

Efficient use of budget needed to enhance quality of education



German hostage beheaded by Philippine militants



Border walls: 'Turnkey' answer to threats real and imagined



Kuwait Times infographic: NBA Power Rankings



## HAYEF SUBMITS DRAFT LAW TO CURB SECURITY RESTRICTIONS

FADHALAH TO FILE GRILLING AGAINST PM ON MARCH 5



Min 08°  
Max 26°  
High Tide 00:31 & 13:38  
Low Tide 06:31 & 19:33

## CYBER ATTACKS AGAINST GULF ON THE RISE

RIYADH: Gulf countries must tighten coordination to fight an increasing number of cyber attacks, experts said yesterday, as one official blamed hackers in Iran. The comments came at an international conference in the Saudi Arabian capital after the Shamoon 2 virus in January reportedly disrupted labor ministry computers. All Gulf Cooperation Council countries are at risk, Saleh Al-Mutairi, director general of the Saudi National Cyber Security Centre, told the conference.

"There is an increase in targeting GCC countries," he said, noting that both financial and government bodies have been targeted. "If we cooperate we will be able to protect all sectors," he added, reporting that his center responded to 124 "breaches" last year. GCC members Bahrain and Kuwait were also the targets of increasing attacks over the past year, according to cyber security experts.

Hackers tried to penetrate the computer systems at Bahrain's interior ministry, said Lieutenant Colonel Bassam Al-Maraj, a ministry director. Maraj said the attempted breach originated in Iran, and singled out "Bahraini people living in Iran". Bahrain, like Saudi Arabia, sees Iran as linked to unrest throughout the Middle East.

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Towards resilient cyber security as a Vision 2030 enabler



RIYADH: Participants attend the second International Cyber Security Conference in the Saudi capital yesterday. — AFP

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Islamist opposition MP Mohammad Hayef and a number of lawmakers yesterday submitted a draft law to regulate what he called "oppressive" security restrictions imposed on Kuwaitis, expatriates and bedoons. He said the measure adopted by security agencies is unconstitutional and has been used to harm a large number of people, adding that it constitutes a violation of basic human rights. Hayef said security restrictions have become a threat to the future of many people and are illogical and reactionary, since they remain in force for long durations.

Several opposition MPs have in recent months complained that security authorities impose such restrictions against people seen as opponents of the government. The restrictions could be used to prevent targeted people from getting jobs, identification cards and other amenities. Hayef said security restrictions have been imposed on some people simply for taking part in a protest or a public rally. He said that in some cases, restrictions are extended to include all members of the family. He said that currently, such restrictions are imposed randomly, and accordingly the measure requires to be regulated.

Meanwhile, MP Khaled Al-Otaibi yesterday submitted a draft law stipulating that any amendment to the election law must be approved by the constitutional court before it becomes effective. The lawmaker said the draft law requires the court to issue its verdict over the amendment within one month and the period is reduced by half when the amendment is made through an Amiri decree.

Continued on Page 13

## ARAMCO TO INVEST \$7BN IN MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR: Saudi Arabia's Aramco will invest \$7 billion in a giant Malaysian oil refinery project, Prime Minister Najib Razak said yesterday, as he declared ties with the kingdom were "at an all-time high". The deal between Aramco and Malaysian state energy firm Petronas for the \$27 billion project will be signed today, the prime minister said. "This is a huge investment and is very significant," said Najib. The vast scheme under construction in the southern state of Johor near the Singapore border is known as the

Refinery and Petrochemical Integrated Development Project.

It is being led by Petronas, which said last month development was more than 50 percent complete, with the project set to come online in 2019. Victor Shum, vice president for energy at global consultancy IHS Markit, said the deal was a "win-win situation". "Having Saudi Aramco as a partner with Petronas is a boost for the project and for Malaysia," he said.

Continued on Page 13

## DIRTY DOZEN: UN SEEKS NEW DRUGS AGAINST SUPERBUGS

PARIS: The UN's health agency urged the world yesterday to create new drugs to tackle 12 killer superbugs which are resistant to antibiotics and threaten an explosion of incurable disease. The "priority pathogens" include germs that cause deadly infections of the bloodstream, lungs, brain or urinary tract, but do not respond to an ever-longer list of medicines. In more and more cases, none of the existing drugs work. "Antibiotic resistance is growing, and we are fast running out of treatment options," said Marie-Paule Kieny, assistant director-general at the World Health Organization (WHO), which published the list. "If we leave it to market forces alone, the new antibiotics we most urgently need are not going to be developed in time."

Governments should put in place policies to boost public and private funding for drug research and development against the listed microbes, the WHO said in a statement. The agency previously warned that if nothing is done the world was headed for a "post-antibiotic" era in which common infections and minor injuries become killers once again. Bacteria can develop drug resistance when people take incorrect doses of antibiotics. Resistant strains can be contracted directly from animals, water and air, or other people.

When the most common antibiotics fail to work, more expensive types must be tried, resulting in longer illness and treatment, often in hospital.

Continued on Page 13



KUALA LUMPUR: University Malaya Vice Chancellor Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah (right) presents an honorary degree of Doctor of Letters to Saudi Arabia's King Salman yesterday. — AFP



HOLLYWOOD: (From left) Best Supporting Actor Mahershala Ali, Best Actress Emma Stone, Best Supporting Actress Viola Davis and Best Actor Casey Affleck pose in the press room during the 89th Oscars on Sunday. — AFP

## 'MOONLIGHT' TAKES BEST PIC OSCAR AFTER MIX-UP

HOLLYWOOD: Coming-of-age drama "Moonlight" won the best picture Oscar yesterday, but not before the film industry's biggest night was marred by one of the worst fiascos in its history, as "La La Land" was mistakenly handed the award first. Until the final minute the film industry's biggest night had run smoothly, marked by plenty of political statements - mainly jabs at US President Donald Trump - and light-hearted jokes from host Jimmy Kimmel.

The evening also represented a move

towards burying the #OscarsSoWhite controversy of the past two years, with two of the four acting prizes and a handful of other major awards going to African American nominees. But the stunning final stumble was a nightmare of a Hollywood ending that no one wanted to see. Tinseltown legends Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway, stars of 1967 crime classic "Bonnie and Clyde" and both past Oscar winners, were meant to give the best picture Oscar to Barry Jenkins' film. — AFP (See Pages 36-40)

## DUMBPHONES SURVIVE SMARTPHONE RISE OFFLINE AI REVOLUTION AWAIT'S 'SUPERPHONES'

BARCELONA: Dumbphones - handsets that just make calls and send texts - were set to disappear as technology moved on, but they have survived in emerging markets and among nostalgics of simpler devices in the West. Their continued appeal was underscored on Sunday in Barcelona on the sidelines of the Mobile World Congress, the world's biggest mobile expo, as Nokia unveiled a revamped version of its iconic 3310 model, more than a decade after it was phased out.

Dumbphones remain useful to telecoms operators to "relaunch or accelerate" mobile phone use as they are relatively inexpensive, said Julien Miniconi, a telecoms expert at consulting firm Wavestone. "It makes sense especially in countries where the network is not great," he added. Last year 1.5 billion smartphones were sold around the world, according to research firm Gartner. But the dumbphone market is still significant, with nearly

400 million sold in 2016. In certain emerging markets such as India, their sales still outstrip smartphones. Basic phones accounted for over 55 percent of all mobiles sold the third quarter of 2016 in the world's second most populous country, according to the International Data Corporation, a market research firm. And dumbphone sales are continuing to rise in this major market by about four percent per year.

Even in developed nations where the telecoms market is mature, the phones continue to sell. "Today they are niche markets, either for those looking for vintage or for those who are anti mobile Internet or old people," said Thomas Husson, a mobile analyst at Forrester, a research group. Young kids also use them as a first phone. Some people use them as secondary phone to lend to visiting friends and family from another country and avoid roaming charges.

British actor Eddie Redmayne, who won

an Oscar in 2015 for his role as scientist Stephen Hawking in "The Theory of Everything", made headlines as he became the latest in a growing band of smartphone refuseniks. "It was a reaction against being glued permanently to my iPhone during waking hours. The deluge of emails was constant and I found myself trying to keep up in real time, at the expense of living in the moment," the 35-year-old said of his decision to go back to a less sophisticated phone.

Within any age group, it's not hard to find people who refuse to join the smartphone revolution. "I have no interest in a smartphone - it's expensive, fragile and I don't see the use for it," said Sandrine, 39, a Paris-based illustrator. "There is also the whole commercial aspect as well, with the need to update phones all the time, without mentioning the opacity of work conditions in China" where many smartphones are made, she added.

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BARCELONA: A person holds the new "Nokia 3310" model of Finnish company HMD Global on the first day of the Mobile World Congress yesterday. — AFP (See Page 27)



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi.— KUNA photos

## BAHRAINI CROWN PRINCE VISITS KUWAIT TODAY

**KUWAIT:** Bahraini Crown Prince, Deputy Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa and his accompanying delegation is due to arrive in the country for a two-day visit today. The Bahraini delegation is due to host official talks that would highlight bilateral relations and ways to bolster them, and how to best serve the people of both nations.



Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa

The visit would solidify further brotherly relations between the two Gulf countries, the Kuwaiti envoy in Manama said. Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and the State of Kuwait Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Sheikh Azzam Al-Sabah, said in a statement that Prince Salman's planned visit depicts the distinguished and brotherly bonds between the two countries.

Kuwait and Bahrain are member states of the GCC, the Gulf Cooperation Council, founded in the early 80s with aim of boosting ties and cooperation among the six regional countries-Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar and the UAE. — KUNA

## AMIR, CROWN PRINCE MEET STATE OFFICIALS

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir received as well His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-

Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. His Highness the Amir also received at Bayan Palace First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Jaber

Al-Mubarak, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, Deputy Premier and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

His Highness Sheikh Nawaf also

received Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Acting Information Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, in addition to Health Minister Dr Jamal Mansour Al-Harbi. — KUNA

## 'KUWAIT KEEN TO SAFEGUARD RELICS'

**SFAX:** Kuwait attaches much attention to the protection and safeguarding of its historic sites and antiquities, said a Kuwaiti archaeologist yesterday. Several Kuwaiti relics have been put on the initial list of world heritage sites, Sheikh Farah Al-Sabah said on the sidelines of a lecture she delivered on Kuwait's efforts to preserve cultural heritage.

The lecture is part of the Kuwaiti Cultural Week, which coincides with Tunisia's celebrations marking "Sfax Capital of Arabic Culture for 2016." Sheikha Farah said she had expounded on Kuwait's rich historic relics, and cultural and architectural heritage, noting that recently discovered annuities date back thousand years and cover several historical eras. She added that Kuwait had also asked for putting more antiquities on the initial list of world heritage sites. Kuwaiti governmental and non-governmental agencies work together to protect and safeguard the country's historic sites and relics, Sheikh Farah pointed out. Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Ambassador in Tunis Ali Al-Thufeiri lauded the vital role of Kuwaiti authorities, mainly museums and the Ministry of Information, in the promotion of Kuwaiti antiquities.

He hoped that more similar lectures would be delivered in the future in order to contribute to consolidating and cementing people-to-people relations. — KUNA



## JAZEERA AIRWAYS ANNOUNCES KEY SPONSORSHIP OF SHEIKH SABAH AL-AHMAD HERITAGE VILLAGE

**KUWAIT:** Jazeera Airways, the first private airline in Kuwait and the Middle East, announced yesterday its key sponsorship of the Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Heritage Village. Held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the village is part of the ongoing sixth edition of the Gulf Popular Heritage Festival which takes place from January 15 to March 15, 2017 and reflects Kuwait's cultural heritage and the shared amity and traditions with the GCC neighbors. As a proud Kuwaiti airline, Jazeera Airways continues to support activities that honor Kuwait's culture and history and firm-

ly believes in Kuwait's and neighboring countries' ability to unite over the bond of shared values and history. The Heritage Village provides fantastic educational opportunities and a wide range of fun activities for children and adults alike visiting from Kuwait and from across the region.

Highlighting Jazeera Airways' role in the sponsorship, Dr Mohamed Barakat, Vice President Marketing and Product said, "Our partnership with Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Heritage Village is a matter of great honor for us and an ideal opportunity to celebrate Kuwait's rich history across a magnificent event that promotes such rich cultural

exchange while celebrating the true spirit of nationalism. We are extremely proud to be the very first airline to sponsor such a visionary project."

As the airline pioneer grows and reaches new highs, Jazeera Airways seeks new ways to give back to the local community. This latest sponsorship falls under Jazeera Airways' CSR strategy that has its focus on providing a platform for Kuwait's talented youth with minds embedded in creativity and a yearning for arts, craft and cultural music and support for local entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Consistently, the airline company strives

to take the lead in promoting progressive growth in all segments of the society while simultaneously keeping alive Kuwait's past, honoring its legacy and reminding Kuwait's youth of how their ancestors history, the GCC brotherhood, had sown the seeds of culture and civilization throughout on their fruitful voyages.

Continuing to foster relations with the Kuwaiti community, Jazeera Airways continues to strongly focus on cultural sponsorships that promote cultural exchanges while welcoming people across the region to visit Kuwait and experience its warm and extraordinary hospitality.

## CONFERENCE ON CHILD PROTECTION

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Interior said yesterday it will hold a regional conference on the protection of children from social media hazards between March 21-23. The conference, the first of its kind in Kuwait, will be held under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Ministry of Interior said in a press release. The event will be attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, along with a constellation of scholars and specialists, it added. The conference will feature several workshops that aim to raise public awareness about social media perils, and to look into the effective ways of protecting children from relevant risks and instilling noble values into their minds, the ministry noted. — KUNA



## OOREDOO CELEBRATES NATIONAL HOLIDAYS IN SOUQ MUROUJ

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo, the fastest network in Kuwait, celebrated the national holidays with hundreds of visitors of Murouj Market, a monthly weekend market for local entrepreneurs and businesses. Ooredoo held several activities related to its national holidays song, performed by famous singer Balqees, in addition to distributing Kuwaiti flags and holding kids' activities and competition. The event also included a performance by Dayem Al-Saif band for traditional and folklore music.

The market includes local farm produce, artisanal food products and crafts, with a 'street food' section aimed at highlighting the culinary diversity of Kuwait's local food community. The market also offers a section dedicated for children's activities. It will be held on weekends, and is ongoing from March 2017. The next market is scheduled to take place in March.

In a statement about this participation, Ooredoo Kuwait stressed its commitment to supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs, especially through this engaging project. This sponsorship comes in tandem with the company's social responsibility strategy, which in turn is based on the core values of Ooredoo, of caring, connecting and challenging.

Ooredoo's special song for Kuwait's national holidays reached 3 million views on YouTube

within one week of its launch. The song also placed in the top 3 trends on Twitter and YouTube. Entitled "What's Your Story?" The song is performed by the famous singer Balqees and features talk show personality Abla Fahita. The song was written by lyricist Saad Al-Musailem, is composed by Fahad Al-Nasser and directed by Ahmed Al-Najjar.

The video clip of the song features a unique

performance by well-known Egyptian puppet character Abla Fahita, who received nationwide recognition for her satirical talk show in which she humorously tackles trending social and political issues. The video also features well-known social media influencers such as Yaqoub Boushahri, Hessa Al-Loughani, Louluah Al-Aslawi, Hessa and Munirah Al-Kulaib, and the Kuwait National Television Music Band.



## KIB VISITS OTHMAN ABD AL-LATIF AL-OTHMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**KUWAIT:** As part of its ongoing social responsibility strategy focused on promoting the growth and development of the younger generations, a team from the Corporate Communications Unit at Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently organized a visit to Othman Abd Al-Latif Al Othman Elementary School for Boys. The visit took place in celebration of the back to school season as well as the National Day holidays.

Speaking on the sidelines of the visit, Fahad Al-Sarhan, Team Leader of Corporate Communications at KIB, said: "Through these ongoing visits to schools all across Kuwait, we aim to encourage students at every academic level to make the most out of their education; as we truly believe that education is the key to the country's prosperity and future development."

Sarhan also noted: "These visits always present us with the opportu-

nity to interact and engage with the students on a personal level. During this visit our team presented the students with gifts and mementos, congratulating them on the beginning of a new academic semester and wishing them success throughout their academic journey."

KIB has maintained an all-inclusive approach when it comes to social responsibility, aiming to engage with all the different segments of the Kuwaiti community. In particular, the Bank devotes special attention to student-focused initiatives, as it believes this segment to be one of the main pillars of society. Accordingly, KIB supports various educational initiatives and activities that aim to nurture the children and youth of Kuwait, seeking to motivate them and develop their abilities to enable them to drive national development in the future.



# DOCTOR DEPORTED OVER MEDICAL ERROR

NO SHOOTING NEAR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

By Meshaal Al-Enezi and A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The misdemeanors court sentenced an expatriate doctor to jail and deportation due to a medical error that happened during an operation that caused complications to a female patient. Lawyer Houraa Habib filed the complaint on behalf of her client, whose condition worsened after the surgical procedure. But the doctor failed to correct the situation, and instead sent her to another medical center, according to the complainant. Habib said that they will also file a case at the civil court for compensation.

### Decision overruled

Meanwhile, the administrative court yesterday cancelled a decision by Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi decision to appoint a new director of the Capital health zone, and compelled him to appoint the more senior Dr Waleed Al-Bosairi instead. In addition, the court fined the health minister to pay the case expenses plus KD 100 in the case filed by lawyer Sultan Al-Tawalah contesting the decision.

### No shooting

A security source strongly denied social media reports claiming that a shooting took place during a fight among a group of young men along the Arabian Gulf Road near the National Assembly. Gunfire shots that can be heard in video footage that went viral on social media were only warning shots fired by police to disperse around 40 individuals gathered at the scene, the source explained. Police had received a report about a fight between 13 men who had just concluded celebrating the national anniversaries. On rushing to the scene, policemen tried to stop the fight in vain, so they had to fire warning shots, the source indicated. Eight of the suspects were arrested and referred to the juvenile police, he added. The source stressed that none of the men had any firearms in their possession, and strongly denied any political aspects to the incident. Finally, the sources urged the public to avoid spreading rumors and inaccurate information without checking with relevant authorities.

Extraordinary sessions

President of the Municipal Council Muhalhal Al-Khalid said procedures taken at the council to hold two extraordinary sessions are correct. Khalid said the sessions were held at the request of members and approved by Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, State Minister of Municipal Affairs Mohammad Al-Jabri. Separately, Kuwait Municipality's Director General Ahmad Al-Manfouhi said the executive apparatus at the municipality pays special attention to the Ministry of Public Works' developmental projects that aim at creating and improving roads and bridges. He said the municipality formed a special committee to support development projects and minimize difficulties the projects face.

## ISLANDS' CLEAN-UP LAUNCHED

**KUWAIT:** A leading environmental activist announced yesterday launching 'environmental voyages' for clearing up Kuwaiti islands from discarded waste and unwanted materials. The campaign to clear up the islands will be with tools and equipment provided by the municipality, said Abdulaziz Al-Shatti, mastermind of the campaign, 'Kuwait a green oasis,' beginning on and around Kubbar island. New trash bins will be placed on the national islands, he said, adding that the campaign will begin by hoisting the national flag onto Kubbar. He however indicated that some preliminary activities had already been done, clearing up Al-Sulaibikhat and Oshairej shores. The campaign which began yesterday aims at lifting discarded waste. Leaflets will be distributed to islands' goers to guide them about means to preserve the marine environment, particularly the islands. Kubbar and Failaka are believed to be mostly polluted among the Kuwaiti islands. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait City and the Liberation Tower as seen from the Mubarakya Market. — KUNA

# KUWAIT'S INFLATION RISES 3.29 PERCENT

**KUWAIT:** Inflation in consumer prices rose 3.29 percent in January compared to the same month in 2016, according to Kuwait Central Statistical Bureau. General index dropped 0.07 percent in January compared to December, on monthly basis. Main index for the major group (food and beverages) rose 0.19 percent in January compared to the same month last year. The group posted drop on monthly basis at 0.32 percent.

Main index of the second group (tobacco) stabilized on monthly basis but rose 0.07 percent on annual basis. That of the third group (clothes and sports uniforms) dropped by 1.48 percent on annual basis; by 0.24 percent on monthly basis. Inflation in the fourth group (household) climbed 6.44 percent on annual basis. That of the fifth group (furniture and maintenance equipment) rose four percent on yearly basis.

The sixth group (health) posted rise in inflation by 1.55 percent on annual basis. That of the seventh group (transports) jumped on annual basis by 10.67 percent; monthly by 0.15 percent. Prices in the 8th group (communications) stabilized. Inflation in the ninth group (leisure and culture) climbed on yearly basis by 0.16 percent. That of the 10th group (education) also rose annually by 0.31 percent. — KUNA

## ELECTRONIC PASSPORTS STOLEN FROM DOHA CENTER

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Detectives and forensics department officers are carrying out an investigation to identify thieves who stormed Doha service center and stole several blank electronic passports, nationality certificates and modern equipment, along with a safe with unknown contents, a security source said. Further details about the incident could not immediately be known. The Interior Ministry started distributing electronic passports immediately after the national holidays at service centers

around the country. In related news, the Foreign Ministry announced yesterday that it would declare soon the conditions for issuing electronic passports for diplomats and holders of special passports.

The ministry is setting up a website to publicize all terms and details regarding the issuance of these passports. A special center has been set up at the ministry headquarters for releasing the e-passports, Ambassador Dhari Al-Ejran, the assistant foreign minister for protocol affairs, said in a statement to Kuwait News Agency.



The Kuwaiti Embassy in Oman celebrates the national days.



The Kuwaiti Embassy in Morocco celebrates the national days.

# KUWAITI EMBASSIES CONTINUE NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's embassies, consulates, and diplomatic missions abroad continued yesterday celebrations marking the 56th anniversary of the National Day, 26th anniversary of the Liberation Day, and 11th anniversary of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's assumption of power. The national celebrations were mainly organized by the Kuwaiti embassies in Serbia, Algeria, Kazakhstan and Australia.

In Serbia, Ambassador Yousef Abdulsamad threw a party to mark the ongoing national festivities, during which he congratulated HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah and HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in addition to the Kuwaiti government and people on the occasion, wishing Kuwait lasting progress and prosperity, embassy in Belgrade said in a statement. Abdulsamad also affirmed moves to boost Kuwaiti-Serbian ties through increasing exchange of visits between officials of both countries, and boosting bilateral economic, investment, and cultural cooperation through forming a joint committee for economic cooperation. In Algeria, Ambassador Mohammad Al-Shabu held a reception to mark Kuwait's national celebrations, in the presence of a number of senior Algerian officials and parliamentarians, in addition to heads of diplomatic missions, prominent cultural, media, and business figures, and religious scholars, congratulating the country's leadership, government and people on the occasion.

Kuwait continues steadily and faithfully to implement its foreign strategy which is based on humanitarian aims to support its friends on regional and international levels, Shabu said during the reception, adding that the country also strives to host an international conference on the suffering of Palestinian children in order to highlight the Israeli violations of children's rights, and support the Palestinian people in regaining their legitimate rights.

In Kazakhstan, Ambassador Tariq Al-Faraj held a reception ceremony to mark Kuwait's national days' celebrations in presence of senior Kazakh officials, heads of diplomatic missions and organizations.



The Kuwaiti Embassy in Australia celebrates the national days. — KUNA photos

During the ceremony, the Kuwaiti diplomat affirmed that the Kuwaiti-Kazakh deep relations continue to progress and flourish in various fields, pointing out the two countries' common vision toward several regional and international issues such as disarmament, international security, and peaceful settlements of disputes.

In Australia, Ambassador Najeeb Al-Bader held a grand ceremony to mark Kuwait's national festivals in presence of a number of senior officials, parliamentarians, speakers, lawmakers, heads of diplomatic missions, commercial and economic authorities and Kuwaiti students. During the ceremony, Bader congratulated the Kuwaiti leadership, government and people on the occasion and recalled Australia's major contribution in the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 when the Australian army deployed over 1,800 soldiers, indicating that the Australian stand will always remain "immortal" in the Kuwaiti people's memories.

On Sunday in Rabat, former Moroccan ambassa-

dor to Kuwait Idris Al-Katani said that stances of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah in support of the Kingdom of Morocco were appreciated on all levels. His remark came on the sidelines of a reception held by the embassy in Rabat on the occasions.

In Muscat, Ambassador Fahd Al-Mutairi held a reception at the embassy's premises, where he commended the recent visit of HH the Amir to the sultanate, which reflected deep-seated ties between the brotherly countries.

On his part, Consul General in Dubai Theyab Al-Risheedi welcomed UAE Minister of State for Financial Affairs Abdullah A-Tayer and Dubai Police deputy chief Dhahi Khalfan, in addition to a host of dignitaries to a reception held for the happy occasions. Risheedi hailed in a statement the historic relations with the UAE, both on official and public levels, extending utmost appreciation to official entities of the UAE, especially the government of Dubai, for sharing celebrations with Kuwait which, according to him, are "an example to be followed." — KUNA



The Kuwaiti Consulate in Dubai celebrates the national days.



The Kuwaiti Embassy in Serbia celebrates the national days.

## SPECIAL REPORT

# EFFICIENT USE OF BUDGET NEEDED TO ENHANCE EDUCATION'S QUALITY, RANKING IN KUWAIT

## EDUCATION EXPENDITURE PER STUDENT ABOVE AVERAGE; QUALITY REMAINS LOW

**KUWAIT:** Global Investment House (Global), a regional Asset Management and Investment Banking firm headquartered in Kuwait with offices in major capital markets in the MENA region, issued yesterday its report on the education sector in Kuwait.

Kuwait's education sector is undergoing reforms commenced by its Integrated Education Reform Program (2011-19), which is focused on establishing the curricula, improving learning outcomes, bringing about competent teaching and school leadership, and refining the accountability and efficiency of the education system. The Kuwaiti government regularly seeks advice of the World Bank with the aim to reform its education system. Currently, it is concentrated on coordinating its courses with the requisites of the employment market. Schooling is mandatory for all children aged 6-14. Free primary, secondary, and tertiary education is available for Kuwaiti nationals at the public schools. The country raised its education sector's contribution at a CAGR of 14.8 percent from 2010 to 2014. Kuwait apportioned about 15 percent of its total budget on education in 2015.

Basic education in Kuwait comprises the elementary stage (five years), the intermediate stage (four years), and secondary stage (three years). The Ministry of Education (MoE) supervises the education system and the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) oversees higher education beyond secondary school. General education in Kuwait comprises pre-primary, primary and secondary school education. In 2014-15, the country had 1,300 government and private schools (excluding schools for adult education). Of these schools, 800 were government schools enrolling 363,235 students and 9 religious institutes enrolling 2826 students. In private schools, there were 257,405 students. After the completion of general education, institutions such as Kuwait University, colleges, and applied educational centers provide training in fields related to basic education, business studies, health sciences, technology studies, and nursing. University education is provided through Kuwait University, the only public university in the country, together with a number of private universities. Established in 1966, Kuwait University offers courses including scientific and educational specializations, social sciences, and humanities.

### Kuwait excels in literacy rate

According to World Bank data, the youth literacy rate (population 15-24 years) in Kuwait was 99.5 percent in 2015, the highest being 99.7 percent in 2005. It stood at 99.4 percent for female youths (percent of females aged 15-24) in 2015, the highest being 99.8 percent in 2005. Kuwait's educational policy is aimed at providing equal access to education to all children, including those with special needs; very much in alignment with all the advanced education systems. The adult literacy rate (percent of people aged 15 and above) in Kuwait for females (percent of females ages 15 and above) was 95.2 percent in 2015 and 96.8 percent for males.

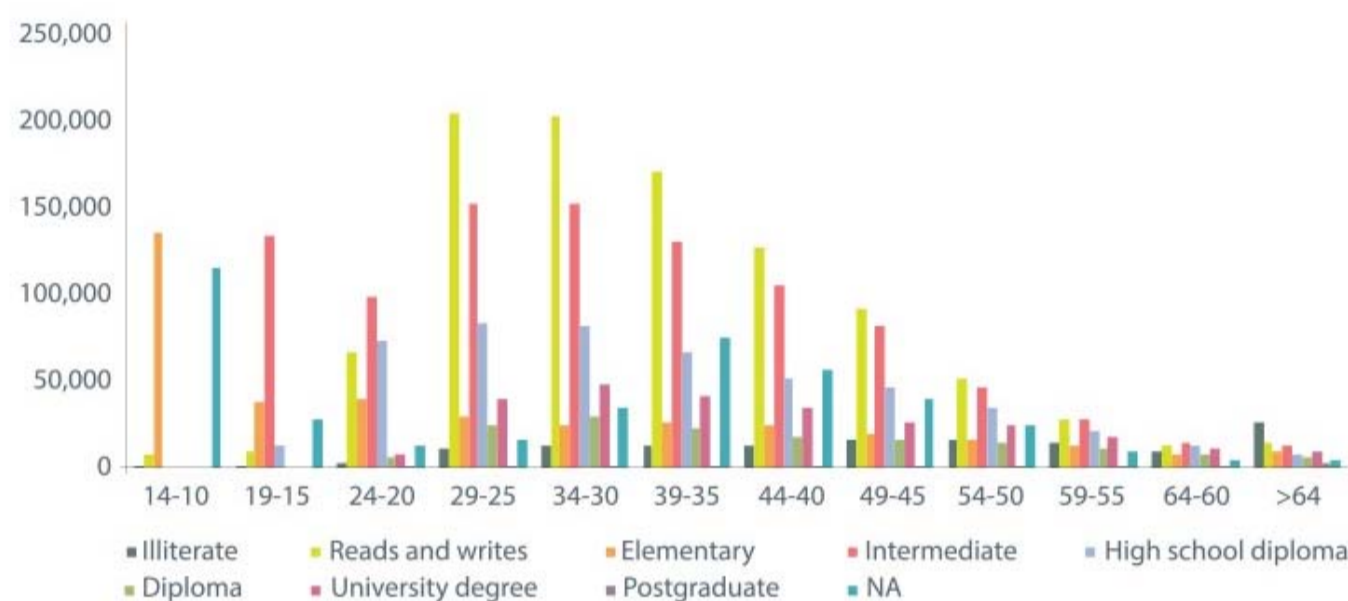
### Government education

In Kuwait, delivery of quality education is broadly discerned as the government's obligation. In 2014-15, the share of total government schools and religious education institutes is around 62.2 percent, with private schools accounting for the rest of 37.8 percent of the total schools in Kuwait. In the recent years, the government spending on education has shown rapid progress, with the leadership continuing to emphasize on the significance of education for producing sustainable employment for Kuwaitis and training them with the expertise to contend in the global market. Government's education expenditure grew at an annual average rate of 14.4 percent in the four years to the 2014-15 fiscal year and constitutes 15 percent of the total government expenditure. While this may seem lower than the 17.5 percent average for the GCC, rationalizing the information in terms of expenditure per student, it seems that Kuwait spends much higher than the GCC aver-



The Ministry of Education's new headquarters building.

### Education status by age



Source: World Bank

age i.e. around \$14,300 per student as against \$11,000 per student for the GCC. Noteworthy, Kuwait's expenditure per student is even higher than the average of \$9,000 per student for OECD countries and \$12,000 per student for Australia and the US.

### Considerable improvement

The World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2016-17 ranked Qatar, the UAE and Bahrain high in terms of their system's educational quality. Within the GCC region, the quality of education in countries such as Oman and Kuwait is relatively low. The primary education enrollment rate was high in Kuwait, whereas the secondary education enrollment rate was relatively lower at 93.6 percent. To address the problem of poor education quality, an authority needs to be formed under the prime minister's purview to ensure adherence to quality. The authority along with international education experts should conduct international workshops and courses for both under-

graduate and post graduate education, and technical and religious education. Teachers would require continuous training as well as an introduction of modern technology in education. The education quality in Kuwait is not even at par with its GCC peers in terms of qualification of staffs and curriculum drafting.

### Upcoming projects

The government is planning to transform its education sector by building excellent world-class universities and encouraging higher education. For instance, China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC)'s Middle East unit won a \$580 million contract in June 2016, to build Sabah Al-Salem University City, run by the Kuwait government. The establishment would be set up as one of the largest campuses in the world and would feature world-class educational facilities. The development would comprise seven uniquely-shaped buildings. The project's management facilities would be constructed, operated and maintained by CSCEC.

### Growth drivers: Government support

Government spending on education has accelerated in recent years largely due to the government's educational commitment both as a pre-requisite for economic diversification and social good.

Despite declining oil revenues, developing knowledge and expertise of locals remains a top priority, throughout K-12 education. Ongoing educational reforms should also see bigger technology usage in education, thus creating opportunities for IT players. The Kuwaiti government's approach to transform its education sector by developing the curriculum, encouraging efficient teaching, constructing distinguished universities, and stimulating higher education bode well for the progress of the sector. Government expenditure on education affairs and services has grown at an annualized rate of 14.4 percent in the four years until 2014-2015 to KD 2.7 billion (\$9.0 billion), accounting for 15.0 percent of the total expenditure.

The government has launched its second phase of the school education quality improvement project at the end of March 2015. Kuwait's MoE and NCED along with the World Bank, brought into effect its five-year technical cooperation agreement concentrating on education reforms. The main agenda of the program was providing support to capacity building, improving the quality of teaching and learning, and supervising impact on schools and students. The project will also focus on expanding the capacity of the MoE and the NCED with regard to policy implementation, decision-making, and execution of integrated reforms.

The program is a part of Kuwait's national education development plan and is closely associated with the ministry's Integrated Education Reform Program.

The government also offers overseas education scholarships to local students to help them

develop requisite skills needed for working in sectors in which the country is currently facing a dearth of workforce.

### Favorable demographics

The demand for education across Kuwait will be driven by population growth combined with an influx of expats. An improvement in birth rate, along with increasing number of expats, has led to rapid growth in the population base the country.

According to IMF estimates, Kuwait population is anticipated to increase at a 2.8 percent CAGR between 2015 and 2020. A rapidly expanding school-and-college-going population base is expected to increase student enrollments, thus driving the education demand in the country.

### Private sector participation

Rising demand for English medium schools from expats has led to a rise in the number of international schools. Growth in the number of private colleges is also anticipated with public institutions reaching full utilized levels amid increasing enrollments. The private sector is also gaining prominence with the rise in demand for international curriculum and government's initiatives to form public private partnerships (PPPs). Driven by these factors, the number of private schools increased from 475 in 2011-12 to 491 in 2014-15. The Kuwait Schools Development Program was introduced with the objective of constructing schools in partnership with the private sector under the build-operate-transfer (BOT) model. Private investors were required to construct, finance, and maintain the facilities, while the MoE was in charge of managing the curriculum and school administration.

