concern the public are blamed on the expatriates: Congested roads, overcrowded hospitals, many areas in which public policy has failed," she said.

Sarah Al-Qabandi, a 35-year old corporate social responsibility manager in the private Ooredoo Telecom says that blaming Kuwait's problems on the expats is a shame. "We expect people abroad to treat us like royalty... we want to be treated well, and yet we don't welcome anyone in our own country," she said. — AP

# Premier Brands

To see your ad here, call:  
**+965 248 35 616 / 617**  
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
ads@kuwaittimes.net  
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net

25  
k.d &  
26  
k.d

Hala  
Feb Offers

**De'Longhi**  
Better Everyday  
CLASSIC  
FH 1163  
Fryer

1400  
Watt

44  
الدين  
69  
قبل  
25  
الدين

- Upper heating element
- Auto. stirring process
- Lid with viewing window
- Removable timer

**Panasonic**  
MK-F500WTZ  
Food Processor

1.5Kgs

64  
الدين  
89  
قبل  
25  
الدين

- 13 Attach. for Functions
- Glass Touch Panels
- Manual Models

**KENWOOD**  
KM282  
Kitchen  
machine

4.3  
Ltr  
900  
Watt

54  
الدين  
79  
قبل  
25  
الدين

- Food Processor Attach.
- Citrus Juicer Attach.
- Blender Attach.

**best**  
AL-YOUSIFI

Credit: Start from SKD • Up to 48 month • Instant approval

• Kuwait 1 (The New str.) • Kuwait 2 (Panasonic Tower) • Hawalli 1 (Tunis str.) • Hawalli 2 (Bin Khalid str.) • Shuwalkh (4th Ring road) • Al-Rai (4th Ring road) • Salmiya (Salem Al-Mubarak str.) • Farwaniya (Behind police Station) • Fahaeel (Opp. General Parking) • Jahra (Opp. Main Co-op.) • Airport (Departure Hall)

Shop Online [www.best.com.kw](http://www.best.com.kw) Free Delivery

1809 809

CLASSIC 500

ROYAL ENFIELD

Awesome and well-known

- Single Cylinder, 4 stroke, Twinspark, Aircooled
- Digital Electronic Ignition
- 5 Speed Constant Mesh
- Electronic Fuel Injection

NOW  
IN KUWAIT

Available in:  Lagoon Blue  Chrome Green  Classic Black  Classic Tan

الشركة الكويتية لاستيراد السيارات ذ.م.م  
Kuwait Automotive Imports Co. W.L.L.

اتصل على: 6902 1397 / 6902 4472  
KAICO available in



**Kuwait Times**  
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  
FAX : 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

## Focus

RIO CARNIVAL PUTS  
CLOTHES BACK ON

When Brazil's top TV station picked its latest dancer to cheerlead coverage of the upcoming Rio carnival, viewers were in for a shock: She was wearing clothes. TV Globo's dancer, known as Globeleza - a mash-up of Globo and the Portuguese word for beauty - is an annual institution. Always young, beautiful, black and skilled at samba, she wiggles her hips in a short, slickly produced clip interspersing carnival programming.

Since her first appearance in 1991, Globeleza has performed naked, other than high heels, sequins, a lick or two of shimmery paint - and some years barely that. So the unveiling of the latest muse, Erika Moura, in lush, even ankle-length, folkloric costumes last month, was national news. "For the first time, Globeleza is dressed" and "Who dressed Globeleza?" were among the chorus of headlines. But Globeleza's new look is only one sign of shifting morality in Brazil as carnival goers rehearse for the famously wild pre-Lenten bash starting Friday.

## Missing the party?

Rio's new mayor Marcelo Crivella, an Evangelical bishop elected last year on the conservative wave sweeping the country, reportedly will not even attend the carnival. Although this has not been confirmed, the city's culture secretary says he has been deputized to stand in for Crivella on Friday at the traditional handing over of the city keys to Rei Momo, the carnival king who is typically a large, jolly man elected by samba enthusiasts.

Given that the carnival is Rio de Janeiro's biggest annual event, drawing approximately one million tourists, the absence of the mayor might seem odd. Crivella, whose billionaire uncle founded the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, would be the first mayor to miss the first carnival of his time in office. His absence would be all the starker given that his predecessor, Eduardo Paes, never looked happier than with a beer and a tambourine in hand.

Crivella appears unperturbed by the fuss. His office would only say that it refuses to comment on "speculation about the destination of the mayor". But another former mayor, Cesar Maia, is not amused. "I understand that because of his religion he doesn't like to dance samba or something like that, but his presence... is obligatory," he told O Globo newspaper.

## Sex object no more

Right-winger Crivella may find the Rio debauchery not to his liking, but it is pressure from the left that is having the biggest impact. Globeleza has long been targeted by activists who saw her nudity reinforcing popular images about black women as sex objects. They were also angered by an episode in 2014 when the dancer picked by Globo took flak on social media for being too dark and was replaced the following year by the lighter-skinned Moura.

Globo TV downplayed this year's switch to a clothed Globeleza, merely saying it wanted to "enrich" the character and that "the warm reaction of the public shows we took the right path". But Luana Genot, who founded a racial equality nonprofit organization called ID\_BR, is celebrating Globeleza's reinvention. "That's something that the black feminist movement has been struggling to get for years and years," she said. "Our struggle right now is for people to see that (black women) cannot be reduced only to this stereotype," she said. "People were just turning off the TV and sending a message that black people don't want to be portrayed this way anymore."

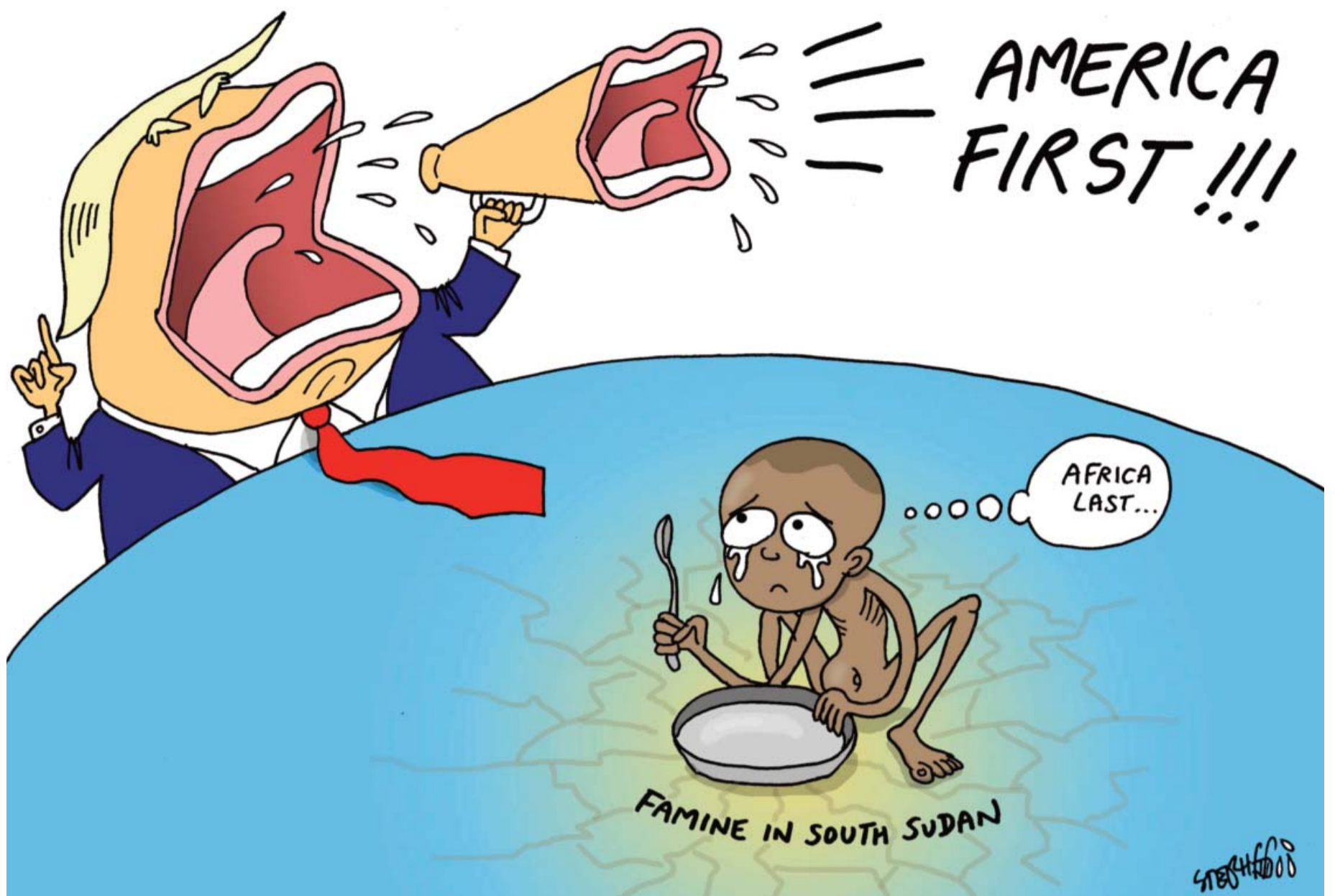
## Changing the music

Music is another battleground. Feminists targeting sexual harassment have come up with a new carnival anthem, sung by Bruna Caram and Chico Cesar, that mixes the traditional body-shaking rhythm with a promise of respect: "It doesn't matter what you wear, I won't touch you unless you consent." There is also fierce debate over alleged sexism and racism in the lyrics of some of the carnival's classic marching songs, for example in their use of the politically charged word for mixed-race women "mulata".

Several street carnival groups, known as blocos, have cut the songs, often written more than half a century ago, from their playlists. Debora Thome, who founded the feminist bloco Mulheres Rodadas, says the tide is turning. "It's something new. A lot of people have talked about it for years but not as much as now," she said. "In our bloco we play about 10 songs and we choose from music sung by women or composed by women and which have empowering lyrics, or funny ones."

However, veteran carnival composer Joao Roberto Kelly, whose output of samba hits includes the perhaps awkwardly titled "Menino Gay (Gay Boy)" and "Maria Sapatao (Maria the Dyke)", accuses feminists of spoiling the party. "I've not seen such censorship since the time of the dictatorship," he fumed in O Estado de S Paulo daily. — AFP

All articles appearing on these pages are the personal opinion of the writers. Kuwait Times takes no responsibility for views expressed therein. Kuwait Times invites readers to voice their opinions. Please send submissions via email to: opinion@kuwaittimes.net or via snail mail to PO Box 1301 Safat, Kuwait. The editor reserves the right to edit any submission as necessary.



## EUROPE DODGES TRUMP DEFENSE ULTIMATUM

US President Donald Trump sent top US officials to Europe with a familiar warning from Washington that allies must spend more on defense, this time with the ultimatum "or else". But Europeans have tried to deflect the threats with the argument that a commitment to security is not just about spending targets, which diplomats said that US officials did not challenge, suggesting that the stand-off will continue.

"Things look very different if we add up our defense budgets, our development aid budgets and our humanitarian efforts all around the world," European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker told the Munich Security Conference last week. By current standards, Washington funds about 70 percent of NATO spending. Standing beside US Vice President Mike Pence on Monday at the Commission, Juncker called for another measure of what counts.

"We want ... a broader understanding that the word 'stability' in the world means defence expenditure, human aid and development aid," said Juncker the EU's chief executive, adding he was against Europeans being "pushed into" the targets. Allies who do not meet NATO targets to spend 2 percent of GDP on military budgets set out to show Pence and Defense Secretary Jim Mattis how Europeans are dealing with crises they trace back, in part, to the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. "France has a readiness to deploy that is hard to match. Spain was leading NATO's new spearhead force last year. Italy is in Afghanistan," said one senior European NATO diplomat. "That isn't already reflected by spending targets."

While Germany says Trump has a point about Europe's drop in defence spending since the fall of the Soviet Union, Berlin and the European Commission also say Washington should take note that the EU is the world's biggest aid donor, spending some €56 billion (\$58.99 billion) a year. The United States spends about 1 percent of its federal budget on foreign aid, or about \$50 billion, but that also includes running diplomatic missions and giving academic grants, according to the US State Department. The European Union says most of its aid goes to the world's poorest countries.

Germany deserves recognition for the €30 to 40 billion (\$32 to \$42 billion) it is spending to integrate over a million refugees, many of whom were displaced as a result of failed Western policy, Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said.

## A96bn goal?

At a NATO summit in Wales in 2014, months after Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula, allies agreed to end years of defense cuts that left Europeans without vital capabilities, such as refuelling airborne fighter bombers. They agreed all allies should reach the target of spending 2 percent of economic output on defense every year by 2024, although the goal is not legally binding.

It aims to reverse a trend that saw defense research spending in the European Union fall by a third, or more than €20 billion, since 2006.

Only the United States, Britain, Poland, Estonia and Greece met the target in 2016, although the cuts have stopped and Latvia, Lithuania and Romania are close, NATO officials say. NATO's 22 European allies and Canada will spend almost 4 percent more, or some €10 billion, on defense this year and Germany's increases account for some 20 percent of that.

There is no European push to change the NATO target and NATO officials say the 2 percent target will remain politically useful, if not economically viable. Reaching the 2 percent target could cost NATO's European members \$96 billion per year, according to think tank Bruegel. US governments have been pressing Europeans to increase spending on their armed forces for decades, but Trump signalled a much tougher approach, suggesting on the cam-

aign trail to make US support conditional on meeting NATO commitments.

He has since given his full support to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, but complained this month that Europeans have "been very unfair to us", for not spending more on defense. Pence maintained the pressure at NATO on Monday, telling allies they had until the end of this year to show "real progress" on spending. Pence cited his spending message as one of the successes of his debut Europe trip, diplomats said.

Europeans say the biggest issue is how money is spent. Spurred on by Britain's decision to leave the European Union, Germany and France are leading plans to build a so-called European Defence Union that would allow countries to develop and share military assets together, as well as deploying troops. Collectively the European Union is the world's second-biggest military spender. But fears in Britain of an EU army held back collaboration. — Reuters

CHINA MOVE PUTS ONUS ON  
US IN N KOREA IMPASSE

China's snap decision to halt North Korean coal imports — a key economic lifeline for Pyongyang — has a broader motive aimed at shaping Donald Trump's as yet undefined policy towards the North's rogue nuclear arms program, experts say. North Korea defied the world a week ago with a missile test and is suspected of orchestrating the stunning assassination a day later of supreme leader Kim Jong-Un's half-brother in Malaysia, provocative acts that followed a nuclear test in September.

China is often the target of US criticism for not doing enough to rein in its irascible neighbor. But analysts said China's ban on North Korean coal imports for the rest of this year could be an attempt by Beijing to defuse such criticisms while nudging North Korea and the United States toward negotiations. "If China is squeezing North Korea, it is for one purpose and one purpose only: to offer a cooperative gesture to the incoming Trump administration in return for an initiative on negotiations," Stephan Haggard, of the Peterson Institute for International Economics, wrote in a blog post.

Under the Obama administration, Washington pursued a policy of "strategic patience" toward North Korea in hopes that sanctions would bring Pyongyang to heel and force it to abandon its nukes. The incoming Trump administration has stepped up the rhetoric, with the US

leader saying after the Feb 12 missile launch that Pyongyang was a "big, big problem" and would be dealt with "very strongly".

## Onus on Trump

China shares US concerns about Pyongyang obtaining a nuclear weapon, but prefers negotiations to sanctions, which it fears could destabilize North Korea and send a flood of refugees across their shared border. "China's main goal in making this move is to put the onus back on Washington, fair and square to solve this problem," said Peter Hayes, director of the Nautilus Institute. "In effect they are saying to the US: OK, we did what you wanted, we lit a fire under their feet. What are you going to do to solve the DPRK problem now?" he added, using the acronym for North Korea's official name.

The UN Security Council has imposed six sets of sanctions since Pyongyang first tested an atomic device in 2006. But North Korea has continued to thumb its nose at the world with a series of missile launches over the years and two nuclear tests in 2016 alone. Beijing traditionally ensures that UN sanctions against Pyongyang include humanitarian exemptions, and had continued to purchase huge amounts of North Korean coal - over \$168 million worth in December alone. — AFP

## UAE GRAPPLES DRONES AFTER AIRPORT CLOSURES

Dubai authorities are grappling with new ways of keeping the emirate's skies safe after drones halted air traffic at one of the world's busiest airports three times last year. The delays were necessary to protect passengers, officials said, but they hit thousands of travellers and cost airlines millions of dollars. Drones pose a "threat to the flying public" and "to an aircraft in operation," said Ismael Al-Blooshi, deputy head of the air safety department of the United Arab Emirates' civil aviation authority.

He compared drones to the threat posed by birds, but said they were less predictable and harder to avoid. "We have means and data to predict when and where is the bird migration... but with drones, you have this object in the air and you don't know the intentions" of the operator, he said. The cost of closing airspace for one hour runs into millions and creates a long backlog, but there is no room to compromise on safety, Blooshi said. "The economic impact is not even on the table" when considering the risks, he said. "The number one priority is avoiding harm to passengers."

Drones have become a more common sight in the skies above the emirate as related technology has plunged in price, with professional photographers eager to use them. "The drone has helped us all. Before we needed a plane and a big budget to do aerial shooting. It's much easier and cheaper now," said videographer Murad Al-Masri, as he shot footage of a desert festival.

After last year's incidents, operator Dubai Airports stressed that flying drones within five kilometres (three miles) of airports was illegal. New regulations introduced last year stipulate up to three years in jail or a fine of 100,000 dirhams (\$27,000) for flying a drone over a prohibited zone.

## Phone app, geo-fencing

But Dubai-owned carrier Emirates, the world's busiest international passenger airline, urged authorities to go further, introducing drone detectors. "Flight diversions and network disruptions due to unauthorized drone activity... cost Emirates airline millions of dirhams on each occasion, and impacted thousands of passengers," it said after one drone-related delay in November.

Authorities have even examined the possibility of hunting down the devices. The International Defense Exhibition and Conference, one of the largest arms fairs in the Middle East, on Monday showcased a private company's drone hunting system. Dubai-based SkyStream said it had crafted a three-phase system that could identify whether the drones were "friendly," jam their signals in case they were not and subsequently bring them down. A security official told AFP Dubai police now have the ability to overpower a drone and bring it down but did not elaborate on how.

The aviation authority has introduced a mobile phone application that clearly marks out no-fly zones for drones across the country, telling users immediately where they can and cannot fly. Out-of-bounds areas include those around airports, military zones and other government installations. The authority also wants drone owners to register their devices. Another measure under study is geo-fencing, meaning that drones are pre-programmed to make them unable to enter restricted areas even if users try to send them there.

"We are talking to various manufacturers to impose this as an import requirement for the UAE," said Blooshi, although he said this is hard because drones are produced by many different manufacturers. Authorities in Europe

have also scrambled to apply rules on flying drones after mishaps at airports.

## Sea rescue drones

"The risk of collision is to be taken seriously," said Yves Morier of the European Aviation Safety Agency. "The introduction of drones has to be done in a safe manner," said Morier, whose agency is to work on common regulations for the European Union. "There have been incidents in Europe and their number has risen in the past years."

France has forbidden flying drones within 10 km of an airport, the French civil aviation authority says, twice the maximum distance in the UAE. But while drones can pose risks to aviation, UAE authorities are keen to make use of them for policing, rescue and security purposes. "We use drones in various aspects, including securing events, detecting explosives and (securing) motorcades" of high profile figures, said Sergeant Abdullah al-Harbi, head of the technical support team at Dubai's General Department of Protective Security and Emergency. He said authorities plan to use drones equipped with face detection software to hunt for suspects.

Rescue services in the emirate of Ajman have also deployed drones to help in sea rescue operations, local press has reported. The drones are equipped with thermal sensors and cameras that scan the waters to locate casualties, and carry buoys that can be dropped to them by remote control. And the labor ministry has been using drones since 2014 to inspect construction sites and make sure companies are giving workers their compulsory mid-day break during hot weather. "Drones are good for us," said Blooshi. "We are eager to accommodate them in a healthy way." — AFP



## MIDDLE FINGER GESTURE COSTS CARLO ANCELOTTI 5,000 EUROS

**BERLIN:** Bayern Munich coach Carlo Ancelotti will donate 5,000 euros to charity after making an obscene gesture to Hertha Berlin fans after their 1-1 draw on Saturday, the German football association (DFB) said yesterday. The Italian had raised his middle finger after leaving the pitch at the end of the game and later said he had done it because he had been spat on by the home fans. Bayern scored in the sixth minute of stoppage time with hosts Hertha left fuming over the length of added time that was played. The DFB said it had ended an investigation into the incident in return for the charity payment. "The investigation has ceased in agreement with the DFB sports court. Linked to that is that the coach of Bayern Munich pays 5,000 euros to the Sepp-Herberger charity." The DFB charity is named after the late Germany coach and works on several social projects. — Reuters



## THISTLECRACK OUT FOR SEASON WITH INJURY

**LONDON:** Trainer Colin Tizzard's stable star Thistlecrack's hopes of landing the blue riband of jump racing the Cheltenham Gold Cup this year are over as an injury yesterday ruled him out for the rest of the season. The nine-year-old, who went down to his first defeat in five starts over fences last time out to Many Clouds who then collapsed and died, was found to have a slight tendon tear. "The vet scanned him this morning and it's a slight tendon tear," said Tizzard. "We've seen it at every yard and it happens every year." Tizzard, though, still has an imposing hand in the Gold Cup which takes place on March 17 bringing the racing festival to a climax with his impressive Welsh Grand National winner Native River the new favourite. Tizzard also has the veteran Cue Card who was well beaten by his younger stablemate Thistlecrack in the prestigious King George VI Chase in late December on course for another tilt at a race which saw him come to grief three fences from home last year when in line for a million pound bonus had he won it. — AFP

## SRI LANKA'S DICKWELLA BANNED AFTER T20 DISSENT

**SYDNEY:** Sri Lanka's Niroshan Dickwella was suspended for two limited-overs matches yesterday after he was punished for dissent during last week's pulsating Twenty20 win over Australia. The wicketkeeper and opening batsman was docked two demerit points and fined 30 percent of his match fee for his aggrieved reaction to being given out caught behind on Sunday, reaching five points and triggering an automatic ban. Australia wicketkeeper Tim Paine was fined 15 percent of his match fee and received one demerit point for taunting Dickwella over the dismissal in Geelong. Dickwella was punished after he paused to view the replay, kicked the turf and stared over his shoulder "for a prolonged period of time", an International Cricket Council statement said. The suspension means Dickwella will miss today's third and final Twenty20 against Australia in Adelaide, when the hosts will seek a consolation win. Sri Lanka clinched victory on the very last ball on Sunday when Chamara Kapugedera hammered a boundary, following Asela Gunaratne's 84 not out off 46 balls. — AFP



## MATURED KOLISI READY TO BE A LEADER FOR STORMERS

**CAPE TOWN:** Stormers loose forward Siya Kolisi admits he has had some growing up to do since bursting on to the Super Rugby scene four years ago but he is now ready to be a leader after being handed the captaincy. The flanker was named skipper yesterday after last year's co-captain Juan de Jongh tore knee ligaments and faces up to three months on the sidelines.

Kolisi made an instant impact when he came into the Stormers side in 2012, but when his career failed to take off he needed a few home truths from coach Robbie Fleck to spark a change in his attitude towards preparation and training.

Advice heeded, the 25-year-old is now ready to live up to the expectations that come with being one of the senior players in the team. "Since that day I haven't looked back. It's not been easy, it's been tough. I won't lie, I had to mature a lot."

"Obviously, now I'm a leader at home as well, I have got three kids that I must be a role model for. I had to change a lot of my ways." The Stormers have lost a number of key players in recent seasons but Kolisi, who has collected 16 Springboks caps since making his debut in 2013, says their presence is still felt. "I have learnt a lot from those guys

that have gone, Schalk (Burger), Duane (Vermeulen) and Jean (De Villiers)," he added. The Cape Town-based side have a challenging fixture list this season including all five of New Zealand's Super Rugby teams.

Last year, they reached the quarter-finals having played only South African and Australian sides, as well as the debutant Sunwolves from Japan and Argentina's Jaguares. They were given a sharp reminder of just how far ahead the New Zealanders are in a 60-21 home thrashing in the play-offs by Waikato Chiefs.

Kolisi said the competition format left the Stormers under-prepared for that game and that playing teams from New Zealand earlier this season would bring long-term benefits. "It means we won't get to a playoff like we did and get shocked. When you play them early in the competition it's perfect," he said. "But you have got to be ready mentally. We are not afraid because we have to play them. If that is what it takes to win Super Rugby, so be it."

Kolisi is convinced that the Stormers, who start their season with a bruising North-South derby at home to the Bulls on Saturday, are genuine title contenders.

"I wouldn't be here if I didn't think that, I wouldn't have worked this hard in pre-season if I didn't think we have the squad to do it," he said. — Reuters



**WELLINGTON:** In this Aug. 6, 2016 file photo, The Hurricanes' Ardie Savea, center, runs over the Lions' Courtnall Skosan, center bottom, during the Super Rugby final in Wellington, New Zealand. Super Rugby will begin its 22nd season tomorrow stalled at a crossroads at which fan expectations and commercial imperatives meet in an almost irreconcilable impasse. — AP

RUGBY

# RUGBY FACES CHALLENGES AHEAD OF CHANGES IN 2017

**WELLINGTON:** Super Rugby will begin its 22nd season tomorrow, stalled at a crossroads at which fan expectations and commercial imperatives meet in an almost irreconcilable impasse.

The sudden expansion of the competition last year from 15 to 18 teams was unsettling to fans who saw playing standards drop in what had previously been regarded as the world's best professional rugby tournament.

Newcomers to the tournament - Japan's Sunwolves, Argentina's Jaguares and South Africa's Kings - occupied the bottom rungs on the competition ladder and the integrity of the conference system, made necessary by a larger number of teams, was undermined by an unexpected weakening of teams in Australia and South Africa. That resulted in teams forfeiting home playoff advantages to others that had performed less well during the regular season and in teams reaching the play-offs whose regular season records hardly justified that reward. The glowing example was the Cape Town-based Stormers who finished top of their African conference but were beaten 60-21 at home in the play-offs by the Hamilton-based Chiefs, who were only the third-best New Zealand team.

Tournament organizers SANZAAR have argued expansion is an unavoidable necessity, saying the commercial viability of the competition depends on its growth now and in the future, to retain the interest of broadcasters and to build its fan base. They have floated plans for further expansion into Asia and for forays into the United States and eventually Britain where Super Rugby would presume to take on established and popular domestic competitions. The Pacific Islands remain a major source of talent for Super Rugby but a problematic area of expansion for organizers because of small local economies and a lack of infrastructure.

SANZAAR has been forced by a generally negative fan reaction to last year's competition to put moves towards further expansion on hold for the

moment and has embarked on a full review of the tournament's structure which might result in teams being axed in South Africa and Australia.

### FULL NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

Existing commitments to broadcasters, sponsors and other stakeholders prevented any changes being made to this season's structure and the result may be a substantial decline in live and television audiences until the tournament's shortcomings are addressed.

What exactly may be on the table in 2018 is not clear but SANZAAR is not expected to be swayed for long from its course of further expansion. SANZAAR is working with outside consultants to produce a 10-year strategic plan for its competitions which is expected to be completed mid-year.

"We should be in a position by the end of May, beginning of June, to deliver the full new strategic plan for SANZAAR," chief executive Andy Marinos told Fairfax Media. Marinos disputed claims that recent changes to Super Rugby have diminished the tournament's appeal. He cited statistics that show the average number of points scored in matches increased from 45.3 to 52 last season and tries per match increased from 5.1 to 6.4. But those increases are largely the result of the mismatches that have become more common.

"All of those numbers we are up on any other rugby competition in the world," Marinos said. "And from a viewership perspective by some magnitude we dwarf what the other competitions are generating. I still believe it's a premium competition." Marinos acknowledged the 2016 competition was one-sided as New Zealand teams captured four of the top five placings but suggested that was an anomaly. "It was a rather bizarre year where we had dominance coming out of one conference and, except for (South Africa's) Lions others struggling to assert themselves," he said. "Early indications are the South Africans, Australians, Jaguares and Sunwolves are going to be

more competitive than they were last year." But on paper it seems New Zealand teams will be dominant again this season. Although the five New Zealand squads contain 33 players playing Super Rugby for the first time they retain depth, plus the Auckland-based Blues - the only New Zealand team to miss last year's play-offs - are stronger than last season. There are issues, the largest of which is the mid-year tour to New Zealand by the British and Irish Lions. While leading All Blacks will remain available for Super Rugby, it is likely their attention will be strongly focused on the Lions series. Also, two New Zealand teams, the Crusaders and Highlanders, must transition to playing under new coaches.

### FOCUS ON FINANCIAL STABILITY

At the same time the Australian and South African teams have not easily coped with a steady drain of top players to France, Britain and Japan. The board of the Australian Rugby Union is already considering whether to drop one of its five teams and if so which one and on what criteria. A focus on financial stability might imperil two-time champions the ACT Brumbies but the Perth-based Western Force and the Melbourne Rebels are in greater jeopardy, imperiling years of effort to broaden the game's geographical base in Australia. "We have to marry what is our priority with the priorities of the joint venture and see if we can come up with a solution that works for everybody," ARU chief operating officer Rob Clarke told Australian Associated Press. "Ultimately it's not going to be a perfect fit for everybody and there will be some sacrifices that are going to be made."

South Africa may be forced to consider surrendering one of its six teams but also faces geographical challenges and the danger of alienating fans in some of its rugby strongholds. The Lions, who reached last year's final against the Hurricanes, remain strong but other South African teams may have to contend with a lack of depth. — AP



## KUWAIT DEFEAT SAUDI, S LANKA IN U-16 WORLD CUP TENNIS TOURNAMENT

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait National Juniors Tennis team defeated Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka with the same score 3/0 each, during the World Cup Tennis tournament for U-16 being held in New Delhi, India. 15 Asian countries participating in the tournament are Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Bangladesh, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Bhutan, Vietnam and host country India. Kuwait's group, includes Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and Lebanon.

Kuwait's delegation to the tournament includes Abdelsamad Al-Aryan heading the delegation coach Bejorm, and players Bader Antar, Ali Al-Shatti and Essa Qabazard.

President of Kuwait Tennis Federation Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Abdallah Al-Sabah congratulated the delegation for these excellent results which places Kuwait on top of its group and qualify for the semifinals.

He said KTF cares for the base of the ages stages specially those under 16 years old, which will be depended on in the future. He said the federation prepared a program for juniors teams all year that guarantees their participation in several international and Asian countries. Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber wished the delegation all success.



**TOKYO:** In this April 23, 2016 file photo, Fecund Lsa of Argentina's Jaguares scores a try during their Super Rugby match against Japan's Sunwolves in Tokyo. Super Rugby will begin its 22nd season tomorrow. — AP



## OLYMPIC DOWNHILL DESIGNER SAYS TOUGH, FASTER COURSE AWAITS

**ST MORITZ:** Stop worrying, downhill racers. The 2018 Olympic course will be faster than you think. The new track in South Korea has been criticized - at a men's test race last year and at the world championships this week - as being too slow with too many twists and turns. Not so fast, veteran Olympic course designer Bernhard Russi told The Associated Press. "It was on purpose to do it like this," Russi said of last February's World Cup downhill where race winner Kjetil Jansrud of Norway peaked at 113.7 kph (70.6 mph).

If that sounds fast, 2014 Olympic champion Matthias Mayer hit close to 135 kph (84 mph) on Russi's design in the mountains above Sochi. A record speed of 161 kph (100 mph) in World Cup downhill

was set by Johan Clarey of France in Wengen, Switzerland, in 2013.

"When you go the first time in a new downhill you start from the slow side. You don't want to kill the guys," said Russi, the 1972 Olympic champion and silver medalist behind Austrian great Franz Klammer four years later. The Swiss veteran is skiing's master architect, and always planned to learn from last year's debut race and a scheduled women's World Cup downhill on the same wide course next month.

"Now we know how much faster we can go, and we will. And the jumps will be longer," Russi said of a men's course that launches them airborne four times.

The main Olympic critic one year ago was Christof

Innerhofer of Italy, the 2014 silver medalist, who called the course in Jeongseon "slow motion."

In St. Moritz, it was world championship downhill silver medalist Erik Guay of Canada who wished for a faster, tougher test at the Pyeongchang Olympics.

Guay said the test race had too many slowing turns, and was similar to a super-G - a pointed remark from the 35-year-old Canadian who is the new world champion in that discipline.

"I hope that they set it a little differently," Guay said of the Olympic course. "I think that they should make it flow a little bit better. But the slope itself is great." The men and women share the Olympic hill, but not exactly the same terrain. Russi said there is

time to adapt both before the Olympics. The women will compete in World Cup downhill and super-G races on March 4-5. "Basically the character will remain the same (as the men's)," Russi said of the women's downhill track. "Maybe the turns will be a little bit tighter. Maybe one, two, three, four more turns. Maybe the jumps a little less big, less long. Perfect for ladies."

Other factors could also change Olympic race-day conditions, such as snow quality and humidity in a mountain region only 40 kilometers (25 miles) inland.

"If the weather is good I think (the snow) is going to be rather on the hard side, on the icy side," Russi said. "Everything is on track." — AP

### OLYMPICS

## OCA CHIEF BACKS DUAL HOST CITY AWARDS

**SAPPORO:** Asia's most powerful sports official has given tentative support to the notion that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) should award the host cities for both the 2024 and 2028 Olympics later this year, an idea which appears to be gaining momentum. The idea has not been formally proposed by the IOC, and with the 2024 host set to be decided in September, time is running out for what would be a radical change. But top-ranking Olympic officials, including the IOC president Thomas Bach, have not ruled it out.

The Olympic Council of Asia president Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, who also holds a key position on soccer's world governing body FIFA, gave his views on the subject during a press conference yesterday at the Asian Winter Games in Japan.

Sheikh Ahmad said he could not comment on the prospects of such a change in the Olympics but it had happened with other sporting events. "The IOC executive board have to decide and until they put it on the table we won't comment," he said.

"But as OCA president, we practised this for (the) 2022 and 2026 Asian Games. At FIFA we also practised to have two World Championships: Russia in 2018 and Qatar in 2022." The spiralling cost of hosting the Olympics has seen a reduction in the number of cities bidding to host it. There are just three candidates in the running for 2024, Paris, Los Angeles and Budapest.

There are growing concerns about Budapest's bid after the city mayor mayor Istvan Tarlos announced last week that he

meet Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban to review the bid.

If Budapest joined Boston, Rome and Hamburg by pulling out, the IOC would be left with just Paris and Los Angeles. But because both cities presented strong cases, speculation is mounting that the IOC could give the 2024 games to one and the 2028 event to the other. The struggle to find Olympic hosts has been an unexpected boon for Asia in recent years. The region is set to stage the next three Olympics in succession: the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang in South Korea, the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo and the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

And Sheikh Ahmad said Asia would be willing to step and host the 2026 Winter Olympics if needed, with Sapporo planning to bid. "Asia will be ready to host the Olympic Winter Games again," he said. "If there is a lot who bid (for 2026), we will have to evaluate the situation, but if not, then we have a good chance."

"We are ready to host a third Olympic Winter Games." The OCA president also flagged the possibility that Oceania nations including Australia could be allowed to compete in the Asian Summer Games from 2022. Australia and New Zealand both accepted invitations to compete at the Asian Winter Games, but on condition they would not be allowed to win medals.

The next Asian Games will be held in Indonesia in 2018 but Sheikh Ahmad said 2022 was a more likely starting date for Oceania participation. — AP



**SAPPORO:** Gold medalist Wu Dajing, center, of China is flanked by silver medalist Seo Yi-ra, left, of South Korea and Park Se-yong, of South Korea during the victory ceremony of the men's 500 meters of short track speed skating competition at the Asian Winter Games at Makomanai Indoor Skating Rink in Sapporo, northern Japan, yesterday. — AP

### WINTER GAMES

## JAPAN WINS 4 GOLD IN SPEED SKATING AT ASIAN WINTER GAMES

**SAPPORO:** Japan claimed four gold medals in speed skating and China won two on the short track at the Asian Winter Games yesterday.

Nao Kodaira of Japan earned her second gold of the Sapporo Games by beating two-time Olympic champion Lee Sang-hwa of South Korea in the women's 500 on the long track.

