

SUBSCRIPTION

# Kuwait Times



THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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**Kuwait Embassy marks Trump's inauguration**



**Survivors found in Italy avalanche hotel miracle**



**Vintage Federer floors Berdych in 90 minutes**



150 Fils

## DONALD TRUMP SWORN IN AS 45TH US PRESIDENT

AMIR SENDS CONGRATULATIONS



Min 10°  
Max 18°



WASHINGTON: Donald Trump is sworn in as the 45th president of the United States by Chief Justice John Roberts as Melania Trump and his family look on during the 58th Presidential Inauguration at the US Capitol in Washington yesterday. — AP

### TRUMP VOWS TO PUT 'AMERICA FIRST' • PROTESTS TURN VIOLENT

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump became the 45th president of United States yesterday, ushering in a new political era that is cheered and feared in equal measure. The 70-year-old Republican billionaire placed his left hand on a bible used by Abraham Lincoln and recited the 35-word oath spoken since George Washington, and then launched into a much-anticipated inaugural address.

"We, the citizens of America, are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and restore its promise for all of our people," Trump told a crowd of hundreds of thousands massed on the National Mall. "Together we will determine the course of America, and the world, for many, many years to come," he said. "From this day forward, it's going to be only America first."

HH the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah congratulated Trump on his inauguration, wishing him best of luck in office. The Amir reaffirmed he was looking forward to boosting friendship and partnership between the two countries, towards new horizons that would achieve common interest. HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-

Jaber Al-Sabah and HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also sent congratulatory cables to Trump.

Trump's inauguration caps the improbable rise to power of the Manhattan real estate mogul, who had never before held elected office, served in the government or the armed forces. A crowd of hundreds of thousands looked on, including outgoing president Barack Obama and Trump's defeated election opponent Hillary Clinton - who narrowly missed out on becoming America's first female president. "I've been waiting for this for a long time," said Thomas Mendenhall, 68, a retired banker from Missouri. "We just want change."

When Trump descended the escalators of his glitzy New York tower in June 2015, his run for office was dismissed and even mocked. His staff, many shunned by friends for supporting a man who has been labeled a racist and bigot by his critics, will become power players in the White House. In the primaries, Trump dominated a crowded Republican presidential field with smash-mouth rhetoric and star power. He rode that same wave of anti-elite sentiment to victory over Clinton in

the November election.

For Trump's critics, there was disbelief that a man who 19 months ago hosted "The Apprentice" is now leader of the free world. A short distance from the steps of the Capitol, where Trump was sworn in, police fired gas to disperse protesters. Stones were thrown and windows broken. A 27-year-old financial worker from Tampa Bay in Florida, who did not want to give his name for fear of retaliation by his employer, said Trump's election victory had left him fearful. "There is nothing to hope for except for grassroots efforts to oppose him," he said. A bigger anti-Trump rally is planned for today.

At 70 years of age, Trump is the oldest man ever to begin work in the Oval Office. He has vowed to tear up Obama's policies and re-examine decades-old alliances with Europe and in Asia. Beginning yesterday, his team plans a rolling series of daily executive orders to roll back Obama's agenda. But he enters office with a 37 percent approval rating, the lowest on record, according to a CBS News poll. His inauguration was notably more sparsely attended than that of Obama in 2009 and 2013. — Agencies



## KRCS CONTINUES AIDING REFUGEES IN LEBANON

**BEIRUT:** Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has continued its humanitarian campaign for aiding Syrian refugees in Lebanon delivering a new batch of relief supplies to Syrians in the eastern border town of Ersal.

Dr Musaed Al-Enezi, the KRCS envoy to Lebanon, said in a statement yesterday that the society teams distributed winter clothes to 500 families in Ersal, a Lebanese town located a stone's throw from the border line with neighboring Syria. Enezi praised the

Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) for aiding the Kuwaiti teams for securing delivery of the humanitarian supplies to the Syrians in need.

The Kuwaiti philanthropic association has been involved in relentless activities to relieve many of the estimated 1.5 million refugees in Lebanon. The volunteers have been working tirelessly despite difficulties, namely the snowy weather in mountainous and remote regions where the refugees are settled. — KUNA



## KUWAITI-FUNDED SCHOOL OPENS IN NORTH IRAQ

**IRBIL:** A Kuwaiti-funded school for war-relocated Iraqis was opened here on Thursday, as part of the relief campaign, "Kuwait on your side." The school was inaugurated in Birzin, Irbil, during a ceremony attended by the State of Kuwait General Consul, Dr Omar Al-Kandari, Irbil Governor and a num-

ber of Arab and foreign diplomats. Dr Kandari said that the school, named "Al-Kuwait Al-Oula," was start of constructing a number of other Kuwait-financed schools in the region, upon guidelines of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Irbil Governor Nawzad Hadi meanwhile expressed gratitude to the State of Kuwait for its generous humanitarian contributions and help for the needy and the displaced Iraqis living in the Kurdish regions of northern Iraq. The school, made up of caravans, has an accommodation capacity for 480 students. — KUNA



IRBIL: Kuwait's Consul General in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kandari meets students at the school. — KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

## AMIR CONGRATULATES DEPUTY SPEAKER ON SUCCESSFUL SURGERY

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday sent a cable to Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly Essa Al-Kandari, congratulating him on the success of a surgical procedure he went through at a hospital in London. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah wished Kandari a swift and speedy recovery. Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem also congratulated Kandari on the successful operation.



Deputy Speaker Essa Al-Kandari



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem



WASHINGTON: Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah (center) and his wife Sheikhha Rima Al-Sabah (right) welcome a guest at the event. — KUNA



Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah welcomes a guest.

## KUWAIT EMBASSY MARKS INAUGURATION OF US PRESIDENT

**WASHINGTON:** The Kuwait Embassy held on Thursday a reception on the occasion of the inauguration of US President-elect Donald Trump. The embassy usually holds such receptions on the eve of the big

moment in Washington and the transition of power, the embassy said in a statement. Some US senior officials, Congressmen, accredited ambassadors and others attended the function, it added. — KUNA

## KISR FOCUSES ON FINDING SOLUTIONS TO STATE CHALLENGES

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Mohammad Al-Fares said Thursday that Kuwait Institute for Scientific Researching (KISR) is focusing on providing science-based solutions for challenges facing the country.

The KISR is keen on finding solutions to national challenges to materialize state development plan, Fares, also Chairman of the Board of Trustees of KISR, told reporters following a board meeting. He pointed out that the meeting has tackled a number of issues including the detailed report of the KISR activities in 2015/2016 and future projects.

For her part, KISR Director General Dr Samera Omar said that the institute has conducted 161 research projects in 2015/2016, including 88 contracted upon researches. She added that the institute has provided 36 technical and consulting services and 19 diverse services to different sectors.

The KISR has also carried out a large number of training courses in Kuwait and abroad to 2,081 Kuwaitis. It also organized training courses for 208 students and offered scholarships for studying abroad to 47 nationals, she noted.

KISR is a pioneering, independent, national institute of scientific excellence. Set up in 1967, KISR's initial role was dedicated to developing three fields of national importance: petroleum, desert agriculture, and marine biology.

Since then, KISR's role and responsibilities have expanded greatly to include the advancement of national industry and the undertaking of studies to address key challenges, such as the preservation of the environment, sustainable management of Kuwait's natural resources, responsible management of water and energy, and development of innovative methods of agriculture. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Mohammad Al-Fares chairs KISR's board meeting. — KUNA

Crime

Report

**INMATE WITH AIDS DIES AT CENTRAL PRISON**

**KUWAIT:** A security source said that a Kuwaiti AIDS patient died in his solitary cell. The inmate, in his forties, was serving a jail sentence at the central prison. Forensics personnel recovered the body and disinfected the cell and surroundings.

**Death sentence upheld**

The cassation court upheld the death sentence of a suspect and a 10-year jail sentence for a second in a murder-robbery case at the vegetable market in Sulaibiya. The court fined two other suspects KD 500 each. The prosecution accused the main suspect, a bedoon, and the second, a Syrian, of killing two victims with a machinegun. While the first did the shooting, the second backed him up with a knife. The prosecution also charged them with possessing an unlicensed firearm with thirty rounds, besides stealing KD 12,000. They were also charged with stealing a car, attempting to burn it and firing in a residential area. The third and fourth suspects were charged with assisting the first two by harboring them.

**Fraud**

Director General of Ahmadi security sent two Asian nationals to criminal detectives for buying and selling state-owned fuel. A police patrol in Fahaheel noticed a fuel tanker parked next to a bus with a hosepipe between them. When the driver was questioned, he said that he purchases fuel at a lower rate from the tanker driver.

**Man dead in fire**

Kuwait Fire Services Directorate's investigators are looking for the cause of a fire that killed an Asian man in a makeshift room and damaged four vehicles in Taima.

**Liquor factory**

A liquor factory was discovered in Mangaf during an inspection campaign on 'bachelor' residences. Officers noticed two rooms open with no one inside. They found out that one of the rooms was used for making liquor and the other for prostitution, which was divided into smaller sections, each with a bed.

**Employee escapes**

An Indian whose sponsor gave him KD 350 to pay for traffic violations left the country with it, prompting his sponsor to file theft charges against him. The sponsor told Sabah Al-Salem police that he asked his driver to pay for his traffic violations as he was running late. Police later found that he had already left the country.

**Firearm stolen**

Detectives are searching for a thief who stole a licensed firearm from a citizen's car in Sabah Al-Salem. The citizen said he found his shotgun missing with 50 cartridges, adding that the car had been broken into. — Al-Anbaa



**KUWAIT OIL DOWN 75 CENTS TO \$50.13 PB**

**KUWAIT:** The price of Kuwaiti oil went down by 75 cents Thursday, settling at \$50.13 per barrel after being at \$50.88 pb the day before, Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) said yesterday. At the global level, the price went up due to a statement by the International Energy Agency (IEA) regarding the shrink-

ing gap between supply and demand, which occurred before the decision by OPEC and Non-OPEC members to reduce their global oil output. The price of the Brent Crude went up by 24 cents to \$54.16 per barrel, the same case with the American crude which also increased by 29 cents to \$51.37 pb. — KUNA

**OPEC CRUDE BASKET DROPS TO \$51.45 PB**

**VIENNA:** OPEC's daily basket price dropped 77 cents on Thursday to settle at \$51.45 per barrel compared to \$52.22 pb Wednesday. OPEC's bulletin, released yesterday, said that the annual rate of its basket price for 2016 was \$40.76 pb.

The OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up Saharan Blend (Algeria), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE), Mery (Venezuela), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador) and Minas (Indonesia). —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait recently celebrated the graduation of a number of its employees from professional programs organized by the Institute of Banking Studies.

**BOSNIA SPEAKER WELCOMES INVITATION TO VISIT KUWAIT**

**KUWAIT:** Speaker of Bosnia and Herzegovina's parliament Sefil Dzaferovic on Thursday considered the invitation sent to him to visit Kuwait as signal of the special ties between the two countries. Dzaferovic received the invitation during his meeting with Kuwait Ambassador to Bosna and Herzegovina Nasser al-Mutairi at the Embassy in Sarajevo, according to a statement by the embassy.

The aim of invitation is to boost the parliamentary friendship and relations between the two sides, the statement added. During the meeting, Mutairi conveyed greetings of Kuwait's National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem to Dzaferovic who also transferred identical salute to Ghanem. The two sides discussed also brotherly ties, and means of developing and enhancing them in all fields to achieve the interests of the two nations, it noted. — KUNA

**KFAED ORGANIZES ALBANIA TRIP FOR OUTSTANDING STUDENTS**

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) organized a trip to Albania for outstanding Kuwaiti high-school students to inform them about the Fund's contributions there. According to a report by KFAED, the eighth edition of the annual "Be among the outstanding ones" trip, which also includes a separate tour to Cuba (for male students), will highlight the Fund's projects in Albania since 1993.

Seven loans were provided by the Fund to Albania worth KD 33.438 million, (\$113.6 million) to finance projects within agriculture, transportation and infrastructure. On an annual basis, the KFAED organizes trips to mainly showcase Kuwait's

huge role in providing assistance to other countries. In a previous statement, KFAED said that these trips contributed to the development of students' skills in research and knowledge, in addition to helping them to discover their own abilities.

The students program is part of a cooperation between the Ministry of Education and KFAED, which kicked off in 2010, and it involves the annual selection of a number of high achieving 11th grade students who are sent on accompanied trips to see firsthand KFAED and Kuwaiti developmental contributions and efforts. KFAED was established in 1961 on an initiative by late Amir Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA

**PAS DECIDES TO MAINTAIN CURRENT BOARDS OF DIRECTORS**

**KUWAIT:** The Public Authority for Sport (PAS) has decided that the boards of directors of the sports bodies will continue on a caretaker basis until new ones are elected. The move is line with the ministerial decision No 847/2016 that was issued by Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah on October 20, the authority said in a statement on Thursday. The decision stipulates that the current boards of directors work temporarily for three months until the new ones are formed in light of schedules and procedures in this regard, it added. The authority is keen of empowering sports board directors to achieve their missions until elections, in accordance with the amended systems, are held, it noted. — KUNA

**Photo**

of the day



**KUWAIT:** An entrance to the historic Souq Mubarakia in Kuwait City. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The Cancer Awareness National Campaign (CAN) organized a ceremony recently to celebrate the conclusion of the second annual breast cancer awareness campaign, which was held under the title 'You Deserve our Attention.'



KUWAIT: Director of Kuwait Municipality Ahmad Al-Manfouhi toured the construction site of the traditional village in Sharq recently, accompanied by senior municipality officials. The project is built over an area of 76,191 square meters, and targets establishing a cultural and touristic destination in the heart of the state's capital.

# International

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**IS wreaks new destruction in Syria's ancient Palmyra**

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**Hopes fading for trapped firefighters in Tehran**

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**Gambia's Jammeh stares down deadline to quit**

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**RIGOPIANO, Italy:** This frame from video shows Italian firefighters extracting a child alive yesterday from under snow and debris of an hotel that was hit by an avalanche on Wednesday. — AP

## SURVIVORS PULLED FROM ITALY HOTEL

MIRACLE THAT ANYONE SURVIVED DEADLY AVALANCHE

**PENNE, Italy:** Italian rescuers yesterday began pulling survivors from the ruins of a mountain hotel, two days after it was buried under a devastating avalanche. Amidst relief that anyone at all had survived, there was confusion over the exact numbers located and extracted amid conflicting updates from different branches of the emergency services. But there were hopes that a total of 11 people would have been removed from the rubble by nightfall, leaving at least another 14 to account for.

A group of six people were found in an air pocket yesterday morning but only two of them, a mother and her young son, had been extracted by mid-afternoon, contrary to earlier briefings from rescuers. Roberto Carminucci, one of the coordinators of the rescue operation, said contact had been made with another group, reported by Italian media to count five survivors.

"We are in contact and we hope to find survivors but we don't know how many voices we are hearing or the state (of health) of those trapped so we cannot give any firm

numbers yet," he said. By late afternoon any survivors would have spent a full two days under the snow-covered rubble of the Hotel Rigopiano, a three-storey spa hotel on the eastern lower slopes of Monte Gran Sasso, the highest peak in central Italy.

### 'Like they'd been reborn'

Marco Bini, one of the officers who reached the first group of six survivors, said the rescue team had been alerted to their possible location when they detected smoke. He said six people had been found together in an air pocket, including the mother and child, who were later shown emerging from a vertical tunnel in the snow. "They were all in reasonable health, if very cold. The fire will have been using up the oxygen so we were lucky to find them. "Their faces said it all, it was like they had been reborn."

A video released by firefighters showed the boy, thought to be seven, emerging into the air to cheers from firemen who mussed his hair. Bini said the rescue had raised hopes others would be found in similar air pockets.

"The snow will have prevented anyone inside from getting too cold, it isolates like an igloo," he said. More than 25 people, including several children, were thought to have been in the hotel when it was hit by a massive wall of snow. Revised estimates yesterday suggested the total could have been as high as 34. Two bodies were recovered when rescuers first reached the site. Most of the guests were waiting to leave when the avalanche struck late Wednesday afternoon.

The had decided to leave after earthquakes in the region earlier in the day but the heavy snow blocked roads and delayed their transport. Scores of mountain police, firefighters and other emergency personnel were deployed at the hotel. Progress was agonizingly slow, with rescuers wary of triggering further movements in the snow piled up on top of the masonry. Lorenzo Gagliardi, one of the first mountain police officers to arrive on Thursday morning, had earlier described what he found to AFP.

### Deafening noise

Gagliardi and his colleagues had trekked

for more than eight kilometres through two-metre-high snow to reach the hotel around 4:00 am on Thursday.

There they found a car with its engine running with survivors Giampiero Parete and Fabio Salzetta inside. Parete, a 38-year-old chef, told the rescuers that his wife, son and daughter were in the hotel. "We were ready to leave at 2:00 pm. We were in the foyer with our bags, we'd paid the bill and were waiting for a snowplough to clear the road," he told reporters after treatment for hypothermia.

"My wife told me she had a headache so I went to the car to get some pills for her. As soon as I got out I felt this wind and then this deafening noise of trees cracking, trunks cascading down the hillside. Then the hotel collapsed under this enormous wave of snow and half the mountain. My car was the only thing that escaped, by a few centimeters." The national civil protection agency confirmed two more deaths as a result of the quake, taking the total to five, including the two at the hotel. — AFP

## ALGERIA ISLAMISTS UNIFY RANKS AHEAD OF POLL

**ALGIERS:** Algeria's Islamist parties are joining forces ahead of April parliamentary elections in hope of reversing a long political decline and having a greater say in the future of the North African country. But they face a firmly anti-Islamist government and an electorate with bitter memories of violence between Islamist militants and the state in the 1990s, which left an estimated 200,000 people dead. The vote comes amid growing security and economic challenges along with speculation around who will succeed 79-year-old President Abdelaziz Bouteflika although experts say the real decision lies in the hands of the country's secretive elite.

Three leading Islamist parties - El Binaa, the Front for Justice and Development (FJD) and Ennahda - said in December they were forming a "strategic" alliance for the election, ahead of a full merger later in 2017. In early January, the Movement for the Society of Peace (MSP), which has links to the Muslim Brotherhood, and a splinter group, the Front for Change, said they would reunite. That could bring Algeria's fragmented Islamist movement together into just two parties ahead of the April poll, the exact date for which has not yet been announced.

"They do not expect great successes in the next election, so they are trying to gather themselves and

form a common force," said political scientist Rachid Tlemceni. Islamist parties in Algeria have realized that political Islam in its various forms has lost public support, he said. Moderate Islamists have been forced to negotiate a difficult balancing act since the violence of the 1990s. A radical movement, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), had been poised to win a parliamentary election in 1991 when the army stepped in to cancel it, prompting many FIS members to take up arms. The "black decade" of violence that followed created divisions that last to this day.

### Joining forces

The Islamists' previous experience shows that joining forces in elections is no guarantee of success. At the last parliamentary election in 2012 following Arab Spring-inspired street protests, Islamist parties hoped they could replicate the gains of their peers in Egypt and Tunisia. The MSP, which was part of the government, left it and joined forces with Ennahda and El Islah to fight the election. But they suffered the worst electoral defeat in their history.

A coalition led by Bouteflika's National Liberation Front (FLN), which ruled Algeria under a single-party system from independence in 1962 until the early

1990s, kept its grip on power. When Bouteflika controversially stood for a fourth term in a 2014 presidential election, Algeria's three main Islamist parties boycotted, calling it a "sham". But the boycott did little to improve their fortunes. Political scientist Rachid Grine said that since Bouteflika first came to power in 1999, Islamist parties had been nearly wiped out. However, "if the elections are honest, the Islamists will be... among the winners," he said.

MSP head Abderezak Mokri, one of the country's most senior Islamist leaders, told AFP that taking part in the April poll was imperative. He said his party would not call for street protests or a boycott. "We refuse to throw oil on the fire because we want a peaceful political transition in the interest of Algeria," he said. He said Algeria's economic and social difficulties would mean growing public opposition to the government. That could play in the Islamists' favor, and experts suspect that if the MSP does well, it could join the next government alongside the FLN. Mokri said the challenge facing Islamist parties was to become less of a fragmented movement. Islamist leader Abdallah Djaballah, Ennahda's founder who later set up the FJD, agreed. "Union is a necessity", he told AFP. "We will meet the MSP soon and see what we can do together". — AFP

## IS WREAKS NEW DESTRUCTION IN SYRIA'S ANCIENT PALMYRA

### TETRAPYLON, FACADE OF AMPHITHEATER DESTROYED

**DAMASCUS:** The Islamic State group has demolished more treasured monuments in Syria's ancient Palmyra, a month after recapturing it from government forces, the country's antiquities chief said yesterday. The news is a fresh blow for the UNESCO World Heritage site, which had already been ravaged by the group during the nine months it held the site before being expelled in March last year. "Local sources told us that 10 days ago Daesh destroyed the tetrapylon," a 16-columned structure that marked one end of the ancient city's colonnade, Maamoun Abdulkarim told AFP using an Arabic acronym for IS. "Thursday, we received satellite photographs from our colleagues at Boston University showing damage to the facade of the Roman amphitheater," he added.

Before being forced out of Palmyra in a Russian-backed offensive in March, IS razed world-famous temples and tower tombs at the site. The tetrapylon, built during the rule of the Roman Emperor Diocletian in the 3rd Century AD, consisted of four sets of four pillars each supporting massive stone cornices. The monument had suffered considerable damage over the centuries and only one of the 16 pillars was still standing in its original Egyptian pink granite. The rest were cement replicas erected by the antiquities department in 1963.

The Roman amphitheater dates to the 1st Century AD and was used by IS for public executions during its occupation of the city between May 2015 and March last year. "From the first day, I was bracing myself for a terrible outcome," Abdulkarim said. "We had already witnessed the terror of the first occupation and frankly I had never thought that the city would be occupied for a second time."

### Strikes kill 40 militants

IS recaptured Palmyra late last year as



**PALMYRA, Syria:** This handout picture provided yesterday and taken on Jan 10, 2017 shows a close-up of a satellite-detected image of the damaged Roman tetrapylon (top) and amphitheater (center) in this ancient city. — AFP

Syria's government waged a fierce battle to take back all of the northern city of Aleppo from rebel forces. The surprise fall of Palmyra, in the central province of Homs, gave IS a propaganda boost as it faced twin assaults on two of its key strongholds - Raqqa in Syria and Iraq's second city Mosul. Syrian forces have battled to prevent further IS advances around Palmyra, and on Thursday fierce clashes between pro-government fighters and jihadists near a military airport in the region left 30 dead, a monitor said.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said 12 regime forces and 18 IS militants had been killed in the fighting by the Tayfur military airport in Homs province. Despite its progress around Palmyra, IS lost nearly a quarter of its territory in Syria and Iraq last year, the research firm IHS

Markit said Thursday. The jihadist group is just one of the many forces involved in Syria's complex conflict, which began with anti-government demonstrations in March 2011 and has killed more than 310,000 people since then.

The war has drawn in foreign powers including government ally Russia and a US-led coalition battling IS and other militants. Late Thursday, air strikes killed more than 40 militants from the former Al-Qaeda affiliate Fateh al-Sham Front in the west of Aleppo province, the Observatory said. But the Britain-based monitor said it was not able to determine if the strikes were carried out by Russian or coalition aircraft. Fateh al-Sham, known previously as Al-Nusra Front, is excluded from a fragile nationwide ceasefire in place in Syria since Dec 30. — AFP

## US STEALTH BOMBERS KILL MORE THAN 80 IS FIGHTERS IN LIBYA

**WASHINGTON:** More than 80 Islamic State militants were killed in a US aerial blitz on training camps in Libya, including fighters involved in plotting attacks in Europe, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter said Thursday. The Pentagon made the highly unusual decision to conduct the air strikes with a pair of B-2 stealth bombers that flew to North Africa on a 34-hour mission from their base in Missouri in America's Midwest.

The last time the distinctive, bat-shaped planes were used in Libya was in 2011 during the mission that led to the ouster of longtime leader Muammar Gaddafi. Wednesday's massive strike saw the B-2s and Reaper drones unleash about 100 bombs on the IS training camps - equating to more than one bomb per militant that was killed. The camps were located about 45 km southwest of the coastal city of Sirte, Gaddafi's former home town that IS for a time turned into a stronghold as it attempted to expand its presence in Libya.

Speaking on his last day in office, Carter said the targets "certainly are people who were actively plotting operations in Europe, and may also have been connected with some attacks that have already occurred in Europe." The air assault came a month after the United States had officially wrapped up its military operations in and around Sirte. The Pentagon launched that mission, Operation Odyssey Lightning, on August 1 and it comprised about 500 strikes.

When operations concluded last month, following Sirte's "liberation", the Pentagon left open the possibility of conducting additional anti-IS attacks if Libya's Government of National Accord asked for help in doing so. Wednesday's strike was conducted in full coordination with the GNA, Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said, noting the operation had been authorized by outgoing President Barack Obama. He displayed brief footage taken ahead of the strike showing a group of men standing by two camouflaged pick-up trucks and unloading what appeared to be bombs or rockets. Officials said no civilians were thought to have been killed and no women or children were present during the massive strike.

### 15 air tankers

Cook would not discuss why the Air Force chose to use the B-2s, or whether it was a show of force as Obama leaves the White House ahead of President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration yesterday. "The use of the B-2 demonstrates the capability of the United States to deliver decisive precision force to the Air Force's Global Strike Command over a great distance," Cook said. The United States has 20 B-2 bombers and the Air Force needed to fly 15 air tankers to ensure refueling over the course of the lengthy mission, Air Force spokesman Colonel Pat Ryder said. — AFP



## BABY AMONG SIX BRITONS KILLED IN SAUDI ROAD CRASH

**LONDON:** A two-month-old baby was among six British nationals killed in a road accident in Saudi Arabia, according to British officials and media Thursday. Four members of the same family killed in the accident were from Manchester, north-west England, while the two other victims were a couple from Glasgow in Scotland. Glasgow Central Mosque named two of the victims as Mohammad Aslam and Talat Aslam, who have five children, saying they had just completed umrah, a pilgrimage to Makkah, Islam's holiest site.

They "were travelling in a minibus" to Madinah, it said in a statement about the accident, which occurred Wednesday according to British media. The baby Adam Anis was killed along with his grandparents, Mohammed Khursheed and Noshina Ahmed, and his grandmother's sister Rabia Ahmed, according to the Manchester Evening News. Two of her other sisters were said to be critically ill in hospital, while the boy's mother is also in a serious condition along with her other children, aged two and three, the newspaper said.

"We are a very close-knit family. This has been devastating for all of us. Our family is never going to be the same again," Farah Zahid, whose mother was critically injured, told the newspaper. "Everyone is either in shock or completely heartbroken," she added. A Foreign Office spokeswoman confirmed six British people died following a road accident in Saudi Arabia. "We are also helping several more British nationals who were injured in the crash," she said, without specifying how many.

Mohammed Arif, director of Manchester-based Haji Tours which organized the tour, said his staff had been informed the crash was an accident and a tyre on the vehicle they were travelling in burst. Every year, millions of Muslims flock to Makkah and Madinah further south, Islam's second holiest site, to carry out the annual hajj pilgrimage or the umrah. — AFP

## SETTLERS RESCUED FROM PALESTINIAN VILLAGE

**NABLUS:** Four Israeli settlers were rescued from angry Palestinian villagers in the occupied West Bank yesterday after they entered in unclear circumstances, Palestinian officials said. The four armed settlers entered the village of Qusra, sparking a confrontation with residents, municipality head Abdul Azeem Al-Wadi told AFP. Villagers surrounded them but Palestinian security forces stepped in to detain the four for their own safety, he said.

A Palestinian security source said the four were later moved to the outskirts of the village, from where Israeli forces took them to safety. Israeli army spokesman Peter Lerner said three of the four were off-duty soldiers and an investigation was under way to determine why they entered the village. "Villagers hurled rocks at them, shots were fired in the air," he told AFP, confirming the four were later brought out safely with the help of local officials.

Some 430,000 Israeli settlers live in the West Bank alongside around 2.75 million Palestinians. Some 200,000 more live in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem. There are regular tensions with neighboring Palestinian towns and villages, with Palestinians largely banned from entering settlements and vice versa. Despite the conflict, Palestinian and Israeli security services work together in many cases. — AFP

# HOPES FADING FOR TRAPPED FIREFIGHTERS IN TEHRAN

## 25 MISSING IN ADDITION TO 20 KILLED

**TEHRAN:** Iranian officials said yesterday they were losing hope of pulling any survivors from the rubble of a collapsed Tehran high-rise where around 20 firefighters are feared to have lost their lives. Rescue workers, soldiers and sniffer dogs were still frantically searching through the wreckage of the 15-storey Plasco building in downtown Tehran, which collapsed on Thursday after a four-hour blaze. "Police have received missing reports of 25 people. We urge people to report if any of their family members that worked in the Plasco building is missing," a police official told TV.

But smoldering fires and smoke were complicating the search, and so far no survivors or bodies had been found. "It is very unlikely that we will pull anyone out alive from the rubble," the head of Tehran's crisis management center, Esmail Najjar, told the ISNA news agency. "Our goal is to recover the bodies of these martyrs without causing any damage to the bodies," he added.

The Plasco building was Iran's oldest high-rise and contained a shopping center and hundreds of clothing suppliers. "The removal of debris is more difficult than removing debris from a major earthquake because we are dealing with fire, smoke and lack of oxygen," said Red Crescent official Morteza Moradipour. "It is still not clear how many people are trapped under the rubble and not even one person has been pulled out," added Tehran emergency services director Pir Hossein Koolivand.

### Praise and mourning

Iranians were in shock over the apparent loss of so many firefighters. State television placed a black banner across the corner of the screen as a sign of mourning, and social media were full of messages of praise and condolence for the emergency services. "If the firefighters had not been there in time, if they had not searched inside to evacuate people, we would have had hundreds under the rubble instead of 20 firefighters," said brigade spokesman Jalal Maleki.



**TEHRAN:** Iranian firefighters help their colleague yesterday during debris removal at the Plasco building which caught fire and collapsed on Thursday. — AP

Supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said that the incident had "caused deep sorrow, regret and concern for me," and praised the "bravery and sacrifice of the firefighters". IRNA said 84 people were injured in the initial fire, of whom five were still in hospital. One firefighter, who escaped the building before it collapsed, died in hospital yesterday from severe burns, it added.

The head of Iran's chamber of commerce, Ali Fazeli, said an initial estimate of 15,000 billion rials (roughly \$500 million) had been put on the financial damage. "Unfortunately, a considerable number of shops in this building were not insured," he added. The clothing suppliers were particularly full of stock in the run-up to Nowruz, the Iranian new year, which falls in March.

Tehran police chief Ghader Karimi said rescue workers were pulling safes and other items out of the rubble, and these were being kept in a special store at the site to return to owners.

President Hassan Rouhani has called for an immediate investigation, with city officials saying the building's managers ignored repeated warnings about fire hazards.

The Plasco building was Tehran's first shopping center and Iran's tallest building when it was finished in 1962, before being dwarfed by the construction boom of later years. It was built by Habibollah Elghanian, a prominent Iranian-Jewish businessman who was arrested for alleged ties to Israel and sentenced to death and executed after the 1979 Islamic revolution. — AFP

# LADEN WORRIED THAT IRAN PUT TRACKING CHIP IN SONS

**WASHINGTON:** Secluded in his hideaway in Pakistan, Osama bin Laden suspected Iranian officials might implant tracking devices in his sons, according to a document released Thursday in a batch of materials seized in a 2011 raid that killed the Al-Qaeda leader. "If they inject you with a shot, this shot might be loaded with a tiny chip," bin Laden wrote in an undated letter to his sons, Uthman and Mohammed, who were being allowed to leave Iran. "The syringe size may be normal, but the needle is expected to be larger than normal size. The chip size may be as long as a seed of grain but very thin and smooth."

In its final hours, the Obama administration released the last of three installments of documents belonging bin Laden that were collected during the raid on his compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. In the second batch of documents, released last

March, bin Laden also expressed the same paranoia in a letter to one of his wives, who also lived in Iran. "I was told that you went to a dentist in Iran and you were concerned about a filling she put in for you," bin Laden wrote. He said he wanted to be told of any concerns she or any of his followers had about "chips planted in any way."

Tracking down and killing the man behind the 2001 terrorist attacks on America is one of President Barack Obama's greatest accomplishments. Intelligence officials have worked for more than two years to declassify the hundreds of documents captured in the raid. The last batch, consisting of 49 documents, includes a running disagreement between bin Laden and Al-Qaeda's affiliate in Iraq, which morphed into the Islamic State group. Those militants are currently the top target of US counterterrorism efforts.

Bin Laden is responsible for orchestrat-

ing the Sept. 11 strikes against the United States that killed nearly 3,000 people. The attacks drastically changed America's footprint abroad and challenged some of the most basic tenets of the Constitution in an effort to detect terrorists before they strike. In a letter to a fellow militant, written after 9/11, bin Laden called on his followers to invent new ways to battle the West.

"If we cannot manufacture weapons like the weapons of the Crusader West, we can destroy its complicated industrial and economic system and exhaust its forces that fight without faith until they escape," he wrote.

"Therefore, the mujahidin had to create new methods that no one from the West can think about, and one of the examples of this creative thinking is using the airplane as a powerful weapon, like what had happened in the blessed attacks in Washington, New York and Pennsylvania." — AP

## NORDIC NOIR TURNS DARK REALITY IN ICELAND

**REYKJAVIK:** A young woman vanishes in the Arctic night, elite police chase down a trawler at sea, and three sailors are jailed: Iceland, with one of the world's lowest crime rates, is fearing a tragic outcome to a rare crime. On this tranquil North Atlantic island, home to medieval stories of murders and barbaric beatings, the police patrol the streets unarmed and homicides are extremely rare. "It's a really safe country, no war or anything like that. The crime rate is low," says Tomas Kjartansson, a 26-year-old salesman in a men's clothing shop.

