

**Sabeels: Fountains  
of life and charity  
on Kuwait's streets**



**Once tax-free,  
Saudi Arabia  
starts expat levy**



**Lukaku set for  
move to Man Utd,  
Rooney to Everton**



**FREE**

# Kuwait Times Friday Times

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NO: 17273 - Friday, July 7, 2017

## BIOMETRIC ATTENDANCE MUST FOR ALL PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

**KUWAIT:** All public sector employees will have to use biometric attendance systems to register their arrival and departure from work without exceptions from October 1, according to a decision by the Civil Service Council. As per the decision, the system will become mandatory for department directors, supervisors and staff members with over 25 years of service in the public sector - who are all currently exempted, said Ahmad Al-Jassar, Director of the Civil Service Commission. The decision also does not

allow any state department to give exceptions to any employee, he added.

However, people with severe disabilities and moderate cognitive impairment remain exempted from fingerprinting, provided that they provide a document from the Public Authority of the Disabled which states that their condition prevents them from operating the system. The Civil Service Council sets regulations pertaining work in the public sector, which the Civil Service Commission follows. — KUNA



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Local Spotlight

CIRCUMCISION



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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BC recently reported an incident that occurred in the UK that raised arguments and debate over its legality and importance. Here is what happened: Three people have been arrested by police for investigation due to their connection to the circumcision of a three-month-old boy. The boy's mother complained to police, saying her son was circumcised without her consent while staying with his paternal grandparents in July 2013. The mother said she was shocked when she opened her baby boy's nappy and saw blood. She found out that he had been circumcised without her consent and filed a legal complaint. The doctor is one of the suspects along with the grandparents over suspicion of grievous bodily harm with intent. All three were released pending further investigations.

I think the root of the problem here is the absence of the mother's consent, because she sees the procedure as a violation of the rights of a young child and "inhumane". Male circumcision is the removal of the foreskin. It is a sensitive fold of skin and other tissues that covers the head of the penis. It is mostly confined to Jewish and Muslim communities. The aim of circumcision is hygiene and to reduce the risk of urinary tract infections and penile cancer in adulthood. Opponents of circumcision say removing the foreskin decreases sensitivity and limits sensation during sexual activity. Others say circumcision is a human rights issue, and that it's unethical for a family to make the decision for their child.

In the past, perhaps 50 years ago or more, girls were also circumcised in some rural and ignorant communities, and I see this as a harsh matter and a violation of their humanity. Sometimes, when I see pictures of children over the age of six who are standing in queue waiting to be circumcised, I feel frightened. The issue of circumcision is a controversial one between the East and West. Some have corrupted the process and made it look like a violation of human rights, although it is widely practiced daily in most countries of the world, and not only by Muslims.

For example in Kuwait, circumcision is done only for male newborns at the hospital by a doctor with the consent of the parents. Medical care to relieve the pain is also provided. It is not done for older children, or as we see in some Islamic countries, at the hands of a barber!

Brian Morris, coauthor of a new report and professor emeritus at the School of Medical Sciences at the University of Sydney, said in a press release that "infant circumcision should be regarded as equivalent to childhood vaccination". So ethically, doctors should offer the parents the option of circumcision for their new baby boys. Because a delay puts the child's health at risk and may never take place. If they refuse, then it is their choice and decision.

Morris and his colleagues found the circumcision rate in newborns has declined from 83 percent in the 1960s to 77 percent in 2010. Additionally, data suggest there is a racial disparity, driven primarily by access to the procedure and cultural and educational factors. The study says the benefits of newborn circumcision exceed the risks by at least 100 to 1.

Circumcision is not related to human rights as much as the medical importance of it, and the approval of the parents to perform circumcision is essential. If a dispute between the two becomes an issue, legal intervention is necessary, because the child's body is the responsibility of the parents. Therefore, it is not right to allow any person to take any part of his body without the knowledge and consent of the parents. After all, parents are responsible for a child's care, protection, and health. If no protections are provided, it may lead to health problems for an innocent child.

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Photo shows Safat Square circa 1958. Photo from KUNA Archives.

In my view

CARING HANDS



By Dana Al-Rashid

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I'm always happy whenever I see a family taking a stroll together. An all too usual scene in any other part of the world, indeed, but unfortunately a rare find here. What I often see here are sterile, foreign hands that feed and clean in a machine-like, monotonous way. I see poor, worn out hands that work endlessly for meager pay, taking burdensome responsibilities that they did not sign up for. They are the same hands that might finally lose their temper and beat the child. There is no excuse for abuse, but if the parents can't stand their own children for more than an hour, how can we demand strangers to spend all day with them?

It is interesting to see the parents' angry and shocked reactions whenever they find out that the housemaid/babysitter is beating or abusing the child in some form or another. Do we really have the right to get mad, after allowing things to escalate unnoticed?

The domestic labor force that is brought to Kuwait usually comes from very poor and uneducated areas. They are but simple people - many of them never even owned a phone in their entire lives. They don't even have basic needs like clean water and electricity back home, let alone

education systems. How can we expect them to teach and raise our children? Assuming that a minority of the home labor force is educated, does this make it right to leave child-rearing entirely to them?

A gentle touch that your child needs - he will be getting it from the housemaid. An entire childhood is spent with her, while the mother merely lingers in the background. A stranger from another continent enjoys endless playtime with a child who once called your insides home. Time that the father could have taken to bond with the child is spent with the driver instead. The child's speech becomes a strange mix of English with an Asian flavor, with no traces of Arabic whatsoever. Isn't that enough of an alarming sign?

Some might leave their children with a nurse, thinking it's a better option. I ask them - is childhood an ailment? How do you expect to form a real relationship with the child? And how will the child know about warmth and gentleness amidst the sterile gloves and medical equipment?

Perhaps the social pressure to have a child and being trapped in an unhappy marriage might lead women to leave the child in the arms of strangers. I believe that a happy family will always make time for its children. These children will grow into adults with emotional dents, and they will travel southeast to heal, only to fall back into their real mothers' laps again.

Feeding, cleaning, caregiving and playing - this is where bonding happens, so let us fill these times with love and joy.

In my view

WELCOME HOME

By Sana Kalim

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Nowadays, Kuwait appears to be very empty - where is everybody?! Kuwait airport has reported an increased travel rate of over 100 percent! Doesn't anyone want to stay here? Sure there are some good reasons for this exodus - Kuwait recorded an all-time temperature high last Thursday. The hottest temperature ever recorded, according to the world meteorological center, is a whopping 54 degrees of scorching heat in Mitribah. This reading was taken during the unending heat wave that continues to make the Middle East swelter.

So temperatures are an obvious reason. A quarter of our population is under 14, so school summer holiday fun is also a major reason why many flee the country, as the opportunity is

finally here!

Moreover, entire families are leaving as well to accompany their children. Many expats here have left too. Seventy percent of the population is made up of expats - and many of them want to break free from whatever's restricting them and visit their homelands. This is the main reason for this article - the feeling of returning home is so immense after being saturated with loneliness here.

Even if Kuwait is welcoming, nothing can replace the rush of love that replaces all the sadness when finally seeing your loved ones. Through the many calls over Viber and WhatsApp, and as each day passes, the need to see your family weighs harder and harder. And the difficulty that they face creates an overwhelming sense of isolation. Now these fairies are finally free!

It has been a difficult year for everyone, and I would like to wish everyone a wonderful summer - a well-deserved summer. Good job, everyone!



# Sabeel :

## Fountains of life and charity on the streets of Kuwait

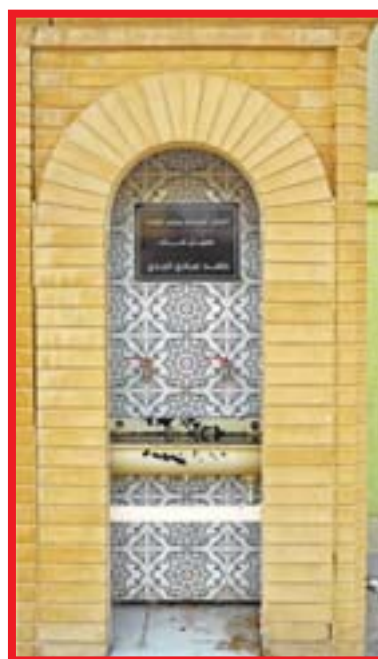


By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

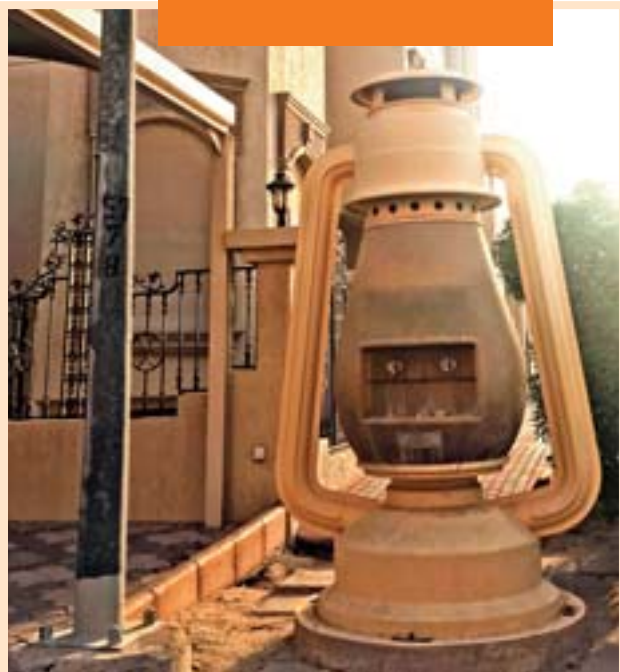
**Y**ou cannot die of thirst in Kuwait. Whether you are on foot, or driving around, free drinking water is available in all neighborhoods of this desert country. The water fountains, known locally as 'sabeel' in Arabic, literally meaning 'road'.

Water is viewed as a gift here and many families will erect water fountains, sabeel, as memorials to deceased relatives. They are also often gifted as awqaf to provide free water to anyone who might need it. Providing water is a favorite act of charity for Muslims. Kuwait also spends a great deal of money digging drinking water wells in poor countries. Sabeels in Kuwait may also be funded by a private institution or with a donation from a cooperative society.

One of the most interesting aspects of sabeel are the variety of designs and structures. Some are encased in large sculptures or brickwork, others are simple fountains while others are built to resemble local or historical landmarks.







Most water fountain designs are associated with Kuwaiti heritage, such as lanterns, urns and architectural forms such as the old wooden houses of Kuwait or water towers, in addition to the dallah (Arabic coffee pot), which symbolizes hospitality. Passersby use these fountains to drink and fill small water containers for street cats, stray dogs and birds.

But some deface the fountains by pasting posters on them, as if they are complimentary advertising spaces!

The huge fountains in their varied shapes add an aesthetic touch to the streets. Not all public water fountains are embellished though - some merely have a fence to protect them from theft. But at the end, they all reflect the philanthropic spirit of the people of Kuwait.







Sabeel take on a variety of forms and structures, often representing Kuwaiti heritage in the form of old Kuwaiti homes or the Arabic coffee pot, dallal. They can also be huge brickwork structures or resemble local landmarks. Many have coolers to provide cold water and can often be found on streets, local parks, outside buildings, shops and offices.

— Photos by Joseph Shagra, Athoob Al-Shuaibi, Yasser Al-Zayyat and KUNA





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# Going Solo



Amr Al-Refai (right) at work at Solo Pizza Napulitana in Kuwait City.

By Shakir Reshamwala

Young entrepreneurs seem to be everywhere these days, starting their own small and medium enterprises and promoting them online. The Kuwaiti government is fully supporting and encouraging them by loosening up rigid laws and cutting down the paperwork and time needed to register a business. But before SMEs became a trend, one young Kuwaiti

man was already bucking norms and forging a path of his own. Now a local success story, Amr Al-Refai serves as a great model for young entrepreneurs hoping to turn their dreams into reality.

According to Refai, everyone has a passion, but to be successful, you have to turn this passion into action - even if it means quitting a cushy job or risk burning the family house down! This is the belief that led him to open an authentic Neapolitan pizzeria in Kuwait back in 2011, a time when few Kuwaitis were interested in being their own boss. Located in a backstreet in a nondescript and hard-to-find area of Kuwait City, Solo Pizza Napulitana has consistently ranked as one of the best restaurants in Kuwait.

Refai, 34, is a trained pizzaiolo from Naples. "I went to Italy for the first time in 2000. There I was told if you want the best pizza, you should go to Naples. This was the first spark of my idea

Last month, Haider was part of a team of chefs that set a record for the world's longest pizza at the Auto Club Speedway of California in Fontana. The pizza reached 6,333 feet (1.93 km) in length, certified by representatives from the Guinness World Records. Placed on one of the largest scaffolding units ever made, the pizza weighed 7,808 kg. The pizza was prepared with 3,632 kg of dough, 1,634 kg of cheese and 2,542 kg of salsa. The previous record was set in Italy in 2016, where a 6,082-foot-long pizza was made.

## All fired up!

Meanwhile, in the opposite corner of the world, in California, another pizzaiolo with links to Kuwait is making waves. Ali Haider, who runs a pizzeria in Sun Valley near Los Angeles, is an Indian-Iraqi-American who was raised and schooled in Kuwait. The former Lamborghini spokesmodel and 2003 Mr India-America has won a host of awards for his traditional and fusion pizzas. Haider's all-halal Neapolitan pizzeria - called 786 Degrees - is also located in a nondescript location, but has become a magnet for pizza lovers.



The pizzeria has an eclectic decor inspired by all things Naples.



## Meet Amr Al-Refai - Kuwaiti pizzaiolo and pioneering entrepreneur

to bring the experience of Neapolitan pizza to Kuwait," he said. After mulling about it, in 2004 he built an oven in his house to work on his skills. But it didn't work out as expected, so in 2007, Refai headed back to Naples to learn pizza-making. He also worked in a restaurant there.

In 2008, he returned to Naples again and participated in a pizza festival. The same year, Refai ordered an original wood-fired oven from a fourth-generation artisan. The oven can cook in five seconds and reaches a temperature of 500 C. In 2011, he opened Solo Pizza Napulitana. "I deliberately chose to open shop here. This is a hidden place. The interior design is influenced by pizzerias in Naples, with our own touch. Our focus was on comfort," Refai said.

### Authentic fare

Solo Pizza Napulitana won a clutch of awards at a recent pizza competition in Dubai, and is featured in Phaidon's new travel tome, Where to Eat Pizza. The restaurant is certified by the Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana, a nonprofit set up in 1984 to promote and protect in Italy and worldwide the "true Neapolitan pizza" ("verace pizza napoletana"). In a bid to burnish its authentic credentials, Solo Pizza Napulitana brings in fresh mozzarella cheese weekly by air. Organic San Marzano tomatoes are also imported. "I'm always trying new stuff. We are constantly experimenting, but we keep it simple - no more than five ingredients to bring out the individual flavors. Simple is very hard - it is easy to use many inferior ingredients to mask their taste," Refai said.

But do people in Kuwait really care about authenticity? According to Refai, his role is to educate the public. So what about pineapple as a topping? "Neapolitans will be horrified. We have tried it here, but don't tell anyone about it," he quipped.

### Breaking barriers

Refai holds a bachelor's degree in finance from Kuwait University. But unlike most Kuwaitis who aspire for a well-paid government job, Refai had an entrepreneurial streak. "I did have a public sector job. But three months after we opened here, I quit. There's no looking back now," he said. His family is also very supportive. "Even when I was experimenting with the oven in my house, my father kept calm," he smiled.

"We were 100 percent Kuwaiti-staffed initially. Kuwaiti families actually came to see the novelty of Kuwaitis working in a restaurant. We broke many barriers, and people were talking about us. There is no shame in the owners or locals working in their own businesses," he said. In conclusion, Refai has a piece of advice. "If you are honest with yourself and God and do your best, God will bless you. But you have to stay humble."





# OPPOSITION MPs THREATEN TO GRILL PREMIER OVER 'ILLEGAL' SPENDING

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** Opposition MP Abdulwahab Al-Haroun threatened yesterday to grill His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah over what he claimed spending KD. 3.8 billion without proper records showing where and how they were spent.

Babtain gave the prime minister until the start of the next national assembly term in October to explain where the funds have gone and show physical legal proof of where they spent. The lawmaker said the funds were spent in previous fiscal years and not in the current fiscal year and regretted that the previous assemblies did not take action over the issue. He said that the issue was raised by MPs Shuaib Al-Muwaizri and Riyadh Al-Adasani during their grilling of the prime minister several weeks ago which passed without filing a non-cooperation motion.

Babtain warned that if the govern-

ment fails to provide legal justification for the spending of the huge sums, he plans to hold those responsible accountable for what they committed. He said that if the government does not provide the justifi-



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah

cations "I declare it frankly that we will grill the prime minister" in the next assembly term and that he will continue to reject the state budget and final accounts until the legal justification is provided. Babtain said that no one is shielded against questioning and that the opposition plans to grill any minister responsible for the spending of the funds.

In a related development, opposition MP Al-Humaidi Al-Subaiei said that five grillings are in the pipeline for the next assembly term, but he did not specify who will be grilled. He said that no "sovereign ministers" are shielded against questioning and that MPs will hold ministers to account even after they resign. He called on the government to carry out necessary reforms in some faulty places adding that lawmakers need ministers who can carry out reforms. Subaie also vowed to strike against corruption in the ministries of oil and electricity and water. Both ministries are run by Essam Al-Marzouk.

# DEVELOPING NATIONAL TOURISM SPELLS ECONOMIC PROSPERITY FOR KUWAIT: ACADEMIC

**KUWAIT:** Developing Kuwait's tourism sector will lead naturally to the development of the national economy, said a Kuwaiti academic yesterday. Professor at Kuwait University's (KU) Industrial and Management Systems Engineering Department, Dr Tariq Al-Dowaisan said in a specialized study that the legislative and executive authorities in Kuwait should consider the establishment of a public authority for tourism similar to the ones in neighboring countries.

Dr Dowaisan added that it was important for Kuwait to facilitate travel procedures for those eager to visit the country. Kuwait has the essential elements to develop its tourism sector, but this goal will not be achieved unless the powers that be take the necessary steps to launch the country in the right direction, said the Kuwaiti academic. The current international rankings showed that Kuwait was lingering behind tourism-wise; therefore, the Gulf country must work on developing its traveling policies, natural resources, and infrastructure in order to usher in an age of economic development within tourism.

In line with the Kuwaiti leadership's desire, the 'Kuwait 2035' development vision was launched to transform the country to a regional and international commercial and economic hub. According to the vision, some 90,000 jobs will be created within the tourism sector until the year 2035. Tourism in Kuwait provides around two percent to the national economy through direct and indirect investments, revealed statistics from the tourism department in the Ministry of Information. There are plans to bring the number to around four percent and more. —KUNA

# BRITISH SECRETARY OF STATE TO VISIT KUWAIT TOMORROW

**LONDON:** Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah announced that Britain's Secretary of State Boris Johnson is to pay an official visit to the country tomorrow to discuss recent developments on the Gulf dispute and ways to end it. Jarallah made his remarks after meeting Wednesday with Johnson in London, adding that they both reviewed developments of the Gulf dispute since its beginning, as well as Kuwait's efforts aimed at bridging the gap and reaching a solution to the root causes of the dispute.

The Kuwaiti-British discussion also addressed recent situation developments in the region, particularly the dispute between Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt, he said, adding that Johnson expressed his country's praise of the efforts exerted by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in brining points of view closer and containing the ongoing dispute.

Meanwhile, Jarallah mentioned that his meeting with British Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa Alistair Burt earlier was "positive" and "beneficial" for both sides, adding that it addressed the ongoing Gulf dispute and Britain's support of the Kuwaiti efforts to contain

and end the dispute. The meeting also discussed regional issues regarding Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Gulf-Iranian relations, he said, noting that Kuwait and Britain share similar views on these issues. On



Boris Johnson

outcomes of the Kuwaiti-British steering committee's meeting, which concluded yesterday, Jarallah said that the committee reviewed latest achievements of deals signed in previous meetings, adding that the steering committee is a monitoring body that follows and watches implementation of signed agreements.

The Kuwaiti senior diplomat official also mentioned that signing an MoU with Britain in the information security field will boost the fruitful cooperation between the two countries, particularly Kuwait as the deal will provide its various state and private sectors with high protection to their information security systems.

## Amir's role

In the meantime, British Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa Alistair Burt highly commended on Wednesday the mediation efforts by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah aiming to resolve the Gulf crisis. Speaking in a statement on the sidelines of the Kuwait-British committee meetings, Burt said the United Kingdom has strong bonds of friendship with all Gulf countries and appreciates the GCC unity and cohesion. He expressed his hope that the Kuwaiti mediation efforts would succeed in containing the crisis. Johnson met Jarallah in London earlier, and said he looked forward to visiting Kuwait to discuss the issue.

Meanwhile, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain on Wednesday expressed sorrow over Qatar's "negative" response to their demands. They extolled the mediation role by His Highness the Amir of Kuwait aiming to find a resolution to the crisis. The four countries affirmed the importance of strong relations amongst Arab nations, and deep appreciation to the Qatari people. —KUNA

## News

in brief

### Green light for visit visas extension

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Khalid Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah gave immigration departments' directors in all governorates the authority to extend visit visas of expatriates and allow visit visa violators to adjust their statuses after paying fines. The new instructions took effect on Tuesday, according to Al-Anbaa daily.

### Felony

Hawally prosecutor told police to register the death of a Jordanian youth by a drug overdose as a felony. A security source said the Jordanian's body was taken to Mubarak Hospital by ambulance after being found in a Hawally park, and he was pronounced dead on arrival. Forensic authorities will determine the exact cause of death.

### Assault

Two bedoon women were hurt and their car damaged at Sulaibikhat cemetery. The two were beaten by a third bedoon woman with the help of her husband and two sons. The two attached a medical report with their complaint to police.

### Burns

A woman who went to a Hawally clinic for laser hair removal, ended up with second degree burns, according to a complaint she lodged at Maidan Hawally police station. She said she made the complaint after being told by Mubarak Hospital doctors that the burns were caused by the laser treatment. Police are treating the matter as a medical error.



MANAMA: Kuwait's Ambassador to Bahrain Sheikh Azam Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khalifa. —KUNA

## BAHRAINI OFFICIAL EXTOLS AMIR

**MANAMA:** A Bahraini official yesterday heaped praise on Kuwait's Amir His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for his honorable actions. According to Bahrain News Agency (BNA), this occurred when Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khalifa met with Kuwait's Ambassador to the Gulf island nation Sheikh Azam Al-Sabah, as talks centered on the latest regional developments. —KUNA





## AVENUES MALL FIRE UNDER CONTROL: KFSD

**KUWAIT:** The fire that erupted earlier yesterday at the construction site of the new Avenues Mall extension project is now under total control, said a statement yesterday. Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's (KFSD) Deputy Director General Jamal Al-Blaihees said that efforts of five firefighting teams succeeded to contain the fire; adding damage was limited to material only. —KUNA





# Friday Times International

FRIDAY, JULY 7, 2017

**Modi caps Netanyahu bromance with barefoot beach stroll**



**Venezuela backers attack opposition National Assembly**



**Kashmir tense as key 'versary looms**



## TRUMP WARNS FUTURE OF THE WEST AT STAKE TRUMP DESCRIBES MOSCOW'S BEHAVIOR AS DESTABILIZING

**WARSAW:** US President Donald Trump warned that the future of the West was at risk and lashed out at Russia and North Korea yesterday at the start of a high-stakes trip to Europe. On the eve of what is likely to be a prickly G20 summit, with Trump facing animosity from traditional US allies, he will use a landmark address in Warsaw to warn that a lack of collective resolve could doom an alliance that endured through the Cold War.

"The defense of the West ultimately rests not only on means but also on the will of its people to prevail," Trump will say, according to excerpts released by the White House. "The fundamental question of our time is whether the West has the will to survive." In Poland, a country deeply wary of Moscow's increasing military assertiveness in its backyard, Trump also offered rare criticism of Russia.

Just a day before he meets Russian President Vladimir Putin for the first time at the gathering of G20 leaders in Germany, Trump described Moscow's behavior as "destabilizing". He also conceded that Russia "may have" tried to influence the 2016 election that brought him to power, but suggested others too may have been involved. Looming large over his entire European trip is Pyongyang's test of an intercontinental ballistic missile that could deliver a nuclear payload to Alaska.

### Very bad behavior

In his first public remarks since the test Tuesday, Trump said Pyongyang's military saber-rattling must bring "consequences" and warned he was considering a "severe" response to its 'very, very bad behavior'. After repeatedly urging Beijing to ratchet up the economic pressure on North Korea, Trump will hold what promises to be a testy meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the G20 in the northern German city of Hamburg.

In his Warsaw address, Trump will paint a picture of liberal democracies facing existential internal and external challenges, of nations battling to defend "our civilization" from terrorism, bureaucracy and the erosion of traditions, according to the extracts. The White House hopes to use the speech-with its echoes of historic Ronald Reagan and John F Kennedy's addresses overseas-to burnish his credentials as a global statesman and deflect suggestions he is making the United States a virtual pariah.

Organizers expect thousands-perhaps tens of thousands-of people to attend, many arriving on free buses laid on by Poland's conservative ruling party, which is eager to ensure Trump gets the adulation he craves. "It is important that President Trump feel good about his visit to Poland," Stanislaw Pieta, a member of parliament for the Party of Law



**HAMBURG:** US President Donald Trump waves after he and US First Lady Melania Trump were greeted by Hamburg's Mayor Olaf Scholz, right, upon arrival at the airport in Hamburg, northern Germany yesterday.—AFP

and Justice told the AFP. That should provide welcome relief from the cool reception he is likely to receive elsewhere. "After his disastrous trip to Brussels and Taormina, friendly pictures with European leaders and cheering crowds at his public speech could help Trump repair his image at home," said Piotr Buras of the European Council on Foreign Relations.

### Blow to global consensus

During the speech at Krasinski Square—which memorializes the Warsaw uprising against Nazi occupation-Trump will point to Poland as an example of resolve in the defense of Western traditions. "We must work together to counter forces, whether they come from inside or out, from the South or the East, that threaten over time to undermine these values and to erase the bonds of culture, faith and tradition that make us who we are."