Kodaira is unbeaten in six World Cups this season, and the winner of the 1,000 on Monday. "I wasn't at my best today, maybe 80 percent of full fitness," Kodaira said. "But I wanted to race against a strong sprinter and it was good preparation (for the 2018 Winter Olympics)." Takuro Oda won the men's 1,000, and Miho Takagi the

women's 1,500. The Japanese team of Misaki Oshigiri, Nana Takagi, and Ayano Sato cruised to victory in the women's team pursuit. South Korea was second, and China third. Wu Dajing, the silver medalist in the men's 1,500 meters on Monday, won gold in the 500, edging Seo Yi-ra of South Korea by .078 seconds. Park Se-yong, also of South Korea, was third.

"The race was quite difficult," said Wu, a two-time world champion in the 500. "The South Koreans gave us pressure over the final two laps and I almost lost my balance in the final lap."

Zang Yize of China won the women's 500. Ayuko Ito of Japan was second, and Choi Min-

jeong of South Korea third after her compatriot Shim Suk-hee got tangled up on the final lap with Fan Kexin of China and both were disqualified. In cross-country skiing, Japan also won the women's 10-kilometer free through Yuki Kobayashi. Lee Chae-won of South Korea was second, 24.4 seconds back, and Yelena Kolomina of Kazakhstan was third.

Rinat Mukhim won Kazakhstan's first gold of the games by winning the men's 15-kilometer free, 4.5 seconds ahead of Naoto Baba of Japan. Akira Lenting, also of Japan, was their best. Elsewhere, the men's ski jumping event was cancelled due to high winds. — AP



**SAPPORO:** Wu Dajing, top, of China celebrates his victory as Seo Yi-ra, bottom, of South Korea falls down after the men's 500 meters finals of short track speed skating competition at the Asian Winter Games at Makomanai Indoor Skating Rink in Sapporo, northern Japan, yesterday. — AP

## SAMPLE RE-TESTS FROM SOCHI OLYMPICS TO RUN TO 2022

**BERLIN:** The re-testing of samples from the 2014 Sochi winter Olympics in Russia to identify any cheats who had competed there will last another five years to 2022, the International Olympic Committee said.

The IOC is re-testing thousands of samples from the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 summer Games as well as the Vancouver 2010 and Sochi winter Olympics to root out any doping offenders. More than 100 have so far seen their sample test positive from Beijing and London alone, with dozens of medals having been stripped so far. In addition a total of 28 Russian athletes who took part in Sochi, face disciplinary proceedings over possible manipulation of their urine samples from the Sochi Games.

The IOC had said in December there was "evidence of manipulation of one or more of their urine samples" collected in Sochi.

This follows publication late last year of the second and final part of the World Anti-Doping Agency's independent McLaren report into Russian doping.

It found more than 1,000 Russian competitors in more than 30 sports were involved in an institutional conspiracy to conceal positive

drug tests over the course of five years. "The IOC has an ongoing programme of reanalysis of all stored samples from Sochi, Vancouver and London," an IOC spokesperson said yesterday. "The reanalysis from Sochi of samples from athletes from many different sports and countries will continue through to 2022," the official told Reuters. "We have no specific timeline. The IOC will continue to communicate on a case by case basis as soon as disciplinary procedures are completed."

The IOC stores samples from past Games for a decade to re-test them at a later date using newer methods or searching for substances that were unknown to anti-doping officials at the time of the competition.

The McLaren report into systematic state-backed doping in Russia over the past years, including during Sochi, has triggered two IOC investigations into the affair and a re-testing of samples. Russian athletes were partly banned from competing at last year's Rio de Janeiro Olympics while a decision on their participation or not at the 2018 winter Games in South Korea's Pyeongchang has yet to be taken. — Reuters

## ASIAN WINTER GAMES WILL BE AN IDEAL STAGE FOR ATHLETES

**SAPPORO:** With the Winter Olympics just a year and a short distance away, the Asian Winter Games will be the ideal stage for the continent's leading winter athletes to fine tune for Pyeongchang 2018.

The eighth Asian Winter Games will open Sunday in Sapporo, on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido, and run through Feb. 26, with more than 2,000 athletes from 31 countries competing in five sports, 11 disciplines and 64 events.

Japan, South Korea, Kazakhstan and China have traditionally been the dominant countries at the games but with Pyeongchang in 2018 and Beijing in 2022 hosting the next two Winter Olympics, athletes in the region are making a major push to be more competitive in global terms. "China is expecting to introduce 300 million people to winter sports during this period, so the next few years are pivotal in establishing a vast, new winter sports scene outside of the traditional markets of North America and Europe," Olympic Council of Asia President Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah said.

The Sapporo Games will also feature athletes from Australia and New Zealand competing, bringing an Oceania element to event.

At the request of the Australian Olympic Committee, the Olympic Council of Asia and the Sapporo 2017 organizing committee agreed to allow athletes from the two countries to take part as guest athletes in individual sports only.

They won't be eligible to win medals, but will gain experience by competing against world-class winter sports athletes from the region in the time zone that will be the same as the Olympics. "Their participation will add value to the Games and further expand the footprint of Asia," Sheikh Ahmad said.

South Korea, the next Olympic host, will have 142 athletes taking part and has set an ambitious goal of 15 gold medals and second place in the medals standings.

Many of South Korea's golds are expected to come in speed skating, a sport the country has excelled at over the years.

Lee Seung-hoon, the 2010 Olympic champion in the men's 10,000 meters, is currently the world No. 1 in mass start. Kim Bo-reum, an emerging star on the women's side, leads all female skaters in mass start this season. South Korea's men's ice hockey team, meanwhile, is coached by former NHL defenseman Jim Paek.

With an automatic berth in the Pyeongchang Games, Paek's team is in Japan aiming to boost its competitiveness.

### CONTROVERSY

Chinese short track speed skaters, who captured six gold medals at the last two Winter Olympics, will be strong medal contenders in Sapporo. Among them are Han Tianyu, who won the men's 1,500 meters at the 2016 world championships, and Wu Dajing, who claimed the men's 500 meter title at the 2016 World Cup in Shanghai. World champion Fan Kexin will be among the goal medal contenders in the women's 500 meters.

Japan is targeting medals in events including ski jumping, speed skating and figure skating, although Sochi Olympic gold medalist Yuzuru Hanyu is sitting out the Games. In his place, Japan national champion Shoma Uno is among the favorites. Australia's delegation features a number of experienced athletes, including three-time Olympic snowboarder Holly Crawford, short

track skater Deanna Lockett and Ben Sim, a Vancouver Olympian in cross country skiing. The games have not been without controversy stemming from recent and older geopolitical tensions. Organizers were forced to ensure a book denying the 1937 Nanjing Massacre will be removed from guest rooms at a hotel to be used as a dormitory in the Athletes' Village.

APA Group, the operator of the hotel chain, has been under fire after it was revealed it had distributed the book, which was written by Chief Executive Toshio Motoya, in its hotel rooms. The book claims the Nanjing Massacre never happened. China says the massacre resulted in the deaths of more than 300,000 people.

The Japanese government decided to allow North Korean athletes and officials to enter the country to take part in the Games despite Japan's entry ban on North Korean citizens.

Tokyo will treat the athletes as an exception to its punitive measure taken as part of its sanctions in response to Pyongyang's nuclear tests and rocket launches. — AP



**SAPPORO:** Wu Dajing, center, of China leads other competitors during the men's 500 meters finals of short track speed skating competition at the Asian Winter Games at Makomanai Indoor Skating Rink in Sapporo, northern Japan, yesterday. — AP



## FIVE INFAMOUS INDIA-AUSTRALIA CONTROVERSIES

**NEW DELHI:** Five previous flashpoints between India and Australia who begin a four-Test series in Pune tomorrow.

### SUNNY'S ALMIGHTY STROP

Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar suffered a massive meltdown during the 1981 Melbourne Test when he threatened to forfeit the match after being given out lbw on 70 off Australian great Dennis Lillee. The batting legend, nicknamed "Sunny", was adamant that the ball had hit his bat first and remonstrated with both Lillee and the umpire before reluctantly starting his walk from the crease while shaking his head vehemently. He instructed bemused fellow opener Chetan Chauhan to leave with him and the pair headed for the boundary. A swift intervention from then Indian manager Shahid

Durrani prevented Chauhan from leaving the field which would have resulted in the visitors conceding the match and incurring a suspension. Gavaskar later said he regretted his "inexcusable behaviour".

### TENDULKAR OUT 'SHOULDER BEFORE'

Indian fans still rage about an umpiring decision during the 1999 Adelaide Test that saw the great Sachin Tendulkar dismissed effectively for "shoulder before wicket". The "Little Master"—who stands at 5ft 4in (1.65m)—attempted to duck a Glenn McGrath bouncer, only for the ball to keep low and hit his left shoulder. Home umpire Daryl Harper had no hesitation in giving Tendulkar out lbw. Some replays suggested the ball may have clipped the top of the stumps but most were inconclusive. Tendulkar was out for a

duck and the reliably-partisan Indian media went apoplectic. The ever-gracious Tendulkar played down the decision, merely saying his dismissal was a bit disappointing.

### GANGULY KEEPS WAUGH WAITING

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly so enraged his opposite number Steve Waugh during India's 2001 tour Down Under that the Australian skipper accused him of a "lack of respect". Waugh was furious that Ganguly kept turning up late for the toss. Waugh wrote in his autobiography that he was "wound up" by the left-handed batsman's "continued petulance". Ganguly, nicknamed the Prince of Kolkata for the air of superiority that he carried on and off the field, initially maintained that his tardiness had been a mistake. Years later though he revealed that

he had turned up a few minutes late on purpose each time to teach the Aussies a lesson for their rude behaviour.

### 'MONKEYGATE' ERUPTS

The 2008 New Year Test in Sydney was undoubtedly the lowest point in India-Australia cricket relations. With tempers frayed because of a string of questionable umpiring decisions and on-field altercations, the "Monkeygate" scandal erupted—almost causing the tour to be called off. Australia all-rounder Andrew Symonds accused spinner Harbhajan Singh of calling him a "monkey". Singh, who denied any wrong-doing, was suspended for three matches for the alleged racist slur. The ban was overturned when India threatened to quit the tour, claiming Singh had been wrongly accused. The allegations prompted India captain Anil

Kumble to say that only one team was playing with the spirit of the game. Australia won the match and went on to take the series 2-1.

### KOHLI SHOWS THE MIDDLE FINGER

Four years after "Monkeygate" came "Fingergate" when a young and angry Virat Kohli let the rowdy Sydney Test crowd get to him. Kohli was fielding in the deep when he was on the receiving end of some unpleasant chants from the famously vocal fans and responded by flashing the middle finger. It was caught on camera and Kohli, now captain, was fined 50 percent of his match fee for bringing the game into disrepute. He later defended his response on Twitter: "I agree cricketers don't have to retaliate, what (sic) when the crowd says the worst things about your mother and sister, the worst I've heard." — AFP

### BASEBALL

## DODGERS ADD GUTIERREZ TO ALREADY LOADED ROSTER

**GLENDALE:** Although Franklin Gutierrez officially joined the Los Angeles Dodgers on Monday afternoon, the veteran outfielder had already been working out at their spring training complex for two days.

The Dodgers reached a deal with him last week, but they couldn't formally announce his arrival because they hadn't been able to clear a spot for him on their 40-man roster until they traded veteran left-hander Vidal Nuno to Baltimore for a prospect on Sunday.

Such is the nature of the Dodgers' remarkable roster depth heading into a season of enormous expectations. The four-time defending NL West champions are bursting with quality big-leaguers at every position, ranging from seasoned veterans to blue-chip young talent, as they chase their first World Series title since 1988.

The Dodgers' extraordinary depth is a luxury for manager Dave Roberts, but it also means spring training is uncommonly important as they begin the difficult process of trimming this roster to a 25-man group.

For instance, Roberts can choose among 10 legitimate big-league starters for his five-man rotation. The club also must make tough calls from the bullpen to the outfield, and the process takes another step forward Tuesday with the first full-squad workout.

"We're going to have a lot of competition around here, and someone is not going to be happy," ace Clayton Kershaw said. "But it's going to be good for us in the long run."

Since the deep-pocketed Guggenheim Baseball Management ownership group took over the team in 2012 and hired top baseball executive Andrew Friedman away from

Tampa Bay two years later, the Dodgers have led the bounty from their multibillion-dollar television deal with remarkable vigor. They did it again during this offseason, committing a combined \$192 million to keep third baseman Justin Turner, closer Kenley Jansen and starter Rich Hill from the team that finished two wins shy of the World Series.

The Dodgers also were deep last season, and they had to be: They won 91 games and reached the NL Championship Series despite setting a single-season major league record by putting 28 different players on the disabled list. They had seven starting pitchers on the DL at the same time in August, and they used 55 different players, tying a team record.

If injury problems ravage them again, the Dodgers think they will be ready. If the Dodgers stay healthy, they'll just be loaded. "You could say that we have more depth," Roberts said Monday. "You could argue that. I think that's a good thing. ... The confidence that we have in our clubhouse is real. We've got some pretty good players."

The Dodgers entered spring training with a roster so deep that they couldn't immediately announce the signing of Gutierrez or the return of Chase Utley. The well-liked veteran infielder is likely to play a utility role this season because Los Angeles already improved its infield by acquiring second baseman Logan Forsythe from Tampa Bay in a trade for pitching prospect Jose De Leon.

"There's a lot of great players in this room," Utley said. "There's not a ton of spots, but there's a ton of good guys. Hopefully we can stay healthy and everybody can perform well." — AP



**COLOMBO:** Members of the Indian cricket team pose for photographs with the winners trophy after defeating South Africa in their ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier final one-day international cricket match in Colombo, Sri Lanka, yesterday. — AP

### CRICKET

## INDIA WINS WOMEN'S WCUP QUALIFYING FINAL

**COLOMBO:** Hamanpreet Kaur hit a six and ran briskly for two runs during the last two balls to steal a tense one-wicket win for India over South Africa in the final of the Women's Cricket World Cup qualifiers yesterday.

Kaur scored a run-a-ball 41 in India's 245-9 in 50 overs in reply to South Africa's 244 all out in its final over. India was the pre-tournament favourite, followed by South Africa, in the 10-

team qualifying event. They and Sri Lanka and Pakistan will join England, Australia, New Zealand, and the West Indies in the Women's World Cup in June in England.

Deepti Sharma top-scored for India with 71 off 89 balls including eight boundaries. Her 124-run stand for the second wicket with opener Mona Meshram (59) set up the successful run chase. Meshram hit seven boundaries and a six. India

appeared to lose its way later, dropping to 223-8 in the 46th over and 237-9 to start the last over, but Kaur held her nerve to see her team through to victory. Marizanne Kapp and Ayabonga Khaka took two wickets each for South Africa, whose top eight batswomen hit double figures. Mignon de Preez top-scored for South Africa with 40. For India, Rajeshwari Gayakwad took three wickets and Shika Pandey two. — AP



**CHRISTCHURCH:** South Africa's Farhaan Behardien kicks a ball during a practice session at Hagley Park, Christchurch, New Zealand, yesterday. South Africa plays New Zealand in a one day cricket international here today. — AP

## INDIA V AUSTRALIA: FIVE TALKING POINTS

**NEW DELHI:** Five talking points ahead of the four-match series between the world's number one Test side India and second-ranked Australia which begins in Pune tomorrow.

### LET'S GO SLEDGING

Former Australia batsman Mike Hussey warned the visitors that winding up India captain Virat Kohli would only make him more dangerous but skipper Steve Smith has given the green light for sledging. "It's all about us making sure that as individuals we're in the right mindset to go out and succeed and if guys want to get in those kind of battles then go for it," declared Smith in his first press conference in India. No one, however, will want a repeat of the 2008 "Monkeygate" scandal at Sydney which almost led to India's tour Down Under being called off.

### UNDERDOG AUSSIES DARE TO DREAM

Though ranked second in the world, Australia will face a super-confident top-ranked India team who are unbeaten in 19 Tests stretching across six consecutive series wins. The visitors haven't won a Test in India since they took the 2004 series 2-1 but that hasn't stopped the underdogs dreaming of a massive upset. "We know that if we can pull something off and win a series here, we will look back in 10 to 20 years and it will be some of the best times of our lives," said Smith.

### UNBEATABLE INDIA EYE GREATNESS

India have enjoyed comprehensive series wins against South Africa, West

Indies, New Zealand and England during their unbeaten streak leading coach Anil Kumble to say his side have the potential to become the best ever. The hosts have won 15 of their last 19 matches but still have some way to go to be bracketed with the best of all time: the dominant West Indies of the 1980s won 40 out of 69 Tests, while Australia triumphed in 72 of 93 Tests from 1999 to 2007.

### HOW TO TAME 'BOWLING BRADMAN'

Former captain Steve Waugh warned that Australia would only beat India if they could tame the rampant Ravichandran Ashwin, terming him "the Bradman of bowling". It won't be easy: the record-breaking spinner this month became the fastest to claim 250 Test victims in his 45th match, surpassing Dennis Lillee's 48-Test mark. And Ashwin has dismissed no less than 61 batsmen in India's last three series.

### STARC REALITY FOR KOHLI

"King" Kohli will stride to the crease in Pune as the world's top-ranked batsman and the first to score double hundreds in four successive series. His duel with strike bowler Mitchell Starc is likely to be a key battle.

"I think Starc is a brilliant bowler for the sub-continental conditions. He bowls at a genuine pace, can swing the new ball and is an excellent exponent of reverse swing. I am sure he will challenge Kohli throughout the series," Hussey told the Press Trust of India. — AFP

**PUNE:** Steve Smith's Australia have the chance of halting India's Test juggernaut in a series between the world's top two sides starting this week which promises to be yet another feisty encounter between the arch rivals.

After India stretched their unbeaten run to 19 Tests this month, several former stars are even daring to predict another whitewash against Australia who have a miserable recent record on the sub-continent. Australia meanwhile have been unusually respectful of their opponents in the build-up but Smith expects his team to greet India with a barrage of sledging when the contest begins in Pune tomorrow. "The guys are in a great frame of mind, we're ready to go. We're pumped," vice-captain David Warner said after Australia drew a weekend warm-up against India A.

Australia have a chance of knocking India off the top of the Test rankings but Virat Kohli's men have won their last six series and are overwhelming favourites to continue that run. Australia's last tour of India in 2013 under captain Michael Clarke was a disaster as they went down 4-0 and four of the team were sent home after refusing to do homework set by coach Mickey Arthur. Team spirit has recovered under Smith's captaincy, but they were thrashed 3-0 last year in Sri Lanka when their shortcomings against spin were exposed along with their lack of a match-winning slow bowler. While their former paceman Glenn McGrath used to be notorious for getting up the opposition's nose by forecasting clean sweeps, Australia have been getting a taste of their own medicine.

India's ex-captain Sourav Ganguly has predicted a 4-0 win for the hosts while veteran spinner Harbhajan Singh has called Smith's team the weakest ever Australian squad.

### 'BRADMAN OF BOWLING'

Indian confidence is largely founded on the form of skipper Kohli who has hit four double centuries since July. They also possess the current best bowler in the world in Ravichandran Ashwin whom McGrath's old captain Steve Waugh recently branded the "Bradman of Bowling", the ultimate compliment by an Australian. Kohli's recent form has also drawn comparisons with the late Donald Bradman, who averaged 99.94 in Tests, but never played in India. And Warner, not one to shirk from an onfield

confrontation, has warned his teammates not to wind up Kohli. "Virat Kohli is one of those players, if you niggle at him, it either makes him better or if you get under his skin, he'll probably get even better," said Warner. Nevertheless, Smith wants his players to get in the face of the Indians, telling reporters: "If they want to get into a battle verbally then, if that gets the best out of them, go for it."

Ever since Harbhajan was accused of calling Andrew Symonds a "monkey" in the 2008 Sydney Test, matches between the sides have never been far from boiling point. Harbhajan showed he has lost none of his ability to stir things up by dismissing the 2017 vintage as a pale comparison to its predecessors.

### 'WEAKEST EVER TOURISTS'

"In my opinion, looking at the composition, this is the weakest Australian side to tour India. I don't think this team has the wherewithal to cope with a quality Indian side in the Indian conditions. It can again be 4-0," Harbhajan told the Press Trust of India. The last series between the two sides ended in a 2-0 victory for Australia Down Under but their

## BANGLADESH RECALL MUSTAFIZUR FOR SRI LANKA TESTS

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh yesterday recalled their left-arm fast bowler Mustafizur Rahman in a 16-man squad for the upcoming two-Test series in Sri Lanka after his prolonged injury lay-off. The 21-year-old has not played a Test since his debut series against South Africa in 2015 after suffering a series of injuries. He underwent surgery on his shoulder last year.

While he made a brief return to the limited-overs side against New Zealand at the turn of the year, he was not deemed fit enough to withstand the rigours of a five-day Test match.

Bangladesh are due to play two Tests against the Sri Lankans—one in Galle from March 7-11 and another in the capital Colombo which starts on March 15 and will be their 100th Test match. They are then scheduled to play three 50-over ODIs before facing off for two Twenty20 international matches at the tallend

humbling at the hands of an unfancied Sri Lanka is likely to weigh heavily on their minds.

Much will depend on whether the spinners Nathan Lyon and Steve O'Keefe can have an impact. They claimed four and three wickets respectively in the tourists' only warm-up match in Mumbai are expected to play in Pune.

India are expected to stick with the line-up that comprehensively beat Bangladesh in Hyderabad earlier this month.

### Squads

India: Virat Kohli (capt), Murali Vijay, Lokesh Rahul, Cheteshwar Pujara, Ajinkya Rahane, Wriddhiman Saha, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Ishant Sharma, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Umesh Yadav, Karun Nair, Jayant Yadav, Kuldeep Yadav, Abhinav Mukund, Hardik Pandya.

Australia: Steve Smith (capt), David Warner, Ashton Agar, Jackson Bird, Peter Handscomb, Josh Hazlewood, Usman Khawaja, Nathan Lyon, Mitchell Marsh, Shaun Marsh, Glenn Maxwell, Steve O'Keefe, Matthew Renshaw, Mitchell Starc, Mitchell Wapson, Matthew Wade. — AFP

of the tour, which wraps up on April 6. The selectors also handed fast bowler Rubel Hossain a recall after he was ignored for Bangladesh's recent defeat in a one-off Test against India, meaning there are five pacemen in the squad. "We think we would require an extra pacer in testing conditions in Sri Lanka," said chief selector Minhajul Abedin.

Opening batsman Imrul Kayes was not named in the squad after he failed to recover sufficiently from a thigh injury picked up in India. But Abedin said he could be called up for the second Test if he regains fitness.

**Squad:** Mushfiqur Rahim (capt), Tamim Iqbal, Soumya Sarkar, Mominul Haque, Mahmudullah Riyad, Shakib Al Hasan, Sabbir Rahman, Liton Das, Taijul Islam, Taskin Ahmed, Kamrul Islam, Mustafizur Rahman, Mehedi Hasan, Mosaddek Hossain, Subashis Roy and Rubel Hossain. — AFP



TENNIS

# KERBER SURVIVES AS LEADING SEEDS STUMBLE IN DUBAI

**DUBAI:** Former world number one Angelique Kerber survived as three of the top five seeds were bundled out of the Dubai Tennis Championships yesterday.

The top seed and winner of two Grand Slams in 2016 dispatched fellow German Mona Bartel 6-4, 6-3 in a second-round match. World number two Kerber is battling to recover the WTA top ranking she claimed last September when winning the US Open, only to see Serena Williams reclaim it with victory at last month's Australian Open.

"I'm happy about my performance, I was trying to play my game and focus on every point, I felt strong," Kerber said.

The German next plays Puerto Rico's Monica Puig, whom she lost to in the Rio Olympic gold medal match last August.

"That match will be completely different," Kerber said. "I will try to do my best against her." Puig ousted 15th seed Caroline Garcia of France 6-1, 4-6, 6-2. US Open finalist Karolina Pliskova, last week's Doha winner and the second seed, was dumped out in straight

sets by France's Kristina Mladenovic 6-2, 6-4. Number three seed Dominika Cibulkova fell victim to Ekaterina Makarova 6-2, 4-6, 6-2, having also lost to the Russian in the Melbourne third round. "It was a tough match again against Domi," said Makarova. "I started really good with aggressive tennis."

"Beating her at the (Australian) Open helped a lot, I was believing more and I knew what to do, how to play, where to go."

Roland Garros champion and fifth seed Garbine Muguruza lasted less than 30 min-

utes on court, retiring at 1-4 in the first set with a foot injury in her second round match against Kateryna Bondarenko of Ukraine. The physio called it an ankle problem while Muguruza insisted it was an Achilles tendon worry left over from last week in Doha.

"It's not (the) ankle, that's ridiculous. The doctor said maybe it's just inflammation. I have to do an MRI," Muguruza said.

"I don't think it's something big, but it's very irritated and it's really bothering me every time I have to run on the court."

"Every time you walk, to kind of have a pain there. It's kind of (a) new one, honestly."

Fourth seed Agnieszka Radwanska, the 2012 tournament winner, beat Belgian Elise Mertens 6-3, 6-2 to progress to the third round to help save some dignity for top five seeds. Elena Vesnina, seeded eight, beat Misaki Doi of Japan 6-2, 7-5 while tenth seed Caroline Wozniacki stopped Swiss Viktorija Golubic 6-4, 6-2 and Ana Konjuh eliminated Australian 12th seed Samantha Stosur 6-4, 6-3. — AFP

SOCCER

# INCREDIBLE HULK BLASTS SHANGHAI TO VICTORY

**SEOUL:** Brazilian forward Hulk blasted Shanghai SIPG to a 1-0 victory over FC Seoul but the big-spending Chinese giants needed to survive a penalty and a red card before winning their AFC Champions League opener yesterday.

Hulk's rocket of a strike on 53 minutes got Andre Villas-Boas's team off to a winning start in Group F, where they lie second on goal difference after Urawa Red Diamonds' 4-0 demolition of Western Sydney Wanderers. In Group E, Kashima Antlers beat Ulsan Hyundai 2-0 and Brisbane Roar were held to a 0-0 home draw by Thailand's Muangthong United. SIPG have splashed out 60 million euros on Brazilian midfielder Oscar, among other buys, in their bid for glory after they reached last year's quarter-finals under Sven-Goran Eriksson.

But a speculative effort from Hulk and another shot way over the bar from the Brazilian were the closest SIPG came in a tepid first half in front of a noisy Seoul crowd. At the other end, Dejan Damjanovic had a chance to finish off a sweeping move from the hosts but the Montenegrin striker shot tamely at goalkeeper Yoo Hyun from close range.

Oscar's most significant moment of the first half came when he petulantly raised his hand to Lee Sang-Ho's throat and shoved the Seoul forward, earning a yellow card. But the muscular Hulk brought the game to life with a moment of magic on 53 minutes, when he smashed a left-footed shot from well outside the box which swerved into the top corner.

REDS RUN RIOT

Six minutes later Damjanovic tumbled in the box, earning a soft penalty and a second yellow card for He Guan-but the striker's scuffed spot-kick was easily saved by SIPG's Yan Junling.

Earlier, Japan's Urawa smashed four second-half goals past Western Sydney Wanderers to open their campaign with a thumping win.

Shinzo Koroki and Tadanari Lee struck within two minutes of each other before Tomoaki Makino and Rafael Silva also got on the score-sheet as the Group F visitors ran riot in Sydney.

The result gives Urawa an early boost in their campaign for a second Champions League crown, but dents the Wanderers' chances of emulating their fairytale title run of 2014, when the club was just two years old. It was Lee who prised open the home defence on 56 minutes, when his perfectly placed through-ball released Koroki who finished smartly with the outside of his right boot.

Two minutes later and Urawa took a stranglehold on the game, when the Wanderers' defenders failed to clear and stood watching each other as Lee swept home the second goal.

Urawa capitalised on yet more slack defending when Makino, unmarked on the back post, prodded home a loose ball from a corner on 68 minutes to make it 3-0.

And four minutes from time, Brazilian forward Silva was afforded plenty of space when he raced clear and beat Janjetovic on his near post from the edge of the box. — AFP



**GLENDALE:** Arizona Coyotes right wing Shane Doan (19) back checks Anaheim Ducks center Nate Thompson in the third period during an NHL hockey game, Monday, in Glendale, Ariz. Arizona defeated Anaheim 3-2. — AP

NHL

# TROCHECK'S LATE GOAL LIFTS PANTHERS PAST BLUES, 2-1

**ST LOUIS:** The Florida Panthers began their five-game road trip near the back of a crowded field in the Eastern Conference playoff race. After sweeping the trip they're near the top of the Atlantic Division.

Vincent Trocheck scored with just under 5 seconds remaining to lift the Panthers to a 2-1 victory over the St. Louis Blues on Monday night. "It felt like we won the Stanley cup for just a second," Trocheck said. "I think to do it with four seconds on the clock, we showed a lot of poise there in the third period, even when they tied it up." Jonathan Marchessault also scored and James Reimer stopped 26 shots to help the Panthers complete a 5-0 road trip - their first perfect trip of at least that many games in franchise history.

Reimer has won five straight decisions and has not lost in regulation since Jan. 7 against Boston, going 6-0-1 since. The Panthers moved into a tie with Boston for third place in the Atlantic Division, but have the edge because they have a game in hand on the Bruins. "It's a great group of players and everybody deserves it," said Panthers interim coach Tom Rowe. "It's been a long season, it's been a hard season and now everything is coming together but again we've got a long way to go. It's going to be a dog fight until the end of the season." Kyle Brodziak, playing for the second time after missing 10 games due to a broken foot, scored for the Blues and Jake Allen finished with 31 saves. St. Louis lost its second straight since winning six in a row.

"We had 30 seconds left to salvage a point in a game that we played not good," Allen said. "Those are huge points right now. Couldn't end up with two points and it slipped away." Marchessault opened the scoring when he beat Allen short side for his 17th goal of the season in the middle of the first period. Brodziak tied about three minutes into the second when he put Ryan Reaves' rebound past

## NHL results/standings

Western Conference						Eastern Conference							
Central Division						Atlantic Division							
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS							
Minnesota	39	13	6	195	133	84	Montreal	31	20	8	166	153	70
Chicago	36	18	5	172	151	77	Ottawa	31	20	6	156	152	68
St. Louis	31	24	5	170	173	67	Florida	28	20	10	149	162	66
Nashville	28	22	8	164	159	64	Boston	30	23	6	159	156	66
Winnipeg	28	29	5	180	194	61	Toronto	27	20	11	181	173	65
Dallas	23	27	10	165	193	56	Buffalo	26	24	10	147	168	62
Colorado	16	38	3	113	190	35	Tampa Bay	26	24	8	160	166	60
							Detroit	24	25	10	149	175	58
							Metropolitan Division						
San Jose	35	18	7	166	144	77	Washington	39	12	7	195	126	85
Edmonton	32	19	8	171	152	72	Pittsburgh	36	14	8	204	165	80
Anaheim	31	20	10	156	154	72	Columbus	37	16	5	187	143	79
Calgary	29	26	4	153	167	62	NY Rangers	38	19	1	196	152	77
Los Angeles	28	26	4	143	145	60	NY Islanders	27	21	10	174	174	64
Vancouver	26	28	6	142	172	58	Philadelphia	28	24	7	154	179	63
Arizona	21	30	7	140	183	49	New Jersey	25	24	10	138	170	60
							Carolina	24	23	8	141	162	56

Reimer for his seventh. Trocheck won it with his team-leading 21st. St. Louis dominated the offensive action in the first period, outshooting Florida 12-8. The Panthers then outshot the Blues 25-15 the rest of the way.

St. Louis dropped to 7-3 under Mike Yeo and remains third in the Central Division, three points ahead of Nashville. The Blues don't play again until visiting Chicago on Sunday.

COYOTES 3, DUCKS 2

Radim Vrbata capped Arizona's three-goal first period and the Coyotes held on to beat Anaheim. Christian Dvorak and Jakob Chychrun also scored

for Arizona, and starting goalie Mike Smith had 27 saves before leaving about 4 1/2 minutes into the third period after a collision in the net. Marek Langhamer helped kill a power play after being pressed into action for his NHL debut and stopped seven of the eight shots he faced.

The Coyotes have won four of their last six. Langhamer gave up Ryan Getzlaf's second goal of the night with 26.8 seconds to play, but thwarted two quality shots in the final seconds.

Jonathan Bernier gave up three goals on six shots in the first period for the Ducks. John Gibson came on to start the second and stopped all 14 shots he faced. — AP



**KASHIMA:** Kashima Antlers midfielder Mu Kanazaki (#33) heads the ball to score a goal against Ulsan Hyundai during the AFC Champions League group E football match between Kashima Antlers of Japan and Ulsan Hyundai of South Korea in Kashima, Ibaraki prefecture, yesterday. — AFP

# HK'S 'BEEF BALL' TAKES BITE OUT OF GENDER GAP

**HONG KONG:** Hong Kong's Chan Yuen-ting will smash another hole through football's glass ceiling when she makes history in the AFC Champions League today-but it couldn't be a tougher debut for the trailblazing female coach.

Chan, nicknamed "Beef Ball" and just 28 years old, will etch her name in the record books as the first woman worldwide to lead a professional men's team into continental competition, at the helm of Hong Kong's Eastern. The game is not far from Hong Kong, in southern mainland China-but it is against Guangzhou Evergrande, the mega-rich "Manchester United of Asia" with two

year award and a place in a BBC list of the world's 100 most influential women. Eastern then became Hong Kong's first club to be handed an automatic berth in the Champions League group stage, thanks to the recent performances of the city's teams in AFC competitions.

Chan said Eastern would concentrate on defending on Wednesday-understandably, against a team which can call on the Brazilian firepower of Paulinho, Ricardo Goulart and Alan.

'I FORGET MY GENDER'

"We need to focus on defence, and especially our discipline and attitude during the match," Chan said. "At this moment I don't want to create extra pressure for myself and my players so we just want to do our best and try to go as far as we can." Chan, whose nickname "Beef Ball" refers to her competitive spirit and is often chanted by Eastern's fans, first caught the football bug when she was 13 and had a crush on David Beckham. She followed Manchester United games on TV and her passion eventually led her into coaching, despite opposition from her parents. "On the pitch I forget my gender as a woman. I just hope to show my abilities," Chan told AFP last year. "I think no matter your age or your gender, what you need is hard work."

Hong Kong Football Association chief executive Mark Sutcliffe said Chan had become a shining light for women involved in sport across the world. "We are proud that Hong Kong has provided an opportunity for a female coach to operate at the highest level," Sutcliffe told AFP. "I am sure she will act as an inspiration for women in sport across the world," he said, adding: "(But) let's not kid ourselves - it's going to be very, very tough." Evergrande will be gunning for their third Champions League title in five years, and as an added incentive real-estate billionaire club chairman Hui Kayan has offered a 300 million yuan (\$43.68 million) bonus per win in the tournament.

But whatever the result on Wednesday, the debut of Chan and Eastern will remain a significant moment for women in football, and for the sport in Asia. "It is a ground-breaking moment for football in Asia, for the women's game and for the global game," said AFC president Sheikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa. "The world will be watching." — AFP



Chan Yuen-ting

Champions League titles and six straight domestic trophies to their name. But for Chan, who last year became the first female coach to win a top-flight men's league, it will be an honour to face Evergrande and their World Cup-winning manager, Brazil's Luiz Felipe Scolari. "I never imagined or expected this could happen but now we're going to play against him so I feel excited and I'm looking forward to meeting him," she told the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) website.

"All I need to do is focus on our team and concentrate on the work that we are doing." Chan's ground-breaking 2016 Hong Kong title with Eastern made headlines around the globe, and earned her the AFC's coach of the

SOCCER

# ISCO READY TO WALK OUT ON REAL MADRID

**MADRID:** Spain international Isco will look to leave Real Madrid in the summer after growing tired of a lack of first team opportunities with the European champions, Spanish media reported yesterday.

Spanish sports daily Marca reported that the midfielder, who cast doubt on his future at the club on Saturday, is unhappy with his role in the team this campaign, citing information coming from the player's representatives.

Isco has started 11 of 21 games in La Liga and only one in the Champions League. Marca reported the 24-year-old was also unhappy with Real Madrid's offer of an improved salary in negotiations to renew his contract and that he wants to move to the Premier League, with

Manchester City his number one choice.

Isco scored a crucial goal in Real's 3-1 at Osasuna on Feb. 11 but was left out of the team in Wednesday's 3-1 win over Napoli in Europe's elite competition.