### Rising income level

The GCC countries rank among the wealthiest in the world. A high level of personal disposable income, coupled with a strong inclination to spend on quality education, will act the greatest driver for the education sector. Kuwait's per capita GDP (at current prices) forecasted at \$29,363 in 2015 is estimated to increase at a 2.2 percent CAGR by 2020. High and growing income level will most likely improve spending on education. Rising income levels, coupled with emerging economic activity in the country, are likely to improve education spending.

### Additional private schools

Student enrollment in Kuwaiti private schools increased at a CAGR of 5.4 percent compared with a CAGR of 0.9 percent in public schools during 2010-15. This indicates a shift toward private schools for better quality of education. With Kuwait's population expected to grow 2.8 percent (according to the IMF) over the next four years, we anticipate the private sector to expand 4.0 percent over the next 3-5 years, translating to additional 10,000-11,000 students per year. To cater to this rise in students, there is



an opportunity to open 6-7 schools with a capacity of 1,500 students each year.

### Tertiary segment

Tertiary education enrollment rate remains very low in Kuwait at 27.0 percent compared to countries such as Saudi Arabia (61.1 percent) and Bahrain (36.8 percent). Kuwait University is the only public university which is operating at full capacity. Though there are private universities operating in Kuwait, there still remains potential for setting up affiliated universities, like in Qatar and UAE to attract Kuwaiti and expat students who go overseas for higher quality education. There is potential for growth in the secondary segment as well with enrollment rate at 93.6 percent for Kuwait compared to more than 101-110 percent for Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

### Provision of quality education

The quality of education in current schools remains a concern for the MoE. The quality of education compared to the West and even some GCC remains low due to a lack of qualified staff. Therefore, this offers an opportunity for establishing high-quality schools to fill the gap. To address this concern, the Kuwait's government is undertaking some measures to develop high-quality schools by launching the Kuwait Schools Development Program in partnership with the private sector. The first phase would cover the development of nine schools (one middle school, three elementary and five kindergartens). This phase would also include accommodation for school faculty, and an Olympic-size swimming pool.

### Popular schools

Within the private school domain, the demand for international schools has increased as both Kuwaiti nationals and expats prefer enrolling their children in English-medium schools. The western curricula are most popular, followed by schools offering Arabic or bilingual curriculum. Of the total private schools in 2014-2015, over 340 were foreign schools, with the remaining 150 being Arabic. According to Edarabia, of the top 12 best schools, 5 of them are bilingual. Bilingual schools derive their popularity from the fact that they combine Islamic values and subjects with western curriculum.

### E-Learning market

To expedite effective learning, Kuwait is gradually deploying information and communications technology (ICT). The government has been investing heavily in modernizing the education system. In 2011, Kuwait's education ministry launched the e-education project. The program focused on digitizing textbooks by replacing textbooks with e-books starting with the high schools. The government also rolled out e-learning products across schools. In May 2016, the MoE in collaboration with Microsoft conducted training sessions on technology for 650 teachers aimed at driving learning transformation across Kuwait schools. The education net project was launched to connect every government school and administrative facilities in the country to a nationwide data network. This undoubtedly indicates a huge market for providers of e-learning content, tools, technology and platforms. There is huge potential for e-learning in the region as universities solely imparting online education are set up gradually.

### Opportunity for PPP

Kuwait's alluring policies and regulatory framework for public-private partnership (PPP) have enticed domestic as well as foreign participants to invest in the country's infrastructure, education and healthcare facilities. The Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP), in association with the MoE, invited companies to participate in the Kuwait schools PPP development program (the project) in accordance with the PPP law. The project involves designing, building, financing, operating and transferring nine schools (five kindergartens, three elementary, one middle school) and one Olympic-size swimming pool comprising 10 lanes. This was in line with the Kuwait Development Plan (2010-2014) policy objectives, which aimed to increase private-sector involvement in the education sector.

### Real Estate funds

We believe there is an opportunity for real estate funds to build schools and lease them to school operators in Kuwait with the following benefits:

\* The funds can potentially earn up to 10.0 percent on the capital cost of the school.

\* From a school's point of view, they can shift immediately to new premises without incurring huge capital costs.

\* It can be particularly beneficial if the government requires schools to move to a less congested area in the future.

We have considered scenarios to build 5,000 sq. m and 7,000 sq. m bilingual schools. The size of the 5,000 sq. m bilingual school corresponds to the size of some private schools in Kuwait. The 7,000 sq. m bilingual school has been considered keeping in mind the school's future requirement for class/grade addition.

The capital cost of constructing a 5,000 sq. m school came in at KD7.5mn, while that for a 7,000 sq. m school was KD10.5mn. With 9.0-10 percent yield for real estate funds (charged in the form of rent), these schools can generate net margin of 8-16 percent, which is reasonable considering the margins generated by listed educational companies. On the contrary, leasing out to Asian curriculum schools would generate lower yield for real estate funds (4-6 percent) as the economics of these schools would not allow higher rent.

### Key Challenges

#### Shortage of skilled teachers

The rise in demand for education is to a large extent being met by the opening of new schools and colleges; however, there is a shortage of skilled teachers in Kuwait. The country primarily depends on expats to bridge this gap. The staff's level of experience or skill determines the effectiveness of teaching imparted. According to UNESCO, in 2014, 75 percent of the teachers at the primary level and 79 percent at primary level were trained in Kuwait.

#### High turnover of teachers

Expats form the majority of teaching staff in Kuwait. The minimum income level for expats is less than that offered to nationals. In addition, a teacher's remuneration might vary by nationality. The salary of a teacher from the West could be KD800-KD2,000 but teachers with similar qualifications from countries like India, Pakistan and Philippines might be offered anything between KD170 and KD250, capped at KD400. This makes it very difficult for teachers to survive in the country with the increasing costs of living. Thus, these professionals are always seeking positions in other schools offering higher pay. Some also turn to private tuitions to deal with the rising cost of living.

#### High construction costs for schools

One of the major obstacles faced by the education sector in Kuwait is the high construction cost involved in building schools. Constructing a new school is a capital-intensive task and attaining land could be a major cost element. Amid the current global

investment climate, procuring funding for a Greenfield project is difficult. Although banks offer loans to participants in the sector, such facilities are restricted to entities with credible track records.

#### Government Control on Fee Hike

MoE-imposed regulations on fee hikes are another obstacle that private players face. A hike in private school fees is subject to regulatory approval. For instance, in November 2015, the MoE suspended 200 private school files on the context of violation of ministry rules. The violations were mostly in form of illegal increase of the school fees and non-payment of stipulated wages to teachers. According to the law, fees cannot be raised more than 3 percent every three years.

#### Enrollment rate in higher education remains low

Enrollment in tertiary education remains low in the GCC countries as compared to developed nations, reflecting a disparity between skills imparted to graduates and the labor market requirements. The major challenge that Kuwait's higher education faces is that the number of high school graduates are way more than what the Kuwait University can take in. Those students that don't get a place at the Kuwait University choose to join Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET). This also has its precincts as PAAET offers only limited programs/majors and that too the number of students attending remains much greater than what the faculty can take in.

# ZAIN GROUP PUBLISHES THOUGHT LEADERSHIP REPORT: 'LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO PROTECT RIGHTS OF CHILDREN'

## RAISING AWARENESS OF THE PLIGHT OF CHILDREN IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

**BARCELONA:** Zain Group, the leading mobile telecom innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa, announces the publication of its annual thought leadership report, this year entitled, 'Leveraging Technology to Protect the Rights of Children.'

The report launched during the 2017 Mobile World Congress Barcelona, outlines the importance of utilizing technology to ensure that mechanisms are in place to protect children from all forms of abuse. Millions of children around the world today suffer from various forms of child abuse and Zain Group has long since been a firm proponent of protecting the rights of children in the countries in which it operates and across the region.

The Digital Age and the rapid advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have brought forward rapid development and opportunities for children - for example, ready access to information and the ability to seek support when in need, including through child helplines. However, ICT can also create considerable risks that have the potential to enable the spread of certain forms of child abuse including several aspects of abusive behavior. The emergence of cyberbullying, inappropriate online content and predatory behavior towards children are directly linked to the global spread of ICT.

Some startling facts included in the report highlight the vulnerability of displaced children in areas of conflict their risk being exposed to physical danger is immense, ranging from the threat of attack, sexual abuse, kidnapping, neglect or recruitment into armed militias. It is estimated that there are 13.7 million displaced children around the world, and 7.5 million of them are Syrian children who are in dire need of assistance. As conflict rises in Iraq, the need of assistance rises too; as one out of every three Iraqi children (4.7 million) require humanitarian assistance. These staggering facts show that children, especially those living in warzones, need to be protected.

These situations are more prevalent in conflict situations, where there is often a breakdown in the rule of law as well as other strenuous situations such as displacement. Scenarios such as these can be found in a number of countries across the Middle East and Africa, and Zain feels a pressing need to raise awareness to this tragic state of affairs and contribute to its rectification.

Given this context, Zain's 2017 Thought Leadership Report examines the role and potential for technology to address child abuse by promoting opportunities and mitigating risks. Given that ICT is a key enabler of socio-economic development on a universal level, it is important that stakeholders work together to ensure that the dangers associated with it are addressed without eliminating the inherent benefits that it offers humanity.

### Tremendous potential

Commenting on the publication of the company's latest report, Zain Group CEO, Scott Gegenheimer commented, "The mobile industry with its fast paced evolution has tremendous potential to raise awareness and provide radically beneficial

solutions that could address the plight of the most vulnerable segments of society, particularly children. Zain is committed to the safety and well-being of the communities it serves and we hope that through this report our efforts to raise awareness and offer solutions are also replicated and championed by our industry peers and beyond." Meanwhile, Jennifer Suleiman, Zain Group's Head of Corporate Sustainability said, "We operate on the doorstep of a series of ongoing conflicts, primarily in Syria and Iraq, which have resulted in arguably the worst humanitarian crises of modern times and the most widespread case of human displacement since WWII.

The circumstances place the children of the region in far greater risk of facing abuse, and we feel compelled to raise attention to these circumstances, while also actively addressing them in our own right." Natasha Jackson, Head of Public Policy and Consumer Affairs, GSMA said, "We would like to congratulate Zain on the work they are doing to harness the power of mobile to help protect vulnerable children, whilst actively combatting the misuse of their services by those who seek to sexually exploit children."

Magdalena Aguilar, Head of Programme Development at Child Helpline International said, "We at Child Helpline International are happy that Zain Group sees child helplines as an essential tool for child online protection. We join this call for action and urge everybody to support us in our fight to protect children when they are at their most vulnerable."

Dr Joanna Rubinstein, President and CEO, World Childhood Foundation USA said, "As a partner in child protection, World Childhood Foundation USA is proud of the important work and leadership of Zain to achieve one of the critical SDGs' targets, 16.2: ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children by 2030."

Across the globe, socially responsible organizations continue to take measures to leverage their core business to help tackle the burning issue of child abuse. "Leveraging Technology to Protect the Rights of Children" highlights how ICT also enables the development of tools and mechanisms to tackle child abuse more effectively and universally than ever before.

Through ICT, new opportunities have emerged that allow people to address, prevent and spread awareness about this issue in an unprecedented way. By leveraging technology, organizations can ensure that mechanisms to address child abuse are more effective, inclusive and accessible to children everywhere. Technology also supports improved data collection about the issue, thus leading to better response capabilities and more targeted policy reforms.

### Critical issue

This latest awareness-raising publication reaffirms Zain's long standing commitment to addressing this critical social issue as the company is already actively involved in a GSMA initiative to combat child sexual abuse content. In 2011, Zain joined the GSMA Mobile Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Content campaign that aimed to ensure that individuals or organizations wishing to use, or profit from child sexual abuse

content using the mobile environment, are prevented from doing so. Further, in 2014, Zain was a key and active supporter of the GSMA's partnership with Child Helpline International to protect young people and safeguard their right to be heard. Additionally, in 2015, Zain launched a multi-faceted media campaign to raise awareness about the ills of child abuse and shed light on this often taboo, yet tragic topic.

Leading institutions, business and community leaders supporting the cause contributing to the report include: Natasha Jackson, Head of Public Policy and Consumer Affairs, GSMA;

Magdalena Aguilar, Head of Programme Development Child Helpline International; Dr Joanna Rubinstein, President and CEO World Childhood Foundation USA; Elaine Weidman-Grunewald, Senior Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer, Ericsson.

Highlighting this issue in this region is a brave move by Zain given the sensitivity of the subject matter, and the company remains undeterred in its determination to shed light on the plight of abused children, and to help in the eradication of this destructive occurrence.



**BARCELONA:** Zain Group CEO Scott Gegenheimer (second from left) poses with a copy of Zain's annual thought leadership report.



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## GULF BANK WELCOMES RED ACCOUNT WINNERS

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank was pleased to welcome the new winners of the second monthly red account draw on February 23, 2017 and present them with their Apple prizes. The red account draw was held on February 20, 2017.

Muneerah Fareed Saleh Al-Awadhi, winner of the iPhone 7 Plus and Rawan Nouri Yousef Al-Khatrash, winner of the Apple Watch both visited Gulf Bank Head Office where they were greeted by Manal Barakat n Manager of red and Nassour Consumer. Nouf Meqbas Askar Al-Shammari, winner of the iPad Pro will visit the head office at a later stage.

Gulf Bank's red is an account for high school students, college and university students aged between 15 and 25. Eligible customers will get the chance to enter the draw automatically and on a monthly basis, upon transferring their student allowances. Each month, an iPhone 7, an iPad Pro, and an iWatch will be gifted to three lucky winners monthly and until December 31 January 2017. The next draw dates are announced as follows: March 30, 2017, April 24, 2017, May 22, 2017, June 29, 2017, July 24, 2017, August 30, 2017, September 28, 2017, October 23, 2017, November 20, 2017, January 11, 2018.

In addition to the Apple prizes, students will have the opportunity to win a Fiat 500-Model 2017 at the annual car draw, upon transferring their allowance! Also, movie tickets at all Cinescape theatres will be available for only KD2 seven days a week by simply being a red account holder; not to mention the exclusive offers from Edfa3ly, which is an international internet shopping services company.



**Gulf Bank representative Manal Barakat hands the prize to one of the winners.**

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Crime

Report

TEENS ARRESTED WITH DRUGS

**KUWAIT:** Criminal detectives arrested three teenagers, a 15-year-old boy and two 14-year-old girls on drug-related charges. The boy was remanded in custody pending court procedures to face charges of drug abuse. Meanwhile, the girls also face charges for accompanying a drug user. Separately, police found an unconscious man under a bridge with a hashish joint next to him.

Officers injured

Hawally prosecutor ordered two female citizens to be remanded in custody to face charges of assaulting a police officer and damaging state property. Case papers also include a medical error showing injuries that a police sergeant sustained when he was run over, as well as a police lieutenant who was injured when he was dragged by a moving vehicle. According to the two officers' statements, a young female citizen was driving a car along with her sister. The sergeant attempted to stop them to issue a citation, but the passenger clutch to his arm while the driver drove fast with an intention to harm him. The other officer was run over while the suspect attempted to escape before she hit a light post.

Fatal accident

A pedestrian was killed in a hit-and-run incident reported on King Fahd Road near Subahiya. An investigation is underway to identify the driver who escaped from the scene, leaving the Asian woman fatally wounded behind him.

Physical assault

A citizen told Meidan Hawally police that she was beaten in Hawally and submitted a medical report stating she had bruises, grazes in the head, on the knees and tendons rupture in the neck vertebrae. Hawally prosecutor ordered a felony case to be filed.

Cafe fight

Late delivery of a shisha caused a fight between a cafe worker and a customer. The Ethiopian waiter complained to police that he was beaten by an Egyptian customer while at a Hawally cafe. A case was filed for investigations.

Drunk man caught

Police arrested a drunk man who was seen dancing on Arabian Gulf Road near Salmiya. They also found a small bottle containing homebrewed liquor and an imported liquor bottle inside his vehicle. He was sent to the proper authorities for further action. Separately, Hawally patrols arrested an Indian man who was driving abnormally on the Fourth Ring Road. He was taken to the police station and charged accordingly.

Intoxicated

A citizen was sent to the forensics department to see whether he was intoxicated or under the influence of drugs. Interior ministry operations received a call about a person who seemed to be dead in his car on the Seventh Ring Road. Several policemen responded and found out that the man has fallen asleep after abusing drugs or alcohol. His vehicle was impounded. — Translated from the Arabic press



THE 'ANGHAM VENUS'

Previously, I wrote several columns about the beauty of the singer Angham's performance and I named her 'Angham Venus'. Venus is said to be the god of storms and disorder for the Pharaohs. So the question is: what are the reasons that caused this change?

Before finding the reason, we must know that singer Angham has a reputation of always being late in many of her concerts, and this is not a fabrication, as we can see that she is not committed to the timing of her appearance. For example, when I attended one of Angham's concerts, which was held at the 'sound and light' festival on Feb 25, 2016, she was late as usual, for more than two hours, and her fans did not complain, rather they sat patiently. When she finally appeared, she did not apologize for the delay. The question to singer Angham who has been on stage since her childhood, is that is it not a part of her laws and etiquettes to comply with the given time?

She came to Kuwait, her second country during its National Holidays, knowing that her concert was at the

Opera House which carries the name of the 'Amir of Hearts' the late Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The structure was opened just recently, which means that the fans are still not used to the entrances and exits of the place. In addition, the 'Hala February' festival was the first to be hosted by Jaber Al-Ahmad Cultural Center, so it would have been better if she would have contributed in a beautiful image to the project of the monument that carries the name of the late Amir, and participate with Kuwait and its people in their National days with a good word, not words of frustration and anger towards Kuwait and its people, as reported by Arab newspapers. Thanks to 'Angham Venus' for her congratulations for our National days.

Kuwait remains the source of Gulf culture, and those who established and instilled its culture are the pillars and founders of the Egyptian culture, and this favor will never be forgotten by the Kuwaiti people. Wishing Kuwait to be the beacon of Gulf culture every year.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

KUWAITI HORNETS

By Saad Al-Mo'tesh

All creatures have a special language through which they communicate, but people do not understand those languages. We do know the names of some creatures, but at the same time know nothing about others. We name birds according to what our ancestors taught us, without even knowing who invented those names.

Just imagine, if all birds used the same language, how much the amount of slanderous words they would use while being chased by falcons or larger predators in pursuit to kill and devour them. Also, imagine how deer or other ruminants would beg for their lives when facing predatory animals in the jungle. People have been using a general name for the sounds made by all flying insects; that is humming or buzzing, which is a sound resulting from the rapid movement of their wings. However, we still do not know how they communicate with each other.

The only exception in those insects are hornets which make a sound locally known as buzzing and that is why people usually say 'he buzzed destroying his own nest' to refer to someone who brings damage upon oneself when attacked. The worst enemies to bees are European greenfinches and hornets. The former are hunted with shotguns or recorded sounds of shotguns, while hornets are usually fought by being hit by shoes because they deserve nothing more.

If anyone thinks this article is referring to them who buzz like a hornet, I have no interest in what you think. And those who fit the description of hornets must beware not to buzz-down their own nest because the bees will never let them fool around their hive.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

WARBA LAUNCHES 'A WORD FOR KUWAIT' IN CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL AND LIBERATION DAYS

**KUWAIT:** Warba Bank launched its national campaign 'A Word for Kuwait' in celebration of Kuwait National and Liberation days at Wonder Village Festival, in Kuwait International Fairgrounds. Warba's booth featured an array of activities to demonstrate national devotion and loyalty to our beloved country Kuwait.

The festival kicked off in February 22nd and ended on February 26th, 2017. Visitors had the chance to express their love and admiration of Kuwait by writing their feelings on a giant wall. Warba Bank also distributed a range of gifts to visitors in celebration of the occasion. The campaign comes as part of the bank's commitment of its social responsibility towards all segments of the society as an authentic Kuwaiti banking institution.

The bank is strongly committed to exert a vital social role in boosting patriotism and loyalty while sharing Kuwait's remarkable days.



ABK CELEBRATES NATIONAL, LIBERATION DAYS WITH STAFF

KFH WRAPS UP EVENTFUL PROGRAM TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL, LIBERATION DAYS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) conducted a lineup of events and activities that marked Kuwait's 56th National Day and 26th Liberation days. This emanates from KFH's firm belief in the importance of its social and national role, yet consolidates its prestigious status on the level of the private sector and its global pioneering position in the Islamic finance industry.

The program encompassed a variety of social and national initiatives. KFH sponsored the awareness program for a voluntary team to participate in the National days in collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and the

Ministry of State for Youth Affairs. Participants underwent several training courses of firefighting, first aid and evacuations.

KFH Headquarters was lighted with the colors of the Kuwaiti flag. The bank launched a series of tutorials and awareness videos on its channels on social media in efforts to create safe and secure atmosphere for people to celebrate this important occasion.

KFH launched a distinct advertising campaign that reveals the secret of the cohesion of the Kuwaiti national fabric, which is the kindness of its people. It also sponsored a chant for Ibrahim Al-Matouq themed "Kuwait

Home of Peace." KFH participated in the flag-raising ceremony that signals start of Kuwait national celebrations.

The ceremony was attended by a plethora of state officials, public figures and ordinary people. KFH is keen on embracing its social responsibility, while participating in every event of importance to the society, primarily the national events. This affirms KFH's prestigious status and underlines its unremitting efforts in pushing other private sector institutions to follow suit in shouldering the social responsibility in all its fields.

**KUWAIT:** Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) celebrated National and Liberation days with its staff members on February 23, 2017, marking the start of the national celebrations. All employees at the Head Office and across all branches were presented with the Kuwait flag and themed pins upon arrival, and enjoyed traditional sweets and Arabic coffee and a variety of other hot drinks throughout the day. The bank marked the start of its

National and Liberation day celebrations earlier this month as it lit up its headquarters with the colors of the Kuwaiti flag. ABK will continue to demonstrate its commitment towards the Kuwait community by celebrating its national holidays every year with its people, with the aim of spreading and strengthening the national spirit among its employees and the communities in which it operates.



KFH officials pose with the voluntary team.





**Shrine for Islamist murderer reveals Pakistan's challenges**

## THE HIDDEN HORROR AT KHASFAH

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# GERMAN HOSTAGE BEHEADED BY PHILIPPINE ISLAMISTS

'WE ALL TRIED OUR BEST. BUT TO NO AVAIL'

**MANILA:** Islamic militants in the Philippines have beheaded the German hostage they were holding for ransom, the government in Manila said yesterday. A video posted by the Abu Sayyaf group, which was monitored by intelligence group SITE, showed Jurgen Kantner being killed by a knife-wielding man. Shortly after the video appeared, government envoy Jesus Dureza confirmed the German's death.

"We grieve as we strongly condemn the barbaric beheading of yet another kidnap victim," Dureza said in a statement. "Up to the last moment, many sectors including the Armed Forces of the Philippines exhausted all efforts to save his life. We all tried our best. But to no avail," said Dureza. Military officials in the south said they had not yet found the German's body.

In Germany, Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel said Berlin had not yet received official confirmation from Philippine authorities that the video was genuine. "If this video is confirmed, then of course this is one of the most horrible things imaginable," Gabriel said. The Abu Sayyaf, blamed for the worst terror attacks in Philippine history, had demanded a ransom of 30 million pesos (\$600,000) be paid by Sunday to spare the 70-year-old.

The group had previously released videos showing a haggard Kantner appealing for payment of the ransom. Kantner was abducted from his yacht, the Rockall, off the southern Philippines last year. The vessel was found drifting on November 7, with the body of Kantner's female companion Sabine Merz with a gunshot wound. The couple had been kidnapped and held for 52 days in Somalia in 2008 before they were freed, reportedly after a huge ransom was paid, press reports said.

### Perilous waters

Despite his ordeal in Somalia, Kantner told AFP in 2009 that he still intended to keep sailing into perilous waters. "I know it's dangerous sail-



**In this undated image made from militant video and released by SITE Intel Group on Feb. 24, 2017, shows German hostage Jurgen Gustav Kantner at an undisclosed location. — AP**

ing off into Somali waters and I have no private security guarding me, but I pray to God that pirates won't get me again. It's a little bit like suicide," he said after being freed.

The Abu Sayyaf, whose leaders have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group, have been kidnapping foreigners and Christians for decades and holding them for ransom in the jungles of the strife-torn southern Philippines. They have frequently killed hostages if their demands are not met, and last year murdered two Canadians.

Apart from Kantner they are now holding at least 19 foreigners and seven Filipino hostages, military spokesman Brigadier General Restituto Padilla said. The group, formed from seed money provided by a relative of Al-Qaeda mastermind Osama bin Laden in the 1990s, also carried out the bombing of a ferry in Manila Bay in 2004 that claimed 116 lives in the country's deadliest terror attack. The military had been pressing an assault against the Abu Sayyaf, attacking their camps and bombing their hideouts just before Kantner was killed. — AFP

## NEW ANTI-IS STRATEGY MAY MEAN DEEPER US INVOLVEMENT IN SYRIA

**WASHINGTON:** A new military strategy to meet President Donald Trump's demand to "obliterate" the Islamic State group is likely to deepen US military involvement in Syria, possibly with more ground troops, even as the current US approach in Iraq appears to be working and will require fewer changes.

Details are sketchy. But recommendations due at the White House are likely to increase emphasis on nonmilitary elements of the campaign already underway, such as efforts to squeeze IS finances, limit the group's recruiting and counter IS propaganda that is credited with inspiring recent violence in the US and Europe. One official with knowledge of the recommendations said the report would present a broad overview of options as a starting point for a more detailed internal discussion. The official wasn't authorized to speak to reporters about the contents of the document and demanded anonymity.

Marine Corps Gen Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Thursday that the emerging strategy will take aim not just at the Islamic State militants but at Al-Qaeda and other extremist organizations in the Middle East and beyond, whose goal is to attack the United States.

He emphasized that it would not rest mainly on military might. "This is a political-military plan," he said. "It is not a military plan." Dunford's comment suggests that Pentagon leaders have a more nuanced view of the IS problem than is reflected in Trump's promise to "obliterate" the group, as he put it on Friday. Dunford said the US should be careful that in solving the IS problem it does not create others, hinting at the sensitive question of how to

deal with Turkey, which is a NATO ally with much at stake in neighboring Syria, and Russia, whose military action in Syria has had the effect of propping up the Syrian regime.

Defense Secretary Jim Mattis is giving the White House the ingredients of a strategy, which officials say will be fleshed out once Trump has considered the options. Officials described the Mattis report as a "framework" built on broad concepts and based on advice from the State Department, the CIA and other agencies. Officials have indicated the recommended approaches will echo central elements of the Obama administration's strategy, which was based on the idea that the US military should support local forces rather than do the fighting for them. Mattis already has signaled publicly that he sees no value in having US combat forces take over the ground war.

"I would just tell you that by, with and through our allies is the way this coalition is going against Daesh," Mattis said last week in Baghdad, using an Arabic term for the Islamic State group. "We're going to continue to go after them until we destroy them and any kind of belief in the inevitability of their message." Trump signed an executive order on Jan. 28 giving Mattis 30 days to present a "preliminary draft" of a plan.

He said it should include a comprehensive strategy that would not only deliver a battlefield victory but also "isolate and delegitimize" the group and its radical ideology. Asked if adding more US troops or arming the Syrian Kurds was under discussion, Mattis said he will "accommodate any request" from his field commanders. — AP

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## MEXICO CATHOLIC CHURCH: GOVT SUBMITS TO TRUMP 'TERRORISM'

**MEXICO CITY:** The Catholic Church in Mexico on Sunday accused the government of adopting an attitude of fear and "submission" over US President Donald Trump's immigration measures, which it labeled "terrorism." Mexican authorities "only make declarations and promises, their reactions are lukewarm and they also show fear and even

worse, submission," read an editorial in the Church's *From the Faith* weekly.

The editorial, entitled "Migrant Terrorism," criticized Trump's immigration measures, which aim to expel millions of undocumented migrants from the United States. The Trump administration issued tough new orders Tuesday for a sweeping crackdown

on illegal immigrants, putting nearly all of the country's 11 million undocumented foreigners in its crosshairs. "What Mr Trump does is not only apply inhuman legalism, but a real act of terror," the editorial said.

The new rules make it easier for US Border Patrol and immigration officers to quickly deport any illegal immigrants they

find, with only a few exceptions, principally children. But on Thursday, US Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson met with Mexican ministers promising no "mass deportations" or use of military force to expel immigrants.

Trump has infuriated Mexico by insisting the country pay for a border wall to keep

undocumented immigrants out. Mexico's foreign minister has warned that his country will impose tariffs on US products if the United States taxes Mexican imports to finance the wall. The country has also promised in recent days that it will not accept deportees from the United States unless they are Mexican nationals. — AFP

## KANSAS HOLDS VIGIL AFTER DEATH OF INDIAN ENGINEER

**WASHINGTON:** Hundreds of people marched and prayed Sunday in the Midwestern US city where an Indian expatriate was killed and another wounded in a suspected hate crime that has prompted calls for action.

Indians at home and in the United States have expressed shock at Wednesday's shooting in the Kansas community of Olathe that saw a drunk white man scream racial slurs and allegedly open fire on two young Indian engineers, killing one.

Alok Madasani, the 32-year-old Indian engineer who survived, told a prayer vigil Sunday that he was suffering profound loss after the death of his dear friend of nine years. "It's hard to believe he is not with me, not with us anymore," Madasani said. "What happened that night is something we all wish didn't happen, but it happened."

Throng of concerned citizens and mourners marched through the Kansas City suburb in memory of the slain man, 32-year-old Srinivas Kuchibhotla, and in celebration of Madasani's survival. The event also honored Ian Grillo, a white bar patron being hailed a hero for trying to help. He is being treated in hospital for gunshot wounds in the chest and hand. Bundled in winter coats, marchers stretched for blocks down a sidewalk near the city's Ball Conference Center, holding posters with messages about peace and unity, and chanting slogans such as "Together we stand, divided we fall!" and "Unity is part of community!"

During the rally, the city of Olathe tweeted: "We stand together in our grief; in our support of the victims, their family & friends. And always, we stand together. #OneOlathe."

Madasani, who had been taken to the hospital after the shooting, was greeted with applause when he hobbled into the room on crutches, and later told the audience about how his friend, whom he would meet at the bar almost weekly, was "always making sure the people around him were happy."

The ceremony, which opened with Hindu, Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh

prayers, was held at the packed community center, with a large overflow crowd forced to stand outside. It ended with the audience lighting candles and singing John Lennon's "Imagine."

### 'Shameful' incidents

During the attack, the alleged suspect, Adam Purinton, 51, reportedly screamed racial slurs and told the two Indian men, who had been living in the United States for several years and working as aviation systems engineers for GPS manufacturer Garmin, to "Get out of my country."

He was arrested after police got a tip from a bartender in a nearby town that the suspect boasted of having killed two Middle Eastern men, *The Kansas City Star* reported. Purinton has been charged with premeditated first-degree murder and two counts of attempted premeditated first-degree murder and is being held on a \$2 million bond.

The FBI is trying to determine if the shooting was a hate crime. India's Information and Broadcasting minister reacted harshly to the attack, stating that the United States must "unequivocally respond and condemn such incidents." "USA should respond to this incident. American President and people of America, they should come out openly to condemn such actions... and then take strongest action," M Venkaiah Naidu was quoted as saying by the Press Trust of India.

A GoFundMe online fundraiser page was quickly set up after the shooting, and as of Sunday had collected more than \$630,000, much of it in small contributions of \$5 and \$10. The money is to help with the funeral expenses "and other ongoing grief / recovery support costs" for Kuchibhotla's widow Sunayana Dumala. Meanwhile, Madasani's father Jagan Mohan Reddy, a chief engineer with the Telangana state government, told AFP he and his wife would spend at least a week in the US before "taking stock of what to do (next)." "They lost a dear friend (Kuchibhotla) in the attack but somehow, by God's grace, my son survived," Reddy said. — AFP

## WITH TRUMP AT HELM, US TAKES ITS SEAT AT UN RIGHTS COUNCIL

### TRUMP'S INTERNATIONAL AGENDA REMAINS MURKY

**GENEVA:** The US claimed its seat yesterday on the Human Rights Council under the new presidency of Donald Trump, whose election has provoked deep concern over the body's future. Over its 11-year history, the council has come in for criticism, including allegations that it has, at times, been co-opted by rights abusers who push resolutions attacking their geopolitical rivals, with genuine rights issues marginalized.

But the 47-member panel has had successes—thanks to support from Barack Obama's administration which held a seat on the council for most of his eight-year term, civil society groups say. Many of the issues prioritized by Obama's UN envoys—including violations in North Korea, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and South Sudan—remain on the agenda. In a keynote address, United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres warned that the world was facing "a time of urgency" and that the council was needed more than ever.

"Disregard for human rights is a disease, and it is a disease that is spreading," he said. "The Human Rights Council must be part of the cure." Trump's State Department has not yet named an envoy to the body and was represented at yesterday's session by veteran foreign service officer Erin Barclay.

### Withdrawal over Israel?

Trump's international agenda remains murky but rights advocates have warned that the early signs do not bode well for either the council or the broader human rights agenda.

"Clearly 'America First' does not suggest an approach that (prioritises) multilateral engagement," said John Fisher of Human Rights Watch (HRW) in Geneva, referring to Trump's foreign policy doctrine.

HRW also reacted to media reports that the US was considering quitting the council before its term expires in 2019 — over the body's treatment of Israel. "A decision by the United States to withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council over its criticism of Israeli policy and its overall effectiveness would be a misguided and short-



**DUESSELDORF:** A float showing US President Donald Trump and the Statue of Liberty are seen during the Rose Monday carnival parade. — AFP

sighted step," the group's UN director Louis Charbonneau said in a statement.

Pro-Israel groups have repeatedly noted that the Jewish state has been targeted by more rights council resolutions than any other nation. Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas, who addressed the opening session, said his people's issue would be a "litmus test" for the council's effectiveness. Assuming the US keeps its seat, there is "significant concern" about Washington's capacity to take a leadership role based on Trump's early moves, according to Fisher.

"When the administration has issued an executive order that bans travel from seven mainly-Muslim countries it erodes the US' moral credibility and ability to engage in initiatives around the UN," Fisher told AFP. Trump's travel ban has been blocked in court. For UN rights chief Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, nations have a duty to resist "political actors ... (who) threaten the multilateral system or intend to withdraw from parts of it." "Our rights, the rights of others, the very future

of our planet cannot, must not be thrown aside by these reckless political profiteers," Zeid said in his opening speech.

### Decisive influence

The precursor to the rights council was the UN Commission on Human Rights, a body deemed so dysfunctional that former UN secretary general Kofi Annan scrapped it. When the new council was born in 2006, the US administration of George W. Bush did not fight for a seat or meaningfully engage, according to a January report from the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) think-tank.