Trump will also issue a Reaganesque call to

tackle bureaucratic over control, which he will frame as more than just an inconvenience or byproduct of a rules-based society. While Trump positions himself as a leader with the vision to confront an epoch-making crisis, for many US allies in Europe and beyond it is Trump himself who has called the world order-and a century of American global leadership-into doubt.

"Trump's decisions to pull out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Paris climate accord have dealt a blow to the near-global consensus," said Dmitri Trenin, director for the Carnegie Moscow Center. In public, European officials profess the decades-old transatlantic partnership to be inviolable and essential. In private, they wonder whether it can survive four or eight years with an impulsive and capricious US president at the helm.

### Storm clouds

Trump's four-day swing will continue to

the northern German city of Hamburg later yesterday for his first G20 summit, where tricky geopolitical currents-from rumbling transatlantic discord over defense and climate change to increasingly difficult ties with China-will converge. Today's meeting between Trump and Putin will-among other things-be pored over for its significance to US domestic politics.

Even simple photographs of Putin and Trump shaking hands or meeting face-to-face pose a political risk for the US president and will likely be weaponized by his foes in the United States. Several of Trump's closest aides are under investigation for possible ties with Moscow, which US intelligence agencies say tried to tilt the November election in the Republican candidate's favor. The scandal continues to eat away at his administration, with key White House staff being forced to hire their own lawyers and spend time rebuffing new allegations.—AFP



## PALESTINIANS, ISRAELIS SQUARE OFF ON UNESCO VOTE ON HEBRON

**HEBRON, Palestinian Territories:** The United Nations' cultural arm will decide whether to declare the Old City of Hebron a protected zone this week, the latest Israeli-Palestinian spat at the international body. Hebron in the occupied West Bank is home to more than 200,000 Palestinians and a few hundred Israeli settlers, who live in a heavily fortified enclave near the site known to Muslims as the Ibrahimi Mosque and to Jews as the Tomb of the Patriarchs.

UNESCO's World Heritage Committee is expected to vote Friday on a resolution brought by the Palestinians declaring Hebron's Old City, including where the settlers live, an area of outstanding universal value. The resolution was fast-tracked on the basis that the site was under threat, with the Palestinians accusing Israel of an "alarming" number of violations, including vandalism and damage to properties. On Tuesday in a separate vote, the heritage committee backed a resolution condemning Israeli actions in Jerusalem, sparking Israeli anger.

Israel says the Hebron resolution—which refers to the city as "Islamic" denies thousands of years of Jewish connection there. Hebron claims to be one of the oldest cities in the world, dating from the chalcolithic period or more than 3,000 years BC, the UNESCO resolution said. At various times it has been conquered by Romans, Jews, Crusaders and Mamluks. If the resolution passes it would be seen as a victory for Palestinian diplomacy and would be cited by Israel as a fresh example of what it alleges is the UN's inherent anti-Israel bias.

In May the Jewish state reacted furiously after UNESCO passed a separate resolution on Jerusalem, and has recently prevented UNESCO researchers from visiting Hebron. The vote, which requires a two-thirds majority of those 21 countries that vote either in favor or against, is likely to be close, with both sides expressing quiet confidence.

### Fake news

On Tuesday the heritage committee backed the Jerusalem resolution 10 to three, with eight abstentions—a couple of switched votes would have tipped the balance. The US envoy to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, voiced support for Israel's attempts to block the Hebron resolution. Alaa Shahin, from the Palestinian Hebron municipality, said UNESCO designation would "help in marketing (the city) as an important global location which will support the tourism sector". "The second thing is that we'll have a legal body at an international level that will help our efforts to stop any attempts to destroy it."

Israeli foreign ministry spokesman Emmanuel Nahshon said the Palestinian plan was "fake news". "They are trying to rewrite Jewish history and the history of the region," he said. Nahshon accused the Palestinian Authority of seeking to pretend that the Tomb of the Patriarchs "is actually part of the Palestinian national heritage." Shahin said they focused only on cultural heritage.

### Empty talk

Hebron itself is a stark example of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The few hundred Israelis live closed off in a settlement most of the world considers illegal, with Palestinians largely banned from entering and using nearby streets. The settlers moved in after the 1967 war in which Israel seized the territory in a move considered illegal by the United Nations. There had been a Jewish community there decades earlier, but they were forced out by attacks in British Mandatory Palestine.

They are now protected by hundreds of Israeli soldiers, with Palestinians saying the settlement makes their lives impossible. At the centre of the row is the Ibrahimi Mosque/Tomb of the Patriarchs compound, holy to both Jews and Muslims. Old Testament figures including Abraham are believed to be buried there. In 1994, Israeli-American Baruch Goldstein opened fire on Muslims praying at the site, killing 29, before being beaten to death by survivors.

Inside Hebron's Old City, the stalls in the traditional souq are largely empty and in places wire mesh above the shops is choked by empty plastic bottles and other trash. The mesh was installed to prevent the settlers living above from dropping rubbish onto the Palestinian stall holders, traders said. Three traders AFP spoke to all said the UNESCO vote was unlikely to change facts on the ground.

"It is empty talk," shopkeeper Jamal Muragh said, saying the Israeli government would not pay attention to the resolution. "If they want to ignore things, they do." —AFP



**MOSUL:** Members of Iraq's Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS) stand in a street in the Old City of Mosul, during the government forces' ongoing offensive to retake the city from Islamic State (IS) group fighters.—AFP

## UP TO 20,000 CIVILIANS TRAPPED IN IS-HELD AREAS OF IRAQ'S MOSUL

### CIVILIANS IN EXTREME DANGER FROM BOMBARDMENT

**BAGHDAD:** Up to 20,000 civilians are trapped in the last Islamic State group-held areas in Mosul's Old City, which Iraqi forces are battling to retake, a senior UN official said yesterday. More than eight months since the start of the operation to retake Mosul, IS has gone from fully controlling the city to holding a small pocket of territory on the west bank of the Tigris River. But the fighting against the last IS holdouts are heavy, and civilians caught in the middle of the battle are in "extreme danger," UN humanitarian coordinator in Iraq Lise Grande said.

"Our estimate at this stage is that in the final pockets of the Old City, there could be as many as 15,000 civilians, possibly even as high as 20,000. The people that are still trapped inside of these pockets are in terrible condi-

tion," facing shortages of food, she said. "They're in extreme danger from bombardment, from artillery crossfire. The (IS) fighters that are still there are still directly targeting civilians if they try and leave." The battle has pushed 915,000 to flee their homes, nearly 700,000 of whom are still displaced.

"We exceeded our worst case scenario more than a month ago. In our very worst-case scenario, we thought that 750,000 people would flee," Grande said. The damage caused by the fighting in west Mosul—and the cost of addressing it—is huge. There are "44 residential neighborhoods in western Mosul.

Six are nearly completely destroyed... Twenty-two neighborhoods are moderately damaged and 16 are lightly damaged," Grande said.

Based on a preliminary assessment, the first phase of "stabilization" in west Mosul—which includes basic services, infrastructure, housing, education and police stations—will cost \$707 million.

That is nearly double the expected figure, "because the level of damage in western Mosul is far higher than what we feared it would be," she said. IS overran large areas north and west of Baghdad in 2014, but Iraqi forces backed by US-led air strikes and other support have since regained much of the ground they lost. The recapture of Mosul will not however mark the end of the war against IS. The jihadist group holds territory elsewhere in Iraq as well as in neighboring Syria, and has been able to carry out attacks in government-held areas.—AFP

## BLAST KILLS TWO AT BUS STATION IN SYRIA'S HAMA

**DAMASCUS:** At least two people were killed and several wounded yesterday in a bomb blast at a bus station in the central Syrian city of Hama, state media reported. "A terrorist with an explosive belt blew himself up at the western bus station in Hama," state television said. State news agency SANA confirmed the bomb blast and gave a toll of two dead and nine wounded. Hama city is the capital of the governorate of the same name, and is under government control.

Last month, Syria's President Bashar al-Assad made a rare public appearance outside the capital when he attended Eid al-Fitr prayers in Hama city. The city has been largely spared the devastation faced by Syrian urban centers like Aleppo,

although it has been struck by occasional violence. In October, at least two people were killed in suicide blasts claimed by the Islamic State group. Across the rest of the province however, government forces are still battling jihadist fighters and allied opposition forces.

Regime forces, backed by heavy Russian air strikes, launched a major assault in June on territory held by IS in rural parts of Hama. The province is of strategic importance to Assad, separating opposition forces in Idlib from Damascus to the south and the regime's coastal heartlands to the west. More than 320,000 people have been killed in Syria since the conflict began in March 2011 with anti-government protests.—AFP



## CLASSMATES RESCUE INDIAN CHILD BRIDE

**JAIPUR:** An Indian teenager sent to live with a much older husband who she married aged just 11 has returned to school after being rescued by her classmates, a children's charity said yesterday. The 16-year-old girl, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was married off by her family in the western state of Rajasthan, where child marriage is particularly prevalent. In May, relatives forced her to leave school and go to a

nearby village to live with her husband and his family.

But her classmates tracked her down to her new home, some walking barefoot for miles to reach her. "They somehow tracked down the house and met the girl who told them that she wanted to continue studies and was not willing to stay with her husband and in-laws," said Gopal Singh, a teacher with the non-profit Sakhi Bal Niketan which

helped the friends unite. At first police refused to listen to them, but they found a number for the topmost administrative official of the district scribbled on the walls of the police station and enlisted his help.

"I made some phone calls to the officials and authorities and she was rescued and rejoined the school after that," district collector Siddharth Mahajan said. The legal marriage age

for girls in India is 18, but millions of children are married when they are much younger, particularly in poor rural areas. The custom is particularly strong in Rajasthan where politically powerful village councils have an iron grip over social and moral life. The Hindustan Times daily yesterday said the teenager returned to the school to a hero's welcome and has since asked the local family court to annul her marriage.—AFP

## ZAMBIA PRESIDENT BLAMES RIVALS FOR STATE OF EMERGENCY

**LUSAKA:** Zambian President Edgar Lungu yesterday justified imposing a state of emergency by alleging that opposition parties were behind a string of arson attacks intended "to create terror and panic". Lungu denied he was establishing a dictatorship in Zambia-until recently a relatively stable country-and said his political rivals were trying to overturn last year's election results. Several fires, including one that burnt down the main market in the capital Lusaka on Tuesday, have been at the centre of rising political tensions in Zambia.

The state of emergency-which increases police powers of detention and arrest-is "to curb lawlessness", Lungu told a press conference at his State House residence. "The theory (by opposition parties) is that they put pressure so that we begin renegotiating the result of the last elections," he said. "There is a deliberate ploy by the opposition... We won the elections and the winner takes it all. Their idea was to create terror and panic." Zambia has enjoyed relative stability since its first multi-party election in 1991.

But last year's election was marked by clashes between rival supporters, and opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema remains in detention on treason charges.

Hichilema was arrested in April after his convoy allegedly refused to give way to the presidential motorcade. He narrowly lost the elections to Lungu, and has alleged that the result was rigged.

### Sad day for the country

The president, who announced the state of emergency in a televised address late Wednesday, dismissed accusations of growing authoritarianism. "Zambia is the most accomplished democracy in this region or the whole Africa. If this is dictatorship, then there is no democracy in Africa," he said. "I know that people think I am targeting political players, I am not targeting any political player. I am only trying to bring sanity," he added.

Parliament has suspended 48 lawmakers from Hichilema's United Party for National Development (UPND), which boycotted an address by Lungu in March. The government has also increased pressure on media outlets that support the opposition. "I don't think there is justification for declaring a state of emergency," Lusaka-based analyst Neo Simutanyi said. "It will inconvenience people and create more tension." He said parliament must approve the measure within seven days otherwise it will lapse, and that lawmakers would be required to renew it every 90 days.

Tobias Simbule, a 43-year-old newspaper vendor in Lusaka, said he feared for Zambia's future. "We have gone back to the one-party state which we rejected in 1991. Today is really a sad day for this country," he said. The UPND has yet to react to the president's move, but the smaller MMD opposition party said Lungu should have allowed investigators to probe the cause of the market fire. "He should reverse his decision and allow Zambians lead normal lives," party president Nevers Mumba said.—AFP



**HADERA:** In this handout photograph released by the Indian Press Information Bureau (PIB) yesterday Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, left, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu talk on Olga Beach in Hadera.—AFP

## MODI CAPS NETANYAHU BROMANCE WITH BAREFOOT BEACH STROLL

**JERUSALEM:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi capped a historic three-day visit to Israel yesterday with a barefoot stroll along the Mediterranean shore with Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu. The two leaders' exuberance for warming bilateral ties has taken the form of bear hugs,

greetings on social media and pledges for increased trade and cooperation. Modi and Netanyahu yesterday paid their respects to Indian soldiers killed fighting with the British Army during World War I before taking a spin on the beach in an Israeli-designed mobile desalination buggy.

The two sipped water produced by the machine, served in wine glasses, before Modi hitched up his pants and waded ankle-deep into the surf. Netanyahu did not roll up his slacks, which got soaked. Israeli agriculture and water technologies have been a major draw for Indian investment and the subject of several deals signed during Modi's visit. "India admires the success of people of Israel in overcoming adversity to advance, innovate and flourish against all odds," Modi said

Wednesday at a joint press conference highlighting water and agricultural technology.

Netanyahu touted Israel's ties with the world's most populous democracy as a "marriage made in heaven," while Modi proclaimed that their goal was "to build a relationship that reflects our shared priorities and draws on enduring bonds between our peoples." Though India kept a frosty distance from Israel during the Cold War, aligning itself with the Soviets and favoring the Palestinian cause, the past two decades have seen New Delhi forge ever closer diplomatic and trade relations with the Jewish state.

Bilateral trade has skyrocketed from \$200 million in 1992, when India and Israel established diplomatic ties, to \$4.16 billion in 2016, according to the Indian Embassy in Tel Aviv. Even so, that figure remains far below Israel's nearly \$40 billion in annual bilateral trade with its largest partners, the US and EU. Both countries appear set on reducing that gap. Billions of dollars in Israeli arms sales to New Delhi have formed the bedrock of diplomatic

detente. Israel is India's third-largest supplier of weapons after the United States and Russia. Earlier this year, Israel's state-owned Israel Aerospace Industries announced over \$2 billion in air and missile defense contracts with India. Modi and Netanyahu, both leaders of nationalist parties, said they discussed greater security cooperation, encompassing counterterrorism and cybersecurity. Amid a handful of high-level trade agreements, three Israeli defense firms announced a new deal to provide India with top-of-the-line combat drones.

Modi's visit, the first by an Indian prime minister, marks 25 years of diplomatic relations. He visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, embraced a boy whose parents were killed in a 2008 massacre in Mumbai carried out by Islamic militants, and addressed an ecstatic crowd of Indian Jews in Tel Aviv. Modi did not meet with any Palestinian officials during his visit. Indian and Palestinian officials say there was no snub, noting that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas visited Modi in India in May.—AFP



# 'NO DEAL' NOT AN OPTION FOR BREXIT

**BRUSSELS:** The EU's top Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier warned Britain yesterday there were no grounds for walking away without a deal, a scenario that would only harm the UK's interests. "No deal would make a lose-lose situation even worse ... in my mind, there is no reasonable justification for a no-deal," Barnier said, referring to recent suggestions by British ministers that London could go its own way if the talks fail. "A fair deal is far better than no deal," he told an EU panel on Brexit, repeating the phrase twice in English.

Britain and the EU began the formal Brexit talks last month based on Barnier's timetable of dealing first with the rights of more than three million EU citizens in Britain, and more than one million Britons living in Europe. Then follows the thorny issues of Britain's estimated 100-billion-euro (\$112 billion) exit bill and future of the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which remains in the EU.

Only once "sufficient" progress has been made on these issues, will the European Union consider London's demand

for talks on its future relationship with Brussels, including all important trade arrangements. Barnier told the panel the EU would make no compromises on this agenda, insisting repeatedly that Britain could not expect to cherry-pick its ties with the bloc as many British politicians say it should. "There can be no sector-by-sector participation in the Single Market. You cannot be half in and half out," he said. Barnier said the EU has been very clear on these issues but "I am not sure they have been fully understood across the Channel." — AFP



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# BRITAIN OPENS SEPARATE 'JIHADI JAILS'

**LONDON:** Britain said yesterday it had begun housing Islamist extremists in separate prison units to prevent them radicalizing other inmates, as it grapples with a mounting terror threat. A new "separation centre" has been opened at Frankland jail near Durham, northeast England, the interior ministry said. It is first of three centers which together will have a capacity of 28 inmates. "The most dangerous and subversive offenders are now being separated from those they seek to influence and convert," said the min-

ister for prisons, Sam Gyimah. The move was recommended by a review into Islamist extremism in prisons published last year, which highlighted similar schemes in the Netherlands, France and Spain. It found some "charismatic" prisoners were acting as self-styled "emirs" and exerting a controlling and radicalizing influence on the wider Muslim prison population, and also found some "aggressive encouragement" to convert to Islam. The review also highlighted incidents of unsupervised collective wor-

ship, intimidation of prison imams and the availability of extremist literature.

The interior ministry said 4,500 frontline prison staff had received specialist training on how to identify and challenge extremist views, adding that new recruits would receive the training as standard. Britain has suffered a string of terror attacks in recent months, and police say they have foiled 18 plots since 2013. Official figures show there were 186 people in custody for terrorism-related offences and domestic extremism on

March 31 this year, up 15 percent on the previous year.

In the year to March, 304 people had been arrested for terrorism-related offences—the highest number since records began in September 2001, and an annual increase of 18 percent. Of these, 108 were charged and 88 were released on bail pending further investigation. In the same year, 70 terrorism-related trials were completed by state prosecutors—up 55 percent from 51 in the previous year, with 68 resulting in convictions.—AFP

## G20 HOST HAMBURG BRACES FOR 'WELCOME TO HELL' PROTEST 'I'D RATHER DANCE THAN G20'

**HAMBURG:** Germany's G20 summit host city Hamburg braced for a potentially violent "Welcome to Hell" protest yesterday by anti-capitalist activists as tensions rise in the lead-up to the power meet. Ugly scenes unfolded Tuesday night as riot police used water cannon and pepper spray to clear an unauthorized protest camp, leaving five people injured and driving fears of more trouble ahead in the northern port city of Hamburg.

Up to 100,000 demonstrators are expected to materialize during the two-day Group of 20 meeting that starts Friday and will bring US President Donald Trump, Russia's Vladimir Putin, China's Xi Jinping and other leaders to the city. Late yesterday, a largely peaceful crowd of about 11,000 protesters marched through Hamburg to techno music under the banner "I'd rather dance than G20". Police detained six people for throwing bottles at officers and were investigating a fire at a local Porsche dealership in which eight luxury vehicles went up in flames.

Germany's second city, hosting its largest-ever international meeting, has deployed some 20,000 police around the event sites, equipped with riot gear, armored vehicles, helicopters and surveillance drones. A holding centre for detainees has been set up with space for 400 people and detention judges on hand. Some 30 demonstrations have been announced before and during the meeting, organized by anti-globalization activists and environmentalists, trade unions, students and church groups.

Most are expected to be peaceful but several will be spearheaded by radical leftwing and anarchist militants known as "black bloc" activists who have often clashed with police, hurling rocks, bottles or fireworks. "Welcome to Hell" organizer Andreas Blechschmidt said the motto is "a combative message ... but it's also meant to symbolize that G20 policies worldwide are responsible for hellish conditions like hunger, war and the climate disaster".

Blechschmidt said that activists would seek to blockade access to the summit venue and, as usual, "reserve for themselves the option of militant resistance" against police. Chancellor

Angela Merkel said that while peaceful demonstrations must be respected, "those who use violence mock democracy".

### Negative impression

Hamburg has banned rallies from the inner city and along access roads to the airport, forcing marchers into harbor side areas of St Pauli and Altona, away from the G20. Some activists have vowed to defy the ban and pledged "civil disobedience" and blockades to sabotage G20 logistics. Protesters accuse the authorities of turning Germany's second city into a "fortress" and denying them the constitutional right to assemble and demonstrate.

The city says it won't be taking any chances as it must protect leaders, some 10,000 delegates and almost 5,000 media workers from both the threat of terrorist attacks and the street protests. Disputes over protest camps which have been fought out in courts in recent weeks escalated when police on Sunday and again Tuesday cleared away small tent cities

in public parks and squares. Demonstrators finally won permission to set up about 600 tents in two parks late Wednesday. A theatre, churches and private residents have also offered to host some of the activists from elsewhere in Germany and Europe. Mega-summits like the G20 have in recent years usually been held in remote locations, but Germany was forced by its logistical demands to host it in a large city with a big venue and dozens of hotels.

Many fear a rerun of the kind of major urban clashes seen at the 2001 G8 summit in Genoa or the Frankfurt opening of the new European Central Bank building in 2015. "The choice of the host city is unfortunate," said Neil Dwane, a strategist for Allianz Global Investors. "Protesters will find a journey to Hamburg easy to make, unlike previous, more remote, venues. "The city will require a degree of protective measures, which may get more media attention than the meeting's contents. Such a result would reinforce an increasingly negative impression of the summit."—AFP



**HAMBURG:** Tents of anti-capitalism activists stand at the protest camp in Altonaer Volkspark park yesterday in Hamburg, northern Germany.—AFP



**TALLINN:** European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos attends an informal meeting of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers at the Tallinn Creative Hub in Tallinn, Estonia yesterday.—AFP

## EU MINISTERS MULL MIGRANT SUPPORT FOR CRISIS-HIT ITALY

**TALLINN:** EU interior ministers yesterday were considering plans to ease pressure on Italy, grappling with a rising wave of migrants crossing the Mediterranean from North Africa. Ministers from across the bloc gathered in the Estonian capital Tallinn after Italy, which has accepted around 85,000 of the 100,000 people who have arrived this year, appealed desperately for help. The influx has revived fears of a return to the European Union's migrant crisis of 2015, when hundreds of thousands of people flooded into the continent in search of a better life.

On the table is a European Commission plan which earmarks 35 million euros (\$40 million) in aid for Rome as well as proposals for working with Libya and other countries to stem the flow of migrants at source. Most of those landing in Italy are sub-Saharan Africans who have crossed by sea from Libya, a journey that has so far claimed more than 2,200 lives this year, UN figures show.

The influx has exacerbated tensions between Italy and neighboring Austria, which this week threatened to send troops to the border to stop migrants entering. "This meeting today will be very ambitious, even if it is informal," said Estonian Interior Minister Andres Anvelt, whose country has just taken over the rotating presidency of the European Union. "We will discuss and work towards a solution and an action plan for Italy."

### Parallel talks in Rome

Meanwhile in Rome, top diplomats from the EU and Africa were gathering with officials from the United Nations and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for parallel talks on ways to alleviate the ongoing crisis in the Mediterranean. Foreign ministers from Libya, Niger, Tunisia, Egypt, Chad, Ethiopia and Sudan were meeting with their counterparts from Germany, Austria, Spain, France, The Netherlands, Malta and Estonia, with the group expected to ink a joint declaration on proposals focused on security and solidarity.

"The meetings this week (in Rome and Tallinn) should put us in a position to come up with a list of European responses," said French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian after talks with his Italian counterpart Angelino Alfano ahead of the meeting.—AFP



## COULD AMERICA SHIELD ALASKA FROM A NORTH KOREAN MISSILE?

**WASHINGTON:** It is every Alaskan's nightmare: finding themselves within range of a North Korean missile. As that fear came one step closer to reality this week, America's ability to block an incoming attack is under scrutiny. On Tuesday the northwestern US state awoke to the news that Pyongyang had test-fired an intercontinental ballistic missile which-though it came crashing down in the Sea of Japan-had a probable range of over 5,500 kilometers, enough to reach Alaskan shores. The US military has faith that its high-tech defensive systems could fend off any attack from North Korea-at least for now.

"It's something we have confidence in," said Pentagon spokesman Navy Captain Jeff Davis, who called the latest development a "nascent threat." But other observers are not so sure, rattled by the pace of Kim Jong-Un's missile program and his stated aim of building a nuclear-tipped ICBM. "Now more than ever, it's imperative for Alaskans and the rest of the nation that we be prepared," tweeted Senator Dan Sullivan, one of several Alaskan congressmen who backed a bipartisan bill last month aimed at expanding US missile defenses.

The state of 750,000 people already hosts a key element of the country's current defense system. The Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system-installed at Fort Greely, about 100 miles outside Fairbanks in Alaska, and California's Vandenberg Air Force Base-will comprise 44 missile interceptors by the end of the year. But if the backers of the Advancing America's Missile Defense Act of 2017 have their way, the government would authorize an additional 28 ground-based interceptors at Fort Greely. Among the bill's co-sponsors is Alaskan Congressman Don Young, who believes "the recent actions by North Korea, a rogue and irrational regime, underscores the importance of Alaska's missile defense systems," his office said in a statement.

### Missile leakage

The catastrophic scenario of having to stop an incoming ICBM as it hurtles through space was put to the test in May, when the military successfully launched a GMD interceptor from the California base. The missile blasted outside Earth's atmosphere and smashed into a dummy ICBM target, destroying it in a direct collision-a move akin to hitting a bullet with another bullet. But the GMD system has had a checkered record in previous tests-failing in earlier launches against slower-moving targets.

And it could be overwhelmed by a barrage of incoming missiles. That is why Joel Wit, a co-founder of the 38 North program of the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University, said he was not fully confident in US anti-missile capabilities. He sees a risk that Kim could build enough missiles to overwhelm US defenses-and that one could slip through the defensive net in a phenomenon known as "leakage." "In the case of a conflict, leakage with nuclear weapons is not a good thing," Wit said.

Wit had previously said he didn't think North Korea would be able to deploy any nuclear-tipped ICBMs until late 2020 or soon after, but all bets are off given the latest test. "It's quite possible the North Koreans could deploy much sooner than then, and do that for the shock effect," he said. Experts do not think Kim has managed to miniaturize a warhead to put on an ICBM, though Kim has repeatedly stated that is his goal. "Clearly they are working on it," Pentagon spokesman Davis said.

### What other defenses?

Aside from the GMD, the US and its allies also have at their disposal what is known as the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System (AEGIS). The ship-based system's highly sensitive radars and sensors feed ICBM-tracking data to the GMD facilities in California and Alaska, and AEGIS is itself capable of intercepting shorter-range missiles. Retired vice admiral Pete Daly, who now leads the United States Naval Institute, said the AEGIS system may also one day have a limited ability to intercept ICBMs.