And so the disappearance of 20-year-old Birna Brjansdottir has captivated the country. The media has reported on little else in recent days, and a solemn march in her honor, tracing her last known steps, was held in Reykjavik on Wednesday. The

auburn-haired young woman was last seen around 5:00 am on Saturday after a night of drinking and partying in Reykjavik's bars.

Dressed in black trousers, a hooded parka and black Dr Martens, Brjansdottir was captured on video surveillance cameras around dawn, stumbling in the snowy and foggy streets as she bought herself a kebab, struggling to stay on her feet. Then, all trace of her is lost. She fails to show up for work a few hours later in the clothing boutique where she's employed. Her shoes are found in the port of Hafnarfjordur, south of Reykjavik, not far from the dock where a Greenlandic trawler, the Polar Nanoq, is moored. Her cell phone signal is later tracked to that area, where someone has turned it off.

Video surveillance cameras also show a small red

car, a Kia Rio, parked near the vessel around 6:30 am - identical to a vehicle observed near the spot where Brjansdottir was last seen. The Polar Nanoq lifts anchor the same day. It is later summoned at sea to turn back to Iceland, and, escorted by the Danish coast guard, returns to Reykjavik on Wednesday.

Just in case, members of Iceland's elite police force, known as the Viking Squad, fly out to the ship by helicopter to question the crew. Three sailors end up arrested, "suspected of possessing information about the disappearance," Icelandic police wrote on Twitter. Crime scene technicians have searched the vessel with a fine-toothed comb, but police officials quoted in the Icelandic media said they doubt the young woman was ever brought aboard the ship. — AFP

## GAMBIA'S JAMMEH STARES DOWN DEADLINE TO QUIT TROOPS READY FOR MILITARY INTERVENTION

**BANJUL:** Gambia's Yahya Jammeh faced a "last chance saloon" deadline to step down as troops from five African nations stood by for action and key regional leaders flew in to make a final plea. Mauritania's Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz and Guinea's Alpha Conde told reporters hope remained for a political resolution to the country's handover crisis as they left for Banjul from Nouakchott, the Mauritanian capital. "We still have every chance for a peaceful solution," Aziz said. "We have every interest in achieving that, we have enough conflicts in Africa going on without adding another."

Conde said a political solution "must be found" before boarding their flight. The pair was due in Banjul as troops already inside Gambia postponed military intervention to give Jammeh, who was defeated in elections last month, a final chance to leave the presidency and the country quietly. A previously announced noon (1200 GMT) deadline was expected to be extended to give the two leaders, who took off for Banjul after 1100 GMT, enough time to meet Jammeh.

The pair are long-term allies of the Gambian strongman, who has had more prickly relations with other west African leaders during the post-election crisis these last weeks. Diplomats in Banjul had confirmed the last-ditch peace push, with one describing a "last chance saloon" moment before foreign troops led by Senegal remove Jammeh by force. Jammeh has rejected President Adama Barrow's December 1 election win, despite significant pressure from regional powers and the UN, sparking a major crisis and sending tourists vital for the tiny country's economy - fleeing. In Conakry, minister and Conde advisor Kiridi Bangoura said Jammeh would be offered asylum in the country of his choice.

### 'An ultimatum'

Barrow, who was sworn in at The Gambia's embassy in Dakar on Thursday, remained in Senegal awaiting the outcome of the talks, with hopes of taking over the reins of state from Jammeh as soon as his safety could be guaranteed. He hailed a "victory of the Gambian nation" and demanded loyalty from his



**DAKAR:** Adama Barrow (left) is sworn in as president of Gambia at Gambia's embassy in Senegal on Thursday. — AP

armed forces at his inauguration. An imminent military operation was suspended late Thursday to allow a final diplomatic push to convince Jammeh, who has ruled the former British colony since seizing power in a 1994 coup, to leave the country.

"We have suspended operations and given him an ultimatum," said Marcel Alain de Souza, head of the 15-nation Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). "If by midday, he doesn't agree to leave The Gambia... we really will intervene militarily," he added, but this looked likely to lapse with Aziz and Conde's late arrival.

### Shifting loyalties

As white flags reportedly flew from Gambian army posts in the countryside, tectonic shifts were said to be underway among the military elite, pointing to a gradual acceptance of Barrow, even among units known for loyalty to Jammeh. A diplomatic source said a faction had "switched sides" among the elite Republican Guards who assure Jammeh's personal protection, following meetings among themselves at their Bakau barracks close to Banjul.

Gambian army chief Ousman Badjie was seen celebrating Barrow's inauguration late Thursday and had already

declared he would not order his men to fight for Jammeh. Soldiers were told by Barrow in his inauguration speech they would be considered rebel elements if they remained armed on the streets, and the few that remained on Thursday did not attempt to stop the spontaneous celebrations that broke out in Barrow's stronghold districts.

Vultures circled the deserted streets of Banjul yesterday morning, with the usual heavy military presence near absent. "If they (foreign troops) come we will just stay in our homes and let them take him. If I had the chance I would apprehend him myself. He's messed up our lives," one Banjul resident told AFP under condition of anonymity.

### Humanitarian crisis

On the ground, troops including "land, air and sea" forces crossed into The Gambia, a Senegalese army officer told AFP, indicating that Nigeria, Ghana, Togo and Mali were also involved. A Senegalese army spokesman confirmed his country's troops had crossed the border, after Nigerian jets earlier flew over The Gambia. The uncertainty continued to push Gambians to flee the country and shelter with relatives in neighboring states, while others living close to the capital returned to villages upcountry. — AFP

## HONOR FOR MAN WHO SHED LIGHT ON ITALY 'MODERN SLAVERY'

**ROME:** It was a passion for football that made Cameroonian Yvan Sagnet want to pursue his studies in Turin, home to Italy's most famous club, Juventus. But once settled in the northern city, the telecoms graduate found himself driven by another cause: Protecting migrant workers from ruthless exploitation in the farm fields of the country's south, often at the hands of organized crime.

Now 31, Sagnet is soon to be named a Knight of Italy's Order of Merit in recognition of his work in exposing what many have described as a modern form of slavery. "People talk about poverty and misery in Africa but, here, in southern Italy, in the heart of Europe, I have seen human beings stripped of every last scrap of dignity," the activist and writer told AFP in an interview.

Sagnet first arrived in Turin a decade ago. It was only by chance that, in 2011, he discovered "caporalato", a notoriously exploitative system under which farm owners recruit fruit pickers and other seasonal workers through an intermediary. A failed exam meant the student was no longer entitled to a maintenance grant. "I had to make some money and so, on the advice of a friend, I went off to pick some tomatoes," he recalled. His trip saw him end up in Nardo, on the heel of the Italian boot, where he had heard a farm was looking for day workers.

### 16-hour days

"At the place there was a tented village with 800 workers living with only five showers and unimaginable hygiene conditions," he said. "There were Tunisians, without doubt the biggest group, but also Moroccans, Angolans, people from Burkina Faso, Mali... I was the only Cameroonian." Under caporalato arrangements, now outlawed but still widespread, the employers, who are the real beneficiaries of workers' labour, avoid both payroll taxes and responsibility for the workers being paid illegally low wages.

The intermediaries, meanwhile, can claim to be paying them correctly while making deductions for services, ranging from transporting them to farms to providing bottles of water while they toil under the broiling sun of the Italian south. The involvement of criminal gangs in the system means Sagnet's efforts on behalf of his fellow Africans mean his life remains under threat. In a 2015 report, Italian trade unions estimated the number of mainly African workers labouring under caporalato conditions at between 300,000 and 400,000. Sagnet's experience of the system involved spending a week waiting for work before he met one of the gangmasters who oil the wheels of the illicit scheme. — AFP



**Yvan Sagnet**

# FROM NOBEL TO SYRIA: OBAMA THE REALIST

**WASHINGTON:** Barack Obama's Nobel Peace Prize may have confounded critics and created enormous expectations, but ultimately it had little influence on his refusal to get drawn into the bloodshed in Syria. In accepting the prize on Dec 10, 2009, the young US president, elected only a year earlier, gave a steely speech about "war and peace", outlining what would become the pillars of his foreign policy.

He defended America's right to wage war provided it was "morally justified" and acknowledged the paradox that he was being honored a week after ordering 30,000 extra troops to Afghanistan. "War is sometimes necessary," the commander-in-chief, then fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, told the

gathering in Oslo. "Our actions matter and can bend history in the direction of justice," he said, warning that "consequences" must back diplomacy to beat repression.

But if the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were legacies of his predecessor, George W Bush, Obama yesterday handed over several thousand US combat troops overseas to his successor, Donald Trump. Norway's Nobel committee - heavily criticized for choosing a man yet to prove his worth - at the time praised Obama "for his extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples". Seven years later, Obama steps down "neither a pacifist, nor a warmonger" says Joseph Bahout, a visit-

ing scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace research center in Washington.

## Red line

"He is a realist with a slight penchant for moralizing, but he's not an idealist," he added, calling Obama a proponent of one strand of American foreign policy doctrine. The attitude that America should no longer be an automatic or zealous policeman of the world puts Obama closer to Trump than the more interventionist approach of George W Bush or even Bill Clinton. "The Nobel Peace Prize did not influence his (overseas) action," said Bahout, who believes Obama was governed

by "instinct" in not dragging America into military conflicts. Faced with the scale of the tragedy in Syria, which has killed more than 310,000 people and displaced millions since 2011, Obama has spoken of feeling responsible even if the window for intervention was limited. "There hasn't been probably a week that's gone by in which I haven't reexamined some of the underlying premises around how we're dealing with the situation in Syria," he said last September.

But he told CBS News in an interview broadcast last weekend that he did not regret his famous "red line" speech about Syria's use of chemical weapons - criticized by many of his opponents as a failure. — AFP

## BUSH SR STABLE, BARBARA '1,000 PERCENT BETTER'

**WASHINGTON:** Former US president George H W Bush remained in intensive care Thursday for treatment of pneumonia but doctors expressed hope he will be moved out of an intensive care unit in "a few days," his spokesman said. "President Bush had a good night's rest and remains in stable condition in the ICU at Houston Methodist Hospital," spokesman Jim McGrath said in a statement. Doctors are evaluating whether tubes inserted to help the 92-year-old former president breathe can now be removed.

And Bush's 91-year-old wife Barbara, hospitalized Wednesday, is feeling "1,000 percent better" after being treated with antibiotics and getting some rest. The former first lady was admitted after experiencing fatigue and coughing, and ultimately diagnosed with bronchitis, the statement said. The Bushes received a visit Wednesday from old friend James Baker, who served as secretary of state under Bush, and his wife Susan, the statement said.

Bush was initially hospitalized Saturday for shortness of breath, then moved to intensive care Wednesday suffering from pneumonia, highlighting concerns about his health as Donald Trump prepared to take office yesterday. Word of the Bush couple's ill health drew wishes for their speedy recovery from President Barack Obama, former president Bill Clinton and Trump.

Bush, who served as the nation's 41st commander-in-chief from 1989 to 1993, is the oldest of the four living former US presidents and uses a wheelchair. He has seemed frail in recent public appearances. He did not attend yesterday's presidential inauguration. In July 2015, Bush was treated in a Maine hospital after falling and breaking a bone in his neck. The previous December he was admitted to Houston Methodist Hospital for breathing problems.

He was treated at the same facility in Nov 2012 for bronchitis, spending nearly two months in the hospital. George Herbert Walker Bush was born June 12, 1924 in Milton, Massachusetts to a wealthy New England political dynasty, the son of Prescott Bush, a successful banker and US senator for Connecticut. — AFP



**SAUDI ARABIA:** In this Nov 22, 1990 file photo, US President George H W Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush wave to US Marines during a Thanksgiving visit at a desert encampment in Saudi Arabia. — AP



**BERLIN:** Activists from Greenpeace display a message along the Berlin Wall yesterday to coincide with the inauguration of Donald Trump as the 45th president of the United States. — AFP

## UK PROTESTERS TELL TRUMP: BUILD BRIDGES NOT WALLS

### BANNERS UNFURLED ON LONDON BRIDGE

**LONDON:** A banner reading "Build bridges not walls" was draped across London's Tower Bridge yesterday as part of a series of protests across the world aimed at expressing displeasure at the inauguration of Donald Trump as US president. Protesters on the drawbridge, with its two Gothic-style towers, held up pink letters reading "Act now!" soon after sunrise, while others unfurled the banner over the railings and a speedboat with a black flag reading "build bridges not walls" raced down the River Thames.

Beside the British parliament, protesters draped banners saying "Migrants welcome here" and "Migration is older than language" over Westminster bridge. Other protests are planned in London, other British cities and across the world yesterday. Julie Chasin, a 42-year-old teacher originally from New York who has lived in London for a decade, said she joined the protest to hold up one of the pink letters on Tower Bridge as she was concerned about the Trump presidency.

"Yes Donald Trump is President, but

he still needs to protect everybody's rights," said Chasin, a Democrat who said she worked on Hillary campaign in North Carolina. "It's scary. I hope he's kept in check. I hope everyone who is telling me not to worry, and saying that we have a strong system of checks and balances, I hope that it's true," Chasin said. Trump has repeatedly pledged to "make America great again", drawing strong support especially from areas of industrial decline. He said on Twitter that he would fight very hard to make his presidency a great journey for the American people.

## Trump's Fresh Approach

As he was sworn in at a ceremony in Washington yesterday, he faces protests in Washington during his inauguration, and in cities from Toronto to Sydney, Addis Ababa and Dublin over his politics which critics say are divisive and dangerous. The protest in London was organized by the campaign group also called "Bridges not Walls", in reference to Trump's pledge to build a wall on the Mexican border. "We won't let the poli-

tics of hate peddled by the likes of Donald Trump take hold," Nona Hurkmans of Bridges not Walls said in a statement.

Trump opponents have been angered by his comments during the campaign about women, illegal immigrants and Muslims and his pledges to scrap the Obamacare health reform and build a wall on the Mexican border. The Republican's supporters admire his experience in business, including as a real estate developer and reality television star, and view him as an outsider who will take a fresh approach to politics.

For some on the protest in London, Trump's victory a little over four months after the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union, symbolizes a rise of populism across the West. "For me it's about not just the inauguration of Trump, but about the rise of right wing populism across Western Europe and the US, and Trump's inauguration is a celebration of that," Jac St John, 26, a doctoral student from London, who unfurled one of the banners. — Reuters

## MIGRANTS VOW TRUMP WALL WON'T STOP THEM

**SAN PEDRO SULA, Honduras:** Donald Trump has promised to make America a fortress against immigration by building a wall on the country's southern border. But as one group of Honduran migrants deported from Mexico vows, no matter what kind of barrier he builds, "we will still try to get over it". That was the pledge from 13-year-old Lizbeth Paredes, returned to her country with dozens of others after their failed bid to make it across the US border to the Latin version of the American dream.

The 8th-grade student left Honduras in January together with her 38-year-old mother Gloria and two cousins, aged 10 and 12. The family had wanted to make it into the United States before Trump takes power, promising to build his wall along the 3,200-km border with Mexico. But Mexican migration officials caught them riding in a truck in the state of Tabasco and sent them back. They were among the 88 adults and children who arrived in Honduras's second city of San Pedro Sula by bus on Wednesday. Although they didn't make this time, Lizbeth insisted - her eyes shining and her hair in a ponytail - they would try again and succeed. She



**SAN PEDRO SULA, Honduras:** Youngsters are driven home in a pickup after they were deported from Mexico to this city on Jan 18, 2017. — AFP

hoisted her backpack on her shoulders and joined her family entering a center for migrant children and families.

### 'We want a better life'

More than a million Hondurans live in the United States, most of them with no legal residency papers. They are a vital source of revenue for their coun-

try, sending home \$4 billion in remittances last year - nearly 20 percent of Honduras's gross domestic product. Trump's plan for a wall has prompted a flood of Hondurans to leave for America, encouraged by traffickers warning it's better to try now than face greater obstacles later.

Thousands of Central Americans

attempt to trek to the United States every year, fleeing vicious gang violence and poverty in their home countries. Another child, a 15-year-old boy who gave his name as Kevin Flores, also predicted a wall would do little to stem the flow. "We go because we want a better life, to be someone," the small boy with wavy brown hair said. It was his mother's idea to try for the United States, he said. After leaving their village of Entrada Copan last Sunday, they, too, were caught by Mexican migration officials.

Aminta Lopez, 41, said she had attempted to make the journey from her home in the capital with her sons, aged five and eight, to flee the ruthless gangs that lord over entire neighborhoods. "The idea was to go now because later there will be the wall that will stop people passing through," she said. "But I will have to try again in any case." Her plan is to make it to the US state of New Jersey, where her brother Israel has been living for 18 years. But that will mean having to successfully dodge the Mexican officials who put an end to her first attempt. Estimates put the number of people leaving Honduras for the United States every year at between 80,000 and 100,000. — AFP

## TIMING OF MEXICO DRUG LORD EXTRADITION SEEN AS POLITICAL

### 'EL CHAPO' ARRIVES IN US

**MEXICO CITY:** Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman's abrupt exit to face charges in the US marks the end of an era in which he was Mexico's most notorious drug cartel boss and, for some, the stuff of folk legend. It's also seen by many in Mexico as a delicately timed maneuver aimed at limiting political fallout for President Enrique Pena Nieto, already deeply unpopular in part for his perceived mishandling of Donald Trump's tough rhetoric on Mexico.

Deputy Attorney General Alberto Elias Beltran, asked at a Thursday night news conference about the timing of Guzman's extradition, said the federal government cannot interfere in court

decisions. "It was resolved today, and we under terms of the international treaty had to make the handover immediately," he said. But observers still considered the timing to have been carefully planned. "It could be a coincidence, but I think that's unlikely," Mexican security analyst Alejandro Hope said, noting it came the last full day of Barack Obama's presidency and hours before Trump's inauguration. "They could not send him after Trump was inaugurated because the interpretation would have been that of a tribute," Hope said. "But maybe they wanted to do it close enough so that both administrations - the outgoing and the incoming - could really make

some political hay out of this."

Others saw it as a reward to Obama and a shot across the bow of Trump, who has called immigrants coming illegally from Mexico criminals and "rapists" and vowed to build a border wall and make Mexico pay for it. "The Mexican government decided to move up the time frame because they didn't want Trump to be in the presidency when they sent him over," said Michael Vigil, the former head of international operations for the US Drug Enforcement Administration. "They wanted Obama to take credit. They wanted to send a message to Trump that they won't be bullied."

One Guzman lawyer, Jose Refugio Rodriguez, said the extradition violated due process. He told the Radio Formula station that he planned to file a complaint with the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. Guzman's departure came the same day Mexican officials announced high-level talks Jan 25-26 in Washington. The discussions will include Mexico's newly installed top diplomat, Luis Videgaray, and key Trump administration officials such as chief of staff Reince Priebus, son-in-law and senior adviser Jared Kushner and senior adviser Stephen Bannon. Hope said the timing also sends a message that Mexico is serious about anti-drug cooperation regardless of who occupies the White House.

Sen Miguel Barbosa of the leftist opposition Democratic Revolution Party seized on the extradition to take a swipe at Pena Nieto. He said it was apparently the only choice after Guzman twice pulled off embarrassing escapes from maximum-security lockups. — AFP



**NIZEA FLORESTA, Brazil:** Inmates walk amid tension as confrontation between rival gangs continues in the Alcacuz prison near Natal yesterday. — AP

## TROOPS DEPLOYED AS BRAZIL RIOTS SPREAD

**NATAL, Brazil:** Stick-wielding inmates hurled stones and lit fires Thursday in a Brazilian jail where dozens were previously massacred, as authorities struggled to contain a wave of gang violence. Police fired rubber bullets and tear gas to try to separate two groups of inmates as they fought a pitched battle in the courtyard of the Alcacuz prison, AFP reporters overlooking the facility saw. Unrest also erupted overnight in the town of Natal near the jail, prompting the government to order the armed forces to deploy to the town.

"The troops will reinforce the patrols in the streets of Natal after the riot in Alcacuz prison," President Michel Temer's office said in a statement. Globonews television channel showed pictures of injured inmates being evacuated from the jail. Rioting had also broken out overnight in six towns in the state, a spokesman for local authorities told AFP. Rioters set on fire 21 buses plus other vehicles and seven people were arrested in that unrest, the spokesman said. One person died and five were hurt during another prisoner uprising in the nearby town of Caico, he said.

On Wednesday, elite officers entered the Alcacuz prison near the northern city of Natal and transferred 220 inmates to another jail. In the town, groups allied with the imprisoned gang members "attacked buses in revenge for the decision to separate the prisoners," state governor Robinson Faria said. "The situation got much worse last night." — AFP



**RONKONKOMA, New York:** US law enforcement authorities escort Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman from a plane to a waiting caravan of SUVs at Long Island MacArthur Airport on Thursday. — AP

# OBAMA SLAMS CONGRESS OVER GITMO

**WASHINGTON:** US President Barack Obama delivered an angry parting shot at Congress on Thursday, berating Republicans for blocking his efforts to close the military detention center at Guantanamo Bay. The facility "never should have been opened in the first place" Obama said in a scathing two-page letter on the eve of President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration. "There is simply no justification beyond politics for the Congress' insistence on keeping the facility open," he added.

Trump has vowed not just to keep Guantanamo open, but to boost the number of terror suspects housed there - even raising the prospect of US citizens being sent to the facility. "We're going to load it up with some bad dudes, believe me, we're going to load it up," Trump famously said while campaigning last year. On another occasion, he said "it would be fine" if US terror suspects were sent there for trial.

One of Obama's first acts as president in 2009 was to issue an executive order to shut the controversial jail within a year - a move that once enjoyed bipartisan support. But Republican

opponents, sensing a political vulnerability, quickly reversed course after Obama took office and blocked moves to close Guantanamo. In his letter, Obama blasted the cost of running the prison - approximately \$7 million per prisoner annually - and said it projected a negative view of America to the rest of the world. "Terrorists use it for propaganda, its operations drain our military resources during a time of budget cuts, and it harms our partnerships with allies and countries whose cooperation we need against today's evolving terrorist threat," he wrote.

### Forever prisoners

Despite failing to close Guantanamo, Obama massively reduced the prison population. On Monday, 10 former detainees - eight Yemenis and two Afghans - were sent to Oman, bringing the remaining Guantanamo population to 45, down from 242 when Obama took office. In his letter, Obama said that only 41 detainees now remain at Guantanamo.

The Pentagon confirmed later Thursday that three prison-

ers - Ravil Mingazov of Russia, Haji Wali Muhammed of Afghanistan and Yemeni Yassim Qasim Mohammed Ismail Qasim - were transferred to the United Arab Emirates. A fourth, Jabran Al-Qahtani, was repatriated to Saudi Arabia, the Pentagon said.

Of the 41 men still at Guantanamo, five are cleared for transfer and another 26 remain in legal limbo - the so-called "forever prisoners" who have not been charged with anything but are deemed too dangerous to release. The other 10, including the alleged plotters of the Sept 11, 2001 attacks, are going through a glacially slow military prosecution at Guantanamo. They are due in a Guantanamo military court next week for yet another pre-trial hearing.

The outgoing president had tried to transfer many detainees abroad and bring the most high-value ones to the United States, but funding was blocked by Republicans and even some in his own Democratic party pushed back against closure plans. — AFP

Kuwait Times

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# MH370: WHAT'S NEXT IN HUNT FOR PLANE

**SYDNEY:** The official search for MH370 may have been called off but experts believe the missing airliner will one day be found, perhaps either by deep-sea miners or treasure hunters lured by a huge cash reward. After spending almost three years and US\$150 million on a deep sea hunt for the Malaysian passenger jet in the remote Indian Ocean off western Australia, top aviation investigators have been forced to admit they have come up with nothing.

More questions than answers have arisen since the Boeing 777 vanished and relatives of the 239 dead fear that China and Malaysia are admitting defeat in the face of one of the world's most enduring aviation mysteries. The only physical evidence has been debris recovered on western Indian Ocean shorelines and the discoveries, far from the official search, have prompted next-of-kin to embark on their own inquiries in Madagascar.

Treasure hunters may also get involved, perhaps through the offer of a multi-million-dollar prize, said former US Air Force aviator

Ronald Bishop from Australia's Central Queensland University. "Sometimes private firms work a bit better," Bishop said, noting they were likely to believe witnesses until they could be disproven. In contrast, government agencies tended to be more quick to dismiss witnesses' evidence "if they are a little bit over-the-top", he told AFP.

Australia's transport minister Darren Chester stressed this week that the search could be revived if there is "credible new evidence" pinpointing MH370's location, thereby leaving the door open for future operations. For oceanographer Erik van Sebille of Imperial College London, the new field of deep sea mining could prove to be the key to one day stumbling across MH370's watery grave.

### 'Some point, somehow, somebody'

Searching for debris under the oceans has always been a challenge because electromagnetic radiation such as radar and X-rays do not work in seawater, leaving only sonar or light and cameras from submersibles operating

very close to the seabed. "It is easier to point a telescope to Mars than to look at our own ocean floor," van Sebille told AFP. "With deep sea mining... that means there's now a commercial incentive to go and have a very close look at the ocean floor for the first time ever... and at some point, somehow, somebody might stumble upon the black box or a significant part of the plane."

Former US Federal Aviation Administration official Michael Daniel, now an air investigator and consultant, told AFP that it did not need to be governments who take the lead in re-examining the evidence. Private firms, lawyers and non-governmental organizations could step in on behalf of grieving families. He said it was time to reassess all the evidence. "I do think that the investigation needs to reboot in certain areas, for example in the criminal investigation area," Daniel said.

"There are still many questions and areas remaining open. What is the motive or why would an aircraft be deviating from its flight plan? There's really no lead in that area other

than the aircraft deviated," Daniel said of one of the central puzzles. The lack of a final resting place and a clear explanation for the disappearance of the Kuala Lumpur to Beijing flight have spawned theories including a Taleban hijacking, a meteor strike and even a diversion by the CIA. Investigators have pursued leads of a possible hijacking, rogue pilot action or mechanical failure. Relatives from Malaysia and China, where most of the passengers came from, are also suspicious of their governments, believing authorities are hiding something.

"We are not convinced the plane crashed into the sea. Where is the evidence?" Malaysia's Selamat Omar, whose son Mohamad Khairul Amri Selamat was on board, told AFP. "Until the plane is found, we will not accept that our son is dead." Bishop remains optimistic that the plane will eventually be found, giving closure to families. "The Titanic took until the '80s to find," he said of the search for the ocean liner that struck an iceberg and went down in the north Atlantic in 1912. "I really think we're going to find (MH370) eventually." — AFP

## FOUR DEAD, 20 HURT AS CAR RAMS MELBOURNE SHOPPERS

### POLICE SAY INCIDENT NOT TERRORISM-RELATED

**MELBOURNE:** A car ploughed into pedestrians on a popular shopping strip in the heart of Australia's second-largest city yesterday, killing four people including a young child and injuring dozens more. Police said they were not considering the incident an act of terrorism. Witnesses described "bodies flying through the air" and people running out of the path of the speeding vehicle in the central mall area of Melbourne.

Moments before, passers-by had watched astonished as the driver gesticulated out the window and spun the maroon-colored saloon round a major intersection, blocking traffic. The trail of violence took place barely a kilometer away from Melbourne Park where the world's top tennis stars were playing the opening Grand Slam of the year in a city teeming with tourists.

Police shot the 26-year-old male driver - who has a history of family violence, mental health and drug issues - in the arm and arrested him. "This individual is not related to any counter-terrorism or any terrorism-related activities," said Graham Ashton, chief commissioner for the state of Victoria. "He is not on our books as having any connection with terrorism and we're not regarding this as a terrorism-related incident. What we do know of the person is there is an extensive family violence history involved."

Three people were killed at different locations on Bourke Street, a man and a woman in their 30s and a child whose age was not given for privacy reasons, Ashton said. A fourth person was confirmed dead by police late yesterday, but their age and gender were not released. Fifteen others were hurt. Five were in a critical condition, including an infant, he added. The Royal Children's Hospital said it was treating three children aged three months, two years and nine years. A fourth child aged 13 was treated and discharged late yesterday. "The prayers and heart-



**MELBOURNE:** Tourists take photos between police cars after a car ploughed into pedestrians in the center of Melbourne yesterday. — AFP

felt sympathies of all Australians are with the victims and the families of the victims of this shocking crime in Melbourne today," Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said in a statement.

### 'History of violence'

The driver allegedly stabbed his brother in the suburb of Windsor six kilometers south of Bourke Street early yesterday, Ashton said. Police had tried to intercept his car before it entered the city about 1:45 pm local time (0245 GMT) and he was seen driving erratically outside Melbourne's main train station in the afternoon. "We believe this male did some 'doughnuts' at Flinders Street and Swanston Street, turned left into the Bourke Street mall and deliberately drove into the crowd, continued along the footpath colliding with further pedestrians," Police Acting Commander Stuart Bateson said.

YouTube footage showed the driver wearing a light-colored top half-hanging out of the vehicle and gesturing to pedestrians. One witness, Kylie Clark, told Melbourne's Herald Sun she saw "bodies flying through the air". "It

seemed to me they (the vehicle that hit people) were being chased by an unmarked police car." Another witness told the newspaper "he wasn't stopping and people walking were trying to get away and he just kept going and collected people on his way". A witness, who asked not to be named, told AFP "it was carnage up the footpath".

Heavily armed officers were deployed around the scene as television footage showed the badly damaged car with the front doors open and the windscreen smashed. A handcuffed man in his underwear was seen lying on a footpath surrounded by police. Other pictures showed an upturned baby pram. The child in the pram was one of the critically injured, Aston said. The suspect was charged last weekend by police, Aston added, without giving further details. "He has come to our attention on many occasions in the past. We have mental health and drug-related issues in the background of this particular person. "He has been coming to our attention more recently over recent days in relation to assaults, family violence-related assaults." — AFP

## CHINA WOOS DIPLOMATS IN GRAFT FIGHT

**BEIJING:** China pledged to banish abuse in graft investigations and urged foreign diplomats to help "weave a cooperative network against corruption", as it tries to build international support for President Xi Jinping's four-year war on graft. Xi has vowed to fight deep-rooted graft at all levels of the ruling Communist Party until officials "dare not, cannot and don't want to" be corrupt, and has warned that failure to stamp out the rot could threaten the party's future.

China has taken the battle global, publishing a list of the 100 most-wanted corruption suspects who have fled abroad to countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia, often taking their wealth with them. Authorities have said they clawed back 2.3 billion yuan (\$334 million) in graft proceeds from more than 70 countries and regions in the first 11 months of 2016. But China has struggled to win full cooperation in tracking and repatriating such fugitives, with foreign countries blaming an under-developed legal system, and concern about rights abuses, for their reluctance to sign extradition treaties. In an unusual step, Wu Yuliang, deputy head of the top graft watchdog, the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), briefed representatives of 113 diplomatic missions and 13 international bodies on Thursday about efforts to fight graft, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Rights groups have accused Chinese authorities of using torture and illegal detention during graft investigations as part of an extra-judicial detention and integration system known as "shuanggui". Abuse, insults, beatings, and "disguised" corporal punishment are forbidden and food, rest and medical treatment must be provided during investigations, according to provisional regulations published on the CCDI website yesterday. Though force has always been technically forbidden, the government has acknowledged problems with torture in its legal system, which it has vowed to correct.

### 'Major Reform'

The rules, passed by the CCDI at a meeting this month, also set limits on interrogation periods, require that sessions are recorded, and explicitly ban threats, coercion and evidence tampering. Efforts to strengthen supervision constitute a "major political reform", Wu said, giving examples such as tougher laws against corruption and the establishment of a national supervisory body. The campaign to return corrupt officials and other overseas fugitives adhered to the law, not only that of China, but also other countries, Wu added. Looking to allay doubts about China's legal processes, Liu Jianchao, who leads efforts to bring home corruption suspects, said details of 105 repatriation cases had been released, according to a transcript on the watchdog's website. — Reuters

# BUSINESS

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DAVOS: (From left), France's Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, IMF, Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda, British Treasury Chief Philip Hammond, Laurence D Fink, Chairman and CEO of BlackRock Inc and German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble attend a plenary session of the 47th annual meeting of the WEF in Davos yesterday.—AFP

## WILL TRUMP END GLOBALIZATION?

### THE DOUBT HAUNTS DAVOS' ELITE

**DAVOS, Switzerland:** It's been impossible to escape the shadow of Donald Trump at this year's gathering of the business elites at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Uncertainty over what Trump will do after he takes office and whether his presidency will mark the end of globalization dominated discussions all week at this event, which more than any has become synonymous with international business.

Sure, lofty ambitions were discussed, from fighting epidemics to dealing with inequalities across the world. But inevitably all talk turned to Trump, who has promised to rewrite free trade deals and even slap tariffs on China, the world's second-largest economy. "Do I really think we're going back to protectionism? I don't really know yet and I can promise you I'm paying a lot of attention to it because trade matters to us," said David Cote, chairman and CEO of industrial conglomerate Honeywell. "It's a little too early to press the panic button; we ought to see what ends up happening here."

Roberto Azevedo, director-general of the World Trade Organization, the institution that oversees global trading rules, reminded delegates that in the 1930s, unilateral actions to raise tariffs led to a "domino effect" that wiped out two-thirds of global trade in three years. "That would be a catastrophe of untold proportions," he said. "I think we should try

not to talk ourselves into a trade war and I think we're seeing a lot of that."