The early years saw countries like Algeria, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia controlling the council, the CFR said, arguing that things began to turn when Obama's administration secured a seat in 2009. The US began "to chip away at the council's deficiencies while strengthening its capacity as a credible international human rights institution," it said. — AFP

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## THAI GENERALS LEAD ROYAL FUNERAL PYRE CEREMONY

**BANGKOK:** Thailand's generals took centre stage yesterday at a ceremony blessing the start of construction of an enormous funeral pyre for the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej, a vivid illustration of the army's intimate links to the palace. Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha, a former army chief who seized power in 2014, led the ceremony, which saw a crane erect the first of a series of giant steel pillars that will form the cornerstones of what will be a largely wooden pyre next to Bangkok's sprawling Grand Palace.

The ceremony was infused with the religious ritual that permeates palace life with Buddhist monks chanting mantras and Hindu Brahmin priests blowing conches as workers in hard hats fixed the pillar to a concrete plinth. Royal cremations in Thailand are grand events. No budget has been publicly released but authorities are spending millions of dollars giving Bhumibol a huge send off. Few Thais have ever seen a monarch's funeral.

The widely admired Bhumibol was the world's longest serving monarch until his October death. He ruled for

seven decades and his passing has plunged Thailand into an unknown future with his unpredictable and less known son Maha Vajiralongkorn on the throne. Designs for the funeral pyre show palace architects intend to build a pyre more than 50 meters high, complete with nine spires and covered in sculptures of mythical beasts.

The pyre will represent Mount Meru, a mountain that is the allegorical centre of the universe in Buddhist, Hindu and Jain cosmology. Bhumibol's body will be placed at the centre before it is set alight

with the belief his spirit will return to the mountain. "The cremation site will be constructed like a divine palace on Mount Meru," General Thanasak Patimaprakorn said during the ceremony. Thanasak, a key coup plotter in 2014 and a deputy prime minister, has been tasked with overseeing the pyre's construction. No date has been given for the funeral, but multiple government officials have told AFP they expect the cremation to take place at the end of the one-year official mourning period, in October or November. During his long reign, Bhumibol assiduously forged links

with a military that portrays itself as the ultimate defender of the monarchy, launching more than a dozen coups in the last seventy years, most of which were signed off by the palace.

The military have promised elections next year, but previous poll date promises have slipped. It is likely the coronation of Vajiralongkorn will need to take place before any elections are held. Thailand's monarchy is shielded from criticism and scrutiny by a draconian royal defamation law. Lese majeste cases have skyrocketed since the army came to power. — AFP

## CHINA'S TOP DIPLOMAT JIECHI SET TO VISIT US

**BEIJING:** China's top diplomat will visit the United States this week, as the two sides work to arrange a meeting between their presidents after a rocky start to the relationship under the administration of Donald Trump. State Councillor Yang Jiechi will meet senior American officials today to discuss "bilateral ties and issues of common concern", the foreign ministry announced late Sunday.

Relations have been strained by Trump's criticism of China's handling of North Korea and its trade policies as well as his questioning of Washington's longstanding "One China" policy. Yang, who outranks the foreign minister, will be the first senior Chinese official to visit the US since Trump took office.

One of his key duties will be making arrangements for a meeting between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping. Wu Xinbo, director of Fudan University's Centre of American Studies, told AFP. Yang will also seek to connect with Trump's diplomatic team and meet key figures such as Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Secretary of Defense James Mattis, he added.

Foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said the two sides have been in "close contact and communication" about a possible meeting between the heads of state, but declined to give details of Yang's schedule or the message he was carrying to Washington. "He will exchange views on bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest with senior officials from the US," Geng said.

### Rocky start

Before Xi and Trump can meet, the two countries must address some of the contentious issues thrust into the spotlight since Trump's election, said Tao Wenzhao, an expert on Sino-US relations at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

They "will carry out a wide-ranging discussion on various global problems and form a consensus", he told AFP. "On that basis, the two countries' leaders can meet."

But the gap on many issues remains large, from China's massive trade surplus with the US to friction over its building of military facilities on artificial islands in the disputed South China Sea. The relationship got off to a rocky start after Trump accepted a phone call from Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, angering China by breaking decades of diplomatic precedent. He upped the ante by suggesting he might recognise Taiwan's sovereignty unless China was willing to negotiate more favourable trade terms with the US — a non-starter for Beijing, which sees the self-ruled island as part of its own territory awaiting reunification.

Seeking to minimise the fallout, Tillerson met China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi earlier this month at a G20 foreign ministers' meeting in Germany. The Secretary of State urged Beijing to help rein in North Korea after its series of nuclear and ballistic missile tests. Tensions between the two countries have eased somewhat since Trump reaffirmed Washington's "One China" policy in a conciliatory phone call with Xi earlier this month.

Since then, Beijing has stepped up its pressure on Pyongyang by announcing a ban on imports of coal from North Korea — previously an economic lifeline for the isolated country. On the presidential campaign trail last year, Trump regularly accused China of stealing American jobs and running a massive and unfairly won trade surplus with the US, vowing to reverse it by whatever means necessary. CASS's Tao said he was "optimistic" the relationship would soon be back on track. "Trump is a very smart person," he said. "He knows that the Sino-US relationship is in America's national interest." — AFP



**BANDUNG:** Police officers stand guard outside a municipal building after a stand-off between a suspected militant and anti-terror police. — AP

## IS-LINKED INDONESIAN SHOT DEAD AFTER BOMB ATTACK

ATTACKER STORMS BUILDING BRANDISHING A DAGGER, STARTING FIRES

**BANDUNG:** Indonesian police shot dead a suspected militant linked to the Islamic State (IS) group during a firefight at a government office yesterday after a small bomb was set off nearby. Witnesses described terrifying scenes as the attacker stormed into the building brandishing a dagger and began yelling at staff and starting fires. TV footage showed heavily armed police firing on the office through clouds of smoke.

But no one apart from the attacker was hurt in the incident in the city of Bandung on Java island, which started with a pressure cooker bomb exploding in a park before the gun battle erupted in the office opposite. Police said the attacker was a former terror convict from an IS-supporting network called Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), which has been blamed for a series of recent attacks in Indonesia including an assault in Jakarta last year.

Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim-majority country, has long struggled with Islamic militancy and hundreds of radicals from the Southeast Asian state have flocked to fight with IS, sparking fears that weakened extremist outfits could get a new lease of life. After the blast at about 8:30 am (0130 GMT), the

attacker fled into a building belonging to local authorities opposite the park and set it ablaze.

Police exchanged fire during an hour-long standoff with the man, who threw a second bomb at officers during the gun battle. They eventually shot him in the stomach and he died later in hospital. Everyone was evacuated from the building unhurt. Police seized guns and two backpacks carried by the attacker but did not say what they contained. Authorities were also searching for a second person involved in the assault after witnesses said they spotted the attacker on a motorbike with someone else before the initial bomb blast.

### Former terror convict

National police chief Tito Karnavian said the attacker belonged to JAD and had demanded that authorities release his associates from prison. Indonesian security forces have arrested hundreds of militants during a sustained crackdown in recent years. "He belongs to the group JAD-it is a main supporter of ISIS," Karnavian told reporters, using a different name for IS. "He asked for his friends to be released from prison." He said the attacker, whom he did not name,

had been jailed over his involvement with militant training in Jantho in Aceh province. Jantho was the location of a notorious Islamic extremist training camp, which was closed down by authorities in 2010.

Last month the United States designated JAD a terrorist organisation, saying the network was an umbrella group for about two dozen Indonesian extremist outfits. Last year's gun and suicide attack in the capital left four attackers and four civilians dead, and was the first assault claimed by IS in Southeast Asia.

JAD has also been blamed for a firebomb attack on a church that killed a toddler and a foiled plan to launch a Christmas-time suicide bombing. Numerous recent IS-linked plots in Indonesia have been botched or foiled, with analysts saying that many of the country's militants lack the capacity to launch serious attacks. Indonesia has suffered a series of Islamic militant attacks in the past 15 years, including the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists. A sustained crackdown weakened the most dangerous networks but the emergence of IS has proved a potent new rallying cry for radicals. — AFP

## ACTIVISTS GATECRASH MEETING OF HONG KONG LEADERSHIP HOPEFUL

**HONG KONG:** Pro-democracy protesters yesterday gatecrashed a press conference by Hong Kong leadership hopeful Carrie Lam, displaying banners criticizing a "rigged election" as the woman seen as China's favorite unveiled her policy. Around a dozen activists including Joshua Wong, the face of 2014's mass pro-democracy protests, entered the venue minutes before the start and demanded to be allowed to communicate their messages to Lam.

Protesters chanted slogans and unfurled banners demanding the public get the right to vote for the city's top post. They were allowed to stay after campaign manager Bernard Chan said he welcomed them to sit in. The chief executive of the

semi-autonomous Chinese city will be chosen on March 26 by a 1,200-strong committee, most of whose members are broadly pro-Beijing. Lam, a former deputy leader of the Hong Kong government, was in charge of promoting a Beijing-backed political reform package rejected as a sham by the pro-democracy camp in 2014.

The proposal would for the first time have allowed all Hong Kong voters to elect their leader, but would tightly control those eligible to stand. Lam said yesterday that divisions in society had made it difficult to restart discussions about political reform. Her platform instead focused on livelihood issues, the city's housing crisis, the economy and youth development. — AFP



**BANDA ACEH:** An Acehese woman gets caned by a religious officer, for spending time in close proximity with a man who is not her husband, which is against Sharia law. — AFP

## CANING LEADS TO COLLAPSES FOR BREAKING ISLAMIC LAW

**BANDA ACEH:** An Indonesian man collapsed while being publicly caned yesterday for spending time with a woman who is not his wife in contravention of strict Islamic laws in a staunchly Muslim part of the country. Herizal bin Yunus, 27, fainted after being caned eight times in front of a crowd in Aceh, the only province of the world's most populous Muslim-majority country that imposes sharia law.

Officials carried him off stage after he collapsed during the punishment outside a mosque in the provincial capital Banda Aceh, which was carried out by a religious official dressed in an all-encompassing, hooded cloak. But once he came to, a doctor examined him and said he was in good health, and he was taken back up on stage to be flogged another 14 times. A local religious court had sentenced him to be caned

a total of 22 times. The man had broken Islamic laws that forbid people in Aceh from spending time in close proximity with members of the opposite sex who are not their husband or wife.

He was one of eight people publicly caned yesterday for breaking the province's Islamic regulations. Public canings take place regularly in Aceh, and people can be punished for offences ranging from gambling, to drinking alcohol, to gay sex. However it is rare for someone to collapse. Aceh, on Sumatra island, began implementing sharia law after being granted special autonomy in 2001, an attempt by the central government in Jakarta to quell a long-running separatist insurgency. Islamic laws have been strengthened since the province struck a peace deal with Jakarta in 2005. — AFP

## IMPEACHED S KOREA PRESIDENT TELLS COURT OF 'BELATED REGRET'

**SEOUL:** South Korea's president expressed "belated regret" yesterday over the scandal that triggered her impeachment, as the Constitutional Court wrapped up hearings on her fate and her supporters screamed threats outside. Park Geun-Hye was elected in 2012 with the highest vote share of any presidential candidate in South Korea's democratic era. But she was impeached by parliament in December over a massive corruption and influence-peddling scandal that prompted millions to take to the streets to call for her ouster.

She has since been on trial for her political life at the Constitutional Court in Seoul, which is set to decide in March whether to approve her removal from office—which would trigger new elections or return her to the Blue House. Park has not attended any of the hearings, which began last month. Her lawyers maintain that she was not aware of any wrongdoing and blamed her secret confidante Choi Soon-Sil, who is accused of using her presidential ties to force local firms to "donate" nearly \$70 million to non-profit foundations.

In a statement read out by her advocate yesterday, Park reiterated that her only fault was trusting Choi and seeking advice from her long-time friend, who took care of her daily affairs for years, including her wardrobe choices. "In retrospect, I have belated regret that I should have been more cautious with my trust in her," she said in her final defence to the court's eight sitting judges. Park bemoaned a "miserable reality" in which her policies and actions had become objects of "misunderstanding and suspicion." But she has rejected repeated requests from the judges to make herself available for questioning, and has also refused to answer questions from prosecutors probing the scandal.

### 'Kill all of them'

Outside the court, hundreds of Park's elderly supporters loudly protested against the drive

to remove her, with some attempting to break through hundreds of police guarding the court. Some waved banners threatening "civil war" if the impeachment goes through, others hurled personal threats against the judges. "I will kill all of them if they impeach the poor president!" shouted one.

Dozens of rival demonstrators held banners backing her removal. Choi is on trial for coercion and abuse of power. The two women became close through Choi's father, a shady religious figure who was Park's mentor for years. Park's own father, dictator Park Chung-Hee, was assassinated in 1979 by his intelligence chief. The 65-year-old president is accused of colluding with her friend to extract money from local firms as well as letting her handle a wide range of state affairs

including nominations to senior posts, despite having no official title or security clearance.

A number of former presidential advisors and cabinet members have been arrested or charged for their involvements in the scandal, including allegedly leaking secret state documents to Choi at Park's order.

Lawmakers pushing for Park's impeachment say she betrayed voters. "A series of unbelievable developments in recent weeks have left South Koreans deeply insulted, humiliated and frustrated," Kweon Seong-Dong, a member of the parliamentary impeachment committee, told the hearing. "We urge the constitutional court to strictly hold her accountable so that people can no longer feel ashamed of the Republic of Korea." — AFP



**SEOUL:** A supporter of impeached South Korean President Park Geun-hye is detained by police officers during a rally opposing her impeachment as the Constitutional Court holds its final hearing in the impeachment trial of Park in front of the court. — AP



A cat yawns outside Eyup Sultan Mosque in Istanbul yesterday. — AFP

## DUMBPHONES SURVIVE SMARTPHONE RISE

Continued from Page 1

Germany's Deutsche Telekom includes several basic phones in its catalogue to meet the needs of clients "who just want to be reachable", said a spokeswoman for the operator. Nokia's original 3310 sold nearly 120 million units worldwide, making it one of the world's best-selling mobiles, but it is unlikely the revamped version unveiled Sunday, which includes Internet access, will post similar sales.

HMD Global, the Finnish start-up which bought the rights to the Nokia brand last year and is making the phones, is seeking publicity for the three other smartphones which it unveiled alongside the new 3310, said Forrester analyst Thomas Husson. "It is a way to create a halo effect around the other models by reviving talk about the Nokia brand," he said. Ian Fogg, head of mobile at research firm IHS, said that HMD, as a start-up, "needs to leverage the warm memories (of the 3310) and show that they are innovating too. They don't want to be seen as a heritage brand."

Meanwhile, the smartphone revolution is poised to go onto the next level - with "superphones" equipped with artificial intelligence now on the horizon. By learning their owners' habits, these new phones will be able to carry out tasks even when they're offline. During a first phase only high-end smartphones will use the technology, like the new models unveiled by China's Huawei at the Mobile World Congress.

But the technology is quickly gaining ground. More than 300 million smartphones - or roughly a fifth of units sold worldwide - will have the function in 2017, according to Deloitte. "It is one of the key areas we are investing in. After the smartphone, we will have the 'superphone' thanks to artificial intelligence," said Vincent Vantilcke, marketing director for Huawei in France.

South Korea's LG and Finland's Nokia both announced in Barcelona that they would use Google's voice assistant - which uses artificial intelligence to answer users' questions - in their newest handsets. "Every big company in the sector is investing all their research and development on this," Gartner analyst Annette Zimmermann said. Today most smartphones run their applications by consulting data stored in external servers, known as the cloud.

But the arrival of faster processors will allow smartphones to use data already stored on the device - much like

a human brain does to translate words or recognize images. "You teach a computer to analyse specific data, make sense of this data and act on it," Zimmermann said. In the future "smartphones will almost make a decision before you do. When you go somewhere, it knows where you want to go" based on your usual habits, said Dexter Thillien, an analyst at BMI Research.

California-based start-up Neura has developed a system of artificial intelligence that can decode a smartphone user's daily patterns of behavior. To do this it combines data gathered by the handset's GPS tracker, the speed at which the phone owner is walking and other elements with algorithms. It then generates insights about users' past and present actions and predictions about what they will do next. Neura says its technology can be used to enable smarter healthcare, cars, music services and homes by constantly updating their portraits of user behaviour patterns.

With the new technology, a smartphone will be able to know whether its owner is "running to catch a bus or because he is jogging", said Neura head Gilad Mieri. The phone can then wait for the right moment to send its user a notification - for example a reminder to take medication. Machine-learning enhanced phones will focus mainly on voice recognition, translation and image recognition, said Ariane Bucaille, a tech specialist at Deloitte. This will enable a smartphone to give a user directions without an internet connection, she said. Smartphones with artificial intelligence "will play an even more crucial role in people's lives. It is another revolution", Bucaille said.

At the moment, the new technology is still being developed. "Where the profit comes from, that's still a big question," Gartner's Zimmermann said. Further down the line, tech firms plan to use AI in other products, such as driverless cars, Thillien said. However, privacy concerns may throw up a roadblock to the technology. A new European Union data protection law which comes into effect in 2018 contains "very restrictive" rules to prevent algorithms from making decisions on their own, Thillien said.

But Bucaille argues that smartphones with AI are actually safer because they do not store information on external servers. This may ultimately act as a disincentive for tech firms to develop AI for smartphones, as their business models so often rely on gathering and using data from users, said Mouloud Dey, director of innovation at SAS in Paris. — AFP

## HAYEF SUBMITS DRAFT LAW TO CURB SECURITY...

Continued from Page 1

Otaibi said the measure will ensure that amendments to the election law or changing the constituencies are in line with the constitution before they are applied, thus preventing nullifying the election or elected assemblies like what happened in the past few years.

MP Youssef Al-Fadhlah meanwhile said he has already completed two issues of the grilling he plans to submit against Prime Minister HH Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah. Fadhlah reiterated that he plans to

submit the grilling on March 5, adding that he is working to complete the other issues. The lawmaker said the issues in the grilling include placing the finances of the country under risk, unfair and suspicious expenditures and flagrant squandering of public funds.

He said other issues include attempts to cut spending by taking random measures that undermine the national economy. Fadhlah said he is committed to submitting the grilling on March 5, unless the government holds to account "leaders of corruption" in the ministry of health and answers his questions. He said he will coordinate with other lawmakers over the grilling.

## DIRTY DOZEN: UN SEEKS NEW DRUGS AGAINST...

Continued from Page 1

The germs on the WHO's list were chosen based on the severity of the infections they cause, how easily they spread, how many working drugs remain and whether new antibiotics to kill them are already being developed. The list is divided into three categories of priority: Critical, high and medium.

The top priorities are superbugs resistant to carbapenem antibiotics - a last-resort treatment for life-threatening infections often spread in hospitals, nursing homes and among patients who rely on ventilators and catheters. In January, an American woman died of an infection - resistant to all 27 available antibiotics -

caused by a germ called Enterobacteriaceae which is on the WHO's critical list. The second and third tiers contain drug-resistant bacteria that cause "more common" diseases such as gonorrhoea and salmonella-induced food poisoning, said the WHO.

The list will be discussed with health experts of the G20 group of major economies in Berlin this week, it added. "New antibiotics targeting this priority list of pathogens will help to reduce deaths due to resistant infections around the world," said Evelina Tacconelli of the University of Tuebingen in Germany, who helped draw up the index. Tuberculosis was not listed because well-funded programs already exist to develop new antibiotics, said the WHO. — AFP

## ARAMCO TO INVEST \$7BN IN MALAYSIA

Continued from Page 1

"For Aramco it's more than just an outlet for its crude supplies. They are now part owner of the plant." He added: "It's really going to make this region - Singapore and South Johor - a major refining and petrochemical hub in Southeast Asia."

The project is expected to create thousands of jobs in Malaysia, according to Craig Erlam, a senior market analyst at Oanda, adding it would provide stiff competition to Singapore, a major refinery hub. Najib made the refinery announcement on the second day of a four-day state visit to Malaysia by Saudi Arabia's King Salman. He told reporters: "The visit will cement and put our relationship on a strong trajectory," adding the Saudi head of state was "satisfied and happy" the agreement would be signed.

Malaysia is keen to attract foreign investment as the

energy-exporting, trade-dependent economy has seen growth steadily slow in recent years, denting revenues and putting severe pressure on the ringgit. Earlier yesterday, Malaysian and Saudi Arabian officials signed several other agreements on trade, human resources and scientific and educational cooperation. In 2016, bilateral trade rose 28 percent from a year earlier to 14 billion ringgit (\$3.2 billion).

After Malaysia, King Salman is to visit Indonesia, Brunei, Japan, China and the Maldives, the official Saudi Press Agency said. The monarch will also visit Saudi Arabia's neighbor Jordan before returning home. Saudi Arabia is the world's largest oil exporter, with much of its crude destined for customers in Asia. The kingdom is eager to attract investment as it diversifies its economy, including its upcoming initial public offering of part of Aramco. — Agencies



Men fly their kites during celebrations of Orthodox Clean Monday in Ayia Napa in Cyprus yesterday. Cypriots traditionally celebrate Clean Monday, the beginning of Lent in the Eastern Orthodox Church calendar, by eating seafood to signify a break with meat-eating and the start of a 40-day fast until Easter. — AP

## CYBER ATTACKS AGAINST GULF ON THE RISE

Continued from Page 1

Quasai Al-Shatti, director general of Kuwait's Central Agency for Information Technology, said financial institutions in his country have also been targeted. The Shamoon virus was first deployed against the Saudi energy sector in 2012. "There is no way you can prevent the attack," Mutairi said of the virus. After the 2012 Shamoon hacking, US intelligence officials said they suspected a link to Saudi Arabia's rival Iran.

The oil and gas-rich region's organizational infra-

structure against hacking is still new, as experts become increasingly focused on combating rising attacks. Saudi Arabia's National Cyber Security Centre has been set up over the past two years but was only formally opened this month. Qatar began its cyber security strategy in 2014, Khalid Al-Hashmi, the emirate's Undersecretary of Cyber Security, told the conference, which continues today. "We need more attention to cyber security and we need to add more professionals to the field of cyber security," said Saudi Prince Bandar Al-Mishari, assistant interior minister for technology affairs. — AFP

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**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  
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P.O.Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.  
 E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
 Website: www.kuwaittimes.net



This photo taken on Feb 6, 2017 shows Israel's separation barrier dividing east Jerusalem (left) from the West Bank village of Anata. — AFP photos



This photo taken on Feb 16, 2017 shows a section of the Mexico-US border fence in San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora state, northwestern Mexico.

# BORDER WALLS: 'TURNKEY' ANSWER TO THREATS REAL AND IMAGINED

Factbox

## KEEP OUT! BORDER WALLS WORLDWIDE

Seventy walls are in place around the world to protect national borders, compared with a dozen in 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down, according to researcher Elisabeth Vallet of Quebec University. As US President Donald Trump moves to build a wall along the Mexican border, here are other significant frontier barriers around the globe:

### US: Extending existing barrier

One third of the 3,200-km US border with Mexico is, in fact, already protected by a fence. Authorized by US President George W Bush and completed in 2010, the metallic barrier is more than five metres high and equipped with floodlights and surveillance cameras.

### European barriers against migrants

● **FRANCE:** With existing high wire fences not enough to stop them, a one-kilometre "anti-intrusion" wall was built in late 2016 to block access to the northern port of Calais for migrants trying to clandestinely cross the Channel to Britain.

● **HUNGARY:** As Europe grappled with its worst migrant crisis since World War II, Hungary built a 175-kilometre, four-metre high fence along its border with Serbia in Sept 2016, followed in October by one along its border with Croatia. Other countries in the region have also put up barriers to thwart migrants, including SLOVENIA with Croatia, AUSTRIA with Slovenia and MACEDONIA with Greece.

● **BULGARIA:** Bulgaria in 2014 started building a razor wire barrier along part of its border with Turkey, the main entry point for migrants seeking to avoid the perilous sea route to the EU across the Mediterranean. The barrier is now 176 km long.

● **GREECE:** Greece became the leading entry point for migrants into Europe at just the moment when its economy was collapsing. So in 2012 Athens built an 11-km barbed wire fence along its river border with Turkey.

● **SPAIN-MOROCCO:** The Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla on the North African coast, Africa's only land borders with Europe, are protected by high-tech border fences, each around 10 kilometres long.

### Walls and conflict

● **ISRAEL-WEST BANK:** Israel began building its 712-km security barrier edging the West Bank in 2002, saying it would stop attacks by Palestinian insurgents. Critics say it has been used to seize land and establish a de facto border in breach of international law. Nine metres high at some points, the wall - which is two-thirds finished - includes watchtowers and electronic surveillance.

● **SAUDI ARABIA-IRAQ:** Responding to the rise of the Islamic State group, the Saudis in 2014 added to an existing seven-metre-high sand embankment on the Iraqi border with a 900-kilometre fence and electronic surveillance system.

● **INDIA-PAKISTAN:** India built a barrier almost 750 km long, along the de facto border dividing disputed Kashmir with Pakistan, to keep out Pakistani militants. It has also surrounded Bangladesh with a 2,700-km barbed-wire fence aimed at restricting immigration and smuggling.

### Marking territory

● **NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA:** The most heavily militarized border in the world is the one drawn between North and South Korea in 1953. Bristling with razor wire, sensors, landmines and heavy weapons, the Demilitarized Zone stretches for 250 km along the full length of the border.

● **WESTERN SAHARA:** A 2,700-km sand wall, in place since the 1980s, has been built between the 80 percent of territory under Moroccan control and zones under Polisario rebels, who have been fighting and negotiating for control of Western Sahara since the 1970s.

● **CYPRUS:** A wall splits the island and its capital Nicosia between its Turkish and Greek Cypriot halves, dating back to Turkey's invasion in 1974. — AFP



This photo taken on Feb 3, 2017 shows Zghala, a woman from Western Sahara, looking at the fence in the Al-Mahbes area as she accompanies her 14-year-old son to show him the wall separating the Polisario controlled Western Sahara from Morocco.

Built to keep out migrants, traffickers, or an enemy group, border walls have emerged as a one-size-fits-all response to the vulnerability felt by many societies in today's globalized world, says an expert on the phenomenon. Practically non-existent at the end of World War II, by the time the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 the number of border walls across the globe had risen to 11. That number has since jumped to 70, prompted by an increased sense of insecurity following the Sept 11, 2001 attacks in the United States and the 2011 Arab Spring, according to Elisabeth Vallet, director of the Observatory of Geopolitics at the University of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM).

One third were intended to bring an end to a conflict, Vallet says, such as between north and south Cyprus, the two Koreas, and India and Pakistan. But in recent years "three distinct types of walls have appeared, including anti-migration walls - the most common - anti-trafficking walls and anti-terrorism walls," she told AFP. For Vallet, walls or fences are often used as a "turnkey response" to a sense of vulnerability felt when "migratory pressures are changing the nature of a society's identity, or exerting economic pressure."

That is the case, she says, in Bulgaria, Greece or Hungary - and most prominently in the United States where President Donald Trump's flagship campaign promise was to build a wall on the border with Mexico. Typically they represent "the divide between rich and poor, north and south," said Vallet, noting exceptions such as Saudi

Arabia which has used walls to isolate itself from its neighbors. And in an electoral context, walls are typically linked to questions of "identity" used by demagogues to cast neighbors in a bad light - and reinforce a sense of them and us.

### High cost, limited returns

Vallet cites data from US border officials that shows that "walls deter and slow down people, but walls never keep them out". In some cases, there is evidence that moves to close borders can actually drive people who had not taken the decision to migrate to do so, she said, with walls fuelling the migration they are intended to curb. Meanwhile their dissuasive power is limited, she says, pointing at the depth of despair that drives migrants to undertake perilous migrations, with newborns in their arms, and exposing themselves to extreme personal danger. "Ninety percent of women will take a contraceptive, presuming not that they could be raped - but that they will be."

"A wall is extraordinarily expensive," she said - money that could be better spent addressing the factors behind migrant movements. The cost of Trump's planned border wall, for instance, could reach \$21.6 billion, according to a Department of Homeland Security estimate circulated by US media. Each kilometer of existing fencing between Mexico and the United States cost between one and eight million US dollars, Vallet noted.

Closing off the whole border, as Trump has vowed to do, by adding more than 2,000 kilometers of wall in "desert areas



This photo taken on Jan 25, 2017 shows a peace wall separating the Catholic and Protestant communities of Belfast.



This photo taken on Feb 20, 2017 shows Indian Border Security Force (BSF) personnel patrolling along a fence at the India-Pakistan border at Wagah, some 35 km from Amritsar.



This photo taken on Feb 12, 2017 shows South Korean guard posts along military barbed wire fence in the border city of Paju near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) dividing the two Koreas.



This photo taken on Feb 2, 2017 shows a four-metre-high wall running along a kilometre-long stretch of the main road leading to Calais port, aimed at stopping migrants who attempt to reach its shores.

where the land is privately-owned and will have to be expropriated, will push the cost up to US\$21 million per kilometer". "If that money were invested in peace missions... or towards responding to the climate change that triggers food insecurity and

migration," Vallet believes it would have the potential to change "the course of history". "You need to invest in peace missions, in security - humanitarian corridors in Syria might have spared Hungary the need to build walls," she said. — AFP



This photo taken on Feb 7, 2017 shows an aerial view showing the border fence near the Hungarian-Serbian border at Kelebia village.



This photo taken on Feb 17, 2017 shows a general view of the fence between the Moroccan city of Fnideq and the Spanish enclave of Ceuta.



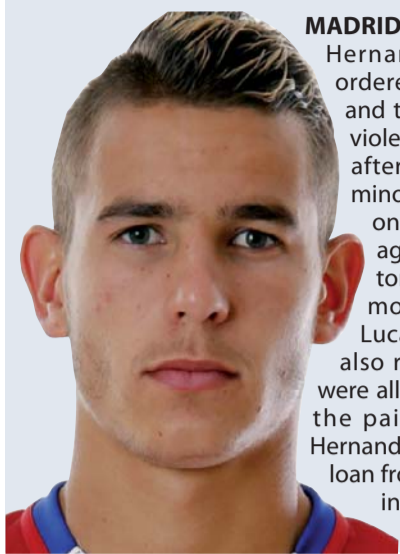
This photo taken on Feb 17, 2017 shows border guards patrolling along Macedonia's southern border with Greece near Gevgelija.



This photo taken on Feb 10, 2017 shows Iraqis walking next to the Iraq-Kuwait border barrier near the town of Umm Qasr.

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**FRENCH DEFENDER, GIRLFRIEND GET COMMUNITY SERVICE FOR SPAT**



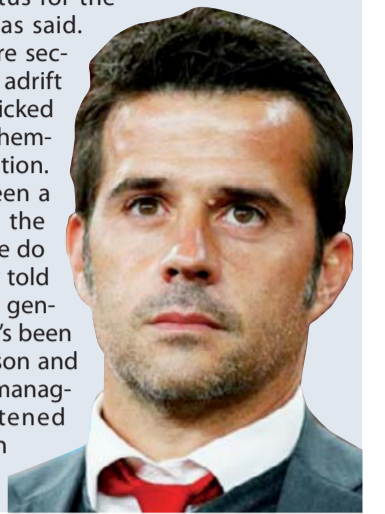
**MADRID:** Atletico Madrid's French defender Lucas Hernandez and his girlfriend were yesterday ordered to serve 31 days of community service and to not see each other for six months after a violent altercation. Hernandez, 21, was arrested after his girlfriend was taken to hospital with minor injuries following a fight between the pair on February 3. Neither party made a complaint against the other, but Spain's public prosecutor asked for prison sentences of seven and six months respectively to be handed down to Lucas and his girlfriend. Judge Borja Vargues also ruled that neither Lucas nor his girlfriend were allowed to bear weapons for 18 months, with the pair having to pay the costs of the case. Hernandez and his younger brother Theo, 19 and on loan from Atletico to Alaves, are both French youth internationals. — AFP

**PAKISTAN TO HOLD CRICKET T20 FINAL ON HOME SOIL**

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan will hold the final of its wildly popular domestic T20 cricket league on home soil for the first time, despite a wave of deadly attacks across the country, the cricket board announced yesterday. However, it was not clear how many foreign players would come to Pakistan, where 130 people have been killed in recent attacks, to take part in the March 5 game in the eastern city of Lahore. While the league, now in its second year, attracts an estimated television audience of over 50 million people in the cricket-crazed nation, so far all matches have been played in the United Arab Emirates. "The nation has shown its passion and unity. The Pakistani nation is peaceful and it will not be blackmailed," Pakistan Cricket Board executive committee chairman Najam Sethi said. The Pakistan Super League features cricket stars from all over the world but many appear reluctant to travel to Pakistan for the final. "We have to wait until March 3 to know which foreign players will travel to Lahore, as we still do not know which two teams will qualify," Sethi told reporters. — Reuters

**SILVA CAN KEEP HULL IN PREMIER LEAGUE: MALONEY**

**LONDON:** Manager Marco Silva has given Hull City a renewed belief that they can secure their Premier League status for the next season, midfielder Shaun Maloney has said. Since Silva's arrival in January, Hull, who are second-from-bottom in the table and a point adrift of safety with 12 games remaining, have picked up eight points from a possible 18 to give themselves a fighting chance of avoiding relegation. "Since the manager came in, there's just been a massive turnaround among the squad and the supporters. There's a feeling of optimism. We do believe we can stay in this league," Maloney told British media. "We've got that optimism and generally the feeling is that we can do it... There's been some pretty dark moments during this season and it doesn't feel anything like that under this manager." Hull travel to face relegation-threatened league champions Leicester City on Saturday. — Reuters



School teams with their coaches.

**IEAS CLINCH UGC'S INTER-SCHOOL SOCCER TROPHY**

**UNITED GOANS CENTRE'S 41ST EDITION FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT**

**KUWAIT:** The United Goans Center (UGC) has been one of the premier soccer clubs in Kuwait for the past thirty eight years. They are always at the forefront of sports activities, socio-cultural activities and various social events to promote harmony between expatriate community in Kuwait. On the turn of the season, when the cold winds refused to make way for a warmer weather, the United Goans Center (UGC) honorable President Tony Alphonso along with his club members Agnelo, Rusario, Brigido and Garry held the Inter-School Soccer tournament for kids under the age of 14 at the Mishrif ground. Since its initiation in 1976, the UGC has always promoted the beautiful game among children. In 2000 and 2015 UGC had also organized a similar tournament where Jabriya Indian School lifted the Inter School trophy in 2000 and United Indian School lifted the trophy in 2005. Their Slogan 'Friendship through Sports' helps stand as a reminder to these young athletes as they mature into grown footballers that though it is a tournament, one must

maintain that sportsmanship and discipline at all times; be it on the field or off. On what promised to be a cold yet sunny morning of Friday, 10th February 2017, United Goans Centre (UGC) held its 41st Edition football tournament. The day began with an epic showdown between Indian English Academy School (IEAS) and Indian Central School (ICS) for the Inter-School under 14 football finals. The two finalists beat a host of other schools that consisted of United Indian School, Kuwait Indian School, Carmel School Kuwait and Indian Integrated School to reach the final. The match itself was well balanced in the first half as both teams were evenly matched in skill and fight for possession. IEAS seemed the more threatening of the two however; no breakthrough could be found ending the first half in 0-0 draw. The second half began with the same energy as the first half. IEAS seemed eager to push forward with a spectacular long-range pass from No.4 Cailan Quiney. IEAS put forth more balls into the box with lovely crosses but there wasn't anyone to receive them except ICS

players. Not wanting to be left out ICS retaliated with more vigor earning themselves a corner but it was cleared by IEAS. ICS increased their attacks inside the IEAS box. IEAS seemed flustered as they lost possession inside their own box leading to nervy moments. The IEAS goalkeeper though seemed to be there just when needed, spectacularly saving a good shot on goal. The game went into extra time and IEAS soaked up whatever attacks thrown at them by ICS but were quick to counter earning themselves a free kick some distance away. No. 17 Aaron D'souza was tasked with taking the free kick, which he took fabulously with a long range ball. Enthused with their goal, IEAS increased pressure and crowded the ICS box. Though the game was all but won, IEAS would not back down. Their efforts paid off when No.5 Huzefa Ali doubled their lead. Even though they were trailing 2-0, ICS kept trying until the last minute of the game; emitting the sporting spirit that great teams are made of.