He is ranked 15th in the squad for the number of minutes played this season and rarely starts when coach Zinedine Zidane has a full squad available. The Spaniard, however, played a starring role in Saturday's 2-0 victory over Espanyol on Saturday, setting up goalscorers Alvaro Morata and Gareth Bale, but after the game said he was uncertain whether he would remain at the club beyond the summer.

"I'm calm but I'm concerned about the number of minutes I'm playing because the career

of a player is very short," he told BeIn sports.

"I'm very happy here and I would like to stay for many more years. We'll take a decision at the end of the season, because my future is at stake." Isco became one of Spain's hottest prospects in his second season with Malaga as he inspired his local team's march to the quarter-finals of the 2012/13 Champions League.

He joined Real for a reported 30 million euros in July 2013, winning two Champions Leagues and the King's Cup. Last April his former coach at Malaga, Manuel Pellegrini, told Marca that Isco had been on the verge of joining him at City before he finally opted to move to the Spanish giants. — Reuters



# PIE-EATING SUTTON GOALKEEPER QUILTS CLUB IN TEARS

**LONDON:** The Sutton United goalkeeper filmed eating a pie while on the substitutes bench during his side's 2-0 FA Cup defeat by Arsenal quit the club in tears yesterday after admitting a "costly error of judgment", Sutton's manager said.

Wayne Shaw resigned within hours of the Gambling Commission and the Football Association announcing investigations into his actions after it emerged that a betting company had offered odds against any Sutton player tucking into a pie during the televised game.

Sutton manager Paul Doswell announced Shaw's fate on live television: "This decision was taken at board level," he said. "We felt we had to take very strong actions. The chairman spoke to him this afternoon and Wayne offered his resignation."

"I'm devastated, the chairman is devastated. I have spoken to Wayne and the guy is in tears, crying down the phone. It is a very sad situation." The news capped a surreal few hours in the history of the world's oldest cup competition.

Shaw, 46, who weighs 20 stone, was caught on camera tucking into the pie minutes from the end of Monday's game against Sutton, who were trailing 2-0 having used their regulation three substitutes.

The keeper had featured on promotion materials during the non-league club's surprise FA Cup run after revealing that he played in the same youth team as former England striker Alan Shearer.

Shaw admitted knowing about the wager offered by Sun Bets, the online betting branch of The Sun newspaper whose

logo also appeared on Sutton's shirts.

"I thought I would give them a bit of banter," he said. "It was meat and potato." Shaw denied he had placed a bet himself, but as his pie-eating antics made headlines in Britain and beyond it became clear the stunt had gone badly wrong.

Yesterday morning the Gambling Commission, the regulatory body that oversees British gambling, announced its inquiry.

"Integrity in sport is not a joke," said Richard Watson, enforcement and intelli-

gence director at the Gambling Commission. "We'll be looking into any irregularity in the betting market and establishing whether the operator has met its licence requirement to conduct its business with integrity."

Later yesterday the FA announced its own investigation into the behaviour of Shaw, Sutton's reserve goalkeeper.

"We are investigating to establish whether there has been any breach of the FA rules relating to betting," a spokesman said. — Reuters

PREVIEW

## POTENT NEW JUVENTUS FACE PORTO ACID TEST

**MILAN:** A potent new attacking formation that has sent Gonzalo Higuain towards another top scorer's award faces the acid test today when Juventus take on Porto away in the last 16 of the Champions League.

Juventus, beaten 3-1 by Barcelona in the 2015 final, are en route to a record sixth Serie A crown and remain many pundits' favourites to challenge the likes of Real Madrid for the trophy in Cardiff next May.

Massimiliano Allegri's Serie A league leaders head to Porto's Estadio do Dragao as favourites, but aware that they also ended Roma's hopes of even qualifying for the competition in clinical fashion last summer.

"Juventus are a top side who have made it to the final of the Champions League recently, so they will be a challenge for us," Porto president Pinto da Costa was quoted as saying in Corriere dello Sport.

"But Roma were also favourites against us, and in the end we won 3-0."

Allegri's decision to ditch his tried and trusted 3-5-2 for a more attack-minded 4-2-3-1 has seen Higuain, thanks to support from Juan Cuadrado, Paulo Dybala and Mario Mandzukic, pull level with Roma's Edin Dzeko at the top of the Serie A charts on 19 goals so far.

But while the Juventus front line is firing on all cylinders, Porto have reason to be targeting a makeshift Juve defence that could be missing key components in Andrea Barzagli and Giorgio Chiellini.

Both remain doubtful due to recent injury niggles, meaning either Daniele Rugani or Mehdi Benatia could partner Leonardo Bonucci in central defence.

Allegri's switch to a flat back four means Stephan Lichtsteiner, Dani Alves, Kwadwo Asamoah and Alex Sandro—who are all adept as wingbacks in a five-man midfield—are all available for the left and right-back positions.

On Friday Allegri said: "Unless some strange things happen in the meantime, we will deploy a 4-2-3-1 in Portugal."

Both Rugani and Lichtsteiner were completely rested for Friday's 4-1 win over Palermo, in which Dybala hit a brace and Higuain hit one. Mario Mandzukic was also completely rested, suggesting he is a definite starter on Wednesday.

Allegri's two holding midfielders are likely to be Miralem Pjanic, the side's free-kick specialist, and Germany midfielder Sami Khedira. Italy international Claudio Marchisio, also on target against Palermo, is expected to start on the bench. Porto might not be considered title winners, but Bonucci has done his homework. "Maybe Porto aren't among the favourites for the quarter-finals, but we will be giving them maximum respect," the Italy defender told uefa.com.

"They went through a difficult period at the season but they've come bouncing right back in impressive fashion. They have some great young players and they'll be playing with the mentality that they nothing to lose."

"If we want to stay in Europe, we'll need a great performance on the night." Porto have hit 14 league goals in their past five league games, all wins, and former Portugal defender Jorge Andrade, who played for both clubs, says scoring an away goal will be crucial for the Italians.

"The most important thing for Juventus will be to be vigilant in Oporto, and to score a goal," he told Tuttojuve.com.

"In Portugal people can't wait for this match. Don't forget that Porto have won the competition twice. Their key player will be (Tiquinho) Soares."

Soares has hit four goals in three games since joining Porto last month and will be looking to make his mark in a game featuring two legendary goalkeepers in Iker Casillas and Gianluigi Buffon. — AFP



**KUWAIT:** The victorious Kuwait SC team with the Amir Cup after beating Kazma SC 4-2 yesterday.

## KUWAIT SC CLINCH PRESTIGIOUS AMIR CUP

### AMIR CONGRATULATES KUWAIT SC FOR WINNING FOOTBALL CUP

**KUWAIT:** Under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and attendance of His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kuwait and Kazma sporting clubs played the final game of HH the Amir's Cup. HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah congratulated the Chairman of Kuwait SC Abdulaziz Al-Marzouq after his team won the Cup for the 2016-17 season.

Kuwait beat Kazma 4-2 in the final that was held at Sheikh Jaber International Stadium. HH the Amir commended the performance of the two teams and the high spirit shown by the players throughout the clash.

HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf also sent a cable to Marzouq to congratulate him on the victory of his team. HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent a similar cable. Earlier, HH Sheikh Nawaf was received



**KUWAIT:** Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah handing over the cup to Kuwait SC captain Hussain Hakim. — KUNA photos

upon his arrival at Sheikh Jaber Stadium by Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Khaled Al-Roudhan, Director General of the Public Authority for Sport Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Sabah, chairman of the interim committee running Kuwait Football Association Fawaz Al-Hasawi, chairman of the interim committee running Kuwait Olympic Committee Sheikh Fahad Jaber Al-Ali Al-Sabah, and chairmen of the two clubs.

The final game was also attended by parliament speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, Sheikh Faisal Al-Saud Al-Sabah, HH Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber, ministers, senior state officials, and commanders of the army, police, national guard and fire department. At the end of the match HH the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince handed the cup to Kuwait SC. — KUNA

## BUFFON AND CASILLAS TO RESUME RIVALRY

**ROME:** It will be a meeting of goalkeeping greatness when Gianluigi Buffon faces old rival Iker Casillas today in the Champions League.

And while both players may be reaching the end of their careers, Buffon and Casillas each still have something to prove in their 17th career meeting - this time in a match between Juventus and FC Porto.

The 39-year-old Buffon has won virtually everything except for the Champions League - finishing runner-up twice, in 2003 and 2015, with Juventus.

The 35-year-old Casillas has won everything - but is looking to regain his spot on Spain's national team and prove his former club, Real Madrid, wrong for casting him aside two years ago.

"Every player knows it takes time to get used to a new city, new surroundings and a new way of life," Casillas told UEFA.com. "Of course when you've spent so long in the same place, as was the case for me, it's strange to experience a change of scenery. Maybe I didn't reach the level I wanted last year, I didn't feel completely comfortable."

"I haven't been called up to the Spain squad, so I've had more time to focus on my club," Casillas added. "I've noticed the effect. First you need to be settled at your club and then, who knows what might happen?" Whatever the result in the first leg, Casillas and Buffon will continue to have mutual respect for each other. The pair engaged in an entertaining exchange on Twitter recently, with Casillas asking Buffon, "What do you think? For me you the best!" To which Buffon responded, "I don't choose. We are the best," adding a smiley face.

In their eight national team meetings,

Casillas' Spain has had the better record with three victories to only one for Buffon's Italy - including Spain's penalty shootout win in the quarter-finals of the 2008 European Championship and Spain's victory in the Euro 2012 final.

In club-level meetings, the goalkeepers have three wins apiece but Buffon's Juventus has prevailed in all three knockout ties - including the 2003 and 2015 Champions League semifinals.

"I am lucky enough to be three years younger than Gigi. I was 14 when I started and he was 18," Casillas said. "I was able to see and appreciate his style and personality. As I grew up, I looked up to him and then we evolved together and we've had similar careers. We've both won a lot and

we've often played against each other. I think Italian football won't have another goalkeeper like him."

The similarities between Casillas and Buffon don't end on the field. Both goalkeepers have female partners who are sports journalists.

Casillas famously kissed Sara Carbonero during a live interview after winning the 2010 World Cup and the couple was married a year ago.

Buffon has a son with Sky Sports studio host Ilaria D'Amico, who still addresses Buffon by his last name in interviews.

Both players also have the same number of appearances for their national teams - 167. Any way you look at it, they are two of soccer's greatest. —AP



**PORTO:** Juventus' goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon gives a press conference at the Dragao stadium in Porto yesterday, on the eve of the UEFA Champions League football match FC Porto vs Juventus FC. — AFP

## PRESSURE ON RANIERI INEVITABLE: SAMPAOLI

**SEVILLE:** Sevilla boss Jorge Sampaoli believes Claudio Ranieri's position as Leicester City boss will undoubtedly come under pressure unless results drastically improve, despite his remarkable success last season.

Leicester travel to face Sevilla in the first leg of their Champions League last 16 tie today mired in a relegation battle just a year after miraculously defying the odds to win the Premier League.

"Now no one talks about the team that won the league in an incredible and historic way, but of the present when they are not playing well and fighting against relegation," Sampaoli said on Tuesday.

"Common sense would say that someone who achieved so much from a team with so little can turn the situation around, but time waits for no one, not even someone as good as Ranieri who won the Premier League."

By contrast, Sevilla are flying in third in La Liga behind only Real Madrid and Barcelona. However, Sampaoli warned his side against over confidence given Leicester won their group earlier in the campaign in their debut season in the Champions League.

And the Argentine also highlighted a 4-2 win over Manchester City in December as a warning that Leicester are still capable of raising their game on the big occasion. "They went through comprehensively as winners of their group and in a tie of two games they will be a very tough test for us," added Sampaoli.

Leicester striker Jamie Vardy scored a hat-trick in that victory over City, but the England international hasn't netted in nine games since. However, Sampaoli believes he still poses the major threat to Sevilla's chances of reaching the quarter-finals for the first time in the Champions League era.

"Vardy was decisive last year and his lack of goals explains Leicester's current problems. When Vardy starts scoring we will once again see the Leicester that are extremely dangerous." Leicester's disastrous form continued with an embarrassing 1-0 defeat to third tier Millwall in the FA Cup on Saturday.

However, Ranieri is set to recall a host of first team regulars after making 10 changes with the likes of Vardy and Riyad Mahrez set to return. — AFP



### Matches on TV (Local Timings)

SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA		
Valencia v Real Madrid	20:45	beIN SPORTS 3 HD
ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP LEAGUE		
Bristol City v Fulham	23:00	beIN SPORTS
UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE		
Sevilla v Leicester	22:45	beIN SPORTS 2 HD
Porto v Juventus	22:45	beIN SPORTS 1 HD
UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE		
Saint Etienne v Manchester United	20:00	beIN SPORTS 6 HD
Fenerbahce v Krasnodar	20:00	beIN SPORTS 7 HD
Schalke v PAOK	20:00	beIN SPORTS 5 HD



India wins  
Women's WCup  
qualifying finalKuwait Sporting  
Club clinch  
prestigious Amir Cup

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2017

HK'S 'BEEF BALL' TAKES BITE OUT OF GENDER GAP

Page 18



MANCHESTER: Manchester City's Sergio Aguero, right, scores his side's third goal during the Champions League round of 16 first leg soccer match between Manchester City and Monaco at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, England, yesterday. — AP

## AGUERO STARS AS MAN CITY SINK MONACO IN THRILLER

MANCHESTER: Sergio Aguero starred as Manchester City beat Monaco 5-3 in a breathless and dizzyingly end-to-end Champions League last 16 first-leg encounter at a rocking Etihad Stadium yesterday. Raheem Sterling put City ahead, only for Kylian Mbappe to level and Radamel Falcao to score twice the second goal a magnificent chip-as Leonardo Jardim's side moved into a 3-2 lead.

But City struck three times in the last 19 minutes, through Aguero's second goal, John Stones and Leroy Sane, to put Pep Guardiola's men in charge ahead of the return leg on March 15.

For a long time it looked likely to be a scarring night for City, who reached the semi-finals last season, as a succession of calamitous defensive errors allowed Monaco to take control.

But Aguero's doggedness allowed them to haul themselves back into the game, abetted by Falcao's failure to convert a penalty early in the second period. Having recently lost his place in the team to Gabriel Jesus, only to regain it after the Brazilian broke his foot, it was a personal triumph for Aguero, who departed to a standing ovation.

Mbappe took Valere Germain's place alongside Falcao in Monaco's starting XI and the 18-year-old in the fluorescent orange boots immediately caught the eye. He looked to run at City's defence at every opportunity, at one point leaving Nicolas Otamendi for dead twice in five seconds before setting up Benjamin Mendy, who was thwarted by Willy Caballero. Kamil Glik's evening got off to a bad start when he was booked for taking out Sane, ruling him

out of the return leg, but he came close to putting Monaco ahead with a header from a corner. It was City, though, who went in front in the 26th minute. Sane lit the fuse, dancing away from three players on the City left and exchanging passes with David Silva before crossing for Sterling to slide home from close range. But within six minutes Monaco were level as Guardiola's goalkeeping problems came back to bite him.

### FALCAO SQUANDERS PENALTY

He had restored Caballero to his line-up, having fielded Claudio Bravo in the FA Cup at Huddersfield Town on Saturday, but the Argentine's wayward kicking gave City jitters all evening.

It was his loose, lofted clearance that gifted possession to Fabinho prior to Monaco's leveller, the Brazilian playing a one-two with

Bernardo Silva and crossing for Falcao to net with a flying header.

Moments later came a contentious moment as Aguero nudged the ball past Danijel Subasic and went to ground, only to be booked for diving. On the touchline, Guardiola reacted furiously, angrily gesticulating at fourth official Teodoro Sobrino, but there was worse to come. City had all the time in the world to organise themselves when Monaco won a free-kick on halfway, but Fabinho was still allowed to find Mbappe, who steadied himself before finishing coolly.

It might easily have been 3-1 by the interval, with Mbappe and Falcao both going close either side of the former's goal.

Monaco looked poised to extend their lead five minutes into the second half when Otamendi was penalised for fouling Falcao,

but the Colombian's weak spot-kick was comfortably saved by Caballero.

City levelled eight minutes later courtesy of a howler from Subasic, who allowed Aguero's shot to go right through him at his near post after a storming run down the right from Sterling. But the momentum swung back Monaco's way just three minutes later when Falcao shrugged off Stones and then lofted an exquisite right-foot chip over Caballero from just 15 yards.

After Sterling had seen a penalty appeal turned away following a robust challenge by Benjamin Mendy, Aguero levelled again, volleying in smartly from Silva's right-wing corner. The momentum was City's and after Stones had put them ahead in the 77th minute, jabbing in at a corner, Silva's dinked pass enabled Aguero to set up Sane to set the seal on an extraordinary match. — AFP

## ATLETICO EASE PAST LEVERKUSEN 4-2 TO TAKE CONTROL OF TIE

LEVERKUSEN: Atletico Madrid beat hosts Bayer Leverkusen 4-2 in a topsy-turvy encounter yesterday to take a firm handle on their Champions League round-of-16 tie ahead of the return leg in Spain next month. Two lethal counter-attacks in the opening 25 minutes put the 2014 and 2016 finalists in the driving seat, with Saul Niguez and Antoine Griezmann on target, and give them the edge for a quarter-final spot for the ninth time.

Leverkusen, who struggled to contain the hard-charging Spaniards for more than an hour, cut the deficit before Atletico's Kevin Gameiro scored with a spot kick and Stefan Savic's own goal set up a nervous finale. Fernando Torres ended any speculation with his goal in the 87th minute as the Germans suffered their first home loss in Europe after a 10-match unbeaten run.

They are at risk of missing out on the last eight for the fifth time with Atletico taking revenge for a 1-0 loss at the same stage last season. The Bundesliga club, finalists in 2002 before the introduction of the round of 16, have never gone past this stage on four previous attempts.

They were supposed to be dangerous on the break but it was Atletico who came close early on with keeper Bernd Leno stopping a Griezmann effort and Wendell

seeing his subsequent clearance bounce off his keeper's crossbar.

Niguez did better in the 17th minute, charging down the right and curling his shot past Leno after it took a slight deflection off Aleksandar Dragovic.

Griezmann then doubled the score after the hapless Dragovic fluffed his clearance and sent the ball into the path of Gameiro who picked out the onrushing Frenchman to sweep in.

Leverkusen played completely into Atletico's hands with their high defensive line, for the first time in the competition conceding goals in the opening 30 minutes.

Griezmann should have added another in the 34th when Gameiro again sent him through but Leno stood his ground and the hosts cut the deficit four minutes after the restart with Karim Bellarabi from inside the box. But their hopes were short-lived as Dragovic capped his nightmarish performance by giving away a penalty after bringing down Gameiro.

Savic's own goal put Leverkusen back in the game but despite constant pressure they failed to carve out an equaliser before substitute Torres finished them off. — Reuters



LEVERKUSEN: Leverkusen's Javier Hernandez, right, shoots on the goal past Atletico's Saul Niguez during the Champions League round of 16 first leg soccer match between Bayer Leverkusen and Atletico Madrid in Leverkusen, Germany, yesterday. — AP





## SINOCEM MAY SELL 40% STAKE IN BRAZIL OILFIELD



PARIS: This file photo taken on February 27, 2016 in Paris shows cows during the opening day of the 'Salon de l'Agriculture' (Agriculture Fair). The upcoming French presidential elections candidates who will visit the France's annual farm fair kicking off on February 25, 2017 will meet farmers facing ruin, anger and discouragement. — AFP

# HSBC PROFITS PLUNGE ON HUGE WRITEDOWNS

## BANK NAVIGATES POLITICAL STORMS, RESTRUCTURING COSTS

**LONDON:** HSBC profits plunged last year on huge write-downs and restructuring charges, the banking titan said yesterday, warning of uncertainty over Brexit and Donald Trump's economic policies.

The London-headquartered bank with a focus on Asia said net profit tumbled to \$1.29 billion (1.22 billion euros) in 2016, down 90 percent on a year earlier. Profit before tax stood at \$7.1 billion, down 62 percent after HSBC slashed the value of its private banking activity in Europe by \$3.2 billion over an acquisition made in 1999.

HSBC was hit also by restructuring costs of \$3.1 billion following its announcement in 2015 to cut 50,000 jobs and exit non-core markets. The bank also took a charge of \$1.8 billion following a change to its debt value. "Investors' reactions to HSBC's full year results only intensified as the day went on, Britain's biggest bank seeing its losses expand following news of a 62 percent slide in annual profit," said Connor Campbell, analyst at Spreadex trading group. Shares in the bank tumbled to trade down 6.7 percent, topping the loser's board around midday on London's benchmark FTSE 100 index.

HSBC had closed down 5.0 percent in Hong Kong. In



HSBC bank logo is seen on a sign outside a branch of the bank in central London yesterday. — AFP

the regulatory statement, HSBC chairman Douglas Flint said the political sea-changes that had rocked the world in 2016 had contributed to "volatile financial market conditions".

Looking ahead, he highlighted "the threat of populism impacting policy choices in upcoming European elections, possible protectionist measures from the new US administration impacting global trade... (and) uncertainties facing the UK and the EU as they enter Brexit negotiations".

Flint said the bank was looking for worldwide agreement on financial rules to avoid possible "fragmentation in the global regulatory architecture as the new US administration reconsiders its participation in international regulatory forums". Trump wants to dismantle some of the restrictions on banks put in place after the 2008 financial crisis, rules his Republican Party says have hampered Wall Street's ability to make money. Observers worry that any such move to loosen controls could leave European and Asian-based banks at a disadvantage compared to their US counterparts. Reacting to HSBC's results statement, Dickie Wong, director of research at Kingston Securities, said that in regards to "the (US) interest rate environment and Donald Trump's policies-no one knows what will happen".

### 'Still on track'

On the impact of Brexit, Flint reaffirmed earlier reports

that "current contingency planning suggests we may need to relocate some 1,000 roles from London to Paris progressively over the next two years, depending on how negotiations develop". Chief executive Stuart Gulliver later told reporters that half the jobs facing a switch across the Channel would be held by French nationals.

The bank also said the process to find a successor to Flint in 2017 "remains on track". Like most global banks, HSBC has been struggling to boost profits as it grapples with the uncertainty thrown up by Britain's looming exit from the EU. British Prime Minister Theresa May has indicated a willingness to give up access to the European single market as the price for getting control over immigration. Companies like HSBC that have large operations in London are worried that such a settlement would present them with difficulties accessing the huge market of the EU.

"Despite an underwhelming set of full year results, HSBC is making progress in de-risking and restructuring, and ultimately the bank's focus on the Far East could be its trump card if the Chinese economy starts to fire on all cylinders," said Laith Khalaf, senior analyst at stockbrokers Hargreaves Lansdown. — AFP

# AUB NET PROFIT SURGES BY 6.2% TO \$570.6 MILLION

**KUWAIT:** Ahli United Bank BSC (AUB) reported a net profit attributable to its equity shareholders of \$570.6 million for the year 2016, representing a growth of 6.2 percent compared to a net profit of \$537.2 million in 2015. The net profit in Q4/2016 was \$128.5 million as compared to \$118.0 million in Q4/2015.

Despite the continuing general weakness in the regional and global economies, the positive operating results of AUB were underpinned by prudent risk taking, effective asset and liability management and judicious cost controls. Net interest income (NII) grew by 1.7 percent from \$814.7 million to \$828.2 million. The NII increase was achieved through a prudent re-deployment of funds within a conservative and diversified risk framework. Fees, commissions & other income grew by 9.7 percent (+US\$ 15.4 million) to \$173.3 million. As a result, total operating income grew by 5.2 percent to reach \$1,149.0



AUB Chairman Hamad Al-Humaidhi

million (2015: \$1,091.9 million). The intelligent cost spend discipline instilled across all AUB Group units was sustained resulting in an improvement of the cost income ratio to 27.8 percent (2015: 28.3 percent).

The non-performing loan ratio was contained at 2.3 percent as at 31 December 2016 while maintaining a very solid specific provision coverage ratio of 84.9 percent (31 December 2015: 84.6 percent). The total provision coverage ratio was 155.6 percent (2015: 181.9 percent).

Overall Return on Average Equity (ROAE) increased to 15.7 percent (2015: 15.6 percent) while the Return on Average Assets (ROAA) increased to 1.8 percent (2015: 1.7 percent).

The resultant basic earnings per share were US cents 8.0 for the year ended 31 December 2016 (2015: US cents 7.7). Given the satisfactory results for the year, the Board of Directors has recommended distribution comprising a cash dividend of US cents 4.5 per share (2015: US cents 4.5) together with a bonus ordinary share issue of 10 percent (2015: 5 percent).

Hamad Al-Humaidhi, AUB Chairman, commented: "Despite the economic and security challenges faced in its operating markets, AUB continued its robust performance in 2016 maintaining growth in core earnings and operating net profit. The 2016 result is a testament to

AUB's well-managed business model based on diversification, targeting of cross border flows and selective growth initiatives to increase operating income that continue to serve AUB well.

During the year, AUB succeeded in expanding its geographic reach by opening its fully owned subsidiary Ahli United Bank Limited (AUBL) in Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), UAE. This launch enables AUB to offer corporate banking, private banking, wealth management, trade finance, treasury and cross-border financial products and services to its clients based in the UAE as well as in the wider Middle East region. All these products and services are available on a conventional as well as on a Shari'a compliant basis through AUBL. The launch of AUBL represents an important addition to the AUB Group and a key step forward in pursuing its defined strategy of targeted regional expansion, with emphasis on increasing cross border business flows. In December 2016, AUB received for the second time the "Bank of the Year, Middle East" award from the UK based The Banker magazine.

"While operating challenges remain strong, AUB looks forward to 2017 with focused plans and objectives to advance our regional strategy in a balanced and prudent manner," added Al-Humaidhi.

## VERIZON, YAHOO AGREE TO LOWERED \$4.48BN DEAL

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Verizon Communications Inc said yesterday it would buy Yahoo Inc's core business for \$4.48 billion, lowering its original offer by \$350 million in the wake of two massive cyberattacks at the internet company. The closing of the deal, which was first announced in July, had been delayed as the companies assessed the fallout from the data breaches that Yahoo disclosed last year.

The No 1 US wireless carrier had been trying to persuade Yahoo to amend the terms of the agreement following the attacks. The deal will combine Yahoo's search, email and messenger assets as well as advertising technology tools with Verizon's AOL unit.

Verizon has been looking to mobile video and advertising for new sources of revenue outside the oversaturated wireless market. The companies said on Tuesday they expect the deal to close in the second quarter. Verizon's shares rose 0.6 percent to \$49.50 in early trading, while Yahoo's shares were up 0.3 percent at \$45.25.

Under the amended terms, Yahoo and Verizon will split cash liabilities related to some government investigations and third-party litigation related to the breaches. Yahoo, however, will continue to be responsible for liabilities from shareholder lawsuits and SEC investigations. "The amended terms of the agreement provide a fair and favorable outcome for shareholders," Marni Walden, head of product innovation and new business at Verizon, said in a statement.

Yahoo said in December that it had uncovered a massive cyberattack, where data from more than 1 billion user accounts was compromised in August 2013, making it the largest breach in history. This followed the company's disclosure in September that at least 500 million accounts were affected in another breach in 2014. — Reuters



# SINOCEM MAY SELL 40% STAKE IN BRAZIL OILFIELD

CHINA GIANT LOOKS TO REJIG ENERGY ASSETS AMID LOW OIL PRICE

**SINGAPORE/NEW DELHI/BEIJING:** China's Sinochem is exploring the sale of its 40 percent stake in Brazil's Peregrino offshore oilfield, four people familiar with the matter told Reuters, a deal that could see the state-owned conglomerate walk away from what was once touted as a key overseas asset because of historically low oil prices.

The oil and chemicals firm agreed to buy the stake from Norway's Statoil for \$3.07 billion in 2010 - beating out a raft of Chinese rivals chasing high-quality assets. The Norwegian giant owns the other 60 percent of Peregrino, the largest heavy oilfield it operates outside its home patch.

But two of the people with knowledge of the matter said Sinochem is moving to sell its largest overseas upstream stake - with capacity to pump 100,000 barrels a day - as it reshapes its assets to reflect oil prices having halved in the last two and a half years. With that in mind, one person said, Sinochem was pitching the sale at a big discount to its purchase price.

"Peregrino has been a success story for Statoil, not just technically but also financially. It provides a lot of value and has a good operator in Statoil," said Horacio Cuenca, Rio de Janeiro-based research director for upstream Latin America at energy consultancy Wood Mackenzie.

Long term expectations of oil prices, however, and capital expenditure required in the next two to three years to develop the second phase of production will determine the value of any

potential stake sale, he said. Earlier this month, Reuters reported Sinochem was in early talks to buy a stake in Singapore-listed commodity trader Noble Group, a move that would further its ambitions to become more active in global energy trade and also develop China's gas industry.

The process to sell the Brazilian stake is still at an early stage and a final decision would depend on how the negotiations progress, the people familiar with the matter said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss it publicly.

Statoil declined to comment and Sinochem did not respond to requests for comment from Reuters. Two sources said Sinochem's intent to sell the stake has been shared with India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation. ONGC did not respond to requests for comments.

One person said the stake is also likely to be pitched to other international buyers, including some Japanese firms and Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company, which snapped up Royal Dutch Shell's stake in Thailand's Bongkot gas field for \$900 million last month.

### Sinochem - Asset Manager

The potential sale of the stake in Peregrino - located 85 km off Brazil in the Campos basin below about 100 metres of water - comes as oil prices hover in a mid-\$50s per barrel range, well below the highs of recent years. That trend has also prompted other industry players to consid-

er selling once-prized assets. Earlier this week, Reuters reported Malaysian state-owned oil and gas firm Petronas is aiming to sell a large minority stake in a local gas project for up to \$1 billion as it seeks to raise cash and cut development costs.

For its part, Sinochem has seen growth in its key oil trading business stagnate, with increasing domestic competition from the likes of state oil traders Unipac and Chinaoil, while overseas oil and gas assets have struggled amid the prolonged low oil prices. "Sinochem is readjusting its energy asset structure," said a Beijing-based industry veteran familiar with the company's strategy. "As a medium- to small-sized oil producer, exposure to higher cost assets like deep water has become over-challenging."

"The company sees itself more as an asset manager. This becomes a clearer direction under the new management," the industry executive said, referring to Sinochem chairman Ning Gaoning who took over the helm last year. The potential sale of the Peregrino stake also comes ahead of the second phase of the project's development, expected to cost about \$3.5 billion with production from the new phase set to start by the end of the decade.

The second phase is designed to add about 250 million barrels in recoverable reserves to Peregrino, which currently contains an estimated reserve of between 300 million and 600 million barrels of recoverable oil. — Reuters



LANDOVER: This file photo taken on December 31, 2014 shows a Walmart store in Landover, Maryland. Wal-Mart Stores yesterday. —AFP

# WAL-MART EARNINGS FALL, BUT ONLINE SALES SURGE

**NEW YORK:** Wal-Mart's fourth-quarter earnings fell nearly 18 percent as the world's largest retailer was hurt by its investments in e-commerce and stores.

But Wal-Mart saw its US business accelerate - both in customer counts and for a key sales metric - during the period that covers the critical holiday shopping season. It also enjoyed a surging global e-commerce business. The company also said yesterday that it is raising its dividend.

Shares rose in pre-market trading. Wal-Mart, like other traditional retailers, has been trying to improve its online operations to be a stronger challenger to online leader Amazon.com. The holiday shopping season was challenging for many retailers, underscoring the changes brick-and-mortar stores need to make. But Wal-Mart's results show that it's been able to make inroads.

"We're moving with speed to become more of a digital enterprise and better serve our customers," Doug McMillon, CEO of Wal-Mart Stores Inc, said in a statement. Still, Wal-Mart and others also face new challenges, as shoppers face uncertainty about health care and other issues under President Donald Trump.

Wal-Mart and other retailers are fighting a Republican proposal aimed at encouraging manufacturing in the US that would essentially tax imported goods - something the retail industry says would increase prices for shoppers on items like clothes and toys by as much as 20 percent. The National Retail Federation, the nation's largest retail trade group, estimates this so-called border adjusted tax proposal would cost the average family \$1,700 in the first year alone. Those kinds of increases would hit hardest on low-income shoppers, Wal-Mart's main customers.

Wal-Mart is also facing a rising US dollar, which has put a crimp on its international business, which accounts for about a quarter of its total business.

Overall, Wal-Mart has retooled its own online shopping programs and bought up some smaller companies with online strengths. It spent more than \$3 billion for Jet.com in a deal aimed at helping it

attract younger and more affluent customers. And it just announced that it had bought the outdoor and gear seller Moosejaw for \$51 million as it expands its online product selections. Moving closer to the terms of Amazon's powerhouse Prime program, Wal-Mart is now offering free two-day shipping on online orders of its most popular items with a minimum purchase order of \$35. Amazon Prime still costs \$99 a year, but comes with services like streaming music and video.

Wal-Mart had also said it planned to slow its new store openings and pour money into its online efforts, technology and store remodels. Global e-commerce sales grew 29 percent in the quarter, up from 20.6 percent in the prior period. Wal-Mart said it's working to accelerate the integration between Wal-Mart and Jet.com, and trying to take advantage of its scale in areas like shipping and sharing its product selection. Wal-Mart last year also raised its stake in JD.com, China's No 2 e-commerce site. But online sales still only account for a fraction of its total.

Besides melding its online and store businesses so shoppers can jump back and forth, Wal-Mart is has launched changes designed to make its stores cleaner and its customer service friendlier and faster. The company has also invested \$2.7 billion in higher wages and training for workers, a move that it says has helped to lower turnover and improve customer service.

The Bentonville, Arkansas-based company said yesterday it earned \$3.76 billion, or \$1.22 per share in the three months ended Jan. 31. That compares with \$4.57 billion, or \$1.43 per share, a year ago.

Excluding certain items, earnings per share were \$1.30. Sales excluding membership fees rose 0.8 percent to \$129.75 billion. Analysts had expected \$1.28 per share on revenue of \$131.13 billion, according to FactSet. Wal-Mart says a key revenue metric rose 1.8 percent at its US namesake business, up from 1.2 percent in the previous quarter. That marked its 10th straight quarter of increases. Customer counts rose 1.4 percent in its US business, marking the ninth consecutive quarter of gains. —AP

# S AFRICA GRANTS BARCLAYS AFRICA IMMUNITY IN FX RIGGING PROBE

**CAPE TOWN:** South Africa's Competition Commission has granted Barclays Africa conditional immunity from prosecution in return for its continuing cooperation in the rand currency trading probe, the head of the Commission said yesterday.

The Commission said last week it had found more than a dozen local and foreign banks colluded to coordinate trading in the rand and the US dollar using an instant chat room called "ZAR Domination".

It recommended fines amounting to 10 percent of the banks' South African revenues in a scandal that has piled political pressure on the country's big four banks and raised questions about their dominance in Africa's most industrialized economy. The local lenders have around a 90 percent market share of the South African banking market.

"We did, through the investigation, receive a leniency application from Barclays/ABSA which cooperated and gave us more information," the head of the Commission Tembinkosi Bonakele told a parliamentary committee yesterday. "We have a conditional agreement with them on immunity but this is subject to confirmation depending on the extent of their cooperation."

Barclays Africa Group, the regional subsidiary of Barclays Plc which includes the South African bank Absa, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

On Monday the Commission said that the local arm of Citigroup had agreed to pay a reduced \$5 million penalty in settlement for its role in the alleged currency trading cartel after it "undertook to cooperate". "I would say that the settlement was low, but as a prosecutor you sometimes have to make these calls because we have a bigger case to run," Bonakele said yesterday, referring to Citi.

The scandal has rattled the share prices of the South African-listed banks, with the sector index having dropped by nearly 4 percent over the last four sessions.

The Commission began its investigation in April 2015, joining an international probe into the manipulation of foreign exchange rates that has led to big banks paying more than \$10 billion in settlements. Former Citigroup foreign exchange dealer Christopher Cummins and Jason Katz, who worked at Barclays and later BNP Paribas SA, pleaded guilty in the United States to conspiring to fix currency prices last month.

Both, along with several others, are named in

the South African regulator's report on its investigation that has been referred to the Competition Tribunal, which holds hearings on antitrust matters before giving a ruling. Bonakele said the Commission was seeking a maximum penalty against other banks whose traders are alleged to have been involved in the scandal but the "door was not closed" for those seeking to apply for leniency in exchange for information that would help lead to a successful prosecution.