#### The case against globalization

Whether or not world trade goes into reverse, it's evident that globalization - the commitment to lower barriers to doing business around the world - is under threat like no other time in decades.

The main allegations are that it has increased inequalities in wealth, eroded job security for the middle and lower-income families in developed countries, and kept a lid on wages as businesses seek low-cost workers in poorer countries. The breakneck pace of technological innovation is making jobs redundant, particularly in industries like manufacturing. Anti-poverty charity Oxfam illustrated the issue of inequality starkly in a report this week in which it said that eight billionaires own as much wealth as half the world's population, or 3.6 billion people.

There's a perception among many middle- and lower-income households in developed economies like the US and Europe that globalization hasn't worked for them and it's their anger that supported Trump's victory and Britain's vote to leave the European Union.

#### The case for it

Globalization has helped lift hundreds of millions to escape poverty over the past few

decades. Populous countries like China and India have enjoyed phenomenal growth, improved standards of living, life expectancy, literacy and employment rates.

As though to underscore that point, China's leader visited the Davos forum this year for the first time ever. In a historic address, Chinese President Xi Jinping cast his country as a champion of free trade and stability. Though China does in fact put big limits on foreign companies in the country, Xi's message was clear: that China wants to take a bigger role on the global stage and keeping business flowing.

"We must remain committed to promoting free trade and investment through opening up, and say no to protectionism," Xi said, without directly referencing Trump. "Pursuing protectionism is like locking oneself in a dark room. While wind and rain may be kept outside, so are light and air ... No one will emerge as a winner in a trade war."

#### Way ahead

The key will be what policies Trump actually puts in motion, and whether other countries follow the temptation to throw up bigger barriers to business. Britain will this year renegotiate its trade relations with the rest of the EU, the region it does most business with. And populist political movements have risen in countries like the Philippines

and are increasingly prominent in developed economies like France, the Netherlands and Italy.

"We may be at a point where globalization is ending," said Ray Dalio, founder of hedge fund Bridgewater Associates. German finance minister Wolfgang Schäuble said he doubted the US and the West would leave the defense of free trade to Chinese leadership. Beyond Trump, Christine Lagarde, the managing director of the International Monetary Fund, said the broader international system must change. Dealing with inequality will have to become a central concern for governments, she said, adding that could mean greater redistribution of wealth - a tough message to deliver to a crowd of millionaires and billionaires.

Theresa May, Britain's prime minister, sought to convince the Davos elite that Britain was not retreating from the global scene. But she did concede that policymakers have to support those for whom globalization is not working. "The forces of liberalism, free trade and globalization that have had, and continue to have, such an overwhelmingly positive impact on our world ... are somehow at risk of being undermined," she said.

Globalization is good. That's the message leaders of developing countries want to send from the Davos forum to Trump, who took office yesterday.—Agencies



ATHENS: A firefighter takes part in a demonstration in central Athens yesterday during an anti-austerity protest. —AFP

## 1.5BN BPD CUT FROM MARKET IN JANUARY: SAUDI'S AL-FALIH

### OIL PRICE RISES AHEAD OF COMPLIANCE MEETING

**ABU DHABI:** Saudi Arabian Energy Minister Khalid Al-Falih said yesterday that 1.5 million of an agreed upon 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil had been taken out of the market in January. Falih estimated the growth of shale oil in 2017 at 200,000 to 300,000 barrels per day, he told Al Arabiya television. An estimate of 500,000 barrels of shale oil by the head of the International Energy Agency (IEA) were exaggerated, Falih said.

Meanwhile, oil prices edged up for a second day yesterday on expectations that a weekend meeting of the world's top oil producers would demonstrate compliance to a global output cut deal, but a larger than expected rise in weekly US crude stocks capped gains.

International benchmark Brent crude prices were up 58 cents at \$54.74 a barrel at 1214 GMT.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil futures were trading up 52 cents at \$51.89 a barrel. "Prices were pushed down a bit too far and hopes will rise that the OPEC/non-OPEC meeting

this weekend will show that these producers actually give some proof that they cut production," said Hans van Cleef, senior energy economist at ABN Amro.

A weekend meeting in Vienna of members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and some producers outside of the group, including Russia, will establish a compliance mechanism to verify producers are sticking to a deal to reduce output, OPEC's secretary general told Reuters. However, higher than expected crude oil and gasoline stocks in the United States weighed on prices yesterday.

US crude inventories rose unexpectedly last week as refineries sharply slowed production, while gasoline stocks soared amid weak demand, the Energy Information Administration said on Thursday. Crude inventories rose 2.3 million barrels in the week to Jan. 13, compared with analyst expectations for an increase of 342,000 barrels. The data showed much larger than expected increases in gasoline

stocks, with inventories on the US east coast, the biggest demand region, swelling to the highest weekly levels on record for this time of year, when refiners typically begin storing barrels ahead of the summer driving season.

Adding to bearish news was the continuing rise in oil production from Libya, which is exempt from the producers' output cut deal. Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) said production had now climbed to 722,000 barrels per day, resuming its rise after poor weather had caused a small dip.

Bjarne Schieldrop, chief commodities analyst at SEB Markets, said Brent crude was starting to move into a trading range centred around \$55 a barrel as the production cut deal had placed a floor price of \$50 a barrel, while US shale oil producers were capping the upside at \$60 a barrel. "As a new consensus is starting to form, the fog around the oil market balance is starting to clear and the oil price is likely going to start to stabilize," he said. — Reuters

## UK RETAIL SALES IN SHOCK SLUMP

**LONDON:** British retail sales unexpectedly slumped 1.9 percent in December from the previous month, sending the pound sliding as yesterday's official data fed into fresh worries over Brexit. "The monthly picture... shows that all main retail sectors saw a decrease in the quantity bought, with the largest downwards contribution coming from non-food stores," the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement. Analysts' consensus forecast had been for a dip of 0.1 percent.

"Sterling is taking a pasting after a pretty shoddy set of retail sales figures for December," noted ETX Capital senior market analyst Neil Wilson. "The pound... dived below \$1.23 immediately following the ONS numbers, which showed the fastest pace of sales decline in five years.

"This is pretty alarming and was vastly wider than the 0.1 percent fall expected," he added. The sales update was offset partly by solid quarterly and year-on-year comparisons. "Overall sales were up 5.6 percent in the fourth quarter and

December's figure was 4.3 percent higher from the previous year-getting a boost from tourists enjoying the benefits of the weak pound," said Wilson.

"But it's the sudden slowdown from November that is discouraging and this has dented sentiment around the pound." Sterling has endured a volatile week, slumping to three-month low points before and after British Prime Minister Theresa May fleshed out her plans for Britain exiting the European Union. In a busy week for UK data, annual inflation has jumped to 1.6 percent—the highest level in two and a half years—while unemployment sits at 4.8 percent, a low since 2006. But it is the retail figures which have shocked most.

"UK retail sales volumes were terrible in December... much worse than expected," said Scotiabank strategist Alan Clarke. "We know from the CPI (inflation) data earlier in the week that prices rose more than expected in December and now we also know that sales volumes fell. — AFP

## ARAMCO TO BOOST GAS PRODUCTION AT HAWIYAH, HARADH

**KHOBAR, Saudi Arabia:** Saudi Aramco plans to boost gas production at its Hawiyah and Haradh plants to meet growing domestic energy needs, industry sources said.

The projects, estimated to cost approximately \$4 billion, would see engineering companies expand the processing capacity at Hawiyah by 1.3 billion standard cubic feet per day. Hawiyah gas plant currently processes 2.5 billion scfd of gas.

Raising gas production is key to Saudi Arabia's plan to diversify its energy mix by cutting its use of crude oil and liquids for power generation. Aramco, the world's largest oil and gas company, would also boost production from Haradh by building gas compression plants and other facilities, the sources said. Hawiyah and Haradh are part of Ghawar, the world's largest onshore oilfield.

Aramco has asked companies to express their interests in participating in bidding for these projects while the actual bidding is expected to start in March.

Saudi Aramco did not respond to an emailed request for comment at the weekend. Saudi oil officials have said they aim to increase the use of gas in the energy mix to 70 percent from 50 percent now. Despite falling oil prices, Saudi Aramco has pushed ahead with oil and gas projects that it has highlighted as a priority for the long term to keep the world well supplied with oil while meeting gas demand for power domestically.

Gas is also essential to boost Saudi Arabia's industrial and mining base as the kingdom plans to diversify its economy under its Vision 2030 plan that aims to reduce its dependence on oil. Last year, Saudi Aramco's CEO Amin Nasser said no downstream or upstream projects had been cancelled. On Tuesday in Davos he said the company was working on building its oil and gas capacity to meet future demand growth. It plans to nearly double gas production to 23 billion standard cubic feet a day in the next decade. Saudi Aramco has embarked on a massive program to boost gas output for electricity and petrochemical production by developing gas fields not associated with oil production.

For instance, it is exploring and developing unconventional gas in the north of the kingdom. Amin Nasser said last year, more gas from unconventional resources will start coming from the end of this year. Aramco awarded last year a 50 billion riyals Fadhili gas project.—Reuters

## TRUMP TREASURY PICK DEFENDS OFFSHORE INVESTMENTS

**WASHINGTON:** President-elect Donald Trump's nominee to head the US Treasury on Thursday fended off questions about previously undisclosed offshore investment firms and real-estate holdings, as well as his bank's foreclosure practices. In his confirmation hearing, Wall Street banker and Hollywood financier Steven Mnuchin also defended his leadership of a bank accused of predatory lending and aggressive foreclosure practices.

Mnuchin conceded he had failed to disclose that he was the director of investment funds incorporated in Caribbean tax havens, or to reveal real estate holdings of about \$100 million, when making financial disclosures to lawmakers in December.

"My lawyer, who is quite sophisticated in this stuff and has done this for many nominees before, believed that we filled out the form correctly," he told the Senate Finance Committee. Mnuchin also said his investment firms in the Caribbean enclaves of Anguilla and the Cayman Islands were created to serve clients that were non-profits and pensions. "These entities were either taxed as US corporations or US partnerships and in no way did I use them whatsoever to avoid any US taxes." Mnuchin also sought to explain Trump's comment this week that the US dollar was "too strong," which briefly caused the currency to plummet on foreign exchange markets.

"It was not meant to be a long-term comment," Mnuchin said, adding that Trump meant the strength of the dollar in the short-term hurt US exports. Mnuchin likewise said Trump's threats on Twitter to impose a "border tax" on manufacturers selling foreign-made cars on the US market did were targeted to specific companies. "He has not suggested an across-the-board border tax," he said. — AFP



# DAVOS: 5 KEY THEMES THIS YEAR

**DAVOS:** The global elite wraps up its talkathon in the Swiss ski resort of Davos yesterday-around the same time as Donald Trump enters the White House on a wave of anti-elitist anger. Here are five key themes from this year's World Economic Forum, which gathers movers and shakers from business, politics, academia and showbiz every year for a week of earnest debate and extravagant partying.

## China: globalisation's new saviour?

China's President Xi Jinping emerged as an unlikely capitalist hero as Davos kicked off Tuesday, with a staunch defence of globalization that stood in stark contrast to the protectionist Trump. The first Chinese supreme to address Davos, Xi said there was "no point in blaming economic globalisation for the world's problems" at a time when anger over the downsides of open borders has triggered political revolts in the US, Britain and beyond. The message won glowing praise from Davos delegates-though the irony of the communist leader's new status as a capi-

talist darling was not lost on observers, and China hands noted that his mantra of openness clashed with his government's repressive actions at home. China's growing thirst for foreign acquisitions was also on display in Davos. The country's richest man Wang Jianling and internet billionaire Jack Ma both expressed an interest in further investments in Hollywood and elsewhere.

## Tackling the populist revolt

After a year in which US and British elites lashed out at out-of-touch elites, the cream of that elite did plenty of head-scratching over the reasons for the revolt and what can be done about it. The official theme of this year's meeting was "responsive and responsible leadership", with the growing rural-urban divide in Western countries up for discussion along with how to appease the "squeezed and angry" middle class. "It's a mistake not to recognize that the middle class in my country and in others is concerned that the government is not fighting for it," said ex-US Treasury secretary Lawrence Summers.

## Getting down to business on Brexit

British Prime Minister Theresa May headlined Thursday, with business leaders flocking to hear further details of her Brexit plan.

May pronounced Britain "open for business" despite her announcement that she plans to exit the EU single market, promising a mass of ambitious trade deals with partners around the world.

Anxious executives in Davos said they were relieved to have a little more clarity on how Brexit might affect business-but they said the devil will be in the details of the divorce negotiations.

## Robots are coming for your jobs

Others spent the week laying preparations for the "Fourth Industrial Revolution"-technological advances such as artificial intelligence that are predicted to change our lives hugely in the decades to come, notably the way we work. After industrial robots put paid to many manufacturing jobs in the West, experts now predict the loss of millions of white-collar jobs that machines will

be able to perform-and are urging governments to wake up to the challenge. "There's insidious insertion of automation in a lot of different domains," said Missy Cummings, a robotics expert at Duke University, naming driverless cars as just one technology that will revolutionise our lives. "The reality is we can't just keep our head in the sand like an ostrich."

## Inequality: on the agenda, and on display

The jamboree of the rich and powerful kicked off with a report by Oxfam that said eight men-including Microsoft founder and Davos attendee Bill Gates-own the same wealth as half of the world's population put together. "Equality is on everyone's lips here in Davos, and maybe actually equality is becoming the new black," remarked Swedish Finance Minister Magdalena Andersson.

But the growing gap between the world's rich and poor was also very much on show in Davos-where billionaires, politicians and A-listers party late into the night at invitation-only events, often after arriving by helicopter. —AFP



**DAVOS:** Participants talk on the fourth day of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos yesterday. —AP

## THE WORLD'S CITIES: VITAL, BUT FRAGILE

**DAVOS:** They may be richer and more numerous than ever, but the world's urban dwellers can be forgiven a sense of dread as threats pile up from climate change, terrorism and anarchic growth.

The fragility of fast-growing cityscapes has been exercising political and business leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos this week. One projection from the Brazilian consultancy Igarape said cities will account for two-thirds of the world's population by 2030, from just over half now.

The bulk of that growth will come from just three countries: China, India and Nigeria. Already the motors of the world economy, some "super-cities" will increasingly resemble nation states with power and influence to go with their teeming populations. But a major theme of the Davos meeting was how they must show "resilience" with proper urban planning. Inside the forum's main congress hall, a data visualisation by Igarape was projected onto a big screen to rank cities: the higher the number, the more vulnerable they are to the totality of risks under discussion.

Paris, with a fragility ranking of 2.18, came in worse than Dakar in Senegal (1.33) but Baghdad was still worse on 3.88. "The world is becoming increasingly urban," noted Igarape's Canadian research director, Robert Muggah, "and their (cities') resilience, success or failure, will shape how a lot of our nation states perform globally".

The concept of urban resilience requires authorities to appreciate the scale of the problem and take remedial steps, French geographer Magali Reghezza said. "Even if we can't eliminate the risks, even if we can't entirely avoid crises, we can stop them turning into disasters. And even if there is a disaster, relief is possible," she said. The recent past in Paris and Brussels has shown the stark threat of mass urban terrorism. — AFP

# US BANKERS TELL EUROPEANS TO THINK POSITIVELY ON TRUMP

## EUROPEANS NEED CONVINCING AMID SABER-RATTLING

**DAVOS, Switzerland:** US bankers, buoyed by a resurgence in profits, are advising their counterparts in Europe to think positively about the new administration of US President-elect Donald Trump. But many Europeans still need convincing. At the annual gathering of the world's political and business elites in the Swiss resort of Davos, US financiers told investors and overseas' rivals to focus less on Trump's anti-globalization rhetoric and more on his cabinet picks, comprising Wall Street veterans and corporate bosses. Many European bankers fear Trump, who campaigned on an "America first" platform and who has threatened to impose punitive tariffs on Chinese imports, could trigger a trade war with the world's second-largest economy.

Jose Vinals, chairman of Standard Chartered Bank and a former deputy governor of the Spanish central bank, said there was a lot of unease over whether the Republican's campaign rhetoric would translate into his policies as president.

"In Europe, there is concern and trepidation about Trump's administration and how his politics will affect global trade and finance," he told Reuters. "Any form of protectionism will likely ultimately make the US economy less competitive and be bad news for the world," said Vinals, who has previously built up an expertise on Asian markets, including China, while working as a senior official at the International Monetary Fund.

But Mary Callahan Erdoes, who runs the asset management arm of US bank JPMorgan, sought to assuage concerns about the incoming White House administration. She told the World Economic Forum that Trump's officials, including former Goldman Sachs bankers Steven Mnuchin and Gary Cohn,



**DAVOS:** German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble gestures during a session on the closing day of the World Economic Forum yesterday. — AFP

would push a pro-business agenda that would drive economic growth. "We are going to have to get used to thinking very pro-actively and getting excited about growth," she said. "It is a pendulum swing and it is going to be positive for business. It just is."

Anthony Scaramucci, a hedge fund manager who has been appointed by Trump to liaise with the business community, was the only member of the new U.S. administration to attend the Davos forum. He spoke publicly about how Trump would be good for the global economy and, according to banking sources, followed this up with private discussions with European bankers. But the sources said industry players in Europe wanted more clarity on key US economic policies from Trump himself. Banks on both sides of the Atlantic might be happy at having a leader in the White House who has pledged to cut tax rates and ease restrictions imposed on banks' risk-taking in the wake of the financial crisis.

## TRADING STRENGTH

At private lunches and evening cocktail receptions in the swiss ski resort, some US financiers expressed concern about the impact from Trump's blunt re-evaluation of key foreign policy principles and his penchant for castigating American companies on Twitter.

Most bankers expect volatile market swings in 2017 after investors, having driven up stock prices in anticipation of tax cuts and spending hikes, grow impatient for action. Increased volatility plays to Wall Street banks' greater strength in trading bonds, stocks and currencies.

US investment banks have already reported bumper fourth-quarter results following a surge in trading volumes across commodities, interest rate products and foreign exchange as investors reworked their portfolios in response to Donald Trump's surprise victory and the Federal Reserve's interest rate hike. Goldman Sachs, the bank most dependent on trading, has seen its stock rise nearly 30 percent since the Nov. 8 election. — Reuters

## CHINA CUTS RESERVE RATIOS FOR BIG 5 BANKS AMID CASH CRUNCH

**SHANGHAI:** China has allowed its five biggest banks to temporarily lower the amount of money that they must hold as reserves to relieve pressure in its financial system as demand for cash surges ahead of the Lunar New Year holiday, three sources with direct knowledge of the matter said.

The People's Bank of China (PBOC) has cut the reserve requirement ratio (RRR) for the banks by a full percentage point, taking the ratio down to 16 percent, the sources said. The central bank's move, its first reduction in RRR in nearly a year, comes after it pumped a record amount of liquidity into markets

this week in a bid to avert a cash crunch heading into the country's biggest holiday of the year. Earlier this week, short-term funding costs had spiked to their highest levels in nearly 10 years on fears that liquidity was sharply tightening, sparking a jump in the yuan currency.

But China watchers polled by Reuters had not expected a cut in RRR until the third quarter of 2017, as such a move would put more pressure on the ailing yuan. Key funding and money market rates had shown signs of easing on Friday after the PBOC's massive injections, but remained well above normal levels.

### 'A STRANGE MOVE'

"Today's move seems to suggest that liquidity conditions are tighter than authorities' expectations, as capital outflows remain strong," said Zhou Hau, senior emerging markets economist at Commerzbank in Singapore. "But in the meantime, an outright easing will add pressure on the yuan exchange rate as well. That could be the reason behind today's strange move."

The central bank will restore the RRR for the five banks to the normal level at an appropriate time after the holiday, according to the sources. "This is a temporary adjustment, and is mainly in

response to the cash withdrawal, tax payment and reserve payment. (The RRR) will go back to the normal rate after the Lunar New Year holiday," one source said. The PBOC said later on Friday that it will provide temporary liquidity support for several major commercial banks for 28 days to ensure adequate liquidity ahead of the Lunar New Year, according to a notice posted on its official microblog. The funding cost for the liquidity support will be about the same as the open market operations rate over the same period, the PBOC said, without specifying any requirement for collateral. — Reuters

## CHINA Q4 GDP GROWTH BEATS EXPECTATIONS, BUT RISKS LOOM

### HOUSING AND STIMULUS TAILWINDS MAY SLOW THIS YEAR

**BEIJING:** China's economy grew a faster-than-expected 6.8 percent in the fourth quarter, boosted by higher government spending and record bank lending, giving it a tailwind heading into what is expected to be a turbulent year. But Beijing's decision to prioritize its official growth target could exact a high price, as policymakers grapple with financial risks created by an explosive growth in debt.

China's debt to GDP ratio rose to 277 percent at the end of 2016 from 254 percent the previous year, with an increasing share of new credit being used to pay debt servicing costs, UBS analysts said in a note. The fourth quarter was the first time in two years that the world's second-largest economy has shown an uptick in economic growth, but this year it faces further pressure to cool its housing market, the impact of government efforts at structural reforms, and a potentially testy relationship with a new US administration.

"We do not expect this (Q4 GDP) rebound to extend far into 2017, when a slowdown in the property market and steps to address supply shortages in the commodity sector ought to drag again on demand and output," said Tom Rafferty, regional China manager for the Economist Intelligence Unit. The economy expanded 6.7 percent in 2016, the National Bureau of Statistics said on Friday, near the middle of the government's 6.5-7 percent growth target but still the slowest pace in 26 years.

Economists polled by Reuters had expected 6.7 percent growth for both the fourth quarter and the full year. Housing helped prop up growth again in the fourth quarter, with property investment rising a surprisingly strong 11.1 percent in December from 5.7 percent in November, even as house prices showed signs of cooling in some major cities. Consumer spending was also strong, with retail sales in December rising at their fastest pace in a year on stronger sales of cars and cosmetics.

### STABILITY A PRIORITY

Fixed asset investment grew 8.1 percent, the slowest pace since 1999, as investment by private firms slowed again in December on a monthly basis. Private sector fixed asset investment fell to 4.07 percent from 4.93 percent in

November, according to Reuters calculations based on statistics bureau data. Consumption contributed the bulk of growth last year, but income growth didn't pick up, and a measure of China's income inequality rose slightly last year, the statistics bureau said.

Amid signs of stabilization, policy sources told Reuters that China's leaders will lower their economic growth target to around 6.5 percent this year, giving them more room to push reforms to contain debt risks. They will not want to let growth fall too sharply, however, ahead of a key party meeting in the autumn when a new generation of leaders will be picked.

"Economic stability is always important but will be an even higher priority ahead of the 19th Party Congress," said Tim Condon, Singapore-based economist at ING.

In a sign of the tasks ahead, the People's Bank of China unexpectedly cut the amount banks must keep in reserve yesterday, a measure aimed at easing tight liquidity ahead of the upcoming Lunar New Year holiday. "Today's move seems to suggest that liquidity conditions are tighter than authorities' expectations, as capital outflows remain strong," said Zhou Hou, senior emerging

markets economist at Commerzbank in Singapore. Capital outflows have been putting strong downward pressure on the yuan, which lost nearly 7 percent last year, making it the worst performing major Asian currency.

### RISKS INCREASE

Rapid monetary expansion and expectations of slower economic growth at home, along with a rising US dollar, also hit the yuan. "The key risk to the Chinese economy in 2017 and 2018 is the possibility that faster than expected US interest rate increases could intensify Chinese capital outflows and increase stresses on China's financial system," said Bill Adams, senior economist at US-based PNC Financial Services Group.

China's sluggish exports could also come under fresh pressure if US President-elect Donald Trump follows through on pledges to impose tough protectionist measures. "Relations with a Trump administration is the biggest known unknown. Trump advisers and cabinet-nominees have identified the US-China relationship as in need of adjustment to support the president-elect's objective of a manufacturing renaissance," said Condon. — Reuters



**BEIJING:** In this Dec 13, 2016 photo, workers buy their lunch outside a construction site at the Central Business District in Beijing. China's economic growth accelerated slightly in the final quarter of 2016 but its full-year performance still was the weakest in nearly three decades. —AP



**NEW YORK:** Specialist Jarret Johnson works at his post on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. —AP

## DOLLAR RECOUPS LOSSES AHEAD OF INAUGURATION

**LONDON:** The dollar recouped earlier losses yesterday while stocks were little changed as investors refrained from big bets ahead of Donald Trump's inauguration as US president and a speech that could shed some light on his economic policies.

Mounting questions about how Trump's administration would carry out an ambitious agenda of lower taxes, more government spending and looser regulations have seen a pause in the post-election rally in risky assets. Concerns over the details of Trump's inauguration speech offset better-than-expected economic data from China and comments from Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen in which she sounded less hawkish than the previous day.

Tens of thousands of law enforcement officers and miles of barriers were in place in Washington DC, as officials braced for hundreds of thousands of people planning to celebrate or protest the inauguration of Trump. The dollar, which has lost some of its momentum in recent weeks, was up 0.1 percent against six major currencies.

Stock futures on Wall Street, trading close to all-time highs, were up 0.2 percent recovering some losses from the previous session. "All eyes will be on the content and style of Trump's inauguration speech," Morgan Stanley strategists led by Hans Redeker wrote in a note.

"The more 'Presidential' this speech comes across, the better the outcome for markets," the strategists wrote. European stocks were down 0.1 percent with mining shares, the biggest beneficiaries of the deflation rally spurred by Trump's election win, the biggest drag on the indexes.

Europe's benchmark index was poised for its worst week since before Trump's election win last November. Eurozone government bond yields hit one-month highs yesterday on hopes of stronger economic growth and higher inflation. "Trump has been talking very strongly about his desire to invest heavily and deliver fiscal expansion," said Matt Cairns, fixed income strategist at Rabobank. "Now we'll see what he has to say as president, and that could be clear soon."

Fund flows in the run-up to yesterday's inauguration indicate investors moving into less risky assets and locking in some profits in banking stocks and high-yield debt.

Precious metals funds saw their first inflows in 10 weeks, according to data from fund tracker EPFR and Bank of America-Merrill Lynch while money was pulled from funds focused on financials stocks and high-yield bonds. —Reuters

## RUSSIA MINISTER FORECASTS 2% GROWTH IF NO SHOCKS

**DAVOS, Switzerland:** Russia's economy could grow by 2 percent in 2017 as long as there are no external shocks such as a renewed fall in oil prices, Economy Minister Maxim Oreshkin said on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos. The Russian economy shrank by between 0.5 and 0.6 percent last year, according to a preliminary data, due to low oil prices and Western sanctions. Yet, with oil prices recovering thanks to last month's Russia-OPEC deal on cutting oil output, prospects for the economy look brighter this year.

Oreshkin said Russia would not abandon a free-floating rouble, which was one of the moves taken by the Russian central bank to help the econ-

omy in 2014. The policy was aimed at preserving its gold and foreign exchange reserves, which had been previously used to smooth out rouble volatility.

The central bank could soon start buying foreign currency to help the finance ministry sterilise excessive budget revenues above \$40 per barrel, Oreshkin said, adding this would not mean Russia would depart from a freely floating rouble. "There is absolutely no talk about abandoning the (rouble) free-floating regime... It will remain absolutely freely float," Oreshkin said.

The central bank has a goal to rebuild its reserves back to \$500 bil-

lion, for which it has planned to start buying forex on the market, but has not given a time indication.

On Thursday, the central bank said it may start buying foreign currency if oil prices stay high, but the amount of forex it buys each month would not exceed the additional revenues Russia gets from oil prices which exceed the level it has in its budget plans.

### PRIVATISATION

After selling stakes in diamond miner Alrosa, oil companies Bashneft and Rosneft last year and earning more than 1 trillion roubles (\$16.8 billion) for the depleted budget, Russia planned to further reduce its holdings in a num-

ber of assets. It has planned to sell a 10.9 percent in state bank VTB and a 25 percent in state shipping company Sovcomflot this year.

Oreshkin said that it would be hard to sell a stake in VTB, Russia's No.2 bank, as the latter is under Western sanctions, while Sovcomflot is "our first task." Two sources close to the deal told Reuters last year that a privatization of a 25 percent stake in Sovcomflot may be equally split between existing and new shareholders, with the operation expected in Moscow this spring. The Russian economy ministry has previously said it wanted to raise 24 billion roubles from the sale of the Sovcomflot stake. — Reuters

## GERMANY SAYS IMF PLANS TO STAY INVOLVED IN GREECE BAILOUT TALKS

**BERLIN:** The International Monetary Fund's chief has reassured German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble that the IMF plans to remain constructively engaged in talks about further aid for Greece, a spokesman for Schaeuble said yesterday.

Christine Lagarde spoke with Schaeuble about Greece's bailout program during the World Economic Forum in Davos this week and told him the IMF aimed to continue its participation, the spokesman told a regular government news conference. The German Finance Ministry this week denied a report in Bild newspaper that Berlin was preparing for a deal without the IMF, which has said it will take part only if it includes significant debt relief.

"Mrs. Lagarde again reassured the finance minister that the IMF is participating constructively in the ongoing discussions and continues to work for a quick agreement on full participation in the rescue program, including funds from the IMF," the spokesman said.

He said it was speculative to discuss what Germany would do if the IMF did pull out. Germany, Europe's largest economy, wants the IMF to have a stake in the bailout to give the rescue plan greater credibility, but also opposes granting Athens significant debt relief. Disputes over labour reforms, fiscal targets and debt relief have prevented Greece and its foreign lenders from concluding a compliance review of its current bailout program, the third since 2010.

Schaeuble last week raised the possibility of a new program for Greece without the IMF should the Fund decide to bow out. Bild said Schaeuble thinks the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), the euro zone's bailout fund, would be tapped to plug the hole left by an IMF departure. — Reuters

## INDIA'S TOP COURT TO HEAR PLEA SEEKING TO DEFER ANNUAL BUDGET

**NEW DELHI:** India's Supreme Court said yesterday it would hear a plea at the start of next week that seeks to postpone the government's annual budget, due to be delivered on Feb 1, until after five forthcoming state elections are held. The Public Interest Litigation (PIL) calls for the delay over concerns that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government could seek to influence the outcome of the polls with populist spending promises.

Election rules in the world's largest democracy do not allow governments to offer such giveaways. Modi's government announced last autumn that it would deliver its budget a month earlier than usual, in a move to preempt the polls. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party needs in particular to do well in Uttar Pradesh, a battleground state with a population of more than 200 million that, were it a country, would be holding the biggest election in the world this year.

"The budget should be presented in April. The government should not release it in February, as the state elections are starting soon," said lawyer M.L. Sharma, who filed the deferment plea earlier this month. — Reuters



**DAVOS:** International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director Christine Lagarde (left) listen to the Governor of the Bank of Japan Haruhiko Kuroda during a session at the Congress hall on the closing day of the World Economic Forum yesterday. —AFP

## KURODA OFFERS OPTIMISTIC VIEW ON JAPAN ECONOMY

### TOKYO THREATENS INDIA WITH WTO ON STEEL

**DAVOS:** Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda said yesterday the country's economy is likely to head toward a sustainable growth path as global trade and manufacturing activity pick up. But he added that Japan had yet to address major challenges, which were to heighten inflation expectations and prod firms to raise wages.

"Our top priority for macro-economic policy continues to be to overcome deflation," Kuroda told a session of the World Economic Forum. "Firms have remained cautious of wage increases, which is one reason why inflation hasn't been gathering momentum," he said.

Experience with decades of deflation had made inflation expectations among the Japanese public adaptive, or heavily influenced by past and underlying price growth, he added.

Still, Kuroda said Japan's economy was likely to expand 1.5 percent both in the current fiscal year ending in March,

and the following year, thanks to a rebound in global demand.

"One notable change since the second half of last year is a global pick-up of manufacturing and trade, which have been sluggish for quite a while since the global financial crisis," Kuroda said. "Japan's economy has shown clear signs of recovery in exports and industrial production," he said.

Kuroda's optimistic comments on recovery prospects suggest the BOJ will maintain its upbeat economic and price forecasts when its nine-member board conducts a quarterly review of projections on Jan. 30-31. The growth projections Kuroda offered are higher than the BOJ board's median forecasts of 1.0 percent expansion this fiscal year and 1.3 percent the following year. It is rare for a BOJ governor to offer specific growth projections that vary from the BOJ board's median forecasts ahead of the quarterly forecast review.

### Trump era

Japan is threatening to take India to the WTO over restrictions that nearly halved its steel exports to the South Asian nation over the past year, a step that could trigger more trade spats as global tensions over steel and other commodities run high.

Such action is rare for Japan. The world's second-biggest steel producer typically tries to smooth disputes quietly through bilateral talks, but with global trade friction increasing, Japan's defence of an industry that sells nearly half of its products overseas is getting more vigorous. Besides concern over India's protection of its domestic steel industry, Japan is also worried about the more rough and tumble climate for global trade being engendered by incoming US President Donald Trump, and feels it must make a strong stand for open and fair international markets. —Agencies

## FED'S YELLEN CRITIQUES TAYLOR INTEREST RATE RULE

**WASHINGTON:** Federal Reserve chief Janet Yellen on Thursday expressed doubts about using a rigid formula to set interest rates, then had to defend her position to the author of that formula.

Speaking on the eve of the inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump, Yellen also repeated her opposition to a Congressional proposal that would audit the central bank any time it deviates from the strict rule, a move she said threatens the Fed's independence.