**Multi Sport-Events**  
The United Goans Centre also conducted

for the first time an Inter-School Multi-Events on 4th February 2017, for children under the age of 14 years. The UGC has introduced these Multi-Events to give both boys and girls a platform to participate and enhance their extracurricular activities. United Indian School (UIS), Kuwait Indian School (KIS), Indian Central School (ICS), Carmel School Kuwait (CSK) were the four schools that participated in various events. The games were held to test the physical and mental capacity as well as create a sense of comradery and teamwork among students. United Indian School took first place due to wins in Tug of War, Relay Mix, Relay Girls, Mathematics Problem Solving and Run with the Ball, Indian Central School took Second place with wins in the Sack Race and Relay Boys. Kuwait Indian School and Carmel School Kuwait took 3rd and 4th place respectively. The winners of the same were announced on 10th February 2017. At the end The United Goans Center (UGC) honorable President Tony Alphonso thanked the participating clubs and school team with a promise to have more and

better events for schools in future. He also thanked the sponsors. List of winners for the awards are as follows: Multi-Events Winners UGC Inter-School Under 14 Multi-Events Winners - United Indian School UGC Inter-School Under 14 Multi-Events 1st Runner Up - Indian Central School. UGC Inter-School Under 14 Multi-Events 2nd Runner Up - Kuwait Indian School. UGC Inter-School Under 14 Multi-Events Tug of War Winners - Indian Central School. UGC Inter-School Under 14 Multi-Events Tug of War Runner Up - Indian English Academy School. **Under 14 Football Final 2017** UGC Inter-School under 14 Football Final 2017 Winners - Indian English Academy School. UGC Inter-School under 14 Football Final 2017 Man of The Match - Sayed Hassan - Indian English Academy School.



Winners Indian English Academy School.



Runners-up Indian Central School.



Milti events winner captain United Indian School.

**FOWLER JOINS FRIENDS IN WINNING AND EXTENDS YOUTH MOVEMENT**

**PALM BEACH GARDENS:** Golf's youngest and biggest stars keep winning. Rickie Fowler has mostly been watching. He wasn't in Hawaii when Justin Thomas swept the Aloha State by a combined 10 shots, including a PGA Tour record for 72 holes and a 59 at the Sony Open. He took off the final two weeks of the West Coast swing when Jordan Spieth blew away all his challengers at Pebble Beach, and Dustin Johnson was overwhelming at Riviera. "It's fun seeing it," Fowler said. "It's motivating to see my friends go win. And to have them texting me last night and wishing me the best, telling me to go get it done, it's a fun group to be part of because we're all trying to push each other to be the best players we can be. "We love seeing each other play well," he said. "And we love beating each other when they're at their best." Sunday at the Honda Classic was Fowler's turn. He didn't

want to recite the entire list of text messages he received, though he mentioned Spieth and Thomas and Rory McIlroy, who has been out with a rib injury the last six weeks. Even that old man in the neighborhood, 41-year-old Tiger Woods, chimed in with a message to Fowler for him to get it done. And that's what he did, though Fowler could have done without a brief spell of suspense. Fowler now has four PGA Tour victories, which is solid for a 28-year-old in his eighth season on the PGA Tour, though it doesn't quite stack up with McIlroy, Johnson, Spieth, or even Thomas. The knock on Fowler always has been whether he wins enough to match his marketing machine. He's heard that before. What really got under his skin was knowing that in four previous occasions that he has at least a share of the 54-hole

lead on the PGA Tour, he had failed to win. Not only that, he had never broken par in the final round when leading. His best chance was at PGA National on a Sunday afternoon that turned blustery. Fowler had a four-shot lead and he never lost it, though there were a few nervous moments. **TIGHT RACE** From behind the fourth green, his putt up the slope found the wrong hole - a sprinkler head - and led to bogey. Two holes later, he hooked his tee shot into the water and made double bogey. He could afford that with a four-shot lead. But when Gary Woodland started to make a run, Fowler suddenly was only one shot ahead, and it then became a chance to fail. But only briefly. He rolled in a 40-foot birdie putt on No. 12. He added a 25-foot birdie putt on

No. 13. That restored his cushion and his comfort, and when he stuffed a 5-iron from 181 yards into the wind and over the lake at No. 16 to 3 feet and made another birdie, the tournament effectively was over. "My putter saved me," Fowler said. "If I don't make those putts, I've got a pretty tight race." The finish was not what he wanted - a tee shot into the water on the par-3 17th for a bogey, a wedge into the bunker on the par-5 18th for another bogey, and yet another round over par - 1-over 71 - in a final round when he had the lead. All that did was cost him a chance to break the 72-hole scoring record at PGA National. Fowler finished at 12-under 268, one shot short of the record, but four shots clear of Woodland and Morgan Hoffmann. This is one time Fowler did not care about pretty. He cared about winning. Asked if it was more meaningful to end 13

months without winning or to show he could close out a victory with the lead, Fowler chose the latter. "Being out front and getting the job done, especially with giving some back and having to fight back," he said. Fowler moved back into the top 10 - he is No. 9 in this week's ranking - for the first time since September. And he extended a telling trend on the PGA Tour this year. Johnson (32) is the oldest PGA Tour winner in 2017 through eight tournaments. The average age of the winners is 25.5 years. Thomas, who missed the cut, came out to the 18th green to watch Fowler finish. Fowler can finally join them. Next he has to beat them. He could not help but mention that while the Honda Classic typically has a strong field, none of the top was there. All except Jason Day (No. 2) will be at the Mexico Championship next week. —AP





## RUGBY

## SA RUGBY BACKS COACH COETZEE DESPITE WOEFUL YEAR

**CAPE TOWN:** South Africa have retained beleaguered head coach Allister Coetzee following a review of the worst season in the country's test history in 2016, SA Rugby said yesterday.

The Springboks suffered a number of unwanted firsts last year, including a home defeat by Ireland and a loss in Italy, as well as an embarrassing 57-15 hammering at the hands of New Zealand in Durban.

Coetzee will remain at the helm, but

there are changes to his technical team with assistant coach Mzwandile Stick dropping out to work with the national Under-20 side, and the addition of Cheetahs coach Franco Smith on a permanent basis.

Smith is much admired in South Africa and will work with the backs, as he did towards the end of 2016, while Johann van Graan and Matthew Proudfoot have retained their positions among the assistants.

The Boks are also on the hunt for a specialist defence coach and have been in talks with former Bok Brendan Venter, according to widespread media reports, who has a contract with Italy in the same role until 2019.

That position remains open until "contractual details are finalised", according to a statement from SA Rugby. "Our coaching review was focused on the Springboks and we identified two areas to give Allister Coetzee additional sup-

port at the head of our most prized national asset," SA Rugby president Mark Alexander said.

"Franco Smith will continue the work he began with the backs and attack at the end of last year while we are very excited about the new defensive coach we have identified to address matters raised during the review. "We expect to be able to confirm that appointment shortly," SA Rugby has retained Coetzee despite the side winning only four of

their 12 tests in 2016, his first season at the helm of the team. "Last year was an incredibly tough one for the Springboks and all of the rugby community suffered," Alexander said.

"We weighed many factors in the review process but we believe that these changes will strengthen the Springbok management hand."

The Boks are next in action in June when they host France for three test matches at home. — Reuters

## BRUISED SAINTS TAKE SOLACE FROM GABBIADINI'S STAR TURN

**LONDON:** A bruised Southampton squad licked their wounds yesterday after narrowly losing a pulsating League Cup final to Manchester United, but can draw much consolation from the confirmation that in Manolo Gabbiadini they have unearthed a goal-scoring diamond.

The Italian, signed from Napoli last month, scored twice in Sunday's Wembley showpiece to draw the Saints level, only for Zlatan Ibrahimovic to score the winner with the match headed to extra-time.

Indeed Gabbiadini can count himself unlucky not to have notched a hat-trick on his Wembley debut, after television replays showed his 15th minute strike should not have been ruled out for offside.

Saints manager Claude Puel pulled no punches afterwards in praise of his new hitman. "He scored three goals and was the best player of the final," said the Frenchman.

"He was better than Ibrahimovic. Both players know how important it is to score goals. He's now scored five goals in three games, it should be six of course, and it's fantastic for him and for the team."

Puel was not alone in praising the slender 25-year-old, with United boss Jose Mourinho also full of admiration, describ-

ing Gabbiadini's second goal as "phenomenal". That strike, where he reacted first to beat Chris Smalling and fire past David de Gea, capped a sizzling performance, during which they outplayed United for huge chunks of the game.

The Wembley showing was in stark contrast to some of their lukewarm performances in the league this season, and the players say they will use this experience to kickstart their campaign.

"We showed our character and determination," midfielder James Ward-Prowse said. "Everyone can be proud, we can come away with our heads held high."

"This has given us an incentive to kick our season on," Gabbiadini and his almost preternatural nose for a goal is sure to feature strongly if Saints are to climb the Premier League table from their current position of 13th.

"He is helping us to be more clinical," Puel said, with maximum understatement. "It's important for the team to keep this spirit, with the same attitude."

"We need to make sure that we take our chances in the Premier League now."

The Saints get a chance to put their plans in action on Saturday when they visit 12th-placed Watford. — Reuters



**LONDON:** Manchester United's Zlatan Ibrahimovic celebrates with the trophy after his side won the League Cup Final soccer match by beating Southampton 3-2 at Wembley Stadium, London, Sunday. — AP

## SOCCER

## WOLFSBURG HIRES JONKER TO SAVE IT FROM RELEGATION

**WOLFSBURG:** Wolfsburg hired former assistant coach Andries Jonker as coach yesterday in a bid to save the team from relegation.

The 54-year-old Jonker, who was last working for Arsenal's youth team, signed a deal to take over with immediate effect until 2018 as Wolfsburg's third coach of the season. "Andries Jonker knows Wolfsburg and regularly kept in touch with the club even after his switch to London. Both were decisive factors that allowed us find this top-solution in such a short timeframe," Wolfsburg sporting director Olaf Rebbe said. The Dutch coach will take over from Valerien Ismael, who was fired on Sunday. Ismael's predecessor, Dieter Hecking, was fired seven games into the season.

Volkswagen-backed Wolfsburg, which won the Bundesliga title in 2009, is only two points above the relegation zone after 22 matches. Jonker has 12 league games to turn the club's season around.

"He is an internationally experienced coach and proven tactician who has the best prerequisites for Wolfsburg to get back on the track to success quickly and sustainably," Rebbe said.

Jonker previously worked as assistant coach to Louis van Gaal at Bayern Munich, taking over as head coach on an interim basis for five games in 2011 when his compatriot was fired.

At Wolfsburg, Jonker worked under Felix

Magath, Lorenz-Guenther Koestner and Hecking. He also had spells in the Netherlands and at Barcelona.

Under Ismael, who took over on an interim basis on Oct. 17 and was made permanent when no better candidates were found, the club slumped to nine losses in 15 league games with only five wins.

There have been five losses in seven games across all competitions since the winter break, despite several additions, including Turkey attacking midfielder Yunus Malli and highly rated Dutch midfielder Riechedly Bazoer, who has played only 45 minutes.

Friday's 2-1 loss at home to Werder Bremen forced the change, particularly in light of Hecking's good work at Borussia Moenchengladbach, resurgent in the Bundesliga and through to the last 16 of the Europa League.

Hecking led Wolfsburg to the quarter-finals of the Champions League last year, after claiming the German Cup title and second place in the Bundesliga the year before.

Wolfsburg's poor season also cost former general manager Klaus Allofs his job. He was asked to leave after the 5-0 loss at home to Bayern Munich in December.

This story has been corrected to show Borussia Moenchengladbach is through to the last 16 of the Europa League, not the Champions League. — AP



**WOLFSBURG:** New coach of the German Bundesliga soccer club VfL Wolfsburg Andries Jonker. — AP

## IBRAHIMOVIC WILL 'STOP ON TOP' BUT IS COY ON UNITED FUTURE

**LONDON:** Ever the showman, Zlatan Ibrahimovic seems to be reveling in maintaining the suspense. Why accept a one-year contract extension from Manchester United now when you can sustain the ambiguity and add to the mystique?

"Let's see what happens," Ibrahimovic said after his free kick and header helped United win the League Cup on Sunday. "I will stop on top. If I don't perform, if I don't bring results, I will not play," the Swede added. "I will not be like other players, playing because they (had) a great career and name and they are still playing because they are who they are."

Even at 35, though, Ibrahimovic is feeding off his goals rather than his reputation. "I'm an animal," he said. "I feel like a lion."

United manager Jose Mourinho certainly wants the striker to stay for another year. After Ibrahimovic produced another age-defying, match-winning display and took his tally for the season to 26 goals, Mourinho said he would not "beg" Ibrahimovic to prolong his stay.

The fans are another matter. If there's any doubt Ibrahimovic could call it quits after a single season in English soccer, Mourinho quipped that supporters should camp outside his house.

It was Ibrahimovic's sons, Vincent and Maximilian, who urged their father to make England his next - potentially final - destination in a nomadic playing career after his Paris Saint-Germain contract expired last year.

"I had my mind somewhere else ... my mind was not here," Ibrahimovic said as he left Wembley Stadium following United's 3-2 victory over Southampton. "Then my kids started to bump my head and Jose called, then I am here."

## 'I AM THE BOSS'

No one but Ibrahimovic, though, is influencing the decision about whether to play on at United into next season. "(My children) are satisfied with what I am doing," Ibrahimovic said, "but this time I am the boss, not them."

The Swede is enjoying toying with reporters about his future, especially after defying so many predictions that he wouldn't be able to cut it in England in the twilight of his career.

"Let's see what happens," he said. "We have another two months of the season to go, because according to many I could not do what I've been doing."

Scoring goal after goal, his exploits relegated a forward almost half his age - 19-year-old Marcus Rashford - and captain Wayne Rooney to the bench at Wembley. And he hasn't just been used sparingly by Mourinho, netting in four different competitions - the Premier League, Europa League, FA Cup and, of course, League Cup - since scoring in the season-opening Community Shield victory over Leicester.

A marksman in front of goal still with such unnerving precision, Ibrahimovic appears as unafraid by the march of time as he is by younger, supposedly more nimble defenders, making 38 appearances with two months of the season still remaining.

"I look good," Ibrahimovic responded with typical bravado when informed that he looked 25 again. "I know I look good." Unlike most swaggering players, Ibrahimovic backs up the hype with performances on the field.

"I feel fresh. I feel good. I feel like an animal. I was not worried about age because I know what

I am able to do," Ibrahimovic said. "People who know me from the locker room know that I train very hard ... and I need to suffer."

## SATISFYING

Ibrahimovic reaps the rewards. Sunday's triumph under the Wembley arch took his career haul of winners' medals to 32, augmenting a collection from Ajax, Milan clubs Inter and AC Milan, Barcelona and PSG.

"People always say I'm difficult to handle and that I have a different character," Ibrahimovic said. "But still I won wherever I went."

Proving himself in England is particularly satisfying even for a player who never doubts his own abilities. "He didn't come and show himself here," Ibrahimovic summed up his doubters as saying. "But I came. And I came when people thought it was impossible for me to do what I am able to do. It feels good. I am enjoying it."

And he knows just how much United is relying on him for goals. No other player in the squad has even reached double figures with the next-highest scorer, Juan Mata, 17 behind with nine. "Do I need to do it? In my head I'm never satisfied," Ibrahimovic said. "I always want more. I'm hungry to do more. That is my mentality." Had it not been for Ibrahimovic, United might be further back in the Premier League standings than sixth place. If Mourinho's side doesn't make the top four - or win the Europa League - it will be out of the Champions League for a second straight season.

Ibrahimovic's future, though, won't depend on whether he has a shot at finally landing European soccer's top prize - the one major honor to elude him in an otherwise illustrious career.

Asked if leaving United to play for another team would be a downhill move, Ibrahimovic responded: "Me or the club?" — AP

## KLOPP BELIEVES BOARD NOT PLAYERS DECIDED RANIERI FATE

**LONDON:** The Leicester City squad have found an unlikely ally in Juergen Klopp after the Liverpool manager said that the club's board were likely responsible for Claudio Ranieri's sacking and that the concept of 'player power' was often exaggerated. The Foxes have been subjected to plenty of negative headlines over the weekend after media reports suggested a player revolt led to Ranieri's sacking on Thursday, nine months after the manager led the club to the Premier League title. "Players are not more powerful. We were much more powerful in the past," Klopp told British media ahead of Monday's clash at Leicester, who are languishing in the relegation zone after picking up just five league victories this season.

"It depends always on the board. As long as the players talk together there is no problem. It is not about how powerful (the players are)." According to several reports, senior players in the Leicester dressing room encouraged club owner Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha to sack Ranieri, saying

they had lost faith in the Italian's ability to guide them to league survival.

"The players need to be powerful but not in sacking managers. It's not like the Leicester players did it. It is if someone asked, they gave an answer," Klopp added.

"If there is a direct way to the board the owners sit with the players and ask 'how are you?' and they say 'not too good because of the manager'. I have never had this situation."

"There was never a direct line to the owner. But I know it has happened." As for his own squad, Klopp said the relationship between him and his players was one filled with mutual trust and respect.

"I don't have a second of doubt about my relationship with the team. I know what they want, they know what I want. Nobody expects perfection. I don't expect it from them and they don't from me," the charismatic German added. "It is all full of respect."

Liverpool are fifth in the table while Leicester are 18th ahead of the clash at the King Power Stadium. — Reuters



Claudio Ranieri



## PIQUE AND RAMOS IN SPAT AS TITLE RACE HEATS UP IN SPAIN

**MADRID:** Barcelona defender Gerard Pique thinks Real Madrid is being helped by the referees. Real Madrid defender Sergio Ramos thinks Pique should mind his own business. The players got into a little spat after the weekend games in the Spanish league, each defending his club as the title race heats up. Pique helped Barcelona earn a difficult 2-1 win at Atletico Madrid on Sunday, then watched Madrid erase a two-goal deficit in a controversial 3-2 win at Villarreal, which complained of the refereeing.

Pique hinted on social media that Madrid was being benefited, posting stories mentioning refereeing mistakes that went against Barcelona and some

that favored Madrid. "Against the same teams, eight points," he wrote, making an apparent reference to the difference in points caused by the alleged mistakes in games involving Madrid and Barcelona.

He made sure the stories came from media outlets in Madrid to "leave no doubt" about the claims.

Barcelona, seeking its third straight league title, is one point behind Madrid after 24 rounds. Madrid has a game in hand, at Celta Vigo. The stories posted by Pique mention a goal he scored but was mistakenly disallowed for offside, and a Ramos goal that was not annulled even though he was offside.

Ramos said the accusation was

expected from the outspoken Pique.

"It would surprise me if it came from (Lionel) Messi," Ramos said. "But from Pique, we already know him, we won't get caught up in that. We will mind our own business, which is to win every match and secure the league title."

"Everyone has to stick to their own problems. Fortunately we only depend on ourselves. We are focused on improving and on doing what we have to do."

It's not the first time Pique publicly showed his frustration with the referees in Spain. Last month, after a penalty kick not awarded to Barcelona against Villarreal, he pointed his finger at the VIP box and yelled toward officials before leaving the field, apparently targeting

Spanish league president Javier Tebas. Pique also complained after Barcelona's loss at Athletic Bilbao in the Copa del Rey. The most controversial play on Sunday was the penalty call that led to Cristiano Ronaldo's equalizer in Villarreal. The ball hit the hand of Bruno Soriano inside the area, but the midfielder claimed it was involuntary.

"I can't just cut my arm off," Soriano said. Villarreal president Fernando Roig added fuel to the controversy by complaining the officiating crew left the stadium carrying Real Madrid bags. Madrid, like many other clubs, is known to hand out small gifts such as key chains, pins and pens to the referees and their assistants after matches.

"The referees try to be fair and sometimes they'll benefit you and sometimes they'll hurt you," Ramos said.

Madrid is trying to win its first league title since 2012. Barcelona, which has lifted three league trophies since then, trailed Madrid by as many as six points this season.

Third-place Sevilla, seeking its first league title since 1946, is three points off the lead. Fourth place Atletico, which last won the league in 2014, is 10 points behind its city rival. "Whoever thinks that Barcelona will throw in the towel and that Madrid has already won it with nine or 10 rounds to go, doesn't know a lot of football," Ramos said. "It's going to be very difficult." — AP

## ALLEGRI WARNS JUVE OVER 'ANGRY' NAPOLI

**MILAN:** Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri has warned against complacency when the Turin giants host 'angry' Napoli in the first leg of their Italian Cup semi-final on Tuesday. Napoli's hopes of staying in the title hunt were dented by a humiliating 2-0 home defeat to 10-man Atalanta on Saturday which left them 12 points off the top. Although Juve's last reverse at home was a league defeat in September 2015 and they recorded a 30th consecutive win in Turin with a 2-0 victory over Empoli on Saturday, Allegri expects Maurizio Sarri's men to push them all the way.

"Now, our focus is on the Cup. We want to reach a third consecutive final and it won't be easy because we're up against a team that will still be angry after defeat on Saturday," Allegri said Monday. "Napoli haven't suddenly become a bad side in the space of three days."

Playing at home is crucial for us if we want to keep a clean sheet." Juventus, bidding for a third consecutive league and Cup double, boast a seven-point lead over Roma in Serie A after the Giallorossi humbled Inter Milan 3-1 at the San Siro on Sunday as he did on Saturday. Allegri is set to rest Gianluigi Buffon and hand the goal-keeping gloves to Norberto Neto for the second consecutive game. "Neto will play again tomorrow," said Allegri. "He's a great goalkeeper and has always stepped up to the plate for us when asked. "The only reason he's number two is because there's Buffon ahead of him." League and Cup winners the past two seasons, Juventus remain in contention for the treble, having coasted past Porto 2-0 last week in their Champions

League last 16 tie in Portugal.

And Allegri, who steered Juve to the 2015 final and a 3-1 defeat to Barcelona in his first season in charge, admitted he wouldn't mind seeing his side play a few extra games at the end of the season. "To fill out the fixtures calendar it would be nice to get to the final of every competition," he added.

"As things stand we have 15 games to play, but hopefully we can extend the calendar because without football the week gets boring." Lazio host Roma in a Cup semi-final first leg tomorrow. —AFP



### Matches on TV (Local Timings)

SPANISH LEAGUE	
Real Sociedad v SD Eibar	21:30
beIN SPORTS	
Malaga CF v Real Betis	23:30
beIN SPORTS	
Valencia v CD Leganes	23:30
beIN SPORTS	
ENGLISH CHAMPIONSHIP LEAGUE	
Aston Villa v Bristol City	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Brighton & Hove Albion v Newcastle	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Wolverhampton v Huddersfield	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Blackburn Rovers v Derby County	22:45
beIN SPORTS	



**MARSEILLE:** Olympique de Marseille's Japanese defender Hiroki Sakai (C,R) vies with Paris Saint-Germain's French midfielder Blaise Matuidi (C,L) during the French L1 football match Olympique de Marseille vs Paris Saint-Germain on Sunday at the Velodrome stadium in Marseille, southern France. — AFP

### SOCCER

# GOAL-CRAZY PSG HAMMER MARSEILLE

**PARIS:** Edinson Cavani bagged his 35th goal of a spectacular season as Paris Saint Germain swept aside Marseille 5-1 on Sunday in "Le Classique" to move second in Ligue 1.

The reigning French champions are three points behind prolific league leaders Monaco and level with Nice, but go second thanks to a better goal difference in what has become a three-way tussle for the title. A Stade Velodrome record 65,252 packed into the stands in the hopes of seeing a Marseille side buoyed by fresh investment and the return of Dimitri Payet derail their old rival's title charge.

But the vociferous home fans were silenced after just six minutes when skipper Thiago Silva rose to powerfully nod the ball back across goal and fellow Brazilian defender Marquinhos headed home unchallenged. That opened the floodgates and Blaise Matuidi, who scored the fifth and best goal of the evening, was jubilant afterwards. "We knew they were going to try to squeeze us in the first 15-20 minutes, but we managed well," the French international midfielder said. "A great victory... It's just sheer happiness. When I was a kid I dreamed of playing these games."

"I'm happy but we have to go on like this. There are other very good teams around us at the top and it's a very nice looking title race." Marseille defender Gregory Sertic commented: "We were very good for the first five-six minutes, but their second goal killed the game, against PSG it's hard to come back."

Marseille were never in the game but Payet, who forced his way out of West Ham in the winter transfer window for 30 million euros (\$32m), had the home side's first real chance when he flashed a long-distance strike just wide on the quarter hour. A minute later however it was 2-0 when the Argentine attacking midfielder Javier Pastore-recalled after injury at the expense of Julian Draxler-cleverly dinked the ball through to Cavani, who poked in past the advancing Yann Pele in the home goal to continue his deadly form. It was the Uruguayan predator's 35th goal in all competitions this term and 26th in the league.

Cavani might have had a second on 23 minutes as PSG dominated, but he miscued his scissor kick over with the goal gaping.

#### MEMPHIS DEPAY DOUBLE

The second half was more of the same and it was 3-0 on 50 minutes when another Brazilian, Lucas Moura, profited from poor defending to prod in from close range.

Matuidi claimed the assist but it was Pastore, back in boss Unai Emery's starting XI and back to fitness, who provided a classy touch on the way. Emery replaced Pastore with Draxler early in the second half and just after the hour the German international schemer made it 4-0, firing in first time after a pinpoint Thomas Meunier cross.

Marseille grabbed a 70th-minute consolation through Rod Fanni, before Matuidi sealed the rout, steering the ball into the top corner from just outside the box.

The heavy defeat leaves Marseille in seventh.

Earlier, Manchester United flop Memphis Depay struck twice as Lyon, a distant fourth, smashed Metz 5-0. Nerveless Fabinho chipped in a late penalty as Monaco beat Guingamp 2-1 away on

Saturday to move clear at the top. Nice were also winners, but they made hard work of it too, coming from behind to beat Montpellier 2-1 on Friday. —AFP

## MOURINHO DEMANDS MAN UNITED TROPHY CHARGE

**LONDON:** Jose Mourinho has challenged his Manchester United stars to use their dramatic League Cup final win against Southampton as a springboard to bigger prizes. Mourinho lifted the first major trophy of his United reign on Sunday after Zlatan Ibrahimovic's late header clinched a 3-2 victory at Wembley. The 54-year-old is the first United manager to win a major competition in his maiden season at Old Trafford and the 19th trophy of his glittering career made him only the third boss, after Alex Ferguson and Brian Clough, to enjoy four League Cup triumphs.

Now Mourinho wants his players to learn from the winning feeling as they chase FA Cup and Europa League titles this term, and ideally Premier League and Champions League glory next season.

"The reality is that we want more: my contract is long, I have two more years with this one, so hopefully I can win more," Mourinho said. "This season I know it's difficult, but the reality is we have to try to fight for more." Despite the landmark occasion Mourinho wore a stern expression during the trophy presentation.

But he insisted he was merely hiding his pride because he wanted his players to soak up the adulation.

"I am very happy. I always try to put myself in the secondary position—it's important for the fans, the club, the players—but it's also important for me," he said.

"I put a lot of pressure on myself, you (the media) put a lot of pressure on myself. I wanted very much to win a major trophy at every club. By doing that with Manchester United it's quite the sense of relief because it was a big target for me."

"I feel very happy with the victory and

the fact I did it four times, the same as the biggest one (Ferguson) and Mr Clough."

#### HUMBLE

After watching United blow a two-goal lead as Manolo Gabbiadini struck twice for the Saints before Ibrahimovic's winner, Mourinho conceded his team had been fortunate. "You could feel in the game the difference in freshness. Southampton were in Spain, relaxing and preparing, and we were playing Europa League and FA Cup," he said. "We coped because we are humble, we stuck together and fought together, then we had a bit of luck because the 3-2 came at a moment when they couldn't react." Although more silverware this year would be nice, Mourinho knows the main target is to guarantee Champions League action next season by securing a top-four Premier League finish.

The key to achieving that will be keeping Ibrahimovic fit and firing on all cylinders. The Swedish veteran, who also scored United's opener with a fine free-kick, was written off by many when Mourinho signed him on a free transfer last year. Yet he has defied the critics with 26 goals in all competitions, and Mourinho said he never doubted the forward. "I was his manager, I know his potential," said Mourinho of their previous spell together at Inter Milan.

"Only a silly player comes to England at 35 years old, and with the successful career that Zlatan has, if he doesn't feel he can do it (he wouldn't have come). "Who better to know? Him. Not me, not you. Him." Ibrahimovic's future remains uncertain as his contract expires at the end of the season but, while Mourinho won't plead with him, he expects the star to stay. —AFP



**LONDON:** Manchester United's Portuguese manager Jose Mourinho holds up the trophy as Manchester United players celebrate their victory after the English League Cup final football match between Manchester United and Southampton at Wembley stadium on Sunday. — AFP

## KANE GROWING INTO A TOTTENHAM LEGEND

**LONDON:** Mauricio Pochettino believes Harry Kane is on course to becoming a Tottenham Hotspur great after the striker scored the 100th club goal of his career.

Kane, 23, scored a first half hat-trick in his club's 4-0 victory over Stoke City, reaching the century mark with his first goal and ending the game with his season tally on 22 goals.

The striker's effort helped Spurs bounce back after the disappointment of going out of the Europa League against Gent this week and Pochettino believes Kane's all-round display confirmed his qualities as one of the world's most dangerous forwards.

"Harry has the profile to be a legend (at Tottenham)," said the Spurs manager. "Maybe he's starting to be a legend with the goals he's scoring and the way he behaves."

"He is so professional. He has the perfect profile to be a legend here. He has his character. Sometimes he argues with me. Sometimes he's upset with me. Sometimes he is happy. "He has a strong character. His personality is because he showed on the pitch behaviour as he showed today."

#### HE IS ONE OF THE BEST

And Pochettino added: "He is one of the best. I am pleased for him. He deserves it (to reach 100 goals). He is very professional, a top man and I'm very happy."

"This is not new for me. I've said many times for me one of the best strikers in the world." Stoke manager Mark Hughes, a former striker with Manchester United, Bayern Munich and Barcelona, added his voice to the

praise directed Kane's way. He said: "He either takes chances or creates them or he's involved in the creation of chances, always involved at the sharp end."

"There's great movement around him and that causes consternation. He benefits from that. He's in a good team and he's a good player and when it all clicks they're very difficult to stop." Kane also set up Dele Alli for his side's fourth goal as the midfielder delivered the ideal response after being sent off against Gent. Alli was heavily criticised for the first half challenge that brought a straight red card and the player admitted it had been a difficult 72 hours.

He said: "It has been a difficult week for me. I felt horrible after the game in the week. I'm delighted to respond like this today."

And his manager offered his full support for the 20-year-old. "Our conversations are private but I gave more love than normal," said Pochettino. "He's very mature and he showed that today. I am happy for him because he was sad and disappointed. He is only 20 years old. I will always protect and support him."

"For me, he is one of the best young players in the world. I will always protect him. His character and the way he behaves, sometimes can make a mistake but I want him on the pitch and I want him next to me."

The win moved Tottenham up to second place and while the gap to leaders Chelsea remains a daunting ten points, Pochettino insists he has not given up hope of chasing down Antonio Conte's side. —AFP



Harry Kane

# Sports

Kurt Busch wins  
Daytona 500  
demolition derby



Mourinho demands  
Man United  
trophy charge



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WESTBROOK SCORES 41 PTS AS THUNDER TOP PELICANS Page 18



NEW YORK: Marc Staal #18 of the New York Rangers attempts to block a shot by William Karlsson #25 of the Columbus Blue Jackets during the first period at Madison Square Garden on Sunday in New York City. — AFP

## ATKINSON, WENNBERG LIFT JACKETS OVER RANGERS

NEW YORK: Cam Atkinson and Alexander Wennberg each scored twice to lead the Columbus Blue Jackets to a 5-2 victory over the New York Rangers in the NHL on Sunday. Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 28 shots to tie his career high with his 32nd win. Josh Anderson also scored and Oliver Bjorkstrand had two assists to help the Blue Jackets win for the fourth time in five games. Columbus won for the second time in two days after its bye week and moved past the Rangers into third place in the Metropolitan Division. The Blue Jackets won three of five in the season series - including both games at Madison Square Garden - after losing seven straight meetings coming in. Rick Nash scored a tying goal for the Rangers early in the first period. Jesper Fast scored in the final second, and Henrik Lundqvist finished with 26 saves.

### BLACKHAWKS 4, BLUES 2

Artem Anisimov scored with 5:20 left in the third period to lift Chicago over St. Louis for its fourth straight win and ninth in their last 10. Anisimov beat Jake Allen on the glove side from the right edge of the crease for his 22nd goal after taking a pinpoint cross-ice pass from linemate Artemi Panarin. Tanner Kero added an empty-netter with 2.6 seconds left. Patrick Kane assisted on

Anisimov's winner and scored a power-play goal. Jonathan Toews also had a goal and an assist for surging Chicago, which pulled one point behind first-place Minnesota in the Central Division and Western Conference. Blackhawks defenseman Duncan Keith had an assist for his 500th NHL point. Magnus

Paajarvi and Alex Pietrangolo scored for the Blues, who played their first game following their bye week and lost their third straight.

### BRUINS 6, STARS 3

Patrice Bergeron had two goals and an assist as Boston beat Dallas, improving to 6-

1 under interim coach Bruce Cassidy. The Stars had tied the game in the second period after trailing 2-0. But Frank Vatrano and Bergeron scored on deflections 40 seconds apart in the second, and Bergeron added his 16th goal of the season in the third period. Brad Marchand, David Krejci scored in the first period for the Bruins. Marchand had two assists and Torey Krug had three assists. John Klingberg and Jiri Hudler had second-period goals for Dallas, and Tyler Seguin scored in the third.