President Jacob Zuma said last week that the government would clamp down hard on financial market abuse. Other banks and brokerages named in the case were Nomura, Standard Bank, Investec, JP Morgan, BNP Paribas, Credit Suisse Group, Commerzbank AG, Standard New York Securities Inc, Macquarie Bank, Bank of America Merrill Lynch (BAML), ANZ Banking Group Ltd and Standard Chartered Plc. Investec has said it would seek to provide further information for the regulator in order to continue to cooperate.

Officials at Standard Bank, BAML, Commerzbank, BNP Paribas, Nomura, Credit Suisse, ANZ, Macquarie and Standard Chartered have so far declined to comment. The other banks have not responded to requests for comment. — Reuters

# RUSSIA'S ROSNEFT, LIBYA'S NOC SIGN OIL OFFTAKE DEAL

**TUNIS:** Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) has signed a crude oil offtake agreement with Russia's Rosneft as it looks to encourage foreign investment and bolster Libyan output, the NOC said yesterday. The NOC and Rosneft also signed a cooperation framework agreement which the NOC said "lays the groundwork for investment by Rosneft in Libya's oil sector".

"The agreement envisages the establishment of a joint working committee of the two partners to evaluate opportunities in a variety of sectors, including exploration and production," the NOC said in a statement.

The NOC gave no details on the offtake deal. Libya has more than doubled its oil production to 700,000 barrels per day (bpd) in recent months, though output remains well below the more than 1.6 million bpd it was pumping before Libya's 2011 uprising.

Production gains are dependent on investment and

repairs to infrastructure, and vulnerable to continuing conflict, with Libya split between political factions based in Tripoli and the east.

Russia has been showing growing support for eastern-based military commander Khalifa Haftar. His forces control most of Libya's oil resources, and have recently been cooperating with the Tripoli-based NOC despite earlier attempts by eastern factions to sell oil independently.

Commodities trader Glencore, which is a shareholder in Rosneft and a trading partner for the Russian firm, has long backed the NOC in Tripoli, and recently extended a deal entitling it to market about one third of Libya's current output. The NOC seeks to boost output to 1.2 million bpd this year, and to 2.1 million bpd by 2020. Libya is one of two OPEC members exempted from recent production cuts as it seeks to recover from years of conflict. — Reuters

# WORLD'S BIGGEST MINER BHP POSTS SOARING HALF-YEAR PROFIT

**SYDNEY:** Mining giant BHP Billiton reported yesterday a dramatic rebound in half-yearly profits on the back of surging coal and iron ore prices and improved productivity.

The underlying profit of US\$3.2 billion and earnings before tax of US\$9.9 billion for the last six months of 2016 exceeded expectations. "This is a strong result that follows several years of a considered and deliberate approach to improve productivity and redesign our portfolio and operating model," chief executive Andrew Mackenzie said.

The Anglo-Australian mining giant announced a 40 cent interim dividend per share which eclipsed analyst projections of about 30 cents. In January the company reported record Australian iron ore production in the last six months of 2016 after a 28 percent surge in the price of the commodity, compared to the corresponding period in 2015. The latest results show a 157 percent increase in underlying profit from a year ago and a 65 percent year-on-year jump in earnings before tax, marking a significant turn-

around in the company's fortunes. BHP posted an annual net loss of US\$6.39 billion, its worst ever result, for the year to June 30 2016 as the industry battled big declines in commodity prices.

For copper, BHP said it would revise output guidance at Chile's Escondida mine, the biggest in the world, where 2,500 workers are on strike. "We are confident in the long-term outlook for our commodities, particularly oil, with markets expected to rebalance in the near-term, and copper where we expect a deficit to emerge in the early 2020s," Mackenzie said. However the firm added in a statement that "the (iron ore) market is likely to come under pressure in the short term from moderating Chinese steel demand growth, high port inventories and incremental low cost supply".

Iron ore prices have risen from a low of \$40 per ton in 2015 to around \$90 this month. Metallurgical coal prices also surged in the last six months "driven by pronounced shortages in both domestic Chinese and seaborne supply," BHP said. —AFP

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.696
Indian Rupees	4.580
Pakistani Rupees	2.922
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.021
Nepali Rupees	2.865
Singapore Dollar	216.050
Hongkong Dollar	39.460
Bangladesh Taka	3.846
Philippine Peso	6.095
Thai Baht	8.751

#### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.721
Qatari Riyal	84.169
Omani Riyal	795.680
Bahraini Dinar	813.740
UAE Dirham	83.435

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	23.400
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	19.403
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.229
Tunisian Dinar	134.760
Jordanian Dinar	431.430
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.042
Syrian Lira	2.184
Morocco Dirham	30.810

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	306.250
Euro	325.390
Sterling Pound	383.120
Canadian dollar	233.960
Turkish Lira	84.600

Swiss Franc	306.560
Australian Dollar	236.580
US Dollar Buying	305.050

#### GOLD

20 Gram	252.410
10 Gram	129.130
5 Gram	65.410

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	305.900
Canadian Dolla	233.480
Sterling Pound	382.165
Euro	325.315
Swiss Franc	309.220
Bahrain Dinar	810.915
UAE Dirhams	83.680
Qatari Riyals	84.900
Saudi Riyals	82.500
Jordanian Dinar	432.620
Egyptian Pound	19.476
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.022
Indian Rupees	4.568
Pakistani Rupees	2.917
Bangladesh Taka	3.854
Philippines Peso	6.082
Cyprus pound	167.990
Japanese Yen	3.690
Syrian Pound	2.425
Nepalese Rupees	3.855
Malaysian Ringgit	69.500
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.840
Thai Bhat	9.715
Turkish Lira	84.660

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

#### CURRENCY BUY SELL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.374257	0.384257
Czech Korune	0.003970	0.015970
Danish Krone	0.039509	0.044509
Euro	0.318486	0.327486
Norwegian Krone	0.032553	0.037753
Romanian Leu	0.071542	0.071542
Slovakia	0.009185	0.019185
Swedish Krona	0.030099	0.035099
Swiss Franc	0.297909	0.308909
Turkish Lira	0.078606	0.088906

#### Australasia

Australian Dollar	0.226449	0.238449
New Zealand Dollar	0.212682	0.222182

#### America

Canadian Dollar	0.227570	0.236570
Georgina Lari	0.138321	0.138321
US Dollars	0.302150	0.306550
US Dollars Mint	0.302650	0.306550

#### Asia

Bangladesh Taka	0.003584	0.004148
Chinese Yuan	0.043138	0.046638
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037369	0.040119
Indian Rupee	0.002683	0.004906
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024

Japanese Yen	0.002610	0.002790
Kenyan Shilling	0.002951	0.002951
Korean Won	0.000257	0.000272
Malaysian Ringgit	0.064895	0.070895
Nepalese Rupee	0.002996	0.003166
Pakistan Rupee	0.002673	0.002963
Philippine Peso	0.006026	0.006326
Sierra Leone	0.000038	0.000044
Singapore Dollar	0.210070	0.220070
South African Rand	0.017379	0.025879
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001683	0.002263
Taiwan	0.009817	0.009997
Thai Baht	0.008400	0.008950

#### Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.805763	0.814263
Egyptian Pound	0.013826	0.023079
Iranian Riyal	0.000085	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000187	0.000247
Jordanian Dinar	0.426284	0.435284
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020163	0.044163
Nigerian Naira	0.000402	0.001037
Omani Riyal	0.789033	0.794713
Qatar Riyal	0.083308	0.084758
Saudi Riyal	0.080580	0.081880
Syrian Pound	0.001299	0.001519
Tunisian Dinar	0.130199	0.138199
Turkish Lira	0.078606	0.088906
UAE Dirhams	0.081956	0.083656
Yemeni Riyal	0.000996	0.001076





KUWAIT: Daniel Khayat, MEA HTC Product Manager, speaks during the interview.



HTC U Play



HTC U Ultra

## HTC TO UNVEIL NEW SMARTPHONES IN KUWAIT

HTC U ULTRA AND HTC U PLAY CHALLENGE EVERYTHING THAT PEOPLE EXPECT FROM SMARTPHONES

By Faten Omar

**KUWAIT:** HTC, a global leader in mobile innovation and design, unveiled its new smartphone series, HTC U with two new models, the HTC U Ultra, which is a flagship phone and HTC U Play. Incomparably beautiful to look at and hold with the technology and software to match, the HTC U series challenges everything that people expect from smartphones. "In March, HTC will launch its newest smartphone series in Kuwait - the 5.7-inch HTC U Ultra and the 5.2-inch HTC U Play smartphones," Daniel Khayat, MEA HTC Product Manager, told the Kuwait Times yesterday.

The HTC U series features the best in class cameras with both main cameras featuring optical image stabilization, phase detection autofocus (PDAF), a dual-tone LED flash and pro-mode among others. The HTC U Ultra comes with a 12MP ultra pixel main camera and the HTC U Play features a 16MP main camera. Both devices include a 16MP selfie camera with a wide-angle lens for panorama selfies and the option to switch to an ultrapixel mode for unparalleled light sensitivity.

The brilliantly designed and powerful new series is beautifully 3D contoured with a liquid surface that's designed to reflect the best you. The HTC U Ultra is the first device from the

company for 2017 and is a premium offering. HTC U Ultra features a 5.7-inch display, a virtual assistant and a secondary screen above the regular one. The 5.7-inch display is a super LCD 5 screen with a QHD resolution. The 2-inch screen above it offers a resolution of 160x1040 and can be used to show contacts, notifications, music controls, and so on. This Smartphone comes with a glass finish, which the company calls 'Liquid Construction'.

The HTC U Ultra includes four microphones on the device, which capture positional sound and allow for immersive audio recordings. "It is meant to learn your habits and tune the phone's behavior accordingly. For example, the

phone will learn your travel route so if you have a flight and there is heavy traffic outside, it will tell you that you are going to be late," Khayat said. He added that HTC U Ultra uses a sonar technology headset to analyze a person's unique inner ear to adapt to you and the noise levels around you and this feature enhances the way you experience sound through the delivery of clear and superior audio.

"HTC introduces the HTC Sense Companion, which is a personal companion that is consistently learning from the user, with voice recognition capabilities. The phone features voice recognition, so it can actually recognize your voice and respond to commands. Through arti-

ficial intelligence, the HTC Sense Companion gets to know you through machine learning to present customized and personalized suggestions and quietly support you in your pursuit of brilliance," Khayat explained.

Khayat confirmed that HTC will bring the latest revolutionary smartphones to Kuwait. HTC continues to push the limit of the performance and advanced features of its smartphones, making them the ideal smartphones to support business users and complement the lifestyle of consumers in general. "It is bringing genuine choice to the category by delivering stunning design and high-end performance at unbelievable value," Khayat added.



**MUMBAI:** Natarajan Chandrasekaran, the new chairman of Tata Group, arrives at Bombay House the conglomerate's headquarters to take charge in Mumbai yesterday. India salt-to-steel conglomerate Tata Sons' new chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran took over officially following the company's acrimonious management dispute with its former chief. —AFP

## EXPORT FIRMS TELL US CONGRESS TO PUSH TAX CODE REWRITE

**WASHINGTON:** Chief executive officers of 16 companies, including Boeing Co, Caterpillar Inc and General Electric Co, have urged the US Congress to pass a comprehensive tax code rewrite, including a controversial border tax. In a letter to Republican and Democratic leadership yesterday, the CEOs said a Republican-proposed border adjustment tax would make US-manufactured products more competitive abroad and at home by making imported goods face the same level of taxation.

"If we miss this chance to fundamentally reshape the tax code, it might take another 30 years before we have another chance to try," the group of CEOs wrote in the letter, according to a copy that Reuters obtained. It is the latest move in a back-and-forth lobbying effort from companies that proposed changes to the tax code would affect.

Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan has proposed lowering the corporate income tax to 20 percent from 35 percent, imposing a 20 percent tax on imports and excluding export revenue from taxable income. The proposal has pitted large US corporations that require imports, like

retailers and auto manufacturers, against those that export much of their goods and therefore support the tax code changes.

A group of retail CEOs met last week with President Donald Trump and congressional leaders to argue against the border adjustment tax. Trump is expected to release his own tax proposal in the coming weeks. While he has said the border adjustment tax is too "complicated," his administration has said taxing goods from Mexico could fund construction of a wall along the nation's southern border.

The letter supporting the border tax was signed by 16 CEOs: Dennis Muilenburg of Boeing, John Coors of CoorsTek, Jim Umpleby of Caterpillar, Andrew Liveris of Dow Chemical Co, Mark Rohr of Celanese Corp; Jeffrey Immelt of GE, Mark Alles of Celgene Corp, David Ricks of Eli Lilly and Co, Tony Simmons of McIlhenny Co, Thomas Kennedy of Raytheon Co, Kenneth Frazier of Merck & Co Inc, Douglas Peterson of S&P Global Inc, Safra Catz of Oracle Corp, Gregory Hayes of United Technologies Corp, Ian Read of Pfizer Inc and Dow Wilson of Varian Medical Systems Inc. —Reuters

## PSA WILL HONOR EXISTING OPEL JOB GUARANTEES

**FRANKFURT/PARIS:** PSA Group has pledged to respect existing Opel and Vauxhall job guarantees if it buys the European arm of General Motors, though some analysts say thousands of jobs are eventually likely to go for the deal to work.

As part of a broader charm offensive, PSA Chief Executive Carlos Tavares met with representatives of powerful German labor union IG Metall and Opel's European works council on Monday to discuss the impact of any deal on existing sites.

"PSA Group reaffirmed its commitment to respect the existing agreements in the European countries and to continue the dialogue with all parties," Peugeot maker PSA said in a statement yesterday. General Motors (GM) has pledged not to impose forced redundancies on some of its German workforce until the end of 2018, IG Metall said, while some existing agreements about building certain models at Opel stretch beyond 2020.

However, some analysts say PSA will eventually need to make big cuts to turn around loss-making Opel and sister brand Vauxhall in a European car industry that has struggled for years with overcapacity. "It's about hard restructuring in Germany,

the UK and in Spain resulting in at least 5,000 manufacturing job cuts. In the end, an integrated General Motors Europe will likely have 20 to 30 percent fewer workers," Evercore analysts said in a note.

Germany accounts for about half of Opel's 38,000 staff, while 4,500 are in Britain where Opel operates as Vauxhall.

Two sources close to PSA told Reuters last week that job and plant cuts were part of the tie-up talks, with the two Vauxhall sites in Britain in the front line.

Paris-based PSA said in an emailed statement it planned to work closely with Opel unions including IG Metall to "find a path to the creation of a European champion with Franco-German roots."

"Tavares communicated convincingly in the talks that he is interested in a sustainable development for Opel/Vauxhall as an independent company," European works council chief Wolfgang Schaefer-Klug said in a separate statement.

Britain's Unite union has yet to receive assurances from PSA officials regarding the possible takeover of Vauxhall, with the first opportunity at the works council on Wednesday followed by a meeting between Tavares and union head Len McCluskey in London on Friday. —Reuters

## ITS GROUP APPOINTS ESSAM AL-KHASHNAM AS CEO

**KUWAIT:** International Turnkey Systems Group (ITS), affiliated to Kuwait Finance House (KFH) announced the appointment of Kuwaiti national, Essam Al-Khashnam as Chief Executive Officer. This comes in line with the company's efforts to improve its businesses and services in the Middle East and the world, not to mention to achieve further milestones in providing high end integrated IT solutions and software services for several sectors such as the financial and banking sectors.

Al-Khashnam enjoys 25-year long experience in the fields of IT, management, marketing and business development. This comes in line with ITS Group's plans and aspirations towards further growth and comprehensive development. Al-Khashnam is considered as a notable figure in the field of



Essam Al-Khashnam

Information Technology and software solutions. He is credited with the innovation and management of several advanced IT solutions dur-



ing his career. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering from the University of the Pacific (United States) in 1991. He completed Strategic Management and Successful Management studies at the Harvard University.

Al-Khashnam served as Manager of the IT Strategic Planning Department at the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK). He held many senior positions in different companies specialized in the IT sector. He was working closely with the banking sector

during his tenure at the CBK. ITS Group, which was established in 1981, offers world class quality IT solutions and services for more than 75 banking and financial institutions, in addition to several clients in the government and oil sectors. ITS implements solutions for clients throughout the Middle East, South Africa, and the Caribbean through high caliber staff that includes 1200 experts and specialists in 7 offices around the world.

Moreover, ITS Group received many international appreciations and awards in the field of information technology such as "Best Provider of Information Technology" from CPI Financial, "Best IT Institution for Islamic Financial Consultancies 2016" and Best IT Provider for Islamic Financial Institutions 2016" from GIFA.



**SURABAYA:** Indonesian job seekers visit a job exhibition in Surabaya yesterday. According to the Indonesian bureau of Statistics (BPS), Indonesia's economic 2016 grew 5.02 percent higher than 2015 at 4.88 percent. —AFP

## SAUDI SEES DEFLATION IN OVER A DECADE, MAY BE SHORT-LIVED

LOW OIL PRICES SLASH GOVT SPENDING

**DUBAI:** Consumer price deflation hit Saudi Arabia in January for the first time in over a decade, official data showed yesterday, but plans for increased state revenues mean prices are unlikely to continue falling for more than a few months.

Prices fell 0.4 percent from a year earlier last month, their first drop since the early 2000s, and decreased 0.2 percent from December, the Central Department of Statistics said.

The falls were partly due to the weakness of the Saudi economy, where low oil prices have slashed the government's export revenues and forced it to cut spending.

Last year's economic slowdown pushed retailers and many other companies into discounting their products. Food and beverage prices sank 4.2 percent from a year earlier in January partly

because of a strong US dollar, to which the Saudi riyal is pegged. The kingdom imports much of its basic foods. A third factor was the government's decision to raise prices of domestic fuel and utilities around the end of 2015 in order to cut its budget deficit. Those hikes dropped out of calculations in January this year, causing a sudden decrease of inflation.

### Pressure up

Pressure for prices to rise is expected to increase within months, however. The government plans another round of fuel price increases in mid-2017 and has said it will impose a 50 percent tax on soft drinks and a 100 percent levy on tobacco and energy drinks in the second quarter of this year.

The government plans to raise fees for foreigners' work permits and their dependents' visas, starting this year, and intends to introduce a 5 percent value-added tax in the first quarter of next year.

Also, the non-oil economy appears to be recovering moderately as the government resumes paying its debts to the private sector, after a freeze on many payments for most of last year. The recovery will boost underlying price pressures, London-based Capital Economics said in a report.

"We think this period of deflation is likely to prove short-lived," said Capital Economics, which has predicted inflation will bounce back above 4.0 percent after the value-added tax is introduced. —Reuters



# HSBC PROFIT PLUNGE WEIGHS ON STOCK MARKETS

**PARIS:** A massive drop in profits at banking giant HSBC helped push London and Hong Kong stocks into negative territory yesterday, while eurozone markets bounced off Asian gains to edge higher.

Protectionist fears under Donald Trump and uncertainties caused by Brexit sparked a huge plunge in 2016 profits, HSBC said, sparking a fall in its share price of over six percent in London and dragging the rest of the financial sector lower. Shares in Barclays, Standard Chartered and Lloyds joined the downward trend. Sterling weakness against the dollar, which has helped lift the FTSE index since last year's Brexit vote, failed to turn the market around this time.

## 'Millstone' HSBC

"Having helped lead the way yesterday, banks are today's index millstone," said Michael van Dulken, head of research at Accendo Markets in London. Asian markets mostly extended their rally earlier, with Tokyo boosted by a jump in the dollar against the yen amid intensifying talk that the Federal Reserve could lift interest rates as soon as next month. But Hong Kong, where HSBC shares are also listed, suffered from what Van Dulken called a "whopping" profit drop at the bank as HSBC stock dropped five percent.

The reason HSBC gave for its earnings decline sent new shivers through markets already

spooked by uncertainty over political stability in Europe, Brexit and US trade policies.

## 'Threat of populism'

"We highlight the threat of populism impacting policy choices in upcoming European elections, possible protectionist measures from the new US administration impacting global trade, uncertainties facing the UK and the EU as they enter Brexit negotiations," group chairman Douglas Flint said in a statement filed to the Hong Kong stock exchange. On the bright side, mining giant BHP Billiton gained nearly one percent in Sydney as it reported a dramatic rebound in half-yearly profits on the back of

surging coal and iron ore prices and improved productivity.

The results lifted miners in London, with BHP, Rio Tinto and Anglo American all posting gains.

Eurozone stock markets meanwhile were underpinned by a key survey saying the eurozone economy grew at its fastest pace in six years in February, as all signs pointed to the recovery maintaining "strong momentum". Data monitoring company IHS Markit also said job creation in the 19-country eurozone recorded its best level for nearly a decade.

But investors, who took a day off from Trump-watching Monday when US markets were closed for a holiday, were awaiting Wall Street's opening trend for further guidance. The New York stock market has

set records in six of its last seven sessions, but some analysts say a correction is due.

## Greenback strong

The dollar climbed against its peers following comments from the head of the Fed's Philadelphia branch, Patrick Harker, that a March rate rise was not "off the table at this point". Expectations of a hike have increased since Donald Trump was elected president in November as dealers bet his big-spending, tax-cutting plans will fan inflation. The latest reading on prices increases, as well as healthy jobs growth and factory activity, have reinforced that view. Investors are keeping an eye on the release this week of Fed minutes from its most recent policy meeting hoping for fresh clues about its plans for rates. — AFP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report						
Tuesday 21 February 2017						
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low	
Price Index	▼ -13.47	6,766.36	6,779.83	6,794.29	6,684.94	
Weighted Index	▼ -1.07	422.92	423.99	423.99	419.26	
KSX 15	▼ -1.98	959.85	961.83	962.00	951.50	

Trades						
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Change
MARIN	63	58	40050	2,323	3	63 ▲ 0.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	420 ▲ 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	820 ▲ 0.0
ENERGYH	44.0	42.5	44,200	1,897	16	44.0 ▼ -0.5
GPI	53	50	199,799	81	53	▲ 1.0
ABAR	94	90	264,348	24,261	22	93 ▲ 1.0
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b>			<b>4,215,772</b>	<b>228,281</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>865.75 ▼ -0.29</b>
KFOUC	370	335	535,762	192,299	56	360 ▲ 5.0
BPCC	580	580	110,000	63,800	7	580 ▲ 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	700 ▲ 0.0
ALQURAIN	325	320	1,365,439	438,299	35	320 ▼ -5.0
<b>Basic Materials</b>			<b>2,011,201</b>	<b>694,398</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>1332.63 ▼ -2.38</b>
KCEM	495	495	27,299	13,513	1	495 ▲ 0.0
KCBL	580	560	122,902	69,987	26	570 ▼ -10.0
SHIP	232	224	150	34	2	224 ▼ -6.0
PCEM	1,100	1,080	71,746	77,490	17	1,100 ▲ 20.0
PAPER	485	485	45,222	21,933	7	485 ▲ 25.0
MRC	89	82	10,100	829	2	89 ▲ 2.0
ACICO	320	305	2,442,796	755,993	52	315 ▲ 5.0
GMCM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	325 ▲ 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	170 ▲ 0.0
KBMM	180	170	5,060	861	6	170 ▼ -10.0
NBCM	216	214	91,399	19,680	6	216 ▲ 0.0
EQUIPMENT	64	61	1,543,490	97,585	44	62 ▼ -2.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50 ▲ 0.0
GYPSSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95 ▲ 0.0
SALBOOKH	75	74	309,540	23,136	13	75 ▼ -1.0
AGLTY	600	560	13,881,474	8,029,889	387	600 ▼ -10.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	204 ▲ 0.0
CLEANING	55	53	1,798,281	95,944	50	55 ▲ 0.0
KGL	68	65	473,039	31,346	16	67 ▼ -2.0
KCCP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	198 ▲ 0.0
HUMANSOFT	3,060	3,000	23,760	71,744	6	3,060 ▲ 0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200 ▲ 0.0
GFC	51	45.5	899,492	43,921	31	51 ▲ 3.0
MAYADEEN	34.0	33.0	5,325,933	178,818	81	33.0 ▼ -1.0
CGC	490	490	1,000	490	1	490 ▼ -10.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56 ▲ 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	820 ▲ 0.0
ALAFCCO	255	250	34,380	8,667	7	255 ▲ 0.0
MUBARRAD	74	73	240,386	17,848	7	74 ▲ 0.0
LOGISTICS	75	73	3,177,835	234,215	78	73 ▼ -3.0
SCEM	85	84	390,501	32,955	13	85 ▼ -1.0
GCEM	90	88	2,675,637	238,419	61	90 ▼ -1.0
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	87 ▲ 0.0
FCEM	90	87	337,201	29,664	10	90 ▲ 2.0
RKWC	102	100	1,176,881	117,870	13	102 ▲ 3.0
SPEC	93	91	366,660	33,840	26	93 ▼ -3.0
<b>Industrials</b>			<b>35,471,964</b>	<b>10,246,249</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>1520.75 ▲ 1.33</b>
KSH	190	190	100	19	1	190 ▲ 10.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	54 ▲ 0.0
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100 ▲ 0.0
CATTL	214	214	1	0	1	214 ▼ -10.0
DANAH	89	88	1,069,820	94,168	31	89 ▼ -1.0
FOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	2,520 ▲ 0.0
<b>Consumer Goods</b>			<b>1,069,921</b>	<b>94,187</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1137.05 ▼ -1.13</b>
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250 ▲ 0.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920 ▲ 0.0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	290 ▲ 0.0
<b>Health Care</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1225.37 ▲ 0.00</b>
KCIN	1,400	1,320	1,010	1,334	2	1,400 ▲ 0.0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	236 ▲ 0.0
SULTAN	79	75	258,457	19,912	28	77 ▼ -3.0
CABLETV	45.0	35.0	125,958	4,448	31	35.0 ▼ -1.3
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385 ▲ 0.0
IFAH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	192 ▲ 0.0
OULAFUEL	124	122	22,813	2,794	13	124 ▲ 0.0
MUNTAZHAT	87	85	1,135,000	97,180	35	86 ▼ -1.0
JAZEERA	630	580	45,829	28,472	15	630 ▲ 20.0
SOOR	124	122	42,347	5,206	14	122 ▼ -2.0
FUTUREKID	118	118	9,427	1,112	1	118 ▼ -2.0
ALRAI	176	174	560,203	97,546	23	176 ▲ 0.0
ZIMAH	67	63	1,065,398	68,423	50	65 ▼ -1.0
Mezzan	960	950	27,096	25,841	2	960 ▲ 10.0
<b>Consumer Services</b>			<b>3,293,538</b>	<b>352,269</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>962.45 ▼ -18.72</b>
ZAIN	485	475	9,966,938	4,748,931	209	480 ▲ 0.0
OOREDOO	1,280	1,220	23,297	29,457	9	1,260 ▲ 4.0
HITSTELEC	58	54	4,396,030	244,692	102	57 ▼ -1.0
VIVA	840	830	84,999	70,756	40	830 ▼ -10.0
<b>Telecommunications</b>			<b>14,471,264</b>	<b>5,093,836</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>665.60 ▼ -2.04</b>
NBK	730	720	978,766	712,428	33	730 ▲ 0.0
GBK	250	248	755,568	187,881	19	248 ▲ 0.0
CBK	500	475	1,301	620	3	500 ▲ 0.0
ABK	300	300	548,645	164,594	21	300 ▼ -5.0
ALMUTAHED	435	430	44,912	19,487	7	435 ▲ 0.0
KIB	246	240	6,915,514	1,687,645	191	244 ▲ 0.0
BURG	315	310	2,111,960	658,184	60	315 ▼ -5.0
KFIN	620	620	3,353,085	2,078,913	79	620 ▲ 0.0
BOUBRYAN	415	410	985,379	404,066	48	410 ▲ 0.0
AUB	230	226	2,638,295	599,582	33	228 ▼ -2.0
ITHMR	64	60	25,350,510	1,551,538	266	62 ▼ -1.0
WARBANK	285	270	12,354,061	3,440,443	238	280 ▲ 5.0
<b>Banks</b>			<b>56,037,996</b>	<b>11,505,382</b>	<b>998</b>	<b>975.82 ▼ -3.66</b>
KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	315 ▲ 0.0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	600 ▲ 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	500 ▲ 0.0
WINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100 ▲ 0.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	186 ▲ 0.0
FTI	75	65	342,300	23,271	26	74 ▲ 4.0
WETHAQ	59	56	105,600	5,921	5	56 ▼ -5.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355 ▲ 0.0
<b>Insurance</b>			<b>447,900</b>	<b>29,192</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1156.02 ▼ -11.42</b>

Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	51	49.0	465,801	231,714	79	49.5	▼ -0.5
KRE	77	75	936,759	70,995	32	77	▲ 0.0
URC	104	100	208,957	21,102	8	102	▼ -6.0
NRE	112	106	6,038,152	663,186	120	112	▼ -2.0
SRE	390	390	1,000	390	1	390	▲ 0.0
TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	460	▲ 0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	182	▲ 0.0
MASSALEH	53	49.0	57,602	2,843	9	50	▼ -3.0
ARABREC	47.5	45.0	4,132,747	190,034	91	46.0	▼ -1.0
ERESCO	48.5	46.5	686,244	31,277	26	48.0	▲ 0.0
MABANEE	840	840	228,193	191,682	7	840	▲ 0.0
INJAZZAT	84	82	692,200	57,359	15	83	▲ 1.0
INVESTORS	31.0	29.5	21,255,682	638,070	205	30.0	▼ -0.5
IRC	39.5	36.0	3,750,020	143,924	71	39.5	▲ 1.0
ALTJARIA	87	85	2,009,375	171,494	24	86	▲ 2.0
SANAM	56	56	100	6	1	56	▲ 0.0
AAYANRE	75	74	70,000	5,220	2	74	▼ -1.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	▲ 0.0
ALAQARIA	46.0	45.0	331,641	15,040	19	45.5	▲ 0.0
MAZAYA	138	130	5,266,148	698,172	104	132	▼ -6.0
ADNC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	11.0	▲ 0.0
THEMAR	94	90	1,099,759	98,978	9	94	▲ 4.0
TLARA	64	60	555,338	33,367	14	62	▲ 1.0
TAAMEER	37.5	35.5	4,752,508	172,297	105	35.5	▼ -2.5
ARKAN	85	83	434,578	36,219	15	85	▲ 2.0
ARGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	198	▲ 0.0
ABYAR	35.5	33.5	13,831,035	479,398	165	35.0	▼ -0.5
MUNSHAAT	70	66	2,309,500	153,716	66	66	▼ -4.0
FIRSTDUBAI	71	69	451,634	31,274	23</		





KUWAIT: Entrepreneurs make remarks on their small businesses in the mall.



The attendees —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## CREC OPENS THE LOBBY PROJECT AT SYMPHONY STYLE MALL PROJECT TO SUPPORT SMALL KUWAITI BUSINESSES: AL-ARYAN

**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Real Estate Company and on behalf of its Chairman Abdulfattah M R Marafie officially opened its unique Lobby project to support small business youth on Monday in the presence of the company's representatives, business owners and tenants of The Lobby at Symphony Style Mall. With media coverage and influencers presence and with a golden sponsorship by KFH Takaful.

During the opening speech, Saleh Al-Aryan, CEO of Admin & Legal Affairs Group at "Al-Tijaria" stated that "The Lobby" project comes in line with Al-Tijaria's vibrant role in corporate social responsibility and commitment to encourage youth with small unique businesses. "The Lobby" provides rent friendly units in small spaces for young entrepreneurs to start their projects. Helping them to establish their commercial activities and achieve their ambitions.

Al-Aryan added: as a result of the success of the 1st phase of "The Lobby" project at Al-Tijaria Tower, we have decided to move on to the 2nd phase opening it today at Symphony Style Mall, and soon the 3rd phase will be ready in Boulevard. Ensuring our continuous support for small businesses and providing



Saleh Al-Aryan, CEO of Admin & Legal Affairs Group at Al-Tijaria

new opportunities for the youth. We invite all entrepreneurs to achieve their ambitions and prove their merit in various fields.



Ali Dashti, Founder and CEO of Developmental Kuwaiti Union

During the opening Ceremony, a video was displayed about "The Lobby" shops located at Symphony Style Mall. Moreover,



Ahmed Al-Nowaif from KFH Takaful

Ali Dashti Founder and CEO of Developmental Kuwaiti union (Non-Profit organization), Motivational Trainer and

speaker offered some valuable advices to the audience about the secrets of establishing a successful small business. Ahmed Al-Nowaif from KFH Takaful has stated that his company is always among the first to develop insurance services and customize it to meet all clients requirements. From this point, KFH Takaful has started supporting small business entrepreneurs and offered them free insurance consultancy services. In addition to that and during the event Al-Nowaif gave some small advices to the attendees of how to study each small business depending on the type of business, activities held and the risk value.

The attendees enjoyed amazing shows from the Owl Group, and the kids had fun with activities from Genius Hub (one of the lobby tenants) and Lego.

It's worth mentioning that The Commercial Real Estate Company had created a special program for its clients "Al-Tijaria Elite" to support and market Al-Tijaria Tower and Symphony Style Mall Lobby tenants. Offering them and all Al-Tijaria clients a discount card to shop in participating tenants shops located around all Al-Tijaria Real Estate properties.



PARIS: This file photo taken on February 27, 2016 in Paris shows cows during the opening day of the "Salon de l'Agriculture" (Agriculture Fair). The upcoming French presidential elections candidates who will visit the France's annual farm fair kicking off on February 25 will meet farmers facing ruin, anger and discouragement. —AFP

## JADED GREEKS RESIGNED TO MORE AUSTERITY

**ATHENS:** When asked what he thought about the prospect of yet more austerity to be imposed on Greece by its international creditors, Nicos Papapetrou was fairly short. "I had better stop ... because I will start swearing," 49-year old Papapetrou, a shop assistant in Athens said.

Greeks appeared resigned yesterday to accepting further budget cuts and tax rises after their government agreed to a last-minute compromise of new reforms to keep bailout funds flowing.

Athens and its creditors - the euro zone and International Monetary Fund - agreed on Monday to resume talks on the long-stalled bailout review, but only after Greece agreed to examine what it described as "fiscally neutral" reforms from 2019 onwards.

That, local media have speculated, will mean a drop in the income tax threshold and further pension reform, in exchange for lower VAT rates on essential items and reduce annual tax rates on real estate. "It's a left wing government and they are bringing new cutbacks to pensioners and will tax the poorest. They should be ashamed of themselves," Papapetrou said.

Lenders have sought further reforms to pensions and tax credits, arguing that a present system is based on a relatively small number of taxpayers supporting a large contingent of pensioners.

The Greek government has responded that it needs not only money but some form of debt restructuring. But ordinary Greeks, who have seen a quarter of their national output wiped out by austerity attached to bailout deals since 2010 with many living off pensions because of high

unemployment, take a dim view. "People simply don't have the money, people cannot afford new measures. They don't have enough to feed themselves," said Spiridoula Gempangolu, 47, who works at a butchers in central Athens. "We used to have queues in this shop. Now we have a client an hour at best who buys a couple of pieces of chicken," she said.

Nearly seven years of austerity have led to a spike in poverty levels, and the highest poverty rate increase in the European Union. Eurostat data from 2015 showed 22.2 percent of Greece's 11 million population were "severely materially deprived".

Greek also has the highest unemployment rate in the EU - at 23 percent - and has just seen its economy contract again after being in deep recession since around 2009.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, whose left-led government is lagging in opinion polls, has frequently said Greeks cannot take more austerity.

But it appeared yesterday as if he had had to cave in. Yanis Varoufakis, who served as finance minister under Tsipras's administration prior to accepting the nation's third bailout in mid-2015, was scathing of the deal.

"Lenders once again imposed on Athens insincere and unattainable targets. Congratulations!" he said in a twitter feed. The conservative opposition New Democracy, which has a double-digit lead in opinion polls, said the government was trying to mask its complete retreat in a bid to get the bailout inspectors back to Athens.—AFP

## FRANCE JOINS THE PARTY AS EUROZONE OUTLOOK SHINES

### JOBS COMPONENT RISES AT FASTEST RATE SINCE 2007

**PARIS:** The eurozone's economy improved sharply this month and enjoyed some rare positive news about jobs, with French business activity unexpectedly matching that in big beast Germany just as its presidential race heats up.