The Fed chair, who has been the target of criticism by Trump for her handling of monetary policy, once again argued against using formulaic and rigid rules for adjusting interest rates, including the well-known Taylor rule. The Taylor rule, originally published in 1993, calls for systematic adjustments in interest rates by the central bank based on just three economic variables, two of which are subject to interpretation.

While they can be "useful benchmarks" for the Fed, "the rules should not be followed mechanically, since doing so could have adverse consequences for the econ-



**STANFORD, CA:** Federal Reserve Board Chairwoman Janet Yellen discusses monetary policy and the economic outlook at Stanford University on Thursday in Stanford, California. —AFP

omy," she told the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research in California. The Taylor rule, for example, would have called for much higher interest rates during the slow US recovery, she said. But when it came time to answer questions from the audience, Stanford economics

professor John Taylor, the author of the rule, rose to challenge Yellen's stance.

He argued-politely-that Yellen's own graphs showed the Fed may have contributed to the financial crisis by keeping rates too low for too long. Yellen disagreed, saying the problems in the hous-

ing market began before there was any indication interest rates were too low. "To say that was responsible for the financial crisis, I guess I wouldn't agree with that," she told Taylor.

### Political influence

Taylor also wondered if Yellen's presentation wasn't just the sort of explanation of policy that Congress is asking for, but she said the House's Fed Oversight and Modernization Act goes much further. "We are and should be accountable to Congress," she said, but noted that the FORM act calls for government audits of Fed decisions any time it fails to follow a strict rule.

"I'm very opposed," because it is "essentially bringing short-term political influence into the determination of policy." In her lengthy speech explaining the calculations that go into decisions about the benchmark interest rate, Yellen said potential "surprises" in the world economy and the still-undetermined spending policies of the Trump administration could impact the course of monetary policy. —AFP

## FIVE QUESTIONS ON A US-CHINA TRADE WAR

### WASHINGTON, BEIJING TALK ABOUT RETALIATION

**BEIJING:** As Donald Trump takes office as the 45th president of the United States, Beijing will be watching closely amid fears a trade war could break out between the world's top two economies.

Trump has repeatedly blasted China's trade policies and threatened to slap huge tariffs of up to 45 percent on its goods, while Chinese media have countered that imports of American aircraft, smart phones, and agricultural products could suffer retaliation in any conflict.

#### What's at stake for the two countries, and the global economy as a whole? And who stands to lose more? Why is Trump so fixated on US-China trade?

The brash billionaire politician has long slammed US trade with China as lopsided and accused the country of manipulating its currency to gain an unfair advantage over US manufacturers.

While he is wrong that Beijing is keeping its currency low-the central bank now spends heavily to support the yuan and stem capital outflows-recent studies claim that the US lost 2 million jobs after China joined the World Trade Organization. Trump claims he can bring some of those jobs back through tougher negotiations with Beijing, but China's ministry of commerce warned Thursday that launching a trade war "will only make both countries suffer".

#### Who stands to lose more?

On the face of it, China: it maintains a huge trade surplus with the US-roughly \$30 billion per month in 2016, according to US Census data-and is in the midst of a tough economic transition

that would become significantly tougher if exports plummeted. To avoid that, Beijing is warning it could find ways to inflict maximum pain in event of a trade conflict, hinting through state media that it could retaliate against American companies that enjoy strong sales in China, such as Apple, GM, and Boeing. American soybean exports to China would also likely take a hit, impacting Trump's rural constituency in America's red states.

#### So will it happen?

Nobody knows. But the message from China's president Xi Jinping at Davos this week that "no one" will win in a trade war suggests an openness to compromise. And ahead of Trump's inauguration the Ministry of Commerce said China is "willing to work" with his administration to "generate benefits for businesses and consumers on both sides".

Trump's secretary of commerce pick Wilbur Ross did not mention broad tariffs in his confirmation hearing, but suggested Washington could use existing rules to apply punitive measures against particular companies-a sign trade action could be less sweeping than feared.

Business leaders from both China and the US would also agitate strongly against any sharp deterioration in economic ties. Last week's meeting between billionaire entrepreneur Jack Ma and Trump saw the Alibaba founder pledging to create one million US jobs-a dubious promise, but music to the ears of the new administration.

Is there room for compromise? Beijing has made some noise recently about further opening its market in a bid both to attract outside capital and

to ward off criticism of an uneven playing field. This week, China announced it would allow foreign companies to launch IPOs on its stock exchanges, and last month it said some foreign firms could operate fully-owned subsidiaries, rather than joint ventures, in sectors including rail transportation equipment and motorcycles.

Still, non-Chinese companies continue to complain about access, with 80 percent of US companies saying foreign firms feel less welcome in a recent American Chamber of Commerce in China survey. China ranked 84th globally-behind Saudi Arabia and Ukraine-in the World Bank's ease of doing business index for 2016, and second to last in an OECD report on restrictiveness towards foreign investment.

#### What next?

China's leadership will be closely watching Trump's first moves in office. (Though the inauguration is on Friday, he has said Monday will be day one of his administration.)

In a 100-day plan released before the election, Trump said that on his first day in office he would direct his secretary of the treasury to label China a currency manipulator. But in a video released after Trump's shock victory, the president-elect failed to mention the "day one" currency pledge.

He did, however, declare his intention to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an arduously negotiated Obama administration trade deal that Beijing detested as an effort to "contain" China. That move, at least, could please the Communist Party leadership watching nervously in Zhongnanhai, its headquarters in Beijing. —AFP

## GOLD EDGES LOWER AHEAD OF TRUMP INAUGURATION

**LONDON:** Gold prices dipped yesterday as investors expect US President-elect Donald Trump to calm markets with a return to conciliatory language in his inaugural address.

If Trump repeats the reassuring tone taken immediately after the election in November there will be scant need for gold's safe haven attributes, analysts said. "On the whole, we'd expect an appropriately presidential tone to be struck and that the dollar will gain and that bullion will once again be under pressure along with the rest of the precious metals complex," said Jonathan Butler, commodities analyst at Mitsubishi in London.

"However, if we get any of the campaign trail divisive rhetoric, that's probably going to sink that reflationary trade and boost gold as a safe haven." Trump is due to take the oath of office at 1700 GMT, after the close of European markets. Spot gold was down 0.2 percent at \$1,202.45 an ounce by 1234 GMT, while US gold futures fell 0.1 percent to \$1,202.20.

Also weighing on gold was a firmer dollar, which makes the metal more expensive for holders of other currencies. The dollar index, which measures the greenback against a basket of currencies, added 0.2 percent to 101.33. Better than expected US jobs, housing and factory data reinforced the view that the US economy is sufficiently robust to warrant interest rate rises.

Gold is highly sensitive to rising rates, which lift the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding assets such as bullion while boosting the dollar, in which it is priced.

The metal has risen more than 7 percent since dropping to its lowest in more than 10-1/2 months in December, though it has failed to break above a key level in recent days.

"Gold has dropped back from quite a significant technical level around \$1,220, a critical retracement of last year's high to low move. I would say from here the risks are skewed to the downside in the short term," Mitsubishi's Butler said.

In other precious metals, silver shed 0.5 percent to \$16.93 an ounce. Platinum slipped 0.5 percent to \$953 after touching a low of \$943.75 in the previous session, its worst since Jan 5. The decline in diesel vehicles in Europe is a threat to platinum prices, Macquarie said in a note. "In 2017, if the European (auto) market grows at the 2-3 percent rate our research group expects, a similar market share decline for diesel will mean falling sales and a hit to platinum demand of something like 35,000 oz." Palladium edged down 0.1 percent to \$753. — Reuters

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# Weekender



SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2017

The sculpture Tiger and Turtle - Magic Mountain is pictured in Duisburg, western Germany. — AFP

## NCIS: Los Angeles star Miguel Ferrer dies at 61

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## Britney Spears' friends are worried she is moving too fast

The 35-year-old pop star met her new beau Sam, 22, on the set of her music video for her single "Slumber Party" last year, and although the pair seem happy, Britney's pals are concerned she's been "thrown off-balance" by having a "new guy in her life" and is rushing into making the relationship more serious than it needs to be. A source told HollywoodLife.com: "Britney has been thrown off-balance by Sam, the hot new guy in her life. Her friends and family have been trying to warn her that she is moving too fast. "Those close to Britney are warning her that Sam may not be the best match for a star of her caliber. They are urging Britney to slow down with Sam, even though Britney is way into him and friends fear she trusts him maybe way more than she should." The blonde beauty - who has sons Sean, 11, and Jayden, 10, with ex-husband Kevin Federline - first sparked rumors of a romance with the personal trainer in November when the pair were spotted having dinner together, and quickly became "totally smitten." A source said previously: "This is the longest Britney has ever been out of a serious relationship and she's made no secret of the fact that she's been desperately lonely. She's been quietly dating for the past year, but Sam is the first man she's met who has swept her off her feet and she's totally smitten." The "Toxic" hit maker's romance with Sam comes after she revealed she was tired of men playing "mind games", and really wants to settle down with a "nice guy." She said: "A lot of men are about games. It's just the mind game with guys, the calling back and texting, it's just too much, it's silly. Actually, I'm not looking for men right now, I'm really happy with myself. I'm not looking for anything, I'm fine with the way I am. "I like someone that's just nice overall, just a nice guy really is groundbreaking in this world."



## NATALIE PORTMAN TO USE HER MATERNITY LEAVE TO WRITE A MOVIE

The 'Black Swan' actress is expecting her second child with husband Benjamin Millepied - with whom she already has five-year-old son Aleph - and is due to give birth in a matter of weeks. Natalie is going to take much-deserved break from filmmaking to focus on her new baby but she also wants to use that time off to create a big screen project which she can direct. The Oscar winner - who previously helmed 2015 drama 'A Tale of Love and Darkness' - said: "I will be having some maternity leave. I need to write, to take some time, get a little focus." Natalie is determined to use her craft to promote feminism in the world and thinks it's "crazy" that there aren't more "women's voices" being heard in film. Although the 35-year-old actress "loves watching" movies made by male filmmakers, she believes it's time to "make a change" and get more female-directed productions made by Hollywood. In an interview with The Guardian newspaper, she said: "Every year it's exclusively male-directed, written and filmed movies that we're talking about in awards season. Not that men shouldn't be making films. I love watching men's films. It's just crazy that there is such a minority of women's voices out there. "If someone notices that there's only one woman at the table they need to make a change. Or if they notice that there are no minorities getting prominent roles in film ... they need to make a change." And although the 'Jackie' star wants more female leaders in the world of cinema, she doesn't believe the world would be a better place if it were entirely run by women, as she says there's no "gender differences" when it comes to being "human beings."



## Kylie Jenner sent her love to Jordyn Woods following her dad's death

The 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians' star has called for "support and prayers" for her pal after her beloved father John passed away from cancer on Wednesday, just two weeks after being diagnosed with the disease. Kylie wrote on Instagram: "My Fire Ox, My Brother, My Soul Sister. Give Jordy & her family some support and prayers right now. "I love you the long way @jordynwoods. The other half of me .. When you cry I cry.(sic)" Jordyn confirmed the sad news on Instagram on Thursday but admitted the tragedy still hadn't sunk in. She shared on Instagram: "Last night heaven Got Another angel. My Daddy. Just two short weeks ago he was diagnosed with cancer and by that time it was too late. "I appreciate everyone's kind words and it means the world to me. It still doesn't feel real. Forever and Always.(sic)" Kylie, 19, and Jordyn have been close friends for a long time and the make-up guru generously splashed out \$70,000 on a car for her pal when she turned 18 in Sept 2015. At the time, Kylie shared a picture of the black convertible Mercedes-Benz on Instagram and wrote: "happy birthday jordyn. Thank you for being you. Most down to earth selfless human being! I hope you enjoy it. (sic)" And Jordyn was left stunned by the generous gift. She also shared a photo of the car and wrote: "There's no words to describe how I feel.. I just don't know what I did to deserve this. I can never thank @kyliejenner for motivating me to always do my best and always opening up new opportunities. Do good and good things will happen. Blessed and grateful always. Love you and thank you again to everyone who made me feel special on this 18th year. (sic)"



The Skokov Troop performs during the opening of the 41st Monte-Carlo International Circus Festival in Monaco. — AFP

## NCIS: Los Angeles star Miguel Ferrer dies at 61



This image released by CBS shows Miguel Ferrer in character as NCIS Assistant Director Owen Granger in NCIS: Los Angeles. — AP

**M**iguel Ferrer, who brought stern authority to his featured role on CBS' hit "NCIS: Los Angeles" and, before that, to NBC crime drama "Crossing Jordan," has died. CBS said Ferrer died Thursday of cancer at his Los Angeles home. He was 61. He had played assistant director Owen Granger on "NCIS: Los Angeles" since 2012. Before that, he played the chief medical examiner and gruff-but-supportive boss to series star Jill Hennessy for the six seasons of "Crossing Jordan."

A native of Santa Monica, California, Ferrer was the son of Academy Award-winning actor Jose Ferrer and singer-actress Rosemary Clooney, and a cousin of George Clooney, who issued a statement Thursday afternoon. "Today, history will mark giant changes in our world," Clooney said, "and lost to most will be that on the same day Miguel Ferrer lost his battle to throat cancer. But not lost to his family. Miguel made the world brighter and funnier and his passing is felt so deeply in our family that events of the day ... pale in comparison. We love you Miguel. We always will."

In his own statement, "NCIS: Los Angeles" show runner R Scott Gemmill called Ferrer "a man of tremendous talent who had a powerful dramatic pres-

ence onscreen, a wicked sense of humor and a huge heart."

Ferrer began his career in the early 1980s with guest shots on many TV series. In 1990 he scored a signature role as FBI Agent Albert Rosenfield on David Lynch's smash series "Twin Peaks." He reprised that character for the 1992 movie "Twin Peaks: Fire Walk with Me." He will encore yet again as Agent Rosenfield for Showtime's "Twin Peaks" revival airing this spring.

Along with TV, Ferrer appeared in more than 40 movies, including "RoboCop," where he played the villainous Bob Morton, designer of the title character, "Iron Man 3," where he portrayed the vice president, and "Traffic." Voiceover credits include "Superman: The Animated Series," "Robot Chicken" and "American Dad!" Before becoming an actor, he was a successful studio musician who played drums in a variety of bands, and toured with his mother and Bing Crosby. Survivors include his wife Lori and sons Lukas and Rafi, in addition to brothers Gabriel and Rafael and sisters Maria and Monsita, and sister-in-law and singer Debby Boone.—AP

## BELAFONTE TO CELEBRATE 90TH BIRTHDAY WITH NEW PROJECT

**H**arry Belafonte is turning 90 in a few weeks, and he's planning to use the milestone to release an album that will underscore part of his life's work - fostering racial harmony. A multi-ethnic children's choir will perform a new version of his classic "Island in the Sun" for a new anthology of his music, "When Colors Come Together: The Legacy of Harry Belafonte." He co-wrote the song for the 1957 film "Island in the Sun." It generated controversy at the time for its exploration of race and interracial romance.

"Most of the things that fuel prejudice, that fuels hate ... are contrived," Belafonte, who turns 90 on March 1, said in a release. "The differences that exist between us should be things that attract us to one another, not alienate us from one another." Belafonte has been a longtime civil rights activist, marching with the likes of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. He is an honorary co-chair of the Women's March today in Washington. The album is set for release on Feb 24. — AP



In this file photo, Harry Belafonte arrives at the charity gala Ein Herz fuer Kinder (A heart for children) in Berlin.



This file photo shows Chance the Rapper performing during the lighting ceremony for the 2016 National Christmas Tree in Washington.

## OBAMA PRAISED FOR BRIDGING GAP BETWEEN HIP-HOP, POLITICS

Not only is President Barack Obama the nation's first black president, but it's safe to say he has been America's first hip-hop commander-in-chief. Obama embraced hip-hop more than any of his predecessors: He's referenced Jay Z's lyrics and Kanye West in speeches, released playlists on Spotify that included Nas, Chance the Rapper, Mos Def and Method Man, and was caught dancing to Drake's "Hot Line Bling" at a White House event.



This file photo shows recording artists Jay-Z and Beyonce arriving on the West Front of the Capitol in Washington for the Presidential Barack Obama's ceremonial swearing-in ceremony during the 57th Presidential Inauguration. — AP Photos

And in a recent televised concert celebrating the opening of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, Obama was shown rapping along when Public Enemy's Chuck D performed "Fight the Power." Ice Cube called Obama an anomaly. "It will probably be a long time before we see another president do something like this," the Hall of Fame rapper said. "It was kind of a now-or-never thing." Throughout his presidency, which ends when President-elect Donald Trump takes office on Friday, Obama paved a way for several rap stars to enter the White House for political discussion and musical performances.

Concerts have taken place at the White House since the 1800s when President John Adams was the first occupant. A few rappers, such as Run-DMC, visited the mansion to meet previous presidents over the years. But the Obama administration gave them a prominent role. In 2011, Common performed poetry at an event at the White House, though Big Sean's 2014 performance is considered by some to be the first true rap performance at there, when he joined Ariana Grande for "Right There." Since then, a barrage of rappers have taken the stage there, including Wale and Kendrick

Lamar, whom Obama has praised often (he cited Lamar's "How Much a Dollar Cost from the rapper's black-empowerment album "To Pimp a Butterfly" as his favorite song of 2015). In November, BET saluted the Obamas with a star-studded concert celebrating a mixture of gospel, R&B and rap music; the president and first lady Michelle Obama joyously danced as De La Soul rapped their classic "Me Myself and I." Earlier this month, several hip-hop artists including Wale, Chance the Rapper and J. Cole took part in another private farewell jam at the White House.

### Jingle Barack

Obama held up flash cards as "Hamilton" creator Lin-Manuel Miranda performed a freestyle rap in Rose Garden area of the White House. Mrs. Obama even got into the rap act, performing a comedic one with former "Saturday Night Live" star Jay Pharoah to promote her college initiatives. (The president never tried to rap publicly himself, admitting once: "That's one thing I can't do is rap. I like rap but I cannot rap.") "Hip-hop doesn't hurt anybody," said Nas, who has visited the White House. "It helps people. Some of the nicest people in the world are hip-hop artists.

Obama respects it. He loves it. It's a part of his world. He is hip-hop. He's a hip-hop fan that makes him relatable. It makes him real." Last year, Obama invited several rappers - including Nicki Minaj, Rick Ross and Ludacris - to the White House to discuss different ways to continue the My Brother's Keeper initiative and spur justice reform in the United States. "It was a gathering of the minds," said Ludacris, who was once criticized by Obama for his politically-themed rap song called "Politics" in 2008. "That was extremely important for hip-hop, because he's giving us a voice. He's done a great job of supporting hip-hop and certain artists, continuing to say we should put out positive messages. I think he's done enough. We've made strides."

Now, several rappers are paying homage to Obama. Lamar said hip-hop owes Obama some gratitude for giving rap artists an opportunity to visit the White House. Chance the Rapper joined actor Kenan Thompson saluting Obama's presidency in holiday-themed tribute "Jingle Barack" on "Saturday Night Live" last month. DJ Khaled said he was honored to visit the White House for the My Brother's Keeper Initiative along with his rap cohorts. "Obama always represents hip-hop in so many ways," Khaled said. "His playlist is hip-hop. I've been to the White House. I'm hip-hop. It was a major key for me. He represents all cultures. That's what a president is supposed to do." —AP

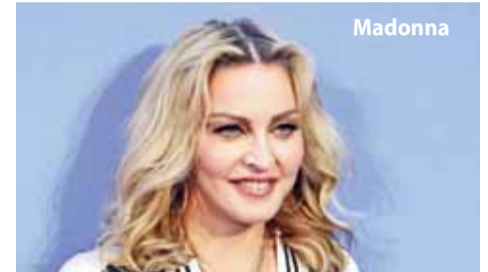
## Madonna on Trump: We have gone as low as we can go

Madonna, an outspoken critic of President-elect Donald Trump, is trying to put a positive spin on his yesterday's inauguration. "He's actually doing us a great service, because we have gone as low as we can go," she said Thursday night. "We can only go up from here, so what are we going to do? We have two choices, destruction and creation. I chose creation."

The superstar, dressed in all black and wearing a shirt that read "Feminist," spoke at the Brooklyn Museum with artist Marilyn Minter about art in a time of protest, among other things, in a discussion moderated by author and poet Elizabeth Alexander, who performed a work at the first inauguration of President Barack Obama. A clip of author James Baldwin, an inspiration of Madonna's, played before the talk, as did her 2013 short film "Secret Revolution," dedicated to people whose rights have been abused and denied. On the eve of Trump becoming president, both Madonna and Minter vowed to lead protests against him, including attending today's Women's March in Washington. "This is the most frightened I've ever been," Minter said. "The most qualified candidate who ever ran was defeated by the most unqualified candidate who ever ran, and it's all because of misogyny." Madonna said that while she was "horrified" Trump won the election over Hillary Clinton, she now believes it was necessary.

"I do believe that Trump was elected for a reason, to show us how lazy and un-unified and lack-

adaisical and taking for granted we've become of our freedom and the rights that we have as Americans," Madonna said. "I feel like people forgot what was written in the Constitution." She added: "They always say it's darkest before the dawn and I feel this had to happen to bring people together, so let's get this party started."



It wasn't all political talk. Madonna talked about her early days in New York, hanging with artists like Andy Warhol and Keith Haring, and how her kids are not the least bit impressed with her iconic career. "They want nothing to do with it," she said. "I always say with my kids, every day is a small crucifixion." Madonna also explained why she considers herself a feminist. "I believe that women have the right to be treated with the same human rights as men," she said. "I feel like we are still very far behind." — AP



People throw turnips at the Jarramplas as he makes his way through the streets beating his drum during the Jarramplas festival in the tiny southwestern Spanish town of Piornal, Spain. — AP

## Town fest sees thief figure pelted with turnips

Dozens of people ran through the streets of this tiny southwestern Spanish town Thursday trying to pelt a beast-like figure representing a farm thief with, appropriately, tons of turnips. The so-called Jarramplas festival, celebrated every Feb 19 and 20, centers around a town resident dressed up in a colorful costume and a horned helmet. The Jarramplas has to dance around the village facing a vicious onslaught of oversized turnips hurled at him by mobs of locals. Some 20 tons were to be used this year.

The origins of the festival are uncertain but there is general understanding that a thief was once hounded out of the village by a rain of vegetables. Only residents from Piornal can be a Jarramplas and it is an honor to be chosen from the decade-long waiting list. Mario Sanchez, who has a degree in business administration but is unemployed at the moment, speaks with passion and pride about being one of this year's

Jarramplas. "We have the sentiment of the festival inside us. We have lived it through our grandparents, parents," Sanchez said.

"It may appear a bit wild, perhaps people from outside won't understand it, but as you can see the people taking part enjoy themselves," he said. "There's no pain, no suffering. It is a beautiful festival." The first day of the festival is seen as a training session for more turnip-pelting yesterday. Over the years the festival has seen some changes, and nowadays the chosen Jarramplas are well-protected by helmets, gloves and chest shields, which together with their outfits, weigh some 40 kilograms (88 pounds), meaning they can't run that fast. They also have to cart a drum during the four dashes about the town each day. The Jarramplas are rarely injured but others often are. More than two dozen turnip-throwers and onlookers were treated for injuries. —AP



# Michelle Keegan can't leave the house without her eye lift cream

The 29-year-old actress has admitted she always carries around Janjira's Marine Radiant White Brightening Eye Lift lotion in her bag, which she has revealed she uses "every morning" right before she goes on set to start filming for a television series or her fashion shoots. Speaking about her essential beauty cosmetics, the 'Our Girl' star said: "I am championing this eye cream - it is by Janjira. I have it in my handbag, and use it every morning at the moment before I go on set." And the brunette beauty - who is married to former 'The Only Way Is Essex' star Mark Wright - has revealed she also "slathers" on the brands body butter, which leaves her skin feeling "so lovely and soft".

She added: "I've been slathering on this Janjira body butter. It smells really exotic and leaves my skin feeling so lovely and soft." Meanwhile, Michelle - who has recently launched her Spring/Summer 2017 collection for Lipsy London - has revealed she has had her fair share of over the top outfits and unusual styling when she was younger, but the brunette beauty believes she has changed her ways and believes "simplicity is the key" to looking great.

Speaking previously, she said: "I can't think of the biggest [fashion] regret. Don't get me wrong there's been a few, but I can't think of one that stands out. I'm sure there's been red car-

pet looks in the past where I've gone so OTT with my hair, the make-up, the dress, that I wouldn't do now. You're just new to it all and I just didn't know what was right and what was wrong at the time, and I was young at the time so I thought the bigger the better; the bigger the hair the better, the more make-up the better, the dress.

"And I always think now simplicity is the key. I prefer to wear a very simple outfit now and my hair to be simple, make-up to be very simple, and I think that comes across better in pictures." Although the star has admitted she has only recently perfected using the cosmetic product, she has revealed her go-to make-up item is lip balm because she not only applies it to her lips but also to her cheekbones and eyelids for a "glossy and dewy" look. Speaking previously about her beauty secrets, she said: "Definitely lip balm because I can use that on my cheekbones and on my eyelids to really moisturize. Last year, I felt like the style was matte [skin] but now this year, I think [the style is] quite glossy and dewy. I enjoyed [it] because I always put lip balm on my cheeks and eyelids. I think I made that up! I just started doing it in school, because I don't really wear make-up when studying."



## 76<sup>th</sup> Vienna Philharmonic Ball



Musical instruments are being removed to make space on the dance floor at the opening ceremony of the Ball of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in Vienna.



Conductor Semyon Bychkov and musicians perform at the opening ceremony of the Ball of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in Vienna.



Debutants perform during the opening ceremony of the 76th Vienna Philharmonic Ball. — AFP Photos

# ALEXA CHUNG STARS IN HER SEVENTH LONGCHAMP CAMPAIGN

The 33-year-old British model - who was scouted at the young age of 16 years old - is the face of the fashion houses latest Spring/Summer 2017 commercial, and the star has admitted she feels "honored" to collaborate with the brand again. The brunette beauty shared an image of her sporting a printed dress as she clutches at a blue handbag to her Instagram account. She captioned the post: "Ahhhh my 7th time fronting the @longchamp campaign! Honored to have been

chosen to work with you once more @sophiedelafontaine for this spring summer shoot, and thank you @mikaeljansson for warming the winter away. (sic).

Meanwhile, the fashion designer - who collaborated with the longstanding retailer Marks and Spencer, also known as M&S, and launched the capsule Archive for Alexa in 2016 - has admitted her friends are her "muses" for her designs, and she "always" has "someone" in mind when she is creat-

ing a new garment. Speaking previously, the creative mastermind - who unveiled her eponymous label in July last year, and has previously joined forces with AG Jeans and Madewell - said: "But, really, I just want my friends to like it and people that I know. When I'm making something, I always have someone in mind. For the navy blue suit, I was like, 'Oh, my friend Gillian would love that.' Or the trench for Tennessee. They're my muses."



Alexa chung



**BERLIN**  
FASHION WEEK



Models present creation by Atelier About during the Berlin Fashion Week in Berlin yesterday. — AFP Photos

Models present creation by Isabel Vollrath at the Berlin Fashion Week in Berlin yesterday.



**MEN'S  
FASHION WEEK**



Models present creation by Japanese fashion designer Junya Watanabe during the men's Fashion Week for the Fall/Winter 2017/2018 collection in Paris yesterday. — AFP Photos

**Iris Law thinks she looks like her mother in her Burberry Beauty campaign**

The 16-year-old model - who is the daughter of 44-year-old actor Jude Law and his ex-wife Sadie Frost - loved the "timeless" look Wendy Rowe created for the advertisements, and the teenager admits she can see a lot of similarities with old pictures of her 51-year-old actress parent. Iris - who was announced as the face of the British designer brand earlier this week - said: "Wendy did a fresh dewy skin, simple eye and a strong red lip. "This look is timeless and reminded me of all the old pictures of my mum when she was in her twenties - so iconic."

The brunette beauty has admitted she never used to use lip

color because she struggled to make it look "neat", but she's grown more confident now thanks to her new favorite Burberry products. She explained to Look magazine: "I used to refrain from using the lip colors as I struggled to get a neat finish. "They'd often end up looking smudged. But the Liquid Lip Velvet lipsticks are so easy to use, they've made me love using lip color. "I apply it to the middle of my bottom lip and use my finger to move the tint across my lips so that the coverage is light. "The color is super pigmented so you can vary the finish any way you want."





Models wear creations as part of Rick Owens Men's Fall/Winter 2017-2018 fashion collection, presented in Paris.

# Travel meets star power at Louis Vuitton's Paris mens' show

**T**ravel, trekking and urban exploration defined Thursday's installment of Paris Menswear Week. And did someone mention celebrities? Here are the highlights of the day's fall/winter 2017 shows:

#### Louis Vuitton's Supreme front row

The word "Supreme" printed on the looks paraded down the catwalk just about said it all. When it comes to fashion shows and celebrity pull, Louis Vuitton is indeed a cut above the rest. Photographers went wild as Kate Moss arrived with slicked-back hair and dressed to the nines in Louis Vuitton, including leggings and a multicolored sweater. The 43-year-old model sat next to David Beckham, who opted for a soft-beige Louis Vuitton knit turtleneck and the safety of his shades. The front row carried additional evidence of the house's PR coup in the forms of Usher, actors James Marsden

and Will Poulter, and sports stars Rio Ferdinand and Lewis Hamilton. A seasoned fashion performer, Moss was the first to dart out of the show venue - and the glare of the cameras - as soon as the display ended.

#### New York, New York: Vuitton-Style

Travel-conscious Louis Vuitton looked to the Big Apple for inspiration this season, producing a collection that celebrated New York of the 1970s, 1980s and early-1990s. The chic, loose-tailored coats recalled the late artist Jean-Michel Basquiat in Manhattan and mixed with logo-filled denim to summon Harlem of the '80s to nice effect. Excessive glittering jewelry, meanwhile, was more than reminiscent of the heady days of Studio 54. "It's uptown and downtown," designer Kim Jones said. "Artists and musicians, friends and heroes." But this was a Paris show at heart.

The printed French silk shirts, work wear items in luxury cashmere and alligator, as well as the venue - Paris' Palais-Royal) - ensured no one forgot that. Sumptuous pajama styles, a Jones signature, delved into the archives and recreated prints from 1930s Louis Vuitton advertisements. It was a nice touch that reined in the edginess and recalled the heritage house's classical roots. The only possible drawback of the strong collection was the over-use of the "Louis Vuitton" branding and LV monogram, which tended to distract the eye.

#### Issey Miyake goes trekking

Urban outfits that can weather the extremes of nature was the highly prescient theme at Issey Miyake. Fashionistas holding coffee cups braved the frosted gardens of Paris' Jardin des Plantes Thursday morning for the fall-winter 2017 collection, with some unfortunate ones slipping on the soil and begrudging the frost. But the clothes on the catwalk provided some functional ideas for how to join forces with and embrace nature instead.

Textured shirts hand-printed in pop patterns and inspired by white birch forests jazzed up the start of the show. But the style crescendo came later - in loose sweaters and cardigan jackets conceived in luxurious wool-cut jacquard that reflected the changing hues of autumn leaves. A 1983 archive coat in



Fashion designer Rick Owens acknowledges applause at the end of his Men's Fall/Winter 2017-2018 fashion collection, presented in Paris. — AP Photos



divine violet also was a standout, cut beautifully in long billowing proportions of washed nylon taffeta. Fashionistas might be pleased to know that the garments were, according to the program notes, all lightweight and wrinkle-resistant - and could probably endure other kinds of fall.

**Rick Owens' Style Feast**

Rick Owens conjured an artistic feast Thursday in a surreal mix of gothic styles and abstract plays on (over-)size. As always for the American-born fashion master, there was method to the madness and great complexity at work behind simple looking silhouettes. The leitmotif of the 41 designs was the horizontal line. Lines appeared on coats as paneling or in the grooves of huge, multicolored bubble jacket sections.

They were haphazardly banded around the bodies of waif-like models with long grungy hair. Elsewhere, light fabric was tied around the neck and shoulders to hold it together. It evoked a rudimentary bandage, or perhaps over-stuffed sleeping bag casing. Silhouettes were long and loose - and at times seemed to intentionally unfurl at the seams. Whatever the intention, it's clear why Owens is so often compared to an artist. Each piece was unique.

**Dries Van Noten**

It was a pared-down affair for Dries Van Noten. The Belgian designer riffed on the wide shoulder, sartorial styles and baggy knit sweaters of the on-trend early 1980s. The retro looks were accessorized with pointed, winkle picker shoes. But proceedings at Thursday's fall-winter show stayed classic and packed no surprises. That's unusual for Van Noten, a designer who is one of the original members of the famed Antwerp Six avant-garde fashion group. In a play-safe collection that showcased traditional fabrics, single- and double-breasted suits filed by among tweeds and long woolen coats. — AP



Models wear creations for Louis Vuitton Men's Fall Winter 2017-2018 fashion collection.

Models wear creations for Issey Miyake Men's Fall Winter 2017-2018 fashion collection.

## US SUES ORACLE, SAYS IT PAYS WHITE MEN MORE THAN OTHERS

**NEW YORK:** The US Department of Labor has filed a lawsuit against Oracle, claiming that the technology giant has a "systemic practice" of paying white male workers more than their non-white and female counterparts with the same job titles.

The suit also says that the company favors Asian workers in its recruiting and hiring practices for product development and other technical roles, which resulted in hiring discrimination against non-Asian applicants. In a statement, Oracle Corporation on Wednesday called the lawsuit "politically motivated, based on false allegations and wholly without merit."

The Labor Department said the lawsuit is the result of a review of Oracle's equal employment opportunity practices at its headquarters in Redwood Shores, California. According to the suit, Oracle has refused to comply with the agency's "routine requests" for employment data and records.