### PREDATORS 5, OILERS 4

Filip Forsberg scored for the fourth straight game and Viktor Arvidsson got the go-ahead goal as Nashville beat Edmonton. Ryan Ellis, Vernon Fiddler and Colin Wilson also scored for Nashville, winners of three straight. James Neal had three assists. Connor McDavid, Milan Lucic, Mark Letestu and Jordan Eberle scored for Edmonton, which has lost three of four. Pekka Rinne made 28 saves for Nashville, extending his winning streak against the Oilers to nine games.

### FLAMES 3, HURRICANES 1

Johnny Gaudreau had two goals and an assist to help Calgary beat Carolina. Micheal Ferland also scored for the Flames. They

have earned at least one point in six straight games, going 5-0-1 in that stretch to move into playoff position in the Western Conference. Victor Rask scored on the power play for Carolina. Brian Elliott made 34 saves for the Flames. Eddie Lack finished with 21 saves.

### SENATORS 2, PANTHERS 1

Kyle Turriss scored the tiebreaking goal in the second period and Craig Anderson stopped 37 shots to lift Ottawa over Florida. Zack Smith had an early short-handed goal for the Senators, who have won four of six. Jonathan Marchessault scored for Florida, and James Reimer made 31 saves. The Panthers have lost three straight after sweeping a five-game road trip, and dropped their last four home games overall.

### COYOTES 3, SABRES 2

Radim Vrbata scored with 18.9 seconds left to cap a three-goal third period and lift Arizona over Buffalo. Vrbata also had an assist, and Max Domi and Jamie McGinn also scored for the trade-depleted Coyotes, who snapped a two-game skid. Louis Domingue made 31 saves. Jack Eichel had a goal and an assist, and Evan Rodrigues also scored for the Sabres, who have lost three straight. Anders Nilsson stopped 26 shots — AP

### NHL results/standings

Chicago 4, St. Louis 2; Nashville 5, Edmonton 4; Columbus 5, NY Rangers 2; Calgary 3, Carolina 1; Boston 6, Dallas 3.

Western Conference					Eastern Conference								
Central Division					Atlantic Division								
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS		
Minnesota	39	14	6	198	138	84	Montreal	33	21	8	172	160	74
Chicago	39	18	5	187	159	83	Ottawa	33	21	6	160	157	72
Nashville	31	22	9	183	173	71	Boston	32	24	6	172	165	70
St. Louis	31	25	5	172	177	67	Toronto	28	20	13	189	182	69
Winnipeg	28	29	6	184	199	62	Florida	28	23	10	155	172	66
Dallas	24	28	10	173	201	58	Tampa Bay	27	25	8	166	170	62
Colorado	17	40	3	121	199	37	Buffalo	26	26	10	152	176	62
							Detroit	24	26	10	150	178	58
Pacific Division					Metropolitan Division								
San Jose	36	18	7	170	145	79	Washington	41	13	7	203	133	89
Anaheim	32	21	10	162	161	74	Pittsburgh	38	14	8	211	168	84
Edmonton	33	22	8	181	166	74	Columbus	39	16	5	199	145	83
Calgary	33	26	4	169	177	70	NY Rangers	40	20	2	206	164	82
Los Angeles	30	27	4	150	151	64	NY Islanders	29	22	10	180	182	68
Vancouver	26	29	6	143	176	58	Philadelphia	28	26	7	157	187	63
Arizona	22	32	7	148	196	51	New Jersey	25	25	11	142	176	61
							Carolina	25	25	8	146	168	58

### TENNIS

## ROGER FEDERER OFF TO SMOOTH DUBAI START

DUBAI: Roger Federer took the opening step in his bid for a record eighth title at the Dubai Tennis Championships yesterday with a comprehensive 6-1, 6-3 defeat of Benoit Paire. Federer, playing his first match since winning a record 18th Grand Slam title a month ago in Melbourne over Rafael Nadal, had been unsure of his form after dealing with a leg injury picked up at the Australian Open combined with a month off court after his title triumph.

But he need not have worried as he defeated Paire for the fourth time without a loss with the streaky Frenchman treated on his right ankle and also jeered for tossing a racket in the second set as he was crashing to defeat.

Federer is playing the event for the 13th time, improving to 48-5 in the emirate where he keeps a training base. Federer won his 11th match since losing to Tomas Berdych in the 2013 semi-finals. He has yet to lift an eighth title at any event having achieved seven in Dubai, Wimbledon, Basel, Cincinnati and Halle. "I'm happy with how I played, I was able to stay aggressive," Federer said as the event began its 25th

edition. "I couldn't have had a better first round start. "I still cannot believe my start to the season." Paire had his ankle strapped trailing 4-1 in the opening set and then lost serve as Federer took a 5-1 lead. The third seed wrapped it up after less than 30 minutes with a service winner.

The second set was equally one-way as Federer went through in well under an hour. Spanish sixth seed Roberto Bautista Agut advanced over Russian hope Karen Khachanov 6-1, 7-6 (7/4) while 2014 semi-finalist Philipp Kohlschreiber moved to within two victories of his 400th career win after he defeated eighth seed Gilles Muller of Luxembourg 6-4, 7-6 (7/1).

"I didn't know, actually, to achieve my record would be great," the 33-year-old German said. "It would put me in the semi-finals. "But I still have a few years to play on the Tour, so I'm pretty confident that I'm gonna make 400-plus, hopefully." Spain's Marcel Granollers put out Czech Jiri Vesely 6-3, 6-2 while Guillermo Garcia-Lopez defeated Serb Viktor Troicki 6-4, 6-3. — AFP



DUBAI: Roger Federer of Switzerland returns the ball to France's Benoit Paire during their ATP tennis match as part of the Dubai Duty Free Championships yesterday. — AFP

# Kuwait Times <sup>55th Anniversary</sup> BUSINESS

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2017

**NBK-Bahrain reports net profits of KD 59.638m for 2016**

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**Nissan Al-Babtain debuts Nissan's iconic Patrol Titanium into Kuwait**

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**Al-Sayer honors team commitment to customer care**

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**THE ALL-NEW 2017 GMC ACADIA DENALI**

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**BARCELONA:** A 5G connected car produced by Ericsson, SK telecom and BMW companies shown at the Mobile World Congress on the first day of the MWC in Barcelona, yesterday. Phone makers will seek to seduce new buyers with artificial intelligence functions and other innovations at the world's biggest mobile fair that started yesterday in Spain. —AFP (See Page 27)

## INDIA FIRMS FEAR LINGERING AFTERSHOCKS FROM CASH BAN GDP GROWTH TIPPED TO SLIP TO 3-YR LOW IN DECEMBER QUARTER

**GHAZIABAD:** Struggling with customers unable to pay on time and plummeting sales, Indian small-business owner Ravi Jain fears the government's crackdown on cash will have a much larger impact than predicted by top policymakers. Jain's bath taps manufacturing firm Supreme, along with many other Indian businesses, has been shaken by New Delhi's shock decision last November to scrap 86 percent of the cash in circulation. And it wasn't certain when things will get back to normal as much depends on a revival in consumer spending.

"Demonetization has developed a psychology among customers to spend only on essential items," Jain told Reuters from his factory on the outskirts of the Indian capital.

"We expect the cash situation to become normal in a couple of months, but we don't

know when this psychology will change." Asia's third-largest economy is tipped to slow down to a near three-year low in the October-December period, losing the title of the world's fastest-growing major economy to China.

The median estimate from a Reuters poll showed economists expect economic growth to slip to 6.4 percent in the last quarter, lower than China's 6.8 percent in the same period and slower than a 7.3 percent annual expansion in the September quarter. The data is due today.

### TEMPORARY PAIN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's currency ban, aimed at fighting tax evasion, corruption and forgery, had caused huge disruption to daily life, leaving farmers, traders and companies - reliant on cash transactions - in disarray. Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian

last month said the official GDP figures may not fully reflect the "real and significant hardships" experienced by the informal sector, in which an estimated nine out of 10 Indian workers are employed. But the pain, policymakers promised, will be short-lived.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has called the slowdown a transitory phenomenon and expects a sharp rebound in economic growth in the next fiscal year as cash conditions improve. That confidence prompted the central bank to keep interest rates on hold this month and shift its monetary policy stance to "neutral" from "accommodative," signalling the end of the monetary-easing cycle.

To be sure, the cash situation is improving gradually. Currency in circulation increased to 7.2 percent of GDP in mid-

February from 5.9 percent in early January, the central bank data showed. But it was lower than the 12 percent ratio before the cash crackdown began.

With the cash situation still not back to normal and weak consumer confidence, many economists predict the aftershocks of Modi's move will linger for months.

### FALTERING CONFIDENCE

Consumer confidence has fallen sharply with households uncertain about their income, employment and spending capability, according to RBI's consumer confidence survey published earlier this month. In rural India, the situation is no better. Sales of two-wheeler vehicles, a proxy for rural demand, fell for a third straight month in January.

Leading consumer goods firm Dabur

India, with exposure to rural India, slashed its revenue growth guidance last month, citing the demonetization fallout.

Indian companies had hoped for a fiscal stimulus to revive consumer spending, but the federal budget this month belied those hopes. With factories running nearly 30 percent below capacity, companies were not ready for fresh investments until demand roars back to life.

"We have seen extreme volatility in the market," Jain said about his company Supreme, whose sales have improved slightly since dropping as much as 50 percent after Modi's November announcement. "Once things stabilize ... we will think in terms of expansion. But it would be reasonable to assume that all this will take at least a year." —Reuters

## TRUMP TO BOOST DEFENSE SPENDING BY \$54 BILLION

**WASHINGTON:** The White House says President Donald Trump's upcoming budget will propose a whopping \$54 billion increase in defense spending and impose corresponding cuts to domestic programs and foreign aid. The result is that Trump's initial budget wouldn't dent budget deficits projected to run about \$500 billion.

White House budget officials outlined the information during a telephone call with reporters given on condition of anonymity. The budget officials on the call ignored requests to put the briefing on the record, even though Trump on Friday decried the use of anonymous sources by the media. Trump's defense budget and spending levels for domestic agency operating budgets will be revealed in a partial submission to Congress next month, with proposals on taxes and other programs coming later.

The big, approximately 10 percent increase for the Pentagon would fulfill a Trump campaign promise to build up the military. The senior budget office official said there will be a large reduction in foreign aid and that most domestic agencies will have to absorb cuts. He did not offer details, but the administration is likely to go after longtime Republican targets like the Environmental Protection Agency. Tentative proposals for the 2018 budget year that begins Oct. 1 are being sent to agencies, which will have a

chance to propose changes to the cuts as part of a longstanding tradition at the budget office.

Trump's budget, once finalized and sent to Congress in mid-March, is sure to set off a huge Washington battle. Democrats and some Republicans are certain to resist the cuts to domestic agencies, and any legislation to implement them would have to overcome a filibuster threat by Senate Democrats. A government shutdown is a real possibility.

Trump's budget also won't make significant changes to Social Security or Medicare, according to an administration official. Capitol Hill aides confirmed details of the upcoming blueprint on the condition of anonymity to discuss information that's not yet been made public.

Trump's first major fiscal marker will land in the agencies one day before his first address to a joint session of Congress. For Trump, the primetime speech is an opportunity to refocus his young presidency on the core economic issues that were a centerpiece of his White House run.

The upcoming submission covers the budget year starting on Oct. 1. But first there's an April 28 deadline to finish up the unfinished spending bills for the ongoing 2017 budget year, which is almost half over, and any stumble or protracted battle could risk a government shutdown then as well. —AP

## US CORE CAPITAL GOODS ORDERS FALL

**WASHINGTON:** New orders for US-made capital goods unexpectedly fell in January after three straight months of strong gains, but did little to change views that manufacturing was recovering from a prolonged slump amid rising commodity prices.

The Commerce Department said yesterday that non-defense capital goods orders excluding aircraft, a closely watched proxy for business spending plans, dropped 0.4 percent after an upwardly revised 1.1 percent increase in December. These so-called core capital goods were previously reported to have gained 0.7 percent in December. There were declines in orders for primary metals and electrical equipment, appliances and components, as well as computers and electronic products. Orders for machinery and fabricated metal products rose.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast core capital goods rising 0.5 percent last month. January's drop in core capital goods orders likely reflects caution among businesses as they await details of the Trump administration's proposed tax reform.

US financial markets were little moved by the report. President Donald Trump has promised a "phenomenal" tax plan that the White House said would include tax cuts for businesses and individuals. Details on the plan remain vague, though Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said last week that he wanted the tax relief enacted by August.

Expectations of tax cuts, increased infrastructure spending and a lighter regulatory burden have boosted business confidence in recent months, spilling over into investment on capital goods. Business investment shifted into higher gear in the fourth quarter, with spending on equipment increasing at a 3.1 percent rate after four straight quarterly declines. The Trump administration's perceived business-friendly policies, together with rising oil prices, are driving manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the US economy. A strong dollar, however, remains a challenge for manufacturers as it makes their goods less competitive on overseas markets.



**MOBILE:** The tail end of an Airbus A321 at the US manufacturing facility in Mobile, Alabama. New orders for US manufactured goods rose in January after two straight months of declines, bolstered by a large monthly swing in aircraft orders, the Commerce Department reported yesterday. —AFP

Shipments of core capital goods fell 0.6 percent last month after jumping 1.6 percent in December. Core capital goods shipments are used to calculate equipment spending in the government's gross domestic product measurement. A 6.0 percent surge in demand for transportation equipment buoyed overall orders for durable goods, items ranging from toasters to aircraft that are meant to last three years or more, which leapt 1.8 percent last month. Durable goods orders decreased 0.8 percent in December.

Last month's surge reflected a 69.9 percent

jump in civilian aircraft orders. The surge came even as Boeing reported on its website that it had received orders for only 26 aircraft last month.

Economists believe not all of the 290 aircraft ordered in December were reflected in the durable goods orders report for that month. Orders for motor vehicles and parts rose 0.2 percent in January, while bookings for defense aircraft soared 59.9 percent.

Pointing to continued manufacturing recovery, unfilled orders of core capital goods increased 0.5 percent last month after rising 0.4 percent in December. —Reuters



## BILLIONAIRE ROSS HEADS TOWARD CONFIRMATION AS COMMERCE SECY

**WASHINGTON:** Billionaire investor Wilbur Ross is headed toward confirmation as Commerce secretary in President Donald Trump's administration. The Senate was set to vote on Ross' nomination yesterday evening. Ross easily cleared the Senate Commerce Committee and a procedural vote by the full Senate.

Ross' confirmation has gone much smoother than other Trump nominees' approval. Former Commerce secretaries have praised him, including one who served under former President Barack Obama. Senators from both political parties were deferential to Ross at his nearly four-hour confir-

mation hearing, which was much more subdued than the confirmation hearings of other Trump nominees. "I believe his extensive management experience in the private sector, and his understanding of the challenges faced by workers and businesses alike, will equip him well for the job of leading the Department of Commerce," said Sen John Thune, R-S.D., chairman of the Commerce Committee.

Breaking with Republican orthodoxy, Ross said the Trump administration will work quickly to re-do the North American Free Trade Agreement, a massive trade pact with Canada and Mexico that has

boosted trade but still stings laid-off workers across the Midwest. Ross said all free trade agreements should be systematically re-opened every few years to make sure they are working in the best interests of the U.S. Ross said he is pro-free trade but noted his close relationship with the United Steelworkers union as proof that he will fight to protect American jobs. The union has endorsed him.

NAFTA was negotiated and signed by President Bill Clinton, with broad support among Republicans in Congress.

Worth an estimated \$2.9 billion, Ross has extensive business ties around the globe. In 2000, he

founded WL Ross & Co, a private equity firm. As part of his ethics agreement, Ross will divest from the firm, if confirmed.

The commerce secretary has several roles in promoting American business interests in the US and abroad. The department handles trade issues, working to attract foreign investment to the US. The department also oversees agencies that manage fisheries, weather forecasting and the Census Bureau, which will conduct a count in 2020. Ross said he has experience at that agency; he was a census-taker while he attended business school. —AP



**NEWARK:** In this Sept 8, 2015 file photo, a United Airlines passenger plane lands at Newark Liberty International Airport in Newark, N.J. United Airlines seeks to narrow gap on competitors like Delta by beefing up routes from hub airports. The airline also wants to upgrade facilities at key airports and reduce its use of smaller planes on important business-travel routes. —AP

## UNITED, AFTER YEARS OF FALLING REVENUE, HITS THE THRUSTERS

**DALLAS:** United Airlines, which lost the distinction of being the world's biggest carrier after shrinking for several years, plans to regain lost ground by adding more flights from key airports this summer. The airline wants to upgrade facilities at key airports and trim the use of smaller planes on important business routes.

If the expansion plans pan out, United could staunch slipping revenue numbers, which fell nearly 2 percent in the last five years, while revenue at industry leader Delta Air Lines Inc. rose 8 percent.

United has slipped in other ways, too. Only once in the last five years did United Continental Holdings Inc. top Delta's operating income. And it consistently ranks worse in on-time flights and cancellations. Delta and American Airlines Group Inc. have been adding flights, often on bigger planes, between major cities. Not United. "We've been shrinking, and our competitors have been growing at our expense," says Scott Kirby, who jumped from president of American Airlines to the same job at United in August. "We're going back on offense." Many analysts are upbeat about United's prospects, but say the path won't be easy for the Chicago airline. "Delta is not standing still either, so it's not only getting back to where they used to be, but it's leapfrogging Delta," said Helene Becker, an analyst with Cowen and Co.

Reducing the number of delays and cancellations is crucial, Becker said. After a 2010 merger with Continental Airlines, United alienated important customers with cost-cutting initiatives that backfired.

A decade ago, for instance, United flew eight daily flights on Boeing 737s between Atlanta and Newark, a big business route where it competes with Delta. By 2013, United flew six times a day on small regional jets or turboprops. Business travelers detest the small planes because they are more likely to be delayed or canceled, and their lack of enough overhead bins can mean carry-on bags get gate-checked - adding a time-consuming trip to bag-

gage claim. "Our best customers started abandoning us and flying on the competition, who had a better product," Kirby said. "We have to turn that around." Kirby thinks that new routes from hubs will win over, or win back, passengers.

If traffic picks up, and as United takes delivery of new planes, it should eventually be able to phase out small planes on key business-travel routes, he said. On Monday, United announced that this summer it will add four new destinations in smaller cities including Rochester, Minnesota, and Santa Rosa, California, add new connections to other medium-sized towns, and add daily flights on 15 other routes that connect with the big hubs. It will add seasonal flights between San Francisco and Munich.

United also wants to expand and upgrade facilities at key airports, including more gates at Chicago's O'Hare. The airline just opened a new club at Los Angeles International Airport, and Kirby told union pilots that United wants part or all of a future terminal there, where Delta and American have been making improvements.

Becker, of Cowen and Co, said United underinvested at its airports after two downturns in the airline business and a trip to bankruptcy court. Now, however, it is solidly profitable, with \$8 billion in pretax income for 2015-16. (Delta's pretax earnings in those two years were \$13.8 billion.)

United is starting to fly planes with fancy new seats in business-class on a few international routes. There have been fewer upgrades in the main cabin, however, and even a move that some travelers consider a step backward - the debut of "basic economy" tickets that are priced below regular economy but come with severe restrictions, including no use of the overhead bins. Delta just announced it will bring back free meals on transcontinental flights. United has been mum on whether it will do the same. Asked if his airline was studying free meals, Kirby said, "I wouldn't even say that." —AP

## LSE SCUPPERS DEUTSCHE BOERSE MERGER HOPES

MERGER PLANNED AS BRIDGE BETWEEN BRITAIN AND EUROPE

**LONDON/FRANKFURT:** The London Stock Exchange has all but ended a planned merger with Deutsche Boerse to create Europe's biggest exchange, which had faced growing opposition since Britain's vote to leave the European Union.

A European antitrust demand that it sell a trading platform in Italy was publicly ruled out by the LSE on Sunday, derailing the 29 billion euro (\$31 billion) bid and knocking shares in both the LSE and Deutsche Boerse yesterday. The LSE's decision not to sell MTS, which had been demanded in order to beef up smaller French rival Euronext, took the European Commission and Deutsche Boerse by surprise, people familiar with the matter said.

But the failure of the deal had been feared by many involved, amid growing calls from German politicians that the headquarters be shifted from London to Frankfurt because of Brexit - a concession that LSE did not want to make. Further complicating the picture, German state prosecutors had opened an investigation into Deutsche Boerse Chief Executive Carsten Kengeter, who had been due to head the combined group, for possible insider trading. Kengeter denies any wrongdoing.

"Brexit changed everything," Bill Cash, a British eurosceptic Conservative lawmaker who led a parliamentary debate on the merger last week, said. "It was inconceivable that after Brexit, having left the European Union, that our stock exchange would have been effectively run from Germany." The breakdown leaves a question mark over the strategy of the exchanges in London, Europe's financial capital, and Frankfurt, the equivalent for Germany, the region's biggest economy.

Earlier this month, Kengeter had warned that Frankfurt stood to lose out if the deal failed. "The biggest risk to Frankfurt ... is doing nothing," he said. Ingo Speich of Union Investment, a shareholder in Deutsche Boerse, said he was disappointed by the outcome.

"I'm certain that they have a Plan B to hand," he said. "They will have to put something on the table to keep investors on side." David Moss of F&C Management said he expected "some of the other players initially mentioned as alternative suitors will be running the numbers again".

Shares in Deutsche Boerse tumbled almost 5 percent and London Stock Exchange shares were down roughly 3 percent.

### Brexit isolation

This is the latest in a series of doomed efforts at dealmaking by stock exchanges, highlighting



**LONDON:** This file photo taken on June 27, 2016 shows pedestrians passing the entrance to the London Stock Exchange in central London yesterday. The London Stock Exchange said it is "highly unlikely" it will be able to meet antitrust conditions set by Brussels for its tie-up with Deutsche Boerse, throwing the merger into doubt. —AFP

the perils for any new buyer such as US exchange ICE. There had already been five attempts, three public and two informal, to combine the London and Frankfurt bourses during the past decade, while the EU blocked a \$17 billion tie-up between what was then NYSE Euronext and Deutsche Boerse in 2012.

The latest attempt came to an end when, in a highly unusual step, the London Stock Exchange pre-empted a European Commission antitrust decision, saying it was unlikely to give clearance for the merger after the London bourse had refused to sell an electronic trading platform in Italy. A deal would now only be possible if the Commission, which declined to comment, were to change its demands - an outcome that is unlikely given its approach to ruling on other mergers. While hopes had been high that the plan to create what Kengeter dubbed a financial bridge between continental Europe and Britain, this had been called into question by Brexit.

Britain's departure from the EU may isolate London as Europe's financial centre and that had turned the tables in favour of Germany, prompting its politicians to demand Frankfurt not London be the headquarters of the group. "They

don't want to be the first to send a clear signal that Brexit has unavoidable disadvantages for Britain," Thomas Schaefer, the finance minister of the state of Hesse, home to Deutsche Boerse, told Reuters earlier this month.

Such German demands had grated with some lawmakers in Britain. By effectively pulling the plug now, the discussion does not arise. The question over where the headquarters should be, which would have arisen had EU authorities given the deal a green light, worried LSE executives, two people familiar with the matter said. But a source close to LSE described the sale of fixed-income trading platform MTS as a key problem because such a move was firmly opposed by Rome.

"MTS has the largest chunk of Italian government bonds which made the Italian authorities wary of a change of ownership," Deutsche Boerse, however, said that decision not to sell MTS had been made by the LSE, adding that it expected a decision by the Commission by the end of the month. MTS is a small part of LSE's business. It said it was nonetheless a major platform for trading European government bonds, particularly in Italy. — Reuters

## EUROZONE HOUSEHOLDS BORROW MORE IN JANUARY

**FRANKFURT AM MAIN:** Growth in borrowing by households picked up in the eurozone in January, data released yesterday by the European Central Bank showed, while growth in businesses' appetite for credit remained steady. The rate of loan growth to firms and consumers is a closely-watched indicator for the economic outlook. Overall, lending to the private sector grew by 2.2 percent year-on-year in the 19-nation single currency area, after already growing by the same rate in December.

Correcting for some purely financial transactions, January's figure stood at 2.4 percent-an increase of 0.1 percent-

age points over the previous month. Still, in adjusted terms, household borrowing grew 2.2 percent in January 0.2 points faster than in December-while growth in credit to businesses held steady at 2.3 percent.

The figures meant "a largely pleasing set of news for the ECB," IHS Markit economist Howard Archer commented, representing "evidence that its monetary policy is providing valuable support to eurozone growth". Loan growth to businesses remained at a seven-year high in January, while growth in credit to households hit its highest level since May 2011, he noted. — AFP



**PARIS:** A SNCF train passes the Stade de France Saint-Denis station, outside Paris, yesterday.—AFP



## NISSAN AL-BABTAIN DEBUTS NISSAN'S ICONIC PATROL TITANIUM INTO KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz AlBabtain Company (AABC), the authorized dealer of Nissan vehicles in the State of Kuwait, has unveiled the all-new 2017 Nissan Patrol Titanium with its refreshed enhancements further complementing the award-winning Nissan Patrol, labeled as one of the most powerful and iconic SUVs the world has seen.

The Nissan Patrol Titanium grade brings together newer features and optional extras; superior levels of styling, luxury and technology, world-class leading off-road capabilities combined with premium safety dynamics. The model claims incredible power at 400 HP, with a luxurious interior of premium tan leather powered passenger seats conveying comfort and luxury, a synonymous characteristic of Nissan's finesse and quality.

The economical fuel consumption makes the Nissan Patrol Titanium an excellent choice to a large customer base. It boasts a 5.6 L engine tuned to offer enhanced performance and fitted with a 20 - inch forged alloy wheels.

Exceptional passenger and baggage space and reduced engine and cabin noise, Nissan Titanium builds on existing line-up of 2017 Patrol models with exteriors that speak volumes of its world-appraised design and styling. Nissan Titanium comes with three LCD monitors, one at the front and two at the back, all equipped with a sleek BOSE system.



With its full seven-seater's 'theatre-style seating' enabling occupants a better all-round enjoyment, the state-of-the-art technology guarantees never a dull moment in the journey.

Known as the 'hero of all terrain', the Nissan Titanium edition delivers the toughness that has become the Patrol promise, with luxury and comfort that has changed the way people perceive 4x4. For over 60 years, Nissan Patrol is

Nissan's flagship SUV with models specifically designed and built as per the demands of the customer base in the Middle East. Highlighted by a fresh look inside and out, the Nissan Patrol family continues to evolve while delivering the best in class power in the V6/V8 category.

The Nissan Patrol Titanium Edition is available at all Nissan Al Babtain's showrooms located in Al Rai and Al-Ahmadi area.

STOCK MARKETS DIVERGE, ALL EYES ON TRUMP

LONDON: World stock markets diverged yesterday, as a recent Trump-inspired rally showed signs of fragility.

The new president's plans to slash taxes and spend big on infrastructure, sent the dollar tumbling at the end of last week, before recovering ground yesterday.

"The markets are continuing to find a way to squeeze out new highs and post small gains on a daily basis, a large portion of which appears to be attributable to the apparently substantial but as yet unknown stimulus measures from the Trump administration," said Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at Oanda trading group.

Elsewhere, the London Stock Exchange on Sunday said it is "highly unlikely" it will be able to meet antitrust conditions set by Brussels for its tie-up with Deutsche Boerse, throwing the

merger into doubt. The announcement by LSE, which also operates the Milan stock exchange, is the latest twist in its longstanding attempt to merge with the German stock exchange operator.

LSE and Deutsche Boerse were both trading down 2.6 percent around the half-way mark in Monday's European trading, "as it becomes clear that the merger... is on a knife-edge," noted Neil Wilson, senior market analyst at ETX Capital.

"The regulatory hurdles were always a risk and with Brexit there are additional hurdles to

clear that seem close to insurmountable now," he added.

'Fraying at the edges'

Despite yesterday's focus on the LSE, "this week it's really about President Trump, his address to a joint sitting of Congress and his tax plan", said Greg McKenna, chief market strategist at AxiTrader.

with Italy's biggest insurer. Meanwhile, the proposed 29 billion euro merger between the London Stock Exchange and Deutsche Boerse to create Europe's biggest stock exchange looked dead in the water due an inability to meet European antitrust demands.

In bond markets, the focus was on France, where the latest polls showed that centrist Emmanuel Macron would score a more convincing victory over far-right and anti-euro Marine Le Pen in the presidential election's runoff vote. — Agencies

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report



Monday 27 February 2017

Table with 6 columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low. Rows include Price index, Weighted Index, KSX 15.

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TOKYO: Passers-by watch their smartphone in front of an electronic stock board of securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. Asian stock markets were lower yesterday as investors looked ahead to US President Donald Trump's speech to Congress this week for details of promised tax cuts and infrastructure spending. —AP

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report. Includes sections for Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, Global Bond Yields, and Commodities.





KUWAIT: Award winners with Faisal Bader Al-Sayer, Chairman, Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer, CEO and Bengt Schultz COO.



KUWAIT: Award winners with Faisal Bader Al-Sayer, Chairman, Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer, CEO and Bengt Schultz COO.



Attendees at the event.

# AL-SAYER HONORS TEAM COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMER CARE

## BEST IN THE BUSINESS: ANNUAL EMPLOYEE CONVENTION REINFORCING THE SPIRIT IN 2017 WITH 'ENGAGE ONE BY ONE'

**KUWAIT:** Al-Sayer Group Holding, one of the leading conglomerates in the region recently held the Annual Employee Convention to honor outstanding customer service efforts for the year 2016 and honor distinguished "Best in the Business" teams across its non-trading and trading business units including Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer for Toyota and Lexus Sales Service and Parts Division, Bahrah Trading Company for HINO, Bobcat, Doosan heavy equipment, Al-Sayer Engineering for Yokohama tires, Cofran oil and Nexa Auto Paint, Al-Shahnan General Trading & Contracting for Valvoline oil, Al-Sayer Medical Company, Car rental, Insurance, Litmus Advertising, KAFF for animal feed, Al-Dhow for IT services and Tristar overseas trading division.

The event was attended by Faisal Bader Al-Sayer Chairman, Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO, Bengt Schultz COO, Michael Smith Group CFO, Jacques Feghali CHRO, Alejandro Massalin CMO, Business Heads, Senior Management

Delegates and 3000+ employees of the Group. During the event Customer Service Awards were distributed to 62 locations of the Group which were measured across three categories including outstanding customer satisfaction for branches scoring high CSI, Chairman's Award for feel at home service and Vice Chairman's Award for best facility presentation.

### Continuous Improvement of Customer Service Efforts

Delivering the opening remarks Faisal Bader Al-Sayer Chairman Al-Sayer Group Holding said "We need a new mind set, a new approach of making sure that the customer engages with us because of what we offer them and because of the way we treat them. This is the new era of customer engagement. Every one of us should start asking himself how am I going to deal with this specific customer? to guarantee his engagement and make him feel uniquely important to us."

Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer CEO stressed on



Al-Sayer Group Holding Chairman Faisal Bader Al-Sayer

strategy to continuously grow the customer satisfaction by providing not just services but an experience that cannot be replicated.

**2017: The Year To Engage One By One** For the Group innovative customer serv-



Al-Sayer Group Holding CEO Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer

ice solutions is all about finding new ways of pleasing customers. 2017 is the year to enhance taking the time to listen and understand, and to adopt service to customer's needs. Through engagement one by one with customers, the group aims to ensure

the best results in the business.

"We are not only aiming to satisfy customers, but also to promote excitement in the work place, create possibilities to grow and develop as one strong team" said Bengt Schultz Chief Operating Officer.

In order to continuously improve the performance and achieve better customer satisfaction results the Group continues to focus on employee development initiatives and the Human Resources will shift the focus on getting micro understanding of the needs of each employee in order to provide more customized learning opportunities and services in general.

For Al-Sayer Group such events become a platform for all employees of the Group to celebrate the success along with finding ways to working together, renewing the team bonding. The Best In The Business Annual Employee Convention will be followed by the mid-year conference during mid-2017.



Heads of Trading Group with Mubarak Naser Al-Sayer, CEO and Bengt Schultz COO.



# THE ALL-NEW 2017 GMC ACADIA DENALI

## DESIGNED TO MAKE A LASTING IMPRESSION

The Acadia Denali mid-size luxury SUV combines premium materials, signature styling and advanced technologies for a driving experience that is unmistakable.

Premium cues distinguish the Acadia Denali. The 2017 GMC Acadia Denali features a dimensional chrome grille, along with integrated chrome side trim, chrome-accented door handles, a chrome lower-rear fascia and specific six-spoke wheels.

In short, the 2017 Acadia Denali's distinctive exterior design is the result of smooth, flowing lines running uninterrupted from front to rear.

The interior of the 2017 Acadia Denali mid-size luxury SUV is equally impressive. It's engineered to bring a higher level of refinement and comfort with real wood grained accents, warm-tone burnished aluminum and French-stitched seats.

A premium driving experience - thanks to features like attractive trim accents, active noise cancellation, two-way adjustable front head restraints and purposeful interior lighting accents throughout the cabin - separates the Acadia Denali luxury SUV from the competition. In parallel, the Acadia Denali's innovative storage options increase capability.



Up to seven passengers fit with comfort and ease in the Acadia Denali - thanks to premium seating and easy access to the third row. And with Acadia Denali's fold-flat second- and third-row seats, customers will have plenty of room for both people and cargo.

The all-new 2017 GMC Acadia Denali

mid-size luxury SUV also offers the latest technology and infotainment innovations that help drivers stay conveniently connected and in control. The model is plugged in with available phone integration technology through GMC's available IntelliLink system, making it easy to connect to some of the features smartphone users rely on most. Apple CarPlay allows drivers to make calls,



send and receive messages and listen to music right from the vehicle's touchscreen. An eight-inch Customizable Driver Display allows owners to easily interact with vehicle information, media and vehicle controls.

In addition, the 2017 Acadia Denali mid-size luxury SUV offers a comprehensive suite of Driver Alert and active safety technologies - including Low Speed Forward Automatic

Braking and Forward Automatic Braking - that rely on a sophisticated network of cameras, radar, and sensors to help prepare drivers for the unexpected.

Built on the philosophy of 'Commands Respect', GMC has built pickups since 1902. With a rich heritage in the Middle East and an impressive 111 years of presence, innovation and engineering excellence is built into all GMC vehicles. The brand is evolving to offer more fuel-efficient pickups, crossovers and SUVs.