"There is some progression and capabilities here that folks are working on," he said. In the meantime, the US military this year began deploying the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system to South Korea, capable of destroying short, medium and intermediate-range missiles in their final phase of flight. The move infuriated China, which has argued the deployment would further destabilize the situation on the Korean peninsula. —AFP



**CARACAS:** A masked men kicks at opposition lawmaker Franco Casella in a melee with pro-government militias who tried to force their way into the National Assembly during a special session coinciding with Venezuela's Independence Day, in Caracas.—AP

## VENEZUELA GOV' T BACKERS ATTACK OPPOSITION NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

### PROTESTERS BLAME MADURO FOR ECONOMIC CRISIS

**CARACAS:** Venezuelan pro-government militants wielding clubs and pipes stormed into the opposition-held National Assembly Wednesday, attacking lawmakers and leaving seven hurt including three with blood streaming from their heads. The special independence day legislative session turned into a violent, nine-hour siege when supporters of leftist President Nicolas Maduro then blocked the building and prevented 350 lawmakers, staff and others from leaving.

Police initially did not intervene, but eventually joined soldiers to keep the mob at bay and allow the lawmakers to leave. The attack is just the latest episode of political violence in three months of chaos in the oil-rich but poverty-stricken country that have seen 91 people killed in clashes with police. Protesters blame Maduro for a desperate economic crisis that has caused shortages of food and medicine. Maduro insists the chaos is a US-backed opposition conspiracy.

The unpopular Maduro, who condemned the violence, faces opposition demands for elections to remove him from office. "I absolutely condemn these deeds. I will never be complicit in any act of violence," Maduro said in a speech at a military parade in Caracas. "I have ordered an investigation, and may justice be done."

### Losing our country

Military police guarding the National Assembly stood by as about 100 intruders brandishing clubs and pipes, and one of them a gun, broke through the front gate in the late morning and into the interior gardens and then the building itself. The mob streamed into the corridors of the congressional building,

striking lawmakers, detonating stun grenades, and ordering journalists to leave the premises. Lawmakers barricaded themselves inside rooms with furniture and rugs. When it was all over, there were blood stains on walls.

The opposition said seven lawmakers were injured and five needed to be hospitalized. Two National Assembly employees were also hurt. "This does not hurt as much as seeing every day how we are losing our country," lawmaker Armando Armas told reporters as he entered an ambulance with his head wrapped in bloodied bandages. During the later siege, government backers gathered at the gates screamed "killers" and "terrorists" at the opposition lawmakers inside. At one point, lawmaker Williams Davila of the foreign affairs commission told reporters, "we have been kidnapped."

Police with shields protected them as they finally filed out of the building. The US State Department condemned the attack as "an assault on the democratic principles cherished by the men and women who struggled for Venezuela's independence 206 years ago today." It also criticized Maduro's "increasing authoritarianism." The Washington-based Organization of American States, Chile, and the regional Mercosur trade bloc also condemned the attack.

### Dictatorship

Earlier Vice President Tareck El Aissami made an unscheduled appearance at the National Assembly along with the head of the armed forces, Vladimir Padrino Lopez. In a brief speech El Aissami said he was within a government branch that had been "hijacked by the same oligarchy that betrayed" independence hero Simon Bolivar. He also

called on Maduro supporters to come to the legislature to show support for the president. A pro-government crowd rallied outside the building for several hours before breaking into the grounds during a recess. "We will not be intimidated by these acts of violence. No one here will surrender to this dictatorship," said senior opposition lawmaker Freddy Guevara.

### Tipping point

The government and opposition have accused each other of using armed groups to sow violence. Maduro retains the public backing of the military high command-a key factor in keeping him in power, according to analysts-but the president last month said he was replacing four senior commanders of the armed forces. Meanwhile the action star helicopter pilot who vanished after dropping grenades on the Supreme Court reappeared in two online videos.

Oscar Perez, who is also an elite cop, called on the security forces Wednesday to turn on Maduro, who he said was at the Tiuna military base "with his henchmen and corrupt leadership," and not the presidential palace. Perez - who claims support from members of the military, police and public servants - urged Venezuelans in a Tuesday video to "stand firm" in their street protests. On June 27, Perez and unidentified accomplices flew over Caracas in a police helicopter and dropped four grenades on the Supreme Court before opening fire on the interior ministry. There were no casualties. Maduro has infuriated his opponents by launching a plan to form an assembly tasked with rewriting the constitution. Opponents say he will pack this constituent assembly with allies in a bid to cling to power. —AFP



## BANGLADESH EATERY BANS FOREIGNERS FEARING ATTACK

**DHAKA:** An upscale Bangladeshi restaurant has banned foreign guests, fearing a repeat of last year's deadly terrorist attack in a Dhaka cafe, the owner said yesterday. Lake Terrace, a reputed rooftop barbeque restaurant in the capital's northern Uttara neighborhood, put a notice at its entrance saying no foreigners were welcome. Shah Tanzil, the owner of Lake Terrace, said the order had come from his landlord. "We had no choice but to follow the landlord's instruction," he said.

"We are ashamed. But we cannot

suddenly shut down our business as it's our bread and butter." The landlord of the five-storey building told local English newspaper, The Daily Star, he feared foreigners were the primary targets of the extremists. "Who would take the responsibility if something bad happens?" he told the daily, on condition of anonymity. Five armed young men entered the Holey Artisan Bakery last year in the city's diplomatic quarters and killed at least 22 people, mostly foreigners, after taking them hostage.

The Islamic State group claimed the attack, although the government blamed a homegrown Islamist extremist organization. The move to close the cafe to foreigners comes after a fresh warning apparently from an IS operative who said the group was expanding its operations in Bangladesh. The US-based monitoring group SITE said Abu Shofiq Al Bengali had posted a message on Wednesday, warning of a "strong trained brigade of thousand brothers" in Bangladesh, Myanmar and the Indian state of West Bengal.

The Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), an elite force fighting militancy in the Muslim-majority nation, said they were investigating the authenticity of the post. "We are verifying the statement, whether it is credible," RAB spokesman Mufti Mahmud Khan said. Bangladesh has seen a spate of fatal attacks on foreigners, secular rights activists and religious minorities in recent years. The Holey Bakery cafe attack led to a major crackdown on Islamist militants, nearly 70 of whom have been shot dead by security forces.—AFP

## KASHMIR TENSE AS KEY ANNIVERSARY LOOMS

### CIVILIANS INTERVENE IN ANTI-MILITANT RAIDS

**SRINAGAR:** In a crowded hospital in Kashmir a 17-year-old student is recovering from gunshot wounds, one of thousands of civilians injured in protests against Indian rule that have exploded since the death of a popular rebel leader a year ago. When government forces came to his village in the picturesque Himalayan region recently to raid a militant hideout, the teenager, who does not want to be named, threw himself into a hail of bullets to help the fighters escape.

"I leapt in between a trapped militant and soldiers who were shooting and took the bullets myself," he said from his hospital bed in Srinagar, the main city in Indian-administered Kashmir. Kashmir, divided between India and Pakistan since 1947, is one of the most heavily

militarized spots on earth with a long history of conflict. The mountainous region is home to dozens of armed groups fighting for independence or a merger of the territory with Pakistan.

But since the charismatic rebel leader Burhan Wani was shot dead by security forces on July 8, civilians have played an increasingly active role in the rebellion against Indian rule. The death of the dashing 23-year-old, who had built up a big following on social media as he posed with an AK-47, sparked a huge outpouring of grief in Kashmir. Nearly 100 civilians were killed in mass protests in the months that followed, most shot dead by security forces.

Many more were blinded by the pellet guns used by government forces in

the region, further exacerbating the divide between authorities and an already alienated civilian population. Hospital authorities in Srinagar say they have seen a steady stream of injured civilians since July and treated more than 1,000 for "horrific" eye injuries.

#### Anger and defiance

In parts of south Kashmir—the epicenter of the renewed insurgency—villagers began intervening in anti-militant raids, throwing stones at government forces to create a distraction and give the rebels a chance to flee. "It is a direct confrontation now," said Kashmiri historian Sidiq Wahid. "Public anger and defiance has reached levels never seen in Kashmir before."—AFP



**SRINAGAR:** Kashmiri villagers look through the debris of houses destroyed during a gunfight between rebels and Indian government forces at Bahmnoo village in Pulwama, south of Srinagar.—AFP

## WAR CRIMES PROSECUTORS DELAY AFGHAN PROBE AMID NEW INFO

**THE HAGUE:** War crimes prosecutors have delayed a decision on whether to launch a full-blown probe into crimes committed in war-torn Afghanistan following "substantial" new information from Kabul, their office said yesterday. The move comes after Kabul responded to a call by the International Criminal Court's prosecutors asking for more information about possible crimes committed by Taliban, Afghan government and US military forces—including the CIA—since the US-led invasion more than 15 years ago.

"The report triggered reaction, notably from the government of Afghanistan, which subsequently submitted substantial information to the (prosecutor's) office earlier this year," the prosecutors said. "The information requires careful review by the office, which is currently ongoing," they added in an email sent to AFP. Once the review is completed, ICC chief prosecutor Fatou Bensouda "will make a final decision" on whether to ask judges to authorize a full-blown investigation.

Bensouda said in November her office was "concluding its assessment" and that a decision on whether to ask the ICC's judges to open a full-blown probe was "imminent". She said US forces may have committed war crimes in Afghanistan by torturing prisoners in what may have been a deliberate policy. She stressed the Taliban militia and the affiliated Haqqani network, Afghan government forces and US troops as well as the CIA all appeared to have carried out war crimes since the Islamic militia was ousted by a US-led invasion in 2001 which followed the September 11 attacks that year.

And Bensouda blamed the Taliban and its allies for the deaths of some 17,000 civilians since 2007 to December 2015 in a brutal insurgency with "numerous attacks" on schools, hospitals and mosques. However, the prosecutor's office on Thursday emphasized that their review of the new information "will not take longer than is required for a thorough internal assessment." "The prosecutor is committed to arriving at a final determination without further delay following this requisite process," her office said. Afghanistan is experiencing a wave of intensified violence, with the United States considering sending more US troops to shore up its presence.—AFP



**ASSAM:** Indian flood victims travel by boat past the submerged village of Katoguri in Morigaon district, in India's northeastern state of Assam.—AFP

## FLOOD DEATH TOLL WORSENS IN ASSAM

**GUWAHATI, India:** The death toll from worsening monsoon floods in Assam state has hit 18 with hundreds of thousands in makeshift camps and no letup in the deluge, officials said yesterday. "Monsoons are still ongoing. There are fresh developments every hour," Rajib Prakash Barua, a senior Assam State Disaster Management Authority official, said as he confirmed the latest

death on Wednesday. The 18 people have died since the monsoons started in the northeastern state in April, said Barua, speaking from the state's main city Guwahati.

"One person died yesterday, taking the overall death toll in the last week to five. Most people died either because of flooding or electrocution," he added. Officials say about 395,000 people have

so far been affected in 863 villages across Assam's 15 districts.

Many people have moved to makeshift camps set up by authorities on higher ground. Jorhat and Sonitpur, around 190 miles and 120 miles from Guwahati, are among the worst affected districts in the state. More storms were predicted for today and coming days.—AFP



## TAIWAN CHARGES CHINESE GRAD STUDENT WITH SPYING

**TAIPEI:** A Chinese graduate from one of Taiwan's top universities was charged with espionage yesterday as prosecutors accused him of attempting to recruit spies for Beijing. The indictment comes as officials warn of growing intelligence threats from China at a time of increasingly frosty ties between Taipei and Beijing. China still sees the island as part of its territory to be brought back into its fold even though Taiwan has been self-governing since the two sides split after a civil war in 1949.

Relations have worsened since Beijing-skeptic President Tsai Ing-wen came to power last May. The Taipei District Prosecutors office said Thursday a man surnamed Zhou-who

came to Taiwan to study in 2012 — violated the National Security Act. Local media identified the man as Zhou Hongxu from Liaoning province in northeastern China, who graduated from the National Chengchi University in Taipei last year.

Prosecutors said Zhou was recruited by a mainland official he met at an event promoting cross-strait exchanges in Shanghai in July 2014, who asked him to build a spy network in return for remuneration. Zhou was told to "introduce politicians, officials in the military, police, intelligence and diplomacy units and other influential people in society to Chinese local officials in destinations abroad," they said. The Chinese govern-

ment would pick up the tab for any meetings arranged with local mainland officials, to be held in locations abroad, Zhou was allegedly told.

Zhou then unsuccessfully attempted to recruit a Taiwanese official on multiple occasions between August 2016 and March this year, the prosecutors said. The unidentified Taiwan official-who may have access to diplomatic documents-was reportedly told he could be paid as much as \$10,000 a quarter if he agreed to work for the Chinese government.

Zhou also said he could arrange for the official to meet with mainland government representatives in Japan under the pretense of a holiday,

according to the prosecutors. National Security Bureau director-general Peng Sheng-chu said in parliament in March that Chinese espionage is "more serious than before". Local media reports claim that up to 5,000 people may be spying for China on the island. Taiwan's cabinet is seeking to tighten existing restrictions on travel to the mainland for former high-ranking Taipei officials to "protect national security and interest".

Cross-strait relations have rapidly deteriorated since the inauguration of President Tsai Ing-wen who refuses to acknowledge both sides are part of "one China". Beijing has cut all official communication with Taipei.

## SINGAPORE PM'S SIBLINGS OFFER TRUCE IN FAMILY FEUD

**SINGAPORE:** The siblings of Singapore's prime minister offered a truce yesterday in an explosive family feud over the legacy of their late father, founding leader Lee Kuan Yew, saying they wanted to settle the matter privately. The tightly-controlled city-state has been captivated by the row over the future of the family bungalow, which has played out in a bitter back and forth across social media since it erupted last month.

"For now, we will cease presenting further evidence on social media, provided that we and our father's wish are not attacked or misrepresented," said Lee Hsien Yang, 60, and Lee Wei Ling, 62, in a joint statement. The patriarch, who ruled Singapore for three decades, wanted the house destroyed after he passed away to prevent the creation of a personality cult. But Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's siblings say their brother is attempting to block the house's demolition to capitalize on their father's legacy for his own political agenda, including grooming his own son as a future leader.

The unprecedented row has shocked a tightly-controlled nation unused to divisions among the elite, with the 65-year-old prime minister telling parliament this week it was "not a soap opera" and calling for private resolution. "We look forward to talking without the involvement of lawyers or government agencies," the siblings said in their statement. The elder Lee was widely revered for having transformed Singapore into one of the world's wealthiest societies, but has also been criticized for authoritarian tendencies.

In his speech to parliament Monday-part of a two-day debate over the dispute-the prime minister said the allegations against him were "entirely baseless" and denied abuse of power and nepotism. Yesterday, his brother and sister also released a document summing up what they say is the evidence against the leader, and repeated their central claim he was trying to block the destruction of the century-old bungalow. "(Lee Kuan Yew) wanted to demolish the house because he knew it was the right thing for Singapore. He did not want Singaporeans to create a cult around him," they said.—AFP



**BANGKOK:** Luxury vehicles up for auction are on display in a lot at a Thai customs property in Bangkok yesterday.—AFP

## THAILAND AUCTIONS SEIZED SUPERCARS

**BANGKOK:** Thai customs officials sold off hundreds of seized luxury vehicles yesterday, including dozens of supercars- although many lots were removed last minute after it emerged they were stolen from abroad. Thailand's role in the global grand theft auto trade has received fresh attention in recent weeks after British police said dozens of stolen supercars had been whisked to the Southeast Asian kingdom.

Police in Bangkok have since launched a crackdown, seizing dozens of illegally imported vehicles, including at least seven stolen from Britain, and arresting a handful of car dealers. The country places a more than 300 percent tax on top-end vehicles-a surcharge that investigators say fuels a lucrative black market aided by corrupt buyers, dealers and government officials. Thailand's Customs Department holds an annual auction for vehicles seized in criminal cases.

Yesterday buyers raised bids for a variety of gleaming sports cars, from Ferraris to Aston

Martins, Lamborghinis as well as luxurious Rolls Royces and Bentleys. Most were confiscated for being illegally smuggled or because owners had tried to avoid paying the full import tax, while others had been seized from drug gangs and other criminals. But 95 cars were pulled from the auction sheet in the weeks running up to the bid after checks showed they were stolen from overseas and did not belong to the Thai state.

Deputy Customs Department spokesman Kreecha Kirdsriphan insisted the oversight was an innocent mistake. "When we discovered that those cars were stolen in those countries, we moved them out from the auction list," he said. Most of the stolen vehicles came from Britain, Malaysia, Singapore and Japan, all countries that drive on the left-hand side of the road like Thailand. Among the vehicles removed was a McLaren 650s supercar with a starting price in the auction of 30 million baht (\$880,000). British police contacted Thai officials to say it had been stolen from the United

Kingdom, Kreecha said. Even without those vehicles, the Customs Department hopes to make some \$14.6 million from around 300 cars going under the hammer in yesterday's auction. The Customs Department is then able to use the funds in their own budget. The most expensive car on the list yesterday was a bright red Ferrari California with a 20.6 million baht (\$604,000) starting price but that proved too expensive for bidders who made no offer above the reserve price.

The vehicle has a base price of around \$235,000 in the United States. One man, who put up a winning bid of \$385,000 for a Rolls Royce Phantom, beamed as promotion girls in monochrome dresses and high heels handed him the keys to his new car. While Thailand's economy has been slumping in recent years, its billionaire class is doing just fine and gleaming supercars remain a common sight on the streets of Bangkok-even if they spend much of their time crawling along the city's gridlocked streets.—AFP



# HUGE FLOODS SWEEP SOUTHERN JAPAN

## TWO DEAD, 20 MISSING

**ASAKURA:** At least two people have been killed and about 20 others are missing in huge floods that are surging through southern Japan, with hundreds of thousands of people ordered or urged to flee. Unprecedented torrential rain has caused rivers to burst their banks, sweeping away roads and houses, and destroying schools. Thousands of soldiers and others were scrambling Thursday to reach people cut off by torrents of swirling water or threatened by landslides, and had rescued 250 people, the government said. "We are in an extremely serious situation," Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso said, warning of the danger of collapsing hillsides and adding "many people are still missing".

More than 20 inches of rain deluged parts of Kyushu, the southernmost of Japan's four main islands, over 12 hours on Wednesday, the meteorological agency said. Downpours will likely continue through Friday, the agency said as the region grapples with the aftermath of a typhoon that raked the country this week. Authorities lifted "special" heavy rain warnings for the hardest hit prefectures of Fukuoka and Oita, although other warnings, such as for rain, landslides and flooding, remained in place.

One man was found dead in the city of Asakura in Fukuoka prefecture, while another died in a landslide in Hita in Oita prefecture, officials said. Japan is deploying 7,800 police,



**ASAKURA:** A local resident stands between cars buried in earth and sand following heavy flooding in Asakura, Fukuoka prefecture yesterday. —AFP

rescue personnel and troops in affected areas of Kyushu, Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga said, telling reporters that "there are about 20 people who are unaccounted for". Those included a child reportedly carried off by

a fast-flowing river and a couple who had not been seen since their house was swept away. Television footage showed rolling waves from swollen rivers hitting residential areas, tearing up roads and inundating farmland.

### Blackout

Asakura was among the hardest hit with footage showing floodwaters surging through the streets. Ryoichi Nishioka, who grows flowers in the city, said he tried to save them from damage amid fast rising waters the night before. "I tried to protect them by covering them up but couldn't make it," he said. "Then the swirling water flooded this area and swept away the greenhouses." Nishioka, 67, also described helping a man who clung to an electric pole as muddy waters rampaged through the area on Wednesday night.

"We had a blackout, so I used a flashlight from the second floor and shined light for him," he said. "I was calling out to encourage him for three hours from 9pm to midnight. 'I shouted: 'Hang in there!'" The man was ultimately rescued, Nishioka said. An elderly man in the hard-hit Haki district of Asakura told NHK how furniture bobbed in the flood waters that inundated his home. "I dodged them and escaped in a gush of water," he said. A railroad bridge has been destroyed by the raging Kagetsu river, disrupting train services, a railway spokesman said. Several other train lines were also forced to delay or stop operations due to heavy rains, while local officials called off classes at primary and middle schools. —AFP

## EU, JAPAN URGE ADDITIONAL NORTH KOREA SANCTIONS AFTER MISSILE TEST

**BRUSSELS:** The EU and Japan yesterday called for further sanctions against North Korea after Pyongyang tested an intercontinental ballistic missile in defiance of repeated UN resolutions. The test has racked up tensions in the region, pitting Washington, Tokyo and Seoul against China, Pyongyang's last remaining major ally. US President Donald Trump earlier yesterday urged the international community to ensure North Korea faced the "consequences" of its action while warning he was considering a "severe" response.

EU president Donald Tusk said after talks with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Brussels on a landmark free trade accord that both sides shared basic values about how a rules-based global order should work. Against this backdrop, they "agreed to call on the international community to strengthen measures aimed at further restricting the transfer of relevant items and technologies as well as funding for North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs."

"In this regard, we appeal for the early adoption of a new and comprehensive UN Security Council resolution," Tusk said. At a separate meeting with Abe at NATO headquarters in Brussels, alliance chief Jens Stoltenberg highlighted the gravity of the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear and missile testing program. "Pyongyang continues its nuclear and ballistic missile tests and the missile ranges are increasing," Stoltenberg told reporters alongside the Japanese premier.

"All of these nuclear and missile tests are a clear breach of UN Security Council Resolutions and a threat to international peace and security," he said. North must stop the tests, abandon its missile and nuclear programs and "engage in real dialogue with the international community," he added. China meanwhile warned against "words and deeds" that could heighten tensions over North Korea and pressed again for negotiations. —AFP



**WAMENA:** Indonesian members of a search and rescue team unload two bodies, victims of plane crash, at a hospital in Wamena yesterday. —AFP

## FIVE BODIES FOUND IN INDONESIA PLANE CRASH

**JAKARTA:** Five people were found dead yesterday after a small plane crashed in Indonesia's Papua province a day earlier, the latest in a series of aviation accidents to hit the country. The Pilatus Porter PC-6 aircraft lost contact around mid-day Wednesday just eight minutes after it took off from Wamena city, located in the eastern province's mountainous region. It had been flying southwest toward neighboring Nduga province. The plane wreckage was spotted in a mountainous area nine miles from Wamena airport late yesterday.

There were no survivors from the crash.

The plane, owned by missionary firm Associated Mission Aviation (AMA), was carrying three passengers and two crew, including the Dutch pilot. The other four victims were Indonesian. Rescue crew began work early yesterday and all five bodies were recovered from the crash site, officials said. "The main challenge was the plane wreckage lies on a cliff, so the evacuation team used a helicopter and hoisted the bodies up," Rasburhani, the head of Wamena airport, who uses one name,

said. Indonesia relies heavily on air transport to connect its thousands of islands but has a poor aviation safety record and has suffered several fatal crashes in recent years. Papua is a particularly difficult area to reach, and has experienced a number of accidents. In December last year, a military transport plane crashed in Papua, killing 13 people on board. In August 2015, a commercial passenger aircraft operated by Indonesian carrier Trigana also crashed in Papua due to bad weather, killing all 54 people on board. —AFP



FRIDAY, JULY 7, 2017

# Life & Style

Friday Times

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A model presents a creation by Jean Paul Gaultier during the 2017-2018 fall/winter Haute Couture collection in Paris. — AFP

## Fendi stuns with Jenner and Hadid fur show to cap couture

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A statue on the roof of Notre-Dame cathedral and the River Seine in Paris, which is in need of large scale restoration. — AFP photos



The interior of Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris, which is in need of large scale restoration.



A statue on the roof of Notre-Dame cathedral and the River Seine in Paris.

## Hunchback's dream: Returning Paris Notre Dame to glory

Victor Hugo would be appalled to see the ravages inflicted by time, pollution and weather on his beloved Notre Dame, the soaring cathedral that adorns the heart of Paris. The celebrated French novelist wrote "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", published in 1831, largely to draw attention to the glories of Gothic architecture, which in his day was often neglected or disfigured by modern additions. With its twin towers, stained-glass windows, gargoyles and flying buttresses—a colossal achievement that took more than a century to complete—the cathedral is a UNESCO World Heritage site that draws between 12 and 14 million visitors each year.

Though the French government currently spends two million euros (\$2.3 million) a year for maintenance work, the conservation to-do list is growing long. Gargoyles that have lost their heads have been fixed up with unsightly plastic tubes for water drainage. Elsewhere, an entire stone balustrade is missing, replaced by plywood; a pinnacle has crumbled and a stained-glass window's frame is in a sorry state of repair.

Decorative details that have fallen away from flying buttresses have been set aside for safekeeping. The central lead-clad wooden spire, which rises 93 meters (300 feet) above the cathedral roof and weighs 250 tons, is also in need of costly restoration. The lead, meant to protect the spire from the elements, is wearing thin, noted government conservationist Marie-Helene Didier.

### 'Really urgent'

Paris is sounding the alarm, seeking donations notably from US patrons to help pay for the work, pledging to match up to four

million euros donated to a heritage fund. Through the Friends of Notre-Dame de Paris group, Paris's Roman Catholic diocese is reaching out to Americans "who have a culture of giving and are very attached to this monument", Andre Finot, a spokesman for the cathedral, said. Finot, who knows Notre Dame's every nook and cranny, is leading the funding drive. "It's really urgent," he told AFP, during a tour of the devastation caused by air pollution and acid rain. "You realize that (state funds) are not enough." By his estimate, the bill could come to at least 150 million euros over 30 years.

### US star power

Notre Dame won some US star power in September 2014 when pop idol Beyonce and her rapper husband Jay Z and daughter Blue Ivy, then two, enjoyed a private tour of the monument. American tourists are particularly enthralled by Hugo's Quasimodo and other characters in "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", immortalized in myriad films, plays and musicals.

"We are not in a situation of danger, we still manage to handle the most urgent needs," said Didier. But private donations "would allow us to speed up the work." While France is spreading the net wide in search of contributions, "we will still be appealing to the French," Finot said. "They should be conscious of the incredible heritage they have." — AFP



A man inspecting the arches on the roof of Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris.



The roof of Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris, which is in need of large scale restoration.