"As a federal contractor, Oracle is prohibited from engaging

in employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity or national origin and is required to take affirmative action to ensure that equal employment opportunity is provided to applicants and employees in all aspects of employment," the Labor Department said.

Earlier this month, the Labor Department also sued Google, saying the company has refused to provide the department with employee compensation records and other information as part of an audit designed to ensure it isn't discriminating against workers based on gender or race. Oracle, Google and other technology companies have made public commitments to improving gender and racial diversity in recent years. But change has been slow to come, and the companies continue to be dominated by white (and sometimes Asian) men, especially in technical and leadership positions. — AP



REDWOOD CITY: This June 18, 2012, file photo shows Oracle headquarters in Redwood City, California. — AP

## IMPACT OF JOB-STEALING ROBOTS A GROWING CONCERN AT DAVOS

**DAVOS:** Open markets and global trade have been blamed for job losses over the last decade, but global CEOs say the real culprits are increasingly machines. And while business leaders gathered at the annual World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos relish the productivity gains technology can bring, they warned this week that the collateral damage to jobs needs to be addressed more seriously. From taxi drivers to healthcare professionals, technologies such as robotics, driverless cars, artificial intelligence and 3-D printing mean more and more types of jobs are at risk. Adidas, for example, aims to use 3-D printing in the manufacture of some running shoes. "Jobs will be lost, jobs will evolve and this revolution is going to be ageless, it's going to be classless and it's going to affect everyone," said Meg Whitman, chief executive of Hewlett Packard Enterprise.

So while some supporters of Donald Trump and Brexit may hope new government policies will bring lost jobs back to America's Rust Belt or Britain's industrial north, economists estimate 86 percent of US manufacturing job losses are actually down to productivity, according to the WEF's annual risks report. "Technology is the big issue and we don't acknowledge that," Mark Weinberger, chairman of consultancy EY, said on Thursday, arguing there was a tendency to always blame trading partners. The political backdrop is prompting CEOs to take more seriously the challenge of long-life training of workforces to keep up with the exponential growth of technological advances. "I think what we're reaching now is a time when we may have to find alternative careers through our lifetime," Microsoft Chief Executive Satya Nadella told Reuters.

Over the last decade, more jobs have been lost to technology than any other factor, and John Drzik, head of global risk at insurance broker Marsh, expects more of the same. "That is going to raise challenges, particularly given the political context," Drzik, who helped compile the WEF report, said.

Compared to clamping down on immigration by tightening borders, dealing with the impact of technology destroying jobs is some-

thing that is perhaps even less easily controlled. For while many advanced technologies remain more expensive than low- or medium-skilled labor in the near term, the shift is likely to accelerate as costs come down.

### Widening gap

Technological advancements require governments, businesses and academic institutions to develop more educated and highly skilled workforces, executives in Davos said. But this shift to skilled workers also widens the income gap and fuels growing inequality. Jonas Prising, CEO of staffing firm ManpowerGroup, noted that US unemployment is only about 2 to 2.5 percent among college-educated people but 9 or 10 percent among those with low or no skills. "The idea that we would ban automation as part of an evolution within the manufacturing industry, is not really part of the discussion," Prising said. He pointed to policies in countries like Denmark and Italy, where there is a focus on employability of workers. "If we don't own responsibility (for the problem of displaced workers), it's only going to get bigger," Procter & Gamble Chief Executive David Taylor said.

### Brawn and brain

The scope of the employment risk from what the WEF calls the "fourth industrial revolution" which "blurs the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres" is unclear. A University of Oxford study in 2013 said nearly half of US jobs were at risk, while in 2015 Forrester Research predicted a net loss of only 7 percent by 2025, as some lost jobs will be replaced with new ones.

Forrester predicts that by 2019, one-quarter of all job tasks will be offloaded to software robots, physical robots, or customer self-service automation. Even the corner office may not be safe. "CEOs feel reasonably confident we are not going to be replaced by artificial intelligence," Inga Beale, CEO of the Lloyd's of London insurance market, said. "But I'm sure there will be a time!" — Reuters

## NY LAWSUITS BLAME SOCIAL MEDIA IN TERROR ATTACKS

**NEW YORK:** The families of victims of terror attacks in Paris, Brussels and Israel are blaming social media companies including Facebook and Twitter for facilitating communications among terrorists. Twitter says it has suspended hundreds of thousands of user accounts in the past 18 months for threatening or promoting acts of terrorism. But that isn't enough, say lawyers for the families of terror victims, including a brother and sister killed in last year's bomb attacks in Brussels and an American college student slaughtered in Paris.

In a string of lawsuits filed in New York, they say they want Twitter and Facebook to pay damages for failing to stop violent extremists from using their platforms to recruit followers, intimidate enemies and raise money.

"If you or I tried to send money to Hamas, you wouldn't get around the block," said Robert Tolchin, a lawyer for the families of Brussels attack victims Alexander and Sascha Pinczowski and Paris massacre victim Nohemi Gonzalez. "Banks are required to check before they do any wire transfers. Why is it any different to provide a communications platform to Hamas, to ISIS?"

Relatives of those three victims filed a federal lawsuit against Twitter earlier this month, saying the San Francisco company violated the US Anti-terrorism Act by providing material support to terrorists. It seeks unspecified damages.

Another lawsuit filed last year on behalf of five people killed or injured in terror attacks linked to Hamas blames Facebook Inc, saying it provides material support to Hamas. The plaintiffs include the families of Taylor Force, a Vanderbilt University student and Lubbock, Texas native stabbed to death in Tel Aviv last March, Yaakov Naftali Fraenkel, a 16-year-old dual Israeli-American citizen kidnapped and killed in Israel in 2014, and 3-month-old Chaya Zissel Braun, who was killed in 2014 when a Hamas operative drove his car into a crowd at a train station in Jerusalem. That suit was combined with a third lawsuit brought on behalf of 20,000 Israelis seeking a court order requiring Facebook to stop providing services to terrorists.

Similar lawsuits across the country have been rejected by the courts on grounds that the companies are protected by the Communications Decency Act, which bars social-networking companies from being sued for speech used by their customers.

"I'm confused why new lawsuits are continuing to be filed because I think these lawsuits are unmeritorious and it seems like the plaintiffs are not directing their ire toward the proper targets," said Eric Goldman, a professor at the Santa Clara University School of Law. "Many social media companies have taken extra steps above and beyond the law to further reduce terrorist content."

In court papers, Facebook is fighting back, saying the material support claim is not new and it's been routinely dismissed by the courts. "Facebook has zero tolerance for terrorism," the Cupertino, California-based company wrote. "It condemns terrorist actions, prohibits terrorist content on Facebook, and swiftly removes any reported terrorist content." Twitter said in a statement that it condemns the use of its services to promote terrorism. "This type of behavior, or any violent threat, is not permitted on our service," it said, adding that it has suspended over 360,000 accounts in the last 18 months for promoting violent extremism, primarily related to the Islamic State.

For legal support, Twitter cites a November ruling at a US court in San Francisco brought by relatives of two US government contractors shot and killed in 2015 at a law enforcement training center in Amman, Jordan. US District Judge William H. Orrick said the suit was barred by the Communications Decency Act.

Alexander Pinczowski, 29, and Sascha Pinczowski, 26, were Dutch siblings who lived in New York. They died when suicide bombers detonated explosives at a Brussels airport. Nohemi Gonzalez, 23, was among 129 people killed by gunmen in Paris in 2015. She a student at California State University, Long Beach and had been spending a semester in Paris studying industrial design. — AP

# KASPERSKY LAB ENHANCES ENTERPRISE INCIDENT RESPONSE WITH KASPERSKY THREAT LOOKUP

OFFERING RELIABLE, GLOBAL INSIGHT ON LATEST THREATS, LEGITIMATE OBJECTS

**DUBAI:** Kaspersky Lab recently announced the global availability of Kaspersky Threat Lookup - a security intelligence service aimed at enhancing enterprise incident response and cyber-security forensics capabilities. Kaspersky Threat Lookup provides access to several petabytes of global security intelligence data that is being updated almost in real-time. This always-on web service helps businesses to properly analyze digital evidence in light of a security incident and obtain the insights needed to speed up detection and remediation.

According to a survey of more than 4,000 business representatives worldwide, conducted by Kaspersky Lab and B2B International in 2016, time is the crucial factor in incident detection and response. The survey findings show that enterprises pay over 100 percent more in recovery fees if they are unable to detect a security breach in a short time. The average recovery cost of a breach that stays undetected for a week or more is over \$US1 million, while instantly discovered incidents cost US\$400k to mitigate, almost half the overall industry average. Detection and response are some of the most time-critical activities on the agenda of security operations centers (SOCs) in organizations around the world, and both require reliable security intelligence.

## Accelerating incident response

Kaspersky Threat Lookup is the solution of choice for corpo-

rate IT security teams to accelerate their incident response and forensic capabilities. Once suspicious indicators such as IP, URL or file hash have been identified by a corporate IT security officer, they can be entered into the service web interface. In return, users are provided with meaningful and structured information about a potential threat and offers global insights that help identify a targeted attack in progress.

Kaspersky Lab's security intelligence is collected from various sources including Kaspersky Lab's cloud security network, spam traps, botnet monitoring initiatives and web crawlers. More importantly, that data is constantly being cross-checked by Kaspersky Lab's own research team and automatically correlated. The solution offers corporate security officers contextual intelligence capabilities. It enables them to quickly investigate the source of the problem, distinguish between potentially malicious and benign actions, and obtain data for fast and efficient incident investigation. Overall, Kaspersky Threat Lookup allows SOC operators to prioritize and act efficiently in the typical scenario of hundreds and thousands alerts received every day.

Kaspersky Threat Lookup offers enterprises the same level of intelligence that Kaspersky Lab specialists use to analyze the most sophisticated threats, and includes indicators of compromise for these new attacks. The solution makes it possible to match data obtained during an investigation due to vast knowledge of mali-

cious objects, as well as access to one of the largest databases of clean objects, part of the Kaspersky Whitelist service.

One of the early adopters of Kaspersky Threat Lookup service is INTERPOL. Kaspersky Lab has been offering early access to the organization's threat intelligence according to the expertise sharing agreement to help investigate cybercrime.

Veniamin Levtsov, Vice President, Enterprise Business at Kaspersky Lab, comments: "In 2016 we have rapidly expanded our range of Security Intelligence Services, including Threat Data Feeds, to provide businesses with the actionable intelligence required for faster detection. But in order to significantly reduce recovery costs, businesses need to improve detection together with response and forensic capabilities. That is, they need to understand the scope of the problem, identify the source of the security event and collect necessary intelligence to mitigate the threat. The Kaspersky Threat Lookup portal is an important addition to the family of Security Intelligence Services that directly addresses these challenges. It provides instant access to Kaspersky Lab's threat intelligence directly from cloud sources and contains comprehensive information on requested file hash, URL or IP." More information about Kaspersky Lab's Threat Lookup services can be found on the company's Security Intelligence Services portal. Extra details are available in the detailed service description (PDF).

## UBER PAYS \$20M TO SETTLE CLAIMS OF DRIVER DECEPTION

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Uber Technologies is paying \$20 million to settle allegations that it duped people into driving for its ride-hailing service with false promises about how much they would earn and how much they would have to pay to finance a car.

The agreement announced Thursday with the Federal Trade Commission covers statements Uber made from late 2013 until 2015 while trying to recruit more drivers to expand its service and remain ahead of its main rival, Lyft.

The FTC alleged that most Uber drivers were earning far less in 18 major U.S. cities than Uber published online. Regulators also asserted that drivers wound up paying substantially more to lease cars than the company had claimed. "Many consumers sign up to drive for Uber, but they shouldn't be taken for a ride about their earnings potential or the cost of financing a car through Uber," said Jessica Rich, director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection. In a statement, Uber said it's pleased to resolve the dispute. "We've made many improvements to the driver experience over the last year and will continue to focus on ensuring that Uber is the best option for anyone looking to earn money on their own schedule," the San Francisco company said.

Most of the proceeds from Uber's settlement will be paid out to drivers. Documents filed in San Francisco federal court didn't spell out how many people will get a cut of the settlement or what the average payment will be. Uber has grown into a cultural phenomenon largely by undercutting the prices typically charged by taxis with rides that can be quickly summoned on its smartphone app. To ensure cars are widely available, Uber has persuaded hundreds of thousands of people in the US to become drivers by dangling the lure of making money at any time that's convenient for them. The drivers are treated as independent contractors, another contentious issue because the classification excludes them from many of the benefits and protections given to full-time employees.

As part of its recruitment efforts, Uber has floated enticing estimates about how much drivers can make picking up passengers in densely populated cities. The FTC's case took issue with how Uber presented its earnings estimates.

For instance, in a statement published on Uber's website from May 2015 through August 2015, CEO Travis Kalanick boasted that the mid-range annual incomes of the service's New York city drivers exceeded \$90,000 and the mid-range annual earnings of its San Francisco drivers topped \$74,000, according to the FTC. The agency's investigation determined that the mid-range income for the New York drivers was nearly one-third less, at \$61,000, 28 percent less in San Francisco, at \$53,000, during the year leading up to Kalanick's statement.—AP

## US CLOSES PROBE INTO FATAL TESLA AUTOPILOT CRASH, NO DEFECT FOUND

**WASHINGTON:** The US Transportation Department closed Thursday its investigation into a fatal crash involving a Tesla car on autopilot, saying no defects were found in the system, including the emergency braking feature. No "safety-related defect" was identified in May's crash on a Florida highway, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration spokesman Bryan Thomas told reporters. "The investigation is closed," he said.

The NHTSA also looked at dozens of other non-fatal crashes that happened when the Autopilot feature was in use in Teslas, including the Model S involved in the fatal crash, Thomas told reporters in a conference call.

While no defect is apparent in the overall system or the Automatic Emergency Braking feature, and no further investigation is needed for now, "the closing of this investigation does not constitute a finding by NHTSA that no safety-related defect exists," he said. "The agency will monitor the issue and reserves the right to take future action if warranted by the circumstances."

Tesla founder Elon Musk tweeted shortly after the NHTSA finding was announced, calling the final report "very positive." Thomas said the investigation indicated the fatal Florida crash, in which a Tesla was hit by a truck crossing a highway, involved "a number of human factor issues," including use of the automatic system beyond its design.

### Distracted drivers

Those issues likely will have implications for how major automakers, including Mercedes and BMW, design the next generation of autonomous driving features, to limit driver misuse, including distracted driving, as much as possible.

And Thomas questioned the marketing of the technology as an "autopilot" feature, which could contribute to drivers overestimating the car's capability. These features "require the continual and full attention of the driver" so that they are "prepared to take action to avoid crashes."

New technology "must be designed with the inattentive driver in mind" to ensure safety, he said. The agency "will aggressively oversee new technology" put on the road and continue to investigate during this rapid period of innovation.

The investigation found that in the fatal crash in Florida, the driver would have had seven seconds to react when the tractor trailer crossed the highway. The impact sheared off the top of the car, killing the driver. That was enough time "to take some action" but it is impossible to know if he could have avoided the accident entirely, Thomas said.

The car was traveling at 74 miles (119 kilometers) per hour

ahead of impact in an area where the posted speed limit was 65 miles per hour, NHTSA found.

Some reports said the driver may have been watching a DVD at the time, ignoring Tesla's warning to remain vigilant while using the Autopilot system. Thomas noted the software update Tesla rolled out in September that included revised driver monitoring, including a "strike out" feature to shut off the system for the remainder of the drive after an "extended period of driver disengagement."



**WASHINGTON:** This file photo taken on December 20, 2016 shows the Tesla logo seen in Washington, DC. — AFP

The system allows the vehicle to automatically change lanes, manage speed and brake to avoid a collision. The system may be overridden by the driver. Tesla acknowledged after the Florida crash that its sensors failed to pick up the white side of the truck against a brightly lit sky. Backers of autonomous driving say that despite the Tesla fatality, the technology is likely to eliminate a large percentage of accidents, which are attributed mainly to human error.

Most major automakers are aiming to produce autonomous cars in the next five years, including BMW, South Korea's Kia, Germany's Volkswagen and General Motors, which plans to test the technology with ridesharing company Lyft. In addition, Google has driven its autonomous cars some 1.5 million miles with only some minor dustups. — AFP

**MOVIES HD**  
ACTION

- 00:30 Colors
- 02:30 Divergent
- 05:15 Real Steel
- 07:30 Hidalgo
- 09:45 Six Days Seven Nights
- 11:45 Betrayed
- 13:45 Real Steel
- 16:00 Hidalgo
- 18:15 Six Days Seven Nights
- 20:00 S.W.A.T.
- 22:00 Lucy

**MOVIES**  
DRAMA

- 01:00 The World Made Straight
- 03:00 Matters Of The Heart
- 05:00 Odd Thomas
- 07:00 Abandoned
- 09:00 A Teacher's Obsession
- 11:00 Odd Thomas
- 13:00 The Beat Beneath My Feet
- 15:00 Standoff
- 17:00 A Teacher's Obsession
- 19:00 Fading Gigolo
- 21:00 Catch Me Daddy
- 23:00 The Riot Club

**MOVIES HD**  
FAMILY

- 01:00 Gulliver's Travels
- 03:00 The Education Of Little Tree
- 05:00 Muppets Most Wanted
- 07:00 Gulliver's Travels
- 09:00 Despicable Me 2
- 11:00 Muppets Most Wanted
- 13:00 Bonta
- 15:00 Inside Out
- 17:00 Zootropolis
- 19:00 Captain Sabertooth And The Treasure Of Lama Rama
- 21:00 Bonta
- 23:00 Inside Out

**MOVIES HD**

- 01:30 Hitman: Agent 47
- 03:15 Barely Lethal
- 05:15 Chloe And Theo
- 07:00 Home
- 09:00 Barely Lethal
- 11:00 San Andreas
- 13:00 Captain America: Civil War
- 15:30 Dad's Army
- 17:30 The Best Of Me
- 19:45 Black Mass
- 22:00 By The Sea

**MOVIES HD**  
COMEDY

- 00:00 Tim And Eric's Billion Dollar Movie
- 02:00 Hot Pursuit
- 04:00 A Lot Like Love
- 06:00 Under The Tuscan Sun
- 08:00 Accidental Love
- 10:00 A Lot Like Love
- 12:00 Hot Pursuit
- 14:00 What If
- 16:00 Accidental Love
- 18:00 The Invention Of Lying
- 20:00 Growing Up And Other Lies
- 22:00 The Ladies Man

**MOVIES HD**  
FESTIVAL

- 01:30 Go For Sisters
- 03:30 Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps
- 05:45 Searching For Bobby Fischer
- 07:45 Ronaldo
- 09:30 Roger Waters The Wall
- 12:00 Searching For Bobby Fischer
- 14:00 Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps
- 16:30 Tracks
- 18:30 Lost River
- 20:30 Almost Famous
- 23:15 Heaven's Gate

**MOVIES HD**  
KIDS

- 01:15 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 02:45 Space Warriors
- 04:30 Worms
- 06:00 Tarzan
- 07:45 Virus Attack The First Antivirus
- 09:30 Hey Arnold! The Movie
- 11:00 Rugrats In Paris: The Movie
- 12:30 Space Warriors
- 14:15 True Story Of Puss'n Boots

- 16:00 Pixies
- 18:00 Hey Arnold! The Movie
- 20:00 Columbus In The Last Journey
- 22:00 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
- 23:30 Pixies

**MOVIES HD**  
PREMIERE

- 00:00 Out Of The Dark
- 01:45 The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel
- 03:45 Oblivion
- 06:00 Tommy Cooper: Not Like That, Like This
- 08:00 The Lady In The Van
- 10:00 The Lovers
- 12:00 Everest
- 14:15 The Last 5 Years
- 16:00 The Lady In The Van
- 18:00 Spooks: The Greater Good
- 20:00 No Escape
- 22:00 Knock Knock

**STAR MOVIES HD**

- 00:00 Tiptoes
- 01:30 A Walk To Remember
- 03:15 Battlefield Earth
- 05:15 The Upside Of Anger
- 07:15 Human Stain
- 09:00 Runaway Bride
- 11:00 The Last Kiss
- 12:45 Million Dollar Arm
- 15:00 Tiptoes
- 16:45 Ginger & Rosa
- 18:15 A Walk To Remember
- 20:00 Captain America: The Winter Soldier
- 22:15 Snow Cake

**sundance CHANNEL**

- 00:00 Girafada
- 01:30 Hollywood's Best Film Directors
- 02:00 Kate Plays Christine
- 04:00 Krishna
- 05:30 Vernon, Florida
- 06:30 Movie Talk
- 07:00 Blood Thunder: The Sound Of Alberts
- 08:00 Blood Thunder: The Sound Of Alberts
- 09:05 Detroit Unleaded
- 10:35 Bob And The Trees
- 12:05 Swedish Auto
- 13:45 Hollywood's Best Film Directors
- 14:15 Blood Thunder: The Sound Of Alberts
- 15:15 Blood Thunder: The Sound Of Alberts
- 16:20 Battle For Britain
- 16:35 Letter's From The South
- 18:20 Mary Is Happy, Mary Is Happy
- 20:25 Paper Covers Rock
- 22:00 Richard Linklater: Dream Is Destiny
- 23:40 Bob And The Trees

**ANIMAL PLANET HD**

- 00:50 River Monsters
- 01:45 Bondi Vet
- 02:40 Predators Up Close With Joel Lambert
- 03:35 Tanked
- 04:25 Gorilla Doctors
- 05:15 Gator Boys
- 06:02 River Monsters
- 06:49 Predators Up Close With Joel Lambert
- 07:36 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:00 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:25 Predators Up Close With Joel Lambert
- 09:15 Lone Star Law
- 10:10 The Vet Life
- 11:05 Wildest Europe
- 12:00 Treehouse Masters
- 12:55 Bondi Vet
- 13:50 Untamed & Uncut
- 14:45 Rogue Nature With Dave Salmoni
- 15:40 Untamed & Uncut
- 16:35 My Wild Affair: The Rhino Who Joined My Family
- 17:30 Gorilla Doctors
- 18:25 Untamed & Uncut
- 19:20 Lone Star Law
- 20:15 Predators Up Close With Joel Lambert
- 21:10 The Vet Life
- 22:05 Treehouse Masters
- 23:00 Lone Star Law
- 23:55 Gator Boys

**ci**

- 00:00 My Crazy Ex
- 01:00 The Haunting Of...
- 02:00 My Haunted House
- 03:00 Monster In My Family
- 04:00 My Crazy Ex
- 05:00 The Haunting Of...
- 06:00 My Haunted House
- 07:00 The First 48
- 10:00 Private Crimes
- 10:30 Private Crimes
- 11:00 Homicide Hunter

- 12:00 Frenemies
- 13:00 It Takes A Killer
- 14:00 The First 48
- 16:00 Monster In My Family
- 17:00 Crimes That Shook Australia
- 19:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
- 20:00 It Takes A Killer
- 21:00 The First 48
- 23:00 Measuring Evil: Britain's Worst Killers

**Discovery Family**

- 00:30 Redesign My Brain
- 01:20 Superhuman Showdown
- 02:10 Now That's Funny
- 03:00 Untamed & Uncut
- 03:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor
- 04:40 How It's Made
- 05:05 How It's Made
- 05:30 Dirty Jobs
- 06:20 Mythbusters
- 07:00 Kenny The Shark
- 07:25 Kids vs Film
- 07:50 Doki
- 08:15 Doki
- 08:40 Too Cute! Pint-Sized
- 12:50 Mythbusters
- 17:00 Redesign My Brain
- 17:50 Redesign My Brain
- 18:40 Superhuman Showdown
- 19:30 Kids Do The Craziest Things
- 19:55 Kids Do The Craziest Things
- 20:20 Guinness World Records Smashed UK
- 21:10 Troy
- 22:00 Untamed & Uncut
- 22:50 Untamed & Uncut
- 23:40 Kids Do The Craziest Things

**HISTORY HD**

- 00:20 Ozzy & Jack's World Detour
- 01:10 Counting Cars
- 01:35 Counting Cars
- 02:00 American Pickers
- 02:50 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 03:15 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 03:40 Shark Wranglers
- 04:30 American Restoration
- 05:00 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us
- 06:00 Leepu And Pitbull
- 06:50 Leepu And Pitbull
- 07:40 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 08:05 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 08:30 Counting Cars
- 08:55 Mountain Men - Closest Calls
- 09:45 American Restoration
- 10:10 American Restoration
- 10:35 Shipping Wars
- 11:00 Shipping Wars
- 11:25 Car Hunters
- 11:50 Car Hunters
- 12:15 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 13:05 Ozzy & Jack's World Detour
- 13:55 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 14:20 Pawn Stars South Africa
- 14:45 Time Team
- 15:35 Counting Cars
- 16:00 Car Hunters
- 16:25 Car Hunters
- 16:50 American Restoration
- 17:15 American Restoration
- 17:40 Shipping Wars
- 18:05 Shipping Wars
- 18:30 Pawn Stars
- 18:55 Storage Wars
- 19:20 Ozzy & Jack's World Detour
- 20:10 Alone
- 21:00 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 21:50 Forged In Fire
- 22:40 Time Team
- 23:30 Alone

**NAT GEO people**

- 00:10 Eat Street
- 00:35 Baking Good, Baking Bad
- 01:00 The Shelbourne
- 01:25 Carnival Eats
- 02:15 Raw Travel
- 03:05 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
- 03:30 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 03:55 Croatia's Finest
- 04:45 The Shelbourne
- 05:35 David Rocco's Dolce India
- 06:25 Poh & Co
- 06:50 Raw Travel
- 07:15 Maximum Foodie
- 07:40 Eat Street
- 08:30 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 08:55 Croatia's Finest
- 09:45 Street Food Around The World
- 10:10 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 10:35 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
- 11:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 11:50 Dog Whisperer
- 12:40 The Shelbourne
- 13:05 Places We Go
- 14:00 Fusion Forager
- 14:55 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia
- 15:25 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 15:50 Croatia's Finest
- 16:45 The Shelbourne
- 17:40 David Rocco's Dolce India
- 18:10 Valentine Warner's Wild Table

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD**

- 00:10 Locked Up Abroad
- 01:00 Airport Security: Colombia
- 02:00 Nazi Megastructures
- 02:55 Nazi World War Weird
- 03:50 Kabaddi: The Great Indian Sport
- 04:45 Operation Sumatran Rhino
- 05:40 Air Crash Investigation
- 06:35 Disappeared: The Search For Cody Dial
- 07:30 Facing...
- 08:25 Dog Whisperer
- 09:20 Dog Whisperer
- 10:15 Monster Fish
- 11:10 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South
- 12:05 Science Of Stupid
- 12:30 Science Of Stupid
- 13:00 Nazi World War Weird
- 14:00 Facing...
- 15:00 Air Crash Investigation
- 16:00 Planes That Changed The World
- 17:00 Mega Factories
- 18:00 Disappeared: The Search For Cody Dial
- 19:00 Cold Water Gold
- 20:00 Planes That Changed The World
- 20:50 Mega Factories
- 21:40 Disappeared: The Search For Cody Dial
- 22:30 Cold Water Gold
- 23:20 Planes That Changed The World

**NAT GEO WILD HD**

- 00:20 Predator Battleground
- 01:10 World's Deadliest Animals
- 02:00 Wild Russia
- 02:50 Wild Survivor
- 03:45 South Africa
- 04:40 1000 Days For The Planet
- 05:35 Hunter Hunted
- 06:30 Monster Fish
- 07:25 Hooked
- 08:20 Unlikely Animal Friends
- 09:15 Baby Animals In The Wild
- 10:10 Amazing Animal Selfies
- 11:05 Animal ER
- 12:00 River Jaws: Monster Catfish
- 12:55 Monster Jellyfish
- 13:50 Mission Critical
- 14:45 Wild Congo
- 15:40 1000 Days For The Planet
- 16:35 Moody Beasts
- 17:30 Dangerous Encounters
- 18:25 Animals Gone Wild
- 19:20 Wild Congo
- 20:10 1000 Days For The Planet
- 21:00 Moody Beasts
- 21:50 Dangerous Encounters
- 22:40 Animals Gone Wild
- 23:30 River Jaws: Monster Catfish

**DISCOVERY SCIENCE**

- 00:30 How Do They Do It?
- 00:55 Food Factory
- 01:20 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 02:10 NASA's Greatest Missions
- 03:00 Superhuman Showdown
- 03:48 Ways To Save The Planet
- 04:36 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 05:24 NASA's Greatest Missions
- 06:12 How Do They Do It?
- 06:36 Food Factory
- 07:00 How Do They Do It?
- 07:26 Food Factory
- 09:26 How The Universe Works
- 10:14 NASA's Greatest Missions
- 11:50 How The Universe Works
- 13:26 How Do They Do It?
- 15:26 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 16:14 Redesign My Brain
- 17:02 Mind Control Freaks
- 17:50 The Science Of Fear And Lust
- 18:40 Superhuman Showdown
- 19:30 Ways To Save The Planet
- 23:40 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman

**BBC FIRST**

- 00:30 Doctors
- 01:00 Doctors
- 01:30 Sherlock
- 03:10 Poldark
- 04:05 Doctors
- 04:35 Doctors



CAPTAIN AMERICA THE WINTER SOLDIER ON STAR MOVIES HD



SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2017

05:05 Death In Paradise  
06:00 Doctors  
09:30 Eastenders  
13:50 Casualty  
14:45 Doctors  
15:45 Dickensian  
18:00 Doctors  
18:30 Eastenders  
19:05 Death In Paradise  
20:00 Last Tango In Halifax  
21:00 Poldark  
22:00 Sherlock  
23:40 Doctors

15:30 Happy Endings  
16:00 Happy Endings  
16:30 \$#! My Dad Says  
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
18:00 2 Broke Girls  
18:30 Life In Pieces  
19:00 Playing House  
19:30 Playing House  
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
21:00 Happy Endings  
21:30 The Simpsons  
22:00 Saturday Night Live  
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers

22:00 Bones  
23:00 Bones



00:20 Extraordinary Pregnancies  
01:10 Secret Eskimo Escape  
02:00 Leah Remini: It's All Relative  
02:25 Leah Remini: It's All Relative  
02:50 Monsters Inside Me  
03:35 My Big Fat Fabulous Life  
04:20 Toddlers & Tiaras  
05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras  
06:00 Jon & Kate Plus 8  
08:30 Cake Boss  
09:20 Separated At Birth  
10:10 Designer Darlings  
11:50 Say Yes To The Dress  
14:45 Say Yes To The Dress: The Big Day  
15:35 My Big Fat Fabulous Life  
17:40 Oprah's Master Class  
19:20 Suddenly Royal  
20:10 Cake Boss  
21:00 Oprah: Where Are They Now?  
21:50 Oprah's Master Class  
22:40 Body Bizarre  
23:30 Diagnose Me



00:00 Violetta  
00:45 The Hive  
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
01:40 Hank Zipzer  
02:05 Binny And The Ghost  
02:30 Violetta  
03:15 The Hive  
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
04:10 Hank Zipzer  
04:35 Binny And The Ghost  
05:00 Violetta  
05:45 The Hive  
05:50 Mouk  
06:00 Jessie  
06:25 Jessie  
06:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
06:55 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
07:20 Star Darlings  
07:25 Austin & Ally  
07:50 Disney Mickey Mouse  
07:55 Jessie  
08:20 Descendants Wicked World  
08:25 Elena Of Avalor  
08:50 Star Darlings  
08:55 Alex & Co.  
09:20 Disney Mickey Mouse  
09:25 Girl Meets World  
09:50 Stuck In The Middle  
10:15 Disney Cookabout  
10:40 Harriet The Spy: Blog Wars  
12:10 The 7D  
12:20 Liv And Maddie  
12:45 Liv And Maddie  
13:10 Liv And Maddie  
13:35 Liv And Maddie  
14:00 Liv And Maddie  
14:25 Austin & Ally  
14:50 Austin & Ally  
15:15 Bunk'd  
15:40 Bunk'd  
16:05 Descendants Wicked World  
16:10 Elena Of Avalor  
16:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
17:00 Gravity Falls  
17:25 Wendy Wu: Homecoming Warrior  
19:00 Star Darlings  
19:05 Disney Cookabout  
19:30 Elena Of Avalor  
19:55 Liv And Maddie  
20:20 Best Friends Whenever  
20:45 Good Luck Charlie  
21:10 H2O: Just Add Water  
21:35 H2O: Just Add Water  
22:00 Binny And The Ghost  
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
23:10 Hank Zipzer  
23:35 Binny And The Ghost



Nickelodeon HD  
00:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
00:36 Max & Shred  
01:00 The Haunted Hathaways  
01:24 Sanjay And Craig  
01:48 Sanjay And Craig  
02:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
02:36 SpongeBob SquarePants  
03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
03:48 Henry Danger  
04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
04:36 The Haunted Hathaways  
05:00 Max & Shred  
05:24 Henry Danger  
05:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants



00:00 Important Things With Demetri Martin  
00:25 Jo Koy: Lights Out  
01:15 Chappelle's Show  
01:40 Another Period  
02:05 South Park  
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
03:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol  
04:15 Key And Peele  
05:05 Ridiculousness  
06:20 Workaholics  
07:40 Key And Peele  
08:30 Workaholics  
09:20 Tosh.0  
09:45 Tosh.0  
10:10 Ridiculousness  
11:00 Life Or Debt  
11:50 Tosh.0  
12:40 Framework  
13:30 Urban Tarzan  
13:55 Ridiculousness  
15:10 Hungry Investors  
16:00 Workaholics  
16:55 Key And Peele  
17:50 The It Crowd  
18:15 I Live With Models  
18:39 Brotherhood  
19:03 The Jim Gaffigan Show  
19:27 Idiotsitter  
19:50 Idiotsitter  
20:13 Tosh.0  
20:37 Tosh.0  
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
21:30 Kroll Show  
21:54 Important Things With Demetri Martin  
22:18 The Meltdown With Jonah And Kumail  
23:05 The Half Hour  
23:30 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:00 Roadies  
01:00 Secrets And Lies  
02:00 Timeless  
03:00 American Crime  
04:00 Good Morning America  
06:00 Prison Break  
07:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
08:00 Unforgettable  
09:00 Notorious  
10:00 Quantico  
11:00 Unforgettable  
12:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
13:00 Once Upon A Time  
14:00 Notorious  
15:00 Royal Pains  
16:00 Live Good Morning America - Weekend  
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
18:00 Grey's Anatomy  
19:00 The Fosters  
20:00 The Blacklist  
21:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow  
22:00 Supernatural  
23:00 Grimm



00:00 Outsiders  
01:00 Strike Back  
02:00 The Night Of  
03:00 True Detective  
04:00 The Knick  
05:00 Dancing In September  
07:00 Tsunami: The Aftermath (Part 1)  
09:00 Tsunami: The Aftermath (Part 2)  
11:00 Primo  
13:00 Life Support  
15:00 Kareem: Minority Of One  
17:00 Primo  
19:00 Outsiders  
20:00 Strike Back  
21:00 Legends  
22:00 House Of Saddam  
23:00 Rome



00:20 12 Monkeys  
01:10 Warehouse 13  
02:00 Warehouse 13  
02:50 Warehouse 13  
03:40 Warehouse 13  
04:30 Warehouse 13  
05:15 Face Off  
06:00 Stargate SG-1  
09:20 Dark Matter  
10:10 Dark Matter  
14:20 Seeds Of Destruction  
16:00 Killjoys  
16:50 Face Off  
17:40 Sanctuary  
18:30 Sanctuary  
19:25 Treasure Island  
21:00 Neverland  
22:30 Neverland



00:00 Bones  
01:00 Maf:the First Year  
02:00 Maf:the First Year  
03:00 Maf:the First Year  
04:00 Maf:the First Year  
05:00 Gallery Girls  
06:00 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
06:30 Mom vs. Matchmaker  
07:00 Wedding Band  
08:00 The Secret Life Of The American Teenager  
09:00 The Secret Life Of The American Teenager  
10:00 Maf:the First Year  
11:00 Maf:the First Year  
12:00 Maf:the First Year  
13:00 Gallery Girls  
14:00 The Bridge  
15:00 The Listener  
16:00 Private Practice  
17:00 House Of DVF  
18:00 Grey's Anatomy  
19:00 Grey's Anatomy  
20:00 Fashion Star  
21:00 Married At First Sight



00:30 Happy Endings  
01:00 Happy Endings  
01:30 Divorce  
02:00 Divorce  
02:30 The Big C  
03:00 Black-ish  
03:30 Kevin Can Wait  
04:00 The Bill Engvall Show  
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
05:30 Trophy Wife  
06:00 \$#! My Dad Says  
06:30 The Bernie Mac Show  
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:00 The Bill Engvall Show  
08:30 Trophy Wife  
09:00 Black-ish  
09:30 Kevin Can Wait  
10:00 Fresh Off The Boat  
10:30 The Bernie Mac Show  
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
12:00 \$#! My Dad Says  
12:30 The Bill Engvall Show  
13:00 Trophy Wife  
13:30 The Bernie Mac Show  
14:00 Kevin Can Wait  
14:30 Kevin Can Wait  
15:00 Fresh Off The Boat



OBLIVION ON OSN MOVIES PREMIERE HD

06:36 SpongeBob SquarePants	03:45 Paw Patrol
07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	04:08 Wanda And The Alien
07:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	04:18 Wanda And The Alien
07:48 Winx Club	04:28 Dora And Friends
08:12 Harvey Beaks	04:51 Dora And Friends
08:36 Breadwinners	05:15 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:00 Get Blake	05:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:24 Rabbids Invasion	06:00 Paw Patrol
09:48 Lost In The West II	06:14 Paw Patrol
10:36 The Haunted Hathaways	06:37 Dora The Explorer
11:00 Winx Club	07:00 Wanda And The Alien
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants	07:11 Zack & Quack
11:48 SpongeBob SquarePants	07:22 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	07:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines
12:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	08:10 Paw Patrol
13:00 Rabbids Invasion	08:35 Shimmer And Shine
13:24 Rabbids Invasion	08:58 Dora The Explorer
13:48 Rabbids Invasion	09:21 Paw Patrol
14:12 Rabbids Invasion	09:45 Little Charmers
14:36 Henry Danger Movie	09:57 Bubble Guppies
15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants	10:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants	10:40 Zack & Quack
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	10:52 Team Umizoomi
16:36 The Loud House	11:15 Louie
17:00 Sanjay And Craig	11:22 Louie
17:24 Rabbids Invasion	11:30 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
17:48 Breadwinners	11:53 Olive The Ostrich
18:12 Henry Danger	11:58 Olive The Ostrich
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn	12:03 Max & Ruby
19:00 100 Things To Do Before High School	12:26 Wanda And The Alien
19:24 Game Shakers	12:37 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
19:48 SpongeBob SquarePants	12:48 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants	13:00 Blaze And The Monster Machines
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	13:22 Blaze And The Monster Machines
21:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	13:45 Zack & Quack
21:24 Breadwinners	13:55 Zack & Quack
21:48 Breadwinners	14:05 Team Umizoomi
22:12 Sanjay And Craig	14:28 Louie
22:36 Sanjay And Craig	14:35 Louie
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants	14:42 Louie
23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants	14:48 Paw Patrol
23:48 Henry Danger	14:58 Paw Patrol
	15:23 Paw Patrol
	15:46 Paw Patrol
	16:10 Wanda And The Alien
	16:19 Wanda And The Alien
	16:30 Dora And Friends
	16:53 Dora And Friends
00:20 Wanda And The Alien	17:16 Blaze And The Monster Machines
00:31 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom	17:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
00:42 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom	18:00 Paw Patrol
00:54 Blaze And The Monster Machines	18:13 Paw Patrol
01:17 Blaze And The Monster Machines	18:36 Dora The Explorer
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01:50 Zack & Quack	19:11 Zack & Quack
02:01 Team Umizoomi	19:22 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
02:25 Louie	19:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:32 Louie	20:10 Dora The Explorer
02:37 Louie	20:53 Olive The Ostrich
02:43 Paw Patrol	20:59 Dora The Explorer
02:57 Paw Patrol	21:22 Bubble Guppies
03:21 Paw Patrol	21:46 Ni Hao, Kai-Lan



# Sparsh: Instilling the essence of benevolence at ICSK Senior

Values are guiding principles or standards of behavior, which are regarded desirable, important and held in high esteem by a particular society in which a person lives. As a premier institution in Kuwait, The Indian Community School Senior aims at convincing and humanizing the magnitude of moral values among students in this post-modern technologically advanced world. Students must love their own values in life; to build a strong character as it will help them to lead their life as it should be lead. It is an inevitable factor for the fulfillment of life's purpose.

To initiate the feelings of empathy and to instill in the students the maxim "Try not to become a man of success, rather become a man of values", the school has initiated many activities. 'SPARSH' is an activity initiated by ICSK Senior to sensitize the students on the sufferings and undue discrimination around them. Through this activity, students are encouraged to visit, share, contribute and understand the sufferings of the people around. They visit old age homes, orphanages, schools for the disabled children, cancer centers etc as a part of this. They make cards and sing and dance with them so that they can spread smiles on their faces. They distribute food, toys and clothing so that they can lend a helping hand to the disadvantaged people of the society. Short video clippings on their visits are screened and appreciated at the school to encourage participation by all. They also take up other socially relevant activities such as planting trees, elimination of plastics, cleanliness drive, conduct health



education classes, take seminar on hygiene to villagers, take classes for street children etc. Group discussions and seminars were also conducted as a part of this.

Sparsh - the value based activity envisaged and pioneered by Dr V Binumon, the Principal Indian Community School, (Senior) Kuwait was successfully presented on the 4th of January 2017, amidst much enthusiasm and goodwill. The motive behind such a presentation was to inculcate strong values

in the young students of Indian Community School. All the videos presented were original for its reference to the values which added to the quality of life. Every single video was exceptional in their depiction of the deepest involvement of the children in the activity chosen by them. The videos also deeply affected the children present as audience in such a way that many were moved beyond words.

Three months of summer vacation were

utilized to complete this project. It was not merely to imbibe values but also tone up other skills like confidence measured body language, interactive skills, team co-operation and coordination which will enhance a child's personality.

Evaluated by experienced judges who are sensitive to the cause of humanitarianism, the video presentation ushered in a new era of value based education. The Judges Ayesha Famy, Aasia Baig and Indira Radhakrishnan shared the views on upholding values there by resulting in the culmination of an exceptional endeavor of value based education. An initiative like this from ICSK has definitely helped the students evolve into better human beings with a mind set to "give rather than to receive".

In the senior secondary Level, Venessa Emilia Soares of class XII C secured the first position, the second position is shared by Abisha Abinesar of class XI A and Sneha Sridharan of class XI D. The third position is shared by Anikah Anna, Bertin Paul, Meril Susan, Thansiha Khatoon class XI E and Anamika Anil Kumar class XII B.

In the secondary level, Alma Trisa Sunil of class VIII A bagged the first position and the second position was shared by two groups Sonal Ghosh, Amreen Amanullah, Cleona Fernandes, Breanne Banze, Eman Hashimof class IX and Moses Kurien, Reshma Sarah Mathews, Rithika Raghupathy, Aleena Ann Daniel, Clifton George Daniel of class X A. Abhijit Satheesh of class X C and Fiona Francis Fernandes of class VIII B shared the third position.



## TRASSK HOLDS MEDICAL CAMP

Thrissur Association of Kuwait (TRASSK) conducted a Medical Camp on 13th of January 2017. The camp was a huge success with the participation of more than 400 beneficiaries including nonmembers of the association. The camp was inaugurated by Biju Kadavi, convener of social welfare. On behalf of association he

expressed gratitude towards the hospital authorities for their support for this social cause. The program was felicitated by Sugunanath; TRASSK Vice President, Hamsa Payyanur and Ambika Mukundhan, TRASSK Vanithavedhi general convener. The program concluded with a vote of thanks by Hari Kulangara, treasurer TRASSK.

## MACE TO HOLD 'SARGOTSAV-2017'

Sargotsav is a children's art festival of various competitions and cultural programs. It is organized every year by Mar Athanasius College of Engineering, Kerala (MACE) Alumni Association, Kuwait Chapter, one of the constituents of Kuwait Engineers Forum (KEF) having membership of over 1350 Engineers working in Kuwait.

This year, SARGOTSAV will be held on January 26 and 27, 2016 at Carmel School, Khaitan.

On behalf of the organizing committee, MACEAA Chairman Salu John and General Convener Sally Roy informed that SARGOTSAV, provides an opportunity to bring out the talents of children of various Engineering college Alumni Associations coming under the Kuwait Engineers Forum (KEF) fraternity.

MACE Alumni Association, Kuwait Chapter was formed in the year 1984 with the intention of cultural and social interaction among the families of MACEAA members residing in Kuwait. SARGOTSAV has its inception since 1999 and has now turned out to be a Mega Cultural Festival which brings out the literary and artistic talents of children bubbling with so much of energy, enthusiasm and excitement. Various individual and group items such as Elocution, Painting, Essay writing, Short story writing, Fancy Dress, Dance, Music, Drama etc. are included in this inter KEF Alumni competition to enhance their creative and artistic talents and to include the values of team work, healthy spirit of competition and sense of culture and integrity. Above 400 children are expected to participate in various items which will cover over 1000 individual items.

All the events are judged by a panel of efficient external judges and the prizes for the winners will be given during the valedictory function on 27th January 2017 evening. SARGOTSAV 2017 souvenir will be released by Sreekumar, General Convener, Kuwait Engineers Forum (KEF), during the Inaugural Function. Sargotsav is a culmination of hard work put in by the whole team of MACEAANs of Kuwait Chapter. The Chairmen/Presidents and all members of constituent Alumni Associations of KEF have voluntarily extended their total support to this mega event to make it a grand success.

# Youth Chorus holds 'Hridayarppanam'

The valedictory function of the Vicennial celebration of Youth Chorus "Hridayarppanam" was held on Jan 12, 2017 at 6:30 pm at the Indian Central School auditorium, Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh. The program was an amalgamation of cultural extravaganza. The chief guest Rev Georgie Varghese, Vicar of Kuwait City Mar Thoma Parish inaugurated the program by lighting the ceremonial lamp along with the other dignitaries. Somu Mathew, one of the founder members of Youth Chorus, who came for a short visit from India and Babu Chakola of KALPAK, who is a veteran actor, were the guests of honor. President John Abraham, Gen Secretary Adv P John Thomas, Secretary Tony Mathew, Treasurer Shibu Thomas Pullampallil and Program Committee Convener Manoj Philip George were also present. William K Daniel, Youth Chorus Advisor welcomed the audience. Jojy Jacob, Manoj Philip George and Ruth Sara Philip anchored the program.

Melodious group songs were rendered by the most popular Youth Chorus Junior and Senior teams. The musical ensemble by Master Blesson Abraham, Master James Abraham and Kumari Evana Rachel Kurian enthralled the audience with the soulful rendition composed especially for the occasion. The orchestra team performed, punctuating the evening with captivating array of tunes. The scintillating group dance performance by the Youth Chorus Juniors kept the audience spellbound. The Biblical Musical Drama "Esther", written and directed by the President John Abraham was the most thrilling and exciting event. This historical drama was well enacted by the Youth Chorus team with a dramatic professionalism. A huge crowd witnessed the spectacular programs especially the Drama "Esther" with a pulsating feel.

The new theme song in Malayalam for the

"Hridayarppanam" was also written and composed by John Abraham, the choir master and the president of the association. The proceeds of the program are set apart for "Pratyasa Bhavan," Ranni, a rehabilitation center for the psychiatric

patients as well as for the eye surgery of 10 deserving patients. Prizes were presented to the winners of the Talents Scan and the Bible Quest. The eventful evening came to an end with Manoj Philip George proposing the vote of thanks.



## OICC delegation visits Indian embassy



A delegation of the Overseas Indian Cultural Congress (OICC-Kuwait), during a visit to the Indian Embassy on Jan 18, expressed serious concerns over rising incidents of crimes in Abbasiya area such as armed robberies and assaults. The delegation communicated the matter to the embassy authorities.

Indian Ambassador Sunil Jain, Deputy Chief of Mission Shubashis Goldar and Second Secretary AK Shrivastava attended the meeting. They gave assurances to the delegation and that the embassy would take up the matter with the concerned authorities such as Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Governor of Farwaniya, for necessary attention and action.

Aby Varicad, Acting President, BS Pillai, General Secretary, Vice-President Samuel Chacko and Harish Thripunithura, Welfare wing Chairman were the OICC officials who called on the embassy officials.

## 'Malabar Maholsavam 2017' raffle coupon released

Sujata Shiva Krishan, Principal of United Indian School, Abbasiya, released the raffle coupon of Malabar Maholsavam 2017 by handing over it to Azeez Thikkodi, program committee chairman, Malabar Maholsavam 2017 and general convener Sathian Varoonda. KDNA is planning to hold its 6th Malabar Maholsavam 2017' as a mega cultural event with a variety of entertainment programs yesterday, Feb 24, 2017 at "Kozhikottangai", Indian Central School open ground, Abbasiya. Several prominent Kuwaiti and Indian artistes will attend the event on the auspicious day when Kuwait is also celebrating its National Day.



## ABORTION RATES FELL AS CLINICS GOT FAR

**AUSTIN:** The number of abortions performed throughout Texas dropped after a 2013 law forced the closure of clinics in all but the largest cities, and the decline was steeper the farther a woman lived from one of the remaining clinics, a study found. The US Supreme Court last year struck down Texas' tougher abortion regulations - known as HB2 - but not before more than 20 clinics closed, including nearly all that served rural and mid-sized cities. None have reopened since.

A study published Thursday in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* suggests that the law affected Texas' abortion numbers before it was overturned. Researchers say the steepest declines in abortions occurred among residents of the Rio Grande Valley along the U.S.-Mexico

border and in a wide swath of West Texas, where the closest clinics were more than 100 miles farther away after nearby facilities shuttered.

The study found that abortions among women from those areas in 2014 plummeted by 50 percent - from 4,589 in 2012 to 2,279 in 2014 - compared to the year before HB2 went into effect. The numbers in the study reflected both medical and surgical abortions performed by a doctor. No explicit connection is made in the study between increased travel times to clinics and fewer abortions, which are in decline nationwide. Abortions also significantly fell nearly 16 percent in the six Texas counties that still have abortion clinics and where longer drives weren't an issue. The study acknowledged that factors other than

distance could have played a role.

"Distance matters, and at some point the geographic barriers become insurmountable and constitute an undue burden," said Daniel Grossman, a study co-author and a member of a University of Texas research team that studies the impacts of the state's anti-abortion laws. The study examined data from the Texas Department of State Health Services and was partly funded by the Susan T. Buffett Foundation, a major supporter of Planned Parenthood and other abortion-rights groups. Grossman was also an expert witness for the plaintiffs in the HB2 trial.

Before HB2 was struck down, Texas had argued that nearly 9 in 10 women would still live within 150 miles of an abortion provider under the law and

that some women could be served by clinics in neighboring states. Texas Republicans say the regulations were needed to protect women's health.

Texas had 41 abortion clinics in 17 counties the year before the law took effect and 21 clinics in 6 counties the year after - making Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, San Antonio and El Paso the only cities with abortion providers. Most of the more than 53,000 abortions in Texas in 2014 were among women living in those big cities. HB2 had required doctors who perform abortions to have admitting privileges at nearby hospitals and forced clinics to meet hospital-like standards for outpatient surgery. The Supreme Court declared the law unconstitutional in a 5-3 ruling last summer.—AP



**JORHAT:** This file photo taken on October 9, 2014 shows a capped gibbon sitting in a tree at the Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary in Jorhat district in the eastern state of Assam. — AFP

## HUMANS, NOT CLIMATE, KILLED OFF AUSTRALIA'S BIG BEASTS

OVER 85% OF AUSTRALIA WILDLIFE EXTINCT AFTER HUMANS

**PARIS:** Humans exterminated an array of weird and wonderful Australian creatures within only 4,000 years of arriving on the continent, according to a study published yesterday that shifted blame away from climate change. Before the arrival of homo sapiens, Australia boasted 450-kilogram wombats weighing as much as a rhino, eight-meter lizards, larger-than-human birds, and car-sized tortoises.

More than 85 percent of Australia's big mammals, birds and reptiles went extinct "shortly" after our species appeared, a team of scientists reported in the *Journal Nature Communications*. The cause of the megafauna die-off Down Under some 45,000 years ago has been the subject of much scientific debate. A study in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* in 2013 said Australia's giant animals were already mostly extinct by the time humans arrived and pointed the finger at climate change.

That study, based on fossil finds, said there was no evidence that a human ever killed a single mega-animal-many of which were herbivores. The new research, on the contrary, concluded the mass extinction was much more likely caused by "overkill", specifically the hunting of juvenile animals. The team based its findings on the remains of ancient megafauna excrement found in a sediment core drilled in the Indian Ocean, off the southwest Australian coast.

### Look back in time

The core contains chronological layers of material that was blown or swept from the land into the sea, including dust, ash and spores from a fungus that thrived in the dung of plant-eating creatures, the University of Colorado at Boulder, which took part in the study, said in a statement. This allowed the team to "look back in time" and reconstruct climate and ecosystem conditions up to 150,000 years ago.

The abundance of fungus spores in the core "is good evidence for a lot of large mammals on the southwestern Australian landscape up until about 45,000 years ago," CU Boulder scientist Gifford Miller explained. "Then, in a window of time lasting just a few thousand years, the megafauna population collapsed"-and that within 4,000 years of human occupation of the continent.

The environment in southwest Australia changed from a dense eucalyptus woodland to arid, open shrubland about 70,000 years ago-some 23,000 years before evidence for the presence of humans on the continent. The team found no association between environmental change and megafauna extinction, or evidence that the animals suffering a slow demise as the area became drier.

"These findings rule out climate change, and implicate humans as the primary extinction cause," the researchers concluded.—AFP

## PROSTATE BIOPSIES MAY BE AVOIDABLE

**PARIS:** A quarter of men suspected of having prostate cancer could avoid invasive and potentially dangerous biopsies with the help of MRI scans, researchers reported yesterday. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) could also reduce the number of men over-diagnosed with the disease by five percent, they detailed in a study published in *The Lancet*. The new approach is potentially a game-changer, experts commenting on the study said. In the case of prostate cancer, "over-diagnosed" includes relatively benign cancers that do not cause any harm during a man's lifetime. "Prostate cancer has aggressive and harmless forms," noted lead author Hashim Ahmed, a surgeon at University College London's faculty of medicine. Typically, men undergo a prostate biopsy if they experience certain symptoms or show high levels of a protein in their blood, as detected by a prostate specific antigen (PSA) test.

Each year, over a million prostate biopsies are done in Europe alone. The procedure-which can cause bleeding, pain and serious infections-involves using a biopsy needle to draw a tissue sample through a small cut made between the anus and scrotum. The needle goes in "blind," and can thus bypass a cancerous mass. "Our current biopsy test can be inaccurate because the tissue samples are taken at random," Ahmed said in a statement. "It can miss aggressive cancers that are actually there." And if the biopsy does find cancer cells, it cannot reliably determine whether they are malignant. As a result, some men are given a false diagnosis and prescribed treatments with nasty side effects. Ahmed and his team wanted to find out if a MRI scan could be used as a "triage" test to determine which men with elevated protein counts might safely avoid a biopsy. A multi-parametric MRI (MP-MRI) can provide information about a cancer's size, density and proximity to the bloodstream.

### Second trial under way

All of these elements help distinguish between aggressive and benign forms of the disease. In the study, 576 men spread across 11 public hospitals in Britain and suspected of having prostate cancer were given a MP-MRI scan, followed by two types of biopsy. One was the type commonly used to detect cancer, and the other was designed to compare the standard biopsy's accuracy in detecting malignancy against the MRI scans.

Forty percent of the men turned out to have had aggressive cancer. The scan correctly diagnosed almost all of them (93 percent), whereas the standard biopsy identified only half. "Our results show that MP-MRI should be used before biopsy" to identify men who have harmless cancers and do not need a biopsy immediately, Ahmed said. This group however should continue to be monitored by their doctors. Only those whose scan results point to an aggressive cancer should have a biopsy, to confirm. Using the two tests in this fashion "could reduce over-diagnosis of harmless cancers by five percent... and improve the detection of aggressive cancers from 48 to 93 percent," Ahmed concluded. Reaction from other experts was positive.—AFP

# PAST WARMING SIGNALS MAJOR SEA LEVEL RISE

## ONE OF THE WARMEST PERIODS IN LAST 800,000 YEARS

**MIAMI:** Scientists who study patterns of natural shifts in the Earth's climate said Thursday they have uncovered a "worrisome" signal that major sea level rise could be on the way. The findings in the journal *Science* show that ocean surface temperatures during the Earth's last warm period, some 125,000 years ago, were remarkably similar to today. But what concerns scientists is that sea level back then was 20-30 feet (six to nine meters) above what it is today.

"The trend is worrisome," said the report led by researchers at Oregon State University, University College Dublin, the University of Wisconsin and the Science Museum of Virginia. "Collectively, these results may help scientists better understand how oceans will respond to modern warming." Our planet goes through periods of warm and cold that last tens of thousands of years, and are influenced by changes in Sun exposure caused by natural variations in the Earth's orbit, combined with the influence of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

These naturally occurring shifts are different than the much faster pace of warming facing the Earth today, as humans burn fossil fuels for energy and send heat-trapping carbon emissions into the air, leading to ice melt and sea level rise. The last time the climate was unusually warm-in the absence of human influence-was about between

116,000 and 129,000 years ago, during what is known as the Last Interglacial Period. It was one of the warmest periods in the last 800,000 years, according to the report.

### 'Humanity's rapid impact'

The basis for the study was an analysis of 83 marine sediment core sites, which can give clues to how warm the Earth and oceans were in the past. Each core site was compared to data sets from 1870-1889 and 1995-2014, respectively. The analysis showed that 129,000 years ago, the global ocean surface temperature "was already similar to the 1870-1889 average."

The temperature rose over the next 4,000 years, "reaching a temperature indistinguishable from the 1995-2014 average." The finding means that some scientific models that have been used to estimate sea levels at various temperatures could have been underestimates. Scientists have already predicted the Earth is likely to see multiple meters of sea level rise in the years to come, a development that will swallow many of the planet's coastal communities, currently home to one billion people.

No one knows how fast the seas may rise in the decades to come, but some experts say the latest study is cause for alarm. "The result that present global sea surface temperatures are indistinguishable from those at the last interglacial 125,000 years ago is extremely wor-



**NEW YORK:** In this July 24, 2016, file photo German tourist Guido Weber of Hanover uses his backpack to cover his head against the hot afternoon sun after forgetting to wear his hat as he walks across the Brooklyn Bridge. — AP

rying since sea levels were six to nine meters higher than compared to present," said Richard Allan, professor of climate science at the University of Reading, who was not involved in the study.

Allan said it could be thousands of years before modern sea levels catch up, and that cuts in fossil fuel use could still help. "Due to the length of time it takes to heat up the depths of our vast oceans and to melt giant ice sheets it would take thousands of years before sea level could potentially

rise to such levels, so sustained and substantive cuts in greenhouse gas emissions from energy-intensive activities remain vital and beneficial to societies."

Merik Srokosz, a marine physics and ocean climate scientist at the University of Southampton, said the study is significant because it shows that changes in temperatures which occurred over thousands of years, are now occurring in the space of a single century. "This demonstrates humanity's rapid impact on the planet and raises the possibility of

significant longer-term rises in sea level," added Srokosz. Andrew Watson, a professor at the University of Exeter, said the study's takeaways are both good and bad.

"The study suggests that in the long term, sea level will rise six meters at least in response to the warming we are causing," he said. "The good news is that with luck it will continue to rise slowly, so that we have time to adapt, but the bad news is that eventually all our present coastal city locations will be inundated." — AFP

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Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



**KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (19/01/2017 TO 25/01/2017)**

<b>SHARQIA-1</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 2:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 4:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 6:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 8:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 10:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:30 AM	xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 8:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 10:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:15 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.1</b> xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 2:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 4:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 6:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 8:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 10:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:45 AM
<b>SHARQIA-2</b> xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 3:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 5:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 7:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 9:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 11:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:00 AM	<b>MARINA-1</b> THE GREAT WALL 11:45 AM BALLERINA 2:30 PM MOANA 4:45 PM THE GREAT WALL 7:00 PM PATRIOTS DAY 9:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:05 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.2</b> PATRIOTS DAY 11:45 AM BALLERINA 2:30 PM MOANA 4:30 PM BALLERINA 6:45 PM PATRIOTS DAY 8:45 PM PATRIOTS DAY 11:30 PM
<b>SHARQIA-3</b> BALLERINA 12:00 PM DANGAL -Hindi 2:00 PM BALLERINA 5:15 PM THE GREAT WALL 7:15 PM PATRIOTS DAY 9:30 PM PATRIOTS DAY 12:15 AM	<b>MARINA-2</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 2:00 PM BALLERINA 4:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 6:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 8:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 10:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:05 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.3</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 2:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 4:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 6:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 8:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 10:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:30 AM
<b>MUHALAB-1</b> DANGAL -Hindi 11:45 AM BALLERINA 3:00 PM BALLERINA 5:00 PM BALLERINA 2:00 PM KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 4:00 PM KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 7:00 PM DANGAL -Hindi 9:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:00 AM	<b>MARINA-3</b> xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 2:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 4:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 6:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 8:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 10:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:45 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.4</b> xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:15 PM SURF'S UP 2: WAVEMANIA 3:15 PM THE GREAT WALL 5:15 PM THE GREAT WALL 7:30 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 9:45 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 11:45 PM
<b>MUHALAB-2</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 2:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 4:00 PM BALLERINA 4:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 6:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 8:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 10:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:05 AM	<b>AVENUES-1</b> SURF'S UP 2: WAVEMANIA 11:30 AM THE GREAT WALL 1:30 PM SURF'S UP 2: WAVEMANIA 1:30 PM A MONSTER CALLS 3:45 PM PATRIOTS DAY 6:00 PM A MONSTER CALLS 8:45 PM THE GREAT WALL 11:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:15 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-1</b> xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 3:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE -3D 5:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 7:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 9:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 11:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 1:00 AM
<b>MUHALAB-3</b> xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 2:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 4:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 6:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 8:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 10:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:15 AM	<b>AVENUES-2</b> xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 2:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 4:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 6:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 8:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE - 10:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:15 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-2</b> BALLERINA 12:00 PM SURF'S UP 2: WAVEMANIA 2:00 PM MOANA 3:45 PM BALLERINA 6:00 PM MOANA 8:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 10:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:15 AM
<b>FANAR-1</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 11:30 AM BALLERINA 1:30 PM BALLERINA 3:30 PM BALLERINA 5:30 PM A MONSTER CALLS 7:30 PM PATRIOTS DAY 9:45 PM PATRIOTS DAY 12:30 AM	<b>AVENUES-3</b> PATRIOTS DAY 1:00 PM THE GREAT WALL 1:30 PM PATRIOTS DAY 4:00 PM KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 4:00 PM KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 6:45 PM PATRIOTS DAY 9:45 PM PATRIOTS DAY 12:30 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-3</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 2:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 4:30 PM DANGAL -Hindi 6:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 9:45 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 11:45 PM
<b>FANAR-2</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:45 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 2:45 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 4:45 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 6:45 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 8:45 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 10:45 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:45 AM	<b>360°- 1</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 2:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 4:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 6:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 8:00 PM Special Show "xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE" 8:00 PM FRI 10:00 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 12:05 AM	<b>PLAZA</b> KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 4:00 PM THU+FRI+SAT+MON 3:45 PM DANGAL -Hindi 7:00 PM SUN+TUE+WED 10:00 PM KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 10:00 PM THU+FRI+SAT+MON 10:00 PM DANGAL -Hindi 10:00 PM SUN+TUE+WED
<b>FANAR-3</b> DANGAL -Hindi 12:30 PM THE GREAT WALL 4:00 PM DANGAL -Hindi 6:15 PM DANGAL -Hindi 9:30 PM THE GREAT WALL 12:45 AM	<b>360°- 2</b> DANGAL -Hindi 1:45 PM DANGAL -Hindi 5:00 PM DANGAL -Hindi 8:15 PM DANGAL -Hindi 11:30 PM	<b>LAILA</b> AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 4:00 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 6:30 PM AL ATR -Kuwaiti Film 8:30 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 10:30 PM
<b>FANAR-4</b> xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 12:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 2:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 4:15 PM xXx: RETURN OF XANDER CAGE 6:15 PM	<b>360°- 3</b> THE BYE BYE MAN 11:45 AM SURF'S UP 2: WAVEMANIA 2:00 PM SING 4:15 PM THE BYE BYE MAN 6:30 PM THE BYE BYE MAN 8:45 PM THE BYE BYE MAN 11:00 PM THE BYE BYE MAN 1:15 AM	<b>AJIAL.1</b> KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 4:15 PM KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 7:00 PM KHAIDI NO. 150 -Telugu 10:00 PM
		<b>AJIAL.2</b> OK JAANU - Hindi 3:45 PM GAUTAMIPUTRA SATAKARNI -Telugu 6:45 PM

**REQUIRED FOR AN INDUSTRIAL COMPANY**

- ◆ Sales and marketing, B.Sc Chemistry, 5 years experience in cement factories, gypsum and lime. Fluent in English, Computer, Kuwait driving license, transferable visa.
- ◆ Quality Control Technician, B.Sc Industrial Chemistry, 5 years experience in Analyzing Chemicals and Minerale , English, Computer, transferable visa.
- ◆ Storekeeper, Diploma, 3 years experience, English, Computer, transferable visa.
- ◆ Loaders drivers, forklift, passengers buses, heavy duty driver's license, two years experience, transferable visa.
- ◆ Office boy, transferable visa.