Preliminary purchasing manager surveys on Tuesday for both countries and the whole 19-member euro zone were nearly all better than anyone polled by Reuters had expected and suggested the economy will be increasingly robust in the near-term.

The eurozone's jobs component grew at its fastest since August 2007, propelled by strong demand and rising optimism. Employment is one of the euro zone's primary weaknesses, with joblessness running just below 10 percent, double the rate in the United States.

Overall, euro zone private sector and manufacturing growth accelerated to near a six-year high in February, according to IHS Markit's monthly Purchasing Managers' Indexes (PMIs), which gauge businesses' expectations of how the economy will perform. "With domestic demand strengthening and a weaker euro boosting orders from abroad, the euro zone economy is seeing robust growth for the moment," ING economists said in a note.

There was also evidence within the reports of rising inflation, something the European Central Bank will doubtless note if not yet act upon. But the flash survey for France is likely to have raised eyebrows the most. The picture it painted of a solid recovery will play straight into spring's presidential election, in which far-right National Front candidate Marine Le Pen is seeking to harness popular discontent to beat more mainstream rivals.

At 56.2, France's PMI combining both manufacturing and services for February was the highest it has been in nearly six years. It was also better than the 56.1 reading for Germany, the euro zone's economic powerhouse.

"France (is) joining the party," Chris Williamson, chief business economist at PMI compiler IHS Markit, said. Most of the French improvement came in the services sector, with the manufacturing index actually falling short of expectations although it remained well above



BRUSSELS: United Kingdom's Treasury State Secretary David Gauke (L) attends an Economic and Financial (ECOFIN) Affairs Council meeting at the European Council, in Brussels, yesterday. —AFP

the 50 line that denotes growth. All three leading presidential candidates in France have argued that deep changes are needed in the French economy.

Le Pen wants to take France out of the euro currency bloc as a matter of national sovereignty and also promises popular moves such as lowering the retirement age, taxing the wealthy and cutting energy prices. Centrist Emmanuel Macron wants closer ties between euro zone governments and labour reform, while conservative Francois Fillon wants to cut public sector jobs, raise the retirement age and cut public spending.

#### ALL AHEAD

Germany was no slouch either. Growth in its private sector picked up to the highest level in nearly three years, driven mainly by its bustling factories. The composite PMI for Germany rose to

56.1 from 54.8 in January - a 34-month high and much better than the consensus forecast in a Reuters poll of 54.7.

IHS Markit's Williamson said the data suggested the German economy was likely to grow 0.6 percent in the first three months of 2017 after expanding 0.4 percent in 2016's final quarter.

Reflecting stronger growth in output and new business, German firms continued to hire more staff in February, with the overall rate of job creation picking up to reach its highest since June 2011. For the euro zone as a whole the flash, or preliminary, composite survey rose sharply to 56.0, the highest since April 2011, from 54.4 in January, confounding expectations for a slight dip to 54.3. "Firing on all cylinders," Morgan Stanley said in a note. "The PMI details show increased business optimism, strong order books, faster job creation and also rising inflationary pressures." —Reuters

## KRAFT'S FAILED UNILEVER BID SHOWS IT NEEDS GROWTH OVER COST CUTS

**NEW YORK:** Acquire, slash costs, repeat. Billionaire investor Warren Buffett and buy-out firm 3G Capital's failed \$143 billion bid to combine their food conglomerate Kraft Heinz Co with Unilever Plc shows their winning formula now needs a growth boost.

Buffett and 3G built Kraft into the world's fifth-largest food and beverage company through acquisitions followed by a relentless drive to boost profit margins. While this cost cut-driven business model wowed industry observers, it appears to be reaching its limits, with Kraft's sales stagnating and

margins flattening. Kraft's bid for Unilever was aimed at addressing these challenges. About 60 percent of Unilever's business is comprised of household products and personal care (HPC) goods, rather than food. Not only would a deal give Kraft plenty of new ground on which to implement its cost-cutting model, it would boost its revenue by allowing it to expand in several emerging markets.

Investment bankers and industry analysts now say Kraft is more likely to pursue another company with a big, growing HPC busi-

ness, rather than a peer in the food sector that would require it to repeat the same M&A cycle a couple of years later.

"Perhaps Kraft will now acquire another medium-sized US food company, like General Mills Inc, Kellogg Co, or Mondelez International Inc. But after three years this M&A 'beast' will need to be fed once again, and the number of attractive US targets is getting smaller," Sanford C. Bernstein analysts wrote in a note on Monday. Kraft declined to comment on which company it may seek to acquire next. —Reuters





## RENAULT AL-BABTAIN CONTINUES SUCCESSFULLY 'HALA FEB' 2017 SPONSORSHIP

**KUWAIT:** Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Company (AABC), the authorized dealer of Renault vehicles in the State of Kuwait continues with great success its sponsorship for the 18th edition of Hala February, the country's annual festival that is held during the month of February and witnesses a range of entertaining activities and enthusiastic participation from locals and the GCC region.

Renault Al-Babtain's sponsorship of this year's mega event was considered key to the brands Corporate Social

Responsibility portfolio as the participation demonstrates its commitment towards the community amidst a festive atmosphere during Kuwait's National & Liberation days.

Moreover, exciting activities were held where the public could participate and enjoy, a draw took place at different local shopping centers to give away a brand new Renault Captur to the winner, so far winners are Hossa Al-Azmi and Yousif Al-Khashawi.

Renault Al-Babtain participated at the festival's opening

ceremony, the Parade ceremony which welcomed hundreds of visitors at Salem Al-Mubarak Street, one of Kuwait's oldest and most popular avenues. Renault Al-Babtain marked its presence by displaying three of its most internationally appraised models; the luxurious Renault Talisman, the all-new revamped Renault Koleos and the fashionable Renault Captur.

Renault Al-Babtain also sponsored Hala February horseback riding tournament that was held for two days at Kuwait Riding Center; and honored first place winner the Jockey Ali

Al-Khorafi with a brand new Renault Captur. Visitors were able to also interact with Renaults Al-Babtain's staff on site & were able to test drive Renault newest models.

Renault Al-Babtain's effort to participate in key local festivities also include a host of customer-centric services and offers. The company's sponsorship with Hala February 2017 demonstrates its commitment towards society as it strives to remain one of the most admired and trusted automobile brand in Kuwait.



## FLYDUBAI OPERATES 24 ADDITIONAL FLIGHTS BETWEEN KUWAIT AND DUBAI FOR NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

**KUWAIT:** Dubai-based flydubai will operate up to 14 flights a day between Kuwait and Dubai from 22 February to 27 February 2017. The additional 24 flights which will operate during this period will accommodate the increase in passengers travelling between the two cities during Kuwait's 56th National and Liberation Day Holidays.

The carrier, which has been operating from the convenient Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Terminal in Kuwait since 2013, offers Kuwaiti citizens and well-wishers from the UAE a flexible flight schedule to join the country's celebrations.

Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer at flydubai, said: "We congratulate our brothers in Kuwait on the occasion of the country's National and Liberation Day, a very dear occasion to our hearts and celebrated by everyone in the GCC and the region and not only in Kuwait. Our heartfelt wishes to the leadership and the people of the country for more progress, peace and prosperity."

flydubai's operations from Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Terminal offer passengers a convenient check-in area, reduced queuing time at immigration and a more personalized flying experience. During the holiday period, passengers are advised to arrive at the airport at least three hours before the departure time of their flight and to check in online, where possible, to avoid the last-minute rush as thousands of people gear up to travel ahead of one of the busiest weekends for travel. Passengers are also reminded to check their baggage allowance when travelling in Economy Class.

Sudhir Sreedharan, Senior Vice President, Commercial (GCC, Subcontinent and Africa)

for flydubai, said: "Kuwait is an important market for flydubai and we remain dedicated to offering passengers from Kuwait more options to travel between the two countries whether in Business or Economy Class. Our high-quality service, convenient travel schedule and great value for money continues to be popular with our passengers."

With over 1,000 hours of entertainment, the airline's award-winning inflight entertainment system (IFE) has something for everyone with a selection of Hollywood, Bollywood, Russian and Arabic films in addition to a range of TV programs, audio albums and games. This service is offered free of charge in Business Class and if travelling in Economy Class it can be pre-purchased online in addition to extra legroom.

Passengers wishing to spend the holiday beyond Dubai, can choose from the convenient connection options offered by flydubai to exciting destinations such as Bangkok, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Zanzibar.

By signing up to OPEN, flydubai's new rewards program, passengers have the opportunity to earn reward points with every flydubai flight. Reward points can be used to pay for flydubai flights, upgrades and optional extras for any trip, on any day, to any destination.

Flights between Kuwait and Dubai can be purchased from flydubai's website (www.flydubai.com), through its local office (+965 22 41 44 00) and accredited travel agents. flydubai also offers visa facilitation services to passengers travelling to the UAE. Details of the carrier's car rental, insurance and other third party services are also available on its website.

## REGIONAL STOCKS TO BE HIGHEST PERFORMING ASSET CLASS IN 2017

ANNUAL MIDDLE EAST SOCIETIES MARKET SENTIMENT SURVEY 2017 BY CFA

**KUWAIT:** CFA Institute, the global association of investment professionals, revealed the results of its annual Middle East Societies Market Sentiment Survey at a press conference ahead of its Middle East Investment Conference (MEIC), to be held in Abu Dhabi on February 23, 2017. The survey presented responses from CFA charterholders and members from across the Middle East.

According to the survey, the healthcare industry is expected to receive the highest volume of investments in 2017 amongst non-oil sectors, followed by hospitality and tourism; as GCC countries seek to increase the economic contribution of such segments. In Saudi Arabia, respondents indicated that capital markets opening up for foreign investments is a highly important factor in easing regional liquidity shortfalls. With rising concerns about the Trump administration's protectionist policies and the potential risk this poses to trade agreements, the survey showed it is the US energy agenda which will have the biggest impact on the GCC. If the dollar remains strong, the likeliest effect on investments would result from pressures on the currency peg; which would then negatively impact the real estate market. The GCC has seen a record volume of bond issuances over the past year, with this trend expected to continue, almost two-thirds of respondents believed that bond yields in the region will increase. Nearly 70 percent of the members surveyed agreed that oil prices are unlikely to reach higher than \$60 per barrel. NPLs, rising Fed rates and tightening liquidity conditions will continue to pose significant challenges to banks in the region, with the cost of raising capital likely to increase.

Mijbel AlQattan, CFA, President of CFA Society Kuwait, commented on the findings saying: "Investment professionals in the Middle East are conscious of developments in the US, as the new administration's energy agenda will have global implications on oil prices and production. Since the GCC does not have its own independent monetary policy, rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve would pressurize the region's pegged currencies given the current liquidity challenges and low economic growth rates. Higher risk premiums and an increase in the cost of capital would also be effects resulting from such US monetary developments."

CFA society members noted that creating incentives for foreign start-ups to set up in the GCC would be the most effective way to foster entrepreneurship and a start-up ecosystem in the region, given the growing need to diversify from an oil-driven economy. The private sector will have to play a larger role in diversification efforts as governments look to realign spending. AlQattan, added: "The findings from our survey suggest that the majority of respondents believe improving market transparency and accountability is the key to improving trust in Kuwait's investment industry and ensuring long term sustainable economic growth. The survey results reflect the discussions we hope to encourage at the conference,



Mijbel AlQattan, CFA, President of CFA Society Kuwait

where practitioners, leading thinkers in finance and investment will reveal insights about the future of the Middle East's financial landscape and where the opportunities lie for investors."

### Top ten key findings

- 46 percent of respondents answered Very Important and 31 percent answered Extremely Important when asked how important will the opening up of Saudi Arabia's capital markets be for foreign capital inflow into the region and liquidity easing.
- 42 percent felt that a stronger dollar is likely to pressurize the currency peg, which will then negatively impact the real estate market.
- 61 percent of the members surveyed believed that bond yields in the region will increase, 16 per-

cent said that they would stay the same and only 11 percent thought that yields would decrease.

- When asked what the expected return from a multi-asset class portfolio (equity, bonds, cash, real estate, commodities, private equity etc.) is likely to be over the course of the year, 48 percent said in the region of 0 percent to less than 5 percent and 37 percent of respondents indicated that returns would be between 5 percent and 10 percent.
- Stocks was ranked as the highest performing asset class in the region during 2017, followed by commodities, private equity, bonds, real estate and lastly cash equivalents.
- The healthcare industry is expected to receive the highest volume of investments in 2017 amongst non-oil sectors.
- 47 percent believe that lower market growth rates and the increased cost of raising capital shouldn't necessarily impact corporate profitability in the region.
- More than trade agreements and fed policies, the Trump administration's energy agenda will have the biggest impact on the GCC.
- NPLs, rising Fed rates, tightening liquidity and credit risk will continue to be the biggest concern for banks in the region.
- Brent crude oil prices are expected to remain in the \$50-\$60 region during the year.

### Methodology

An online survey was conducted from 22nd January to 13th February 2017. Participants included 100 CFA members across its societies in Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

## AMBANI TO ANNOUNCE RELIANCE JIO HIT 100 MILLION SUBSCRIBERS

**MUMBAI:** India's richest man Mukesh Ambani is likely to announce that Reliance Industries' has reached its targeted 100 million subscribers on its Jio telecom unit, a source familiar with the matter said. Ambani could also make additional announcements, the source added without giving details, when he starts speaking at 1330 India time (0800 GMT). The speech will be broadcast live on the company's social media accounts. Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd opened for business in September and has shaken up the competitive Indian telecoms market with its free voice and cheap data plans that are slated to run through the end of March. Ambani has already hinted Jio surpassed the 100 million subscriber mark in comments at a tech industry conference last week.

"When we started Jio and we set a target for ourselves in terms of saying that we will

acquire a 100 million customers in the shortest time, even we didn't imagine that we will do it in months in terms of that," Ambani said at the time. Concerns, however, remain if Jio will be able to retain its subscribers once it begins charging for the services. Analysts say many subscribers are using Jio as a second mobile connection to take advantage of the free data. Jio's launch came after years of delay and Reliance Industries has already invested more than \$20 billion into the venture.

Shares of some of Jio's rivals fell ahead of Ambani's speech, with Bharti Airtel down 2.2 percent. Idea Cellular fell as much as 1.1 percent but recovered to gain 0.41 percent later in the day. Bharti Airtel and Idea are India's largest and third-largest telecoms network operators, respectively. —Reuters

## GULFAIR.COM A WINNER AT 2016 MAGELLAN AWARDS

**MANAMA:** Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, along with travel partner Anix, a state-of-the-art internet booking engine supplier, have been recognized by the Travel Weekly 2016 Magellan Awards winning the 2016 Silver Award for Online Travel Services - in the category of Overall - Booking Interface.

The award recognizes the joint-solution crafted by Gulf Air and Anix to improve the airline's e-commerce website gulfair.com with a next-generation booking and shopping platform improving the experience for customers booking flights and purchasing various travel add-ons such as rail tickets, hotel bookings, car rentals, tours and more. The enhanced platform supports the airline's drive to strengthen its online and mobile channels, adding dynamic shopping and booking capabilities in an

easy-to-navigate design that gives users a more personalized travel experience.

Gulf Air Chief Commercial Officer Ahmed Janahi said: "It is an honor to be recognized for such a key achievement for Gulf Air that saw us work hand in hand with Anix to deliver an engaging, easy to use booking interface designed to appeal to users around the world. Our focus has always been on the continual development of innovative technology. This recognition is a testament to our skilled e-commerce development team and their capabilities, alongside our partners Anix - I am proud of the contribution of our teams to delivering a revamped gulfair.com."

Gulf Air's one-stop-shop website gulfair.com offers a suite of services beyond flight bookings to include hotel bookings, car rental, travel insurance

and the Gulf Air Tours service that gives passengers access to a variety of travel add-ons such as sight-seeing tours, museum passes, tours, excursions, local activities and airport transfers at their final destination.

The Travel Weekly Magellan Awards acknowledge outstanding travel professionals who provide the best products and services in the tourism industry, honoring the best in a wide range of industry segments, such as hotels, resorts, travel destinations, online travel services, airlines and airports. Winners are evaluated based on the highest standards of excellence in their entered category, on the extensive experience of Travel Weekly, and the awards are judged and overseen by a panel of top travel professionals and the most accomplished leaders in the travel and tourism industry.





## ELECTRONIC MEDIA SEARCHES AT BORDER CROSSINGS RAISE WORRY

**PORTLAND:** Watchdog groups that keep tabs on digital privacy rights are concerned that US Customs and Border Protection agents are searching the phones and other digital devices of international travelers at border checkpoints in US airports. The issue gained attention recently after at least three travelers, including a Canadian journalist, spoke out publicly about their experiences.

The episodes have gained notice amid an outcry over President Donald Trump's travel ban and complaints of mistreatment of foreign travelers, but the government insists there has been no policy change in the new administration. Border Protection says searches increased fivefold in the final fiscal year of the Obama presidency, but still amounted to less than one-hundredth of 1 percent of all international arrivals. Here are some things to know about the searches and your privacy rights.

### What has prompted the concern?

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Electronic Frontier Foundation both say they have noticed an uptick in complaints about searches of digital devices by border agents. The increase has become most noticeable in the last month, said Adam Schwartz, a senior staff lawyer at the Electronic Frontier Foundation. "We are concerned that a bad practice that has existed under past presidents has gotten worse in quantity under the new president," Schwartz said.

The government says nothing has changed. Customs officials also say the per-

ceived shift can be attributed to a jump in the number of electronic devices that people are carrying with them and shifting tactics as the agency adjusts to the amount and types of information that can be stored on today's devices.

### What search authority does the border protection have?

Americans have protection under the Fourth Amendment from unreasonable search and seizure. A police officer, for example, must obtain a warrant from a judge before searching a suspect's phone. But the US border is a legal gray zone. Border agents have long had the right to search travelers' physical luggage without a warrant, and that interpretation has been expanded to include digital devices, ACLU staff attorney Nathan Freed Wessler said. In 2013, the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that if agents want to do a forensic search they need to have a reasonable suspicion of wrongdoing, he said. But the court stopped short of requiring agents to obtain a search warrant beforehand, he said. And an agent can flip through a phone in a cursory search for any reason.

The law has not kept up with the "incredible volume of personal data that we have in our pockets now" - and that creates tremendous constitutional questions, said Wessler. "In some ways, a search of your phone is more invasive than a search of your house," he said. A case currently headed to another appeals court could further clarify the law, said Schwartz.

### What does the border protection say?

Numbers provided by the Border Protection show a fivefold increase in electronic media searches in the 2016 fiscal year ending on Sept. 30 over the previous fiscal year. In 2016, under the Obama administration, there were 23,877 electronic media searches. That comes to .0061 percent of total arrivals into the US in fiscal year 2015, there were 4,764 electronic media searches.

A senior CBP official briefed reporters on the issue Friday, but the agency insisted the official not be identified. "We see it as an article that is brought into the US, no different than a booklet of materials, no different than a suitcase with items in it," the official said. "We've uncovered very serious and significant information in these types of searches, everything from national security concerns to child pornography to evidence of crimes to determinations of people's admissibility status under the immigration laws."

### How can you protect your digital privacy while traveling?

Privacy advocates say travelers who are concerned should leave their phones and laptops at home and buy a cheap phone once they arrive at their destination. The Council on American-Islamic Relations is also advising its members to do the same. Those who can't leave their devices behind should encrypt them and close out of all social media applications so they aren't accessible without a password, said Schwartz. But those steps won't matter much if a border

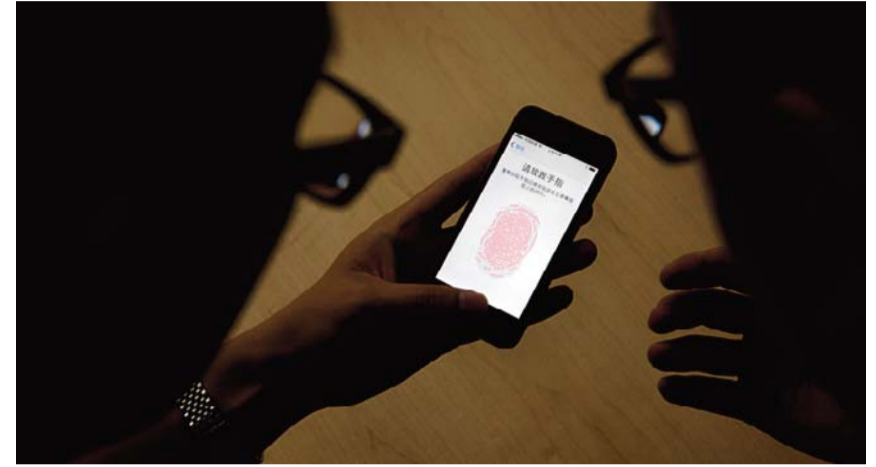
agent asks a traveler to unlock the phone or provide a password, said Schwartz. And travelers should also be aware of the rules in other countries. Israel authorities can check mobile phones at the airport, for example.

### What happens if you refuse?

CBP can't bar a US citizen from entry if they refuse to comply, but agents can make things difficult. Travelers who don't unlock their phones could be questioned, detained temporarily and have their phones taken by

agents for days. Travelers who are not US citizens can be denied entry.

Hasaim Elsharkawi, a self-employed businessman from Anaheim, California, told the AP that he was stopped by agents in Los Angeles last week as he was boarding a plane to Saudi Arabia to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. They asked him to unlock his phone without telling him why. Elsharkawi, a Muslim, said he refused because he didn't want the male agents to see photos of his wife with her head uncovered.—AP



**BEIJING:** In this Sept 11, 2013, file photo, an Apple employee, right, instructs a journalist on the use of the fingerprint scanner technology built into the company's iPhone 5S during a media event.—AP



**CHICAGO:** In this Monday, Feb. 6, 2017, photo, the Chicago Bulls' mascot Benny the Bull reenacts the famous scene of Ferris Bueller singing during a parade at Daley Plaza while shooting a daylong Snapchat video, reenacting several scenes from the Chicago based movie Ferris Bueller's Day Off.—AP

## BIG HIT FOR BULLS, 'BENNY'S DAY OFF' CONNECTS ONLINE

**CHICAGO:** Dancing on the roof, microphone in hand as he lip-synched to "Twist and Shout," Benny the Bull was putting on quite a performance as his tricked-out black van rolled through downtown Chicago. It was not quite "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," and it won't be coming to a theater near you. But as spoofs go, "Benny's Day Off" is quite a production.

The story starring the Chicago Bulls' mascot played out almost in real time on social media on a recent Monday, with scenes posted on Snapchat right after they were recorded throughout the day. The team also tweeted the effort while the crew headed to the next location, fans tuning in to see what Benny would do next. "You're only limited by your imagination," Bulls digital content manager Luka Dukich said. "You can do a lot of damage with a phone these days."

The NBA, including team and player accounts, has about 1.3 billion likes and followers over various social media platforms. The Bulls, by their own count, rank second to the Los Angeles Lakers among major North American sports franchises, with nearly 25 million followers across Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube and Instagram.

Snapchat has emerged as a major player in recent years, particularly when it comes to reaching younger fans. NBA associate vice president of social media Sam Farber said a "vast majority" who follow the league's account are younger than 24. "It's really important for us to use that platform to reach that audience in an authentic way and we found that to be quite successful over the last couple of years," he said.

The NBA's relationship with Snapchat started in 2014 and expanded this season with more in-game content and behind-the-scenes coverage. The league can also post features that show the evolution of the crossover or players talking about the first time they dunked, for example, on the Snapchat Discover channel. It can produce live stories that capture the atmosphere at the arena. It allows the dozens of players to show themselves in a different light. The same goes for the teams, whether they take a more serious and basketball-centric approach or try to have fun with it, like the Bulls.

"Benny's Day Off" comes on the heels of a "Clue"-themed feature in late January that also starred their mascot. It had more than 60,000 views on Snapchat and an additional 55,000 on YouTube and Facebook in little more than two days after a marathon production that went from the United Center to a shop in Chinatown to a movie theater on the city's North Side to the famed Second City comedy club before heading to Daley Plaza downtown.

### Benny's not well

The shoot starts in a storage room just off the United Center floor that's stuffed with costumes and uniforms. The lights are out in Benny's lair as shooting begins. The mascot is in bed on a pullout loveseat with a blanket - a Bulls blanket - pulled in tight, just like Ferris Bueller. Bulls entertainment assistant Tom Sargent leans over like Ferris' parents. "Benny, you don't look too good," he says. Benny shakes his head.

The cameraman is Dukich using his phone, the director Billy Bungeroth from Second City. Actors and actresses from the group pop up throughout the day. They do several takes and eventually go with one that has the lights on in the room. In the second shot, it becomes clear that Benny is not skipping school like Ferris when Sargent mentions a "big meeting" and tells him to stay in bed. In the third shot, Sargent tells him to feel better and walks away. Benny whips out a sign that says: "Benny's Day Off A Snapchat Film." And with that, they're off.

### Spoofing a classic

While the shoot lasts all day, the idea was months in the making. The Bulls' digital team started thinking about narratives for Snapchat before the season. Not long after that, they reached out to Second City and the brainstorming began. They came up with a story where Benny was bored working odd jobs while the team was away. From there, they got another idea. "Why doesn't he have like a Ferris Bueller day out in the city?" Dukich said. "That evolution kind of was in the last two weeks. It's amazing."

The Bulls could only produce the story on a day when the team was off and on the road because they needed their Snapchat channel clear. Benny's schedule also had to be open. The Second City crew had to be available, and the shoots at the shop in Chinatown and the movie theater had to be arranged. Stories last only 24 hours on Snapchat, but the platform gives the Bulls a captive audience and the full attention of their viewers. And when it's gone, well, the 4-minute, 55-second video lives on in full on YouTube and Facebook.

### Touring the town

Cut to a boardroom at the United Center. Second City's Jeffrey Murdoch is channeling Ben Stein as the economics teacher as he takes attendance. "Bull? ... Bull? ... Bull? ... Anyone," he says in that "Bueller? ... Bueller? ... Bueller?" tone. Sargent, seated at the head of a long table with the Bulls' court painted on top, explains that Benny is sick.

Another nod to the movie happens in a parking lot across from the arena. This time, it's the Ferrari scene. There's Benny, in the driver's seat, lifting his left leg in and closing the door before the car peels off. What viewers don't see is Benny getting out and Sargent behind the wheel in the scene that makes the cut. Oh, and about the car. Instead of a classic 1961 Ferrari 250 GT California, they're using a vintage 1998 Lexus ES 300 that Bulls manager of corporate communications Ross Lipschultz purchased from his grandparents. Ferrari's not a team sponsor; Lexus is and considers Ferrari a competitor. "Which is fine," Lipschultz said. "It's up to them. They're an official car sponsor so for cars we had to find a Lexus."

### Bull in Chinatown

In Chinatown, Benny visits a gift shop. The bull in the China shop drops a large glass egg - which actually lands on a team employee lying on the floor off camera - before getting kicked out of the store.—AP

## NIGERIANS STARVED OF POWER TURN THEIR SIGHTS TO SOLAR

**JOHANNESBURG:** The surprise was finding that people dependent on candles, batteries, kerosene and fuel for generators in countries without a secure supply of electricity spend more on power than solar options. The founders of Dutch company Lumos knew they could do better. In Nigeria, for the cost of powering a small generator for two hours they offer enough solar power to light a house, cool a room with a fan and charge cell phones for about eight hours. Customers can even watch TV for a few hours.

For Nigerian government clerk Sandra Besong, it means her three children aged 8 to 17 can study and read at night. "Before, I was using a local lamp with kerosene, but the flame wasn't bright enough for the children to read," she said in a telephone interview from her home in Masaka, in central Nasarawa state. "We love the light!" she said. "The children appreciate it because they can read, watch TV, and they can use fans, so they are not hot. And there's none of the noise and fumes from a generator." Fans are important in Nigeria, where temperatures average 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit).

### Battling with darkness

Besong said she's also saving money. Powering a small generator for two or three hours a day cost her up to 7,000 naira (\$23) a month, compared to 4,500 (\$15) for solar, which provides double the time. She pays her bills through her cellphone. Development across Africa is hampered by a lack of electricity. In 2015, 621 million people in sub-Saharan Africa - or two out of three - lacked access to power, and the numbers are growing, according to a report by the Africa Progress Panel. "It would take the average Tanzanian eight years to use as much electric-

ity as the average American consumes in a single month," it said in a report.

Nigeria is worst of all. Just 25 percent of its 170 million people have access to regular electricity, and the West African nation has the highest outage rate on the continent, 32 a month averaging eight hours each, according to the Overseas Private Investment Corp., the US government's independent investment agency.

Such figures inspired former US President Barack Obama to create Power Africa, bringing together technical and legal experts, the private sector and governments.

Power Africa provided financial assistance to Lumos to produce the solar kits, which it provides to clients on a five-year subscription. A \$50 million low-cost loan from OPIC and \$40 million in equity will help fund another 200,000 solar kits to bring power to 1 million Nigerians by year's end, said Yuri Tsitribbaum, CEO of Lumos Nigeria.

Lumos began selling solar kits in Nigeria in May 2014. The company, which has 30,000 customers in central Nigeria, launched nationwide this week. Firefighter Ibrahim Momoh-Bekisu turned to solar fearing for his family's safety. "Do you know how many families' lives have

been destroyed because of fires caused by candles, kerosene, electrical fires?" he asked in a telephone interview from his home in Abuja, Nigeria's capital.

Momoh-Bekisu said his neighbors battling with darkness are now interested in getting solar power: "Their children come to my flat to come and study and watch TV." Most importantly, "For me, this (solar power) is a life-prolonging issue, it contributes to life expectancy," he said in a country where the average person dies at 52 compared to a global average of 71 years, according to UN figures.—AP



**LAGOS:** In this photo taken on Monday Feb 20, 2017, vegetable vendors ply their wares by the light of locally-made lanterns.—AP

## TAXIS IN ITALY STRIKE ON 'UBER' BENEFITS

**ROME:** Hundreds of taxi drivers protested in Rome yesterday as a strike over delays to Italian legislation regulating Uber and car-hire services entered its sixth day. Commuters have been stranded in several cities across the country, with taxis from Rome to Milan, Turin and Naples taking only emergency fares for disabled people or those needing to get to hospitals.

The row is over the government's decision to suspend until the end of 2017 the introduction of norms to control car-hire and car-share services. Drivers say the current rules benefit ride-hailing service Uber or NCCs—cars rented with a driver—because unlike taxis they can purchase licenses in smaller towns, where they cost less, but use them to work in cities.

Taxi driver representatives were due to meet with Italy's Minister of Transport Graziano Delrio later Tuesday. "A taxi license in Rome is worth 150,000 euros (\$158,000), but the NCC pays ten times less elsewhere," said Gabriele, 52, who has been a taxi driver since 2011 and did not want to give his surname.

His colleague, Antonio Moratti, 58, gave as an example a village in Calabria in southern Italy which he said had sold some 200 licenses to drivers who went to work in cities—though the town was only authorized to issue two licenses. Taxi drivers are also furious that they have to work under fixed tariffs while Uber and the NCCs can charge as much as they like.

The government postponed the bill to regulate the car-hire services because it wanted more time to investigate the issue, amid protests that the region should have the power to regulate the industry. Italian Consumer Association Federconsumatori called for a quick resolution of the strike, which has reportedly led to scuffles between taxi and NCC drivers and threats against those who want to return to work.—AFP

## THE POLICE IN CHINA'S RESTIVE XINJIANG TO TRACK CARS BY GPS

**BEIJING:** A prefecture in China's restive Xinjiang region has ordered all vehicles to be equipped with GPS-like tracking software, police and media reports said yesterday, as authorities step up an "anti-terrorism" campaign. All drivers in the Bayingol Mongolian Autonomous Prefecture must install a China-developed satellite navigation system called Beidou "to prevent theft, but also primarily to maintain stability", an officer at the prefectural police headquarters told AFP by phone.

China's Global Times newspaper quoted a police official as saying the policy was needed so that drivers "can be tracked wherever they go" and residents had until June 30 to comply. Xinjiang is the homeland of the Uighurs—a Turkic, traditionally Muslim, ethnic minority, many of whom complain of Chinese cultural and religious repression and discrimination. The region has been racked for years by a series of violent attacks which Beijing blames on exiled Uighur separatist groups whom it says are aligned with foreign terrorist networks.

### New policy

"Cars are the major means of transportation for terrorists, and also a frequently chosen tool for terrorist attacks, so it's necessary to use the Beidou system and electronic vehicle identification to enhance the management of vehicles," a statement posted to the official social media account of the Bayingol traffic police said earlier this month.

Drivers must pay an annual 90 yuan (\$13) fee for the system, the statement said. Thirty-five percent of Bayingol's more than 1.2 million people are Uighur, according to official 2015 figures. There were no indications yet that the new policy would be adopted more widely across Xinjiang, a vast resource-rich region near Central Asia.

Tensions are simmering after anti-terrorism military rallies were held last week in three cities, including the regional capital Urumqi. Under the rallying cry of "Display power to intimidate", 10,000 security personnel paraded through Urumqi, accompanied by hundreds of police and military vehicles, the regional government's official Tianshan website said.

It quoted the Xinjiang Communist Party committee deputy secretary Zhu Hailun as saying such displays were necessary to "build a wall as strong as iron" and that the forces of separatism, extremism and terrorism would be destroyed "with crushing blows". Last week eight people were killed in a knife attack on a crowd near the city of Hotan, including three attackers who were gunned down by police.

Police last month killed three "rioters" in the same county following a hunt for suspected members of a "violent terror group" linked to a 2015 attack there, according to the regional government's official website. Uighurs in Urumqi staged bloody anti-Chinese riots in July 2009 that left nearly 200 people dead, according to official estimates, and prompted a massive region-wide security clampdown.—AFP



## CASES INVOLVING ALLEGED DRUG THEFT AT VA HEALTH FACILITIES

**NEW YORK:** Government data obtained by The Associated Press show that incidents of drug loss or theft at federal hospitals have jumped nearly tenfold since 2009 to 2,457 last year, spurred by wide-

spread opioid abuse in the US. Federal authorities report that doctors, nurses or pharmacy staff - mostly in the Department of Veterans Affairs health system - had siphoned away controlled substances, while in other cas-

es, drugs intended for patients simply disappeared.

Some notable cases involving alleged VA drug theft:

### Arkansas

Three VA employees in Little Rock were charged this month with conspiring to steal prescription medications, including opioids, from the John L. McClellan Memorial Veterans Hospital. A 2016 investigation by the VA inspector general's office alleges that a pharmacy technician used his VA access to a medical supplier's web portal to order and divert 4,000 oxycodone pills, 3,300 hydrocodone pills and other drugs, costing the VA \$77,700. The VA employees were also charged with conspiring to distribute those drugs, which had a street value of more than \$160,000.

### Utah

An associate chief of pharmacy at the VA medical center in Salt Lake City recently pleaded guilty to acquiring possession of a controlled substance by fraud, according to the inspector general's office. The VA employee was accused of diverting about 25,000 pills, including oxycodone, hydromorphone, Adderall,

buprenorphine, Ritalin, and tramadol from the inpatient pharmacy from October 2011 to March 2015. A spokeswoman for the VA facility, Jill Atwood, said the hospital has since added new software, training and made procedural changes to ensure that similar thefts don't happen again.

### New York

A former hospice nurse at the VA medical center in Albany was sentenced last year to more than six years in prison after admitting to stealing pain medication intended for patients. An investigation alleges the VA nurse stole the painkiller oxycodone hydrochloride from syringes to feed his drug addiction and replaced the contents with Haldol, an anti-psychotic medication. At his sentencing hearing, family members of some of the hospice patients gave statements detailing the pain and suffering the nurse inflicted on dying veteran patients.

### Rhode Island

A former registered nurse in the intensive care unit of the Providence VA medical center pleaded guilty last year to stealing prescription drugs.

Authorities say the nurse admitted that on dozens of occasions over several months in 2015 she used an override feature of an automated medication dispensing system to obtain hundreds of controlled substance pills, such as oxycodone and morphine. The pills weren't prescribed for or provided to patients. The IG's office says the nurse had previously been fired from a private hospital for allegedly diverting controlled substances, but was hired at the VA after making false claims in her application.