The GMC portfolio in the Middle East features Terrain small SUV and Acadia crossover. The Sierra half-ton pickup is the most powerful light duty pickup on the market, and the first full-size pickup to receive the highest possible five-star Overall Vehicle Score for safety since the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration changed its New Car Assessment Program for the 2011 model year. Every GMC model, including Yukon and Yukon XL full-size SUVs, is available in Denali luxury trim. GMC also offers customers a high-level aftersales service experience. For more information, please visit [www.gmcarabia.com](http://www.gmcarabia.com).

## SYLHET TO BECOME FLYDUBAI'S 3RD DESTINATION IN BANGLADESH

**KUWAIT:** Dubai-based flydubai yesterday announced the addition of Sylhet to its network, becoming the airline's third destination in Bangladesh after Chittagong and Dhaka. flydubai will commence direct flights between Dubai and Sylhet on 15 March 2017. The new service will see flydubai provide up to 27

Commenting on the new announcement, Ghaith Al-Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer at flydubai, said: "We are happy to be relaunching flights to Sylhet, an important cultural and trade centre in Bangladesh. We remain committed to strengthening air links between the UAE and underserved markets. We look forward

cities of Afghanistan and Nepal with flights to Kabul and Kathmandu respectively.

"Since we began operations to Dhaka and Chittagong at the beginning of 2011, we have seen strong demand for flights to Bangladesh," said Sudhir Sreedharan, Senior Vice President Commercial for GCC, Subcontinent and Africa at flydubai. "We are confident that our passengers from Sylhet will benefit from our direct flights to Dubai and beyond, via Dubai's efficient aviation hub, especially on to our strong GCC network which is served by up to 650 weekly flights to 18 points."

With the announcement of the launch of flights to Batumi in Georgia, Qabala in Azerbaijan and Tivat in Montenegro, earlier in February, flydubai's network has expanded to 93 destinations in 44 countries. This now sees the airline operate to 62 destinations that previously had no or very few direct air links from the UAE. Flights can be booked from flydubai's website ([flydubai.com](http://flydubai.com)).

### Flight details

Flights between Sylhet and Dubai start on 15 March 2017 with four flights a week. flydubai's FZ 595/596 will operate between Dubai International Terminal 2 and Sylhet's Osmani International Airport.

### Fares

Economy Class return fares from Dubai to Sylhet will start at AED1,500 including 7kg hand baggage, while Business Class return fares will start at AED2,700 and are inclusive of all taxes and 40kg checked baggage.

Economy Class return fares from Sylhet to Dubai will start at US\$50 including 7kg hand baggage, while Business Class return fares will start at US\$900 and are inclusive of all taxes and 40kg checked baggage.



flights a week to Bangladesh.

The service to Sylhet, also known as Jalalabad, will begin with four flights a week and is set to increase to six flights a week from 16 May. The operation to Sylhet Osmani International Airport is in partnership with Bangladesh carrier Regent Airways.

to seeing more people choose our reliable and affordable service between Dubai and our growing network in Bangladesh."

flydubai serves a wide network of destinations in the Subcontinent. This network covers eight points in India, five points in Pakistan, three points in Bangladesh, two points in Sri Lanka as well as the capital

## GULF BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF AL-DANAH DAILY DRAWS

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws yesterday announcing the names of its winners for the week of 19 February - 23 February 2017. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws each and every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

### The winners are:

- (Sunday 19/2): Muneera Abdulla Sulaiman Alrashidi, Zahra Mohammed Haji Aljadi
  - (Monday 20/2): Badreya Salah Hussain Alabdulmohsen, Aadel Jaweed Jaweed Aqbal
  - (Tuesday 21/2): Ali Abdulrazzaq Alkasheer, Hussain Ali Abbas Sarkhou
  - (Wednesday 22/2): Abdullatif Mohammed Jawhar Abdullah, Qais Kazem Mohsen Alballam
  - (Thursday 23/2): Laxmi Limbaji Shinde, Ahmad Saad Soud Al-Mehjan
- Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2017 draw lineup

includes daily draws (2 winners per working day and each receive KD1000). Al-Danah's 1st quarterly draw for the prize of KD200,000 will be held on 30 March, the 2nd quarterly draw for the prize of KD250,000 will be held on 29 June and the 3rd quarterly Draw for the prize of KD500,000 will be held on 28 September. The final Al-Danah draw for KD1 million will be held on 11 January, 2018 whereby the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

### Five reasons why the Al-Danah account is the best:

- 1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million
- 2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD500,000
- 3) Two winners of KD1,000 every working day
- 4) The most chances to win
- 5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from year to year Only Al-Danah

makes millionaires.

Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2017 upcoming quarterly and yearly draws, customers must have an Al-Danah account containing at least KD 200; customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, transfer on line, or call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805 for assistance and guidance. Customers can also log on to [www.e-gulf-bank.com/aldanahwinners](http://www.e-gulf-bank.com/aldanahwinners), to find out more about Al-Danah and its winners.

## LULU GROUP, AL-FUTTAIM HOLDING AND SAVOLA GROUP APPEAR ON DELOITTE'S 250 GLOBAL RETAILERS

**KUWAIT:** The top 250 global retailers generated aggregated revenues of \$4.31 trillion in fiscal year 2015, representing composite growth of 5.2 percent, according to the Global Powers of Retailing 2017: The art and science of customers report from Deloitte Global.

"Slow economic growth in major developed economies, high levels of debt in emerging countries, deflation or low inflation in rich countries and a protectionist backlash against globalization were among dynamics which contributed to a challenging economic environment for retailers," explained Dr. Ira Kalish, Deloitte Global Chief Economist. "And yet people still need to shop, so the industry carries on. In some places and with some cohorts of shoppers, the outlook for retailers is favorable."

"The Middle East remains an attractive destination for retailers, with 3 retailers ranking in Deloitte's report of the 250 largest retailers around the world: Lulu Group, Majid Al-Futtaim Holding LLC and Savola Group. Together, the Africa/Middle East region's 19.1 percent growth rate and 5.8 percent net profit margin were the highest among the five geographic regions in FY2015," explains Herve Ballantyne, partner and Consumer & Industrial Products Industry leader, Deloitte, Middle East.

### Other highlights:

- Global Ranking of Middle Eastern retailer:
    - \* LULU Group: 153
    - \* Al-Futtaim Group: 160
    - \* Savola Group (Panda) KSA: 240
- With \$6.2 billion revenue, Lulu which has operations in nine countries, also finds a place among world's 50 fastest growing retailers. Ranked 27 in the list of fastest growing retailers, Lulu Group recorded a compound annual growth of 17.3% for the 2010-15 period. MAF Holding's Carrefour was 160th in the global list with retail revenues of \$6.01 billion & Saudi Arabia's Savola Group came third in the ME region and ranked 240th globally with retail revenues of \$3.6 billion.

### Global Powers of Retailing Top 250

For the third year in a row, revenue growth for the Top 250 apparel and accessories retailers outperformed other product sectors.

Historically, this category of retailers has also been the most profitable, and fiscal year 2015 was no exception. However, retailers of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) are, by far, the largest companies (average retail revenue of nearly US\$21.6 billion) as well as the most numerous (133 retailers accounting for just over half of all Top 250 companies and two-thirds of Top 250 revenue).

The level of retail globalization appears to be at the same level as the previous year. Two-thirds of Top 250 retailers operated outside their home country borders and on average, they had retail operations in more than 10 countries and derived nearly one-quarter of their composite retail revenue from foreign operations.

### The art and science of customers

Global Powers of Retailing 2017 also discusses the art and science of customer engagement to help retailers design fresh experiences, enabled by the right technology, and strengthen customer loyalty. What was once considered futuristic is now table stakes. Retail innovators know technology is no longer supplemental to the shopping experience, it is fundamental. Technology alone, however, is not enough. Customers are seeking new and surprising products and experiences.

The five trends identified in the report are:

- \* Less is more. Customers are defining themselves less by how many things they own and more by how curated their lives are in terms of possessions and experiences.
- \* "Following" economy. Customers are seeking experiences and products that reflect the personal brand they promote on social media.
- \* "Retailization" of the world. The maker movement, the sharing economy, and other factors have made it increasingly difficult to define what a retailer is and does - non-traditional retailers are developing new business models to serve customer needs, such as subscription services and flash-sales.
- \* On-demand shopping and fulfillment. Relevancy will be determined by the ability of retailers to meet the on-demand mindset of the modern customer.
- \* Exponential living. Exponential technologies, like artificial intelligence, robotics and virtual reality are changing how we live and how we will shop.

## BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF YAWMI ACCOUNT

**KUWAIT:** Borgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the lucky winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a prize of KD 5,000.

- The lucky winners for the daily draws took home a cash-prize of KD 5,000 each, and they are:
1. Amer Abdulqader Baqer Al-Awadhi
  2. Mohammad Abbas Abdullah Abdulaziz
  3. Salem Ahmad Ali Al-Ibrahim
  4. Ahmad Mohammad Kareem Al-Saadi
  5. Ali Ismaeil Sarab Mohammad

In addition to the daily draw, Borgan Bank also offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, entitling one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account offers Daily and quarterly Draws, the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for 2 months prior to draw date.

Additionally, every KD 10 in the account, will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Borgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The more customers deposit, the higher the chances they receive of winning.

For more information on opening a Yawmi account or about the new quarterly draw, customers are urged to visit their nearest Borgan Bank branch and receive all the details, or simply call the bank's Call Center at 1804080 where customer service representatives will be delighted to assist with any questions on the Yawmi account or any of the bank's products and services.

## EVERY SECOND PHISHING ATTACK AIMS TO STEAL MONEY

**DUBAI:** Almost half of all phishing attacks (fraudulent email messages or copycat websites that appear legitimate) registered in 2016, were aimed at stealing their victim's money, according to an analysis of the financial threat landscape by Kaspersky Lab. Compared to 2015, the amount of financial phishing attacks increased 13.14 percentage points in 2016 to comprise 47.48 percent of all registered phishing attacks. In 2016 Kaspersky Lab's anti-phishing technologies detected almost 155 million user attempts to visit different kinds of phishing pages.

Of those, more than 73.5 million - almost half - were the result of financial phishing attacks, i.e. the aim was to obtain valuable personal information from users - such as their account numbers for banking, credit accounts, social security numbers, and the login and passwords they use to access online banking. The cybercriminals intended to use

this information to steal money from their victims. This is the highest share of financial phishing registered to date by Kaspersky Lab.

Banking phishing schemes are the absolute leaders among all types of financial phishing. Every fourth (25.76 percent) attack used fake online banking information, or other content related to banks - a result that is 8.31 percentage points up on 2015. The share of phishing related to payment systems and e-shops accounted for 11.55 percent and 10.14 percent respectively, an increase of 3.75 p.p. and 1.09 p.p. compared to 2015. The share of financial phishing detected on MacOS computers was 31.38 percent.

### Security solution

The distribution of different types of financial phishing in 2016 Financial phishers are particularly keen to use data related to top multi-national banks,

popular payment systems and Internet shops and auctions from the US, China and Brazil in their scams. The list of brands used stays the same from year to year, as their popularity remains high and they are therefore a lucrative target for cybercriminals.

"Financial phishing has always been one of the easiest ways for cybercriminals to earn illegal money. You don't have to be a skilled programmer, and you don't have to invest lots of money into supporting infrastructure. Of course, most phishing schemes are easy to recognize and avoid, but judging by what we see in our statistics, lots of people are still not cautious enough when it comes to dealing with financial data online. Otherwise, we wouldn't have seen so many attacks in 2016," said Nadezhda Demidova, senior web content analyst at Kaspersky Lab. In order to protect themselves from phishing, Kaspersky Lab experts advise users to take

the following measures: When paying online always check the legitimacy of the website. The connection should be protected with Https, and the domain should belong to the same organization that you're going to pay. Always check the legitimacy of emails that you're receiving from famous brands. Even if it urges you to do something urgently, like change your password etc.

First, make sure that it was sent by a legitimate party - contact your bank or payment system representative to find out if the email really has been sent by them to you. Don't click the links in emails or web-pages if you have doubts about their legitimacy; Use a proven security solution with behavior-based anti-phishing technologies. This will make it possible to identify even the most recent phishing scams which haven't yet been added to anti-phishing databases.

## SAMSUNG DELAYS ITS NEW PHONE AND SHOWCASES TABLETS INSTEAD

### NEW TABLETS TO CARRY THE GALAXY BRAND

**NEW YORK:** Samsung's product showcase Sunday is notable for what's missing: a new flagship phone. Instead, Samsung is spotlighting new Android and Windows tablets after delaying the Galaxy S8 smartphone - an indirect casualty of the unprecedented September recall of the fire-prone Note 7 phone. The new tablets will carry the Galaxy brand and come with many of the Note 7's features, including the S Pen stylus and screens with rich colors.

Consumers will have to wait at least a few weeks longer for details on Samsung's next major smartphone. That's partly so that Samsung wouldn't have to share the stage with its smartphone rivals at the Mobile World Congress trade show, which began yesterday in Barcelona, Spain. The delay also gives Samsung more time to make sure it has done everything right, given that any minor bug will surely draw outsized attention. "The microscope is going to be firmly on Samsung," said Geoff Blaber, an analyst with the research firm CCS Insight.

### About the tablets

Samsung said the new tablets will go through extensive safety checks put in place after dozens of Note 7 phone overheated and in some cases exploded. Those incidents prompted aviation authorities to ban them on flights; Samsung eventually killed the product. Samsung now wants everyone to focus on its tablets' most notable features: The new Galaxy Tab S3, running Google's Android system, will have a glass back and metal frame, borrowing designs from Samsung's smartphones.

The screen technology, called AMOLED, offers richer colors and purer blacks than standard LCD screens. The display will support high-dynamic range, a feature that promises brighter whites, darker blacks and a wider range of colors - at least for the handful of video titles produced with that capability.

For those wanting a laptop replacement, Samsung is releasing the Galaxy Book with Microsoft's Windows 10 and more powerful processors from Intel. Only the 12-inch version will get AMOLED, though; the 10-inch Galaxy Book will use LCD. Both models come with a keyboard attachment, something sold as an optional accessory for the S3. The Galaxy Book is Samsung's answer to Apple's iPad Pro and Microsoft's Surface devices. All models come with Samsung's S Pen and include standard features from the Note phones, such as taking on-screen notes when the phone is locked. But unlike the Note, these tablets lack spring-loaded cavities for storing the stylus. Prices and release dates haven't been announced. Samsung also said that its Gear VR virtual-reality headset will now come with a hand-held controller, matching Google's Daydream View offering.

### Phone competition

The absence of a new Samsung phone gives



**NEW YORK:** A user takes a photograph through a window using a Samsung Galaxy Tab S3 tablet, in New York.—AP

rivals a chance to shine. LG, for instance, is pushing a G6 phone that is slightly smaller than the Note 7 but matches the doomed phone's 5.7-inch screen size. LG is also matching major rivals in offering water and dust resistance, though in doing so, it got rid of an ability to replace the battery with a spare - a feature LG had long cited to set itself apart from rivals.

LG also redesigned the insides to separate the two main sources of heat - the main processor and the display driver - while doubling the separation between the battery's positive and negative chambers. The fact that these under-the-hood improvements are getting any mention at all shows the climate all phone makers are navigating after the Note 7 fires.

Meanwhile, Motorola has a new version of its mid-range Moto G phone, while Chinese smartphone maker TCL is unveiling a BlackBerry Android phone with a physical keyboard after BlackBerry gave up on making hardware itself. And the classic Nokia 3310 phone from the year 2000 is coming back; although it's not a smartphone, the device is popular for its durability. It'll be tough, though, for any company to stand out as innovation in smartphones slows down. The challenges are underscored by the fact that only Apple appears to have benefited from Samsung's troubles.

According to research firm IDC, worldwide iPhone shipments grew 5 percent in the fourth

quarter, compared with the previous year. That's about the same as what Samsung lost. Even after the Note 7 recall, many consumers decided to stay with Samsung, analysts say. Switching to the iPhone means learning a new operating system and buying new apps, while Google couldn't produce enough of a promising Android contender, the Pixel, to meet demand.

### Samsung's next phone

Samsung took a \$5.3 billion hit on its earnings in recalling millions of Note 7 phones. Its reputation also took a hit - but not necessarily permanently. "In the process of addressing the situation, I think Samsung buys back some of the good will with consumers," said Ramon Llamas, an analyst with IDC. "What people want is an assurance that it doesn't happen again." This could mean being more conservative in the S8 features, though it also needs some breakout features to restore excitement in the brand.

Llamas said that could come through software features, such as S Voice, a voice assistant rivaling Apple's Siri, or Samsung Flow, a way for multiple devices to work together. The new tablets will come with Samsung Flow so that you can make phone calls and answer texts using the tablet as a bridge to a phone sitting on the table or in your pocket. Blaber said Samsung was smart in delaying the launch of the S8, as it needs a smooth rollout to recover.—AP



## A NEW ERA FOR NOKIA SMARTPHONES

**KUWAIT:** HMD Global, the home of Nokia phones, today unveiled a new generation of Nokia smartphones, setting a new standard in design, quality and user experience throughout the range. The highly anticipated global portfolio features three new smartphones - the new Nokia 6, delivering performance and immersive entertainment in a premium and extremely robust design; Nokia 5, an elegant smartphone that fits perfectly in your hand; and Nokia 3, which delivers an unprecedented quality at an affordable price point.

The new range of Nokia smartphones all run Android Nougat and offer a pure, secure and up to date experience and will all feature Google Assistant. Today also sees the return of a modern classic - the iconic Nokia 3310, reborn with a modern twist on design. The family of products announced demonstrate a belief that every consumer should have access to premium quality, not just those with high end flagship devices. Combined with a thoughtful design philosophy that focuses on improving the smartphone experience at every level, each technical component has been carefully considered and integrated into the phone design to have the biggest benefit on consumers' daily lives.

Drawing on the hallmarks of the Nokia phone heritage of quality, simplicity and reliability, the range is designed for a new generation of fans. With a commitment to deliver pure Android, users can expect a simple, clean and clutter free experience. Featuring the latest Google services, as well as monthly security updates, Nokia smartphones are safe, secure and up-to-date. The new Nokia smartphones feature Google's most recent innovation, the Google Assistant, building further on a great Android experience.

Our teams have worked together to ensure the Google Assistant is integrated, allowing for conversations with the Google Assistant to take place easily on Nokia smartphones. It was also announced that the world-renowned game Snake will be snaking its way back into people's hearts with a new version available to play on Messenger, part of Facebook's Instant Games cross platform experience. The new free Snake game is designed to be played with groups of friends making it even more playable than the first time around.

The new Nokia range of Android smartphones unveiled today ahead of Mobile World Congress includes:

Nokia 6 is going global - combining superior craftsmanship and distinctive design with immersive audio and an impressive bright and colourful 5.5" full HD screen, the Nokia 6 delivers a truly premi-

um smartphone experience. The unibody of the Nokia 6 is crafted from a single block of 6000 series aluminium. The smart audio amplifier with dual speakers allows consumers to experience a deeper bass and unmatched clarity, whilst Dolby Atmos sound delivers a powerfully moving entertainment experience. Available in four colours - MatteBlack, Silver, Tempered Blue and Copper - the Nokia 6 will retail at an average global retail price of €229.

Nokia 6 Arte Black Limited Edition - celebrating the worldwide Nokia 6 portfolio is the Nokia 6Arte Black Limited Edition. With 64GB storage and 4GB RAM, this special edition combines the best features of the Nokia 6 family in a stunning black high gloss package and will retail at an average global retail price of €299.

Nokia 5 - a sleek and compact smartphone that nestles in your hand. The Nokia 5 has been precision engineered out of a single block of 6000 series aluminium to create a perfect pillowed body that flows seamlessly into the sculpted Corning Gorilla Glass laminated 5.2" IPS HD display. Powered by the Qualcomm Snapdragon 430 mobile platform and the Qualcomm Adreno 505 graphics processor, the Nokia 5 brings robust structural integrity, attention to detail and the quality of a high-end flagship to everyone. Available in four colours - MatteBlack, Silver, Tempered Blue and Copper - the Nokia 5 will retail at an average global retail price of €189.

Nokia 3 - a stunning new smartphone designed to deliver an outstanding experience with unprecedented value. With a precision machined aluminium frame forged out of a single piece of aluminium, a sculpted Corning Gorilla Glass laminated 5" display and seamlessly integrated 8MP wide aperture cameras (front and back), the Nokia 3 packs a truly premium quality smartphone experience into its compact and elegant form. Available in four distinctive colours - SilverWhite, Matte Black, Tempered Blue and Copper White - the Nokia 3 will retail at an average global retail price of €139.

### Also announced today were:

Nokia 3310 - a modern classic reborn. Thin, light and incredibly durable, the Nokia 3310 is a head turning modern twist on one of the best-selling feature phones of all time. Boasting an incredible 22-hour talk-time and month long stand-by, the Nokia 3310's fresh, colorful, modern design brings it bang up to date. The Nokia 3310 is available in four distinctive colours - WarmRed and Yellow, both with a gloss finish, and Dark Blue and Grey both with a matte finish.

## THE BILLIONAIRE PHILANTHROPISTS INTENT ON USING SATELLITES TO SAVE THE WORLD

**SEATTLE:** Some of the world's most influential billionaire philanthropists plan to launch a powerful digital platform to harness the avalanche of data sent from satellites each day - and make it freely available for humanitarian and environmental causes. Bill and Melinda Gates - who are also custodians of legendary investor Warren Buffet's billions - have joined forces with Pierre Omidyar, founder of eBay, to fund the 'Radiant Earth' project, a repository and archive of the world's satellite, aerial and drone imagery.

The project, expected to cost "multi millions" of dollars, aims to find ways to combine and analyze Earth data and imagery and offer it free of charge in formats that do not require specific expertise to understand. Anne Hale Miglarese, Radiant CEO, said the world is now awash in data but for non specialists, finding it and creating ways to use it practically can be both difficult and expensive. "(Radiant) will help build the 'who, what, where when or why' for the planning and management of issues such as land tenure, global health, sustainable development, food security and disaster response," she said.

### Data growth

The Gates Foundation invited more than 150 academics and data analysis specialists to Seattle last week for what was billed as a 'Thought Leaders Summit' on the project. Experts discussed what humanitarian agencies, environmental and land rights groups might want and need. Amazon Web Services Global Open Data chief, Jed Sundwall, said Radiant would try to "give humans back their time to focus on research and analysis".

"Open data is happy data: we have so much data that can tell us about our world but we can't know it because it is too expensive to

know it," he said. Industry experts said over the past five years the number of operational satellites has jumped 40 percent, and nearly 1,400 now orbit the Earth. This number could more than double over the next five years as satellites become smaller, lighter and more affordable.

Entrepreneurs have increasingly begun to view the sky as a new market which can help feed the burgeoning global demand for more communications, satellite TV and broadband services. However satellites are also collecting data from space about the Earth itself. Applications are far reaching - from tracking plant health through chlorophyll to gauging the impact of natural disasters and the surveillance of illegal logging.

Two weeks ago, India launched 104 satellites - 101 of them for foreign companies and agencies - in a single mission as part of its strategic bid for a bigger share of the \$300 billion global space industry. Experts at the Seattle summit said the multiple launches, described as a world record by its space agency, was also significant because 88 were shoebox-sized Dove satellites launched by Planet, a San Francisco-based private satellite operator founded by former NASA scientists. The constellation of small satellites will, once settled into orbit in six months' time, will photograph the entire Earth every day.

### The new explorers

"Satellite imagery might be one of the most powerful and unbiased tools to tell people what is going on with the planet" Albert Lin, Research Scientist at the University of California, San Diego, told the summit. The key, he said, lay in finding ways to translate enormous amounts of information into something that can be understood by everyone. This

means finding ways of sorting and interlinking the trillions of bits of data sent to Earth and reconstruct them into readable, digital and sometimes 3D models.

In some cases, data can be analyzed with the help of communities of "citizen scientists sitting alone at their computers all over the world". "This is a wake-up call that satellite imagery is not just about questions and insights but also about engaging the entire planet in observing the planet, together," he said. Some of these techniques were used to map the New Zealand city of Christchurch after the 2011 earthquake and in the search for the Malaysian Airlines jet that went missing in 2014, he said.

Lin said his laboratory, the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology, can explore the world without disturbing a sod of soil. He led a team that tried to find Genghis Khan's tomb in one of the most remote parts of Mongolia, a quest that has fascinated historians and scientists for centuries. Mongolians believe the tomb to be sacred and any disturbance of its site a portent of disaster.

Data analysts from Australia to Norway scoured satellite and geo-spatial data from the most remote parts of the Mongolian mountains. They helped to spot ancient structures seen only from space that helped to guide the team on the ground on horseback to pinpoint the most likely sites. Ultimately, said Radiant CEO Miglarese, the new platform will foster more informed decision-making about the Earth's resources. The team also hopes Radiant will encourage the creation of more open source technologies and innovation that can help "solve societies' most pressing issues." "Radiant is about using Earth imagery for positive global impact," she said.—Reuters



## BEE'AH, SHERAA PARTNER TO DEVELOP ENTREPRENEURS OF THE FUTURE

**SHARJAH:** Bee'ah, the Middle East's leading and award-winning environmental management company has entered into a long-term partnership with Sharjah Entrepreneurship Centre (SHERAA). The strategic partnership agreement was announced last week during the 'Inaugural Showcase Day' at AUS.

In the presence of H.H. Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Sharjah; Sheikhha Bodour Al Qasimi, Chairperson of Sharjah Entrepreneurship Centre and of the Sharjah Investment and Development Authority; and Khaled Al-Huraimel, Bee'ah's Group CEO, Bee'ah was revealed and acknowledged as a key strategic partner focused on supporting

and investing in Sheraa's next wave of entrepreneurs.

In its new capacity, Bee'ah will work closely with Sheraa, to identify, inspire and support young entrepreneurs in the field of sustainability, in addition to mentoring and funding their ventures in this respect. Young entrepreneurs will gain valuable insight and inspiration from

Bee'ah's innovative and sustainable operations towards developing their own innovations in the field.

Commenting on the partnership, Khaled Al-Huraimel, Group CEO of Bee'ah, said: "The strategic partnership with Sheraa reflects our belief in the positive impact that young entrepreneurs can have on social and economic development. We aim to enable the brightest talent of the UAE to start their journey in the fields of entrepreneurship and sustainability. This partnership will provide them with the support needed to bring about the latest innovations in the sustainability and environmental fields."

"Together, we will work to create the next wave of sustainability entrepreneurs. Fields that provide environmental solutions have the greatest need for youthful ingenuity. We need to support young talent that is creative and can think outside the box because they will overcome future obstacles on the road to sustainability," he concluded. From its base in Sharjah, Sheraa has inspired a community of more than 2400 aspiring entrepreneurs, mentoring over 946 people, in its first year alone.

Consisting of the 'ideathon' phase that validates business ideas using actual customers; the 'incubator' phase that helps refine concepts and develop prototypes; and the flagship 'accelerator' program which provides the means to

market the product, the Sheraa entrepreneurship journey conducts the idea-to-product transition seamlessly and effectively. Through its collaboration with Bee'ah, Sheraa will be able to make this transition easier for sustainability-focused entrepreneurs, within the UAE and Sharjah.

Najla Al Midfa, General Manager of Sheraa, commented, "We are excited to be partnering with Bee'ah, to create the next generation of entrepreneurs in the fields of sustainability and the environment. This partnership will inspire students and graduates through talks and events focused on sustainability. We will hold challenges and competitions to help generate ideas in this field. Winning teams will go on to have their ventures incubated at Sheraa. With the support of Bee'ah, as our strategic partner, we will develop a sustainability track for startups."

The partnership agreement with Sheraa is in keeping with Bee'ah's enduring commitment to supporting educational and entrepreneurial initiatives that positively impact the environment. Adding budding entrepreneurs to a large portfolio that consists of initiatives like the Bee'ah School of Environment and environmental competitions like the Sharjah Environment Awareness Awards (SEAA) and Inter-School Recycling Competition, Bee'ah is at the forefront of inspiring environmental change.



## NEW URGENCY IN FIGHT TO RESTORE FLORIDA EVERGLADES

### NOT A SINGLE PROJECT COMPLETED IN 20 YEARS

**MIAMI:** Rising seas, polluted coastlines and the specter of more frequent droughts and storms have lent new urgency to efforts to restore the ecosystem of the Florida Everglades, the largest freshwater wetland in the United States. The Everglades' saw grasses, swamps, tree islands and mangroves are home to a host of fascinating species, from American alligators to endangered hook-billed birds known as snail kites

**Water flow stopped**  
Even though the Everglades is known as the River of Grass, the water has not properly flowed through it in the past 70 years or so, because human development cordoned off the freshwater which used to spill over from Florida's massive Lake Okeechobee toward the south. As millions of people poured into the Sunshine State, a dike was built to protect against hurricane flooding and swamps were drained to make

with smelly, guacamole-colored sludge, and swimmers were warned to stay out of the water due to outbreaks of poisonous bacteria. Meanwhile, the spread of hot and salty water off the southern tip of Florida killed fertile fish breeding grounds known as sea grasses, threatening tourism and fishing—two key drivers of the state economy. "There is simply not enough water coming in from the north to keep the entire system hydrated

landscape flattens making it easier for saltwater to invade, Johnson told a meeting of the Tropical Audubon Society this month. Saltwater intrusion is already making its way into parts of Florida's aquifers—which provide drinking water—and could forever alter the Everglades' fragile ecosystem. Having more freshwater in the system could help because it "pushes against the saltwater and keeps those marshes wet," explained Johnson. "It helps stave off the effects of sea level rise."



**MIAMI:** This photo shows the Florida Everglades, otherwise known as the river of grass in Florida's Miami-Dade County. —AFP

to invasive Burmese pythons. Until now, the world's largest ecosystem restoration project—a massive plan expected to spend some \$10.5 billion, known as the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan—has made little progress since it was launched in 2000. "Our goal was to have much of it done in 20 years," said Steve Davis, a wetlands ecologist with the Everglades Foundation, who led reporters on an airboat tour of the Everglades this month. "We are almost 20 years in and we don't have a single project completed."

way for sugar cane farms. About one third of the Everglades' original three million acres became farmland, and 1.5 million acres were designated a national park. "We altered the ecosystem back in the '40s and '50s when we didn't know any better," said Bob Johnson, a hydrologist with the National Park Service. "Now we have to fix it."

**Polluted coasts**  
The consequences of diverting Lake Okeechobee's water—much of it polluted by agricultural discharge to the east and west has grown increasingly dire. Last year, algae blooms coated the coastline

from top to bottom," said Davis. The movement of freshwater from the lake toward the south must be restored if the area's tourist economy, drinking water and natural and developed lands are to be sustained in the years to come, he said.

**Saltwater intrusion**  
Without some two million more acre-feet—an old measure devised by imagining a foot of water on an acre of land—of freshwater to drench the Everglades, the marshes dry out, the thin layer of peat covering the porous limestone ground dissipates or even burns under the hot sun, and the

**Political progress**  
Scientists like Davis and Johnson say the solution requires having more land south of the lake—an area filled with sugar cane farms—to use as storage reservoirs where water can be cleaned before flowing south. "If we don't figure out how to store more water, we can't get through the problems to come. We can't get through long droughts and then very intense rainfall," said Johnson. After years of political squabbles, there are signs that lawmakers are motivated to fix the problem. Bills have been newly introduced in the Florida House and Senate to authorize over one billion in state dollars to acquire 60,000 acres of land for a reservoir south of Lake Okeechobee that would hold 120 billion gallons of water. But more than a dozen farming companies in the area have dug in their heels, including sugar giants US Sugar and Florida Crystals, saying they are not willing to sell, questioning the science behind the proposals, and warning of job losses if land acquisition goes ahead.

Criticisms of the plan and its priority on finding storage south of Lake Okeechobee have also emerged from the South Florida Water Management District, which is made up of political appointees of Republican Governor Rick Scott, a well-known skeptic of climate change. A review of the Everglades restoration plans by the National Academies of Sciences (NAS), issued in December 2016, found that more money and water is urgently needed, because the effects of climate change were not considered in the restoration plans when they were released in 2000. —AFP



**TOKYO:** This handout picture shows female giant panda Shin Shin, left, and male giant panda Ri Ri, right, at the Ueno zoo in Tokyo. —AFP

## BASHFUL TOKYO PANDAS MATE AFTER FOUR-YEAR HIATUS

**TOKYO:** Two giant pandas at Tokyo's Ueno Zoo mated for the first time in four years yesterday—a 52-second effort that boosted hopes for a baby as well as shares in a nearby Chinese restaurant. Public viewing of pandas at the zoo has been halted since last week as the mating season got into full swing for the mammals, which are notoriously difficult to arouse. But male Ri Ri and female Shin Shin, both 11 years old, eyed each other through a fence separating them, seeming to be in the mood for love, according to the zoo.

"We let the two be together at 8.06 am (2306 GMT Sunday) and confirmed they mated for 52 seconds from 8:48am," Ueno Zoo announced in a statement. Four minutes later they were separated again. "They usually live in solitude as pandas in the wild do," Ueno public relations official Hitoshi Suzuki told AFP on the phone. "Living together could lead to quarrels and wounding each other," Bloomberg said the mating coincided with a rise in the shares of Chinese restaurant chain Totenko—which has its main outlet within walking distance of the zoo—on hopes that a baby panda would draw tourists to the area.

The stock initially shot up nearly 10 percent but pared gains to close up 2.90 percent at 177 yen (\$1.57) by the end of the day. Totenko's shares have risen and fallen in line with panda news before according to Bloomberg. It said shares jumped as Shin Shin appeared to be expecting in 2013 — when the pandas last mated—but dove a month later on news the pregnancy was a false alarm. Shin Shin, who was brought from China six years ago just before the massive earthquake and tsunami that devastated Japan's northeast, gave birth to a baby in 2012, the first at the zoo in 24 years.

But the cub died from pneumonia six days later. Giant pandas are notoriously clumsy at mating, with males said to be bad at determining when a female is in the right frame of mind and often befuddled at knowing what to do next. In the event the animals do feel compatible, sex is frequently over too quickly to impregnate the female, who is only receptive to the proposition for two or three days a year between February and May. According to estimates, less than 2,000 giant pandas remain in the wild, in three provinces in south-central China. —AFP

## DOCTOR-TO-DOCTOR DONATION: KIDNEY SAVES SICK COLLEAGUE

**NEWPORT BEACH:** It's not unusual for a surgeon to save another doctor's life. But Dr. Colleen Coleman did so by going under the knife to help an ailing colleague who desperately needed a kidney. Coleman donated to Dr. Brian Dunn, an anesthesiologist she works with at Hoag Hospital Newport Beach whose kidneys failed from chemotherapy he received as a teenager to treat a stomach tumor. Coleman came through after one donor withdrew her offer and Dunn's doctor advised him against accepting a kidney from a patient with Lou Gehrig's disease.