Participants hold red scarves as they celebrate the 'Chupinazo' (start rocket) to mark the kickoff at noon sharp of the San Fermin Festival, in front of the Town Hall of Pamplona, northern Spain, yesterday. — AFP photos

## Running of the bulls festival kicks off in Spain

A wine-soaked sea of revelers dressed in red and white packed into a Pamplona square yesterday to kick off Spain's most famous street party, the San Fermin bull-running festival. At noon, a shout of "viva San Fermin!" from the balcony of city hall and the lighting of a firework rocket known as the "chupinazo" gave the official start to nine days of bedlam. "It's the best, there are no words to explain this," Paula Ramirez, one of two volunteers from local charity DYA Navarra who were elected to ignite the "chupinazo" this year, told public television TVE. Fun-seekers from around the world squeezed into the square, dressed in traditional white outfits and red neck scarves.

They cheered, danced and sprayed each other with sangria and cheap wine, turning white shirts to pink, and passed large yellow inflatable balls over their heads as scores looked down

from apartment balconies. Pamplona has stepped up its campaign against cases of sexual assault at the festival after a 18-year-old woman was alleged to have been raped last year by five men from Seville, who also recorded the attack.

The men, who are in custody awaiting trial, include a recent graduate of Spain's Guardia Civil police force as well as another member of the armed forces. Municipal officials have plastered the city with signs showing an open hand with the slogan: "Pamplona free of sexual aggressions". "When a woman says no, it is no," Laura Berro, the Pamplona city councilor in charge of equality issues, told TVE. The festival, immortalized in Ernest Hemingway's 1926 novel "The Sun Also Rises", dates back to mediaeval times and features religious processions, folk dancing, concerts and round-the-clock drinking.

But the highlight is a bracing daily test of courage against a thundering pack of half-ton fighting bulls through the city's cobble streets. Each day at 8:00 am hundreds of people race with six bulls, charging along a winding, 848.6-metre (more than half a mile) course through narrow streets to the city's bull ring, where the animals are killed in a bullfight. The bravest-or most fool-hardy-run as close as possible to the tips of the horns while trying to avoid being gored. The first bull run, which traditionally draws the largest number of participants, is today. Fifteen people have been killed in the bull runs since modern day records started in 1911, the latest death occurring in 2009. — AFP

## KESHA RETURNS WITH LEAD SINGLE FROM FIRST ALBUM IN 5 YEARS

Kesha has released her first new music in four years and announced a forthcoming album, her first since a high-profile legal battle with Dr Luke over a lawsuit accusing the music producer of sexual assault and harassment. Kesha has debuted "Praying," the lead single from "Rainbow," her first album since 2012's "Warrior."

Co-written by Ryan Lewis, "Praying" features lyrics about overcoming adversity. In an essay for Lenny Letter, Kesha writes that the song is about "coming to feel empathy for someone else even if they hurt you or scare you." Dr Luke, whose real name is Lukasz Gottwald, has denied Kesha's allegations. "Rainbow" is due out Aug 11 and features appearances by Dolly Parton, Eagles of Death Metal and the Dap-Kings. — AP



In this file photo, Kesha arrives at the Billboard Music Awards at the T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas. — AP

## 'Granddaddy of techno' Pierre Henry dies at 89

French electronic composer Pierre Henry-whose music inspired the theme tune of the American animated television series "Futurama"-has died at the age of 89, his assistant said yesterday. Known as the "grandfather of techno", Henry's "Psyche Rock" riff was used in the Oscar-winning Costa-Gravas film "Z" (1969) and later remixed by British DJ Fat Boy Slim for the 2004 Lindsay Lohan film "Mean Girls".

French electronic music star Jean-Michel Jarre led the tributes to Henry, which he said had opened the way for his own music. "He wasn't just a musician and an innovator, he was a poet. All his life he tried to bring about a fusion between experimentation and poetry," Jarre told AFP. "He leaves behind an enormous and impressive body of work, and I hope France grants him the homage that he deserves." Henry's assistant Isabelle Warnier said that the composer "died during the night. He would have celebrated his 90th birthday in December." Never one to be unduly hamstrung by modesty, Henry liked to call himself "the father of modern music".

A pioneer of early electronic music made with all sorts of recorded sounds known as "concrete music", he studied at the Paris Conservatoire under one of the greatest composers of the 20th century, Olivier Messiaen. Two years after leaving he formed the GRMC, the Research Group into Concrete Music, with the sound engineer, composer and writer Pierre Schaeffer. Jarre said the group had been a huge influence on him. "With Pierre Schaeffer, Pierre Henry gave me the inspiration at the end of the 1960s to set out on my own path," he added. The jointly composed "Symphonie pour un homme seul" ("Symphony for a lone man") of 1950 is regarded as the first major work of the "concrete music" genre.

The choreographer Maurice Bejart took up the piece for his 1966 dance piece of the same name. Paris-born Henry's work was

also later used by other legendary choreographers including George Balanchine and Merce Cunningham. But it remains for the bells and static of his three-minute "Psyche Rock" that he is best known. Taken from his 1967 dance piece "Messe pour le temps present" ("Mass For The Present Time"), it became a catchy worldwide jingle after it was reworked for Matt Groening's sci-fi sitcom set in the 31st century. — AFP



This file photo taken on December 9, 2007 shows French composer Pierre Henry working in a studio in Paris. — AFP





A robot waitress delivers food at a pizza restaurant in Multan. — AFP photos



Pakistani engineer Osama Jafari (center) poses with robot waitresses Annie (left), Rabia (right) and Jennie (background) at his pizza restaurant in Multan.

## Pizza bytes! Pakistan enchanted by first robot waitresses

**P**akistan's first robot waitresses are serving up smiles for customers at an upscale pizza restaurant in the ancient city of Multan, better known for its centuries-old Sufi shrines, mango orchards and handicrafts. Rabia, Annie and Jennie greet customers and bring them their pies at Pizza.com, where owner Osama Jafari—who built the prototypes himself—says the response has been a surge of new business. "We went to a lot of places, but my uncle said that in this restaurant a robot serves and when the robot served us pizza we felt very happy," customer Osama

Ahmed, 12, told AFP. "It is an innovation," another customer, Hamid Bashir said. "It feels good to be served like that and it is a good entertainment for the children."

Jafari said he was inspired by videos of robot waiters in China. The 24-year-old, who studied engineering at Islamabad's National University of Science and Technology, said he began working on a prototype with the support of his parents. "The response that we got is actually tremendous. People are loving it. My friends, family members and all the local people here," he said. Jafari said

he sourced and fabricated all parts for the robots locally, building them for 600,000 rupees (\$6,000). He is already working on the next generation, which he says will be more interactive, able to respond to customer's questions, and hopes to spread his robot staff to his family's other restaurant in the southern Pakistani city of Hyderabad. — AFP

## US architect creates paper 'forest' inside museum

**J**eanne Gang has dedicated her life to using architecture and design to connect people of various backgrounds who otherwise would not interact. So when the architect noticed how difficult it was to hear someone standing just 10 feet (three meters) away in the Great Hall of Washington's cavernous National Building Museum, she set about tackling how to change this feeling of "being out in the open in a giant agricultural field." Her answer: building three tall, interconnected domed structures using more than 2,500 interlocking wound paper tubes that are lightweight, recyclable and renewable.

Simultaneously monumental and intimate, the domes transform light and sound while also encouraging social interaction. Inside the two smaller domes, visitors are invited to play instruments made of commonplace construction materials like copper pipes, wrenches and drainage pipes.

"This would be similar to standing in a clearing in a forest where you can have a

conversation, make music, and you would be able to hear the things around you," Gang told AFP. The installation, dubbed "Hive," opens Thursday and runs through September 4. Gang, a MacArthur "genius" fellow and French legion of honor recipient who presented a translucent marble curtain here in 2003, heads the architecture and urban design collective Studio Gang. It has been acclaimed for its innovative work on projects like the Aqua Tower in Chicago or the Taipei Pop Music Center. It's also one of two finalists in a competition to redesign the Tour Montparnasse skyscraper in Paris, which Gang says "aims to bring community but still preserve this monumentality."

### Inspired by Women's March

Hive's paper tubes are a brilliant silver on the outside, contrasting with the museum's bronze and rust 19th century interior, and magenta on the inside, a color Gang said was inspired by the "pussy hats" worn by protesters at the Women's March on

Washington after President Donald Trump took office in January.

"We wanted to make a relationship to this historic structure but also be very contemporary about current events and what's going on in our country right now," Gang said. "The magenta is about people coming together. So our hopes for these two months while this is up is that people from different backgrounds will intersect. And there's something about the round plan that focuses people inward toward each other." Gang is also concerned about growing polarization in the United States. "We really need to speak to each other, and maybe architecture can help shape that or set the stage for that. That's my hope and my dream," she said.

### Complex design

Hive's largest dome measures some 60 feet (18 meters) tall, with an oculus of over 10 feet in diameter opening onto the ceiling. The domes are similar to the vaulted structure of cathedrals or ancient arches designed to bear their own weight. Because such a structure had never really been done before, it was necessary to test the tubes until failure. Gang had the Carleton Laboratory at Columbia University perform a crush test on the tubes to measure compressive strength. In fact, the design is so complex that the exhibit had to be delayed by two days as workers placed the last pieces on top of the largest dome, like the keystone of a masonry arch. — AFP

Workers raise a ladder to support the main structure of Studio Gang's Hive, made of over 2,700 wound paper tubes, in the Great Hall of the National Building Museum. — AFP photos



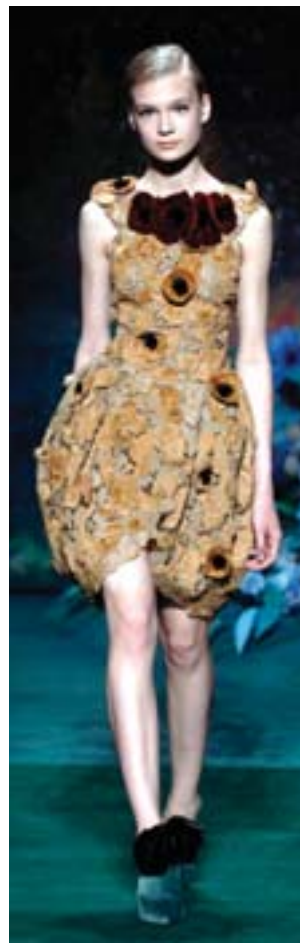
Workers check Studio Gang's Hive, made of over 2,700 wound paper tubes.



A man looks inside Studio Gang's Hive.







Models present creations for Fendi during the 2017-2018 fall/winter Haute Couture collection in Paris. — AFP photos



## FENDI STUNS WITH JENNER AND HADID FUR SHOW TO CAP COUTURE

**K**endall Jenner and Bella Hadid were employed with devastating effect by design Maestro Karl Lagerfeld to cap Paris Haute Couture Week in Fendi's dramatic color-infused fur collection. Exuberant Lagerfeld, 83, made light of the spectacle's theater venue by making not one bow - but three. Here are some of Wednesday's fall-winter highlights.

### Fendi's fur-meets-flowers

A shot-red forest decor in Paris' exclusive Champs-Elysees theater led down to multicolored blooms. And a few yards on, sat the VIP guests, including filmmaker Sofia Coppola. Lagerfeld's collection for "haute fourrure," or high fur, went technicolor this fall-winter season in mink and sable - with three-dimensional floral and flower-shaped fur detailing cutting a fine style.







A bright red poppy motif sheath was followed with a sienna coat with purple fur blooms. A turquoise cape dress sported over-size red fur flowers that turned, again, into poppies on the floppy ankle boots. Later, coats with strong necklines speckled with multi-color were echoed cleverly by fur coats, with real life speckled contrasts. Then came the stars.

Model of the minute Hadid, 20, prowled out animalistically in a loose and floaty, blue floral jumpsuit with peek-a-boo sheer sections and slicked-back hair. Jenner, 21, followed soon after in a black tulip-shaped mini dress, with cape that curved round like a flower petal. Previous Fendi Paris fur shows have seen animal activist protests - but there was no disruption this year.

#### Valentino's stars

Coppola also held court on the Valentino front row beside house-founder Valentino Garavani at his eponymous couture show in the opulent Hotel Salomon de Rothschild. The youthful-looking 46-year-old, who's still basking in the glory of her 2017 Cannes Best Director Award for "The Beguiled," looked demure in a black Valentino sleeveless silk gown. Oscar-winning actress Brie Larson also attended the silken display, alongside actress Kristin Scott Thomas.

#### Piccioli's couture

Color-blocking mixed with historic silken gowns - and a small dash of star-power - for Valentino. The recently-solo designer, Pierpaolo Piccioli, is going from strength to strength. The long, floor-sweeping organza gowns that evoke the Renaissance- now a staple of the Rome-based couture house - were all there in the Wednesday show's accomplished designs. Indeed, Italian painter Titian was even referenced in the program notes and could be felt in the silken hues of the collection that fused gentle whites, blues, reds and yellows. An intarsia velvet plisse dress, which took 960 hours to make, had blown-up baroque motifs. But Piccioli mixed it up this season. Graphic shapes were produced with some stylish color-blocking on gowns. One billowing cape in cerulean blue velvet sported a contrasting under garment with white sporty zip up collar.

#### Coco Rocha steals the show (again)

In 2007, Coca Rocha's stunned guests at Jean Paul Gaultier- as the then 18-year-old Canadian model opened the show with a dramatic traditional Irish step jig that she danced all the way down the runway. Ten years later, Rocha stunned again.

This time the 28-year-old - who's still at the top of her game - capped the snow-themed show from the French designer by cycling down the podium in a strange white, fluffy tricycle carriage in gold leggings. Guests applauded and cheered as the soundtrack boomed out a French version of Frozen's "Let it Go." "It's never just another runway show with @JPGaultier!" exclaimed the model from her Twitter account.

#### Gaultier's winter wonderland

The ever-unpredictable couturier Jean Paul Gaultier lived up to his reputation Wednesday in a humorous couture treat for guests who included France's Former First Lady Carla Bruni. The 61 diverse designs loosely united around one central theme: the winter wonderland. Loosely.

But the display was mainly about fun and veered often into the wacky, harking from different continents and silhouettes. It almost defied definition. On a snow-white runway, oversize bubble jackets in gray and gold paraded alongside fitted jackets with snow motifs and furry white platforms. For the head: Gaultier served up gargantuan fur Russian chapkas that competed with wooly bobble hats in blue and white. Then there were Sarees - that are worn in the sun, not in snow.

"(It's) childish and exotic... What was funny was a mix of winter. So the snow, and the pullover. And also the saree which is from a country where there's a lot of sun," he told The AP. And where would a winter wonderland scene be without Scandi knits? Inspired by the 1970s craze for Swedish-style cardigans, model Anna Cleveland wore a thick blue and white cardigan with floppy knitted headwear. Then the couturier seemed to head for the Himalayas with wrapped-up Asian-style silhouettes - with one bright red, floor length, square-shouldered gown reminiscent of traditional Nepalese dress. — AP

**Models present creations for Valentino during the 2017-2018 fall/winter Haute Couture collection.**







Models present creations by Jean Paul Gaultier during the 2017-2018 fall/winter Haute Couture collection in Paris. — AFP photos



COOKING ON DEADLINE:

# Cavatappi with Cherry Tomatoes, Pesto

By Katie Workman

Summer, summer, summer. The word is fat and round and breezy and rolls around nicely on the tongue. And we want our food to be breezy, too. If you have basil and tomatoes growing in your garden, make this. If you have a farmers' market near you, make this. And if you have leftover pesto hanging around, even store-bought, you can still make this.

You'll cook the pasta and make the pesto in the time it takes to roast the little tomatoes. The amount of oil in the dish is flexible; a bit is added to the roasting tomatoes, a bit to the cooked pasta, and the rest goes into the pesto. The pesto is intentionally a bit thick, as it will distribute itself nicely over the pasta and tomatoes when tossed, but you can always add a little more oil if you want a more fluid pesto.

By no means do you have to use cavatappi — it was the pasta I grabbed at the moment, and I do love its compact, chewy, twisted little shape. Another thing to love is the fact that this can be served hot, warm or at room temperature. It's a great make-ahead dish, hanging out happily for a day in the fridge before being brought to room temperature and served. It's very portable. And it's not too hard on the eyes either. Yellow tomatoes are a nice burst of sunny color, but you can use red too, or a mix of colors.

## CAVATAPPI WITH ROASTED CHERRY TOMATOES AND PESTO

### Ingredients

Serves 6

Start to finish: 35 minutes

2 pints cherry or grape tomatoes, halved

5 sprigs fresh thyme

1/2 cup olive oil, divided

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

1 clove garlic, minced

1 cup packed basil leaves

3 tablespoons finely grated Pecorino Romano cheese

1 pound cavatappi or other chunky pasta

### Preparation

Preheat the oven to 300 F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and coat it with nonstick cooking spray. Place the tomatoes and thyme sprigs on the baking sheet and toss them with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Roast for about 30 minutes, until they are wrinkly and slightly collapsed.

While the tomatoes are roasting, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. While the water is coming to a boil, make the pesto. Place the garlic and basil in a food processor or blender and pulse until everything is roughly chopped. Add 1/3 cup of the olive oil, a bit of salt and pepper and process, scraping down the sides part way through until everything is well blended. If it is very thick, add a bit more olive oil. Add the cheese and pulse until blended in. Taste and adjust seasonings.

Cook the cavatappi according to package directions. Reserve 1/2 cup of the cooking water, and drain the pasta. Toss the pasta with the cooking water, the remaining 1 to 2 tablespoons of olive oil (more if it seems dry) and the roasted tomatoes (discard the thyme sprigs), and transfer to a serving bowl. Dollop the pesto on top, and toss. Serve hot, warm or cold.





# Go ahead, dive into the veggie noodle world with 'zoodles'

By Melissa D'arabian

**V**egetable "noodles" are super trendy, and summer is the best time to make them since the king of veggie noodle - zucchini - is ubiquitous, and inexpensive. Go ahead and load up, because zucchini is a true powerhouse of vitamins. One cup provides over a third of your daily vitamin C, and about 10 percent of five additional vitamins and minerals, and weighs in at under 20 calories.

While "zoodles" are easily the most popular noodle, noodles can be made from a variety of vegetables. Try other summer squashes, winter squash such as butternut, beet, carrot, sweet potato, and parsnips. Veggie noodles are easy to make, too. You can buy an inexpensive spiralizer to make quick work of cutting perfectly-shaped noodles.

Or, you can even use your vegetable peeler to shave long, thin ribbons from your vegetables; no special equipment needed. Cooking the noodles is quick:

usually by steaming or sauteeing briefly. Some veggies, like summer squash, can be left completely raw if you want, and made into a cold summer noodle-like salad.

If you have been seeking the perfect recipe to dip your toe in the veggie noodle world, today's recipe is perfect. Sunshine Vegetable Ribbons can be made in mere minutes using only a vegetable peeler and a pan as equipment. The flavors are bright and familiar: a little garlic, lemon, toasted pine nuts and nutty parmesan cheese.

Serve this as a pretty first course, as a side dish or even as a vegetarian main course with a thick slice of crusty Italian bread on the side. Once you've mastered the vegetable peeler noodle, get creative and explore the endless options for this new technique, swapping in vegetables for pasta in your favorite recipes.



## SUNSHINE VEGETABLE RIBBONS

### Ingredients

Servings: 4  
Start to finish: 15 minutes

2 large carrots, peeled  
2 crookneck squashes (yellow summer squash)  
2 zucchini  
2 teaspoons olive oil  
1 garlic clove, minced  
2 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons toasted pine nuts  
1 ounce parmesan cheese, shaved into shards with a vegetable peeler  
Lemon zest or fresh herbs for garnish, optional  
Freshly ground black pepper

### Preparation

Use a vegetable peeler to shave long, thin ribbons (like flat noodles) of the vegetables. (You will likely have a thin core remaining of each vegetable that you'll have to use for another

purpose.) Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a large saute pan. Add the garlic and saute for one minute, until fragrant. Add the vegetable ribbons, a pinch of salt, and stir. Add the lemon juice and cover with a lid for just one minute (or longer if you want very soft ribbons). Remove the lid, and remove from heat. Serve on four plates, topped with pine nuts, parmesan cheese, black pepper and lemon zest or fresh herbs, if desired. — AP



Friday Times

FRIDAY, JULY 7, 2017

# Travel

Off the tourist trail in Bali:  
The best less-visited spots

Rice fields and volcanoes like Gunung Agung form a wonderful backdrop to hikes to hikes around Sideman.





**G**iven it's one of the world's most famous resort islands, Bali seems an unlikely choice for those wanting to escape the crowds. And while it's true that this is a very touristy destination - attracting nearly 10 million visitors per year - most people only head to the south of the island, leaving plenty of wonderful spots to explore elsewhere, blissfully free of the masses. Chilled-out islands, beaches for surfers, divers and sun worshippers, a lush interior of idyllic landscapes in multiple shades of green, and the chance to have genuine and engaging cultural encounters like in the Bali of old are all awaiting anyone willing to get off the beaten track a little.

#### Sideman

Ubud - the nucleus of Bali's thriving arts, culinary and yoga scenes - is certainly not to be missed, but its popularity means its appeal can wear thin. Fortunately the immediate surrounds are stunning, featuring emerald green rice fields, rolling hills and volcanoes. And there's nowhere better to appreciate it all than Sideman, just a 45-minute drive away.

The last few years have seen more and more travellers trickle in for a laid-back stay among fruit trees and sublime views here, including the dramatic vista of Gunung Agung, Bali's highest peak. Not only is Sideman a great base for climbing the towering volcano, but there are easier day walks heading off along trails through the verdant surrounds.

There's a great choice of accommodation to suit all budgets: charming Pondok Wisata Lihat Sawah maximises the views; stylish Samanvaya is where you go to pamper yourself. All places can offer hiking advice and arrange guides, too. If you like Sideman, check out Munduk. Another relaxed town that's attracting those seeking some solitude among nature, Munduk offers mountain hik-

ing in forests scented by spice plantations. Its waterfalls are another big attraction - the perfect spot to cool off with a swim.

#### Nusa Penida

Despite Nusa Lembongan's reputation

as the place to head to escape from the mainland, it can get busy there too (especially during high season). The neighbouring island of Nusa Penida, however, is perfect for slowing it down another notch. Despite its large local population, Penida has really only

just begun catering to tourists and it's definitely emerging as one of Bali's new hot spots, attracting a breed of traveller looking for an ultra chilled island to explore and hang out on.

It's also famous for diving and one of the



The diving's great or you could just lounge on the beach in Padangbai





Explore the Bajra Sandhi Monument at ground level, then climb to the top for sweeping views across Bali's capital, Denpasar.

best places in the world to see sunfish, as well as manta rays. Rent a motorbike (it's a large island) to explore its temples, isolated beaches and waterfalls. Alternately, Penida Tours can arrange excellent thematic local tours that include seaweed farming, beach camping and even black magic.

For backpackers, Jero Rawa is a perfect option; Ring Sameton Inn is the more plush choice. Don't miss the dragon fruit daiquiris and seafood BBQs at beachside Penida Colada. If you like Nusa Penida, check out Nusa Ceningan. The other island that makes up part of this chain off Bali's east coast is Nusa Ceningan - the perfect compromise between resorty Lembongan and low-key Penida. It's connected to Nusa Lembongan by the Love Bridge (opened in early 2017 to replace a previous one that collapsed in 2016) so it's a good base to explore all three islands, and has its own small but thriving backpacker scene.

#### Denpasar

Hectic, noisy Denpasar is worth a look for those keen to lap up a bit of local flavour. As the island's capital, it has a classic Indonesian feel you won't get elsewhere in Bali, and the food here is amazing: Depot Cak Asmo and Café Teduh are two local favourites. Pasar Badung, the largest food market on the island, was devastated by fire in early 2016 but is recovering and still warrants a visit for its range of tropical fruits and spices. Denpasar also has arguably the best sight-seeing in Bali. For a definitive overview of Balinese culture and history, head to the well-curated Museum Negeri Propinsi Bali, or the epic Bajra Sandhi Monument in the middle of Denpasar's main park, which you can climb for great views.

If you like Denpasar, check out Singaraja. Despite being only 10km from the popular beachside town of Lovina, Bali's second largest town, Singaraja, in the far north, has a truly authentic Indonesian feel. There's little tourist infrastructure but, like Denpasar, it has some wonderful museums, temples and restaurants, and it's a great spot to meet locals.

#### Tirta Gangga

Home to one of Bali's most beautiful

palaces, the majestic Taman Tirta Gangga, Tirta Gangga may attract its fair share of visitors during the day, but evenings bring a tranquility far removed from touristy Bali. Beyond the palace, the main lure is the bucolic countryside with some wonderful hikes to pretty rice fields, local villages and holy temples. Mountain-bike tours offered by Bung Bung Adventure Biking are a highly recommended way to explore the area with a local, and they can arrange hiking guides too.

Pondok Lembah Dukah is a simple but excellent hilltop guesthouse with rooms opening to beautiful natural views, otherwise live like royalty at Tirta Ayu Hotel, located within the palace grounds. Similarly popular with day-trippers, the Gunung Batukau region is far from being a secret, but given its relative isolation from Bali's main towns, its surrounding countryside is a great spot to tune out from the tourist trail. It is best known for the World Heritage-listed rice fields at Jatiluwih and the divine Hindu temple, Pura Luhur Batukau.

#### Pemuteran

The remoteness of the far northwestern corner of Bali tempts travellers looking to get as far away from Kuta as possible. And while it may disappoint if you've come this far in search of the 'real' Bali only to discover Pemuteran's penchant for five star resorts, you can rest assured its laid-back demeanor definitely exudes a distinct old-school Bali feel (plus there's plenty of affordable guesthouses too).

On the doorstep of Bali's only national park, Taman Nasional Bali Barat, the area attracts not only divers and snorkellers (headed to Bali's most famous coral reefs at Pulau Menjangan), but also those here to simply unwind along its pretty little beach with a sandy cove. The great mix of accommodation runs from budget boutique Kubuku Ecolodge to beachside resorts such as Taman Selini Beach Bungalows. If you like Pemuteran, check out Padangbai. Sleepy Padangbai is one of Bali's best known diving towns. It has great diving directly offshore and is also a fabulous base from which to tackle Bali's entire east/north dive sites. ([www.lonelyplanets.com](http://www.lonelyplanets.com))



Gunung Batukau's Pura Luhur Batukau temple is a wonderfully atmospheric place to visit.