### California

A former resident anesthesiologist at the VA medical center in West Los Angeles pleaded guilty in 2015 to theft of public property and possession of a controlled substance while treating a veteran. Authorities say while providing anesthesia care to a veteran in surgery, the doctor passed out in the operating room after taking a sedative and injecting himself with controlled substances including fentanyl. His fully conscious patient lay nearby and said he was initially frightened that the commotion was due to his own medical condition, according to news reports. —AP



WASHINGTON: In this June 21, 2013 file photo, shows the Veterans Affairs Department. —AP

## REFUGEE POPULACE DRAWS DOCTORS TO RURAL KANSAS

MILLENNIALS GRADUATING HAVE A DESIRE FOR INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL SERVICE

**GARDEN CITY:** Dr Scarlett Gard's passion for humanitarian work took her to India and Bangladesh. After finishing her medical training, she set off for a place she knew had a diverse population in need of doctors: western Kansas. Gard came to the meatpacking town of Garden City to work with Somali immigrants - a population that's become the cornerstone of an effort by a growing network of rural hospitals to entice doctors to come practice in sparsely populated hamlets across western Kansas.

The innovative recruiting effort grew out of

"I don't think I saw myself necessarily staying here until I realized that the same things I wanted to do - go to underserved people of different cultures - I assumed I would have to go overseas to do that and I clearly don't."

### Language and culture

The hospitals are encouraging doctors like Gard to come work with immigrant populations and learn a language and culture before heading overseas. They also offer generous time off for medical trips abroad. The doctors are finding

So far, 25 Kansas doctors have joined the loose network of physicians working in medical facilities in Garden City, Lakin, Santana, Scott City, Ashland, Minneola, Tribune and Leoti, Anderson said. The group is working to solidify that arrangement by forming a nonprofit organization to help support their medical work overseas and in rural Kansas.

Although Trump's ban on travelers from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen isn't expected to affect the hospitals' recruiting efforts, it has generated concern among Garden City's Somalis immigrants. A judge put the ban on hold, but two Somali refugees who had been living in Garden City haven't been able to come back after traveling to their home country. Refugees also worry about how long it will be before they see their loved ones who had been expected to come to the US, said Ifrah Ahmed, a 27-year-old Somali immigrant.

Ahmed said the doctors' work has helped residents see that people still want to help them. "It is a way to see that in spite of everything that is going on, there is still good out there," Ahmed said. "There are still people who believe in us, there are people that want the best for us." Ahmed changed her shift at the meatpacking plant where she works as a translator so she could volunteer at a walk-in clinic at a Somali apartment complex. Gard is the volunteer medical director of the clinic, which opened Saturday and is staffed by volunteer doctors who've dubbed it New Hope Together.

### Magnet for migrants

The Tyson Foods plant outside Garden City has long been a magnet for various immigrant populations, transforming the western Kansas city into a multicultural haven of about 27,000 people where more than a dozen languages are spoken. The hundreds of Somali refugees who began settling here around 2008 are just the latest wave. Other immigrant groups who have come to western Kansas for jobs in meatpacking plants or on farms include Hispanics and people who speak low German.

The doctors have become so important to the Somalis that when 27-year-old Mursal Naley learned that Anderson and two physicians were going to Africa in November, he felt obligated to join them. Naley, who is now a US citizen, bought his own plane ticket so he could show them the ropes and, if necessary, protect them from any problems. For the doctors, the work is a calling.

"It is fulfilling for a lot of us as physicians to realize that we can make a big difference for these people coming from all over the world right here in Garden City, which is not something you would expect in rural Kansas," said Dr. John Birky, who helped put in the new walk-in clinic. Anderson got the idea to recruit doctors interested in international work from the Via Christi Health International Family Medicine Fellowship in Wichita. Similar recruiting efforts by hospitals in Iowa, Michigan and Tennessee offer time off for overseas medical work.

It's been a boon to hospitals in western Kansas that once struggled to hire doctors. "In the past we had to wait a long amount of time to be seen," said Kearney County Commissioner Shannon McCormick. "We had to travel to be seen, to get health care that now we can get easily." —AP



COLORADO SPRINGS: In this Feb 17, 2017, photo, Ed Kim, a NASA researcher and lead scientist for a NASA-led experiment called SnowEx, stands near a Navy P-3 Orion aircraft used for SnowEx, at Peterson Air Force Base. —AP

## NASA AIMS TO MEASURE VITAL SNOW DATA FROM SATELLITES

**DENVER:** Instrument-laden aircraft are surveying the Colorado high country this month as scientists search for better ways to measure how much water is locked up in the world's mountain snows - water that sustains a substantial share of the global population.

A NASA-led experiment called SnowEx is using five aircraft to test 10 sensors that might one day be used to monitor snow from satellites. The goal: Find the ideal combination to overcome multiple obstacles, including how to analyze snow hidden beneath forest canopies. "It would be, I would say, a monumental leap in our ability to forecast water supply if we had this kind of information," said Noah Molotch, a member of the science team for the experiment.

One-sixth of the world's population gets most of its fresh water from snow that melts and runs into waterways, said Ed Kim, a NASA researcher and lead scientist for SnowEx. "Right there, it's hugely important for people," he said. Snow has other consequences for society as well, including floods, droughts and even political stability when water is scarce, Kim said.

### Snow water equivalent

The key to predicting how much water will pour out of mountain snows each spring is a measurement called snow water equivalent. The global average is 30 percent of snow depth, Kim said - 10 inches of snow melts down to 3 inches of water. But a single mountain snowbank contains multiple layers with different snow water equivalents, making measurement difficult. The layers were dropped by successive storms with different moisture contents, and then lingered under different weather conditions before the next storm covered them.

A further complication: At times during the winter, some snow melts, so water will flow through the interior of the snowbank, distorting or absorbing signals from remote sensors. No single instrument can overcome all the obstacles. "We have these different sensing techniques. Each one works to a certain degree," Kim said.

### 'What's the optimal combination?'

Two SnowEx sensors will measure snow depth: Radar and LIDAR, which stands for light detection and ranging. LIDAR uses laser pulses to measure distance. Four sensors will measure snow density: three other types of radar, plus a passive microwave instrument, which detects how much of the Earth's natural microwave radiation the snow is blocking. Two thermal infrared sensors will measure temperature. A hyperspectral imager and a multispectral imager will measure how much sunlight the snow is reflecting, which helps determine how fast it will melt.

Aircraft will take the instruments on multiple passes over two areas in western Colorado, Grand Mesa and Senator Beck Basin. Ground crews will also analyze the snow to verify how accurate the instruments are. One key technology used to predict snow runoff in the American West is the Snow Telemetry Network, or SNOTEL, operated by the US Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

### Scattered across the West

More than 800 automated SNOTEL ground stations scattered across the West measure the depth and weight of the snow, the temperature and other data and transmit them to a central database. Federal agencies use SNOTEL to produce daily state-by-state reports and maps on how the current snow water equivalent compares to the long-term average.

Water utilities, farmers, public safety agencies and wildland firefighters track the updates closely to help predict how much drinking and irrigation water will be available in the spring and whether they will face floods or fire-inducing droughts.

SNOTEL collects data from individual points, but the "holy grail of mountain hydrology" is a way to estimate the distribution of snow water equivalent across broad mountain landscapes, said Molotch, who is also director of the University of Colorado's Center for Water, Earth Science and Technology. SnowEx could be a step toward that, he said. —AP



GARDEN CITY: In this Friday, Feb 3, 2017 photo, Dr John Birky works at his desk at Wellspring Family Healthcare. —AP photos



GARDEN CITY: Ifrah Ahmed, left, and Mursal Naley stand outside a new walk-in clinic.

the realization that many millennials graduating from medical schools have a burning desire for international medical service. It also comes amid the backdrop of President Donald Trump's attempts to restrict the influx of refugees into the United States from seven predominantly Muslim nations, including Somalia.

"It just kind of drew me because it surprised me that this existed in southwest Kansas," said Gard, who moved to Garden City in September after finishing her medical residency in Wichita.

that people from the oppressed and war-torn countries where they want to work are in western Kansas, said Benjamin Anderson, an administrator for the Kearney County Hospital in Lakin who is behind the recruiting effort.

"So what is normally a deterrent for recruiting traditional candidates has become a cornerstone of this recruiting effort," Anderson said, adding that all local residents - not just immigrants - benefit from having highly trained doctors working there.

Artificial insemination, embryo transfer and genetic selection have led to significant improvements in animal breeding in recent years. For instance, in the United States, selective production to improve the milk output from cows has meant far fewer cows in the United States-nine million today compared to 25.6 million in 1944 - produce 1.6 times as much milk.

"Thanks to improvements made in the dairy industry through traditional breeding, a glass of milk today is associated with just one third of the greenhouse gas emissions linked to producing a glass of milk in the 1940s," Van Eenennaam said. Gene editing can complement the toolkit available to breeders today by "precisely introducing desirable genetic variations into livestock breeding programs," she added.

This technique has already been used to make certain animals resistant to disease, such as pigs that are resistant to porcine reproductive and respiratory virus. A tuberculosis-resistant form of cattle was also reported recently out of China.

### Cows without horns

Van Eenennaam is working on a gene editing technique that allows cows to be born without horns. Typically, the animals are born with them but undergo a painful process to remove them when they are young so that they don't damage other cows or people working with them. Some breeds, such as Angus cows, naturally carry a genetic mutation that prevents them from growing horns.

Gene editing has the ability to modify a normal, identical gene in Holstein cows and insert this same genetic variation seen in the Angus. This trait is then passed down to the cow's offspring. Other teams of geneticists around the world are hoping to benefit from gene editing techniques. For instance, it is now possible to alter chickens so that they only lay eggs that produce female chicks, a practice that can double the output of a chicken farm and curb the cruel practice of killing roosters. Researchers are also working on a variety of chicken that would be resistant to bird flu, a potentially deadly disease that regularly devastates flocks worldwide and can spread to people.

### Potential risks

Gene editing can also improve plant growth, said Dan Voytas, a professor of genetics and cellular biology at the University of Minnesota who has used the CRISPR/Cas-9 simple yet powerful gene-editing technique to improve soy crops. "We are probably the first genome-edited product to enter the food supply," he told the AAAS conference. "We have a soybean product which produces a healthier cooking oil, it is high in non saturated fat, no transfat." But Doug Gurian-Sherman, a plant pathology expert at the Center for Food Safety, warned that certain applications could be risky. For instance, research that alters the genes of insects and grains to fight resistance to insecticides and herbicides could introduce mutations in nature that modify entire populations of animals and plants in the course of just a few years, potentially destabilizing the food chain and allowing other species to invade. —AFP

## GENE EDITING MULLED TO IMPROVE LIVESTOCK

**BOSTON:** Gene editing, which has raised ethical concerns due to its capacity to alter human DNA, is being considered in the United States as a tool for improving livestock, experts say. The technique is different than that used in genetically modified organisms (GMOs) because it does not introduce foreign genes, but rather alters already existing DNA. But scientists and consumer groups say there is not enough evidence yet to shed light on the potential risks of gene editing, particularly regarding its trickle-down effects on the environment and the ecosystem.

"Gene editing is one of the newest and most promising tools of biotechnology," Alison Van Eenennaam, an expert in animal genetics and biotechnology at the University of California, Davis, told the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. It "enables animal breeders to make beneficial genetic changes, without bringing along unwanted genetic changes," she added.





**QUIXERAMOBIM:** A man fills a community cistern with water from a water truck in the rural area of Quixeramobim, in Ceara State, on February 8, 2017, during the worst drought in 100 years in the Brazilian Northeast. —AFP photos



**QUIXERAMOBIM:** A calf searches for food on the side of a road.

## BRAZIL'S POOREST REGION SUFFERS WORST DROUGHT IN A CENTURY EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES, EVEN WASHING CLOTHES OR DRINKING, HAVE BECOME A LUXURY

**QUIXERAMOBIM:** A cow's skull lies baking in the sun and nearby another dead cow rots, symbols of the desolation gripping northeastern Brazil during its worst drought in a century. Farmer Kerginaldo Pereira, 30, walks through the dust and cactuses in dismay. There are in all about 30 skeletons of cattle, donkeys and other farm animals in a sort of open-air cemetery set aside in his settlement of Nova Canaa, in Ceara state, to avoid spread of disease. "Most are animals that died of thirst or hunger. Sadly, that's the reality. So many animals have died in these five years of drought," Pereira told AFP.

The semi-arid northeast of Brazil, known as the Sertao, is used to rain shortages but no one can remember a drought like this. There has been almost no rain since 2012 and the leafless, desiccated landscape has the appearance of having been in a vast fire.

Rivers and reservoirs that used to serve rural populations are not coping. The authorities estimate that reserves are at six percent capacity, with some

completely emptied. Experts say that a cocktail of factors has produced the disaster: a strong El Nino in the Pacific, heating of the north Atlantic and climate change that has seen temperatures in Ceara rise by 1.3 degrees Celsius (2.4 degrees Fahrenheit) in 50 years. Pereira said he had to sell his other three cows and 10 sheep, fetching poor prices because they were "skeletal." Like others in Nova Canaa, home to 70 families near the town of Quixeramobim, he could no longer afford to feed the animals as well his two small daughters.

### Water on wheels

Everyday activities, even washing clothes or drinking, have become a luxury in the Sertao, which extends across eight states. The region has 25 million inhabitants and of them three million have insufficient water, according to state government figures—a ratio that shoots up for those living in the countryside.

Rural communities depend on gov-

ernment water trucks, which fill cisterns. Even so there is only enough for about 20 liters (5.3 gallons) a day per person, far off the World Health Organization's recommended 50 to 100 liters a day, for drinking, cooking and sanitation.

To boost this supply, villages get together to pay for hard-to-afford private deliveries, or they go with donkeys to public wells where they stand in line for hours. Some dig their own wells but the water is so salty that even animals refuse to drink.

Most families get little more than about \$130 a month in social security and emergency drought aide—barely enough, especially when extra deliveries by truck cost about \$50. "We were able to get through one year of drought easily, because the reservoirs still had plenty of water saved, but now we are having to conserve more every day," said Clara Carneiro, a 67-year-old farmer. She saves shower water and reuses washing-up water to give to her dozen cows, which each need 100 liters a day.

### Dead turtles

Tourism has also dried up, literally. The Paradise Bar, with views of the Cedro Reservoir in Quixada, is still open but there are few customers now that the lake, which has a capacity of more than the equivalent of 50,000 Olympic swimming pools, is completely dry. Hundreds of carcasses of turtles and the bones of fish litter the bed of the reservoir.

"There was very extensive biodiversity, with a lot of fish, amphibians, mollusks and many birds who fed on the fish," said Wagner Docarm, taking part in a Quixada State University study on the dead animals. "Now it's all gone." Hugo Fernandes, a zoologist leading the study, said the turtles would usually be migrating "but they couldn't find a way to get across the reservoir."

Local people who depended on fishing in the reservoir say the drought has devastated them. "Everybody here lived by fishing. There were a lot of fish, shrimps," said Francisco Elso Pinheiro, 75. He said that by selling fish he had been

able to double his approximately \$300 a month pension. His boat now? It's anchored in the middle of dry land.

### Recession and corruption

In the worst recession for a century, the government often delays aid payments, while a much-awaited but controversial project to divert the major San Francisco River was held up after the main contractor was caught up in a nationwide corruption scandal. "There's no doubt that the political crisis, together with the economic crisis, have made the water situation worse," said Ceara state's top water official, Francisco Teixeira.

Weather forecasts for 2017 give little hope of the Sertao getting a break, let alone refilling the reservoirs. The small communities around Quixeramobim say only God can help them. "We have to pray because the only one who can help is above. The politicians forget about us once elections are over," said farmer Sebastiao Batista, 66, looking upward. —AFP

## US TEEN SUICIDE ATTEMPTS FELL AS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE TURNED LEGAL

**CHICAGO:** Teen suicide attempts in the U.S. declined after same-sex marriage became legal and the biggest impact was among gay, lesbian and bisexual kids, a study found. The research found declines in states that passed laws allowing gays to marry before the Supreme Court made it legal nationwide. The results don't prove there's a connection, but researchers said policymakers should be aware of the measures' potential benefits for youth mental health.

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for all US teens. Suicidal behavior is much more common among gay, lesbian and bisexual kids and adults; about 29 percent of these teens in the study reported attempting suicide, compared with just 6 percent of straight teens. Laws that have the greatest impact on gay adults may

make gay kids feel "more hopeful for the future," said lead author Julia Raifman, a researcher at Johns Hopkins' Bloomberg School of Public Health.

The measures also could create more tolerance and less bullying, making these teens feel less stigmatized. Those effects could also benefit straight teens but more research is needed to determine how the laws might influence teen behavior, Raifman said. The study was published Monday in JAMA Pediatrics. The researchers analyzed data on more than 700,000 public high school students who participated in government surveys on risky youth behavior from 1999 through 2015, the year the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage.

About 230,000 students reported being gay, lesbian or bisexual. The surveys didn't

ask about transgender status. They included questions about suicide attempts, smoking and alcohol or drug use. In 32 states that enacted same-sex marriage laws during the study, suicide attempts dropped 7 percent among all students and 14 percent among gay kids after the laws were passed. There was no change in suicide attempts in states without those laws. The study only included suicide attempts, not deaths.

The new work makes an important contribution to identifying how laws limiting gay rights may affect psychological and physical health, said Columbia University public health researcher Mark Hatzenbuehler. But more research is needed to determine which teens are most vulnerable to policies that limit gay rights, he wrote in an accompanying editorial. —AP



## NEW MINIATURE FROG SPECIES FOUND IN INDIA

**NEW DELHI:** Scientists have discovered four new species of miniature night frogs small enough to sit on a fingernail in a remote part of India, according to a report published yesterday. The researchers, who spent five years exploring the lush Western Ghats mountains, said the tiny amphibians were there in abundance but had likely been overlooked because of their size. They also found three other species of night frogs,

according to the report in the PeerJ medical sciences journal. "The miniature species are locally abundant and fairly common but they have probably been overlooked because of their extremely small size, secretive habitats and insect-like calls," researcher Sonali Garg was quoted as saying. Indian night frogs split off from other frogs some 70 to 80 million years ago, making them a particularly ancient group. —AFP

CLINIC  
PAGE



Kuwait Times  
248 33 199

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem  
د. فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال  
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



## QUALITYNET CELEBRATES NATIONAL DAY WITH A SONG FEATURING SUPERSTAR SINGERS

Qualitynet, Kuwait's #1 ICT, Data Communications & Internet Services Provider announced the launch of its National Day Song, a tribute to Kuwait and its people. The song is a poem of love to the country and was sung by Superstars Ahlam and Bashar Al-Shatti.

The song's video embodies cheerfulness and joy through a collective operetta and a series of traditional dances, celebrating Kuwait and expressing national pride. The song is inspired by the words of a poem written by poet Youssef Al-Shatti, and was composed by the artist Bashar Al-Shatti. He carefully worded the song to describe the love for Kuwait in everyone's hearts, and describes the manifestation of the greatness of Kuwait's rich past.

Qualitynet carefully chose a creative production team to handle the subject they had in mind, that of addressing the authenticity and rich meanings of the language. The poem's graceful and beautiful wording caught the attention of both Ahlam and Bashar Al-Shatti, who worked with Creative Director Khaled Al-Rifai and the team at Joy Productions to bring the song

to life through colors, dance and music. Qualitynet is keen on being a part of Kuwait's joys, and it forms a crucial part of the brand's Social Responsibility towards the Kuwaiti society. The song took several months to materialize, starting from the search for an inspiring idea, to choosing the right artists and the general framework for action. This is especially important when creating something that becomes an integrated work of art, which delivers a message to the nation and is also held close to the hearts of its people. Qualitynet also added that the song has gathered a lot of positive response and interaction since launch, and will feature on Cinema Screens and National & Regional TV Channels, in addition to YouTube and other Social Media channels.

We take this opportunity to thank and appreciate the parents of all the children that formed the operetta, and all those who contributed to the success of this National Song. Qualitynet dedicates the song which is a labor of national love, to Kuwait, its people and to the ancestors that made Kuwait the great nation it is today.



## INDIAN AMBASSADOR HOSTS 'TASTE OF INDIA' LUNCH

Indian Ambassador Sunil Jain and spouse Dr Gargi Jain hosted a 'Taste of India' lunch. It was attended and highly appreciated by Ambassadors' of Japan, Korea, Bhutan, Guyana, Egypt, Kenya, Somalia, Palestine, Liberia, Bangladesh and Nepal with the spouses of the Jordanian and South African ambassador.



## KNES HOSTS SUCCESSFUL MATH RELAY COMPETITIONS

The Primary Department of Kuwait National English School successfully hosted its Annual Math Relay Competition for pupils from Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The competition aims to develop in our pupils a spirit of Team Work, Critical Thinking and Problem Solving skills. Math relays at KNES has had a positive impact on the teaching and learning of Mathematics and a steady improvement in problem solving skills. The competition is very popular amongst pupils and they are always enthusiastic and eager to participate in the competition. All winning teams were awarded medals.





## AL-KOUT THE PLACE FOR HALA FEB 2017 SHOPPING FESTIVAL

Residents and visitors to Al-Kout - the largest waterfront mixed-use destination in Kuwait - can look forward to an amplified shopping experience during Hala Feb 2017, an engaging retail promotion being held across the country during the entire month of February in celebration of Kuwait's National & Liberation Days.

Souq Al-Kout, part of Al-Kout, will offer shoppers the chance to drive away in a sleek car or take home cash or other prizes daily by

spending as little as KD 5 at any of the mall's participating stores through entering the raffle draws organized by the annual Hala Feb Shopping Festival.

The eight draws to be held at Souq Al-Kout will take place from February 22nd until March 1st, and will be followed by an exciting entertainment program with a variety of performances and activities ranging from live music to kids shows to MC's competitions and giveaways, where visitors can celebrate Kuwait's

National and Liberation days on February 25-26 in a festive fun packed outdoor setting.

Jumana Jaroug, Center Manager, Al-Kout, said: "Whether residents of Kuwait or visitors from neighboring countries, the entertainment at Souq Al-Kout during Hala Feb 2017 is bound to excite families. The month-long festival and promotion is eagerly awaited by residents and attracts tourists to the country and our malls."

The entertainment at Souq Al-Kout will

feature traditional and modern Kuwaiti bands as well as other regional genres of music. The kid's entertainment program will feature popular and loved shows such as Teletubbies, Barney, Dora the Explorer, Frozen, among others. Face painting, henna art, hair braiding and flag giveaways will also bring further life to the festivities. The mall itself will be decorated with beautiful Kuwaiti flags and colored lighting around the mall will light up the entire area.

End of this year, Al-Kout will be the largest waterfront mixed-use destination in Kuwait that comprises six separate cohesive experiences. The destination begins from Rotana - a 5-star hotel where guests can stay and enjoy areas around, followed by the upcoming new Al-Kout Mall and Souq Al-Kout. The experience will also include the scenic and traditional Marsa Al-Kout - the marina, Sahel Al-Kout - the beach and Naga'at Al-Kout - the fisherman's wharf.



## ACK CELEBRATES KUWAIT'S NATIONAL & LIBERATION DAY

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) celebrated Kuwait's National Day of independence and Liberation days at the campus. The event was attended by ACK students and staff members to express their love for the country and to symbolize unity under the nation's colors. Organized by ACK's Student Affairs department, with many representatives from the College's student clubs, staff members and students were treated to a wonderful showcase of traditional dancing

performance by the "Al Kuwait Group", in addition to numerous activities and a variety of traditional Kuwaiti food displays. Concluding the event, a special program was organized featuring different competitions and distribution of many prizes to participants and winners. The Student Affairs department aims to create a vibrant campus life and safe environment that contributes to ACK's students in different ways to push them towards excellence and success.

## SEVA DARSHAN KUWAIT TO HOLD SEVA KIRAN 2017

Seva Darshan, Kuwait, a socio-cultural organization, will conduct a mega event 'Seva Kiran 2017' on February 25 at the Marina Hall in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. The event will showcase a musical drama enacted by members of the organization called 'Aarsha Keralam' and an instrumental fusion concert 'Sounds for Seva' led by renowned percussionists Padmasree Mattanur Sakarankur. He would be joined by noted Thavil Vidhan Karunamoorthy, vocalist Palakkad Sreeram, flute and saxophone player Josey Allapuzha, keyboardist Prakash Ullieyri, violinist Abhijit Nair. They will be accompanied by Kuwait's own artist Perunna



Harikumar on the mridangam and Nissy on the drums. The audience will have a full-day of live entertainment from 10 am to 5 pm.

The chief guest of the event is India's Minister for Statistics and Program Implementation DV Sadananda Gowda. The organizers invite all mem-

bers of the community, especially music and drama lovers to the grand cultural event. Seva Darshan Kuwait which has over 3,000 members and has been actively working amongst the expatriate community over the last 12 years. As part of its members' commitment to help the needy brethren in Kuwait and back in India, Seva Darshan Kuwait has offered to build a medical dispensary and provide a mobile medical unit for the backward tribal people of the North East of India. This is part of the global effort to provide decent living conditions to those stranded citizens and is being done along with the government's initiatives.



The American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) Kuwait Chapter conducted a training seminar on "OHS risk analysis and management" at Best Western Hotel in Mahboula recently.

### WHAT'S ON - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All photos submitted for What's On should be minimum 200dpi. Articles must be in plain text and should include name and phone numbers. Articles and photos that fail to meet these requirements will not be published.

Please send them to [news@kuwaittimes.net](mailto:news@kuwaittimes.net)



**OSN MOVIES**  
**ACTION**

- 01:00 Green Street 3: Never Back Down
- 03:00 Sharknado 3: Oh Hell No!
- 05:00 Last Knights
- 07:00 The Throwaways
- 09:00 Pompeii
- 11:00 Tracers
- 13:00 Last Knights
- 15:15 Metro
- 17:30 Batman: Bad Blood
- 19:00 Blown Away
- 21:15 Momentum
- 23:00 Payback

**ANIMAL PLANET HD**

- 00:00 Catching Monsters
- 00:55 Gator Boys
- 01:50 River Monsters
- 02:45 Bondi Vet
- 03:40 Catching Monsters
- 04:35 Tanked
- 05:25 Call Of The Wildman
- 05:50 Call Of The Wildman
- 06:15 Gator Boys
- 07:02 River Monsters
- 07:49 Catching Monsters
- 08:36 Going Ape
- 09:00 Going Ape
- 09:25 Groomer Has It
- 10:15 Catching Monsters
- 11:10 Call Of The Wildman
- 11:35 Call Of The Wildman
- 12:05 Tanked
- 13:00 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101
- 13:55 Bondi Vet
- 14:50 Catching Monsters
- 15:45 Gator Boys
- 16:40 Call Of The Wildman
- 17:05 Call Of The Wildman
- 17:35 Tanked
- 18:30 River Monsters
- 19:25 Yankee Jungle
- 20:20 Insane Pools: Off The Deep End
- 21:15 Tanked
- 22:10 Call Of The Wildman
- 22:35 Call Of The Wildman
- 23:05 Yankee Jungle

**BBC FIRST**

- 00:10 Orphan Black
- 00:55 Doctors
- 01:25 Call The Midwife
- 02:20 Silent Witness

- 03:30 South Park
- 04:00 The Daily Show - Global Edition
- 04:25 Catch A Contractor
- 05:15 Lip Sync Battle
- 05:40 Ridiculousness
- 06:05 Ridiculousness
- 06:30 Urban Tarzan
- 06:55 Urban Tarzan
- 07:20 Life Or Debt
- 08:15 Catch A Contractor
- 09:05 Disaster Date
- 09:30 Ridiculousness
- 09:55 Ridiculousness
- 10:20 Workaholics
- 10:45 Disaster Date
- 11:10 Ridiculousness
- 11:35 The It Crowd
- 12:00 Hungry Investors
- 12:50 Workaholics
- 13:15 Lip Sync Battle
- 13:40 The It Crowd
- 14:05 Catch A Contractor
- 14:55 Ridiculousness
- 15:20 Sweat Inc.
- 16:10 Workaholics
- 16:35 Ridiculousness
- 17:00 Ridiculousness
- 17:30 Disaster Date
- 17:55 Lip Sync Battle
- 18:25 Workaholics
- 18:50 Urban Tarzan
- 19:15 Urban Tarzan
- 19:39 The It Crowd
- 20:03 Life Or Debt
- 20:50 Disaster Date
- 21:13 Ridiculousness
- 21:37 Workaholics
- 22:00 The Daily Show - Global Edition
- 22:30 The Meltdown With Jonah And Kumail
- 22:54 Key And Peele
- 23:18 Another Period
- 23:42 Another Period

**Discovery Family**

- 00:15 Destroyed In Seconds
- 00:40 Ultimate Survival
- 01:30 Science Of The Movies
- 02:20 Australia Smashes Guinness World Records
- 02:45 Australia Smashes Guinness World Records
- 03:10 Guinness World Records Smashed UK
- 04:00 Destroyed In Seconds
- 04:25 Destroyed In Seconds
- 04:50 Ultimate Survival
- 05:40 How It's Made
- 06:05 How It's Made
- 06:30 Dirty Jobs

- 13:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 14:00 Welcome To The Ronks
- 14:15 Gravity Falls
- 14:40 Hank Zipper
- 15:05 Star Darlings
- 15:10 Austin & Ally
- 15:35 Jessie
- 16:00 Bunk'd
- 16:25 Kirby Buckets
- 16:50 Rolling To The Ronks
- 17:15 Sunny Bunnies
- 17:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 17:45 Elena Of Avalor
- 18:10 Stuck In The Middle
- 18:35 Descendants Wicked World
- 18:40 Girl Meets World
- 19:05 Bizaardvark
- 19:30 Bunk'd
- 19:55 Best Friends Whenever
- 20:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 20:25 The Next Step
- 20:50 Austin & Ally
- 21:15 Star Darlings
- 21:20 Shake It Up
- 21:45 Backstage
- 22:10 Liv And Maddie
- 22:35 Cracked
- 22:40 The Next Step
- 23:05 Best Friends Whenever
- 23:30 Jessie
- 23:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts

**Disney Junior**

- 00:00 Doc McStuffins
- 00:30 Doc McStuffins
- 00:55 PJ Masks
- 01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 01:35 The Hive
- 01:45 Loopdidoo
- 02:00 Henry Hugglemonster
- 02:15 Calimero
- 02:30 Art Attack
- 02:55 Zou
- 03:05 Loopdidoo
- 03:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 03:35 Calimero
- 03:50 Zou
- 04:05 Art Attack
- 04:30 The Hive
- 04:40 Loopdidoo
- 04:55 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:10 Art Attack
- 05:35 Loopdidoo
- 05:50 Calimero
- 06:05 Art Attack
- 06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 06:45 Zou
- 07:00 Art Attack
- 07:30 Henry Hugglemonster

- 14:55 Storage Wars Canada
- 15:20 Alaska: The Last Frontier
- 16:10 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
- 17:00 Deadliest Catch
- 17:50 Fast N' Loud
- 18:40 Misfit Garage
- 19:30 How Do They Do It?
- 19:55 How Do They Do It?
- 20:20 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
- 21:10 Storage Wars Canada
- 21:35 Storage Wars Canada
- 22:00 Made By Destruction
- 22:25 Made By Destruction
- 22:50 How Do They Do It?
- 23:15 How Do They Do It?
- 23:40 Impossible Engineering

**XD**

- 00:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA
- 07:00 Danger Mouse
- 07:25 Gravity Falls
- 07:50 Atomic Puppet
- 08:15 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 08:25 Counterfeit Cat
- 08:40 Supa Strikas
- 09:10 K.C. Undercover
- 09:35 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 10:00 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 10:25 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 10:50 Danger Mouse
- 11:20 Supa Strikas
- 11:45 Supa Strikas
- 12:10 Counterfeit Cat
- 12:35 Pair Of Kings
- 13:00 Pair Of Kings
- 13:30 Future-Worm!
- 13:55 Lab Rats
- 14:20 Lab Rats
- 14:45 Atomic Puppet
- 15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 15:15 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 15:40 Supa Strikas
- 16:05 Lab Rats
- 16:30 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 16:55 Right Now Kapow
- 17:25 K.C. Undercover
- 17:50 Future-Worm!
- 18:15 Gravity Falls
- 18:40 Lab Rats Elite Force
- 19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:10 Supa Strikas
- 19:35 Right Now Kapow
- 20:00 Atomic Puppet
- 20:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 20:55 K.C. Undercover
- 21:20 Kickin' It
- 21:45 Mighty Med
- 22:10 Danger Mouse
- 22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 22:45 Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution
- 23:10 Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors
- 23:35 Booster

**EHD**

- 00:00 E! News
- 00:15 Botched
- 01:05 Botched
- 01:55 Botched
- 02:50 WAGs
- 03:50 WAGs
- 04:45 WAGs
- 05:40 WAGs
- 06:30 Fashion Bloggers
- 07:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 07:55 E! News
- 08:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 09:10 WAGs Miami
- 10:10 WAGs Miami
- 11:05 WAGs Miami
- 12:00 WAGs Miami
- 13:00 E! News
- 13:15 WAGs Miami
- 14:10 WAGs Miami
- 15:05 WAGs Miami
- 16:00 E! News
- 16:15 Celebrity Style Story
- 16:45 Celebrity Style Story
- 17:15 Mariah's World
- 18:10 Mariah's World
- 19:05 Mariah's World
- 20:00 E! News
- 21:00 Fashion Police
- 22:00 So Cosmo
- 23:00 So Cosmo

**food network**

- 00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 01:00 Man Fire Food
- 01:30 Man Fire Food
- 02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 03:00 Man Fire Food
- 03:30 Man Fire Food
- 04:00 Chopped

- 05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 06:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 06:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 07:00 The Kitchen
- 08:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 08:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 09:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 09:30 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 10:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 10:30 Anna Olson: Bake
- 11:00 The Kitchen
- 12:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 12:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 13:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 13:30 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 15:00 Chopped
- 16:00 The Kitchen
- 17:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 17:30 Anna Olson: Bake
- 18:00 Chopped
- 19:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 20:00 Chopped
- 21:00 Food Network Star
- 22:00 Kitchen Casino
- 23:00 Iron Chef America

**itv HD CHOICE**

- 00:15 Coronation Street
- 00:40 Coronation Street
- 01:10 The Chase
- 02:00 Emmerdale
- 02:30 Coronation Street
- 03:00 Coronation Street
- 03:30 Couples Come Dine With Me
- 04:25 Murdoch Mysteries
- 05:20 Him
- 06:15 Grantchester
- 07:10 The Chase
- 08:05 Couples Come Dine With Me
- 09:00 Murdoch Mysteries
- 10:00 Him
- 11:00 Grantchester
- 11:55 The Chase
- 12:50 Couples Come Dine With Me
- 13:45 Emmerdale
- 14:15 Coronation Street
- 14:45 Coronation Street
- 15:15 The Chase
- 16:10 Couples Come Dine With Me
- 17:00 Tina & Bobby
- 17:55 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 18:50 The Syndicate
- 19:50 Emmerdale
- 20:15 Coronation Street
- 20:45 Coronation Street
- 21:10 Couples Come Dine With Me
- 22:00 Tina & Bobby
- 22:55 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
- 23:50 Emmerdale

**H2 HD**

- 00:00 Ancient Aliens
- 01:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 02:00 Warriors
- 03:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 04:00 Missing In Alaska
- 04:50 Ancient Aliens
- 05:40 Ancient Aliens
- 06:30 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 07:20 America: The Story Of The U.S.
- 08:10 The Universe
- 09:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 10:00 Missing In Alaska
- 11:00 Ancient Aliens
- 12:00 Ancient Aliens
- 13:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 14:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
- 15:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 16:00 Missing In Alaska
- 17:00 Ancient Aliens
- 18:00 Ancient Aliens
- 19:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 20:00 America: The Story Of The U.S.
- 21:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 22:00 Missing In Alaska
- 23:00 Ancient Aliens

**HISTORY HD**

- 00:30 American Pickers
- 01:20 Forged In Fire
- 02:10 Leupu And Pitbull
- 03:00 Swap People
- 03:50 Storage Wars
- 04:15 American Pickers
- 05:05 Pawn Stars
- 05:30 Pawn Stars
- 06:00 Mountain Men
- 06:40 Alaska Off-Road Warriors
- 07:50 Shipping Wars
- 08:15 Shipping Wars
- 08:40 Counting Cars
- 09:05 Counting Cars
- 09:30 Pawn Stars
- 09:55 Pawn Stars