"I thought, it's not going to happen," Dunn told The Orange County Register. He had received a kidney from his mother when he was 25, but donated kidneys don't last forever. In late 2015, his health was failing and he could hardly keep pace with his young daughter. "I started dragging," he said. "Holy crap, I felt bad." He started dialy-

sis in April and needed to go through the process four times a day to purify his blood. He referred to the time-consuming and tiring process as his prison. Coleman's intervention also almost didn't happen after an initial screening erroneously said she wasn't a match.

Only after the testing company called back in June to say it made a mistake did Coleman learn she was a match. Her initial eagerness to help out, though, was tempered with second thoughts and fears until she considered Dunn's 6-year-old daughter. Coleman's grandmother had died of kidney failure when her mother was a 6-year-old girl. "I didn't want his daughter to grow up without a dad," Coleman said. The surgery last month was a success. Coleman went to see Dunn afterward. "I wanted to make sure my kidney could pee," she said.

Dunn, 45, said he felt vibrant and grateful

three weeks later. In a note sent to Coleman thanking her for her sacrifice, Dunn credited her with persevering to help him. "Monday, January 30th is a day I'll remember forever," he wrote. "It's the day that someone did something truly selfless for me. Colleen, you are an answer to prayer and an amazing example to everyone around you." Coleman, 51, who returned to work to find flowers, a cake and people hailing her as a hero, said she was moved by the note from Dunn.

"I did not understand how impactful it would be to help someone in this way," Coleman said. "There is a benefit to giving. But hero is a very embarrassing word." In addition to the scars they both bear in their midsections from the surgeries, they also share other reminders of their bond. Dunn gave Coleman a set of kidney-shaped Tiffany earrings to thank her. She gave him a Tiffany money clip in the shape of a kidney. —AP

## HEART DISEASE GROWING HEALTH CONCERN IN GCC

**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES:** Cardiovascular diseases have been attributed to being the leading cause of death worldwide. More people worldwide die annually from CVDs than from any other cause. An estimated 17.5 million people died from CVDs in 2012, which represents 31 percent of all global deaths. Of these deaths, an estimated 7.4 million were due to coronary heart disease and 6.7 million were due to stroke.

CVDs are a group of disorders affecting the heart and blood vessels, and range from diseases of the blood vessels supplying the heart muscle, brain, arms and legs, damage to the heart muscle and heart valves, malformations of heart structure as well as blood clots. The most important risk factors of heart disease to consider are unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco use. Aspirin therapy which thins the blood is a preventative measure that can reduce the risk of major CVD events such as heart attacks and strokes.

It can be used as a secondary prevention measure among individuals who have experienced a heart attack or stroke to prevent additional events. Prevention remains the key component to help reduce the risk of CVD. Studies have shown that carrying out more than 150 minutes of moderate physical activity every week can help reduce risk of coro-



**Dr. Wael**

nary heart disease by about 30%. Other determining factors include quitting smoking as well as balancing a healthy nutritional diet.

In order to reduce the rising number of CVDs in the region, individuals need to be better educated on how to reduce the risks. There is also the need for increased government investment through national programs aimed at prevention and control of CVDs and all chronic diseases. Individuals and readers are encouraged to check with their physicians before taking Aspirin and any other medication.



## 'BEAUTY BEYOND IMAGINATION' FROM THE PEARL CLINIC

**KUWAIT:** The Pearl Clinic, a gem in the heart of Kuwait, welcomes you to its specialized medical center for dermatology and laser procedures. With a combination of the latest technology and modern facility, the clinic will meet your aspirations in terms of skin care, dermatology and beauty treatments. All procedures are overseen by the most professional medical team of specialist doctors in dermatology and venerology as well as skilled nurses led by Professor Dr. Ljiljana, who is ranked amongst the best dermatology and venerology doctors in Europe and is chairwoman of the department of Dermatovenerology at the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Belgrade.

### Latest Treatments

The Pearl Clinic at Al Biraq Mall provides not only the best but the latest non-invasive dermatologic care and cosmetic treatments. The facility specializes in state-of-the-art laser procedures that will leave you with a "pearl-effect" sensation, starting from our premium laser hair removal, to treating varicose veins using laser, all the way to our Radio Frequency treatment of enlarged pores, scars and reduction of stretch marks.

The Pearl Clinic also provides special treatments that take care of the beauty of the face and body, restoring a youthful look for every customer looking for beauty. The treatments include PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma) skin regeneration therapy, botox, fillers, skin tightening, body contouring, facial rejuvenation, mesotherapy, microdermabrasion, and a combination of other treatments.

### Beauty and Elegance

Inspired by its "Beauty beyond imagination" slogan, the Pearl Clinic offers a one-of-a-kind experience



in its soothing ambience and elegant interior that exceeds the customers' expectations and allows patients to unwind from the minute they set foot into the facility. In addition to the treatments and procedures offered by the Clinic, the customer service, attention to details, and care that the staff offers each customer makes their experience a special one.

In addition to that, it is important to mention that the clinic's talented dermatology consultants and doctors not only carry out procedures, they also help guide you through consultations to select the perfect beauty treatments to meet your needs and bring out the beauty you are seeking.

### Guaranteed Results

The Pearl Clinic's CEO Mr. Waleed Abu Zaid said during the clinic's official opening ceremony: "the Pearl Clinic consists of laser rooms equipped with the most advanced and proven effective

laser machines, body rooms with the latest body contouring devices, facials rooms with the latest beauty equipment, modern consultation rooms and a relaxing waiting area."

He added: "Our primary goal is to provide the best laser and beauty treatments, and we are committed to providing the highest standards of service, quality and convenience for our customers. Every customer is special to us, and we are dedicated to making their visit to the Pearl Clinic an unforgettable experience."

The Pearl Clinic was first launched in 2013 in Qatar, and following the great success it had there, the second branch was opened in Kuwait to provide the highest levels of service in laser and beauty treatments. The clinic ensures applying the highest international standards of hygiene and sanitation whilst paying high regards to professionalism and high quality service.



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Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem

د. فهد علي المخيزيم

Consultant Pediatrician إستشاري أطفال  
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM





NS Das



Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, General Manager Badrya Darwish, Advertising Manager Taleb Kanjo and the staff of the Advertising and Marketing wish Mr NS Das a final farewell at his retirement dinner.



Kuwait Times management and staff at a group picture with NS Das

## KUWAIT TIMES BIDS NS DAS A FORMAL FAREWELL

Kuwait Times would like to wish a formal farewell and express its gratitude for the service and commitment of N.S. Das, who will be retiring after nearly 42 years of employment with the newspaper. Mr Das joined the newspaper in November 1975, beginning as a sub editor and rising to become one of the firm's senior advertising executives. He served as an envoy between the Kuwait Times and the Indian community in Kuwait, working in concert with the Indian Embassy to promote and create awareness for Indian community concerns through the newspaper. A long serving and loyal employee with a proven track record for supporting the Kuwait Times through his tireless efforts, Mr Das was congratulated by the newspaper's staff at a farewell dinner yesterday at the Kuwait Times in Shuwaikh.



Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan poses with NS Das for a final photo at Mr Das' retirement party.



Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, Advertising Manager Taleb Kanjo, NS Das and deputy General Manager Adnan Saad share a moment. —Photos by Yasser Al Zayyat



Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan with Editor Sajeev Peter, NS Das and Advertising Executive Jinse Jose during the retirement dinner.



Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan presents a memorial shield to NS Das



Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan and NS Das at the retirement party.





# HONDA ALGHANIM ANNOUNCES THE WINNER OF THE BIGGEST BOOMERANG COMPETITION

**H**onda Alghanim, the exclusive distributor of Honda cars, motorcycles and marine equipment, announced the winner of the brand-new 2017 Honda Civic in one of the biggest social media competitions on February 18, 2017 at their Al-Rai showroom. This widely anticipated social media competition involved some of the country's most popular social media influencers who added the right amount of exposure and glamour to the event and competition that specifically targeted the youth segment.

In an effort to position the Honda Civic as the ultimate ride for the youth, Honda Alghanim launched one of the biggest and first of its kind social media competitions, enticing the youth to participate and get the chance to drive away with this iconic vehicle. The social media competition rules were simple: participants were encouraged to take a Boomerang video of themselves posing next to a Honda Civic and posting their video on Instagram with #MyStyleMyCivic and @AlghanimhondaKW.

Honda Alghanim located the 2017 Honda Civic in areas regularly frequented by the youth, specifically 360 Mall during the Auto Moto Show that took place on January 12 to 21, Cinescape at The Avenues on January 22 to 28 and lastly, the American University of Kuwait on February 8 and 9. If willing participants did not make it to any of the three designated locations, they were always encouraged to visit Honda's showrooms at Al-Rai and Shuwaikh where they could pose with a 2017 Honda Civic and enter the social media competition at a time and date that was convenient to them.

The competition attracted nearly 1,000 Honda contestants and only ten of them were



chosen randomly by Honda Alghanim to be a part of the final round. Hussein Hassan Abdallah was announced the winner of the competition by scoring the highest number of likes on his Boomerang video which was reposted on Honda Alghanim's official Instagram account.

Due to its originality and relevance amongst the youth's culture, the social media competition was very well received by the target audience, a factor that was furthered by the involvement of one of Kuwait's most popular social media influencers including Dana Al-Tuwairish, Abdullah Al-Jassar and Fatma Al-Awadhi, admired individuals who increased the competition's

exposure and people's awareness of it. Honda Alghanim would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Hussein Hassan Abdallah and also thank him for his enthusiastic participation, something that Honda Alghanim hopes to observe more of in its upcoming campaigns.

The iconic 2017 Honda Civic has set an all-new standard in compact car style and performance with its sleek, sporty lines and improved power-to-weight ratio that has proven to be every driver's daily delight. While the spacious, dual-zone automatic climate control and premium-grade cabin is loaded with premium features for class-above comfort and convenience, the exterior



features boast color-coordinated power side mirrors with integrated LED turn signals, wide and low beam fog lights that enhance visibility in dust storms or heavy fog as well as signature LED headlights. Convenience was a key factor in the redesigned Honda Civic; from the cap-less fuel system, electric parking brake and aerodynamic wing spoiler to the Smart Entry engine start and stop button and 7-inch touch screen audio display, the Honda Civic is truly the ideal car for the youth who yearn for a smooth and comfortably stylish drive that reflects their lifestyle.

Customers are encouraged to visit any of the Honda showrooms for a chance to test drive a Honda Civic and get full details from

Honda's sales representatives. Honda Alghanim's showroom in Al-Rai operates from 9.00 am until 10.00 pm, Saturday to Thursday, and from 9.30 am until 10.00 pm on Fridays. The Shuwaikh showroom operates from 9.00 am until 10.00 pm. Alghanim Motors, the exclusive distributor of Honda automobiles, motorcycles, power products, and marine products in Kuwait, is committed to providing customers with flexible payment solutions and efficient and cost-effective services. The cars service center waiting lounge offers entertainment and comfort for customers, digital satellite TV, free wireless internet and relaxing massage chairs. For more information, please call 1822777.



Bussam Al-Qassas and Egypt's Pope Towadros II.

## EGYPT'S POPE EXTENDS HIS CONGRATULATIONS TO KUWAIT

**E**gypt's Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Pope of the See of St. Mark recently extended his holiest and warmest congratulations to Kuwait, its leaders and its people on the occasion of celebrating the 56th National Day and the 26th Liberation Day anniversaries. The Pope also hailed the deep-rooted historic bilateral relations between Kuwait and Egypt.

Pope Tawadros particularly hailed the wis-

dom of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and stressed that he had shown remarkable skills in the posts he assumed, through which he managed to keep Kuwait safe and maintain local, regional and international peace and security. "HH's wisdom made him the Sheikh of diplomacy for over half a century", the pope added noting that this helped maintain Kuwait's stability amidst violent international political conflicts.



## LOYAC DISTRIBUTES CERTIFICATES DURING THE DESIGN AND DRAWING WORKSHOP

**L**oyac Academy of Performing Arts distributed appreciation certificates to participants in the design and drawing workshop, which was supervised by artist Tanya Saleh, and lasted five days. 13 persons aged 15 and above participated in the workshop which aimed at presenting the principles of using the illustrator program to young designers and artists along with the graphics systems.

Saleh said that each person can innovate and such workshops are a good opportunity to know Kuwait and Arab youth and work together to discover their abilities to create designs and drawings related to all types of art, be it drawing, theater, dancing in addition to motivate the students' abilities to create various understandings and applying them through the use of drawing tools.

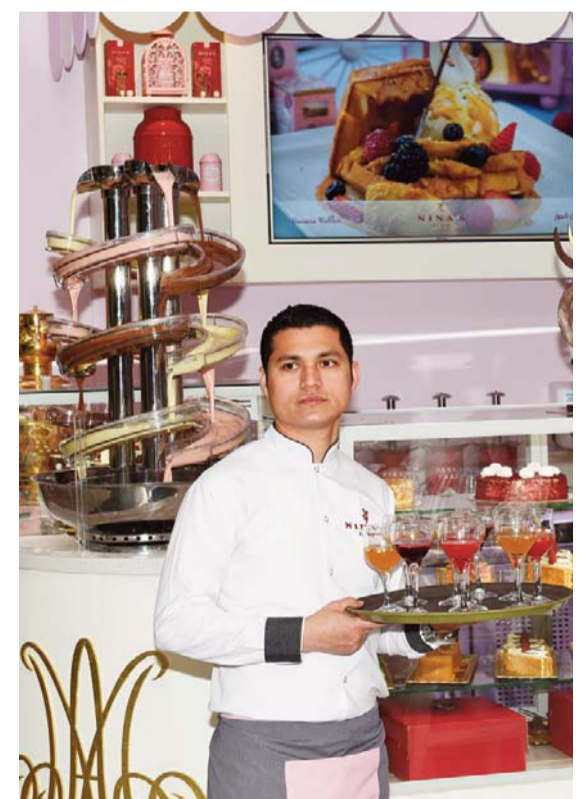
## NINA'S PARIS TAKES ITS CUSTOMERS ON A PARISIAN JOURNEY

**N**ina's Paris celebrated its re-launch with a new design that takes French cuisine enthusiasts in a Parisian journey starting with the cafes new ambiance with its contemporary and relaxing designs, its new and dessert menu, in addition to the unique tea selection that is exclusively served at Nina's Paris Kuwait. Nina's Paris, located at the Avenues Mall (near the gold market's entrance), was reopened in a ceremony highlighted by French sophistication and luxury.

The organizers made sure to provide the kind of atmosphere that Paris lovers seek in order to make them feel luxury, happiness and hospitality at the same time. Businessmen and women as well as media personalities in attendance were drawn by French jazz music that was playing throughout the ceremony. They also viewed the new menu and tasted more than 30 kinds of French dessert prepared exclusively at Nina's Paris by expert chefs.

Adel Hashim, Projects Development Manager, said during the ceremony: "We wanted to create a Parisian atmosphere for upscale French cuisine enthusiasts, offering breakfast, brunch, and French desserts that Nina's Paris is distinguished with." Nina's Paris is the ideal place for ladies who want to enjoy breakfast with a cup of tea. The new breakfast menu includes a wide variety of omelets prepared as per order with ingredients such as salmon, spinach, sausage, and Nina's specialty sauces. The new menu also offers four varieties of pancakes, waffles and crepes, which all come with unique ingredients.

Furthermore, the new menu contains a selection of fine sandwiches, salads and sliders with Nina's specialty spices and ingredients, in addition to a wide variety of appetizers, pasta and main courses. As for desserts, the menu includes 30 kinds of fresh French desserts prepared daily with fine French touches in order to give diners a special Parisian experience that can be tasted in the variety of cakes, cheesecakes and tarts



offered at Nina's Paris. During the ceremony, Nina's Paris organized a tasting competition in which social media celebrities and fashionistas in Kuwait participated. At the end of the competition, fashionistas Marmar and Zouri Ashkenani expressed their satisfaction with the quality of food and variety found in the new menu. Meanwhile, models Reham and Asrar expressed admiration with the place and its decorations that were inspired by elegant French designs, and take diners in a French journey from the moment they enter the cafe until the minute they leave.



CROSSWORD 1533



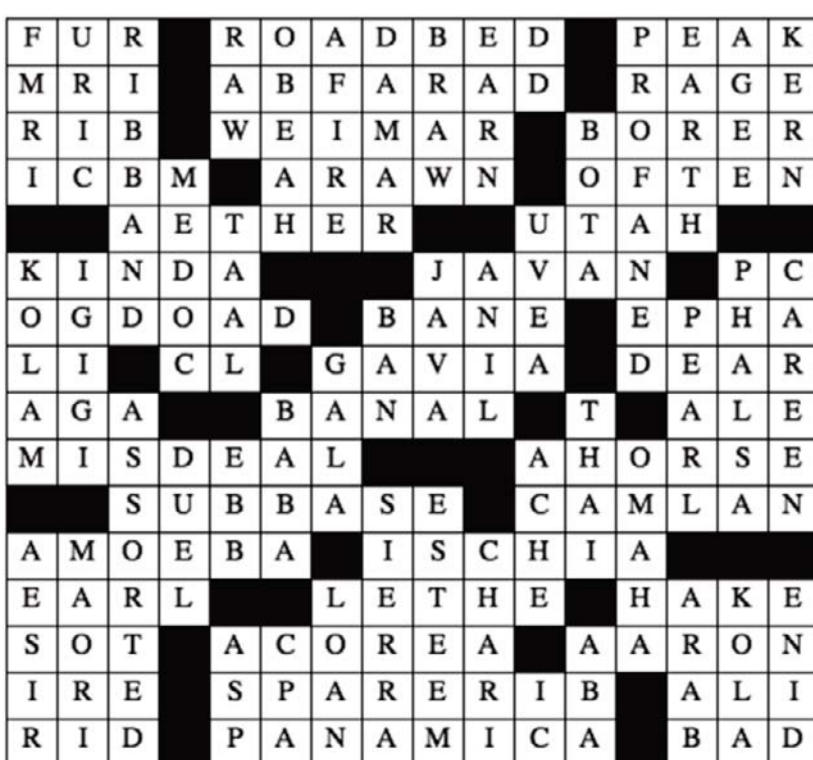
ACROSS

- Nut of any of several trees of the genus *Corylus*.
- (of non-living objects) The state of being free of pathogenic organisms.
- Biennial Eurasian plant usually having a swollen edible root.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- A small flat triangular bone in front of the knee that protects the knee joint.
- Imprudently incurring risk.
- A member of the agricultural people living in the central Volga provinces of European Russia.
- A doctor's degree in religion.
- Traveling on horseback.
- An Italian poet famous for love lyrics (1304-1374).
- Of or relating to the uvea of the eye.
- (in Gnosticism) A divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of the universe.
- A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
- Any of various birds of the Australian region whose males build ornamented structures resembling bowers in order to attract females.
- (used of persons or the military) Characterized by having or bearing arms.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- Tropical African herbs.
- Being of delicate or slender build.
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- A village in eastern Ireland (northwest of Dublin).
- Squash bugs.
- The dynasty that ruled much of Manchuria and northeastern China from 947 to 1125.
- Worn or shabby from overuse or (of pages) from having corners turned down.
- The principles of right and wrong that are accepted by an individual or a social group.
- (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
- A metrical unit with unstressed-stressed syllables.
- A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- A cylindrical spikelike inflorescence.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- Any organic compound formed by adding alcohol molecules to aldehyde molecules.
- A quantity of no importance.
- West Indian tree having racemes of fragrant white flowers and yielding a durable timber and resinous juice.
- Transient cessation of respiration.
- Any of several small ungulate mammals of Africa and Asia with rodent-like incisors and feet with hooflike toes.
- United States composer noted for his innovative use of polytonality (1874-1954).
- Large long-winged warm-water seabird having a large bill with a distensible pouch for fish.
- The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
- A piece of furniture with a writing surface and usually drawers or other compartments.
- Be earlier in time.
- The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.

DOWN

- Providing sophisticated amusement by virtue of having artificially (and vulgarly) mannered or banal or sentimental qualities.
- A slender double-reed instrument.
- A member of the British order of honor.
- Scandinavian liquor usually flavored with caraway seeds.
- Someone who sets snares for birds or small animals.
- The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
- Of or relating to the feet.
- An honorary degree in science.
- A state in midwestern United States.
- A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- English illustrator of several of Dickens' novels (1815-1882).
- A British peer ranking below a Marquess and above a Viscount.
- A city in western Germany.
- A location other than here.
- Beat thoroughly in a competition or fight.
- Leafless East Indian vine.
- (of a young animal) Abandoned by its mother and raised by hand.
- Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
- (Greek mythology) One of the three Graces.
- Long-tailed arboreal mustelid of Central and South America.
- A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
- Realistic Norwegian author who wrote plays on social and political themes (1828-1906).
- A toxic protein extracted from castor beans.
- Order by virtue of superior authority.
- Any of a group of antidepressant drugs that inhibit the action of monoamine oxidase in the brain and so allow monoamines to accumulate.
- A complex red organic pigment containing iron and other atoms to which oxygen binds.
- Combatant who tries to throw opponent to the ground.
- A dull persistent (usually moderately intense) pain.
- (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
- Resoluteness by virtue of being unyielding and inflexible.
- Lacking or deprive of the sense of hearing wholly or in part.
- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- In some classifications.
- Having the leading position or higher score in a contest.
- An underground enclosure with access from the surface of the ground or from the sea v 1.
- Any piece of work that is undertaken or attempted.
- An inhabitant of Lapland.
- A university in Connecticut.
- Surpassing the ordinary especially in size or scale.
- (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- United States writer (born in Poland) who wrote in Yiddish (1880-1957).
- Used of a single unit or thing.
- A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You show great understanding of the needs of others and you are in a good position to communicate concerning groups and society in general. You may have a job as a teacher; however, it is time to consider some form of management. A desire to teach the teacher is strong and the next step may be to see where you would fit in at the university level of teaching. Successfully guiding people to seek knowledge beyond the usual is a jazzy feeling when you consider the desire to learn is where we get our scientists, adventurers and teachers of knowledge. You enjoy taking a part in making positive things happen. Close personal ties with small groups assume a high priority in the evenings; perhaps a book club or travel group is an inspiration.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Some difficulties are always going to rise up when there are many people involved in the decision-making responsibilities. Listen to your inner voice before jumping in too quickly to add your thoughts. Mental stimulation is easy to find-emotional upheavals will be short lived. Music is likely to play an important role for you as a calming method. You may find yourself shopping for a gift or looking for that new music album that just came on the market recently. At home, you escape into some special quiet place to rebuild your energies. Perhaps you have an indoor garden. This is a wonderful way to relax and bring a balance into your day. Others find themselves interested in your hobby or music. Conversations are easy to enjoy this evening.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Respect, status and achievement are central goals for you as a new phase begins in your life. Investments can start small and grow beyond your wildest dreams-be on the lookout for opportunities of this sort. Challenging authority and striving for success are on your agenda now. Properly channeled ambition results in great achievements and brings recognition. Regardless of the weather outside, you may decide to smoke a couple of hens and throw some vegetables together for a fun meal with friends this evening. If you are musically inclined, you may find yourself or others sitting around a piano and singing, or you just generally enjoy being with your friends. A feeling of being at peace comes into prominence at this time.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Communicating is strong today. Those around you will find you aware and in touch with the world around you-willing to give yourself to important issues. There is an unusual method or technique to learn today and you seem to enjoy sorting through things. This afternoon there will be time to share a couple of funny stories. Stability and permanence satisfy a deep emotional need and you may work very hard at bringing things into balance. Sometimes it does not take so much work; sometimes just a smile and a hug are good. You can be most persuasive with others and eloquent in vocalizing about important subjects. The situation is a natural for self-expression and you are able to articulate your particular ideas and thoughts well. This is also a lucky day!



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Someone may not understand you this morning, but you can make things work if there is an understanding to agree to disagree. Think things through before acting-have a plan. Your desire to accomplish a task all the way through to the end may cause some undue stress. Push too hard and you could drive everyone nuts-including yourself. Your current situation may demand some reevaluation or otherwise challenge your ideas. Give yourself a break during the noon break and enjoy the fun activity in a music store, bookstore, art or hobby store, etc. Wrap yourself in good energies and return to work feeling refreshed and renewed. Work is easier this afternoon. You find yourself more talkative this evening. A dialogue with an older person is insightful.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Quick answers, great wit and a surplus of insights and solutions are available in the workplace. There are two kinds of you when it comes to money. Have you decided which one you are this day? times you spend money as if it was your last day on earth and then at other times you save, invest and double your money in wise business choices. Remember that money is energy. For every five or so dollars there is one hour of energy. When you purchase a product that costs ten dollars, you could be looking at two hours of energy in order to pay off the item. This may help you consider your next purchase. For your enjoyment and your professional progress, keep your business and your personal life separate. Music and friends go side by side this afternoon.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This is a great time to play! Unfortunately, it is a workday. Plan some fun activities with your friends or a loved one this afternoon and dive in to work this morning with your eager drive to accomplish. Progress will be easier than you think, especially once you settle down and put your mind to a particular task. Family, home, relatives and real estate play a big part in your life this afternoon. You want to belong on a private, intimate, personal level-to be needed and to feel it is okay to have needs. The purchase of new property may be the outcome soon whether you are currently married or not. Investing in something you can call your own is a good thing. You return a favor to a friend later today. You are understanding and helpful.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is not the best day to handle money or be involved with contracts, agreements or hiring. Your judgment has been known to be better and you could easily be conned into an impulsive and unwise course of action. You may, however, be moved to appreciate some new piece of equipment and instead of making a purchase at this time, request a demonstration. Remember, sometimes products on sale cannot be returned-ask questions. This evening you and your loved one may catch up on some paperwork, perhaps taxes. Consider this tax reporting to be a project to be taken in little steps and you will make greater progress before a target date. The rest of the evening has possibilities for some fun activity that the two of you can enjoy.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Taking care of business and developing a plan is a major theme where your direction of the day is concerned. You crave organization and practicality and you want to get things accomplished. Some type of routine meeting early in the morning sets the pace for the whole week. In a small amount of time a satisfying division of work will keep production level positive. Friends will keep you busy this afternoon, perhaps with young people and teaching. A feeling of being at peace and stable on the emotional level comes to your attention. You know just what to do and can act without haste and emotion. You are called on to express your natural abilities. Music is likely to play a more important role for you this evening-perhaps you are performing.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Everything today seems to point to the unique qualities that most people do not see from you. You and a co-worker could begin a new group within the working team. This would be helpful when there is a push to accomplish rush jobs or in searching for answers. You could come up with new solutions or inventions. You have a natural sense of what the public wants and can step up to help whenever there is a need. There is a group activity that needs your leadership today. You use your mind to create positive results and although you are not an extrovert, you have a way of leading that can be very commanding. Pay attention to the financial news. There are opportunities to improve your finances now. Romantic arguments end quickly.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This is a day of much energy and drive. Perhaps that extra cup of coffee has you running full speed ahead. This is the perfect time for taking care of business quickly. You will find yourself running errands and feeling comfortable with the physical demands of today as well. Financial savvy and a practical turn of mind are qualities that take on a greater importance this afternoon. Your knack for knowing how to put people, ideas and things together profitably will have you in a management position very soon. Figuring out how to organize projects and people is apt to become a topic of special interest-and a challenge. This is one of your best days for love. If you are not involved with a loved one you will soon become smitten. Romantic times are ahead.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may find yourself in a huddle with other co-workers today. There is work to perform and a time limit within which to work. Creative ideas flow easily and any problems you come across seem to have an easy answer. Concerned with the fairness of decision, you may ask for any comments regarding the outcome of certain projects. Listening to any suggestions for accuracy and speed is an important factor. Recent research looks promising for future presentations. You will discover the appropriate course of action. A massage before you head for home is something you might consider this afternoon as a positive transition. The people you love and care about have lots of hugs and cheerful, pleasant surprises for you.

WORD SEARCH

Musical Instruments 2

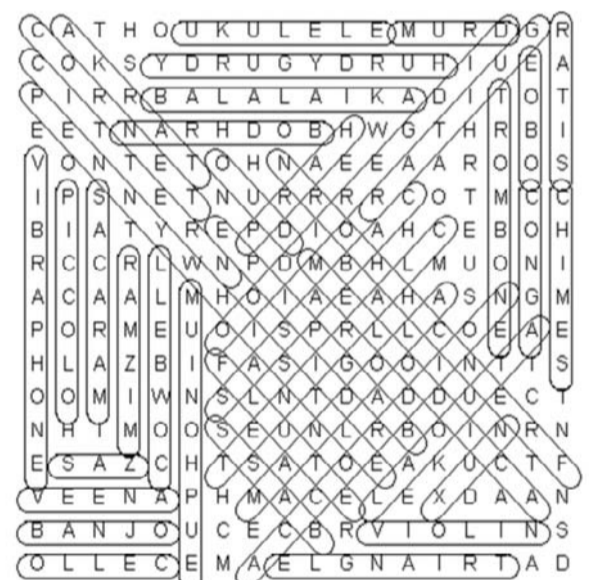
Find and circle all of the musical instruments that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a G. K. Chesterton quotation.



- |            |              |           |               |
|------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| BASSOON    | FIFE         | MARIMBAS  | SHOFAR        |
| BONGOS     | FLUGELHORN   | MELODEON  | SLIDE WHISTLE |
| BOUZOUKI   | GONG         | MOCENO    | STRUMSTICK    |
| BUGLE      | HARMONICA    | NEFER     | TAMBOURINE    |
| CASTANETS  | HARMONIUM    | OCARINA   | TAMBURA       |
| CONCERTINA | HUNTING HORN | PIANO     | TIN WHISTLE   |
| CONCH HORN | JEWS' HARP   | REBEC     | TRUMPET       |
| CUMBUS     | KEYBOARD     | RECORDER  | TUBA          |
| CYMBAL     | LUTE         | SAROD     | VIOLA         |
| DULCIMER   | MANDOLIN     | SAXOPHONE | XYLOPHONE     |

Yesterday's Solution

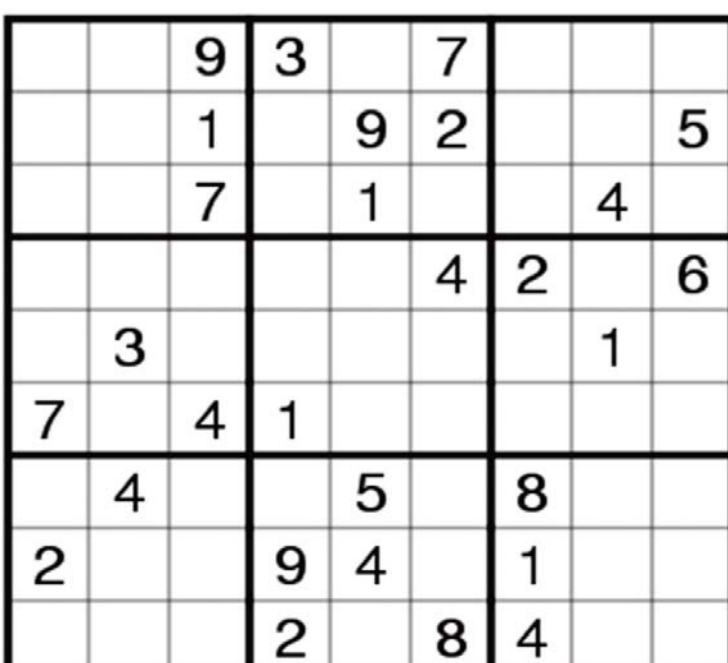
Musical Instruments 1



- |           |             |              |            |
|-----------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| ACCORDION | CONGA       | HURDY-GURDY  | SAZ        |
| BAGPIPE   | CORNET      | LAOUTA       | SITAR      |
| BALALAICA | COW BELL    | MANDOLA      | TARKA      |
| BASS      | DIDGERIDOO  | MARACAS      | TRIANGLE   |
| BANJO     | DRUM        | MELODICA     | TRUMPONE   |
| BODHRAN   | EUPHONIUM   | MIZMAR       | UKULELE    |
| CABASAS   | FLUTE       | OBOE         | VEENA      |
| CELLO     | FRENCH HORN | QUID         | VIBRAPHONE |
| CHIMES    | GUITAR      | PENNYWHISTLE | VIOLIN     |
| CITTERN   | HARP        | PICCOLO      | XUN        |
| CLARINET  |             |              |            |

Hidden sentence: THOSE WHO HEAR NOT THE MUSIC THINK THE DANCERS MAD

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution







# Colours of Australia STUDENT ART COMPETITION

## CATEGORY 6 TO 9 YEARS



Al-Hasan Al-Maged - Al-Ruaya School



Neema Hamza Abo Ain - Al-Qotuf School



Sonia Anna Mouradian - Armenian School



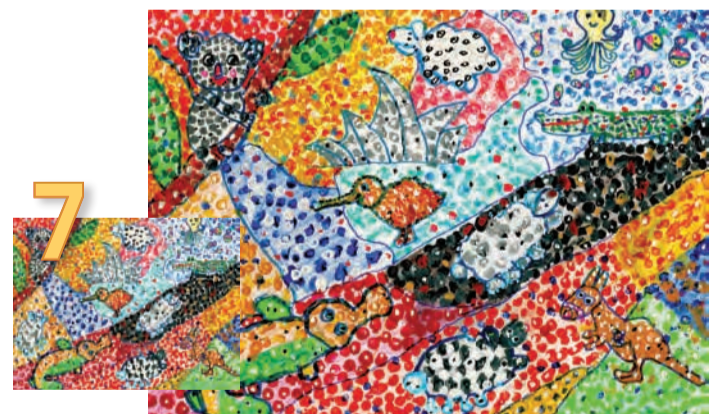
Daniella Becca Derec - Indian English School



Andrea K. Sequeira - Carmel School



Anna Belle - Lycee Francais



Sreena Surech - Indian Educational School



Nour Salah - Future School



Hamed Yousef - Hisham Ebn Omayya School



Meher Singh Sayed - Salmiya Indian Modern School

# Colours of Australia STUDENT ART COMPETITION

## CATEGORY 10 TO 13 YEARS



Nandhakrishnan . M - Indian Educational School (Bhavans)



Dikshita Voura - Carmel School



Warada Nabil - International School of Pakistan



Lolwa Abed Al-Aziz Mochafer - Mushref Intermediate School



Sharan James Rijo - United Indian School



Sukaina Raza Ali - English School of Kuwait



Fatma Taher Nour - Gulf English School



Sheyanshe Dhirawat - Integrated Indian School



Lexine Simmel Lunday - New Kuwait Philippine International School



Sadan Ali Al-Olaimi - Om Kalthoum Intermediate School

FASHION



Emma Stone



Dakota Johnson



Nicole Kidman



Amy Adams



Charlize Theron

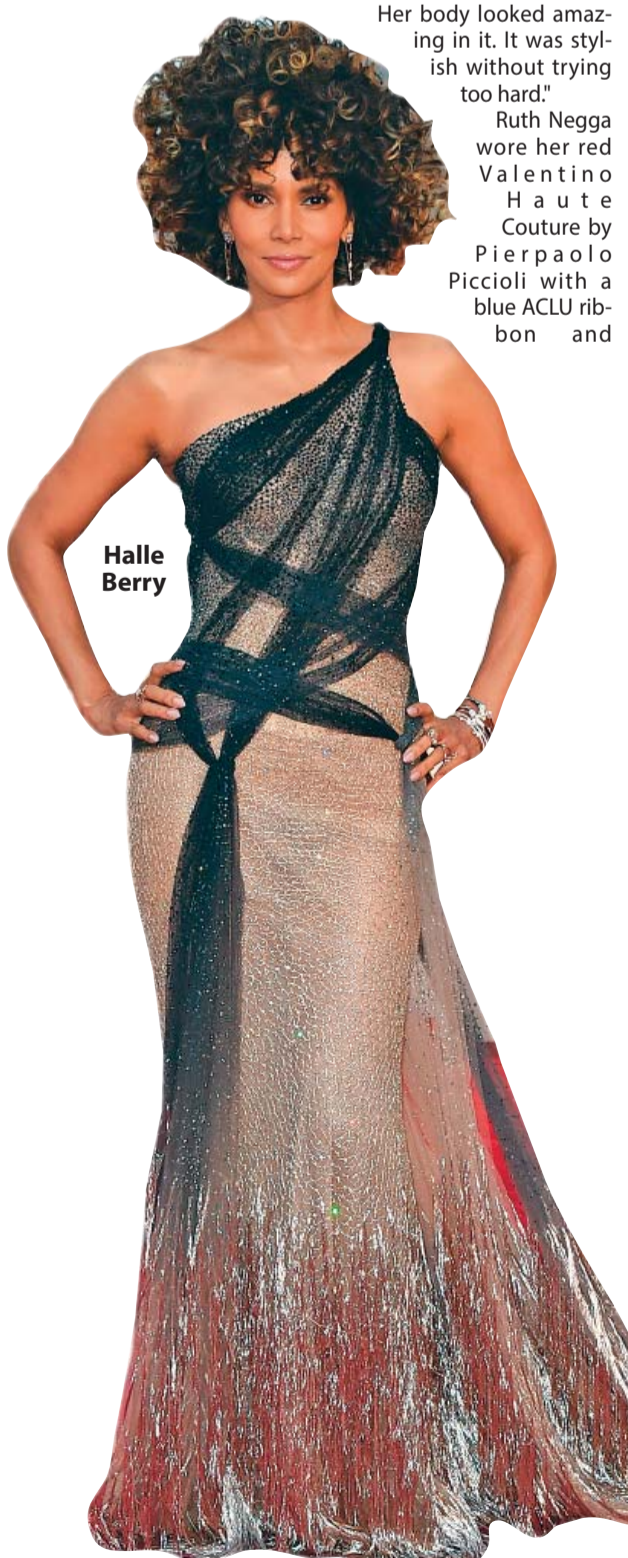
# THE OSCARS RED CARPET LED BY RUTH NEGGA AND EMMA STONE



Jessica Biel



Viola Davis



Halle Berry



Auli'i Cravalho



Ruth Negga

And the red carpet goes to ... the women in red, for one, with equal accolades for shiny and shimmering gold worthy of the Oscars, this and all years. Long sleeves and belts played major roles Sunday in Los Angeles at the Dolby Theatre, along with a beautiful Janelle Monae, transformed in Elie Saab Haute Couture into a busy but fabulous fashion city of black tulle, birds, lace, feathers, sequins, crystal stones and a head piece that served as the perfect topper. There were some midnight blues, including Meryl Streep's sparkly Elie Saab with trousers, and a smattering of blah black. Among the night's trends were velvet, worn Old Hollywood style by Henson, Brie Larson and Michelle Williams, and metallics, including a fierce Charlize Theron, Emma Stone and Jessica Biel. All in all, the clunkers were few.