Send CV to:  
**Email: jazirasys@yahoo.com**

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**M.A. Nijam** S/o Abdul Alam holder of Indian Passport No. G1276440, Civil ID No. 278041804378 has changed my name to Nijam Mohamed Meeran, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by name of Nijam Mohamed Meeran. (C5258) **19-1-2017**

**I, Mohammad Salim** S/o Azizul Haque, Passport No

F2525309, Civil ID No 272020116835, has changed my name to Mohammad Aslam hereinafter in all my dealings and documents. (C 5257)

**ACCOMMODATION**

**Sharing** accommodation for Filipino Bachelor ONLY near Big Jamiya Farwaniya. Available already, Contact 66826412 or 97512782 **19-1-2017**

**Hospitals**

<b>Sabah Hospital</b>	<b>24812000</b>
<b>Amiri Hospital</b>	<b>22450005</b>
<b>Maternity Hospital</b>	<b>24843100</b>
<b>Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital</b>	<b>25312700</b>
<b>Chest Hospital</b>	<b>24849400</b>
<b>Farwaniya Hospital</b>	<b>24892010</b>
<b>Adan Hospital</b>	<b>23940620</b>
<b>Ibn Sina Hospital</b>	<b>24840300</b>
<b>Al-Razi Hospital</b>	<b>24846000</b>
<b>Physiotherapy Hospital</b>	<b>24874330/9</b>

**Clinics**

<b>Kaizen center</b>	<b>25716707</b>
<b>Rawda</b>	<b>22517733</b>
<b>Adaliya</b>	<b>22517144</b>
<b>Khaldiya</b>	<b>24848075</b>
<b>Kaifan</b>	<b>24849807</b>
<b>Shamiya</b>	<b>24848913</b>
<b>Shuwaikh</b>	<b>24814507</b>
<b>Abdullah Salem</b>	<b>22549134</b>
<b>Nuzha</b>	<b>22526804</b>
<b>Industrial Shuwaikh</b>	<b>24814764</b>
<b>Qadsiya</b>	<b>22515088</b>
<b>Dasmah</b>	<b>22532265</b>
<b>Bneid Al-Gar</b>	<b>22531908</b>
<b>Shaab</b>	<b>22518752</b>
<b>Qibla</b>	<b>22459381</b>



## Flight Schedule

## DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

### Arrival Flights on Saturday 21/1/2017

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
KLM	413	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:25
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
CLX	852	Luxembourg	00:35
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55
RJA	642	Amman	01:05
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50
DLH	635	Doha	01:55
MSC	511	Alexandria	02:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30
KAC	412	Bangkok	02:50
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55
KKK	6506	Istanbul	02:55
FDB	069	Dubai	03:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10
KAC	358	Kochi	03:30
QTR	1076	Doha	03:30
KAC	206	Islamabad	03:45
KAC	546	Cairo	03:55
FEG	931	Alexandria	04:00
KAC	418	Manila	04:25
UAE	873	Dubai	04:55
JZR	503	Luxor	05:10
JZR	529	Asyut	05:15
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20
KAC	344	Chennai	05:35
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:45
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55
KAC	384	Delhi	06:05
KAC	364	Colombo	06:05
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	06:25
BAW	157	London	06:40
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	07:00
KAC	204	Lahore	07:15
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	08:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40
KAC	382	Delhi	08:45
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05
KAC	352	Kochi	09:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00
AVV	653	Sohag	10:10
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:15
IRM	1188	Mashhad	11:15
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30
FDK	801	Damascus	11:45
JZR	563	Sohag	12:00
SYR	343	Latakia	12:05
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
JZR	239	Amman	12:45
FDB	075	Dubai	12:50
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
IAW	157	Al Najaf	13:25
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:30
KAC	564	Amman	13:40
KAC	788	Jeddah	13:45
KNE	231	Riyadh	13:55
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10
FDB	059	Dubai	14:20
KAC	692	Muscat	14:30
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40
KAC	542	Cairo	14:45
KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55
KAC	618	Doha	15:00
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15
KAC	286	Dhaka	15:20
OMA	645	Muscat	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:50
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:50
KAC	154	Istanbul	15:55
SAW	705	Damascus	16:00
SVA	504	Madinah	16:00
KNE	531	Jeddah	16:05
QTR	1072	Doha	16:10
JZR	535	Cairo	16:10
FDB	051	Dubai	16:25
JZR	357	Mashhad	16:25
JZR	787	Riyadh	16:25
KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	16:35
RJA	640	Amman	16:55
KAC	118	New York	17:00
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30

JZR	777	Jeddah	17:45
JZR	325	Al Najaf	17:50
NIA	251	Alexandria	17:55
SVA	500	Jeddah	18:00
UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
FDB	063	Dubai	18:10
JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
QTR	1080	Doha	18:50
IRA	669	Mashhad	18:55
SYR	341	Damascus	19:00
KAC	512	Mashhad	19:20
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:25
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
KAC	502	Beirut	19:30
CLX	856	Luxembourg	19:35
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
KAC	104	London	19:50
KAC	166	Rome	19:55
KNE	381	Taif	19:55
MSR	618	Alexandria	20:05
OMA	647	Muscat	20:10
JZR	189	Dubai	20:15
QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
KAC	562	Amman	20:40
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:45
KAC	174	Munich	20:45
FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
KAC	616	Bahrain	20:50
JAI	572	Mumbai	20:55
KAC	786	Jeddah	21:15
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
JZR	125	Bahrain	22:05
KLM	415	Amsterdam/Dammam	22:05
NIA	151	Cairo	22:10
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15
AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
JZR	241	Amman	22:45
KNE	533	Jeddah	22:45
KAC	164	Paris	22:55
KAC	1544	Cairo	22:55
JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:50

### Departure Flights on Saturday 21/1/2017

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:50
BBC	044	Doha/Chittagong/Dhaka	01:30
KLM	413	Amsterdam	01:50
KAC	417	Manila	02:00
CLX	853	Luxembourg	02:05
THY	773	Istanbul	02:25
KAC	285	Dhaka	02:25
SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:55
MSC	512	Alexandria	03:05
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
PGT	859	Istanbul	03:35
KAC	103	London	03:40
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
KKK	6505	Istanbul	03:55
OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
QTR	1077	Doha	04:40
FEG	938	Sohag	05:00
JZR	562	Sohag	05:25
QTR	1087	Doha	05:50
FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
KAC	153	Istanbul	06:50
UAE	874	Dubai	06:50
THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
KAC	165	Rome	06:55
RJA	643	Amman	07:05
JZR	238	Amman	07:10
KAC	541	Cairo	07:15
GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	163	Paris	07:25
KAC	173	Munich	07:35
KAC	787	Jeddah	07:45
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
KAC	563	Amman	08:00
BAW	156	London	08:40
FDB	054	Dubai	08:55
KAC	117	SNN/New York	09:00
KAC	691	Muscat	09:00
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15

JZR	534	Cairo	09:15
KAC	101	London	09:35
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
JZR	356	Mashhad	10:25
KAC	411	Bangkok	10:30
FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
QTR	1071	Doha	10:40
SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00
KAC	617	Doha	11:10
AVV	654	Asyut	11:10
KAC	501	Beirut	11:15
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
RBG	554	Alexandria	11:55
KAC	661	Abu Dhabi	12:05
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:05
IRM	1189	Mashhad	12:30
FDK	802	Damascus	12:45
SYR	344	Latakia	13:05
JZR	786	Riyadh	13:10
KAC	511	Mashhad	13:15
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
FDB	076	Dubai	14:05
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	324	Al Najaf	14:25
IAW	158	Al Najaf	14:25
KNE	382	Taif	14:50
BON	102	Sarajevo	14:55
KAC	561	Amman	15:00
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
FDB	060	Dubai	15:10
KAC	785	Jeddah	15:15
PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	15:20
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:25
JZR	188	Dubai	15:40
QTR	1079	Doha	15:40
KAC	1543	Cairo	15:55
KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KNE	684	Madinah	16:00
KAC	357	Kochi	16:20
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:30
OMA	646	Muscat	16:35
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	16:50
SAW	706	Damascus	16:55
KNE	532	Jeddah	16:55
KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
SVA	505	Madinah	17:00
JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
JZR	240	Amman	17:15
FDB	052	Dubai	17:25
KAC	615	Bahrain	17:35
QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
RJA	641	Amman	17:55
KAC	353	BLR	18:15
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	205	Islamabad	18:25
JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
JZR	554	Alexandria	18:55
NIA	252	Alexandria	18:55
FDB	064	Dubai	19:05
JZR	124	Bahrain	19:15
MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
SVA	501	Jeddah	19:30
QTR	1081	Doha	19:50
IRA	666	Esfahan	19:55
SYR	342	Damascus	20:00
ABY	124	Sharjah	20:05
GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
KAC	383	Delhi	20:30
KAC	361	Colombo	20:35
FDB	058	Dubai	20:35
KAC	775	Riyadh	20:45
KNE	232	Riyadh	20:55
CLX	856	Hong Kong	21:05
MSR	607	Luxor	21:05
OMA	648	Muscat	21:10
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	21:30
QTR	1089	Doha	21:35
DLH	634	Doha	21:35
KAC	741	Dammam	21:45
FDB	5054	Dubai	21:50
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JAI	571	Mumbai	21:55
KAC	351	Kochi	22:00
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:15
MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:45
KAC	381	Delhi	22:45
UAE	860	Dubai	22:55
KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	23:05
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
NIA	152	Cairo	23:10
QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
KNE	534	Jeddah	23:35



WORDSEARCH PUZZLE

Fourth Of July

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an Abraham Lincoln quotation.

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

- BALD EAGLE CONCERTS HOLIDAY PATRIOTIC
- BALLOONS DECORATIONS HOT DOGS PHILADELPHIA
- BARBECUE DEMOCRACY INDEPENDENCE PICNIC
- BASEBALL FIREWORKS JOHN ADAMS RED WHITE BLUE
- BEN FRANKLIN FLAG LIBERTY STARS AND STRIPES
- BETSY ROSS FLOATS NATIONAL ANTHEM STREAMERS
- CAKE FREEDOM NATIONHOOD THOMAS JEFFERSON
- CARNIVAL GREAT BRITAIN PARADE USA
- CELEBRATION HAMBURGERS PARTY WHITE HOUSE
- COLONIES HISTORY

Yesterday's Solution

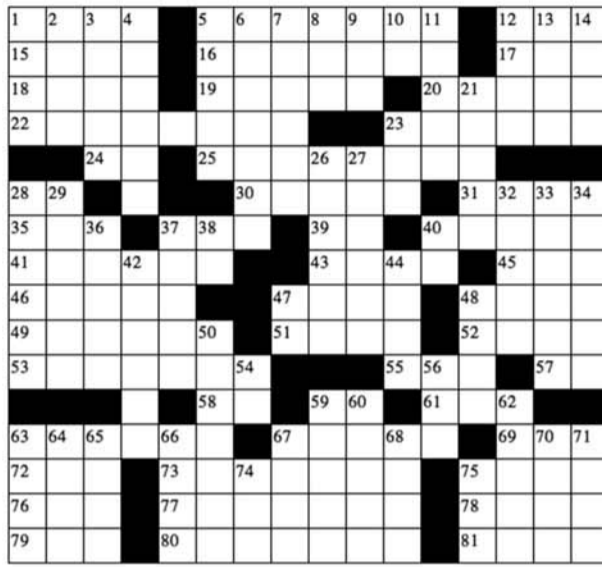
Flowers

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

- ALSTROEMERIA CORNFLOWER GOLDEN ROD PANSY
- AMARYLLIS DAFFODIL HEATHER PEONY
- ANTHURIUM DAISY HOLLYHOCKS PETUNIA
- ASTER DELPHINIUM HYACINTH ROSE
- BABY'S BREATH FORGET-ME-NOT HYDRANGEA SNAPDRAGON
- BELL FLOWER FOXGLOVE IRIS STATICE
- BIRD OF PARADISE FREESIA LAVENDER STOCK
- BOUVDIA FUCHSIA LILAC SUNFLOWER
- CALLA GERANIUM LILY TULIP
- CARNATION GERBERA LISIANTHUS VIOLET
- CHRYSANTHEMUM GINGER MARGOLD YARROW
- CLEMATIS GLADIOLUS ORCHID

The hidden sentence is: A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME WOULD SMELL AS SWEET

CROSSWORD 1497



ACROSS

1. A city in northern India.
5. A perceptual structure.
12. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
15. German tennis player who won seven women's singles titles at Wimbledon (born in 1969).
16. A disorder of the vocal organs that results in the loss of voice.
17. A metal-bearing mineral valuable enough to be mined.
18. Marked by or showing unaffected simplicity and lack of guile or worldly experience.
19. An ornamental net in the shape of a bag that confines a woman's hair.
20. A magician or sorcerer of ancient times.
22. A communication system linking different rooms within a building or ship etc.
24. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
25. Any sail set forward of the foremast of a vessel.
28. An informal term for a father.
30. (Old Testament) The second patriarch.
31. Freedom from difficulty or hardship or effort.
35. (Norse mythology) One of the Aesir known for his beauty and skill with bow and skis.
39. A metric unit of length equal to one billionth of a meter.
41. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
43. Little known Kamarupan languages.
45. Electronic warfare undertaken to prevent or reduce an enemy's effective use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
46. Of or relating to or associated with the moon.
49. Deciduous round-headed Asiatic tree widely grown in mild climates as an ornamental for its heart-shaped leaves and fragrant yellow-green flowers followed by hanging clusters of fleshy orange-red berries.
51. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
52. Chief port of Yemen.
53. Type genus of the Cariamidae comprising only the crested caria.
55. Feline mammal usually having thick soft fur and being unable to roar.
57. A Mid-Atlantic state.
58. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
61. Nocturnal mouse-like mammal with forelimbs modified to form membranous wings and anatomical adaptations for echolocation by which they navigate.
63. Conqueror of Gaul and master of Italy (100-44 BC).
69. A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school.
72. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
73. Of or pertaining to or suggestive of a goat (especially in strong odor).
76. Seed vessel having hooks or prickles.
77. (zoology) Lacking a tail or tail-like appendage.
78. Using speech rather than writing.
79. United States liquid unit equal to 4 quarts or 3.785 liters.
80. Born out of wedlock.
81. A small cake leavened with yeast.

DOWN

1. God of fire.
2. The mother of your father or mother.
3. An Indian side dish of yogurt and chopped cucumbers and spices.
4. The conscious subjective aspect of feeling or emotion v. 1.
5. An archaic name for Easter or Passover.
6. Of or relating to apnea.
7. United States clockmaker who introduced mass production (1785-1859).
8. To an excessive degree.
9. Either extremity of something that has length.
10. A state in New England.
11. A river in southeastern Australia that flows generally northwest to join the Darling River.
12. Scottish writer of rustic verse (1770-1835).
13. Wild sheep of northern Africa.
14. Flat tableland with steep edges.
21. Metal or plastic sheath over the end of a shoelace or ribbon.
23. Resinlike substance secreted by certain lac insects.
26. Fairly small terrestrial ferns of tropical America.
27. South Asian deer with three-tined antlers.
29. Type genus of the Alaudidae.
32. Having the leading position or higher score in a contest.
33. Concerned with religion or religious purposes.
34. The expensive white fur of the ermine.
36. A person who avoids the company or assistance of others.
37. A dark region of considerable extent on the surface of the moon.
38. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
40. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
42. A statement of fundamental facts or principles.
44. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
47. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
48. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
50. North American republic containing 50 states - 48 conterminous states in North America plus Alaska in northwest North America and the Hawaiian Islands in the Pacific Ocean.
54. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
56. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
59. The main city of ancient Phoenicia.
60. The basic unit of money in Yemen.
62. A crown-like jewelled headdress worn by women on formal occasions.
64. Largest known toad species.
65. A British peer ranking below a Marquess and above a Viscount.
66. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
67. A short erect tail.
68. Cut off the testicles.
70. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
71. The arch of bone beneath the eye that forms the prominence of the cheek.
74. The network in the reticular formation that serves an alerting or arousal function.
75. A numbered compartment in a post office where mail is put to be called for.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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

## THE LOW-COST PROVIDERS ON NFL'S FINAL 4 TEAMS

**DALLAS:** The construction of a Super Bowl team starts and stops with a championship-caliber quarterback. Don't discount the importance of those in-between ingredients, though, particularly the impact players on market-bargain contracts, toward winning a title. The quartet of quarterbacks left in the NFL playoffs this weekend could hardly have produced any stronger pedigree, with Aaron Rodgers and Matt Ryan in the NFC spotlight and Ben Roethlisberger and Tom Brady on the AFC stage.

By Sunday, they'll have played in a combined 21 conference championship games. They've accounted for seven of the last 15 starting quarterbacks to hoist the Super Bowl trophy. They have 47 cumulative seasons as their team's starter.

Green Bay, Atlanta, Pittsburgh and New England don't get discounts on such prowess, though. Rodgers, Ryan, Roethlisberger and Brady are, naturally and deservedly, the most expensive player on each of their teams. On average, they use 13 percent of their team's salary cap, which makes the low-cost contributors in the supporting cast all the more meaningful and necessary. Here's a closer look at those paid-with-a-coupon players, each occupying less than 1 percent of his team's salary cap, on the four conference championship game qualifiers who've made it possible for the Packers, Falcons, Steelers and Patriots to move within two victories of a title:

### GREEN BAY

Packers general manager Ted Thompson has long relied on under-the-radar prospects to fill out the roster as much as any of his contemporaries around the league. Left guard Lane Taylor, in his fourth year after going undrafted out of Oklahoma State, has stepped in capably following the surprise release of Josh Sitton right before the season began. Fullback Aaron Ripkowski, who has quietly and steadily made the fans in Wisconsin forget about former favorite John Kuhn, was a sixth-round pick last year from Oklahoma.

The performance of cornerback LaDarius Gunter might be the most critical of all the complementary pieces the Packers will rely on against Ryan, Julio Jones and a fearsome Falcons offense. Gunter, who went undrafted out of Miami in 2015, has been thrust into the starting lineup in light of a slew of injuries at his position.

### ATLANTA

Another fullback, Patrick DiMarco, is one of a whopping 19 undrafted players currently on the active roster for the Falcons. His companions in the backfield are playing on championship-friendly cheap deals, too: Devonta Freeman (fourth round in 2014 from Florida State) and Tevin Coleman (third round in 2015 out of Indiana). The significantly improved defense has had an influx of youth over the last two years under coach Dan Quinn, and rookie linebacker De'Vondre Campbell (fourth round from Minnesota) has been one of the catalysts.

### PITTSBURGH

Left tackles are almost as difficult to obtain and develop as quarterbacks, but the Steelers found theirs in former US Army Ranger Alejandro Villanueva, who was versatile enough in his college career to play wide receiver, too. After four years of military service, he landed on the practice squad in 2014 and has been a starter for one of the best offenses in the league since. Running back Le'Veon Bell (second round out of Michigan State in 2013) is in the final season of his rookie contract. Roosevelt Nix (surprise, another fullback) went undrafted from Kent State in 2014. Then there's kicker Chris Boswell, who made all six of his field goal attempts last week in the 18-16 victory at Kansas City in the divisional round. He's on a \$525,000 salary, roughly half of what Roethlisberger makes per game.

### NEW ENGLAND

Brady takes the snaps from center David Andrews, who's in his second year as the anchor of the offensive line after going undrafted out of Georgia. Defensive end Trey Flowers, undrafted from Arkansas, had seven sacks in his first season as a starter. Cornerback Malcolm Butler might be the best example of all, with his NCAA Division II college career at West Alabama and undrafted status that kept him under the radar until the Super Bowl two years ago when he intercepted the pass by Seattle at the goal line with 26 seconds left to preserve a 28-24 victory by the Patriots. —AP



**OAKLAND:** In this Nov 6, 2016, file photo, Oakland Raiders fans hold up signs about the team's possible move to Las Vegas during an NFL football game between the Raiders and the Denver Broncos. — AP

## JACKPOT! VEGAS LOOKS TO SCORE BIG WIN BY LANDING RAIDERS

**LAS VEGAS:** First the NHL's Vegas Golden Knights. Soon, maybe, the Las Vegas Raiders. Once looked on with disdain by major sports leagues, this gambling city is now just 24 votes away from cashing in on one of the biggest sports jackpots ever. The Raiders made it official Thursday by filing for relocation from Oakland to Las Vegas, the culmination of a whirlwind romance to bring an NFL team to a city that the league had previously gone out of its way to shun because of sports betting fears.

League owners are expected to vote on the move in March, and it's hard to find anyone betting it won't happen. "I don't know how you can put a price on this," said Steve Sisolak, a county commissioner who has been involved in the efforts to land the team. "There are only 32 cities that can say they have an NFL team and we will be one of them." Actually, there is a price on it. Tourists will pay increased room taxes to fund \$750 million of the cost of a new \$1.9 billion stadium as part of a deal rammed through a special session of the Nevada Legislature by powerful casino owner Sheldon Adelson's family.

### Breaking the glass ceiling

The stadium will be just off the glittering Las Vegas Strip, where the Golden Knights will begin play this fall in a new arena of their own. The expansion hockey team is the first major sports franchise to call the city home. "Without the Golden Knights I don't know if the Raiders would have thought this was a viable market," Sisolak said. "They kind of broke the glass ceiling."

If approved, the move would be the third announced by an NFL team in a year as the league undergoes a geographic shift unlike any in recent history. The Rams returned to Los Angeles from St Louis this season, while the San Diego

Chargers will begin play in LA next season. "(Raiders owner) Mark Davis is a man of his word and the filing of the Raiders' application for relocation of the franchise with the NFL is a significant step in bringing the team to Las Vegas," Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval said.

The NFL has long been opposed to any association with Las Vegas, to the point where just a few years ago it refused to allow the city to advertise on the Super Bowl telecast because it offered legal betting. But the league's opposition has softened, and so has the stance of Commissioner Roger Goodell.

"I think there are some real strengths to the Las Vegas market," Goodell said at an owners' meeting last month. "It's clear the Las Vegas market has become a more diversified market, more broadly involved with entertainment, hosting big events. And there's a growth to the market."

Las Vegas, which has about 2.5 million people in the metropolitan area, would be a smaller market than the Bay Area. But fans from other cities are expected to fill a third of the proposed 65,000-seat stadium, and the team will also be able to draw on Raiders fans from throughout California. Influential owners like Jerry Jones of the Dallas Cowboys and Robert Kraft of the New England Patriots have spoken favorably about the prospects of a move, and Raiders owner Mark Davis has been lobbying behind the scenes to secure the votes of three-fourths of the 32 owners needed for relocation. The vote is expected to take place during league meetings March 26-29 in Phoenix.

### Possible hang-up

Davis did not comment Thursday on the relocation application, but has made no secret of his commitment to Las Vegas. At a stadium meeting last year in the city he brought along a pro-

gram from a 1964 American Football League exhibition game in the city where the Raiders beat the Houston Oilers. Davis has said the team will continue to play in Oakland until the Las Vegas stadium is finished, likely by the 2020 season. There are two sites currently being looked at for the stadium, both adjacent to the Strip.

One possible hang-up could be Adelson's participation in the project. He's the one who initiated conversations with Davis last January, and was instrumental in getting a tax increase passed by the state legislature in October. Adelson's family has offered \$650 million toward the stadium, but has reached no deal with the Raiders yet. Team representatives say they have secured the funding to replace Adelson's investment in case a deal isn't reached. NFL rules prohibit casino operators from having ownership roles in teams.

Andy Abboud, the executive working on the project for Adelson, called the filing "one of those moments that makes it real" and vowed that necessary negotiations will be completed. "The people of Las Vegas should be excited that the NFL is coming to town," Abboud told AP. "Business deals take time to work out, but everything will work out in the end."

The Raiders have two one-year options to play at the Oakland Coliseum in 2017 and 2018 and are already taking season ticket renewals for next season. But the Raiders have largely ignored a proposal by former player Ronnie Lott to build a new stadium in Oakland to keep the team permanently. "We are in this game and we are playing to win," Lott's group said in a statement, vowing to push ahead. Under Davis' father, Hall of Fame owner Al Davis, the Raiders moved from Oakland to Los Angeles in 1982 then returned to the East Bay in 1995. — AP



**CLEVELAND:** Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James (23) passes against Phoenix Suns' TJ Warren (12) in the second half of an NBA basketball game. —AP

## HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS: CLEVELAND OVERPOWERS SUNS

**CLEVELAND:** Kyrie Irving scored 26 points, All-Star teammate LeBron James had 21 points and 15 assists, and the Cleveland Cavaliers looked more like themselves at home in a 118-103 win over the Phoenix Suns on Thursday night. The Cavs were back in Quicken Loans Arena following a six-game road trip (their longest of the season) that concluded with an embarrassing 35-point loss at Golden State. But on their home floor, they had better offensive balance and ball movement while improving to 30-11 - the same record Cleveland had at the halfway point of its 2016 NBA championship season. Channing Frye scored 18, Iman Shumpert 17 and James Jones 14 while filling in for star forward Kevin Love, still bothered by back spasms. Tyson Chandler had 22 points and 16 rebounds, but the Suns lost for the fourth time in five games.

### WIZARDS 113, KNICKS 110

John Wall had 29 points and 13 assists, scoring Washington's final four points in the last 32 seconds as the surging Wizards beat New York. Otto Porter Jr made six 3-pointers for the second straight night and added 23 points, but the Wizards needed big plays from Wall down the stretch to win their fourth in a row. He made two free throws to put Washington back on top after New York had rallied to take a 110-109 lead, then rebounded Carmelo Anthony's miss and left all the Knicks in his dust as he raced down the floor for a dunk with 13.7 seconds to play. Anthony finished with 34 points but Wall stole the ball from Brandon Jennings to prevent the Knicks from attempting a 3-pointer that could have tied it.

### HEAT 99, MAVERICKS 95

Goran Dragic had 32 points, Tyler Johnson scored 10 of his 23 in the fourth quarter and Miami topped Dallas. Dragic shot 11 for 15 from the field and 4 of 4 from 3-point range. He also got a big offensive rebound in the final minute to extend a possession, and Johnson made a pair of free throws with 29.9 seconds left to give Miami an eight-point lead. Dirk Nowitzki scored 19 points for Dallas, which had its season-

best three-game winning streak snapped. The Mavericks went 1 for 8 from the field during a late stretch of the fourth quarter and never got the lead again.

### SPURS 118, NUGGETS 104

Kawhi Leonard scored 34 points, rookie Dejounte Murray added a season-high 24 and short-handed San Antonio overcame a pregame injury to Pau Gasol. Denver's three-game winning streak was snapped despite a career-high 35 points from Nikola Jokic. Leonard had his fifth straight 30-point performance, right after learning he will start for the Western Conference in the All-Star Game for the second consecutive season. The Spurs were unexpectedly without Gasol, Tony Parker and then coach Gregg Popovich. Gasol and Parker were both late scratches due to injury, and Popovich is ejected for the first time this season. Gasol broke the ring finger on his left (non-shooting) hand when he jammed it against Kyle Anderson's shoulder during pregame warmups while attempting a running hook. The veteran center immediately clutched his hand and left the court. X-rays revealed the break, and the Spurs said there is no timeline for Gasol's return. Murray started in place of Parker, who sat out with a sprained left foot.

### TIMBERWOLVES 104, CLIPPERS 101

Karl-Anthony Towns scored 37 points, including the go-ahead jumper with 45 seconds left, and Minnesota beat injury-depleted Los Angeles to stop its seven-game winning streak. Andrew Wiggins added 27 points, including two free throws with five seconds left that helped Minnesota snap its six-game road losing streak. DeAndre Jordan had 29 points and 16 rebounds to lead the Clippers, but was unable to make enough free throws down the stretch to keep his team in front. Austin Rivers added 20 points for Los Angeles, which dropped to 7-1 in 2017. The Clippers played without two injured stars, point guard Chris Paul and forward Blake Griffin. Paul is expected to miss six to eight weeks, but Griffin could be back in a week or two. — AP

## WESTBROOK SNUBBED FOR CURRY AS ALL-STAR STARTER

**NEW YORK:** Oklahoma City's Russell Westbrook, averaging a triple double, was snubbed for a Western Conference starting spot in next month's NBA All-Star Game in voting announced Thursday by the league. LeBron James and Kyrie Irving, who led the Cleveland Cavaliers to last season's NBA title, were named to the Eastern Conference starting five while Golden State teammates Stephen Curry and Kevin Durant were voted onto the Western Conference opening lineup.

The 66th NBA All-Star Game will be played February 19 at New Orleans. A revamped selection format took 50 percent from fan voting, which concluded Monday, and 25 percent each from player and media ballots. From more than 38 million fan votes, a jump of 146 percent over last year, James was the overall winner with 1,893,751 votes with Curry on 1,848,121, Durant on 1,768,185 and Irving on 1,696,769.

Thunder guard Westbrook leads the NBA with 30.6 points a game, ranks second with 10.4 assists a game and pulls down 10.6 rebounds a contest as he tries to become only the second player to average a triple double for an entire campaign after Oscar Robertson in the 1961-62 season. But the West starting backcourt will be 3-point Warriors sharpshooter Curry and Houston's James Harden, who ranks second in NBA scoring with 28.9 points a game and leads the NBA with 11.6 assists a contest.

Westbrook was level with Curry and Harden in the weighted point totals but lost out based upon fan ballot totals that served as the tie-breaker. Curry and Harden with 1,771,375 were more popular with fans than Westbrook on 1,575,865. "Dude averaging a triple double and not starting in the all star game is wild," tweeted Memphis Grizzlies forward Chandler Parsons. Joining Westbrook's former Thunder teammate Durant in the starting West frontcourt will be San Antonio forward Kawhi Leonard and New Orleans center Anthony Davis, who will be playing on his team's home court. "It's going to feel amazing to be an ambassador for the city," Davis said. "I'm definitely going out to try and get MVP (Most Valuable Player) being here in New Orleans."

Golden State big man Zaza Pachulia of Georgia would have started in place of Davis had the fan vote only been used as in past years. In the Eastern Conference, forward James and guard Irving will be joined by Toronto guard DeMar DeRozan, Chicago's Jimmy Butler and Milwaukee center Giannis Antetokounmpo of Greece—the first Bucks All-Star starter since 1986. DeRozan and Boston's Isaiah Thomas were tied for the second East backcourt spot but the fan vote tie-breaker favored DeRozan by 796,112 to 755,102. Had the public vote been used as in previous years, Chicago guard Dwyane Wade and Philadelphia frontliner Joel Embiid of Cameroon would have been East starters.

### LeBron in rare company

James is the all-time top All-Star scorer with 291 points. He will make his 13th consecutive All-Star start in 14 NBA seasons. Only Kobe Bryant and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar have started more. Butler and DeRozan reached their third All-Star Games while Irving, the 2014 All-Star Game MVP, is in his fourth game in six seasons. Antetokounmpo, 22, makes his All-Star debut as the first Milwaukee player in the game since Michael Redd in 2004. Durant, an eight-time All-Star selection, has the best All-Star Game scoring average at 25.6 points. Harden makes his fifth All-Star appearance while Curry, the two-time reigning NBA MVP, and Davis are in the All-Star Game for the fourth time and Leonard, the two-time reigning NBA Defensive Player of the Year, starts for the second year in a row. —AFP



**OAKLAND:** Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry, right, defends Oklahoma City Thunder's Russell Westbrook during the second half of an NBA basketball game. —AP

## ROOKIES LIFT B'DESH, SOUTHEE TAKES FIVE

**CHRISTCHURCH:** Rookie opener Soumya Sarkar led a makeshift Bangladesh to a competitive 289 but New Zealand claimed the honors on day one of the second Test in Christchurch yesterday. "If you can bowl a side out on day one it's a good effort," New Zealand strike bowler Tim Southee said after taking his sixth five-wicket haul. But, despite removing two of the more experienced Bangladesh batsmen in the first 11 overs, it took New Zealand until the last over to end the innings of an injury-hit side with seven players having three or fewer Tests to their name.

"We were pretty good at the start then they got a bit of a partnership going," Southee said. "We knew if we could hang in our areas for a long period of time then it was our best chance of taking wickets. So once we got that right we looked more effective." After being put into bat on a standard New Zealand green surface, Bangladesh were ready to punish anything short or wide on a pitch which offered swing but not extreme pace. Their willingness to search for runs resulted in early casualties when senior batsmen Tamin Iqbal (five) and Mahmudullah (19) were removed inside 11 overs to be 38-2. Shakib Al Hasan mounted a sterling fightback producing a rapid 127 with Soumya who celebrated his return to Test cricket and maiden innings as an opener with 86 off 104 balls. In his previous three Tests in 2015, Soumya had batted at six or seven with a best score of 37, yet he felt he could have done better as an opener against New Zealand.

"I am not satisfied with my effort," he said. "The focus was on playing a big innings in my first time as a Test opener. It was a big opportunity for me so if I had made a bigger contribution, I would have felt better. "Shakib and I tried to lengthen the innings after two early wickets. After I got out we lost two more wickets which put us on the back-foot. If we had handled that period better, we could have been in a better position." Soumya's recall and elevation to opener came as injuries kept Imrul Kayes, Mushfiqur Rahim, and Mominul Haque, and a combined 98 Tests worth of experience, out of the match. In their place were Soumya for his fourth Test and debutants Nurul Hasan and 18-year-old Nazmul Hossain with the fledgling trio all featuring well in the innings. Soumya brought up his 50 driving Colin de Grandhomme to the boundary and had a life on 52 when dropped off the same bowler in the first of four missed chances by New Zealand. — AFP



**CUTTACK:** India's Mahindra Singh Dhoni (R) raises his bat after completing his half century as India's Yuvraj Singh (L) looks on during the second One Day International cricket match between India and England at the Barabati Stadium

# YUVRAJ, DHONI BLITZ CLINCHES ODI SERIES

**CUTTACK:** Comeback man Yuvraj Singh rated the 150 against England as his best knock after he combined forces with Mahendra Singh Dhoni to set up India's series clinching 15-run win in Cuttack on Thursday. The 35-year-old Yuvraj and former captain Dhoni (134) put on 256 runs for the fourth wicket to help India post a mammoth 381-6 after being put into bat.

The hosts restricted England to 366-8 despite a breathtaking century by skipper Eoin Morgan, who smashed 102 off 81 balls. India took an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. But the day belonged to Yuvraj and Dhoni, who turned back the clock during their epic partnership that came after India were reduced to 25 for three at Cuttack's Barabati Stadium. The left-handed Yuvraj, who is making a comeback in the ODI side after a gap of three years, surpassed his previous best of 139.

"Probably the best (knock)...The higher you bat the more balls you get to play and getting 150 was a target in my career and I am very happy to get that," Yuvraj, who was named man of the match, said. Yuvraj, who last scored a hundred against West Indies in the 2011 World Cup, recorded his 14th ODI century as he smacked 21 fours and 3 sixes in a 127-ball knock. In the process, he overtook the great Sachin Tendulkar's record run tally in ODIs against England, and he has now accumulated 1,478 runs in 36 matches.