Aries (March 21-April 19)

You have plenty of good practical job-related thoughts and ideas. You have the ability to communicate with superiors and describe what you see. You work with real imagination and understanding in areas of the mind that are most private–depth psychology. Understanding your co-workers has an advantage this week, as someone may have been relieved from certain duties and another may have moved up in status. Politics and jealousy from others may gain your sympathy. Working with others at this time has brought you to realize that your ability to focus is an important factor in your business expertise. You may be sought after as just the person for a particular project. Laughter is contagious this evening–enjoy a good laugh with friends.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may be under a lot of pressure, at least in the way you appear to others. All is not in harmony between your emotions and the way you express yourself just now. Take a step back and reassess what motivates you. You are insightful when it comes to practical matters–job, career and such. You are independent and you may have an unconventional approach to work, especially regarding how you organize or manage your work. Perhaps the only problem today is that you may have a reputation for being different. You enjoy the emotional nourishment and a sense of security from ideals, friends and social involvement. There is a need for change, a desire to break away from the outmoded patterns. Find an enjoyment for the new and unique.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You do not like making speeches, but when elected to take the place of a scheduled speaker, you can plan each word perfectly. You are able to be a very forceful speaker when needed. Today, your words just gush out and you create an emotional impact that brings new information to your listeners. You have no trouble putting your feelings into words; in fact, you may have to exercise some control over your tongue, for you are quick. You may enjoy throwing in a word here and there that is new to the audience and keeps them alert and listening. Ideas, words, books, etc., are pursued with great gusto. This is a time when support and recognition should be in the forecast from public, family and friends. Slow the tempo tonight and enjoy a quiet evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Everything points to your taking a project over. You feel that you have support from those around you and your ideas will add to the smoothness of the execution of the project. There is a surge of independence, freedom and an interest in trying new ideas. If you are in sales, or teaching, others will not be able to resist paying attention to you. You are a smooth talker with a quick wit. This is a productive time. You are not afraid to try new things. This will broaden your thinking and help you see new styles, ideas and paths to successful outcomes. A little time management may be needed for most people, but you seem to naturally pull things together. A sense of humor this evening helps you to enjoy your surroundings.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Pay attention to your timing today so that you are able to make complete sentences and complete whatever tasks are placed before you. Communication, particularly with those you feel may be a bit pushy, could prove troublesome. When using written communications, it will be good to spell-check and proofread. You will be successful in whatever method of communication you choose. Create an interest in viewing the possible outcomes of a situation, instead of the quick fix–no surprises. You encourage others through your own actions. There could be change on the home front this evening. You appreciate tradition and regularity and you may be set against anything new. Of course, one could consider a good reupholstering job on a sturdy chair.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your most essential quality has to do with the very real love and compassion you radiate. Your sense of value and sheer appreciation for life are communicated to all. You take control of a difficult situation today in some efforts to make others feel at ease. You could feel great support from those around you. You are also a born entertainer. There are special talents you are aware of and the energies today are with you in all of these areas. They are to enhance your problem-solving and strengthen your ability to help others. Perhaps you are in the medical field. You will succeed in your efforts; feel the confidence that belongs to you. Fill the air with music tonight.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You must learn to listen to some of your own more sensitive areas and feelings; they are clues into who you are and where your compassion can be found. Clear communication is ever important in order to get your information across. It is time to start thinking about opportunities that will show off your own special abilities. You may enjoy your job and be able to express your business expertise. This evening it will be time to show how well you can create what everyone wants. This may be with music, crafts or techniques, styles or expressions. You have held yourself back for much too long. You cannot abolish your creativity. Consider taking some time to volunteer in some mentoring and tutoring capacity, perhaps a community awareness project.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You have strong, stable emotions and tend to draw around you the perfect environment for yourself. The thing you need is always at hand. In addition, you get much support and good fortune from friends and relatives. You are sometimes pulled between a desire to progress and be all that you can be, versus a tendency to dwell in the past. Today may be full of dwelling in the past but you will eventually pay attention to the happenings around you. You can change a difficult matter in the office to an understandable occurrence. You will probably be the teacher today and you should be very pleased at the way the workday ends. Meeting with friends after work will afford you an opportunity to relax and enjoy the company of your peers.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may feel left out or passed over just now. Your own requirements may appear to limit and separate you from where the rest of the gang is headed. This is a short-term situation but needs your attention. Close relationships will take on more emotional depth, power and importance at this time. An important event is near. This is a time during which you can have the experience of taking a greater role in the creation of life itself. You become one with the creative force to a marked extent–powerfully positive thinking. This could just be the time to break the mold and try what is unconventional, but with real passion. A much more independent and adventurous you will emerge. Relax this evening, perhaps a good video movie.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This is a great time to be with others and to work together. You enjoy working in a group that knows how to be part of a team and work together. You are very motivated, with a strong drive and urge to do and accomplish. In your own personal workspace you have an eye toward progress and the future; you feel compelled to try for what is just out of your reach. As a born coach or teacher, you are at home in the physical-action areas of life. You are quite able to manage a very active and strong emotional life. At home this afternoon a loved one gives you reason to be critical–you are wise to hold back your comments. Find the positive possibilities in this particular person. This person may just need to talk.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Your relentless pursuit of anything hidden makes you a good investigator. You are positive and energized, handling subject matters that others would never come near. You are able to size up a problem and come up with a solution. Using your mind to negotiate obstacles and handle dilemmas, you will be called upon to solve several business problems today. You could be a computer wizard or a technical adviser–whatever the case, others are glad you make yourself available. You have a natural ability to guide and lead others through the hassles of life. You could be very much in demand as a counselor–you enjoy solving problems. Be prepared–this could amount to a passion that others may not be ready to deal with–pace yourself.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your mind could be quite clear and natural. Ideas are streaming easily to you. You can talk, talk, talk. You could be on a planning committee or in advertising that calls for your kind of thinking. Your outward seriousness and no-nonsense approach to things are obvious to all. This deliberate sense of responsibility comes across and is central to your personality and the way you relate to other people. Everything is run through your checkpoint to see if it holds up and can pass the test. Although you are very creative, you can be a stickler with details. You may be able to enjoy and value the relationships you have with your friends and loved ones tonight. General good feeling and a sense of support and harmony make this a happy time.

COUNTRY CODES

Afghanistan	0093	Libya	00218
Albania	00355	Lesotho	00266
Algeria	00213	Lithuania	00370
Andorra	00376	Luxembourg	00352
Angola	00244	Macau	00853
Anguilla	001264	Macedonia	00389
Antiga	001268	Madagascar	00261
Argentina	0054	Majorca	0034
Armenia	00374	Malawi	00265
Australia	0061	Malaysia	0060
Austria	0043	Maldives	00960
Azerbaijan	00994	Mali	00223
Bahamas	001242	Malta	00356
Bahrain	00973	Marshall Islands	00692
Bangladesh	00880	Martinique	00596
Barbados	001246	Mauritania	00222
Belarus	00375	Mauritius	00230
Belgium	0032	Mayotte	00269
Belize	00501	Mexico	0052
Benin	00229	Micronesia	00691
Bermuda	001441	Moldova	00373
Bhutan	00975	Monaco	00377
Bolivia	00591	Mongolia	00976
Bosnia	00387	Montserrat	001664
Botswana	00267	Morocco	00212
Brazil	0055	Mozambique	00258
Brunei	00673	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Bulgaria	00359	Namibia	00264
Burkina	00226	Nepal	00977
Burundi	00257	Netherlands	0031
Cambodia	00855	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Cameroon	00237	New Caledonia	00687
Canada	001	New Zealand	0064
Cape Verde	00238	Nicaragua	00505
Cayman Islands	001345	Nigar	00227
Central African	00236	Nigeria	00234
Chad	00235	Niue	00683
Chile	0056	Norfolk Island	00672
China	0086	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Colombia	0057	North Korea	00850
Comoros	00269	Norway	0047
Congo	00242	Oman	00968
Cook Islands	00682	Pakistan	0092
Costa Rica	00506	Palau	00680
Croatia	00385	Panama	00507
Cuba	0053	Papua New Guinea	00675
Cyprus	00357	Paraguay	00595
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Peru	0051
Czech Republic	00420	Philippines	0063
Denmark	0045	Poland	0048
Diego Garcia	00246	Portugal	00351
Djibouti	00253	Puerto Rico	001787
Dominica	001767	Qatar	00974
Dominican Republic	001809	Romania	0040
Ecuador	00593	Russian Federation	007
Egypt	0020	Rwanda	00250
El Salvador	00503	Saint Helena	00290
England (UK)	0044	Saint Kitts	001869
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Lucia	001758
Eritrea	00291	Saint Pierre	00508
Estonia	00372	Saint Vincent	001784
Ethiopia	00251	Samoa US	00684
Falkland Islands	00500	Samoa West	00685
Faroe Islands	00298	San Marino	00378
Fiji	00679	Sao Tome	00239
Finland	00358	Saudi Arabia	00966
France	0033	Scotland (UK)	0044
French Guiana	00594	Senegal	00221
French Polynesia	00689	Seychelles	00284
Gabon	00241	Sierra Leone	00232
Gambia	00220	Singapore	0065
Georgia	00995	Slovakia	00421
Germany	0049	Slovenia	00386
Ghana	00233	Solomon Islands	00677
Gibraltar	00350	Somalia	00252
Greece	0030	South Africa	0027
Greenland	00299	South Korea	0082
Grenada	001473	Spain	0034
Guadeloupe	00590	Sri Lanka	0094
Guam	001671	Sudan	00249
Guatemala	00502	Suriname	00597
Guinea	00224	Swaziland	00268
Guyana	00592	Sweden	0046
Haiti	00509	Switzerland	0041
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Syria	00963
Honduras	00504	Serbia	00381
Hong Kong	00852	Taiwan	00886
Hungary	0036	Tanzania	00255
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Thailand	0066
Iceland	00354	Togo	00228
India	0091	Tonga	00676
Indian Ocean	00873	Tokelau	00690
Indonesia	0062	Trinidad	001868
Iran	0098	Tunisia	00216
Iraq	00964	Turkey	0090
Ireland	00353	Tuvalu	00688
Italy	0039	Uganda	00256
Ivory Coast	00225	Ukraine	00380
Jamaica	001876	United Arab Emirates	00976
Japan	0081	United Kingdom	0044
Jordan	00962	Uruguay	00598
Kazakhstan	007	USA	001
Kenya	00254	Uzbekistan	00998
Kiribati	00686	Vanuatu	00678
Kuwait	00965	Venezuela	00582
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Vietnam	0084
Laos	00856	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Latvia	00371	Virgin Islands US	001340
Lebanon	00961	Wales (UK)	0044
Liberia	00231	Yemen	00967



OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

00:15 The Night Crew  
01:55 The Tower  
04:10 Metro  
06:00 Blackhat  
08:25 Echo Effect  
10:05 The Tower  
12:15 Gone In Sixty Seconds  
14:20 Blackhat  
16:35 Harlock: Space Pirate  
18:30 Beyond Redemption  
20:05 I Am Number Four  
22:00 Revenge Of The Green Dragons  
23:40 Montana

OSN MOVIES HD THRILLER

00:40 The Darkness  
02:15 911 Nightmare  
03:50 Flightplan  
05:35 Invasion Day  
07:20 The Darkness  
09:00 911 Nightmare  
10:30 San Andreas Quake  
12:00 Flightplan  
13:40 Dark Was The Night  
15:30 Arlington Road  
17:35 San Andreas Quake  
19:05 The Returned  
20:50 Return To Sender  
22:30 Love Crimes

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

00:30 Ice Princess  
02:10 Confessions Of A Teenage

Drama Queen  
03:40 Hotel Transylvania 2  
05:10 Rio  
06:50 Ice Princess  
08:30 Confessions Of A Teenage  
Drama Queen  
10:00 Minions  
11:40 Hotel Transylvania 2  
13:20 Chicken Little  
15:00 Ice Age  
16:25 The Shaggy Dog  
18:05 The Amazing Wizard Of Paws  
19:45 Hannah Montana Movie  
21:40 Ice Age  
23:05 Chicken Little

OSN MOVIES HD FIRST

01:35 The Other Side Of The Door  
03:15 Justice League: Monsters  
04:50 The Jungle Book  
06:50 After Words  
08:35 Zoolander 2  
10:20 Alvin And The Chipmunks:  
The Road Chip  
12:00 The Jungle Book  
13:50 Eddie The Eagle  
15:40 Point Break  
17:35 Alvin And The Chipmunks:  
The Road Chip  
19:15 Ice Age: Collision Course  
21:00 Lost & Found  
22:40 The Huntsman: Winter's War

OSN MOVIES COMEDY HD

01:10 Dirty Work  
02:30 The Guilt Trip  
04:05 Yoga Hosers  
05:35 Hope Springs  
07:15 You Again

09:00 Yoga Hosers  
10:30 Hope Springs  
12:05 You Again  
13:55 Take Care  
15:30 Ricki And The Flash  
17:15 Ride Along  
18:55 National Security  
20:30 Gentlemen Broncos  
22:00 Vacation  
23:40 Jackass 3

OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL

00:40 Inherent Vice  
03:10 Foreverland  
04:50 Swing Kids  
06:45 I Am Bolt  
08:45 Foreverland  
10:30 Swing Kids  
12:30 The Best Of Me  
14:30 Memories  
16:10 Steve Jobs: The Man In The  
Machine  
18:20 Young Ones  
20:10 The Zero Theorem  
22:00 1984  
23:55 The Informant

OSN MOVIES KIDS

00:05 Pooh's Heffalump Movie  
01:40 Blue Elephant 2  
03:20 Outback  
04:50 Paws  
06:15 Marco Macaco  
07:35 Mune  
09:05 Yugo & Lala 2  
10:20 Zodiac: The Race Begins  
11:50 The Adventures Of Don  
Quixote  
13:10 Blue Elephant 2

14:50 Doctor Proctor's Fart Powder  
16:20 Yugo & Lala 2  
17:40 The Tigger Movie  
19:00 Egon And Donci  
20:20 Doctor Proctor's Fart Powder  
21:50 Mune  
23:15 The Tigger Movie

OSN MOVIES HD

01:15 Poltergeist  
02:55 Blown Away  
04:55 The Guardian  
07:15 Blown Away  
09:15 Reign Over Me  
11:20 Con Air  
13:15 Last Knights  
15:15 Barely Lethal  
17:00 War Of The Worlds  
18:55 Erin Brockovich  
21:05 Dracula Untold  
22:45 Bram Stoker's Dracula

SUNDANCE TV

00:00 Mammal  
01:35 The Phone Call  
02:00 Jack Irish  
03:00 Rectify  
04:00 Full Grown Men  
05:25 Radiator  
07:00 Miss Firecracker  
08:40 Detroit Unleaded  
10:10 Movie Talk Legends: Anthony  
Quinn  
10:40 Elliott Smith: Heaven Adores  
You  
12:25 Cameraman: Life/Works Of  
Jack Cardiff  
13:50 Back To Your Arms  
15:25 Writers' Room  
15:55 Miss Firecracker  
17:35 Detroit Unleaded  
19:10 West Beirut  
21:00 Movie Talk Legends - Steve  
McQueen

BBC FIRST

00:15 Doctors  
00:45 EastEnders  
01:15 Holby City  
02:15 Agatha Raisin  
03:10 Agatha Raisin  
04:00 Him & Her  
04:35 EastEnders  
05:05 The Musketeers  
06:00 Holby City  
06:55 Doctors  
07:25 Doctors  
07:55 EastEnders  
08:30 EastEnders  
09:00 Casualty  
09:50 New Tricks  
10:45 New Tricks  
11:40 New Tricks  
12:35 Casualty  
13:30 Holby City  
14:25 EastEnders  
14:55 New Tricks  
15:55 Doctors  
16:25 Doctors  
16:55 Doctors  
17:25 Doctors  
17:55 Doctors

COMEDY CENTRAL

00:05 Impractical Jokers  
00:30 Impractical Jokers  
00:55 Impractical Jokers  
01:20 Impractical Jokers  
01:45 Lip Sync Battle  
02:10 Disorderly Conduct: Video On  
Patrol  
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor  
Noah  
03:25 Hungry Investors  
04:15 Disaster Date  
04:40 Disaster Date  
05:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On

Patrol  
05:55 Bondi Ink.  
06:50 Catch A Contractor  
07:40 Lip Sync Battle  
08:05 Lip Sync Battle  
08:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On  
Patrol  
09:20 Sweat Inc.  
10:10 Hungry Investors  
11:00 Life Or Debt  
11:46 Bondi Ink.  
12:40 Disaster Date  
13:05 Disaster Date  
13:30 Lip Sync Battle  
13:55 Lip Sync Battle  
14:20 Hungry Investors  
15:10 Catch A Contractor  
16:00 Disorderly Conduct: Video On  
Patrol  
16:55 Tattoo Disasters  
17:25 Tattoo Disasters  
17:50 Lip Sync Battle  
18:15 Lip Sync Battle  
18:39 Disaster Date  
19:03 Disaster Date  
19:27 Catch A Contractor  
20:13 Frankenfood  
20:37 Frankenfood  
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor  
Noah  
21:30 The President Show  
22:00 Live At The Apollo  
22:55 Todd Barry: Super Crazy  
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor  
Noah

food network

00:00 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers  
00:30 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers  
01:00 Private Chef  
01:30 Private Chef  
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
03:00 Man Fire Food  
03:30 Man Fire Food  
04:00 Chopped  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To  
Basics  
06:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To  
Basics  
07:00 The Kitchen  
08:00 The Pioneer Woman  
08:30 The Pioneer Woman  
09:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts  
09:30 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts  
10:00 Bake With Anna Olson  
10:30 Bake With Anna Olson  
11:00 The Kitchen  
12:00 The Pioneer Woman  
12:30 The Pioneer Woman  
13:00 Siba's Table  
13:30 Siba's Table  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
15:00 Chopped  
16:00 The Kitchen  
17:00 Bake With Anna Olson  
17:30 Bake With Anna Olson  
18:00 Chopped  
19:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
20:00 Paul Hollywood - City Bakes  
21:00 Reza's African Kitchen  
21:30 Reza's African Kitchen  
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
23:00 Chopped

OSN SERIES HD COMEDY

00:15 The Middle  
00:40 The Middle  
01:05 Kevin Can Wait  
01:30 Kevin Can Wait  
01:55 The Mindy Project  
02:20 The Tonight Show Starring  
Jimmy Fallon  
03:10 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
04:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
04:50 The Bill Engvall Show  
05:15 Malibu Country  
05:40 American Housewife  
06:05 The Mick  
06:30 The Bernie Mac Show

06:55 The Mindy Project  
07:20 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:10 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
09:00 The Tonight Show Starring  
Jimmy Fallon  
09:50 The Bill Engvall Show  
10:15 Malibu Country  
10:40 The Bernie Mac Show  
11:05 Kevin Can Wait  
11:30 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
12:20 Seinfeld  
12:45 Seinfeld  
13:10 The Middle  
13:35 The Middle  
14:00 The Bill Engvall Show  
14:25 Malibu Country  
14:50 The Bernie Mac Show  
15:15 American Housewife  
15:40 The Mick  
16:05 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
17:00 Seinfeld  
17:30 Seinfeld  
18:00 The Middle  
18:30 The Middle  
19:00 Last Man Standing  
19:30 Baby Daddy  
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring  
Jimmy Fallon  
21:00 Seinfeld  
21:30 Seinfeld  
22:00 Kevin Can Wait  
22:30 Kevin Can Wait  
23:00 The Mindy Project  
23:25 Late Night With Seth Meyers

OSN SERIES HD FIRST

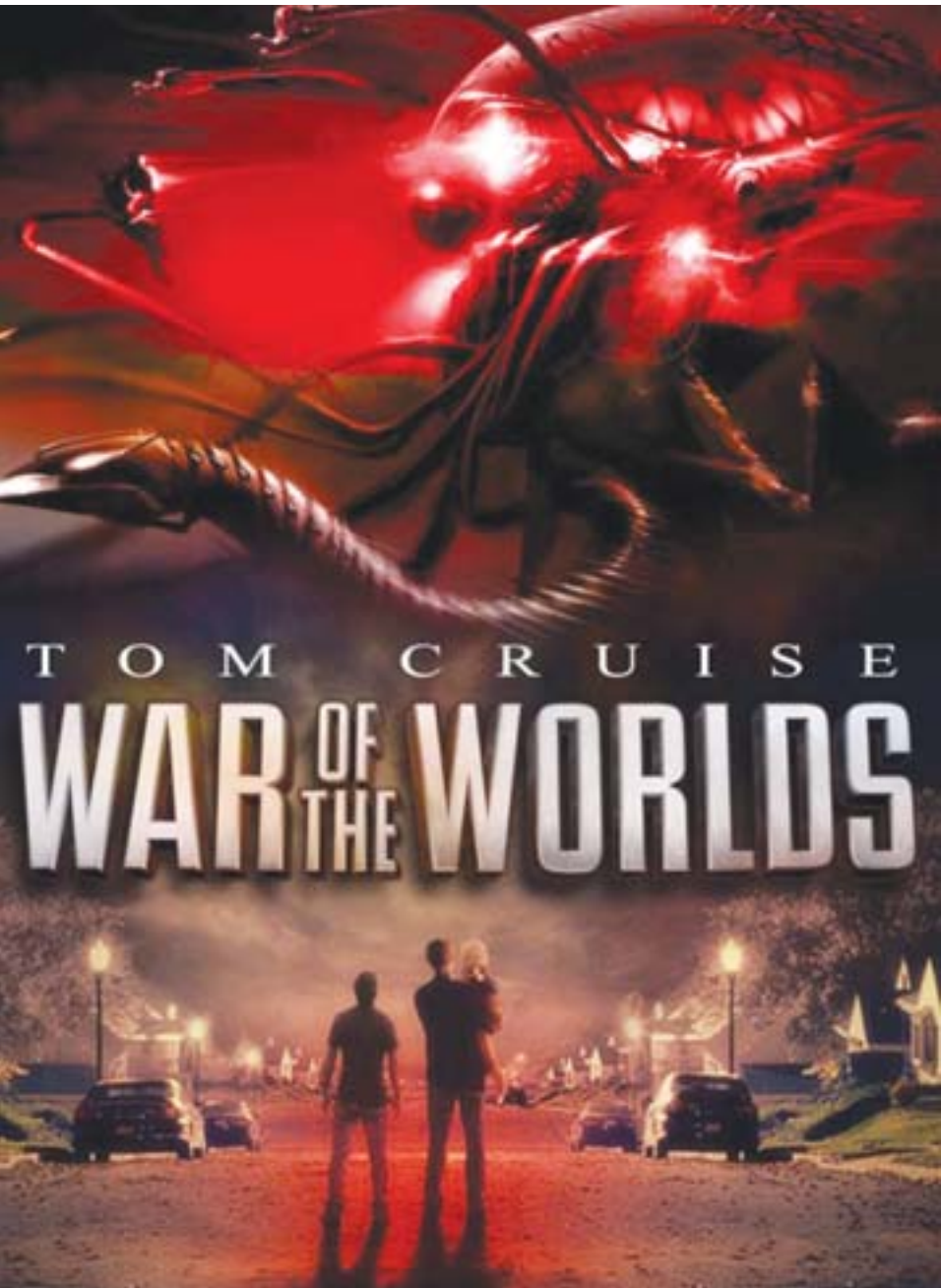
00:40 The Americans  
01:30 Beyond  
02:20 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow  
03:20 Supergirl  
04:10 Drop Dead Diva  
05:00 Good Morning America  
07:00 The View  
07:45 The Chew  
08:30 Riverdale  
09:20 Supergirl  
10:10 Drop Dead Diva  
11:00 The Blacklist  
11:45 Suits  
12:30 The View  
13:15 The Chew  
14:00 Live Good Morning America  
16:00 Drop Dead Diva  
17:00 Supergirl  
18:00 The Blacklist  
19:00 Time After Time  
20:00 Suits  
21:00 Emerald City  
22:00 Eyewitness  
23:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow  
23:50 The Blacklist

OSN FIRST HD Home of HBO

00:25 Unscripted  
00:55 Unscripted  
01:25 Lucifer  
02:10 The Alzheimer's Project  
03:00 Veep  
03:30 Silicon Valley  
04:00 LifeStories: Families In Crisis  
04:30 Larry David: Curb Your  
Enthusiasm  
05:35 The Wizard Of Lies  
07:50 Prom Night In Mississippi  
09:20 Winchell  
11:10 The Gathering Storm  
12:45 Into The Storm  
14:25 Meet The Donors: Does  
Money Talk  
15:30 61\*  
17:40 Class Divide  
19:00 Big Little Lies  
20:00 Chance  
21:00 Lucifer  
22:00 Mildred Pierce  
23:05 LifeStories: Families In Crisis  
23:40 Big Little Lies

OSN SERIES HD

00:00 Beyond  
01:00 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow  
01:50 The Blacklist



WAR OF THE WORLDS ON OSN MOVIES HD



02:40 The Americans  
03:30 Beyond  
04:20 DC's Legends Of Tomorrow  
05:20 Supergirl  
06:10 Drop Dead Diva  
07:00 Good Morning America  
09:00 The View  
09:45 The Chew  
10:30 The Americans  
11:20 Supergirl  
12:10 Drop Dead Diva  
13:00 The Blacklist  
13:45 Suits  
14:30 The View  
15:15 The Chew  
16:00 Live Good Morning America  
18:00 Drop Dead Diva  
19:00 Supergirl  
20:00 The Blacklist  
21:00 House Of Cards  
22:00 House Of Cards  
22:55 House Of Cards  
23:50 House Of Cards



00:45 Killjoys  
01:35 Killjoys  
02:25 Stargate SG-1  
03:20 Sanctuary  
04:15 Eureka  
05:05 Smallville  
06:00 Sanctuary  
06:55 Sanctuary  
07:45 Sanctuary  
08:40 Pokemon IV: 4Ever  
10:00 Dark Matter  
10:55 Dark Matter  
11:50 Dark Matter  
12:45 Dark Matter  
13:40 Dark Matter  
14:35 Dark Matter  
15:30 The Host  
17:40 Red Faction: Origins  
19:20 Killjoys  
20:10 Killjoys  
21:00 King Kong



00:00 House Of DVF  
02:00 Cougar Town  
05:00 Fashion Star  
06:00 Gallery Girls  
08:00 House Of DVF  
10:00 Cougar Town  
13:00 Fashion Star  
14:00 Gallery Girls  
16:00 Desperate Housewives  
17:00 Desperate Housewives  
18:00 American Idol  
21:00 Desperate Housewives  
23:00 Gallery Girls