**Some highlights:**

**The reds**

Viola Davis rocked the color as she picked up a best supporting actress Oscar for her role in "Fences." She wore silk Armani Prive in vermilion, with the perfect halter neck falling into a pleated capelet effect off the shoulders. Her short hair with bangs swept to one side let the dress shine and she kept jewelry to a minimum. "It was a perfect shade of red on her," said Adam Glassman, creative director for O magazine and a special correspondent for Extra TV. "The color red was a symbol of hope and optimism. We are living in dark times, and perhaps by choosing red she is symbolizing HOPE. The gown was sensual and elegant at the same time. The draped capelet detail was so flattering on her.

Her body looked amazing in it. It was stylish without trying too hard."

Ruth Negga wore her red Valentino Haute Couture by Pierpaolo Piccioli with a blue ACLU ribbon and

Irene Neuwirth jewelry featuring Gemfields responsibly sourced Mozambican rubies. Her jewels included a head piece not all could pull off, but she did so effortlessly. The gown included a high lace collar and skimmed the ground, her makeup a perfect match on eyelids and lips. "It proves you don't have to be plucky and show lots of excess flesh to look sexy and beautiful," said Avril Graham, the executive fashion and beauty editor for Harper's Bazaar US. "The fact that she wore those rubies played into that sustainable trend and were a great modern take." Auli'i Cravalho, at 16, killed her first Oscars performance, singing "How Far I'll Go" from "Moana" in, yes, another standout red gown.

**The golds**

Stone led the pack in a custom Givenchy Haute Couture by Riccardo Tisci. It was a long dress in all-over embroidered nude lace with fishnet detailing and gold and bronze crystals. It had tiers of fringe that lent a tad of flapper without going overboard. Her red lip color and swifty, matching earrings from Tiffany and Co. went a long way. She was "finished with Old Hollywood worthy waves," said Kerry Pieri, the digital fashion and features director for Harper's Bazaar. "This was glamour at its best, finished with a subtle Planned Parenthood pin." Dakota Johnson took one of the night's biggest risks. She wore a long-sleeve, strong-shouldered sweeping silk gown with a waist tie. The dress was Gucci and paired with a vintage Cartier necklace. "And it paid off," Pieri said.

Gold turned Champagne hewed on Nicole Kidman, in Armani Prive, and Felicity Jones, in princessy Dior Haute Couture. Amy Adams wore plunging metallic silver as a presenter, courtesy of Tom Ford. It was embroidered with silver bugle beads, had long sleeves and was cut wide open nearly to her waist. Theron, Graham said, "knocked it out of the water, as always. The metallic moment was amazing." Theron was "Grecian Goddess meets Glamazon" in her pleated Dior Haute Couture that plunged at the neck and was set free to flow below the waist, Glassman said. And that's not a bad thing.

"Charlize OWNS the red carpet," he said. Fashion and style expert Hal Rubenstein found Theron's huge Chopard drop earrings in connecting pear and heart shapes distracting, and the dress a little much. "There was almost six yards too much fabric in that dress," he said. "It's impossible for her to look bad but that was an awful lot of dress and an awful lot of jewelry."

FASHION



Hailee Steinfeld



Janelle Monáe



Kirsten Dunst



Taraji P. Henson



Teresa Palmer



Olivia Culpo

Jessica Biel was the definition of gold statuesque in a KaufmanFranco gown that hugged her body and included a metallic fringe-looking collar and liquidy train.

"She really scored well. It was cut really vavoom and close to show off her figure," Graham said. "This was not frothy. This was a way of wearing metallics and sequins and embellishment in a contemporary way." Stone was on top of Rubenstein's best-dressed list. "For me it's not about this being a fashion show. It's about celebrating the movies and who looks like a movie star. They should look like Lauren Bacall and Lana Turner and people like that," he said. "Emma looked the most like that. She looked sexy without being overt or redundant or trashy."

**The confections**

Hailee Steinfeld pulled one off. It was sheer white with back pleating and huge red and purple and blush floral embellishment. It had a heavy train and a dainty belt. It had a high collar. It was by Ralph & Russo, and it was one of those young-girl coups that might not have worked otherwise, not unlike Dakota Johnson's look. Speaking of confections, but with a fierce bite, Monae made her usual fierce fashion statement in Elie Saab Haute Couture. Her Forevermark jewels were valued by the company at \$1.5 million and included multiple diamond rings.

"It wasn't my favorite. I always like sleek lines," Graham said of Monae. Kirsten Dunst looked a bit swallowed-up by her black Dior Haute Couture. She was strapless with a corseted bodice and asymmetric hem that fell at the ankle at the front with a voluminous train behind. "It was big, black, wide, sort of 18th century," Graham said. "I just didn't like the proportions."

**Just Taraji**

Henson, a co-star with Monae in "Hidden Figures," earned praise from many for her deep navy blue Alberta Ferretti. It fell off the shoulder and her Nirov Modi diamond necklace pointed the way to ample décolletage. Henson left her hair loose with a sexy side part. "From head to toe she was sophisticated, elegant and glamorous," Glassman said. "The neckline was perfect for the Academy Awards. The navy velvet was so on point for the season and her hair was soft and cool. It was a modern take on the Old Hollywood look. Every detail worked on her." As "Hidden Figures" supporting actress contender Octavia Spencer opted for a silvery Marchesa adorned with a flounce of feathers. Resembling a real-life - though much more chic - Oscar award. — AP



Octavia Spencer



Scarlett Johansson



Jennifer Aniston



Salma Hayek



Priyanka Chopra



Georgina Chapman



Actor Darby Stanchfield



Luciana Barroso and Matt Damon



Michelle Williams and Busy Philipps



Hala Kamil



Mel Gibson and Rosalind Ross



Meryl Streep



Chrissy Teigen



Producers Pharrell Williams and Mimi Valdes

AWARDS



The cast of 'Moonlight' and "La La Land" appear on stage as presenter Warren Beatty (center), flanked by host Jimmy Kimmel (left) shows the winner's envelope for Best Movie "Moonlight" on stage at the 89th Oscars on February 26, 2017 in Hollywood, California. — AP/AFP



Best Supporting Actor Mahershala Ali, Best Actress Emma Stone, Best Supporting Actress Viola Davis and Best Actor Casey Affleck pose in the press room during the 89th Oscars.



Cast and crew of 'Moonlight' accept the Best Picture award onstage.

# 'Moonlight' wins best picture at botched Academy Awards



US actress Viola Davis delivers a speech on stage after she won the award for Best Supporting Actress in 'Fences'.



Director Damien Chazelle delivers a speech on stage after he won the Best Director award for 'La La Land'.



Casey Affleck poses in the press room with the Oscar for Best Actor.



US actress Emma Stone delivers a speech on stage after she won the Best Actress award in "La La Land".



Christopher Nelson, second from left, Giorgio Giorno, center, and Alessandro Bertolazzi, second from right, winners of the award for best makeup and hairstyling for "Suicide Squad" pose in the press room with Kate McKinnon, left, and Jason Bateman, right.



Iranian-US engineer Anousheh Ansari (left) delivers a speech on behalf of Iranian director Asghar Farhadi the award for Best Foreign Language Film for "The Salesman" from South African-US actress Charlize Theron (second right) and US actress Shirley MacLaine (center).



(From left) Jeremy Kleiner, Adele Romanski and Barry Jenkins pose in the press room with the Oscar for Best Picture.



Linus Sandgren poses in the press room with the Oscar for Best Cinematography for "La La Land".



Kenneth Lonergan poses in the press room with the Oscar for Best Original Screenplay.



Sylvain Bellemare poses with the Oscar for Best Sound Editing for 'Arrival'.

Oscar winner, take two. Barry Jenkins' "Moonlight" - not, as it turned out, "La La Land" - won best picture at the Academy Awards in a historic Oscar upset and an unprecedented fiasco that saw one winner swapped for another while the "La La Land" producers were in mid-speech. Presenters Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway apparently took the wrong envelope - the one for best actress winner Emma Stone - onto the stage for the final prize. When they read "La La Land" as the winner, representatives for ballot tabulators PwC - formerly Price Waterhouse Coopers - realized the mistake and raced onstage to try to stop the acceptance speeches. Host Jimmy Kimmel came forward to inform the cast that "Moonlight" had indeed won, showing the inside of the envelope as proof. "I knew I would screw this up," said Kimmel, a first-time host.

Gasps were heard around the auditorium. Presenters, winners and Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences huddled to discuss the debacle. Beatty refused to give up the envelopes until he could hand them first to Jenkins. "La La Land" director Damien Chazelle and Jenkins hugged amid the chaos. "Even in my dreams this cannot be true," said an astonished Jenkins, once he reached the microphone. "To hell with dreams! I'm done with it because this is true." Backstage, Stone said she was holding her winning envelope at the time. "I think everyone's in a state of confusion still," said Stone. Later the actress, who pledged her deep love of "Moonlight," added, "Is that the craziest Oscar moment of all time? Cool!"

**Critically adored**

It was, nevertheless, a shocking upset considering that "La La Land" came in with 14 nominations, a record that tied it with "Titanic" and "All About Eve." Jenkins' tender, bathed-in-blue coming-of-age drama, made for just \$1.5 million, is an unusually small Oscar winner. Having made just over \$22 million as of Sunday at the box office, it's one of the lowest grossing best-picture winners ever but also one of the most critically adored. "Moonlight," released by indie distributor A24, also had some major muscle behind it, including Brad Pitt's Plan B, which also backed the 2015 winner "12 Years a Slave." "It was unfortunate that things happened as they did but, goddamn, we won best picture," the still cool and composed Jenkins told reporters.



US Actor Mahershala Ali delivers a speech on stage after he won the award for Best Supporting Actor in "Moonlight".

The "La La Land" team was celebrating onstage when producer Jordan Horowitz took to the microphone to say: "There's been a mistake. 'Moonlight,' you guys won best picture." He then graciously passed his statue to the "Moonlight" producers, saying, "This is not a joke." "I noticed the commotion that was happening and I thought that something strange had occurred," Jenkins said backstage. "The last 20 minutes of my life have been insane." "Moonlight" co-star Mahershala Ali, the supporting actor winner, said the conclusion "threw me a bit." "I don't want to go up there and take anything from someone," he said afterward. "It's very hard to feel joy in a moment like that."

In a statement, PwC apologized to each film, Beatty, Dunaway and Oscar viewers. "The presenters had mistakenly been given the wrong category envelope and when discovered, was immediately corrected," said the accounting firm. PwC, which has long watched over the Oscar ballots, said it was currently investigating "how this could have happened." For "La La Land," a musical in

A W A R D S

Winners

**Best Picture:** "Moonlight."  
**Actor:** Casey Affleck, "Manchester by the Sea."  
**Actress:** Emma Stone, "La La Land."  
**Supporting Actor:** Mahershala Ali, "Moonlight."  
**Supporting Actress:** Viola Davis, "Fences."  
**Directing:** Damien Chazelle, "La La Land."  
**Foreign Language Film:** "The Salesman," Iran.  
**Adapted Screenplay:** "Moonlight," screenplay by Barry Jenkins, story by Tarell Alvin McCraney.  
**Original Screenplay:** Kenneth Lonergan, "Manchester by the Sea."  
**Production Design:** "La La Land,"  
**Production Design:** David Wasco;  
**Set Decoration:** Sandy Reynolds-Wasco.  
**Cinematography:** Linus Sandgren, "La La Land."  
**Sound Mixing:** "Hacksaw Ridge," Kevin O'Connell, Andy Wright, Robert Mackenzie and Peter Grace.  
**Sound Editing:** "Arrival," Sylvain Bellemare.  
**Original Score:** "La La Land," Justin Hurwitz.

**Original Song:** "City of Stars" from "La La Land," music by Justin Hurwitz, lyric by Ben Pasek and Justin Paul.  
**Costume Design:** Colleen Atwood, "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them."  
**Documentary (short subject):** "The White Helmets," Orlando von Einsiedel and Joanna Natasegara.  
**Documentary Feature:** "O.J.: Made in America," Ezra Edelman and Caroline Waterlow.  
**Film Editing:** "Hacksaw Ridge," John Gilbert.  
**Makeup and Hairstyling:** "Suicide Squad," Alessandro Bertolazzi, Giorgio Gregorini and Christopher Nelson.  
**Animated Feature Film:** "Zootopia," Byron Howard, Rich Moore and Clark Spencer.  
**Animated Short Film:** "Piper," Alan Barillaro and Marc Sondheimer.  
**Live Action Short Film:** "Sing," Kristof Deak and Anna Udvardy.  
**Visual Effects:** "The Jungle Book," Robert Legato, Adam Valdez, Andrew R Jones and Dan Lemmon. — AP

which reality repeatedly intrudes on fantasy, it was another alternate ending. "La La Land" still collected a leading six awards, including honors for cinematography, production design, score, the song "City of Stars" and best director. Chazelle, the 32-year-old filmmaker, became the youngest to win best director. "This was a movie about love and I was luckily enough to fall in love while making it," said Chazelle, speaking about his girlfriend and Oscars date, Olivia Hamilton.

**Grief-filled performance**

Up until the frenzied end, the telecast had seasawed between jabs at Donald Trump and passionate arguments for inclusivity. "All you people out there who feel like there isn't a mirror out there for you, the academy has your back, the ACLU has your back and for the next four years we will not leave you alone, we will not forget you," said Jenkins, whose film is, in three chapters, about a young black kid growing up poor and gay in impoverished Miami. Kenneth Lonergan, the New York playwright whose last film ("Margaret") was beset by lawsuits and conflict, won best original screenplay for "Manchester by the Sea." "I love the movies. I love being part of the movies," said Lonergan. After the wild ending, Lonergan deadpanned to reporters, "It turned out that we actually won best picture." Shortly later, Affleck - in one of the night's most closely watched races, won best actor - his first Oscar - for his soulful, grief-filled performance in Lonergan's film. Affleck and Denzel Washington ("Fences") were seen as neck-and-neck in the category. An admittedly "dumbfounded" Affleck looked shocked when his name was read. "Man I wish I had something bigger and more meaningful to say," said Affleck, who hugged his more famous brother, Ben, before taking the stage.

The show kicked off with Justin Timberlake dancing down the Dolby Theatre aisles, singing his ebullient song, "Can't Stop the Feeling," from the animated film "Trolls." It was an early cue that the Oscars would steer, at least in part, toward festiveness rather than heavy-handedness. Protests, boycotts and rallies have swirled ahead of Sunday night's Oscars. But Kimmel, in his opening monologue, quickly acknowledged that he "was not that guy" to heal a divided America. But he pointedly led a standing ovation for the "overrated" Meryl Streep and later tweaked the president by tweeting to him on air, including telling him that Streep "says hi."

**Ordinary people**

Viola Davis, co-star of Denzel Washington's August Wilson adaptation "Fences," won best supporting actress. She and Ali, both widely expected winners, marked the first time in more than a decade that multiple Oscar acting honors went to black actors. "I became an artist, and thank god I did, because we are the only profession to celebrate what it means to live a life," said Davis, the best supporting actress winner. "So here's to August Wilson, who exhumed and exalted the ordinary people." The evening's most blunt protest came from a winner not in attendance. Best foreign film for the second time went to Asghar Farhadi, director of Iran's "The Salesman." Farhadi, who also won for his "A Separation," had said he wouldn't attend because of Trump's travel ban to seven predominantly Muslim nations. Anousheh Ansari, an Iranian astronaut, read a statement from Farhadi.

"I'm sorry I'm not with you tonight," it read. "My absence is out of respect for the people of my country and those of other six nations who have been disrespected by the inhumane law that bans entry of immigrants to the US." The broadcast often veered between such strong personal statements and Kimmel's efforts to keep things a little lighter with bits reminiscent of his late-night show. Shortly before he led a dazed, unsuspecting tour group into the theater, presenter Gael Garcia Bernal, the Mexican actor, declared: "As a migrant worker, as a Mexican, and as a human being, I am against any wall." Rich Moore, one of the three directors of Disney's best animated film winner "Zootopia," described the movie as about "tolerance being more powerful than fear of the other."

**Acting category**

Mel Gibson's World War II drama "Hacksaw Ridge" was, surprisingly, the evening's first double winner, taking awards for editing and sound mixing. Gibson, for a decade a pariah in Hollywood, was seated front and center for the show, and was a frequent presence throughout. Ezra Edelman's "O.J.: Made in America" took best documentary, making it - at 467 minutes - the longest Oscar winner ever, beating out the 1969 Best Foreign Language Film winner "War and Peace" (431 minutes). Edelman's documentary, while it received an Oscar-qualifying theatrical release, was seen by most on ESPN as a serial, prompting some to claim its place was at the Emmys, not the Oscars.

Edelman dedicated the award to the victims of the famous crime, Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman. "This is also for other victims, victims of police violence, police brutality," Edelman said. "This is their story as it is Ron and Nicole's." The "OscarsSoWhite" crisis of the last two years was largely quelled this season by a richly diverse slate of nominees, thanks to films like "Moonlight," "Fences" and "Hidden Figures." A record six black actors are nominated. For the first time ever, a person of color is nominated in each acting category. "I want to say thank you to President Trump," Kimmel said in the opening. "Remember last year when it seemed like the Oscars were racist?" The nominees follow the efforts by Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences President Cheryl Boone Isaacs to diversify the membership of the largely white, older and male film academy. "Tonight is proof that art has no borders, no single language and does not belong to a single faith," said Isaacs. — AP



Joanna Natasegara, second from left, and Orlando von Einsiedel, winners of the award for best documentary short subject for 'The White Helmets', pose in the press room with David Oyelowo, left, and Salma Hayek, right, at the Oscars.



John Gilbert, center, winner of the award for best film editing for 'Hacksaw Ridge', poses in the press room with Michael J Fox, left, and Seth Rogen, right.



Ezra Edelman, right, and Caroline Waterlow accept the award for best documentary feature for 'O.J.: Made in America'.



Byron Howard, from left, Rich Moore and Clark Spencer pose in the press room with the award for best animated feature film for 'Zootopia'.



Alan Barillaro, left, and Marc Sondheimer pose in the press room with the award for best animated short film for 'Piper'.



Director Kristof Deak (left) and producer Anna Udvardy (right) pose in the press room with their Best Live Action Short Film for 'Sing'.



Host Jimmy Kimmel speaks at the Oscars at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Actor/director Ben Affleck (left) and actor/producer Matt Damon speak onstage.



(From left) Actor Dakota Johnson, production designer David Wasco and art director Sandy Reynolds-Wasco, winners of Best Production Design for 'La La Land' and actor Jamie Dornan pose in the press room.



Actor Leonardo DiCaprio (left) and actress Emma Stone, winner of Best Actress for 'La La Land' pose backstage.



John Legend performs songs from best original song nominees 'City of Stars' and 'Audition' from 'La La Land'.



Actor Ryan Gosling attends the 89th Annual Academy Awards.



An image of the late Carrie Fisher is displayed as Sara Bareilles performs during the Memoriam tribute at the Oscars.



Nominee for Best Supporting Actor 'Lion' Dev Patel and his mother Anita arrive on the red carpet.



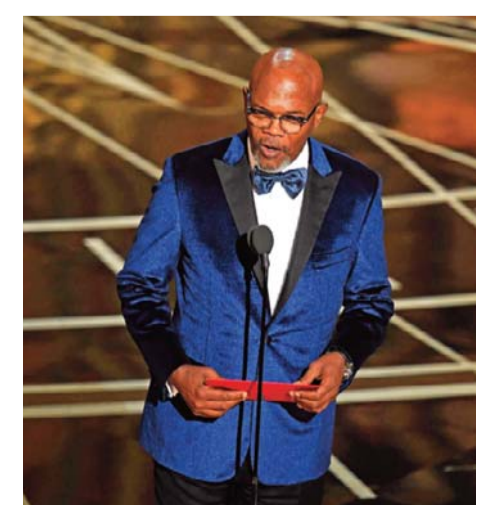
Hong Kong actor Jackie Chan poses as he arrives on the red carpet.



Musician John Legend (center) performs onstage.



Nominees for Best Foreign Language Film "Tanna" (Australia) pose as they arrive on the red carpet.



Actor Samuel L Jackson speaks onstage.

'Moonlight' wins best picture at botched Academy Awards



Actress Emma Stone accepts Best Actress for 'La La Land' onstage during the 89th Annual Academy Awards at Hollywood &amp; Highland Center on February 26, 2017 in Hollywood, California. — AFP

## Iran's 'The Salesman' wins Oscar as Farhadi boycotts

Iranian film "The Salesman" on Sunday won the Oscar for best foreign language film, but director Asghar Farhadi skipped the Hollywood gala in protest at a travel ban by US President Donald Trump. Farhadi initially said he would head to Hollywood for Oscars night, where his film—the story of two actors whose relationship turns sour during a performance of Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman"—earned a statuette. But after citizens from seven Muslim-majority countries were briefly denied entry last month to the United States, he decided there were too many "ifs and buts" about whether he would be allowed to enter the country.

Instead, thousands of people watched "The Salesman" for free in London's Trafalgar Square. In a statement read at the Oscars in his name, Farhadi said he was staying away in solidarity as people had been "disrespected" by Trump's policy, which is currently on hold after a decision by a federal appeals court. "Dividing the world into the US and 'our enemies' categories creates fear a deceitful justification for aggression and war," he said in the statement read at the Hollywood gala by the Iranian-born US engineer and astronaut Anousheh Ansari. "These wars prevent democracy and human rights in countries which have themselves been victims of aggression."

"Filmmakers can turn their cameras to capture shared human qualities and break stereotypes of various nationalities and religions. They create empathy between us and others—an empathy which we need today more than ever." Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif wrote on Twitter that he was "proud" of the cast and crew of "The Salesman" and hailed the Oscar statement on Trump's visa policy. "Iranians have represented culture and civilization for millennia," he wrote.

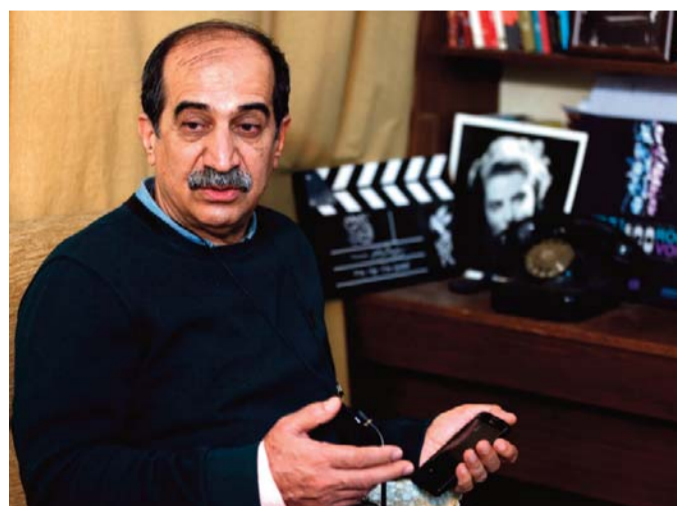
### 'Fanaticism and extremism'

At the age of just 44, Farhadi has established himself as Iran's most acclaimed director, touching people around the globe with stories that resonate beyond borders. This was his second film to win an Oscar in the foreign language film category, following the 2012 victory for "A Separation"—a stark, powerful family drama about Iran's fractured social classes, which also picked up a Golden Globe. Coming at another dark time in relations between the United States and Iran, when international sanctions were at their peak, Farhadi's 2012 speech was lauded back home for putting Iranian art, culture and history above politics. But this time, politics trumped art.

His statement in January blasted the rising mood of "fanaticism and extremism" and compared Trump to hardliners in his own country. "Instilling fear in the people is an important tool used to justify extremist and fanatic behaviour by narrow-minded individuals," he wrote. His lead actress, Taraneh Alidoosti, also boycotted the event, calling Trump's visa ban "racist". The measure has been put on ice by the US federal courts, and Trump's White House is devising a new order.

### Restrictions breed creativity

Working in the Islamic Republic for most of his career, Farhadi has had to turn limitations into sources of cre-



Iranian director and film critic Esmaeil Mihanost, author of "Face to Face with Asghar Farhadi" that reviews his cinematic works, gives an interview to The Associated Press at his office in Tehran, Iran, yesterday. — AP photos

ativity. "There are two types of censorship: official censorship and self-censorship, which is much more dangerous," Farhadi once said. Outside Iran, "the restrictions no longer weigh me down, but I am still subject to a conditioning that's beyond my control," he said. "I try to see that as an advantage rather than a hindrance and to respond in a creative way." Born in 1972 near the ancient city of Isfahan, Farhadi was swiftly drawn towards the arts, becoming interested in writing, drama and cinema while still at school. He later took courses at the Iranian

Young Cinema Society and graduated with a master's degree in film direction from Tehran University in 1998.

### 'Complex but fluid'

"The Salesman" also found success at last year's Cannes film festival, with Farhadi winning best screenplay and his star Shahab Hosseini named best actor. It was his second official festival selection after his French-language film "The Past" in 2013, which won the ecumenical jury prize. The structure of Farhadi's scripts "is always complex but fluid," cinema writer Beatrice de Mondenard said at the time. "He seeks to show the difficulties inherent in relationships between people, the



Anousheh Ansari accepts the award for best foreign language film for "The Salesman" on behalf of Asghar Farhadi.

choices faced by everyone, choices which make us question our values and our convictions." Farhadi's "About Elly", which tells of a woman who vanishes on a beach getaway with friends, scooped the Silver Bear award for best director at the 2009 Berlin film festival. Other films include "Dancing In The Dust", "Fireworks Wednesday" and "Beautiful City". — AFP

## BIG AWARD CEREMONY MISTAKES

The Oscar mix-up that saw "La La Land" mistakenly named as Best Picture before "Moonlight" took the award might be the biggest such blunder, but it is by no means the first. Here is a rundown of awards slip-ups:

### Oscars 2017

Faye Dunaway and Warren Beatty announced Sunday that "La La Land" had won Best Picture, at the climax of the 2017 Academy Awards ceremony. But as the film's crew gave their acceptance speeches, they realized the mistake and announced that "Moonlight" had actually won, prompting Beatty to mumble apologies. PricewaterhouseCoopers, the accounting firm responsible for tabulating Oscar ballots, apologized, saying that Beatty and Dunaway were handed the wrong envelope.

### Miss Universe crowns wrong beauty queen

In December 2015, the host of the Miss Universe pageant, comedian Steve Harvey, misread his cue card and announced that Miss Colombia had won, before apologizing and correcting to Miss Philippines. The event was live in Las Vegas before millions of viewers around the world. Half-laughing, half-sobbing with emotion, Ariadna Gutierrez was fleetingly crowned and congratulated, but as she cradled a huge bouquet of flowers and blew kisses to the crowd, Harvey owned up to his blunder. "OK folks, I have to apologize. The first runner up is Colombia," he said. "Miss Universe 2015 is Philippines." Harvey added as the music picked up again, with Wurtzbach looking stunned and mouthing "What?"

### Oscars 2014

In a prequel to Sunday's flub, actor John Travolta got it wrong when he was called on to announce the 2014 Oscar for Best Original Song, which was "Let It Go", sung by Idina Menzel for the animated film "Frozen". Travolta mangled Menzel's name and asked the audience to applaud "Adela Dazeem".

### Australia's Next Top Model

In September 2010 Australia's Next Top Model award was announced as Kelsey Martinovich, before presenter Sarah Murdoch had to go back and announce that the winner was in fact Amanda Ware. The two finalists had already made their winner's and loser's speeches when Murdoch, daughter-in-law of media tycoon Rupert Murdoch, revealed the mix-up.

"Oh my God, I don't know what to say right now. I'm feeling a bit sick about this," Murdoch said. "This is what happens on live TV, folks. This is insane, insane, insane." A bewildered Ware, 18, finally accepted the award and made a brief victory sashay down the catwalk, as 19-year-old Martinovich took the bizarre defeat gracefully. Broadcaster Foxtel blamed the error on a "miscommunication" between backstage operators, and offered Martinovich a cash gift and a trip to New York as compensation.

### NRJ music mix-up

French radio station NRJ messed up two years in a row, starting in 2009 when US singer Katy Perry accepted the station's best international song award. Seconds before the show ended, the presenter announced that the award was in fact meant for Rihanna. In 2010, The Black Eyed Peas were named best international group of the year, a mistake corrected just a few minutes later when the German group Tokio Hotel got the nod. — AP

## Film on Syria's White Helmets wins Oscar

A film about Syria's White Helmets—rescuers who risk their lives to help save civilians caught in the country's devastating war—took home the Oscar for best documentary short on Sunday. The Netflix-produced film, called simply "The White Helmets", was directed by Orlando von Einsiedel, and bested another short about the Syrian conflict, "Watani: My Homeland." But members of the group including the cinematographer who shot much of the footage, Khaled Khatib, were not allowed to enter the United States for the Oscars.

Group members said on Twitter that they had waited for three days at the airport but were not permitted to board a flight. The US Customs and Border Protection service said only that they did not have valid documents. The ordeal comes as US President Donald Trump sharply curtails visas for Syrians as well as citizens of a number of other Muslim-majority countries. Raed Saleh, leader of the rescue group, also was not able to attend but said in a statement that the White Helmets had saved the lives of more than 82,000 civilians.

"I invite anyone here who hears me to work on the side of life, to stop the bloodshed in Syria and around the world," he

said in a statement read by the director. "It's very easy for these guys to feel forgotten. This war has been going on for six years. If everyone could just stand up and remind them that we all care, (then) this war ends as quickly as possible." Khatib tweeted: "While we follow the Oscars, the Syrian regime has launched chlorine gas attacks in Harasta, injuring civilians." The White Helmets emerged in 2013, working to rescue civilians in rebel-held areas during the nearly six-year war.

Before fighting broke out, the volunteers had everyday jobs—bakers, painters and even students. Since 2013, the group says it has attracted more than 3,000 volunteers. It is named for the distinctive white hard hats worn by its volunteers and has gained international renown for its daring rescues, often filmed and circulated on social media.

### International support

The group's motto, "To save one life is to save all of humanity," is drawn from a verse of the Koran, although the rescuers insist they treat all victims, regardless of religion. The White Helmets were nominated for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize and

garnered international support for their candidacy, though they ultimately lost out. Their detractors, mostly supporters of President Bashar al-Assad's government, accuse them of being tools of their international donors. But others have hailed the group's volunteers as "real life heroes." Syria's conflict started in 2011 with the brutal repression of anti-government protests and has since spiralled into a complex war, killing more than 310,000 people and displacing over half the country's population.

The group is funded by several countries including the United States, Britain, Germany, Japan and The Netherlands. It also receives individual donations used to buy equipment, like their white hard hats, which cost about \$145 each. "The documentary took a lot of effort to make and we've been working on it for a long time," Saleh told AFP ahead of the Oscars. "People who are featured in the film have since died. There's equipment that you see that has been destroyed." — AFP



Members of "The White Helmets" film, Syrian cinematographers Khaled Al-Khatib (left) and Fadi Al-Halabi (right), and team member Abdelrahman Al-Mawass (center), pose yesterday, in Istanbul, a day after the film won the Oscar for best documentary short in Hollywood. — AFP