**AFTER THE BALL ON OSN MOVIES COMEDY HD**

- 10:20 Storage Wars
- 10:45 Storage Wars
- 11:10 American Pickers
- 12:00 Hunting Hitler
- 12:50 Time Team
- 13:40 Swamp People
- 14:30 Ax Men
- 15:20 Mountain Men
- 16:10 Shipping Wars
- 16:35 Shipping Wars
- 17:00 Counting Cars
- 17:25 Counting Cars
- 17:50 Pawn Stars
- 18:15 Pawn Stars
- 18:40 Ice Road Truckers
- 19:30 Aussie Pickers
- 20:20 Mountain Men
- 21:10 American Pickers
- 22:25 Car Hunters
- 22:50 Forged In Fire
- 23:40 Forged In Fire

**NAT GEO people HD**

- 00:20 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
- 00:45 The Shelbourne
- 01:10 Glamour Puds
- 01:35 Wineroads
- 02:00 Poh & Co
- 02:25 Sara's Australia Unveiled
- 02:50 Delinquent Gourmet
- 03:15 Chocolate Covered
- 03:40 Eat: The Story Of Food
- 04:30 Tom's Istanbul Delight
- 04:55 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
- 05:20 Carnival Eats
- 05:45 Eat Street
- 06:10 Confucius Was A Foodie
- 07:00 Chocolate Covered
- 07:25 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
- 07:50 Poh & Co
- 08:15 Sara's Australia Unveiled
- 08:40 Delinquent Gourmet
- 09:05 Chocolate Covered
- 09:30 Eat: The Story Of Food
- 10:20 Tom's Istanbul Delight
- 10:45 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
- 11:10 Carnival Eats
- 11:35 Eat Street
- 12:00 Confucius Was A Foodie
- 12:50 Chocolate Covered
- 13:15 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
- 13:40 Poh & Co
- 14:05 Sara's Australia Unveiled
- 14:35 Delinquent Gourmet
- 15:00 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 15:30 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt
- 15:55 Tom's Istanbul Delight
- 16:25 Valentine Warner's Wild Table
- 17:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
- 17:50 Carnival Eats
- 18:15 The Great Food Revolution
- 19:10 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 19:35 Eat Street
- 20:05 Tom's Istanbul Delight
- 20:30 Valentine Warner's Wild Table
- 21:00 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
- 21:50 Carnival Eats
- 22:15 The Great Food Revolution
- 23:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 23:30 Eat Street
- 23:55 Poh & Co

**OSN MOVIES DRAMA**

- 00:00 Only God Forgives
- 02:00 The Devil You Know
- 04:00 A Good Marriage
- 06:00 A Teacher's Obsession
- 08:00 The Intruders
- 10:00 The Harvest
- 12:00 A Mother Betrayed
- 14:00 The Boy
- 16:00 Assassin's Bullet
- 18:00 Two Wrongs
- 20:00 Backtrack
- 22:00 Unfriended

**OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY**

- 01:15 Hocus Pocus
- 03:15 Toy Story 3
- 05:00 Jem And The Holograms
- 07:00 Pooh's Heffalump Halloween Movie
- 08:15 Toy Story 3
- 10:00 Jem And The Holograms
- 12:00 Atlantis: Milo's Return
- 13:30 Pooh's Heffalump Halloween Movie
- 14:45 Turbo: A Power Rangers Movie
- 16:45 Lilo & Stitch
- 18:30 Kim Possible: So The Drama
- 20:00 High School Musical 3: Senior Year
- 22:00 Batman Unlimited: Animal Instincts
- 23:30 Lilo & Stitch

**OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY**

- 00:00 Sisters
- 02:00 No Escape
- 04:00 A Royal Night Out
- 06:00 Fathers And Daughters
- 08:00 The Peanuts Movie
- 10:00 The Intern
- 12:00 Suffragette
- 14:00 The Jungle Book
- 16:00 The Benefactor
- 18:00 Kindergarten Cop 2
- 20:00 Zoolander 2
- 22:00 Ride Along 2

**OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY**

- 01:00 Army Of Darkness
- 03:00 The Beautician And The Beast
- 05:00 Ana Maria In Novela Land
- 07:00 Undercover Brother
- 09:00 The Beautician And The Beast
- 11:00 Ana Maria In Novela Land
- 13:00 Undercover Brother
- 15:00 After The Ball
- 17:00 With This Ring
- 19:00 Parenthood
- 21:00 Superfast
- 23:00 Awful Nice

**OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL**

- 01:45 Primal Fear
- 04:00 The Hurricane
- 06:30 The Help
- 09:00 The Sting
- 11:15 Days Of Heaven
- 13:00 The Rainmaker
- 15:15 A Perfect Day
- 17:00 And Justice For All
- 19:00 Erin Brockovich
- 21:15 The Blind Side
- 23:30 Black Swan

**OSN MOVIES HD KIDS**

- 00:30 Mamma Moo And Crow
- 02:00 Bonta
- 03:45 The Olsen Gang In Deep Trouble



**LAST KNIGHTS ON OSN MOVIES ACTION**

- 03:20 Silent Witness
- 04:20 Orphan Black
- 05:05 Doctors
- 05:35 Doctors
- 06:05 New Tricks
- 07:00 Doctors
- 07:30 Doctors
- 08:00 Holly City
- 08:55 Death In Paradise
- 09:50 The Coroner
- 10:35 New Tricks
- 11:30 Doctors
- 12:00 Doctors
- 12:30 Death In Paradise
- 13:25 The Coroner
- 14:20 New Tricks
- 15:15 Doctors
- 15:45 Doctors
- 16:15 Death In Paradise
- 17:10 The Coroner
- 18:05 New Tricks
- 19:00 Doctors
- 19:30 Eastenders
- 20:05 Death In Paradise
- 21:00 Poldark
- 22:00 Last Tango In Halifax
- 22:55 Ripper Street
- 23:50 Orphan Black
- 07:20 Mythbusters
- 08:00 Kids vs Film
- 08:25 Bear Grylls Survival School
- 08:50 Bondi Vet
- 09:40 How It's Made
- 10:05 How It's Made
- 10:30 Science Of The Movies
- 11:20 Mythbusters
- 12:10 Bondi Vet
- 13:00 Ultimate Survival
- 13:50 How It's Made
- 14:15 How It's Made
- 14:40 Dirty Jobs
- 15:30 Mythbusters
- 16:20 Science Of The Movies
- 17:10 Kids vs Film
- 17:35 Bear Grylls Survival School
- 18:00 Wildest Africa
- 18:50 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
- 19:40 Destroyed In Seconds
- 20:05 Destroyed In Seconds
- 20:30 How It's Made
- 20:55 How It's Made
- 21:20 Mythbusters
- 22:10 Wildest Africa
- 23:00 Lost & Found With Mike & Jesse
- 23:50 Destroyed In Seconds
- 07:45 Loopdidoo
- 08:00 Zou
- 08:15 Calimero
- 08:30 Loopdidoo
- 08:45 Henry Hugglemonster
- 09:00 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 09:05 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 09:15 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 09:30 Miles From Tomorrow
- 09:45 Goldie & Bear
- 09:55 The Lion Guard
- 10:20 PJ Masks
- 10:35 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 10:50 Doc McStuffins
- 11:00 Goldie & Bear
- 11:15 PJ Masks
- 11:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 11:35 The Lion Guard
- 12:00 Sofia The First
- 12:30 Doc McStuffins
- 12:55 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 13:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 13:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 14:15 Gummi Bears
- 14:40 Sofia The First
- 15:10 Little Mermaid
- 15:35 PJ Masks
- 16:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 16:30 The Lion Guard
- 16:55 Unbungleable
- 17:00 Miles From Tomorrow
- 17:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 17:55 The Lion Guard
- 18:20 Goldie & Bear
- 18:50 PJ Masks
- 19:15 Sofia The First
- 19:40 Doc McStuffins
- 20:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 20:30 Little Mermaid
- 21:00 Doc McStuffins
- 21:30 Doc McStuffins
- 22:00 Unbungleable
- 22:05 Goldie & Bear
- 22:35 Miles From Tomorrow
- 23:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 23:25 Gummi Bears
- 23:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons

**Disney Channel HD**

- 00:00 Kirby Buckets
- 00:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 01:10 Hank Zipper
- 01:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 02:00 Violetta
- 02:45 The Hive
- 02:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 03:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 03:40 Hank Zipper
- 04:05 Binny And The Ghost
- 04:30 Violetta
- 05:15 The Hive
- 05:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 05:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 06:10 Hank Zipper
- 06:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 07:00 Violetta
- 07:45 The Hive
- 07:50 The 7D
- 08:00 Jessie
- 08:25 Jessie
- 08:50 Rolling To The Ronks
- 09:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 09:20 Elena Of Avalor
- 09:45 Bunk'd
- 10:10 Stuck In The Middle
- 10:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 11:00 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 11:25 A.N.T. Farm
- 11:50 A.N.T. Farm
- 12:15 Good Luck Charlie
- 12:40 Good Luck Charlie
- 13:05 Shake It Up
- 13:30 Shake It Up

**Discovery Channel HD**

- 00:30 Fast N' Loud
- 01:20 Misfit Garage
- 02:10 The Island With Bear Grylls
- 03:00 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive
- 03:50 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
- 04:40 Fast N' Loud
- 05:30 Storage Wars Canada
- 06:00 How Do They Do It?
- 06:30 How Do They Do It?
- 07:00 Deadliest Catch
- 07:50 Misfit Garage
- 08:40 Fast N' Loud
- 09:30 Running Wild With Bear Grylls
- 10:20 Storage Wars Canada
- 10:45 How Do They Do It?
- 11:10 How Do They Do It?
- 11:35 The Island With Bear Grylls
- 12:25 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive
- 13:15 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
- 14:05 How Do They Do It?
- 14:30 Storage Wars Canada



# CLASSIFIEDS



**Kuwait Times**  
 Now you can browse  
[www.kuwaittimes.net](http://www.kuwaittimes.net)  
 e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net

## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (16/02/2017 TO 22/02/2017)

Channel	Time	Programme	Channel	Time	Programme
SHARQIA-1	11:30 AM	EL QERD BEYETKALIM-Arabic	MARINA-3	12:00 PM	RINGS
SHARQIA-2	12:45 PM	GOLD	AVENUES-1	11:30 AM	THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE
SHARQIA-3	12:45 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	AVENUES-2	12:15 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2-2D-4DX
MUHALAB-1	12:15 PM	PET	AVENUES-3	12:00 PM	RINGS
MUHALAB-2	12:00 PM	EL QERD BEYETKALIM-Arabic	360°-1	12:15 PM	EL QERD BEYETKALIM-Arabic
MUHALAB-3	12:45 PM	JOHN WICK: CHAPTER 2	360°-2	12:45 PM	SPLIT
FANAR-1	11:30 AM	EL QERD BEYETKALIM-Arabic	360°-3	12:15 PM	AL MOKHAYAM (Kuwaiti Film)

### MATRIMONIAL

Jacobite parents invite proposals for their son, Post Graduate Engineer, 29/173, working in Kuwait. M4marry profile ID - 4178223. Email: scariahreji@gmail.com (C 5275) 18-2-2017

### TRANSPORT

Transport required from Dhajeej to Hawally Qutaiba street, from 5 pm. Friday & Saturday off. Contact: 99878317. 18-2-2017

### FOR SALE

For sell new white faux fur (artificial) coat size M And pre owned like new black leather coat size M made in Turkey, Tel. No: 55020291

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

**EMERGENCY 112**

### PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	05:02
Shorook:	06:21
Duhr:	12:02
Asr:	15:16
Maghrib:	17:42
Isha:	18:59

## FOR RENT للإيجار

New شقة جديدة في الجابرية الدور الأول موقع مميز للأغراض التجارية تصلح لإستخدامها كصالون أو لأعمال أخرى

Commercial Flat(1st Floor) Superb Location in Jabriya Suitable for Salon or other activities

For more details call لمزيد من التفاصيل الإتصال **97600063**

Embassy of Brazil in Kuwait invites applicants for the vacancy of:

- Technical Assistant for the Commercial Section

Requirements:

- University degree in International Trade & Finance
- Excellent command of written and spoken English Portuguese and Arabic
- Experience in trade promotion and/or market research and commercial issues

Applicants are requested to submit their CV to [secom.kuwait@itamaraty.gov.br](mailto:secom.kuwait@itamaraty.gov.br)

Last date to submit CV: Feb 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017

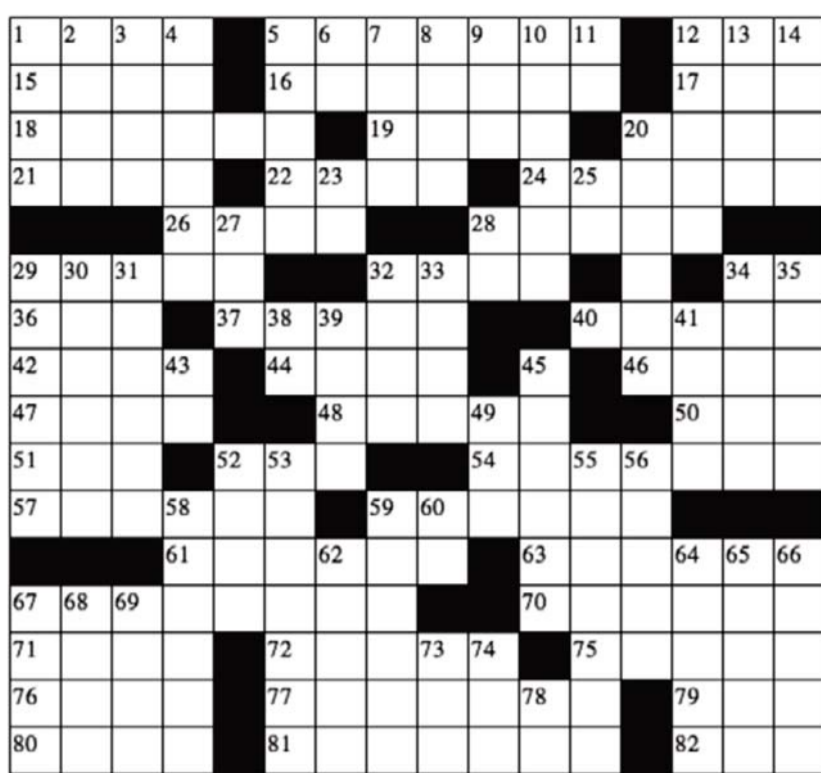
## Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

### Flight Schedule DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Wednesday 22/2/2017				Departure Flights on Wednesday 22/2/2017			
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	Airlines	Fit	Route	Time
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
KAC	102	London	00:55	FDK	804	Damascus	01:55
FDK	803	Damascus	01:00	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	THY	773	Istanbul	02:25
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:55	MSC	406	Sohag	03:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	PGT	859	Istanbul	03:35
MSC	405	Sohag	02:30	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	KKK	6505	Istanbul	03:55
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
KKK	6506	Istanbul	02:55	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
FDB	069	Dubai	03:05	MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	QTR	1077	Doha	04:40
KAC	204	Lahore	07:15	KAC	103	London	04:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	07:35	CEB	0019	Manila	05:20
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	QTR	1087	Doha	05:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	08:20	JZR	1330	Al Najaf	06:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	JZR	560	Sohag	06:05
KAC	382	Delhi	08:45	FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
IAW	157A	Baghdad	09:00	KAC	153	Istanbul	06:50
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
KAC	362	Colombo	09:05	KAC	171	Frankfurt	07:05
KAC	352	Kochi	09:10	QTR	1073	Cairo	07:05
JZR	1331	Al Najaf	09:25	KAC	541	Bahrain	07:15
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	JZR	1338	Al Najaf	07:40
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	JZR	1332	Al Najaf	07:50
IRC	6511	ABD	09:55	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15	KAC	563	Amman	08:00
IRA	665	Shiraz	10:40	BAW	156	London	08:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	FDB	054	Dubai	08:55
TXC	1622	IQA	11:00	KAC	691	Muscat	09:00
JZR	1339	Al Najaf	11:05	KAC	743	Dammam	09:00
AXB	889	Mangalore/Bahrain	11:10	KAC	117	New York	09:00
JZR	1333	Al Najaf	11:15	JZR	534	Cairo	09:15
IRM	1188	Mashhad	11:15	KAC	513	Tehran	09:30
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	KAC	101	London	09:35
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
IAW	157	Al Najaf	12:00	UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
KAC	744	Dammam	12:10	IAW	158A	Al Najaf	10:00
JZR	561	Sohag	12:40	JZR	482	Istanbul	10:00
FDB	075	Dubai	12:50	KAC	671	Dubai	10:05
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	KAC	613	Bahrain	10:10
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
CLX	792	Luxembourg	13:15	KAC	787	Jeddah	10:15
KAC	614	Bahrain	13:30	JZR	356	Mashhad	10:25
KAC	564	Amman	13:40	KAC	161	Geneva	10:35
KNE	231	Riyadh	13:55	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
KAC	514	Tehran	13:55	QTR	1071	Doha	10:40
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	KAC	501	Beirut	10:55
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:15	IRC	6522	Lamerd	11:00
FDB	059	Dubai	14:20	MSC	416	Sohag	11:15
KAC	692	Muscat	14:30	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
KAC	414	Bangkok	14:35	IRA	664	Shiraz	11:40
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40	JZR	1340	Al Najaf	11:55
IRC	6521	Lamerd	14:40	KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	12:05
KAC	542	Cairo	14:45	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:05
KAC	672	Dubai	14:50	AXB	890	Mangalore	12:10
KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55	IRM	1189	Mashhad	12:30
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05	MEA	405	Beirut	12:55
FDB	8053	Dubai	15:10	IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:00
				JZR	786	Riyadh	13:10
				KAC	511	Mashhad	13:15
				JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
				TXC	1623	IQA	14:00
				MSR	611	Cairo	14:00



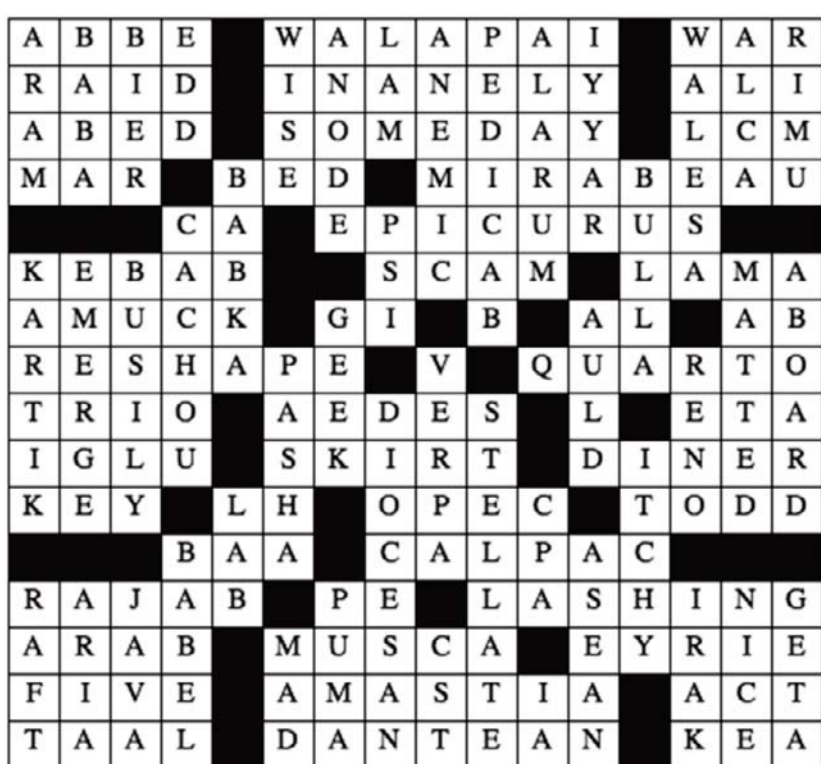
CROSSWORD 1529



ACROSS

- Greenish-yellow pear.
  - Bears and extinct related forms.
  - The number that is represented as a one followed by 6 zeros.
  - Large elliptical brightly colored deep-sea fish of Atlantic and Pacific and Mediterranean.
  - A baroque musical composition (usually for a keyboard instrument) with full chords and rapid elaborate runs in a rhythmically free style.
  - A flat wavy-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
  - A syllabic script used in writing Sanskrit and Hindi.
  - A Lolish language.
  - A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
  - Showing self-interest and shrewdness in dealing with others.
  - A motley assortment of things.
  - (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
  - (archaic) Of persons.
  - A room equipped with toilet facilities.
  - Full of submerged reefs or sandbanks or shoals.
  - An award for winning a championship or commemorating some other event.
  - Being of delicate or slender build.
  - The capital of Western Samoa.
  - A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
  - Someone who copies the words or behavior of another.
  - The younger brother of Edwy who became king of Northumbria when it renounced Edwy.
  - An informal term for a father.
  - Someone who is morally reprehensible.
  - Individual serving of minced e.g. meat or fish in a rich creamy sauce baked in a small pastry mold or timbale shell.
  - A permanent council of the United Nations.
  - Of or relating to or near the tarsus of the foot.
  - The wife of a sheik.
  - Small Atlantic wrasse the male of which has a brilliant blue head.
  - A member of a nomadic Berber people of the Sahara.
  - A small stream.
  - The boy whose upbringing was described by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.
  - A popular island resort in the Netherlands Antilles.
  - A loud utterance.
  - A bin for holding coal.
  - A rapid escape (as by criminals).
  - A sensation (as of a cold breeze or bright light) that precedes the onset of certain disorders such as a migraine attack or epileptic seizure.
  - A bag used for carrying money and small personal items or accessories (especially by women).
  - A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- DOWN**
- Consisting of or made up of bone.
  - A translucent mineral consisting of hydrated silica of variable color.
  - An narrative telling the adventures of a hero or a family.
  - Thorny shrub or small tree common in central Argentina having small orange or yellow flowers followed by edible berries.
  - A city in central New York.
  - An artificial language for international use that rejects all existing words and is based instead on an abstract analysis of ideas.
  - A narcotic that is considered a hard drug.
  - (informal) Very bad.
  - The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
  - A drug (trade names Atarax and Vistaril) used as a tranquilizer to treat anxiety and motion sickness.
  - (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
  - By chance.
  - English essayist (1775-1834).
  - An association of criminals.
  - United by being of the same opinion.
  - A public promotion of some product or service.
  - A radioactive element of the actinide series.
  - A doctor's degree in dental surgery.
  - A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
  - A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
  - A city in northwestern Spain near the Cantabrian Mountains.
  - Being the one previously mentioned or spoken of.
  - Emblem usually consisting of a rectangular piece of cloth of distinctive design.
  - A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
  - A group of biological taxa or species that share features inherited from a common ancestor.
  - (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
  - An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
  - An informal term for a father.
  - A form of address for a man.
  - A clergyman in many Christian churches who has the authority to perform or administer various religious rites.
  - A nucleotide derived from adenosine that occurs in muscle tissue.
  - The Hebrew patriarch who saved himself and his family and the animals by building an ark in which they survived 40 days and 40 nights of rain.
  - A high-pitched noise resembling a human cry.
  - Chinese ephedra yielding ephedrine.
  - Tired to the point of exhaustion.
  - United States minimalist painter (born in 1936).
  - The unit of plane angle adopted under the System International d'Unites.
  - Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
  - A constitutional monarchy on the western part of the islands of Samoa in the South Pacific.
  - A Dravidian language closely related to Tamil that is spoken in a hilly section of southwestern India.
  - Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
  - Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
  - The function or position properly or customarily occupied or served by another.
  - (Norse mythology) One of the Aesir known for his beauty and skill with bow and skis.
  - An honorary law degree.
  - A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
  - A state in midwestern United States.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may cause people to grow distant and indifferent when you forget or ignore their feelings or needs. This could come from your concentration at work and your determination to advance. Recognize this tendency and try and create a balance in your daily activities. Your drive to climb the ladder of success is commendable and you may be realizing some rewards for your hard work. Financial success through a partner's venture with someone as reserved as you will be quite successful. Strive to eliminate situations that are draining your resources, or at least bring them down to a controllable level. An instinctive urge to get serious about taking care of you at many levels is emphasized now. Diet, exercise and work somehow mean more now.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Obstacles to self-discipline or to your sense of organization may appear today. You could be frustrated by someone in this regard. Authorities and red tape may stand between you and your goals. You and your friends will find some time to enjoy this afternoon together. Perhaps some contact sports or music will be the object of your activities. Whatever the subject, the point of the afternoon is camaraderie and exercise. You could be reorganizing your possessions this evening to allow more room for movement in the living area of your home, room or apartment. You may want to gather some of your old things for a garage sale or a charity organization. This will free up some space and create a feeling of being a free spirit.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

The past has created a wise, talented and well-balanced you that excels at this time. You are more able to see things clearly at this time and not be taken in by other people's creative stories. Your choices about most things these days tend to be more positive than in the past. Ambitious schemes and the pursuit of success and status take on a high priority. There is a focus on the practical, the successful, the pragmatic-whatever it takes to get you ahead in the end. Your mind could be quite clear. Ideas are flowing and they come easily. You can talk, talk, talk. Pleasant interactions with the family and plans of travel make this a happy day. Check and recheck your transportation schedule in order to confirm dates and times.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are most persuasive with others when you want to make a point or give an example. The circumstances are a natural for self-expression. You are energized. This is one of the best times to work in teams and accomplish much. You may be sought after as just the person for a leadership type of job. Your management and directional abilities are in high focus. Pay attention, your overtime work is adding up and you could find complaints on the home front. New ways to communicate or an easy manner will make conversations and interactions go well. You may find yourself more talkative and easygoing than at other times. Find time to be with your loved ones this evening-this fun time together is the glue that binds.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

There are long-standing issues that are ready to end soon. One way you can continue to move forward in a positive way is to let go of some past difficulties. This is a good time to come to grips with the past-stand, accept and give it a sense of closure. You can be very lucky with gambling today. Sorry, this does not mean money gambling. Taking a chance on a person or project, creating a change or loving an animal can all be part of this gambling. You have an increased interest in many different forms of metaphysics, including religion, and may decide to join a friend to check out a metaphysical bookstore. Throughout this day and much of march, you will be putting a large amount of your focus on money-ways to increase your funds.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

A customer or someone else from outside the business staff may try your patience at times. Do not allow those feathers of yours to be ruffled-this person is not angry for the reasons you think. As a busy, active person, your attitude toward solving any problem is usually to end difficulties quickly and move on-today could be a bit different. You will want to kick back this afternoon and have fun with your friends. A group of you may even decide to chat about some of the things you did as teenagers. Visiting with old friends and remembering old times is fun and brings about good feelings. Marriage and other close relationships give rise to great expectations. This is a time to appreciate your ties to others and to seek and promote pleasant connections.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You will find that you are appreciated for your psychological insight while dealing with the public. This can be extremely helpful when working in many types of professions. When you can sell a product that was previously unknown or talk a co-worker into helping you with some difficult work, you are in command. It will not be long before you will be looking at some advancement in your profession. Clashes with authorities over new ideas could occur if you do not have some research facts to back up your work or ideas. You experience a sense of support when you visit with friends this afternoon. However, be aware of tendencies to believe too quickly, too deeply, or to become dependent on things or people that seem to have quick answers.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

People have important subjects about which to communicate. When you come in to work you may become frustrated, but not for long. Your timing should be perfect and those around you should find you most spontaneous. Why not enjoy some time out-of-doors during the noon break and walk or just look in the store windows-weather permitting, of course. You can then return to work refreshed. Do not be shy about saying what is on your mind to your superiors today. If you decide to be a teacher, instructor or guide, you can be one of the best. You may find the opportunity to speak in lectures, teach part-time, guide a group or perhaps lead a tour. It is time to enlarge your scope of capabilities so start thinking!



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Figuring out how to organize projects and people becomes a topic of special interest at this time. Opinions are not enough for you: authority or evidence must back them and above all they must have practical appeal and purpose. This could be a period of intense study and thought. Two people arguing in the workplace today could become uncomfortable-if you try to intervene, you could make the problem worse. Although you can be very good at settling problems, this is not the time to do it. Your productivity has improved and you can expect some attention and praise regarding your work. Poetry and art may be possible this afternoon-you could create another one of your great love poems for your loved one. A gift of a t-shirt represents your next vacation.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your energies are high this morning and your accomplishments are many. The first consideration for today will be to break away from the mental thinking that you cannot do some task in the workplace. This is a productive time to be with others and to work together. You may be the one asked to follow through on a particular job. This is where your talents will shine-you can do it! Your management and directional abilities are in high focus. You may find that even a promotion is possible now-if it is what you want. In your personal dealings with financial matters, always check your sources and know the presenter's history or background. You could save a financial loss if you know the group or person with whom you will be negotiating.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You can demonstrate great understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others but may have to exercise patience when others do not show you the same courtesy. A jealous person has the means to open the door of opportunity for you to grow financially. Consider drawing up a short-term contract-then this jealous person will not feel as threatened. You will make a difference, in not only business improvements, but also financial improvements for yourself. Everything seems to be working together-you may find yourself expressive and able to communicate well. Incentives are the secret to an improved love relationship now. One incentive is the promise of your time. Hobbies, poetry and art may be shared.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You are the one to calm a negative person today; you seem to understand that this is a person that is afraid of outcomes and just needs encouragement. You progress nicely in the workplace and may soon receive recognition for your work. Perfection is what you aim for and acknowledgement is what keeps you aiming! New ways to communicate fill your break time with experimental fun, testing and communicating. You may have received a new phone or new computer. After you learn the mechanics, interactions go well. You may find yourself more talkative than usual. A fun dialogue with an older person may take place. A phone call from a family member may require a visit from you and surprises happen.

WORD SEARCH

Movies: Musicals

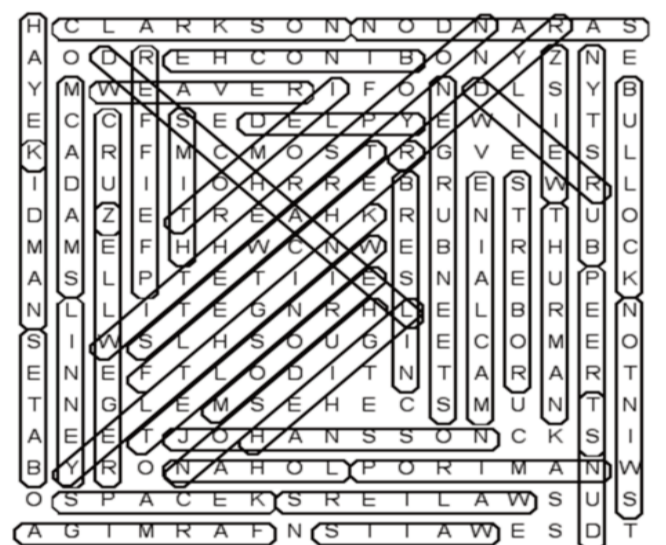
Find and circle all of the Movie Musicals that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of an additional Movie Musical.



- |               |            |                |                 |
|---------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| A CHORUS LINE | CHICAGO    | HELLO, DOLLY!  | PAL JOEY        |
| ALL THAT JAZZ | EVITA      | HIGH SOCIETY   | SHOW BOAT       |
| ANNIE         | FAME       | HOLIDAY INN    | SILK STOCKINGS  |
| BLUE HAWAII   | FANTASIA   | JAILHOUSE ROCK | SOUTH PACIFIC   |
| BRIGADOON     | FUNNY FACE | LA TRAVIATA    | STATE FAIR      |
| BUGSY MALONE  | FUNNY GIRL | MARY POPPINS   | SWEET CHARITY   |
| CABARET       | GIGI       | MOULIN ROUGE   | SWING TIME      |
| CALAMITY JANE | GODSPELL   | MY FAIR LADY   | THE MUSIC MAN   |
| CAMELOT       | GREASE     | NEWSIES        | TOMMY           |
| CARMEN        | GYPSY      | OKLAHOMA!      | TOP HAT         |
| CAROUSEL      | HAIR       | OLIVER!        | WEST SIDE STORY |

Yesterday's Solution

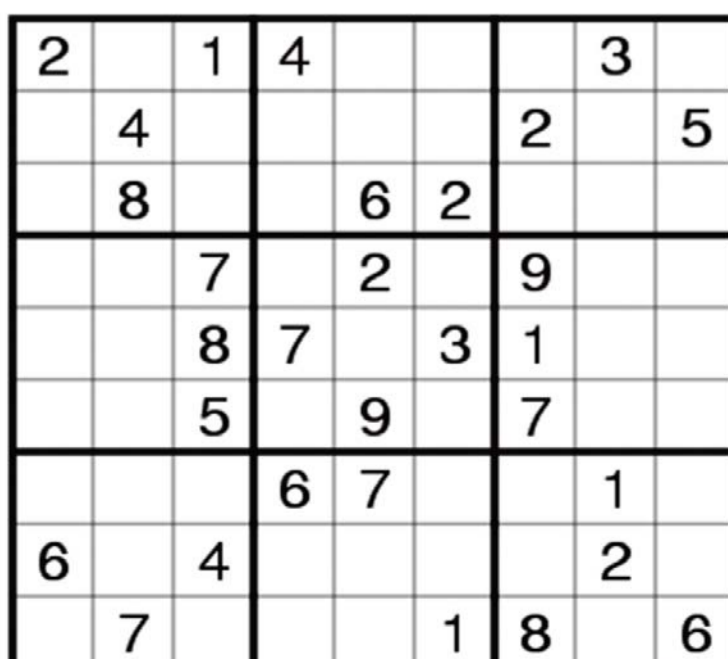
Movie Actresses 2



- |                    |                     |                    |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| BATES, Kathy       | JOHANSSON, Scarlett | SPACEK, Sissy      |
| BINOCHÉ, Juliette  | KIDMAN, Nicole      | STEENBURGEN, Mary  |
| BRESLIN, Abigail   | KNIGHTLEY, Keira    | STEWART, Kristen   |
| BULLOCK, Sandra    | LINNEY, Laura       | STREEP, Meryl      |
| BURSTYN, Ellen     | LOHAN, Lindsay      | SWINTON, Tilda     |
| CLARKSON, Patricia | MACLAINE, Shirley   | THURMAN, Uma       |
| CRUZ, Penelope     | MCADAMS, Rachel     | TOMEI, Marisa      |
| DELPHY, Julie      | MOORE, Julianne     | WALTERS, Julie     |
| DESCHANEL, Zoë     | PFEIFFER, Michelle  | WATTS, Naomi       |
| DUNST, Kirsten     | PORTMAN, Natalie    | WEAVER, Sigourney  |
| FARMIGA, Vera      | REID, Tara          | WEISZ, Rachel      |
| FLETCHER, Louise   | ROBERTS, Julia      | WINSLET, Kate      |
| HAYEK, Salma       | RYDER, Winona       | WITHERSPOON, Reese |
| HEIGL, Katherine   | SARANDON, Susan     | ZELLWEGER, Renee   |
| HUDSON, Kate       | SMITH, Maggie       |                    |

The hidden movie title is: ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





For labor-related inquiries and complaints:  
Call MSAL hotline 128



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630  
Fax: (+965) 24348714  
www.met.gov.kw



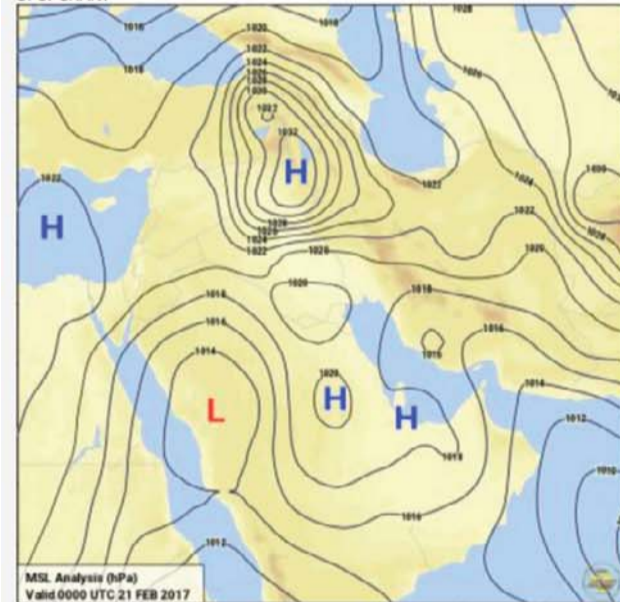
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 21/02/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 19 °C

By Day : Sunny with light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 22 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear later on  
By Night : Very cold with light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 20 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Expected Weather	Mostly sunny	partly cloudy + cloudy + scattered thunder rain	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
Min Temp °C	04	07	09	09
Max Temp °C	20	16	21	22
Wind Direction	variable	north easterly to easterly	northerly to north westerly	north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	06 - 22	15 - 40	12 - 35	12 - 35

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	10	18
KUWAIT AIRPORT	01	19
ABDALY	02	18
BUBYAN	04	17
JAHRA	05	20
FAILAKA ISLAND	06	17
SALMIYAH	10	17
AHMADI	10	15
JAL ALIYAH	03	20
QAROH ISLAND	13	14
UMM AL-MARADEM	12	15
NUWASIB	03	17
WAFRA	02	19
MANAGISH	03	21
SALMY	04	19
MUTRIBA	02	20

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	18
Min Temp (°C)	02
Max Rel Hum (%)	42
Min Rel Hum (%)	14
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	36 NW
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	06:21
Sunset	17:42

Prayer Times

Fajr	05:02
Sunrise	06:21
Zuhr	12:02
Asr	15:16
Sunset	17:42
Isha	18:59

Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Siego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

PRIVATE CLINICS

<b>Ophthalmologists</b>	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
<b>Ear, Nose &amp; Throat (ENT)</b>	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
<b>General Practitioners</b>	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaezem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
<b>Urologists</b>	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

<b>Plastic Surgeons</b>	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
<b>Family Doctor</b>	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
<b>Psychiatrists</b>	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
<b>Gynaecologists &amp; Obstetricians</b>	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
<b>General Surgeons</b>	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
<b>Internists, Chest &amp; Heart</b>	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

<b>Paediatricians</b>	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
<b>Dermatology</b>	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
<b>Dentists</b>	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
<b>Neurologists</b>	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
<b>Gastrologists</b>	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

<b>Endocrinologist</b>	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
<b>Physiotherapists &amp; VD</b>	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
<b>Rheumatologists:</b>	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
<b>Internist, Chest &amp; Heart</b>	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
<b>Consultant Cardiologist</b>	
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123



FASHION

# Brazil transgender model Sampaio 'fighting for better world'



This file photo shows Brazilian model Valentina Sampaio presenting a creation by Patricia Viera during the Sao Paulo Fashion Week in Sao Paulo, Brazil. — AFP photos

**V**alentina Sampaio, the first transgender model to make the cover of French "Vogue", will be flying the flag for the LGBT movement at Milan fashion week. The 22-year-old Brazilian, who appeared on the cover of Elle Brazil in November and has modeled for labels such as Gisela Franck and Rchlo, is in the city to attend casting sessions in the hope of snapping up a place on the catwalk for the world's top fashion houses. The shy, green-eyed brunette told AFP in Milan, where the autumn-winter collections go on show from Wednesday, she was "proud" of being a role model for the LGBT community.