00:20 Oprah's Lifeclass  
01:10 Promzillas  
02:00 Cake Boss  
02:25 Cake Boss  
02:50 Say Yes To The Dress  
03:15 Say Yes To The Dress  
03:35 Oprah's Lifeclass  
04:20 Little People, Big World  
04:45 Little People, Big World  
05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras  
06:00 Cake Boss  
20:10 Cake Boss  
20:35 Cake Boss  
21:00 Kate Plus 8  
21:50 Separated At Birth  
22:40 Cake Boss  
23:05 Cake Boss



00:45 America's Cutest Pets  
01:40 Wild Ones  
02:05 Wild Ones  
02:35 Tanked  
03:25 Blood Lions - Bred For The Bullet



DRACULA UNTOLD ON OSN MOVIES HD



00:20 Street Outlaws  
01:10 What On Earth?  
02:00 Salvage Hunters  
02:50 Storage Hunters UK  
03:15 Storage Hunters UK  
03:40 Misfit Garage  
04:30 Container Wars  
05:00 How Do They Do It?  
05:30 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 Abandoned Engineering  
06:50 You Have Been Warned  
07:40 Gold Divers  
08:30 What On Earth?  
09:20 Shipwreck Men  
10:10 The Island With Bear Grylls  
11:00 The Wheel: Survival Games  
11:50 Life After: Chernobyl  
12:40 Heavy Rescue  
13:30 Fast N' Loud  
14:20 Diesel Brothers  
15:10 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre  
16:00 Abandoned Engineering  
21:00 Fast N' Loud  
21:50 How It's Made: Dream Cars  
22:15 How It's Made: Dream Cars  
22:40 Fast N' Loud: Demolition Theatre  
23:30 Heavy Rescue



00:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents  
01:00 Weapons At War  
02:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
02:50 Ancient Aliens  
03:40 Your Bleeped Up Brain  
04:30 The Universe  
05:20 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents  
06:10 The Universe  
07:00 Weapons At War  
08:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
09:00 Ancient Aliens  
10:00 Your Bleeped Up Brain  
11:00 The Universe  
12:00 Ultimate Guide To The

14:00 Evil Up Close  
15:00 Homicide Hunter  
16:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
17:00 Nightmare In Suburbia  
18:00 Nightmare In Suburbia  
19:00 Evil Up Close  
20:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
21:00 Homicide Hunter  
22:00 They Took Our Child, We Got Her Back  
23:00 Deadly Wives



00:30 Six Degrees Of Murder  
01:20 Murder Chose Me  
02:10 Murder Book  
03:00 Betrayed  
03:48 I Almost Got Away With It  
04:36 California Investigator  
05:01 California Investigator  
05:24 Deadly Affairs  
06:12 Southern Fried Homicide  
07:00 The Locator  
07:25 The Locator  
07:50 I Almost Got Away With It  
08:40 California Investigator  
09:05 California Investigator  
09:30 Deadly Affairs  
10:20 Southern Fried Homicide  
11:10 Vanity Fair Confidential  
12:00 The Locator  
12:25 The Locator  
12:50 I Almost Got Away With It  
13:40 California Investigator  
14:05 California Investigator  
14:30 Deadly Affairs  
15:20 Southern Fried Homicide  
16:10 I Am Homicide  
17:00 The Locator  
17:25 The Locator  
17:50 I Almost Got Away With It  
18:40 California Investigator  
19:05 California Investigator  
19:30 Deadly Affairs  
20:20 Southern Fried Homicide  
21:10 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall  
22:00 Who Killed Jane Doe?  
22:50 The Vanishing Women  
23:40 Casey Anthony: An American Murder Mystery

04:15 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
05:02 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
05:49 Wild Ones  
06:14 Wild Ones  
06:36 Gorilla School  
07:00 Gorilla School  
07:25 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
08:15 Wild Ones  
08:40 Wild Ones  
09:10 Predators Up Close With Joel Lambert  
10:05 Tanked  
11:00 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
11:55 America's Cutest Pets  
12:50 Wild Ones  
13:15 Wild Ones  
13:45 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
14:40 Predators Up Close With Joel Lambert  
15:35 Tanked  
16:30 Untamed China With Nigel Marven  
17:25 Deadly Islands  
18:20 Wildest Africa  
19:15 Tanked  
20:10 Dr. Jeff: Rocky Mountain Vet  
21:05 Deadly Islands  
22:00 Wildest Africa  
22:55 The Lion Queen  
23:50 Untamed China With Nigel Marven



Crime & Investigation Network  
00:00 The First 48  
01:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
02:00 Homicide Hunter  
03:00 Cold Case Files  
04:00 The First 48  
05:00 Robbie Coltrane's Critical Evidence  
06:00 My Crazy Ex  
07:00 My Crazy Ex  
08:00 Evil Up Close  
09:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
10:00 Homicide Hunter  
11:00 Nightmare In Suburbia  
12:00 Nightmare In Suburbia  
13:00 My Crazy Ex

Presidents  
13:00 Weapons At War  
14:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
15:00 Ancient Aliens  
16:00 Your Bleeped Up Brain  
17:00 The Universe  
18:00 Ultimate Guide To The Presidents  
19:00 Weapons At War  
20:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
21:00 Ancient Aliens  
22:00 D-Day: The Lost Films



00:20 Queen Of The Chase  
01:10 Unlikely Animal Friends  
02:00 Lion Gangland  
02:50 Survive The Wild  
03:45 Safari Brothers  
04:40 My Life Is A Zoo  
05:35 Lion Gangland  
06:30 Survive The Wild  
07:25 Safari Brothers  
08:20 My Life Is A Zoo  
09:15 Python Hunters  
10:10 Wild Argentina  
11:05 1000 Days For The Planet  
12:00 Great White Code Red  
12:55 Secrets Of The King Cobra  
13:50 Wild 24  
14:45 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER  
15:40 Predator Fails  
16:35 Python Hunters  
17:30 Wild Argentina  
18:25 1000 Days For The Planet  
19:20 Dr. K's Exotic Animal ER  
20:10 Predator Fails  
21:00 Python Hunters  
21:50 Wild Argentina  
22:40 1000 Days For The Planet  
23:30 Great White Code Red



00:04 Boj  
00:16 Barney And Friends  
00:44 What's The Big Idea?  
00:50 My Little Pony  
01:13 Qumi Qumi  
01:26 Transformers: Rescue Bots  
01:48 Pound Puppies

02:11 Chuck And Friends  
02:33 Bali  
02:47 Kit 'n' Kate  
03:00 Littlest Pet Shop  
03:22 Heroes Of The City  
03:38 Heroes Of The City  
03:53 My Little Pony  
04:16 What's The Big Idea?  
04:22 Qumi Qumi  
04:35 Barney And Friends  
05:03 Transformers: Rescue Bots  
05:25 Boj  
05:38 Pound Puppies  
06:00 Chuck And Friends  
06:23 Bali  
06:37 Kit 'n' Kate  
06:43 Kit 'n' Kate  
06:50 Thomas And Friends  
07:01 Littlest Pet Shop  
07:24 Heroes Of The City  
07:40 Heroes Of The City  
07:55 Barney And Friends  
08:23 My Little Pony  
08:46 Qumi Qumi  
08:58 Transformers: Rescue Bots  
09:21 Boj  
09:33 Pound Puppies  
09:56 Chuck And Friends  
10:18 Barney And Friends  
10:46 What's The Big Idea?  
10:53 Kit 'n' Kate  
10:59 Bali  
11:13 Thomas And Friends  
11:25 Littlest Pet Shop  
11:47 Heroes Of The City  
12:03 Heroes Of The City  
12:18 My Little Pony  
12:41 What's The Big Idea?  
12:48 Qumi Qumi  
13:00 Transformers: Rescue Bots  
13:23 Barney And Friends  
13:51 Boj  
14:03 Pound Puppies  
14:26 Chuck And Friends  
14:48 Kit 'n' Kate  
14:55 Kit 'n' Kate  
15:01 Thomas And Friends  
15:13 Littlest Pet Shop  
15:35 Heroes Of The City  
15:51 Heroes Of The City  
16:06 My Little Pony  
16:29 What's The Big Idea?  
16:36 Qumi Qumi  
16:48 Transformers: Rescue Bots  
17:11 Boj  
17:23 Kit 'n' Kate  
17:30 Barney And Friends  
17:58 Chuck And Friends  
18:20 Bali  
18:34 Pound Puppies



Word Search Puzzles

Hawaii

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid.  
The remaining 48 letters spell a secret message.

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

ALPHA ARCHISELAGO BEACHES CANOEING COFFEE GRASS SKIRT HAWAIIAN HONOLULU HULA HUMPBACK WHALES ISLANDS  
KAHOOLAWE KAUAI KAYAKING KONA COAST LANAI LUAAU MACADAMIA NUTS MANTA RAYS MAUI MOLOKAI NAPALI COAST  
NETHAU NORTH SHORE OAHU PACIFIC OCEAN PEARL HARBOR PINEAPPLES RESORTS SAND SCUBA DIVING SNORKELING STATE  
SUGARCANE SURFING TOURISTS TROPICAL UKELELE VACATION VOLCANOES WAIKIKI WAIMEA BAY WARM WHALE WATCHING

Yesterday's Solution

Happy New Year

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

APPETIZERS BABIES BALLOONS BANNERS BUFFET CELEBRATE CHAMPAGNE CONFETTI DANCE DAY ONE  
DECORATIONS END OF DECEMBER EVENTS FAMILY FATHER TIME FEAST FESTIVITIES FIREWORKS FIRST OF JANUARY FRIENDS  
HATS HOLIDAY HORNS KISS MIDNIGHT MUSIC NEW YEARS DAY NEW YEARS EVE NOISEMAKERS OCCASION  
PARADES PARTY PUNCH RESOLUTIONS SINGING STREAMERS THIRTY FIRST TIARAS WINE YEAR IN REVIEW

The hidden message is: TIMES SQUARE IN NEW YORK CITY

CROSSWORD 1653



ACROSS

- The basic unit of electric current adopted under the System International d'Unites.
- A language spoken by the Atakapa people of the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
- Type genus of the family Mycidae.
- The cry made by sheep.
- That which weakens or causes a loss of strength.
- A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
- A graphical recording of the cardiac cycle produced by an electrocardiograph.
- A white powder (LiCO3) used in manufacturing glass and ceramics and as a drug.
- The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- A formation of people or things one beside another.
- Flightless New Zealand birds similar to gallinules.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Monaco or its people.
- Desert shrub of Syria and Arabia having small white flowers.
- A resource.
- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- Of or relating to neuroglia.
- The part of a coal seam that is being cut.
- Letters and packages that are transported by aircraft.
- (informal) Roused to anger.
- (trademark) A liquid that temporarily disables a person.
- A genus of delicate ferns belonging to the family Osmundaceae.
- Very small free-living arachnid that is parasitic on animals or plants.
- (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
- Hormone released by the hypothalamus that controls the release of thyroid-stimulating hormone from the anterior pituitary.
- A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school.
- A master's degree in business.
- Music performed for dancing the polka.
- Thick heavy expensive material with a raised pattern.

- Loose-fitting nightclothes worn for sleeping or lounging.
- An island of central Hawaii.
- Strike with disgust or revulsion.
- A small cake leavened with yeast.
- (computer science) A coding system that incorporates extra parity bits in order to detect errors.
- A large family of related languages spoken both in Asia and Africa.
- (British) Your grandmother.
- Any of numerous hairy-bodied insects including social and solitary species.
- A rope for raising or lowering a sail or flag.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- At right angles to the length of a ship or airplane.
- Used of men.
- Not acknowledging the God of Christianity and Judaism and Islam.
- An overwhelming feeling of wonder or admiration.
- A unit of magnetic flux density equal to one weber per square meter.
- Large heavily built goat antelope of eastern Himalayan area.
- A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
- Grown for its thickened edible aromatic root.
- Black tropical American cuckoo.
- 1 species.
- A Buddhist who has attained nirvana.
- A woman of refinement.
- Not only so, but.
- A dull persistent (usually moderately intense) pain.
- Having undesirable or negative qualities.
- Valuable fiber plant of East Indies now widespread in cultivation.
- An organism especially a bacterium that requires air or free oxygen for life.
- (chemistry) P(otential of) H(ydrogen).
- English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
- English monk and scholar (672-735).
- (anatomy) Of or relating to the ilium.
- Deciduous shrub of North America.
- Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
- A member of a European people who occupied Britain and Spain and Gaul in pre-Roman times.
- A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
- 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.
- 30 to 300 kilohertz.
- A unit of electrical resistance equal to the resistance between two points on a conductor when a potential difference of one volt between them produces a current of one ampere.
- A light touch or stroke.
- A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
- A parallelogram with four equal sides.
- (Old Testament) The first of the major Hebrew prophets (8th century BC).
- A doctor's degree in dental medicine.
- Rate of revolution of a motor.
- A genus of Platealea.
- A woody climbing usually tropical plant.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- (Hindu) A manner of sitting (as in the practice of Yoga).
- Any competition.
- Belonging to some prior time.
- A British peer ranking below a Marquess and above a Viscount.
- (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
- A close friend who accompanies his buddies in their activities.
- A unit of pressure.
- The syllable naming the fourth (subdominant) note of the diatonic scale in solmization.
- A yellow trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.

Daily SuDoku

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

MAZE



Yesterday's Solution

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



## UNESCO KEEPS BARRIER REEF OFF 'IN DANGER' LIST

**WARSAW:** UNESCO said yesterday its World Heritage Committee (WHC) had decided not to place the Great Barrier Reef on its list of sites "in danger" despite concern over coral bleaching. A WHC spokesperson said the Committee, which is meeting in Poland, had made the decision late Wednesday and expressed "deep concern" over two years of back-to-back mass coral bleaching which aerial surveys found had affected some two-thirds of the World Heritage-listed site.

The bleaching is the result of warming sea temperatures linked to climate change. In reaching its decision, the Committee noted Australian attempts to preserve the largest living structure on Earth under its Reef 2050 Plan and did not find it necessary to place the site on its danger list, spokeswoman Anika Paliszewska said, despite fears on whether conservation targets can be met.

### Coral predators

WHC lauded "major efforts deployed by all those involved" in the Australian preservation plan but "strongly encourages (Australia) to step up efforts to ensure that medium- and long-term objectives fixed by the Plan are met, which is essential for the global resilience" of the reef. In a draft report to the WHC last month, UNESCO said climate change remained the most significant threat to the future of the coral expanse which stretches for some 2,300 kilometers and criticized Australia for slow progress towards achieving water quality targets.

The reef is notably threatened by a proliferation of crown-of-thorns starfish, a coral predator which has a devastating impact on coral reef ecosystems. A Deloitte Access Economics report commissioned by the Great Barrier Reef Foundation last month stated that the site is an asset worth Aus\$56 billion (\$42 billion) supporting 64,000 jobs and as an ecosystem and economic driver is "too big to fail." That report was the first time the economic and social value of the reef—which is bigger than Britain, Switzerland and the Netherlands combined—had been calculated. As well as the problem posed by starfish, the site is also under pressure from farming run-off and development. The report's lead author, John O'Mahony, said the study made clear the reef was "priceless and irreplaceable" both in terms of its biodiversity and its job-creating potential. — AFP

## DIABETES TAKING GROWING TOLL ON AFRICA: REPORT

**PARIS:** The costs of diabetes in sub-Saharan Africa could double to almost \$60 billion annually just 13 years from now, as obesity fuels an explosion of the disease, a report said yesterday. In 2015, the overall diabetes cost in the region was nearly \$20 billion (18 billion euros), or 1.2 percent of total economic production, according to research published by The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology. This included medication and hospital stays, and loss of labor productivity due to illness or death.

About half of all treatment costs were paid for by patients themselves. "We estimate that the total cost will increase to between \$35.33 billion (1.1 percent of GDP) and \$59.32 billion (1.8 percent of GDP) by 2030," said the report compiled by more than 70 experts from around the world. The rise of Type 2 or adult-onset diabetes in sub-Saharan Africa has been fuelled by growing disposable income to spend on junk food, the shift to a more sedentary urban lifestyle, population growth and population ageing as healthcare improves.

The number of adults in the region classified as overweight increased from 28 million in 1980 to 127 million in 2015. While in 1990, HIV/AIDS, diarrhea, malaria and children's diseases were among the region's leading causes of death, today they are being replaced by heart disease. "Diabetes and its complications have the potential to reverse some of the health gains seen in sub-Saharan Africa in recent years—over-



**NEW DELHI:** This file photo taken on November 8, 2011 shows a medical assistant holding an insulin pen administered to diabetes patients at a private clinic. — AFP

whelming the region's health system and crippling patients' personal finances as they pay for their own healthcare," a statement said.

Today, only about half of diabetes sufferers in the region know they have the disease, and just one in ten receives the necessary drugs. "In its current state, sub-Saharan Africa is not at all prepared for the increasing burden of

diabetes caused by rapid, ongoing societal transitions," said lead author Rifat Atun of Harvard University. Diabetes is a lifelong disorder that causes blood-sugar levels to be too high. Untreated, it can cause blindness, kidney failure, heart attacks and stroke. According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 1.5 million deaths in 2012 were directly caused by diabetes. — AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times  
248 33 199





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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (06/07/2017 TO 12/07/2017)

<b>SHARQIA-1</b>			<b>FANAR-5</b>			<b>AL-KOUT.2</b>		
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	11:30 AM		DESPICABLE ME 3	2:00 PM		KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)		12:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	2:00 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	3:00 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR		2:45 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	4:00 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	5:00 PM		PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales		4:45 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	6:00 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	7:00 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR		7:30 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	8:00 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	9:00 PM		KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)		9:30 PM
THE MUMMY	10:45 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:45 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR		12:05 AM
THE MUMMY	1:00 AM							
<b>SHARQIA-2</b>			<b>MARINA-1</b>			<b>AL-KOUT.3</b>		
DESPICABLE ME 3	11:45 AM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:00 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		12:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:45 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	2:45 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3		3:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	4:30 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	5:30 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3		5:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	7:15 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	7:30 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3		7:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	10:00 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	9:30 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		9:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:45 AM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:30 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		11:45 PM
<b>SHARQIA-3</b>			<b>MARINA-2</b>			<b>AL-KOUT.4</b>		
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:30 AM		DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM		TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI		11:30 AM
KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	2:30 PM		PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	1:30 PM		PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales		1:30 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	5:00 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	4:00 PM		THE MUMMY		4:00 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	7:45 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	6:00 PM		TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI		6:15 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	9:45 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	8:00 PM		TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI		8:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:45 PM		THE MUMMY	10:00 PM		TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI		10:15 PM
			PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	12:15 AM		THE MUMMY		12:15 AM
<b>MUHALAB-1</b>			<b>MARINA-3</b>			<b>BAIRAQ-1</b>		
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	12:00 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	11:30 AM		DESPICABLE ME 3 (3D)		11:30 AM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	2:45 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:30 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		1:30 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	5:15 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	4:15 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D		4:15 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	7:45 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	7:00 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		7:00 PM
THE MUMMY	10:30 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	9:45 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D		9:45 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	12:45 AM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:30 AM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		12:30 AM
<b>MUHALAB-2</b>			<b>AVENUES-1</b>			<b>BAIRAQ-2</b>		
DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM		TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	12:45 PM		PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales		11:30 AM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	1:30 PM		TRANSFORMERS: The Last Knight	3:30 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3		2:00 PM
FRI			TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	6:30 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3		4:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	1:30 PM		TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	9:15 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3		6:00 PM
NO FRI			KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	12:05 AM		DESPICABLE ME 3		8:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	3:30 PM					DESPICABLE ME 3		10:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	5:30 PM		<b>AVENUES-2</b>			PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales		12:05 AM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	7:30 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:45 AM				
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	9:30 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3 -3D-4DX	2:30 PM				
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:30 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D-4DX	4:30 PM				
			DESPICABLE ME 3 -3D-4DX	7:15 PM				
<b>MUHALAB-3</b>			SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D-4DX	9:15 PM		<b>BAIRAQ-3</b>		
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:00 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D-4DX	12:05 AM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR		12:00 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	1:45 PM					TISBAH ALA KHAIR		2:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	3:45 PM		<b>AVENUES-3</b>			KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)		4:00 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	6:30 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	11:30 AM		TUBELIGHT (Hindi)		6:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	9:15 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	1:30 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR		9:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:15 AM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	3:30 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		11:15 PM
			KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	5:30 PM				
<b>FANAR-1</b>			TISBAH ALA KHAIR	8:00 PM		<b>PLAZA</b>		
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	11:30 AM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	10:00 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		4:00 PM
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	1:30 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR	12:15 AM		ROLE MODELS -Malayalam		6:45 PM
THE MUMMY	4:15 PM					SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		9:30 PM
MOM - HINDI	6:30 PM		<b>AVENUES-4</b>					
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: Dead Men Tell No Tales	9:30 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	1:00 PM				
THE MUMMY	12:15 AM		NO THU					
			Special Show" TUBELIGHT (Hindi)"	11:30 AM		<b>LAILA</b>		
<b>FANAR-2</b>			THU			SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		3:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:45 PM		TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	3:00 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3		6:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	3:30 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	5:45 PM		TISBAH ALA KHAIR		8:30 PM
KHAMMIS & JUMMA (Horoob Ejbary)	5:30 PM		NO SUN			SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING		10:30 PM
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	8:15 PM		Special Show"THE MUMMY"	5:30 PM				
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	10:15 PM		SUN			<b>AJIAL.1</b>		
TISBAH ALA KHAIR	12:30 AM		TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	7:45 PM		TUBELIGHT (Hindi)		4:15 PM
			TISBAH ALA KHAIR	10:30 PM		TUBELIGHT (Hindi)		7:00 PM
<b>FANAR-3</b>			SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:30 AM		TUBELIGHT (Hindi)		9:45 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	11:30 AM					<b>AJIAL.2</b>		
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	2:15 PM		<b>AVENUES-5</b>			MOM - HINDI		3:30 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	4:15 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:00 PM		MOM - HINDI		6:30 PM
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	7:00 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D	2:45 PM		MOM - HINDI		9:30 PM
TUBELIGHT (Hindi)	9:00 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	5:30 PM				
TAFASH WE ARB3EEN HARAMI	12:05 AM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING -3D	8:15 PM		<b>AJIAL.3</b>		
			NO THU			DESPICABLE ME 3		3:30 PM
<b>FANAR-4</b>			Special Show"SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING"	8:15 PM		GUEST IIN LONDON -HINDI		5:45 PM
DESPICABLE ME 3	11:45 AM		THU			GUEST IIN LONDON -HINDI		8:30 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	1:45 PM		SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	11:00 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3		11:15 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	4:30 PM							
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	7:15 PM		<b>AVENUES-6</b>			<b>AJIAL.4</b>		
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	10:00 PM		DESPICABLE ME 3	11:30 AM		ROLE MODELS -Malayalam		3:45 PM
SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING	12:45 AM					ROLE MODELS -Malayalam		6:30 PM
						ROLE MODELS -Malayalam		9:30 PM



# Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, JULY 7, 2017

## FRANCE TO END SALES OF PETROL, DIESEL VEHICLES



Japan, EU seal key trade deal in challenge to US

Page 39

Page 38



ALEPPO: A Syrian employee works at a textile factory in Aleppo's Kallase neighborhood on Wednesday. (Inset) A Syrian youth works at a plastic factory in Kallase. —AFP

## ALEPPO INDUSTRIAL ZONES REEMERGE

**ALEPPO:** In a formerly rebel-held district of Syria's Aleppo, factory owner Karam allows himself a small smile as he watches his machines back in action, churning out plastic goods. Six months after Syria's army captured the country's one-time economic powerhouse, dozens of manufacturers with small and medium-sized factories are cautiously returning to the city's east, once a stronghold of opposition fighters. "I had 30 machines, and there are five left. I lost \$1.5 million when my warehouse outside the city was set alight," says Karam in his office in east Aleppo's Al-Kalasseh neighborhood.

Miraculously, his factory building remains intact despite four years of brutal war in Aleppo that ended with the government's recapture of the city in December. Just a month later, he decided to restart operations with his remaining machines, which melt and mold plastic granules into items including baskets and wastebins. "Thank God, my losses were bearable, while others lost everything," the 40-year-old tells AFP.

Syria's conflict has ravaged the country's economy since it began in March 2011 with anti-government protests, before spiralling into a complex war that has killed more than 320,000 people. Al-Kalasseh is one of 17 industrial zones scattered inside and around Aleppo, most of which fell into the hands of rebels when they entered the city in 2012. Even now, the eastern sector of the city remains a moonscape of ruins, with mounds of rubble on streets lined by collapsed buildings with blown-out windows.

### Billions in losses

The city's Chamber of Industry estimates Aleppo's industrial zones lost \$55 billion during the course of the war. Of the 1,326 small and medium-sized manufacturers in Al-Kalasseh, around 200 have resumed operations, according to official figures, though with greatly reduced resources. "I had 70 employees, now I have just five. The young people have left," Karam says, speaking on condition that his family name not be used. His factories used to run 24 hours a day, but the painfully high cost of fuel means he can only run his machines for 11 hours daily. As a result, his monthly production has dwindled from 60,000 items before the conflict to just 6,000 now. "Before (the war) we exported 70 percent of our merchandise to Iraq, Jordan and Kuwait. Today, we export nothing."

Magd Al-Naasani is another of these industrialist "survivors", with a textile factory in Al-Kalasseh where automated weaving machines spin reels of thread. Aleppo has long been famed for its textile production, and the sector represented 60 percent of the city's manufacturing before the war. Like Karam, Naasani has had to adapt to new realities since reopening his factory a few weeks after the government retook the city.

"We used to sell six tonnes (5,400 kg) of fabric a week to factories making clothes. Today we sell 800 kilograms," he says. Naasani has another workshop in the Khan Al-Asas area in western Aleppo province, which

remains under rebel control. "I don't know what has happened to it," he says.

### 'Scrap metal'

Nadim Atrache, president of Al-Kalasseh's industrial committee, describes Aleppo as having been "the mother of the textile industry in the Arab world". "If the state and international organizations provide assistance, 70 percent of the factories in Al-Kalasseh will resurface within a year," he tells AFP. But in Leyramun, an industrial area on the north-western edge of the city, there is less room for optimism.