"I wanted to prove a point to myself. It's been a while, my career has been up and down," Yuvraj, who played his 295th ODI, said of his 14-year international career. Dhoni, 35, had a relatively sedate start, seeing out two maidens before boosting his confidence with a couple of boundaries. The wicket-keeper-batsman, who survived a dropped catch on 43, made the most of the reprieve to post his 10th ODI hundred as he

hit 10 fours and 6 sixes. Yuvraj was caught behind off Chris Woakes, who ended up with four wickets, while Dhoni fell to Liam Plunkett but their departure was scant consolation to the England bowlers who were all carted around the park. "Two of the greats stepping up as they have done so many times for Indian cricket," said skipper Virat Kohli, who got out cheaply for eight. "That's what we envisioned when we got Yuvraj back in the side, that if these two bat together it's going to do wonders for the team."

### Morgan power

But it was not all that smooth for India as Morgan gave the home team a scare with his powerpacked innings which kept the crowd on its feet. With England requiring 46 off the final three overs the visitors stood an outside chance but Morgan's unfortunate run out in the penultimate over ended their hopes. The left-handed batsman, who smashed 6 fours and 5 sixes for his 9th ODI century, put on a crucial 93-run sixth-wicket stand with Moeen Ali (55) to keep the chase alive.

But the pressure of keeping pace with the ever-increasing run rate finally got to the visiting side as Plunkett remained unbeaten on 26. "We weren't at our best again. It's very disappointing to get so close and not over the line," said a disappointed Morgan. "We showed a lot of fight. We believed we could chase it down. There's a tremendous amount of belief but we didn't quite have the skill."

Earlier Jason Roy (82) and Joe Root (54) also put on 100 runs for the second wicket to lay a solid foundation before Indian spinners struck back to dent the opposition's hopes. India's premier spinner Ravichandran Ashwin claimed three wickets. The third and final ODI is scheduled in Kolkata tomorrow ahead of the three-match Twenty20 series. — AFP

## INQUIRY INTO BIG BASH TV'S LIVE TACTICAL TALK

**SYDNEY:** Cricket Australia was investigating yesterday on-air comments by a television commentator after he appeared to pass on tactical advice to a player during a Twenty20 Big Bash League match. Network Ten commentator Mark Howard told Adelaide Strikers captain Brad Hodge during Wednesday's game that bowler Ben Laughlin had previously been successful against Sydney Thunder batsman Shane Watson.

"Our master statistician Lawrie Colliver tells us Laughlin has got Watson twice in the last eight balls he's bowled him in this competition," Howard told Hodge, who was wearing an on-field microphone. "I'll leave that with you skipper," Howard said during the live broadcast, to which Hodge replied: "I'll bring him on next over then... Let's get him into the game. Next over bud."

Laughlin was then brought into the attack for the next over. "Very naughty. Very, very naughty, Howie," said ex-England batsman Kevin Pietersen, who was in the commentators' box with Howard. Cricket Australia said they were "disappointed with the comments... and expressed this concern immediately to Channel 10 when it occurred". "Cricket Australia's integrity unit is looking into the matter further to ensure the comments made during the broadcast did not jeopardise the integrity of... (the) match," it added in a statement released Thursday. Network Ten apologised to Cricket Australia and said the comments "were in no way intended to advise Adelaide Strikers Captain Brad Hodge on game tactics or influence the outcome of the game". "Network Ten ensures that all commentators are educated on Cricket Australia's integrity codes and policies." The use of on-field microphones by players in Twenty20 matches sparked controversy last year after star Australian batsman Steve Smith lost his wicket while commenting during a Twenty20 game against India. — AFP

## NISHIKORI POWERS INTO FOURTH ROUND

**MELBOURNE:** Japan's Kei Nishikori reached the Australian Open fourth round with a convincing, straight-sets win over Lukas Lacko yesterday. The fifth seed made it to the last 16 for the sixth straight year with a 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 victory over the Slovak qualifier in two hours, 11 minutes. Nishikori will next face a big challenge against 17-time Grand Slam champion Roger Federer, who destroyed big-serving Czech 10th seed Tomas Berdych in straight sets.

The Japanese is looking to improve on his three quarter-final appearances at the Australian Open, losing to Andy Murray in 2012, Stan Wawrinka in

2015 and Novak Djokovic last year. "There were some little tough moments, but I stayed tough in the third set," Nishikori said. Nishikori broke the 121st-ranked Lacko's serve four times and gave up his own service only once.

"I did well with my service games and came up with some important first serves on the big points," he said. "I am feeling well physically and mentally and I've been playing well in my three matches in Melbourne." Nishikori got the early advantage with a service break in the seventh game after Lacko overhit a forehand. The Japanese star got a double

break to lead 3-0 and Lacko got one break back to trail 3-5 before Nishikori served out for a two sets to love advantage.

Nishikori peeled off a ripping forehand return winner to grab an early break in the final set to hit the front and stay there. He hit 46 winners, 27 of them on his forehand, and dominated the rallies. Nishikori became the first Asian man to contest a Grand Slam final when he lost to Marin Cilic at the 2014 US Open after defeating three top-10 players-Milos Raonic, Wawrinka and Djokovic along the way. — AFP



**MELBOURNE:** United States' Venus Williams eyes on the ball for a return to China's Duan Yingying during their third round match at the Australian Open tennis championships. —AP

## VENUS FOCUSED ON TENNIS, NOT AGE, IN RECORD 73RD SLAM WIN

**MELBOURNE:** One could never accuse Venus Williams of being sensitive about her age. Not the way she keeps making self-deprecating jokes about it at the Australian Open. Case in point: Asked about the Australian great Margaret Court after her third-round win over China's Duan Yingying at Margaret Court Arena yesterday, Williams said she had a letter from the 24-time major winner hung on the wall in her room as a memento.

"It's a congratulations for me being the oldest person in the draw or something like that," she dead-panned. The 36-year-old Williams fields more than her fair share of questions about her advanced age in the sport, how often she considers retirement, what keeps her motivated after more than two decades on the court.

Indeed, she is appearing in her 73rd Grand Slam singles draw - a record for the Open era. And she is the oldest woman in the draw at Melbourne Park, though it should be noted that male players her age, such as Ivo Karlovic and Roger Federer, aren't continuously peppered with the same questions.

But rather than show her annoyance, Williams smiles and patiently responds each time, sometimes with a joke. And she's made clear with her play this week that she's still a serious contender - she's reached the fourth round at the Australian Open for the 10th time in her career, and without dropping a set. Against Duan, a player who admitted she'd never seen the seven-time Grand Slam winner play, the 13th-seeded Williams only lost one game.

### Poor word choice

"Just like every player here, I have put in a ton of work," Williams said earlier in the week. "I'm not coming all the way to Australia for kicks and giggles. I'm here as a competitor." Williams made clear yesterday she doesn't want to get dragged into controversies, either. She declined to comment on a remark by a TV commentator during her second-round match when he described her as moving in and charging with what sounded like a "gorilla" or "guerrilla" effect.

The commentator, Doug Adler, who maintains he said "guerrilla" - as in, her choice of tactics - but apologized for his poor word choice, was dropped from ESPN's coverage for the rest of the tournament. "All I can say is it's been a wonderful, wonderful career for me full of positives. That's what I focus on," said Williams, who hasn't shied away from addressing issues ranging from racism to gender pay equity throughout her career.

"I pay attention and address situations that are noteworthy," she added, when pressed on the subject. "That's been my past record, clearly." What Williams wants to talk about is her tennis. Especially as she continues to win at Melbourne Park, where she's reached the final just once in her career. Her next opponent is another player many years her junior, 26-year-old Mona Barthel, a No 181-ranked qualifier from Germany. "It's never enough," Williams said. "I've been in the fourth round before. I've tasted it before and it's always a great feeling because it means, hey, I have an opportunity for the quarterfinals. That's what I'm going to go for." — AP

## KNIGHT MURRAY SPURS MAIDEN AUSE TITLE BID

**MELBOURNE:** Andy Murray saw off giant-killer Sam Querrey yesterday as he ramped up his bid for a first Australian Open title after the shock departure of six-time champion Novak Djokovic. On a cool day in Melbourne, the men's number one and women's top seed Angelique Kerber both hit a hot patch of form as the final rounds beckoned.

Murray will have watched from the sidelines as second seed Djokovic, his conqueror in four Melbourne finals, suffered a stunning defeat to 117th-ranked Denis Istomin on Thursday. Querrey also upset Djokovic at Wimbledon last year but Murray, made a knight in Britain's New Year honors, never looked like slipping on any banana skins in round three.

He put Querrey away 6-4, 6-2, 6-4 in just under two hours, winning 77 percent of points on his first serve and facing only three break points in a clinical display. The Scot also showed no signs of discomfort in his right ankle, after he rolled it painfully during his second-round win over Andrey Rublev. "I felt better and better as the match went on in terms of my movement," he said. "The ankle was a little sore and I was a little tentative at the start but it got better and better through the match."

Next up for Murray is an assignment with Mischa Zverev, the elder brother of highly-rated German teen Alexander who came through in four sets against Tunisia's Malek Jaziri. The winner of that meeting will play either Roger Federer or Tomas Berdych, the old Grand Slam rivals who play the night match on Rod Laver Arena later. Stan Wawrinka, the 2014 champion, survived a four-set tussle with Viktor Troicki 3-6, 6-2, 6-2, 7-6 (9/7) and now faces Italy's Andreas Seppi, who ousted Steve Darcis of Belgium.

Former finalist Jo-Wilfried Tsonga also came through in four sets against American Jack Sock and will play Briton Dan Evans, who beat Australia's Bernard Tomic 7-5, 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/3). In the women's draw, Kerber finally got into her stride with a 6-0, 6-4 destruction of Kristyna Pliskova, the 58th-ranked twin sister of Czech fifth seed Karolina. The German defending champion was an early loser at both of her warm-up tournaments and was taken to three sets in unconvincing wins in round one and two. — AFP



**MELBOURNE:** Britain's Andy Murray reacts after a point against Sam Querrey of the US during their men's singles third round match on day five of the Australian Open tennis tournament. — AFP

## GHANA TARGET QUARTERS, EGYPT CHASE WIN

**PORT-GENTIL:** Ghana can secure a place in the quarter-finals of the Africa Cup of Nations with a group game to spare if they beat Mali in Group D in Port-Gentil today. Avram Grant's side, beaten on penalties by the Ivory Coast in the 2015 final, set themselves up nicely in this year's tournament by edging out Uganda 1-0 courtesy of an Andre Ayew spot-kick in their opening match on Tuesday.

It was not a vintage performance from the Black Stars but, on a terrible playing surface, Grant is only interested in winning matches for now, regardless of the manner in which they do it. "In this tournament at the start it's important to take the points and then you have to come to your best at the right time," said the Israeli former Chelsea coach. "In the last tournament we played very good against Senegal in the first game and we lost, even if at the end of the day we got to the final,

so we just wanted to take the three points. "Of course we can play better but this is a tournament and every game will be different." Not everything is rosy in the Ghana camp, however. Abdul Rahman Baba's tournament appears to be over after he suffered anterior cruciate knee ligament damage in the first half against Uganda. The left-back, who currently plays for Schalke on loan from Chelsea, has now been flown back to Germany to undergo further tests and possibly surgery.

Meanwhile, Harrison Afful is struggling with what could be malaria, and Ghana also went to the wrong training ground on Thursday. When they eventually turned up at the right venue their players were forced to sit on the team bus for an hour because Uganda were still using the pitch. West African rivals Mali showed that they are a team to be taken seriously when they drew 0-0 with Egypt in their first outing.

Alain Giresse's side will now hope to build on that with some fans no doubt hoping to see more of 20-year-old Yves Bissouma after the Lille midfielder starred from the bench against Egypt. "He brought his freshness to the game but let's not forget that it is easier for him to come off the bench in games because of his age," warned Giresse.

### Egypt goalkeeping crisis

Egypt disappointed in their first appearance at the Cup of Nations after a seven-year absence, with star man Mohamed Salah being substituted in the second half following a poor display. The record seven-time champions also lost goalkeeper Ahmed El Shennawy to injury, and with Sherif Ekramy also in the treatment room suddenly coach Hector Cuper has a bit of a crisis. — AFP

## YIADOM'S JOURNEY FROM BARNET TO BLACK STARS

**PORT-GENTIL:** When Ghana got to the final of the 2015 Africa Cup of Nations, Andy Yiadom was plying his trade in the fifth-tier of English football. Now the 25-year-old is a member of the Black Stars squad in Gabon alongside the likes of Andre Ayew and Asamoah Gyan, hoping to play a part for Ghana as they bid to win a first Cup of Nations since 1982.

It has been an unlikely rise to the international stage for the versatile full-back, who worked under Dutch legend Edgar Davids at Barnet, a modest club from north-west London. His performances as captain there in the fourth tier last season led to a move to second-tier Barnsley, from Yorkshire in northern England, and from there a call-up by coach Avram Grant to the Ghana squad for the Cup of Nations.

"I was playing for Barnet for a good four years and then last year I signed for Barnsley and obviously there things have been going well, I caught the attention of the national team and got called up and here I am," Yiadom told AFP at the Ghana team hotel in Port-Gentil, the home of Gabon's oil industry. Yiadom started with Watford but had to drop down the divisions before now working his way back up.

His first call-up came for a 2018 World Cup qualifier in Egypt last November, after Grant had seen him perform well against the Newcastle United of Christian Atsu, a star of the 2015 tournament. "It is a wonderful experience. I am honoured to be here," adds Yiadom in a quiet spot outside a hotel which, bizarrely, has its own zoo where the star attraction is a gorilla. The Cup of Nations can be a culture shock to those coming from Europe, and there is not much in steamy, sweaty Port-Gentil that will remind Yiadom of Barnsley, an old mining town.

Ghana are sharing the same hotel as Uganda, who they beat 1-0 in their opening Group D match on Tuesday with Yiadom watching on from the bench. "A few years back I never would have thought I'd be playing in the Africa Cup of Nations so to be here is wonderful. I'm learning new things, taking in a different tournament, because the Africa Cup of Nations is massive."

Born and brought up in London to Ghanaian parents, Yiadom says he has visited the west African country several times and describes it as "a beautiful place." He did not represent the country at youth level but he insists his different background has not been an obstacle to settling in with his new international colleagues. "When I came in here it was very welcoming, players like Ayew and Gyan have played in the UK as well so I have come in here and learned from them. Everyone is very welcoming even though I am new to this squad," he said. —AFP



**FRANCEVILLE:** Senegal's, Moussa Sow, centre, Sadio Mane, right, are seen in action as Zimbabwe's Elisha Muroiwa, left, reacts during the African Cup of Nations Group B soccer match between Senegal and Zimbabwe at Stade de Franceville Stadium. —AP

## SENEGAL END DISMAL RUN BY REACHING LAST EIGHT

**FRANCEVILLE:** Senegal put a string of disastrous Africa Cup of Nations campaigns behind them Thursday by beating Zimbabwe 2-0 and becoming the first qualifiers for the 2017 quarter-finals. The Group B match was all but over as a contest after only 13 minutes in Gabonese city Franceville after Liverpool star Sadio Mane and Henri Saivet scored.

Since finishing fourth in 2006, the Senegalese have suffered a horror run in the premier African football competition, failing to get past the group stage three times and not even qualifying twice. Now they are guaranteed to top Group B—whatever the result of their final fixture against battling Algeria next Monday.

"The goal today was to qualify and we have done that," said Senegal coach and 2002 World Cup star Aliou Cisse. "Even when we played badly in the first match

(against Tunisia), we won. Today we played well and won and we have qualified. "It's been 10 years since we last made the quarter-finals. Now we have done it and I congratulate the players. "I am very proud of the guys. Now we have to continue like this."

Tunisia recovered impressively from a first-match beating by Senegal to defeat Algeria 2-1 and become favourites to finish runners-up and also secure a last-eight place. A draw with Zimbabwe in Libreville, in a fixture scheduled to start at the same time as Senegal against Algeria, will clinch second spot. Algeria, considered likelier quarter-finalists than Tunisia before the biennial competition kicked off last Saturday, are in serious trouble.

Only if they beat Senegal and Zimbabwe beat Tunisia might the Desert Foxes squeeze through on goal difference,

goals scored or the drawing of lots. Senegal wasted two chances to score before Mane tapped in a Keita Balde cross on nine minutes after Saivet carved open the Zimbabwe defence with a superb pass. Saivet doubled the lead four minutes later by curling a free-kick over the defensive wall and past goalkeeper Tatenda Mkuruva.

A rout seemed on the cards as Senegal played keep-ball at times, as if in a training session, while increasingly frustrated Zimbabweans chased shadows. The sole southern Africa representatives in Gabon did have a half-chance before half-time, but star attacker Khama Billiat shot weakly at Abdoulaye Diallo. Senegal continue to stamp their authority on the match in the second half and Mane was foiled twice in quick succession by Mkuruva and Czech Republic-based defender Costa Nhamoinesu.—AFP



**SAN SEBASTIAN:** Barcelona's players celebrate after Brazilian forward Neymar scored his team's first goal during the Spanish Copa del Rey (King's Cup) quarter final first leg football match Real Sociedad vs FC Barcelona at the Anoeta stadium. — AFP

## BARCA END SOCIEDAD HOODOO AS ATLETICO DISMANTLE EIBAR

**MADRID:** Barcelona ended a decade-long drought without winning away to Real Sociedad on Thursday as Neymar's first-half penalty handed the Spanish champions a 1-0 Copa del Rey quarter-final, first leg lead. Atletico Madrid also took a huge step toward the semi-finals as goals from Antoine Griezmann, Angel Correa and Kevin Gameiro downed an under-strength Eibar 3-0 at the Vicente Calderon. Barca hadn't won in their last eight meetings at Anoeta with coach Luis Enrique describing their 1-1 draw back in November as "almost a miracle" given how his side had been outplayed.

However, the Catalans continued signs of their return to form in a bright start that was rewarded when Neymar was clearly upended by Aritz Elustondo 20 minutes in. Just as in the last round, Lionel Messi handed over responsibility from the spot to the Brazilian and he sent Geronimo Rulli the wrong way. "It is always difficult to play at Anoeta and against Real Sociedad, but I think it was a complete performance," Enrique told GoITV.

"We were very solid in defensive and efficient in attack. No matter the result we have gained, the return leg always presents difficulties but for us it is a good result and very good news." Neymar should have added to Barca's lead early in the second-half when he took a poor touch with just Rulli to beat.

And Neymar came close again moments later when he curled just wide of the far post from a lovely Messi backheel. Sociedad enjoyed plenty of possession, but failed to break down the Barca defence as a dangerous cross from Yuri that just had too much pace for Mikel Oyarzabal at the far post

was the closest they came. Indeed, the hosts were fortunate not to concede a second penalty when Neymar was booked for diving 25 minutes from time despite Rulli appearing to clip his heels as the Barca forward rounded the 'keeper. The two sides meet again for the second leg at Barca's Camp Nou on January 26.

### Freezing temperatures

Despite largely empty stands amidst freezing temperatures in the Spanish capital, Atletico made light work of an Eibar side shorn of many of their usual starting line-up to ensure the return leg should be a mere formality. "It was difficult in the first-half but you could see the chances would come if we were a bit more precise and that happened in the second-half," said Atletico boss Diego Simeone.

The hosts had the ball in the net on 25 minutes, but Stefan Savic was harshly adjudged to have been offside as he slotted home from close range. However, Atletico had to wait only three minutes more to open the scoring when Jose Maria Gimenez beat Rodriguez to a free-kick lofted into the area and Griezmann headed the Uruguayan's knockdown into an empty net. Rodriguez nearly redeemed himself in the second-half when Yannick Carrasco bore down on goal, but despite saving the Belgian's effort, the ball fell kindly for Correa to tap home the rebound. Seven minutes later Atletico killed the tie off when Griezmann headed across goal from Koke's corner and the grateful Gameiro was left unmarked to nod home. — AFP

## NAINGGOLAN HITS MAIDEN BRACE IN 4-0 CUP ROMP

**MILAN:** Radja Nainggolan's maiden Roma brace stole the spotlight as his team secured an Italian Cup quarter-final tie against second division Cesena with a 4-0 romp over Sampdoria on Thursday. Although Luis Muriel hit the post early on for Sampdoria, a sensational Leandro Paredes volley also hit the woodwork at the other end and was a sign of more to come from Luciano Spalletti's Serie A title challengers.

Samp 'keeper Christian Puggioni did well to bat away another scorcher from Paredes, but the keeper was left powerless when Nainggolan pounced on a poor Matias Silvestre touch to fire a right-footed volley from outside the area into the far top corner minutes before the interval.

The celebrations extended to a substitutes bench featuring an ecstatic Francesco Totti, and were almost back on minutes later when Nainggolan set up El Shaarawy with a back-heel flick that the forward fired just over. Puggioni palmed a low drive from El Shaarawy round the near post and from the corner Nainggolan blasted wide.

Two minutes after the restart, El Shaarawy won back possession to set up Edin Dzeko for the Bosnian beat Puggioni at his far bottom corner for Roma's second. Dzeko, twice, then Antonio Rudiger were denied but El Shaarawy made amends with a superbly-taken third for the hosts. The former AC Milan forward controlled Dzeko's 40-yard pass while on the run, cut in past his marker and controlled to fire a delicate lob over onrushing Puggioni.

Totti replaced Dzeko on the hour and stung Puggioni's gloves twice. Diego Perotti capped his recent return from injury with a cross for Nainggolan as the Belgian headed past Puggioni on the stroke of full time. Roma now face Cesena who on Wednesday had on-loan Sassuolo forward Karim Laribi to thank for scoring the winner that sent his parent club crashing out of the competition. — AFP

## ZIDANE SEEKS SOLUTION

**MADRID:** Real Madrid boss Zinedine Zidane insists he is responsible for the European champions' back-to-back defeats as they look to return to winning ways when Malaga visit the Santiago Bernabeu today. Madrid hadn't lost in 40 matches in all competitions stretching back nine months until conceding twice to lose 2-1 at Sevilla last weekend, and followed that up with a shock defeat by the same scoreline at home to Celta Vigo in the first leg of their Copa del Rey quarter-final on Wednesday.

Zidane played down his concern, but admitted "something is wrong for sure" after Madrid lost on home soil for the first time in 11 months and just the second time since he took charge. "I am the one responsible for this and I have to look for the solution," said the Frenchman. Worryingly for Zidane, Madrid's lacklustre display in midweek came about despite the fact he picked almost a full strength side.

Karim Benzema looks set to return up front and Keylor Navas will replace Kiko Casilla in goal. However, with first-choice right-back Dani Carvajal out injured for a month, Zidane may have to move captain Sergio Ramos or Nacho wide to avoid handing the hapless Danilo, who was jeered by the Real fans on Wednesday, another start. Malaga are suffering a slump of their own with new coach Marcelo Romero yet to pick up a point in two games since former Spurs boss Juande Ramos resigned during the winter break. Top scorer Sandro Ramirez is expected to be out till March through injury, whilst the on-loan Diego Llorente can't feature this weekend against his parent club.

### Rampant Sevilla

A return to winning ways will allow Madrid to open up a four-point lead at the top of the table before Sevilla have the chance to cut the gap, or even go top should Real slip-up once more, when they travel to bottom-placed Osasuna tomorrow. Sevilla are in stunning form having won their last four league games, but will have to do without the influential Vitolo for up to a month with the Spanish international sidelined by a hamstring injury. Barcelona stand just a point adrift of Sevilla in third and have bounced back into form themselves with three straight wins after a difficult start to the year, the latest of which came at Real Sociedad in the Copa del Rey on Thursday. — AFP

## ORIGI WANTS REDS TO KEEP PRESSURE

**LIVERPOOL:** Liverpool striker Divock Origi has challenged his team-mates to keep the pressure on Premier League leaders Chelsea when they host relegation-threatened Swansea today. Jurgen Klopp's side are seven points behind Chelsea in third place after losing ground in the title race following a frustrating 1-1 draw at bitter rivals Manchester United last weekend. But Origi is convinced Liverpool can still overhaul Chelsea as they long as they don't ease up during a hectic month that includes nine matches in all competitions.

Klopp made nine changes for Wednesday's FA Cup third round replay at fourth tier Plymouth, and was rewarded with a 1-0 victory secured by Lucas Leiva's first goal in seven years. One significant bonus from Wednesday's match was the inclusion of Brazil playmaker Philippe Coutinho, making his first start since suffering an ankle injury against Sunderland at the end of November. Coutinho's creativity was a key factor in Liverpool's climb to the top of the table earlier this season and keeping him fit could be crucial if they are to stand any chance of catching Chelsea. "I think it's very tight above us at the moment, but you just have to look at it game by game," Origi said. "There are still a lot of big games, important games, so we have to stay together and finish well."

### Live Match on TV (Local Timing)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE		
Liverpool v Swansea City	15:30	beIN SPORTS
Middlesbrough v West Ham	18:00	beIN SPORTS
Crystal Palace v Everton	18:00	beIN SPORTS
West Bromwich v Sunderland	18:00	beIN SPORTS
Stoke City v Man United	18:00	beIN SPORTS
Bournemouth v Watford	18:00	beIN SPORTS
Man City v Tottenham	20:30	beIN SPORTS

SPANISH LEAGUE		
Espanyol v Granada CF	15:00	beIN SPORTS
Real Madrid v Malaga	18:15	beIN SPORTS
Deportivo Alaves v Leganes	20:30	beIN SPORTS
Villarreal v Valencia	22:45	beIN SPORTS

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE		
Chievo Verona v Fiorentina	20:00	beIN SPORTS
AC Milan v SSC Napoli	22:45	beIN SPORTS

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA		
Werder Bremen v Borussia	17:30	beIN SPORTS
Schalke 04 v FC Ingolstadt	17:30	beIN SPORTS
VfL Wolfsburg v Hamburger SV	17:30	beIN SPORTS
Augsburg v 1899 Hoffenheim	17:30	beIN SPORTS
Darmstadt v Monchengladbach	17:30	beIN SPORTS
Leipzig v Eintracht	20:30	beIN SPORTS

FRENCH LEAGUE		
Nantes v PSG	19:00	beIN SPORTS
FC Metz v Montpellier	22:00	beIN SPORTS
Guingamp v Stade Rennes	22:00	beIN SPORTS
Caen v Nancy Lorraine	22:00	beIN SPORTS
Girondins v Toulouse	22:00	beIN SPORTS
Dijon v Lille OSC	22:00	beIN SPORTS

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP		
Ghana v Mali	19:00	beIN SPORTS
Egypt v Uganda	22:00	beIN SPORTS

Klopp must be concerned though, by the continuing poor form of his strikers. Origi was anonymous at Old Trafford last weekend and equally poor at Plymouth, where he missed a penalty. Daniel Sturridge, who played in attack with Origi on Wednesday, showed little sign of recapturing the form he showed in his first 18 months at Anfield. Roberto Firmino is set to return in attack against Swansea, leaving the future of Sturridge, who has been beset by injuries over the last two-and-a-half years, the subject of speculation.

### Confusion

Klopp is hoping that the confusion surrounding Cameroon international Joel Matip's eligibility will be sorted out quickly. Matip is alleged to have refused to play for Cameroon after being named in their preliminary squad for the Africa Cup of Nations and, under FIFA rules, that may be enough to bar him from featuring for Liverpool while the tournament in Gabon is in progress.

There is some doubt over whether the rule applies in the Premier League though, as Matip was not selected for Cameroon's final 23-player squad. Swansea sacked their manager after losing their last meeting with Liverpool at the Liberty Stadium in early November; they have sacked another one since, and are in grave danger of losing their Premier League status after a six-year stay. — AFP



**CHAPECO:** Brazilian Chapecoense footballer Alan Ruschel (R), one of the survivors of the LaMia airplane crash in Colombia, jokes with Wellington Paulista after a training session at the Arena Conda stadium. — AFP

# CHAPECOENSE TURN PAGE WITH FRIENDLY

**CHAPEC:** Tragic Brazilian football team Chapecoense are ready to turn the page with new players recruited in record time to play their first match today since its squad was wiped out in a plane crash. The friendly against Brazilian champions Palmeiras will be the final tribute to the 19 players and 24 other club members who were killed as the team travelled to the away leg of the Copa Sudamerica final in Colombia last November.

Under new sporting director Rui Costa, 22 players have been recruited, the majority on loan, forming the backbone of the rebuilt team. "The club understood that this was the moment to confirm its greatness by building a strong team, worthy of those who have left us," Costa told AFP. "The strongest argument was to show (the new players) that this club refused to die. "Saturday's match will be very important to show that everything that was accomplished by the players who left us will continue. It's the most beautiful tribute we can pay them."

The accident cut short the fairytale run of the unheralded team who had risen in five years from the fourth division and were playing in their first major final. Atletico Nacional subsequently asked that their grieving opponents be award-

ed the Copa Sudamerica title, and the trophy will be officially presented today at their Arena Conda de Chapeco Stadium. The tragedy put the town of just 160,000 people in the global spotlight with a large banner at the exit of the tiny Serafin Enoss Bertaso airport reading 'thank you' in a dozen languages.

### 'Charged with emotion'

The club is torn between the desire to honor its heroes and at the same time the need to turn the page, veteran goalkeeper Nivaldo told AFP. Nivaldo missed the fateful trip to Colombia and has since hung up his gloves and joined the team's coaching staff.

"This match against Palmeiras will be charged with emotion, but it will be the final stage in the mourning process because it's time to think about the future of Chapecoense," he added. "We'll take advantage to bond with our fans before turning toward the objectives which those who have left us would want us to achieve."

Among the faithful supporters will be Joan Dutra who has followed the side's meteoric rise from this small country club to the heights of South American football. The 60-year-old has made the 130 kilometer trip from Pato Branco, in the neighboring state of Parana, to

attend the match. "For me, it's moving to see this, because I lost friends in this tragedy, thank God the team is back, we have to be strong to pay tribute to those who have left us and try to do as well as they did if not even better," said Dutra, a friend of former president Sandro Pallaoro, who died in the crash.

The new-look Chapecoense has no big names, but experienced players such as former Lille striker Tulio de Melo and ex-Benfica goalkeeper Artur Moraes. "It's a privilege to participate in this reconstruction, but it's also a great challenge. We have a group of players, but we have to form a real team as quickly as possible," said Moraes of the 28-man squad.

De Melo, 31, added: "I simply could not say no. I knew almost everyone who was in the plane. It was a real shock. "We were chosen for our qualities on the pitch, but also off it. It's a club unlike any other, a family, where everyone is very humble but with the soul of a warrior." Symbolically the first stone in rebuilding will be against the team they last played on November 27 when Palmeiras beat Chapecoense 1-0 at home to lift the Brazilian title, just one day before tragedy struck. Its first competitive fixture since the disaster will be at home against Joinville on January 26. —AFP



SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 2017

# Sports



Barca end Sociedad hoodoo

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MELBOURNE: Switzerland's Roger Federer hits a return against Czech Republic's Tomas Berdych during their men's singles third round match on day five of the Australian Open tennis tournament. — AFP

## VINTAGE FEDERER FLOORS BERDYCH SWISS MASTER WINS IN 3 STRAIGHT SETS

**MELBOURNE:** Swiss marvel Roger Federer blitzed long-time rival Tomas Berdych in straight sets to storm into the fourth round with a vintage performance at the Australian Open yesterday. The 17-time Grand Slam champion, seeded 17th after an injury-hit 2016, downed the 10th-seeded Czech 6-2, 6-4, 6-4, in just 90 minutes.

Federer reached the round of 16 in Melbourne for the 15th time where he will face Japanese fifth seed Kei Nishikori. "From the baseline, honestly I felt worlds better than in the first couple of rounds. Yeah, it's wonderful. I'm really happy, yeah, of course," Federer said. "I'm sure I've done some sort of a performance like this (before). When you don't get broken, you don't have to save any break points, you're always in the lead, it's always easier to play."

Any concerns that Federer might be in for a tough night evaporated with a double service break to lead Berdych 5-2 in

the opening set. The Swiss maestro continued to put on a tennis masterclass to leave the big Czech floundering. Federer breezed through the opening set in 26 minutes, made it 2-0 another 31 minutes later and cruised through the final set in 33 minutes to complete an astonishing demolition of one of his long-time rivals. Federer broke Berdych's big serve four times and did not face one break point on his own service, while hitting 40 winners against just 17 unforced errors.

### 'I did surprise myself'

"I didn't expect it as such, to be honest, especially not this kind of a scoreline," Federer said. "Especially having to save no breakpoints, just always rolling on the serve. That was a big surprise to me. I think it was a great mental test for me to see if I could stay in the match point for point, keep rolling. I was able to do that. That's where I'm just really happy that I was

able to deliver that. "I had no expectations really for tonight, but I did surprise myself."

On facing Nishikori in his next match, the 35-year-old Swiss legend said: "I'm a big fan of his game. He's got one of the best backhands out there. I love how he can crush it down the line or crosscourt." He's got wonderful second serve returns. He's fast on his legs. Strong in his mind. "I know how tough he is as the match goes along. He finds his range and his rhythm, he's tough to stop." It was the 23rd career meeting between the pair and their seventh meeting at a Grand Slam, and fourth at the Australian Open. Federer extended his record to 17-6 over Berdych and has won their last six meetings. The last time the Czech defeated Federer was in the semi-finals at Dubai in 2013. The Swiss legend is looking to become the third man to win five Australian Open singles titles after Novak Djokovic and Roy Emerson, who have both won six. — AFP