Her dream, she said, would be to model for the likes of Italian icon Giorgio Armani. Sitting on a bench in the sunshine, her face lights up as she talks of the opportunities fame and fashion could bring her in the fight to combat transgender prejudice. Sampaio, who began her modeling career in Brazil four years ago before becoming an "ambassador" for L'Oreal, said landing the coveted cover of Vogue magazine was "important because fashion is a means to stop people speaking about us with prejudice". While several US fashion magazines have already featured transgender models, this is a first for France.

**'Valentina is Valentina'**

"I want to continue fighting for a better world" where trans are considered "normal", she says in her soft voice. The model, who did not once use the words transsexual, transgender or the acronym LGBT in the interview, said she was tired of those who are not heterosexual or cisgender being seen as "an anomaly". "Juan is Juan, Maria is Maria and Valentina is Valentina," she said with a laugh. Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Transsexual is an older term that is used by some people who have permanently changed or seek to change their bodies through medical interventions. Sampaio, who has about 35,000 followers on Instagram, wowed the Sao Paulo fashion week in October, where she shimmied down the runways for Agua de Coco and Vitorino Campos.

**'Like a little girl'**

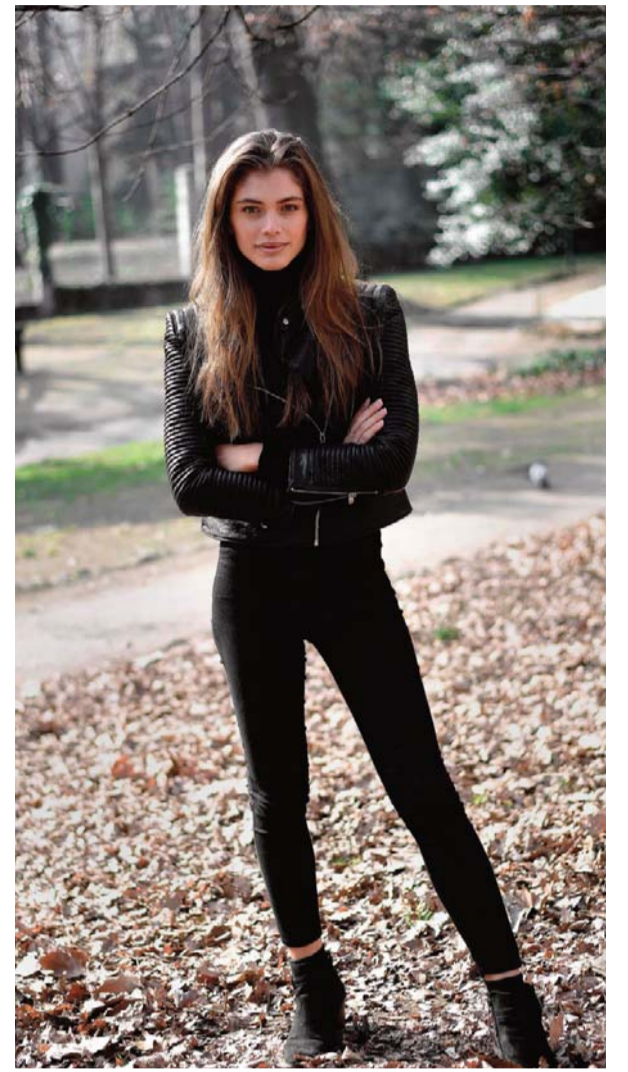
Her life could have taken a different course: she was studying architecture in Fortaleza in north Brazil when she dropped out to attend fashion courses. The youngster thanks her parents for an upbringing which allowed her to express her gender, say-

ing "as a little boy, I felt like a little girl". "I was born in Ceara in the northeast and in that small place I felt protected, because everyone knows and respects each other," she said. Sampaio said there were some unpleasant "incidents" at the beginning of her career, like one brand refusing to use a transgender person for its advertising campaign.

"I felt very bad, I wanted to stop working" as a model, "but in the end I realized that I liked this work and it did not stop me," she said. Sampaio is part of a group of Brazilian models that fights prejudice and violence against shemales-transsexuals who have both male genitalia and female secondary sex characteristics. "The advice I can give them is to believe in themselves and not be discouraged by difficulties," she said. French Vogue, which features Sampaio in a plunging gold gown on the cover of the March edition, described her as a "glam standard-bearer of a cause that is on the march... in a post-gender world". — AFP



Brazilian transgender model Valentina Sampaio poses during an interview in Milan.



Brazilian transgender model Valentina Sampaio poses during an interview in Milan.



## Burberry draws on sculptor Henry Moore in fashion highlight



**A**ll eyes were on Burberry and creative director Christopher Bailey Monday night as London Fashion Week reached its starry climax. Bailey didn't disappoint, drawing on the sculptor Henry Moore for inspiration in a startling new collection that built on the English heritage brand's traditional appeal. The Burberry spectacle capped four days of shows that highlighted London's claim to be an international fashion hub that rivals Paris, Milan and New York. Buyers, devoted fans and journalists - including American Vogue editor-in-chief Anna Wintour enjoyed spring-like temperatures as they viewed offerings from Burberry, Christopher Kane, Erdem and Aspinal of London on Monday. The shows continue Tuesday before the fashion circus moves on to Milan.

**Burberry continues to mine Britain's artistic heritage**

No fashion house pays as much attention to English heritage as Burberry, which paid homage to the late English sculptor Henry Moore with the autumn and winter collection unveiled to a packed house Monday night. The catwalk space was adorned with some of Moore's oversized sculptures and guests were treated to a display of his drawings before the show. Bailey said he sought to make the clothes three-dimensional and textured much like Moore's sculptures - which look smooth from a distance but are actually textured and detailed when viewed up close. He told The Associated Press he used the color palette that Moore often wore when he worked and pointed proudly to one of Moore's striped work aprons on display behind glass at the Burberry Makers House in London's Soho neighborhood.

"Henry Moore has been a huge influence on me my whole life," Bailey said of the sculptor known for his monumental

works. "I grew up very close to where he was born. I'm very privileged that we had a sculpture park close by. My formative years were spent there," he continued. "He's been a big influence, but I never really got under the skin of his work, and for this collection it just felt right."

Bailey said the sculptural shapes of the collection were taken from Moore, as was the lacing he used on many pieces. The stripes came from Moore's apron, and the rope motif - seen by some as nautical - came from the abstract shapes Moore created with ropes. Burberry has for several years shunned the recorded music heard at many shows in favor of live performances. Monday's show was enlivened by English singer-songwriter Anna Calvi, backed by her band and the Heritage Orchestra and Choir. The music, the sculptures and the evocative collection justified Burberry's status as a London fashion fixture.



Models present creations from the Burberry collection during a catwalk show on the fourth day of the Autumn/Winter 2017 London Fashion Week in London. — AP/AFP photos



FASHION

**Christopher Kane seeks 'tougher femininity' in eclectic show**

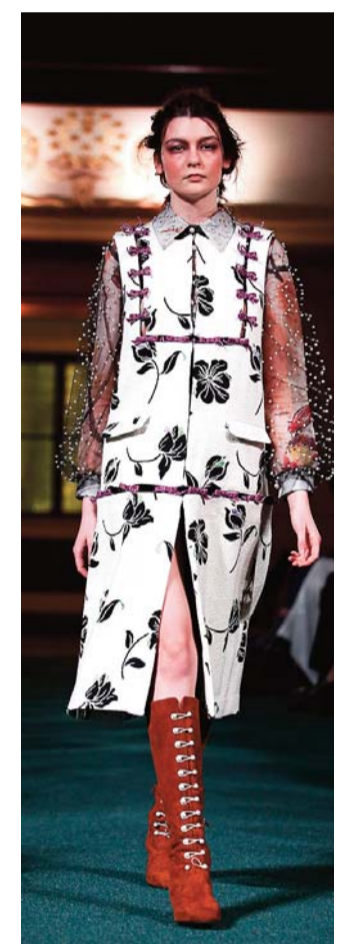
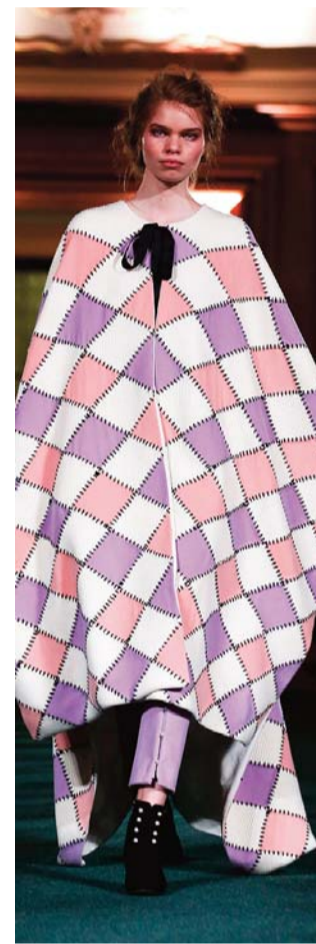
One of London's favorite designers, Christopher Kane, mixed new technology with tried-and-true craftsmanship to produce a stellar show Monday at the Tate Britain museum. Kane used space-age techniques, including holographic foiled lace and iridescent full-print knits, along with a traditional weaving process from the early days of mechanization. Most striking was the use of a Gainsborough silk reworking of a French damask from the 18th century that was styled into very contemporary dresses.

Kane's approach gave the outfits an old-meets-new mystique, and the use of Asian motifs, including billowing silk prints, expanded his range. Triangular shapes appeared on the front of many dresses and Kane made good use of the pink floral theme that has been popular in shows this year. "We wanted to express a tougher femininity this season," said Kane. "(I was) looking at abstract shapes, hard angles, and sharp jags" inspired in part by female factory workers.

Leading hatmaker Stephen Jones called the show "fantastic." "There was so much fashion that was new," he said. "The colors. The pearlescent knitwear. Everything about it. That Gainsborough silk - you see that in Buckingham Palace! It was great to see it here in a show." Singer Katy Perry sat in the front row, adding her star power to the proceedings. — AP



Models present creations by British fashion designer Christopher Kane during a catwalk show on the fourth day of the Autumn/Winter 2017 London Fashion Week in London.



Models present creations by Chinese-born fashion designer Huishan Zhang.



Model presents creations from the JOSEPH collection during a catwalk show.



Model presents creations from the Osman collection during a catwalk show.





FEATURES



A teacher (center) at the PEFTI Film Institute teaches students to use a video camera at the school in Lagos. — AFP photos



A make-up artist helps a student tie a traditional headscarf at the PEFTI Film Institute in Lagos.



Abiola Adenuga (left), the head of the PEFTI Film Institute, speaks to student at the school in Lagos.

# A boost for Nollywood with 'The Wedding Party' success



Students leave the PEFTI Film Institute in Lagos.



Abiola Adenuga (left), the head of the PEFTI Film Institute, speaks to students at the school in Lagos.

Nollywood film "The Wedding Party" has shown Nigerian cinema at the top of its game, with its success at the box office taking it to new audiences across Africa and the world. The country may well be in recession but Nollywood, which churns out some 2,000 films a year and is the world's second-biggest film industry outside India, has never been healthier. "The Wedding Party" is a madcap, glamorous comedy telling the story of the marriage of Dunny and Dozie, despite the misgivings of their families' rivalries. One family is Igbo and the other Yoruba—two of the main ethnic groups in Nigeria.

The film's director, Kemi Adetiba, admitted that she hadn't expected it to be so successful. In the two months since its release, the film, which is still showing in cinemas, has already generated 400 million naira (\$1.3 million, 1.2 million euros), shattering the west African nation's previous record. Until then, the record was the 178.5 million naira made by "A Trip to Jamaica", which also came out last year, showing that home-grown films can be more popular than Hollywood blockbusters.

**Coming together**

At a cinema in Lagos, the audience cried out in delight at the sight of hundreds of guests of the bride and groom trying to outdo one another in frenzied traditional dances. Betty, a 27-year-old Lagos entrepreneur, had seen the film three times already but was still laughing throughout. She said the dance contest was her favorite scene. "That's exactly the way we are in terms of weddings. Our weddings are very colorful, our weddings are a lot of laugh time, a lot of dancing, a lot of drama, that's who we are," she said, smiling.

Another cinema-goer, Joy, said the film sends out a message by mocking the intolerance and mistrust that often characterize relationships between Nigeria's different ethnic groups. "The movie is like two sides of Nigerians: the Igbos and Yorubas, the toughest part in Nigeria," she said. "It is like harmonizing the two parts together and making us understanding why we need to be together, no matter the tribe."

**Improving standards**

Critics, the public and the vocal band of Nigerian cinema bloggers have called the film "superb" and "perfectly cast". They also agree 2016 was an "exceptional" year for Nollywood. About a dozen Nigerian films including "The Wedding Party" have been shown at international film festivals, including in Toronto last September. "The CEO" for example, which came out in June last year, had a budget of more than \$1 million and couldn't be further removed from the shoestring productions that typify Nollywood. "We are in a crucial time in the history of Nigerian film-making," said Abiola Adenuga, the head of the PEFTI Film Institute in Lagos. "Professionalism is climbing to new heights with new production companies, advertising agencies, cinema houses..."

"Nigerian people are a very selective audience... internationally travelled, we know what to obtain everywhere and we expect nothing less on the home front." Since Nollywood took off in the 1980s, movies were often made in just a few weeks with a budget of less than \$20,000. Most went straight to DVD and were pirated, to be sold at traffic lights, junctions and market stalls.

**'Nigerian touch'**

But the improving quality of local productions, the explosion of pan-African satellite television channels and the opening of more modern cinemas, has helped the industry take off. In 2014, Nollywood generated \$7.2 billion or 1.4 percent of Nigeria's economy, according to the Oxford Business Group. But beyond the modernization of the sector, it's the "Nigerian touch" of the film, the exuberance of its characters and the gags that's made "The Wedding Party" a success, its director said. "The first thing that was important to us was making a Nigerian story," Adetiba added. "The story of love and romance is very universal but we didn't try to play like a Hollywood movie or that sort of thing. 'We wanted people to be able to turn around and go, 'That's my mum, that's my auntie.' And that's what happened.'" — AFP



Nigerian director Kemi Adetiba, who directed "The Wedding Party", speaks about the film in Lagos.



Abiola Adenuga, the head of the PEFTI Film Institute, speaks about the school in Lagos.

## Ex-teen idol David Cassidy says, he has dementia

Former teen idol David Cassidy said on Monday he was suffering from dementia, a day after weekend performances in California in which he forgot his words and appeared to fall off stage raised concern about his health. The former Partridge Family singer and actor, 66, told People magazine he was fighting dementia, a disease which his mother also suffered from. "I was in denial, but a part of me always knew this was coming," Cassidy told People. Cassidy told the magazine he had decided to stop touring as a musician to concentrate on his health. "I want to focus on what I am, who I am and how I've been, without any distractions," he said. "I want to love. I want to enjoy life." Cassidy's publicist said his comments were accurate but gave no further details. His comments followed videos taken by fans of the singer struggling to remember words to some of his old hits at small venue concerts in southern California on Saturday and Sunday. At one point, he appeared to fall off the side of a small stage before climbing back up.

Cassidy, whose hits "Cherish" and "I Think I Love You" had teenage girls swooning in the 1970s, has struggled with drinking and financial troubles in recent years. In 2015, he had to auction his Florida home after a bankruptcy filing. He was arrested three times for drunken driving between 2010 and 2014, and was ordered to rehab as part of his sentence in 2014. Cassidy appeared in several stage shows after his career as a solo singer declined. He played an aging former teen heartthrob in the short-lived 2009 TV comedy "Ruby & the Rockits" and was a member of the "Celebrity Apprentice" reality TV show in 2011. — Reuters



This file photo shows actor-singer David Cassidy, best known for his role as Keith Partridge on "The Partridge Family," arrives at the ABC Disney Summer press tour party in Pasadena, Calif. — AP

## Passion plus timing makes magic formula for 2017 Oscars

This year's Oscars is filled with projects fueled by passion and deeply-held personal visions that prevailed over skepticism, funding troubles and conventional wisdom. For favorite "La La Land," which took director Damien Chazelle six years to get made, and indie challenger "Moonlight," made on such a tight budget the cast and crew shared one trailer, the tortured path to the Academy Awards has only added to their allure.

Other recent films like Martin Scorsese's "Silence" was 28 years in the making, while Warren Beatty flirted for two decades with the idea of "No Rules Apply." They were notably snubbed in awards season and at the box office, however, as was Ben Affleck's personal project "Live by Night." Hollywood awards watchers say that may have little to do with the skill and commitment of the filmmakers. But certain passion projects and their creators found a way of breaking through to audiences at what turned out to be the just the right moment, years after they were first conceived.

"Timing is everything on these movies and how they resonate. It's about passion but it's also about being in the right place at the right time," said Pete Hammond, awards columnist for Deadline.com. "Moonlight," the tale of a young black man struggling to grow up in an impoverished Miami neighborhood, was drawn from the personal experiences of director Barry Jenkins and writer Tarell Alvin McCraney.

"No one was doing it for the paycheck," said "Moonlight's" Oscar-nominated supporting actress Naomie Harris. "We didn't have a publicity budget, it was all word of mouth and us doing interviews." Despite such hardships, the unsentimental view of bullying, drugs and gay issues arrived just as

Hollywood was clamoring for movies about modern, black stories rather than "maids and slaves" fare. "Moonlight" has eight Oscar nominations. The film shows "a very specific place and point of view and I think people right now want to experience genuine and authentic stories," Jenkins said.

**Fantasy comes knocking**

Meanwhile, "La La Land," a new, romantic musical with old world charm but a not-so-happy ending, is favorite to take the best picture Oscar on Sunday after getting a leading 14 nominations. Six years ago, "the idea of making an original Los Angeles-set movie was an utter fantasy," said producer Fred Berger, while accepting a Golden Globe last month, thanking voters for "ignoring conventional wisdom."

After a bitter US election campaign and a slew of sudden celebrity deaths in 2016, escaping it all with a musical has proved appealing. "Musicals have been very successful at times when the country is in a state of depression or war. When the nation is not in a good place, musicals explode," said Craig Zadan, who with Neil Meron produced Oscar-winner "Chicago" in 2002. Waiting does not always have a happy ending. Beatty directed, produced, wrote and starred in his film

about Howard Hughes. But his dream project failed with audiences who may have felt they knew enough about the eccentric business and film tycoon from Scorsese's acclaimed 2004 film "Aviator." Also, after a 15 year-absence from movie screens, many people under 30 had barely heard of Beatty.—Reuters

## Jolie has warm words for estranged husband Pitt

Angelina Jolie had warm words for her estranged husband Brad Pitt and is optimistic about the future of their family, the Hollywood star said in an interview yesterday. Jolie and Pitt, once Hollywood's most celebrated couple known as "Brangelina," are in the midst of a high-profile divorce and last month reached an agreement to keep private the details of their split and battle over custody of their six children. "We are focusing on the health of our family," Jolie said on ABC's "Good Morning America."

"We will be stronger when we come out of this because that's what we're determined to do as a family." The actress was asked if she still thought of Pitt as a wonderful father, which is how she had described him in the past. "Of course. Of course. We will always be

a family. Always." Jolie, 41, filed for divorce in September, citing irreconcilable differences. She accused Pitt of hitting their teenage son on a flight that month from France to Los Angeles, sparking tabloid gossip and an FBI probe. Pitt, 53, was later cleared by both the FBI and social workers.

Jolie is seeking sole custody of their six children, while Pitt wants joint legal and physical custody. The A-listers got married in France in August two years ago, but had been a couple since 2004. Jolie spoke to the ABC morning news program from Cambodia, where she is promoting her new film "First They Killed My Father," a true-life account of the Khmer Rouge genocide. — AFP



Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie, second from left, waves with her adopted children Pax, left, Maddox, center, Zahara, third from right, and Shiloh, second from right, while they wait to meet Cambodia's King Norodom Sihamoni in Siem Reap province, Cambodia. — AP



FEATURES



(From left) Eric Fernando Rivera, Maria Luisa Vaquero, Alam Yael Bernal, Marcos Emiliano Lopez, Marcos Aaron barcenas and Ivete Guadalupe Vallejo (center) pose for pictures during a photo session at the Factory of Arts and Crafts (FARO) (Fabrica de Artes y Oficios, in Spanish) cultural and training center, in Mexico City. — AFP photos



Maria Luisa Vaquero, owner of a street stall, poses for pictures during a photo session at the Factory of Arts and Crafts (FARO).



Former gang member Marcos Aaron Barcenas poses for pictures during a photo session at the Factory of Arts and Crafts (FARO).

# ARTS SAVE YOUNG MEXICANS FROM CRIME

**E**x-drug addict Fernando Rivera lived through hell as a youth from a poor and violent suburb of Mexico City—until art saved him. Now, aged 24, he smiles as he shows the mask with a skull design that he wears when he creates paintings with a spray-can. After spending time in a rehab clinic, he ended up at the Arts and Crafts Factory (FARO), a network of municipal centers that have saved thousands like him from lives of drugs and violence. "It is like being shipwrecked and then finding a place of refuge," he tells AFP.

### Changing lives

The dead bodies of crime victims used to be found at dawn on the spot where the vast warehouses housing the FARO now stand, on the outskirts of the capital. The spot is home to the Eastern FARO, offering free workshops in art, crafts, drama, literature and more to 2,000 locals. Rivera started off at the center six years ago on a photography course and traveled the country taking pictures of folk customs. That led to an interest in social anthropology, a subject he is now studying at university level. Without the center, he says, "my life would have been totally different."

### Arts versus drugs

"We are at war here against the gangs to see how you can recruit more young people—with culture or with drugs," says award-winning photojournalist Jesus Villaseca, who teaches at the center. He says authorities have neglected the surrounding Santa Martha Acatitla district. Cracks run through the walls of the nearby houses and the ground, unrepaired following an earthquake. There are two jails in the neighborhood but no university. That is where the FARO—the acronym means "Lighthouse" in Spanish—comes in.

It started 18 years ago and has since spawned three other similar centers in other troubled neighborhoods. One of Villaseca's students, Emiliano Lopez, aged just 12, has been taking photographs since he was six. He specializes in pictures of demonstrations. "Photographing protests is a way to give a voice to people," he says, "and also to express my own complaints."

### Escape from violence

Alam Yael Bernal recalls that his aunt brought him to the center "almost by force" when he was a child. He was living with relatives after seeing his mother killed in a shoot-out that landed his father in jail when Alam was 11.

Many of his old schoolmates are either dead, jobless or in gangs. But Bernal, now 23, is studying politics at FARO. He wants to study to become a journalist to report on politics and social justice. On arriving, "I believed in nothing. I did not trust the institutions," he recalls. "This helped me find a way out."

### Hip-hop survivor

Guadalupe Vallejo, 39, records her own hip-hop songs in a studio at the FARO. She had a birth defect that has caused her to have a speech impediment and means she has to use a wheelchair. "Don't hold back. Look at what I have done. I never stopped fighting," she says, in the lyrics of one of her songs. "You will not fall, and if you do, you'll get back up." — AFP



Eric Fernando Rivera shows his tattoos as he poses for pictures during a photo session at the Factory of Arts and Crafts (FARO).



Picture of an old Volkswagen Beetle with a throne with skulls on its roof which is one of the sculptures made at the Factory of Arts and Crafts (FARO).



Twelve-year-old Marcos Emiliano Lopez poses for pictures during a photo session at the Factory of Arts and Crafts (FARO).



Alam Yael Bernal poses for pictures during a photo session in Mexico City.



Eric Fernando Rivera shows his tattoos as he poses for pictures during a photo session at the Factory of Arts and Crafts (FARO).



Eric Fernando Rivera poses for pictures with a spray can during a photo session at the Factory of Arts and Crafts (FARO).

# UNESCO appoints Iraqi composer 'Musician for Peace'

**U**N Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) announced Monday it is appointing Iraqi composer and Oud virtuoso Nasser Shamma as its "Artist for Peace" in recognition of his life's work in favor of peace, a statement from that body said. The UN organization's Director-General, Irina Bokova, will formally honor Shamma tomorrow and appoint him to the elevated status "in recognition of his commitment to support the musical education of young people in Iraq and beyond" and for his work in promoting "the message of peace through his performances

and his dedication to the universal ideals" represented by UNESCO.

The Iraqi will be called upon to support UNESCO's work on education and for peace among young people and he will also have a prominent role in "safeguarding of cultural heritage in Iraq and in the region," the statement added. Shamma, who is 54, is renowned for his Oud performances and his music compositions for film, television and the stage. He is currently at the head of the Arab Oud House in Cairo, which he founded in 1999.

UNESCO Artists for Peace are internationally

renowned personalities who use their influence, charisma and prestige to help promote UNESCO's message and programs. UNESCO works with these distinguished personalities to heighten the public's awareness of key development issues and inform it of the Organization's action in these fields. — KUNA



Oud virtuoso Nasser Shamma



# Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2017

A boost for Nollywood with 'The Wedding Party' success

38



Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama waves beside her 2016 production titled "Flowers that Bloom Tomorrow" at a photo session during a press preview of her exhibition titled "My Eternal Soul" at the National Art Center in Tokyo yesterday. The three-month-long exhibition, "My Eternal Soul" will open today. — AFP

## Taiwan 'White Terror' brought back to life for gamers

As the 70th anniversary of a bloody political purge in Taiwan looms, a new horror video game set during the island's "White Terror" is winning rave reviews. "Detention" was created by Taiwanese developers and takes place during the crackdown on opponents by the ruling nationalist Kuomintang, when the now democratic island was still under martial law. The nightmarish 2-D game starts with the disappearance of a teacher, with players acting as two high school students trying to solve the mystery.

One scene shows a classmate hanging dead in the school auditorium. Another sees one of the students consoling her sobbing mother before entering a room with portraits of faces bleeding from their eyes. Gamers have praised it as an "emotional and educational" experience—it made the top 10 of popular gaming distribution platform Steam after its release last month, and is still on the bestseller list.

Developer Yao Shuen-ting said his team tried to capture the pervasive fear of a time when family members and colleagues were going missing. "We want to let players experience the atmosphere through the characters' perspective... to come to the conclusion themselves that this was a time

when you could die from reading a book," said Yao. Next Tuesday is the 70th anniversary of the start of a brutal massacre of anti-government protesters by KMT troops on February 28, 1947, under nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek. It was a precursor to decades of purges under Chiang and his son between 1949 and 1987, when martial law was finally lifted.

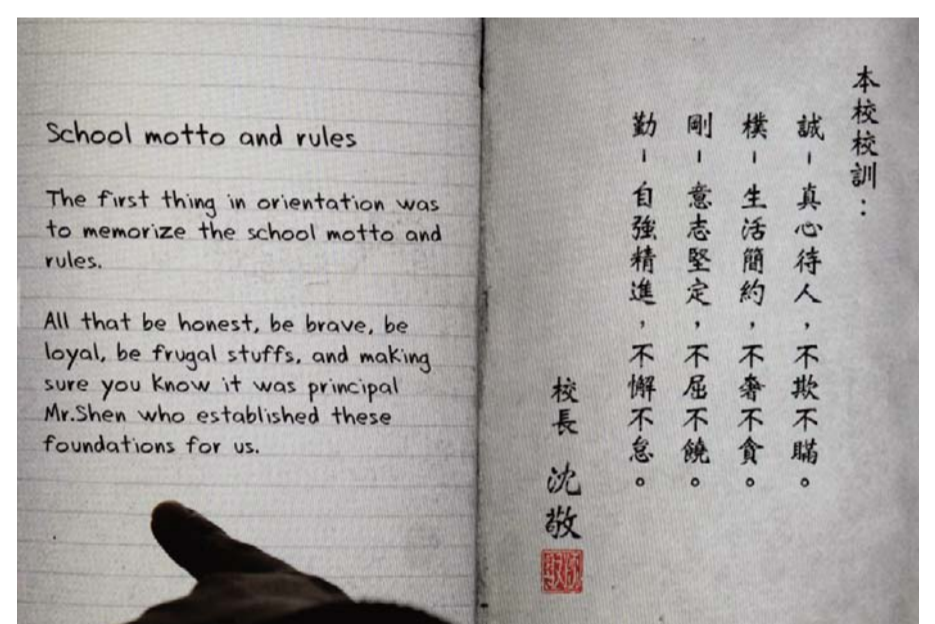
Victims were often teachers and doctors who were angry with government corruption and turned to underground organizations that created and distributed reading materials seen as subversive. "Detention" developers say they spoke with their own elderly relatives to help recreate the era, finding out finer details such as the kinds of outfits school officials would have worn. Yao describes it as almost like a film as players delve into the main characters' inner minds and eventually discover a disturbing truth.

### 'Emotional experience'

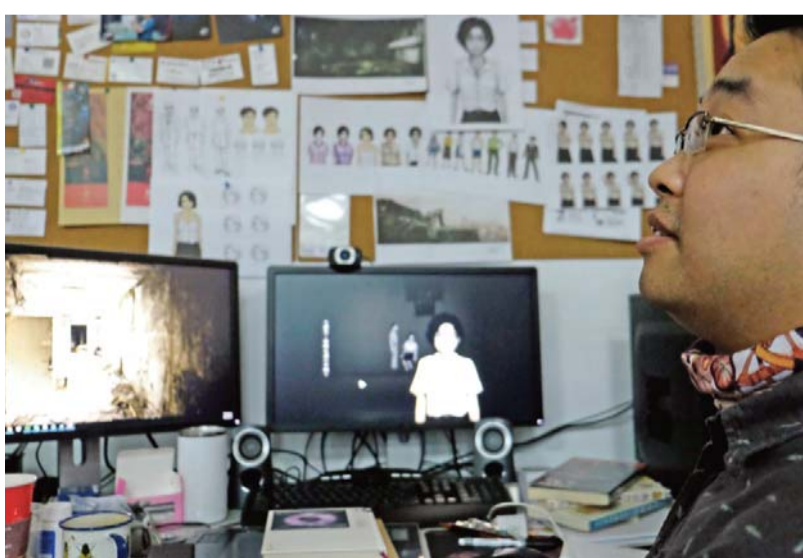
The game is aimed at 15-year-old players or older and is downloaded from Steam for Tw\$299 (\$9.67). It has gained an international following, with half its users from outside Taiwan, including China, Europe, and the US. "I don't think I've ever

seen such a deep and sensitive view into the dark corners of our inner lives and society," one overseas gamer wrote in a review on Steam. "This was a very educational and emotional experience, and it just makes me grateful that I did not experience a time and place so terrifying just to express free speech," another overseas reviewer said.

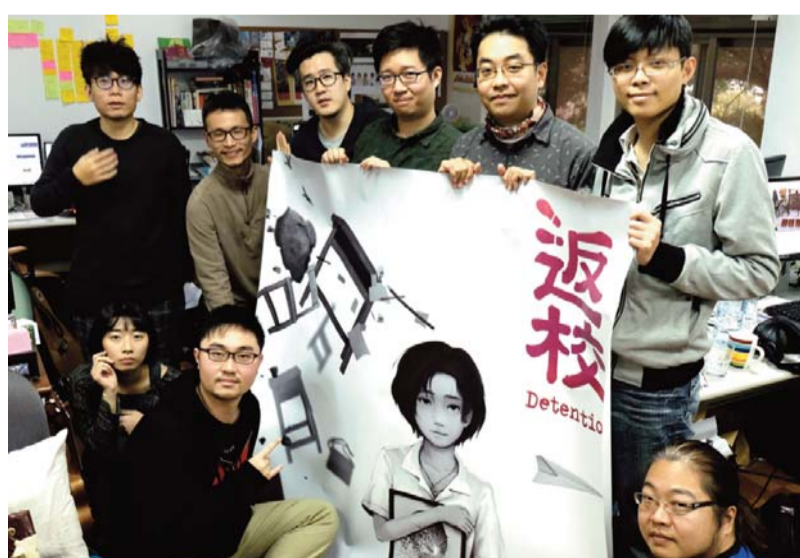
"Detention" has also hit a nerve at home, where reviewers reflected on Taiwan's hard-won freedoms and said they hoped such purges would never be repeated. "Today's democracy and freedom is built upon bodies whose blood flowed as rivers," one local player wrote. Yao said he was surprised how much the crackdown resonated with players, and counted its popularity overseas as a marker of its success. "They don't have the historical context so they will be more objective," he said, adding that some Taiwanese customs featured in the game might throw foreign users. "They might not know what they're doing. But they can experience the atmosphere of the time," says Yao. "They might even cry." — AFP



Yao Shuen-ting, a co-founder of game developer Red Candle Games, demonstrating his video game "Detention" during an interview in Taipei. — AFP photos



Yao Shuen-ting, a co-founder of game developer Red Candle Games, speaking during an interview in Taipei.



This picture shows Yao Shuen-ting (top second right), a co-founder of game developer Red Candle Games, and his colleagues displaying a poster of the video game "Detention" during an interview in Taipei.



Yao Shuen-ting, a co-founder of game developer Red Candle Games, displaying a key figure of the video game "Detention" during an interview in Taipei.

## Eiffel Tower view: Paris tourism rises after yearlong slump

Tourism to Paris is showing signs of a revival after a yearlong slump attributed to deadly extremist attacks, violent labor protests, strikes and floods. The biggest drop came in demand for Paris hotels from Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Italian tourists, according to 2016 figures released yesterday by the Paris regional tourism committee.

The Louvre Museum, Musee d'Orsay and Disneyland Paris saw visits drop between 9 and 13 percent last year and overall tourism-related revenue in the region fell more than 1 billion euros, or about 6 percent, according to the committee's estimates. Many potential Paris visitors were scared off by November 2015 attacks on cafes, a rock concert and the national stadium that killed 130

people. However by the end of 2016, hotel reservations started rising again, the report said. — AP

File photo shows police officers patrol at the pyramid outside the Louvre museum in Paris. — AP