The area was the scene of fierce fighting between government forces and opposition groups that has left a cemetery of workshops draped with a heavy silence. "In Leyramun, 85 percent of the factories - more than a thousand - have been completely destroyed," says Bassel Nasri, deputy chairman of Aleppo chamber of industry. "You can count on your fingers the number of people who have started renovation work," he says. "The machines here cost tens of thousands of dollars," he adds.

The "Richi and Kaway" textile factory speaks to the breadth of the challenge facing owners. Inside is a desolate sight - dust-covered machines under what is left of a roof smashed in by bombardment. "These are not machines anymore, they are scrap metal," says the factory's chief technician Wahid in despair. "It's enough to make you cry," adds another visiting industrialist. —AFP

## SAUDI ARABIA STARTS LEVYING TAX ON EXPATS

**RIYADH:** Saudi Arabia yesterday said it had begun taxing foreigners working in the private sector as part of fiscal reforms aimed at coping with a drop in oil revenues. Long a tax-free haven for expatriates, the Saudi economy was dealt a serious blow in 2014 when global crude prices plummeted. The kingdom, the world's largest exporter of oil, has since launched an economic diversification plan and slashed state spending in an attempt to cope with a hefty deficit.

On July 1, foreigners working in the private sector began paying a family tax of 100 riyals (\$26.60) per month for every minor or unemployed relative living in the kingdom, the Saudi general directorate of passports said in a statement. An estimated 11 million foreigners work in the Saudi private sector, with 2.3 million of their dependents based in the kingdom, according to the Public Authority for Statistics.

The tax is expected to increase every year until 2020, when it will cap at 4,800 riyals (\$1,280) per dependent annually. Saudi Arabia projects a government budget balance in 2020. Saudi Arabia's ambitious "Vision 2030" plan, unveiled in April 2016, aims to broaden its investment base and diversify the once oil-dependent economy. The plan will also see the sale of nearly five percent of state-owned Aramco - the world's largest oil company reportedly worth between \$2 trillion and \$2.5 trillion. —AFP



## BUSINESS AS USUAL AT CHINA-N KOREA BORDER

**DANDONG, China:** Trucks still line up bumper-to-bumper on the "Sino-Korean Friendship Bridge" to bring goods from North Korea into China even as Beijing faces massive pressure to strangle its Communist ally economically. Some two dozen trucks awaited clearance to enter the border city of Dandong, through which 70 percent of North Korea's trade passes, a day after Pyongyang successfully tested an intercontinental ballistic missile on Tuesday.

While United Nations sanctions do not ban all trade with North Korea, US President Donald Trump has berated China for not doing more to cut off more sources of cash that have kept the reclusive regime afloat. The US administration is now leading a new push at the UN to impose tougher sanctions on Pyongyang after Trump complained that trade between China and North Korea had surged in the first quarter. Traders in

Dandong acknowledge that it is business as usual at the border, with taxi drivers saying they have not seen a dip in the number of North Korean merchants visiting the city in recent days. Gold is among the raw materials from North Korea that are banned under UN sanctions. But the manager of a store selling "North Korean speciality products" on the boardwalk of the Yalu River said her employees have had no trouble going across the border to purchase gold and silver in recent months.

The manager, who refused to give her name, said the raw material is sent to factories in the southern city of Guangzhou, where it is made into rings and bracelets. "It's cheaper to buy from North Korea, so the prices we offer shoppers are cheaper than what they can normally find in China," she said. "We operate as normal. We have been working with the same North Korean suppliers for years."

A clerk in another gift shop down the street, which employs a similar business model for its gold jewelry, said she does not know about any disruptions. "Most of our products are actually made in China, but items such as these traditional dresses are made by North Korean workers who have come over to Dandong to work in textile factories," said the Chinese clerk, surnamed Yan.

Trump complained on Wednesday that trade between China and North Korea grew almost 40 percent in the first quarter. Official Chinese customs data shows a 37.4 percent rise in yuan terms and 30.6 percent in US dollars. But China decided to stop buying North Korean coal in February and total imports of all goods from the North have steadily dropped every month from \$207 million in January to \$99 million in April. —AFP



**BRUSSELS:** European Council President Donald Tusk (left), Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (center) and President of European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker pose for a picture at the European Council yesterday. —AFP

## JAPAN, EU SEAL TRADE DEAL LANDMARK AGREEMENT CHALLENGE TO TRUMP

**BRUSSELS:** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and top EU officials agreed yesterday to the broad outline of a landmark trade deal, presented as a direct challenge to the protectionism championed by US President Donald Trump. The breakthrough capped four years of talks and came on the eve of a G20 meeting in Germany at which Trump is expected to defend his "America First" stance on world trade.

"Today we agreed in principle on an Economic Partnership Agreement (with Japan), the impact of which goes far beyond our shores," European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker said at a joint press conference with Abe and EU President Donald Tusk in Brussels. The EU and Japanese economies combined account for more than a quarter of global output, making the deal one of the biggest trade pacts ever. "We were able to demonstrate a strong political will so that the EU and Japan take the lead on free trade," Abe said just hours before he was due to meet Trump at the G20 in Hamburg.

### Cars for cheese

With the deal, the EU is seeking access to one of the world's richest markets, while Japan hopes to jump-start an economy that has struggled to find solid growth for more than a decade. Japan is also hoping to seize an opportunity after the failure of the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), torpedoed in January by Trump. The "political agreement" on the trade deal covers some of the accord's toughest aspects but leaves aside details that could still prove difficult.

At the heart of the deal is an agreement for the EU to open its market to the world-leading Japanese auto industry, with Tokyo in return scrapping barriers to EU farming products,

especially dairy. EU officials insist that the deal will be a major boon for European farmers who would gain access to a huge market that appreciates European products.

### 'Corporate protectionism'

Left untouched for now is the issue of controversial investment courts which have stoked opposition to trade deals in the EU nations, including Germany and France. "After hard negotiations, the EU and Japan are sending a very positive signal to the world," said Markus J Beyrer, Director General of BusinessEurope, a Brussels-based lobby. "We are asking the G20 to take action against protectionism and this is a concrete example of how this could be done," he added.

Anti-free trade activists meanwhile furiously criticized the mooted deal, calling it a dangerous sop to multinationals. "This trade deal, and others like it, smack of corporate protectionism at the expense of democracy and the environment," Greenpeace trade campaigner Kees Kodde. Last year, the EU's giant CETA trade deal with Canada nearly sank on such concerns when the small Belgian region of Wallonia threatened to veto it, before eventually relenting.

Most opposition is centered on the investment courts, a controversial measure designed to resolve commercial disputes. They have come under fierce opposition in Europe and the EU is trying - so far unsuccessfully - to persuade partners to adopt a new system staffed by public officials. Divisions within the EU over the issue could prove significant when the EU-Japan deal faces ratification in the bloc's more than 30 regional and national parliaments. EU officials said they hoped to implement the deal in Jan 2019. —AFP

## QATAR AIRWAYS JOINS MIDEAST RIVALS IN LIFTING LAPTOP BAN

**DUBLIN/DUBAI:** Qatar Airways said yesterday passengers travelling to the United States can now carry their laptops and other large electronics on board, ending a three month in-cabin ban on devices for the Doha-based airline. Qatar Airways joins Emirates, Turkish Airlines and Etihad Airways, which have also announced this week a lifting of the ban on their US flights.

In March, the United States imposed the ban on direct flights originating at 10 airports in eight countries - Egypt, Morocco, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and Turkey - to address fears that bombs could be concealed in electronic devices taken aboard aircraft. Qatar Airways said in a statement on Thursday the ban had been lifted after the airline and its hub airport Hamad International met with new U.S. security requirements.

The United States announced on June 29 enhanced security measures for flights to the country which require additional time to screen passengers and personal electronic devices for possible explosives. Qatar Airways Chief Executive Akbar al-Baker told reporters in Dublin the airline was found to be in compliance with the "new draconian requirements" after an audit over the previous two days.

US transport officials were due to visit Qatar Airways, Emirates and Turkish Airlines on July 5 to check the latest measures were in place, a spokesman for the US Transportation Security Administration (TSA) told Reuters on Wednesday. TSA said on Twitter yesterday the restrictions on Qatar Airways and Hamad International had been lifted. Airlines affected by the ban have complained that demand on US flights had been weakened by restrictions imposed by President Donald Trump's administration.

Middle East carriers saw demand rise by 3.7 percent in May compared with a year earlier, close to an eight-year low, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said yesterday. IATA said the weaker growth was reflective of the laptop ban on US-bound flights and uncertainty over President Trump's proposed travel bans. The new US security measures, which take effect within three weeks of the announcement, will affect around 325,000 passengers a day travelling on 180 airlines from 280 airports around the world, according to the US Department of Homeland Security.

Airlines that fail to meet the new security requirements could still face in-cabin restrictions on electronic devices. Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia) has said it expects the ban to be lifted on flights from Jeddah and Riyadh by July 19. Royal Air Maroc also believes it can have the ban lifted for flights out of Casablanca's Mohammed V International Airport by July 19, a senior official from the state-owned airline told Reuters. Other airlines affected by the ban include Royal Jordanian, Kuwait Airways and EgyptAir. —Reuters



## TESLA MODEL S FALLS SHORT IN CRASH TEST AGAIN

**WASHINGTON:** In another setback for the high-flying electric carmaker, Tesla's Model S once again fell short of the top rating in a key crash test, an independent testing agency said yesterday. On the eve of seeing its first mass-market Model 3 roll off the assembly line, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety said that despite changes made to the vehicles produced after January, the Model S was again only able to attain an acceptable rating in the small-overlap test conducted in February. That test mimics a car hitting a tree or a pole.

As a result, Tesla failed to achieve the IIHS Top Safety Pick rating, which requires a "good" rating in all five of its crash test scenarios. Carmakers often request a retest if they fall short of the highest rating the first time. IIHS said the Model S in both tests fell short of the top rating because the safety belt did not sufficiently restrain the driver in the crash. "The main problem with the performance of the Model S was that the safety belt let the dummy's torso move too far forward, allowing the dummy's head to strike the steering wheel hard through the airbag," the statement said. The vehicle also had some structural issues in the second crash test, IIHS said.

A Tesla spokesperson defended the vehicle's safety rating, noting it had achieved the

highest rating in the other four IIHS crash categories, and testing by the government's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) gave the car the top rating across the board. However, NHTSA does different tests than the IIHS and does not have a comparable small overlap test. IIHS, which is funded by the insurance industry, and NHTSA, a federal agency, are the only organizations in the United States that conduct crash tests.

The government tests "found Model S and Model X to be the two cars with the lowest probability of injury of any cars that it has ever tested, making them the safest cars in history," the spokesperson said in a statement, adding that insurance companies charge five percent less to insure Tesla vehicles compared to comparable models. Tesla in April recalled 53,000 vehicles to address a manufacturing defect that could prevent the parking brake from releasing, but there were no reports of injuries or accidents related to the issue.

The company also was investigated for a fatal crash in May 2016 involving a driver of a Model S using the Tesla's autopilot feature. But investigators found the driver was warned repeatedly for not keeping his hands on the steering wheel, and no safety defect



**LAS VEGAS:** This file photo taken on Jan 3, 2017 shows attendees watching a video of the FF91 electric vehicle racing a Tesla Model S at Faraday Future's press conference at the 2017 Consumer Electronics Show (CES2017). —AFP

was found. The company's share price slumped 7.2 percent Wednesday after Goldman Sachs slashed its price target on the carmaker due to the expected slowdown in

deliveries, despite the announcement Monday that production of the \$35,000 Model 3 would ramp up quickly, with the first deliveries July 28. —AFP

## US CARS A TOUGH SELL IN S KOREA

**SEOUL:** US auto imports from the likes of General Motors and Ford Motor must become more chic, affordable or fuel-efficient to reap the rewards of US President Donald Trump's attempts to renegotiate a trade deal with key ally South Korea, officials and industry experts in Seoul say. Meeting South Korean President Moon Jae-in last week in Washington, Trump said the United States would do more to address trade imbalances with South Korea and create a level playing ground for US businesses, especially carmakers, in the world's 11th largest auto market by sales.

While imports from automakers including Ford, Chrysler and GM more than doubled last year largely thanks to free trade deal which took effect in 2012, sales account for just 1 percent of a market dominated by more affordable models from local giants Hyundai Motor Co and affiliate Kia Motors Corp. Imports make up just 15 percent of the overall Korean auto market, and are mainly more luxurious models from German automakers BMW and Daimler AG's Mercedes-Benz, which also benefit from a trade deal with the European Union.

"Addressing non-tariff barriers would not fundamentally raise the competitiveness of US cars," a senior Korean government official told Reuters, declining to be identified because of the sensitivity of the subject. "What we really want to say to the United States is: make good cars, make cars that Korean consumers like."

### Taste Barrier

In Korea, US imports are seen as lagging German brands in brand image, sophistication and fuel economy, industry experts say. US imports do have a competitive advantage in electric cars: Tesla Motors' electric vehicles are seen as both environmentally friendly and trendy, while GM has launched a long-range Bolt EV. US Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross had cited a quota in the current trade deal as an obstacle to boosting imports.

The quota allows US automakers to bring in each year 25,000 vehicles that meet US, not necessarily Korean, safety standards. Should GM, for example, decide to bring in more than its quota of one model - the Impala sedans - it would cost up to \$75 million to modify the cars to meet Korean safety standards, the company told its local labor union. Asked about non-tariff barriers, a spokesman at GM's Korean unit said removing them could expand the range of models the company can bring in from the United States. —Reuters

## FRANCE TO END SALES OF PETROL, DIESEL VEHICLES

### PARIS PLANS TO ATTAIN TARGET BY 2040

**PARIS:** France will end sales of petrol and diesel vehicles by 2040 as part of an ambitious plan to meet its targets under the Paris climate accord, new Ecology Minister Nicolas Hulot announced yesterday. "We are announcing an end to the sale of petrol and diesel cars by 2040," Hulot said, calling it a "veritable revolution". Hulot acknowledged that reaching the goal would be "tough", particularly for automakers, but said that French carmakers Peugeot-Citroen and Renault were well equipped to make the switch. France is the biggest manufacturer of electric cars sold in Europe, with the Renault Zoe far outselling other models in 2016.

On Wednesday, Volvo said it planned to phase out production of petrol-only cars from 2019, with all new models to be either electric or hybrids. The Chinese-owned group is the first major manufacturer to electrify all of its models. Hulot cited Volvo as an example in making his surprise announcement, part of his plan to make France "carbon neutral" by 2050.

### 'Public health' matter

Hulot, a veteran environmental campaigner, was among several political newcomers to whom President Emmanuel Macron gave top jobs in his government. His nomination was seen as a statement of Macron's commitment to environmental issues. Last month, the 39-year-old centrist hit back at US President Donald Trump's announcement that he would pull out of the 2015 Paris accord with a video vowing to "make our planet great again" - a play on Trump's campaign pledge to "make America great again" that went viral on social media. Several countries have said they want to dramatically reduce the amount of polluting petrol and diesel cars on their roads but few have made firm commitments. India has said it wants all cars sold there to be electric-powered by 2030. In Europe, Norway aims to end sales of



**PARIS:** French Minister of Ecological and Inclusive Transition Nicolas Hulot delivers a speech to present his plan on climate yesterday. —AFP

petrol and diesel cars by 2025 and Germany wants to put one million electric cars on the road by 2020. Welcoming Hulot's announcement World Wildlife France chief Pascal Canfin told France Info radio: "We have every interest in being among the leaders. "The sooner we invest, the better we will be positioned on the industrial and job fronts." Motorists still continue to opt overwhelmingly for petrol and diesel models, usually substantially cheaper. In 2016, hybrid and electric cars accounted for only 3.6 percent of new cars registered in Western Europe, according to the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA). The greatest spurt in sales was for non-rechargeable hybrids, which rose 27.3 percent compared to 2015. Electric car registrations

jumped by seven percent last year while plug-in hybrids grew by only 3.9 percent. Hulot said that weaning France off conventional cars was a matter of "public health".

Paris, Lyon, Grenoble and other French cities have a chronic smog problem. Analysts are split on how quickly electric vehicles will displace those powered by internal combustion engines. The 29-nation International Energy Agency (IEA), formed after the 1973 oil crisis, sees relatively modest growth, resulting in an eight percent market share - about 150 million vehicles - by 2040. Private forecaster Bloomberg New Energy Finance's estimates, by contrast, predicts a 22-percent market share for electric vehicles by 2035. China - the largest market in the world for electric vehicles - sold more than half-a-million in 2016. —AFP



## JAPAN LAW BIG STEP TOWARDS COMMERCIAL WHALING

**TOKYO:** A recent law promoting whaling allows Japan to take a key step towards resuming commercial hunting of the giant mammals that are “a great source of food,” officials said yesterday. Japan defies international protests to carry out what it calls scientific research whaling, having repeatedly said its ultimate goal is to whale commercially again. In the 2016-2017 season, its fleet took 333 minke whales in the Antarctic.

The new law, passed in June, will help enshrine as a “national responsibility” an activity that was previously just a tacit policy, said Shigeki Takaya, direc-

tor of the Whaling Affairs Office at Japan’s Fisheries Agency. “While the government has given its support to the implementation of scientific research into whales, it is heartening to see that the law clarifies its position even further,” Takaya told a news conference.

In 2014, the International Court of Justice ruled that Japan should halt Antarctic whaling. Japan suspended its hunt for one season, to re-tool its whaling program with measures such as cutting the number of whales and species targeted, but resumed hunting in the

2015-2016 season. Japan has long maintained that most whale species are not endangered and that eating whale is part of its culture. It began scientific whaling in 1987, a year after an international whaling moratorium began. The meat ends up on store shelves, even though most Japanese no longer eat it.

“This resource exists,” said Kiyoshi Ejima, a member of the upper house of parliament from Shimonoseki, a whaling port in western Japan that forms part of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s electoral district. “There are minke whales down in the Antarctic that are of

body weight of about 5,000 kilograms to 10,000 kg,” added Ejima, one of the lawmakers behind the bill. “These are a great source of food and my position is that we should harness this.”

But activist Nanami Kurasawa, from the Dolphin and Whale Action Network, said the law, which sped through parliament in barely a week, was enacted without sufficient debate or attention and actually proves that whaling is unsustainable. “It’s clear that this industry cannot stand on its own two feet without government subsidy,” she told the news conference. —Reuters



**CARACAS:** A demonstrator gets ready to throw a gasoline bomb during clashes with security forces on July 4, 2017. —AP

## VENEZUELA ENTREPRENEURS ADAPT TO NATION IN CRISIS

### YOUNG BUSINESSPEOPLE FIND OPPORTUNITIES

**CARACAS:** Unfazed by Venezuela’s political unrest, devastated economy and ranking as one of the world’s worst places to do business, two years ago Johel Fernandez started making sweatshirts emblazoned with icons of Caracas for online customers overseas. Fernandez, 22, is part of a small group of young business people finding opportunities in Venezuela’s crisis, building companies in their neighborhoods at a time when many peers are seeking their fortunes abroad.

“Right now there is a movement of entrepreneurs who have decided ‘we are not going anywhere.’ Venezuela will always be our center of operations,” said Fernandez, who markets his products with the slogan “Made with love in Caracas.” Working out of a cramped basement workshop, Fernandez’s company Simple Clothing is tiny, selling a few dozen articles a month to the United States, Spain and Britain. But the foreign currency earned goes a long way in a country where many professionals make less than \$40 a month.

Triple digit inflation, a recession the central bank says shrank the economy almost a fifth last year and chronic shortages mean socialist-run Venezuela is not the first place that springs to mind to start a company. The World Bank lists it the fourth-hardest place to do business among 190 countries, ranked between Libya and war-ravaged South Sudan. It takes an average of 230 days to open a Venezuelan business, and just six in neighboring Colombia. Fernandez’s designs of the capital’s metro map, its shanty towns and the country’s favourite candy brands are popular among the growing diaspora of

Venezuelans. He has opened his production to other designers to help them earn hard currency and ride out the recession. Like other young businessmen he sees running a business as a way of helping Venezuela survive its current decline.

There are even some upsides in the topsy-turvy economy. Simple Clothing’s individualized export business is viable in part because distortions created by multiple currency and price controls make the cost of sending a package abroad much lower than in nearby countries. “Shipping from Venezuela is currently super cheap, and it is something we can offer our clients,” said Fernandez. “We can send it at no extra cost to them.”

For example, to send a small package to Spain from Venezuela by Fedex costs just \$1.50 at Venezuela’s widely used black market rate. It would cost \$56 to send the same package from Mexico, more than the \$36 Fernandez sells his sweatshirts for. In bolivars, his clothes are unaffordable for most Venezuelans at home. Fifteen seamstresses work by contract for specific orders, giving the company flexibility to adapt to occasional scarcity of the right cloth, as well as riots that force them to shutter up several times a week. The flexible hours also give workers time to scour supermarkets for food.

What Fernandez calls “the Venezuelan factor” means orders are occasionally late. One of the couriers Fernandez uses, DHL, in June postponed flights to and from Venezuela indefinitely. DHL did not give a reason, but several airlines have stopped flying to Venezuela because they are unable to repatriate earnings. —Reuters

## INDIA’S NEW TAX HURTS SMALL FIRMS, INFORMAL WORKERS

**MUMBAI:** India’s biggest ever tax reform excludes tens of thousands of small businesses and millions of workers, risking an increase in unemployment and social unrest, analysts say. The goods and services tax, the biggest tax reform in the 70 years since independence, replaces more than a dozen federal and state levies. Officials say it will bring millions of businesses into the tax net, boosting government revenues.

But critics say the tax is too complex and the cost of compliance too high. The new tax requires firms to upload their invoices to a portal that will match them with those of their suppliers or vendors. Companies that do not register for a tax number risk losing customers. “Smaller, unregistered companies are being treated as untouchables,” said Vinod Shetty, a rights lawyer in Mumbai. “Not all companies can afford to register and invest in compliance. As a result, you will see small businesses shutting down and laying off workers.”

India’s informal sector employs an estimated nine out of 10 workers. It makes up about half the textile industry and 70 percent of footwear and jewellery manufacturers. Any firm with an annual turnover of more than 2 million rupees (\$31,000) has to register for the goods and services tax, which will require an overhaul of the firm’s accounting systems and an investment in technology. For small companies operating on wafer-thin margins, this is an expensive proposition.

“The entire system only favors registered companies. Even firms not required to register will suffer, as other firms may not want to do business with them,” Shetty said. “It is really targeting a class of business owners who are not very wealthy and are likely religious minorities or of lower caste, who now stand to lose their livelihoods.”

According to the government, the new tax makes doing business easier, and companies will gain substantial savings. Expanding the tax base will bolster public finances and boost welfare spending, officials say. For businesses, the benefits outweigh any initial costs and hiccups, said an industry representative. “Small businesses face an existential question: Comply and thrive, or not comply and die,” said Anil Bhardwaj, secretary general of the Federation of Indian Micro and Small and Medium Enterprises lobbying group. “Inevitably, a few firms will lose out.”

The informal sector employs about 400 million workers and generates more than half India’s gross domestic product. Those losing their jobs may have a hard time finding employment, as too few jobs are being created despite an expanding economy. Only about 200,000 jobs were created in eight of India’s most labor-intensive sectors in the last two years - a fifth of the jobs created in the previous two-year period, data showed.

Meanwhile, the government has diluted its goal of training 500 million people in new skills by 2022. “Imagine that millions of workers laid off because of GST (goods and services tax) end up on the street with no jobs,” Shetty said. “It will lead to an increase in social unrest unless the government makes GST more inclusive.” —Reuters



## CHINA REGULATES BIKE-SHARING AS COMPLAINTS SOAR

**SHANGHAI:** Authorities in Shanghai and Tianjin will impose regulations on the rapidly growing bike-sharing sector following mounting complaints over an accumulation of millions of the rentable two-wheelers on city streets, state media reported. The two metropolises have drafted rules that will require operators "to adhere to standards on production, operation and maintenance" of bicycles, Xinhua news agency said in a report late yesterday.

The regulations, to take effect October 1, will mandate a service life of three years for bikes and require companies to hire at least one maintenance employee for every 200 bicycles, it said. It added that there were now more than 10 million such bikes on the streets of Chinese cities, operated by more than 30 companies. China's bike-sharing sector has exploded from virtually nothing about a year ago into a transport phenomenon in major cities.

Market entrants have flooded streets with the GPS-enabled bikes that users can unlock via a smartphone app,

use as long as they want, and then leave anywhere. China's government has thrown its support behind the concept as a cheap, convenient, and green transport option, and leaders Ofo and Mobike have attracted hundreds of millions of dollars in venture capital. Much of this has been poured into putting more bikes on streets in a race for market share.

But concerns have mounted over haphazardly parked bikes cluttering sidewalks, too many operators piling in with little business planning, and customer payment disputes. Earlier this week, China's central government issued broad guidelines for the sector designed to encourage "prudent" growth of the sector and "orderly" competition. There were nearly 19 million users of shared bikes as of the end of 2016, Xinhua said, citing China's E-commerce Research Center.

But it quoted a Shanghai consumer affairs official saying there were more than 2,600 complaints about shared



**HANGZHOU, China:** This picture taken on June 28, 2017, shows an aerial view of shared bicycles abandoned in a field in Zhejiang province. — AFP

bikes in the city in the first four months of this year, nine times more than the same period in 2016. The report also quoted officials saying Shanghai had

more than a million such shared bikes in operation, twice what the city needs, but far too few maintenance personnel to deal with broken-down bicycles. — AFP

## US PRIVATE PAYROLLS GROWTH SLOWS IN JUNE, JOBLESS CLAIMS RISE

**WASHINGTON:** US private employers hired fewer workers than expected in June and applications for unemployment benefits last week increased for a third straight week, pointing to some loss of momentum in job growth as the labor market nears full employment. Those signs were also evident in another report yesterday, showing growth in services industry employment slowing in June even as the sector, which accounts for more than two-thirds of the US economy, continued to expand at a healthy clip.

The moderation in job gains likely reflects difficulties by employers finding suitable workers amid an unemployment rate that is at a 16-year low. Even so, the labor market remains strong and tightening conditions could allow the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates again later this year. "The slowdown in hiring, in our view, is a function of the difficulty in hiring workers," said John Ryding, chief economist at RDQ Economics in New York. "Companies remain very reluctant to lay off workers and this is a continued sign of the tightness of the labor market."

The ADP National Employment Report showed private sector payrolls increased by 158,000 jobs last month, stepping down from the 230,000 positions created in May and below economists' expectations for a gain of 185,000. The report, jointly developed with Moody's Analytics, came ahead of the Labor Department's more comprehensive nonfarm payrolls report on Friday, which includes both public and private-sector employment.

While the ADP report has a spotty record predicting nonfarm payrolls, June's modest job gains together with the modest rise in first-time applications for jobless benefits and cooling services sector employment pose a downside risk to the government's June jobs report. According to a Reuters survey of economists, nonfarm payrolls likely increased by 179,000 last month after May's 138,000 gain. The unemployment rate is forecast unchanged at 4.3 percent.

The dollar was trading lower against a basket of currencies on the data. Prices for US Treasuries also fell as did stocks on Wall Street. In a separate report, the Labor Department said initial claims for state unemployment benefits increased 4,000 to a seasonally adjusted 248,000 for the week ended July 1. It was the third straight weekly increase in claims. The rise in claims last week likely reflected automakers' closing of assembly plants for the annual summer retooling. Still, it was the 122nd straight week that claims remained below 300,000, a threshold associated with a healthy labor market. That is the longest such stretch since 1970, when the labor market was smaller. The labor market is near full employment, with the jobless rate at a 16-year low. — Reuters

## NEED A BALL OR UMBRELLA? IN CHINA THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT 'SHARING ECONOMY' BOOMING

**SHANGHAI:** Basketballs, electric scooters and rainbow-colored umbrellas - nothing seems out of bounds in China's booming "sharing economy". Where once Chinese consumers would look to shell out on items such as luxury handbags or cars, now they can rent them for short periods taking advantage of the explosion of mobile payment technology. As ever with China, the numbers are mind-boggling: the shared economy more than doubled to 3.45 trillion yuan (\$505 billion) last year from a year earlier, according to official figures which projected average annual growth of 40 percent in the years ahead.

But experts warn that China, which has rapidly become a world leader in the concept, is oversharing, and some start-ups are going bust. The fiercely competitive bike-sharing craze in China's major cities claimed what was widely reported as its first victim in June when Wukong Bike reached the end of the road with 90 percent of its bikes missing and presumed stolen.

The government has supported the sharing industry as a new growth driver as the overall economy slows, but there are signs Beijing is becoming wary and on Monday it asked local governments to come up with new industry regulations. In Shanghai, where bicycles of all colors threaten to take over the streets, Claire Victoria Pan said she uses a gamut of sharing services for bikes, cars, Airbnb and co-working spaces. "These sharing tools make life very convenient," said Pan, from Hong Kong but living in Shanghai, where she founded a wine-trading company. "There is oversharing, but it is just temporary. When a new thing appears it will expand quickly so that there is excess supply. "But after a period of time people find that demand is limited, then the supply will naturally reduce."



**SHANGHAI:** A woman scans a QR code on a shared battery station inside a shop on Wednesday. — AFP

### Disappearing bikes

Backed by a torrent of venture capital, the boom has spawned some novel ideas, including from an entrepreneur in eastern China's Zhejiang province offering basketballs for hire to save people having to carry them to games. Users can unlock a court-side locker by scanning a code with their smartphone and take the balls for 1.5 yuan (20 US cents) for 30 minutes. A camera films the transaction to discourage them running off with the balls.

Spare rooms, washing machines, umbrellas and mobile-phone charging are all up for rent as China becomes the home of the sharing economy. Smartphone apps such as Alipay and WeChat have enabled the boom by allowing customers to buy products or transfer money by scanning QR codes. Bike-sharing, in which users can pick up bicycles on the street and leave them anywhere when finished, has been a standout success since being introduced

in the last two years and latest official figures say there are now 10 million such bikes ploughing the streets of China.

But with complaints soaring about bikes parked haphazardly and clogging up pavements, a backlash has begun. In an attempt to get a grip on the runaway industry, authorities in Shanghai and Tianjin will impose regulations from October 1 mandating a bicycle service life of three years and requiring companies to hire at least one maintenance employee for every 200 bicycles, state news agency Xinhua said. Wukong Bike, in the southwestern megacity of Chongqing, folded within just a few months and this week Beijing-based 3Vbike packed it in after most of its bikes also went AWOL.

These won't be the last casualties, said Christopher Balding, associate professor at Peking University HSBC Business School in the southern city of Shenzhen. — AFP



# CUBS RALLY FOR 7-3 WIN OVER TAMPA BAY



**CHICAGO:** Chicago Cubs Willson Contreras, left, is tagged out at second base by Tampa Bay Rays shortstop Tim Beckham (1) as second base umpire Mark Carlson makes the call during the eighth inning. — AP

**CHICAGO:** Jon Jay connected for his third career pinch-hit homer and Ian Happ hit a tiebreaking, two-run single an inning later, helping the Chicago Cubs rally for a 7-3 victory over the Tampa Bay Rays on Wednesday. The Cubs appeared to be headed for their sixth loss in eight games before Jay drove a 1-2 pitch from Erasmo Ramirez (4-3) over the wall in left-center for a tying three-run shot with two outs in the sixth. Jay then popped out of the dugout for a curtain call, obliging the crowd of 39,855 on a picturesque day at Wrigley Field. Happ got his big hit in the seventh, driving in Kris Bryant and Anthony Rizzo with a bouncer up the middle against Tampa Bay's drawn-in infield. Pedro Strop (3-2) pitched a scoreless seventh for the win. Carl Edwards Jr. and Koji Uehara worked the eighth, and All-Star Wade Davis got three outs.

## RANGERS 8, RED SOX 2

Andrew Cashner held a hot Boston lineup hitless into the sixth inning. Rougned Odor hit an early two-run homer and Texas ended the longest winning streak in the majors at six games with a rain-delayed victory over the Red Sox. Cashner (4-7) retired 10 straight batters before first baseman Pete Kozma's error on a dropped throw kept the sixth going. The next batter, Xander Bogaerts, ended the no-hit bid with a two-run homer. The right-hander allowed three hits, three walks and two unearned runs with four strikeouts in seven innings. Boston, which had at least 10 hits and six runs in every game during the winning streak, missed a chance to be the first team to sweep a season series of more than three games against the Rangers since they moved to Texas in 1972. The Red Sox won the first five meetings this year. After a delay of nearly 90 minutes to start the game, Odor's 16th homer put Texas ahead 2-0 in the second. Carlos Gomez had a solo shot in the third. Odor scored three times before leaving with a bruised left hand after the fifth inning, when he was hit by a pitch. Doug Fister (0-2) gave up six runs - four earned - over 3 2/3 innings in his third start since Boston claimed him off waivers from the Angels.

## DODGERS 1, DIAMONDBACKS 0

Alex Wood pitched three-hit ball over seven innings to start the season 10-0 and NL West-leading Los Angeles beat second-place Arizona. Wood became the first Dodgers starter to reach 10-0 since Don Newcombe in 1955, when the Brooklyn Dodgers won the first of the franchise's six World Series championships. The 26-year-old left-hander hasn't lost since May 30, 2016 - a span of 13 starts. Wood struck out 10 and walked two. Kenley Jansen pitched the ninth for his 20th save in as many chances. He put the potential tying run on with a two-out single to Brandon Drury before striking out Chris Herrmann to end the game. Arizona's Zack Godley (3-3) gave up one run and three hits in 5 2/3 innings. Yasmani Grandal's RBI double to deep center field in the second scored Chris Taylor from first base.

## ROCKIES 5, REDS 3

Jon Gray hit his first career homer an estimated 467 feet - the farthest by any Rockies player this season - and pitched effectively into the sixth inning as Colorado beat Cincinnati on a sweltering night. Pat

Valaika had a career-high three hits, including a two-run homer and a run-scoring single with two outs in the eighth. Gray's two-run drive in the second was the longest among pitchers since MLB's Statcast began tracking distances in 2015. Gray (2-0) also was solid on the mound, going 5 2/3 innings and allowing three runs, two earned, in his second start since a broken bone in his left foot sidelined him for two months. Greg Holland threw a shaky ninth for his 28th save to help the slumping Rockies win for the third time in 14 games. The game-time temperature of 97 degrees tied for the second-hottest home contest in Rockies history. Scott Feldman (7-6) gave up four runs in five innings.

## BLUE JAYS 7, YANKEES 6

Dellin Betances forced in the go-ahead run with four walks in the eighth inning, and Toronto beat New York after wasting a five-run lead. Justin Smoak and Kendrys Morales hit back-to-back home runs in the third off Michael Pineda, who also allowed Kevin Pillar's leadoff homer in the fourth. Russell Martin tied the score at 6 with a seventh-inning homer against Chad Green, then walked to drive in the go-ahead run in the eighth against Betances (3-4). Aaron Judge hit his major league-leading 29th home run, tying Joe DiMaggio's Yankees rookie record set in 1936, and Ji-Man Choi homered in his Yankees debut. Toronto took two of three from New York, which is 0-6-1 in its last seven series. Leading the AL East by four games on June 13 with a 38-23 record, the Yankees have lost 16 of their last 22. Danny Barnes (2-2) threw 1 2/3 innings and Roberto Osuna pitched the ninth to convert his 20th consecutive save chance and 21st overall this season. Brett Gardner singled with two outs, and Osuna struck out Judge.

## BREWERS 4, ORIOLES 0

Matt Garza pitched into the seventh inning and Keon Broxton hit a two-run homer to lift Milwaukee to a three-game sweep of Baltimore. Garza allowed five hits and two walks with four strikeouts over 6 1/3 innings for his first scoreless outing of the season. Oliver Drake, Jared Hughes and Corey Knebel completed the shutout with 2 2/3 innings. Garza (4-4) ran into trouble in the second inning when the Orioles loaded the bases with no outs. The veteran right-hander escaped by striking out Ruben Tejada and pitcher Jayson Aquino (1-2) before getting Seth Smith to fly out to right field.

## ASTROS 10, BRAVES 4

George Springer drove in the go-ahead run in the seventh inning, Josh Reddick and Marwin Gonzalez each had three RBIs and streaking Houston beat Atlanta. Houston has won four straight and 12 of 15 to improve to 58-27 overall, best in the majors. The first three batters - Springer, Jose Altuve and Reddick - went 8 for 15 with six RBIs in this one and hit a combined .581 in the two-game series with 15 RBIs in 31 at-bats. Norichika Aoki doubled to begin the three-run seventh and chase Braves starter Jaime Garcia (2-7). Springer followed with a single, Altuve with a double and Gonzalez with a single to make it 7-4. Chris Devenski (6-3) earned the win after walking one and striking out two in 1 1/3 innings.

## ROYALS 9, MARINERS 6

Salvador Perez hit a two-run homer in the 10th, Alex Gordon added a two-out RBI single later in the inning and Kansas City completed a three-game sweep with a win over Seattle. Perez drove the second pitch from reliever James Pazos (2-2) out to right field for his 17th homer. It was the third home run of the game for Kansas City, adding to earlier two-run shots by Mike Moustakas and Lorenzo Cain. Mike Minor (5-1) pitched the ninth to get the victory and Kelvin Herrera threw the 10th for his 19th save. Minor had a scare when Mike Zunino led off the ninth with a flyball to deep left field that Gordon caught one step in front of the wall. Kansas City won for the sixth time in seven games and handed Seattle its seventh straight loss at home.

## PIRATES 5, PHILLIES 2

Gerrit Cole pitched six strong innings and drove in his first runs of the season with a tiebreaking two-run single to lead Pittsburgh over Philadelphia. Cole (7-7) rebounded from a poor outing Friday against San Francisco and a shaky first inning against the Phillies, allowing two runs and seven hits with eight strikeouts and one walk. The right-hander struck out the side in his final inning. Felipe Rivero, pitching on his 26th birthday, recorded his fifth save by striking out the side in a scoreless ninth. Cole's big hit came in the Pirates' four-run fourth inning, when Pittsburgh also got some help from Ben Lively (1-4).

## ATHLETICS 7, WHITE SOX 4

OAKLAND, California (AP) - Sonny Gray pitched six mostly sharp innings for Oakland to beat Chicago for the second time in two weeks. Jed Lowrie had three hits and two RBIs, Bruce Maxwell doubled in two runs and Jaycob Brugman homered to help the A's to their second straight home win following eight consecutive losses at the Coliseum. Gray (4-4) allowed a two-run homer to Matt Davidson, the only blemish during an otherwise strong outing. Todd Frazier also homered for the White Sox, a two-run shot in the ninth. White Sox starter Mike Pelfrey (3-7) retired 10 batters and allowed four runs, falling to 0-6 in six career starts at Oakland.

## PADRES 6, INDIANS 2

Cory Spangenberg hit a two-run homer, Luis Perdomo won his third straight start and San Diego got another rare road win, beating Cleveland as the Indians played again without manager Terry Francona. Perdomo (4-4) allowed one earned run in five innings and continued his turnaround after a rough start this season. The right-hander didn't get his first win until his 11th start and is 4-1 since June 12. Carlos Asuaje drove in two runs and the Padres did just enough against starter Trevor Bauer (7-7) to improve to 14-26 on the road. Francisco Lindor had three hits and two RBIs for the Indians, who dropped their second straight to the Padres, fell to 18-23 at home and are 2-11 in interleague play. Francona missed his second consecutive game as he remains hospitalized at the Cleveland Clinic. Francona, who was hospitalized twice last month, has been undergoing tests to determine what has been causing light-headedness and increasing his heart rate recently. — AP



## I'M 'BACK TO RINGO' JOKES RORY MCILROY

**PORTSTEWART:** Rory McIlroy joked he was now like Beatles drummer Ringo Starr having fallen to number four in the world rankings ahead of this week's Irish Open. The defending champion and host for this week's event at Portstewart on the rugged Northern Ireland coastline, had dropped to third in the world after missing the cut at the US Open last month.

He then fell a further place behind number one Dustin Johnson and second-ranked Hideki Matsuyama when Jordan Spieth won the Travelers Championship to move into third. "I am back to Ringo," McIlroy said smiling. "It only bothers me I'm not where I

want to be. But I feel like there's been a couple of things that have been out of my control this year that have led to that with the injuries and stuff."

McIlroy had to adjust to new clubs this year after Nike stopped manufacturing equipment, suffered a rib injury which has limited him to just three tournament appearances since the Masters and had the happy distraction of getting married in April. "Like I've said all along, winning golf tournaments and playing well takes care of the rankings," said McIlroy. "It's funny, I don't look at it as much now as I would if I was number one. If I was Dustin Johnson, I would be looking at that thing every Monday morning."

### One putter

Four-time major winner McIlroy said he was realistic about his form having missed so much of the season, but was still determined to get into contention every time he tees it up. "The good thing is I know where I am and I realise that I'm a long way off where I want to be, but I can't think about that at the minute," said the 28-year-old.

"I just have to think about trying to win golf tournaments, trying to get in contention again at golf tournaments, first of all. "And then just playing well, and playing well takes care of a lot of that stuff." McIlroy played practice rounds in the past

week not only at Portstewart and nearby Royal Portrush, which will be the venue for the 2019 British Open, but also Royal Birkdale which hosts the third major of the year in a fortnight's time.

McIlroy has struggled with his putter this year, changing clubs frequently, so it was notable that he was accompanied at Birkdale last week by putting coach Phil Kenyon.

"With Phil's help I have whittled it down to just one putter I want to use," McIlroy said. "Phil walked around 18 holes with me at Birkdale last Thursday and then I spent a little bit of time with him on the putting green after that. It feels good." — AFP

## SOUTH AFRICA WILL NAME 'CASUALTIES'

**JOHANNESBURG:** South Africa will reveal today which two of their six Super Rugby franchises are to be axed at the end of this season from a competition being cut from 18 teams to 15. Central Cheetahs from Bloemfontein and Southern Kings from Port Elizabeth are the media favorites for the chop. Should that scenario unfold, Coastal Sharks from Durban, Golden Lions from Johannesburg, Northern Bulls from Pretoria and Western Stormers from Cape Town will compete next year.

Rising costs, exhaustive travel across 15 time zones, dwindling crowds and TV audiences, and a hard-to-understand format are among the reasons for cutting the number of teams. Cheetahs and Kings are the anticipated casualties because they have the lowest average attendances and poorest overall playing records among the South African sextet. The other victims of the cull will be either the Melbourne Rebels or the Perth-based Western Force from Australia.

New Zealand will have five of the 15 teams next season, Australia and South Africa four and Argentina and Japan one. There has been media speculation that Cheetahs and Kings may join the Pro12, a European competition currently including Irish, Italian, Scottish and Welsh teams. But no rugby officials, bar one at the Cheetahs, are talking ahead of the Friday announcement.

### Internal process

"The Cheetahs have a participation agreement with South African Rugby to participate in Super Rugby until 2020," Cheetahs spokeswoman Ronel Pienaar told reporters. "SANZAAR (Super Rugby governing body) and SA Rugby decided to minimize the number of teams in Super Rugby from 18 to 15. "SA Rugby started with an internal process to determine which two teams to drop from 2018 onwards," said Pienaar.

She did not comment on reports that the Cheetahs are pondering legal action to ensure Super Rugby survival given the participation agreement has three seasons to run. TV analyst and former Springboks coach Nick Mallett, one of the most outspoken voices on South African rugby, favours a radical solution. "Divide the country into four regions," suggested the coach of the Springboks that finished third at the 1999 Rugby World Cup. "Let us have Gauteng (Bulls and Lions), KwaZulu-Natal (Sharks), Eastern Cape (Cheetahs and Kings) and Western Cape (Stormers) making up the four South African franchises."

Kings vice-president Bantwini Matika backed Mallett. "I believe that this is a golden opportunity for SA Rugby to re-examine and revamp what I consider to be a racist rugby landscape," he wrote in the City Press newspaper. "The allocation of the four franchises should move away from historical apartheid rugby structures and look to the future." New Zealand teams have dominated Super Rugby since its introduction in 1996 with three-time champions the Bulls the lone South African winners. — AFP



**WELLINGTON:** British and Irish Lions' Jonathan Davies is tackled by New Zealand All Blacks' Jerome Kaino (L), Sonny Bill Williams (2nd L) and Beauden Barrett (R) during their second rugby union Test between the British and Irish Lions and the New Zealand All Blacks. — AFP

## GATLAND BACKS UNCHANGED LIONS, ALL BLACKS ROLL DICE

**AUCKLAND:** The British and Irish Lions named an unchanged team yesterday for the decisive third Test against the All Blacks, who gambled on rookies in a reshuffled backline. Visiting coach Warren Gatland urged his team to "make Lions history" as he had the luxury of picking the team's first unchanged line-up since 1993.

The All Blacks, who are back-to-back world champions, won the first Test 30-15 but lost 24-21 last week, when the Lions came from nine points down in the final 20 minutes. The Lions will now bid to complete their first New Zealand series victory in 46 years on Saturday at Auckland's Eden Park where the All Blacks are unbeaten in 38 Tests. "It is not very often on a Lions Tour that you get to pick the same 23 for the following game," Gatland said. "We are all aware of how big this game is and we are expecting a backlash from the All Blacks," he added. "This is a huge chance for this group of players to show their abilities and reap the benefits of the

work everyone has put in. "It is their chance to make Lions history."

While the composite team are finally settled at the end of their tour, the All Blacks were forced into changes with coach Steve Hansen giving Jordie Barrett and Ngani Laumape their first Test starts. Prolific winger Julian "The Bus" Savea returns after being dropped for the first two games with Barrett, fly-half Beauden's brother, named at fullback and Laumape at centre. It comes after Sonny Bill Williams was suspended following his red card in the second Test. Hansen said Rieko Ioane was unwell and his fellow wing Waisake Naholo was dropped as a precaution after a head knock.

### 'Cool, calm, collected'

Jordie Barrett and Laumape have just 70 minutes of international rugby between them, and Anton Lienert-Brown, who will partner Laumape in the centres, only made his debut last year. Hansen denied reports of scuffles at training as tensions mount pre-game,

and insisted that Barrett, who is likely to face an aerial bombardment from the Lions, could handle the pressure. Barrett, is a "cool, calm collected kid and we wouldn't have put him there if we didn't think he was up to it. He wouldn't be put in the position if we didn't trust him," Hansen said.

"Ngani's the guy we see going forward is going to play a big part in our selection process and we've got a lot of confidence in him." The last time the All Blacks played a rookie fullback against the Lions was in 1977, when Bevan Wilson came in after New Zealand lost the second Test. His penalty-kicking prowess steered the All Blacks to victory in the remaining two Tests of that series. Hansen also attempted to play down the importance of the game, insisting it would not be the end of the world if the Lions win only their second series in New Zealand. "I've heard a lot of stories this week that you'd think the All Blacks have never lost a game and the sky's fallen in" after losing the second Test, he said. — AFP



## WIMBLEDON SERVES SUSHI AS PLAYERS SWITCH FROM PASTA

**LONDON:** The world's top tennis players are ravenous for sushi, with Wimbledon catering chiefs having to lay on twice as much of the Japanese dish this year to meet the growing hunger. Pasta was the traditional carbohydrate-heavy dish of choice for tennis professionals but demand for sushi at Wimbledon has doubled year on year, said Anthony Davies, the All England Club's head of food and beverage.

"Making sure they have what they need in order to be match fit and deliver what they need to do on court is a big part of what we do," he told AFP. "It's all about variety. Players make

their own choices about what they eat. Pasta is a very, very popular dish because of the carbs-but sushi has grown in popularity. "It's doubled year on year over the last three years. It's a very popular product. It's a good, solid dose of protein and carbs all in one small bite-sized piece so it probably works well."

He said the range of food offered to players changes with the latest updates in sports science. "We have long conversations with the ATP and WTA governing bodies about what's new in nutrition and what the players are looking for each year and we introduce new products based on their

input," he told reporters. Wimbledon bills itself as Europe's largest annual catering event and its English summer event image is inextricably linked to strawberries and cream. The strawberries are picked daily in Kent in south-east England at 4:00am, collected from the packing plant at 9:00am and are delivered to the All England Club in London in a truck by 11:00am, half an hour before play starts on the outside courts. There are at least 10 strawberries in each serving, and the price has been held at £2.50 (\$3.25, 2.85 euros) since 2010, with the All England Club taking a hit on the traditional favorite to keep the prices within popular

reach. 28,000 kilograms of strawberries are consumed during the tournament, along with more than 10,000 liters of fresh cream.

There have been concerns that Britain's impending departure from the European Union could push up food prices or force a switch to imports, with many British farms reliant on EU migrant workers for fruit-picking. "We think we'll be able to maintain British strawberries," Davies said. "If there's a bridge we need to cross at some point in time, we'll cross it. Strawberries are really important to Wimbledon-we'll make sure we have strawberries." — AP



**WIMBLEDON:** Japan's Naomi Osaka serves against Czech Republic's Barbora Strycova during their women's singles second round match on the third day of the 2017 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis Club. — AFP

## TEEN OSAKA 'PREPARING WHOLE LIFE' TO FINALLY FACE VENUS WILLIAMS

**LONDON:** Japanese teenager Naomi Osaka wasn't even born when Venus Williams made her Wimbledon debut 20 years ago, but she believes her life has been building towards the moment they meet on a tennis court. That time will come on Friday when they clash for a place in the last-16 at the All England Club.

"I kind of feel like I have been preparing for this my whole life," said Osaka, whose infectious conversation style is punctuated with liberal doses of 'like', 'kind of' and 'stuff'. "I was supposed to play her in Auckland (in 2016 when Williams withdrew injured). So unfortunately that didn't happen. "But I was kind of, like, prepared then. So I feel like maybe that was leading up to this. "I'm really humbled to be able to come here from watching her on the TV."

Osaka, born in Japan to a Haitian father and Japanese mother, left her homeland when she was three, the fam-

ily settling in New York. She now lives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This year, the 59th-ranked Osaka is making her debut at Wimbledon. In stark contrast, 37-year-old Williams first appeared at the All England Club in 1997 — four months before Osaka was even born. Like many of her generation, however, the Williams sisters were an inspiration for Osaka, although she admits Serena, missing from Wimbledon this year, to give birth to her first child, is the bigger idol.

### Great role

"I'm kind of more of a Serena person. I mean, I like super love Venus, too, but Serena was, like, my No. 1," said Osaka, who recalled supporting Serena when the American great had to scramble past Britain's Heather Watson at Wimbledon two years ago. "I was screaming at my TV, like, Come on, Serena, you can do it. "I remember like when me and my sister used to train,

like, at public courts and stuff, random people would be, like, Are you the next Venus and Serena? I feel like they had a great role in us growing up. I always wanted to be Serena." Osaka made the third round by seeing off Czech 22nd seed Barbora Strycova in three sets.

Now she hopes to get a date on Centre Court to face five-time champion Williams on Friday. It would be her first visit to the famous arena and, come what may, it will provide her with fuel for her leisure-time love of photography. "From the players' restaurant, it has a really good view of all the other courts, and I think it's really pretty," she said when discussing the best place on site to snap a picture.

"It's also the grass courts. They look really pretty from a high place. And I think they use the space really well. "I feel like the courts are next to each other, but it's really neatly organized." — AFP

## FINES FOR BAD BOYS TOMIC, MEDVEDEV

**LONDON:** Wimbledon bad boys Bernard Tomic and Daniil Medvedev have been fined for "unsportsmanlike conduct" following their controversial behavior at the All England Club. Tomic was hit with a £11,600 (\$15,000) fine after the temperamental Australian claimed he was "bored" during his lackluster Wimbledon first round defeat against Mischa Zverev.

In an astonishingly frank press conference, Tomic also admitted he called for the trainer even though he was not injured to try to disrupt his opponent's momentum. The International Tennis Federation responded by taking a significant chunk of the world number 59's £35,000 earnings from the tournament. The 24-year-old's level of effort has frequently been called into question, and he said on Tuesday: "I couldn't care less if I make a fourth round at the US Open or I lose first round."

"To me, everything is the same. I'm going to play another 10 years, and I know after my career I won't have to work again." Russian world number 49 Medvedev was slapped with a £11,200 (\$14,500) fine after a series of disputes with umpire Mariana Alves during his five-set loss to Ruben Bemelmans in the second round. Medvedev ended the match by throwing coins in the direction of umpire's chair.

He expressed remorse afterwards and insisted he was not trying to insinuate that Alves had been bribed but his conduct cost him \$7,500. The remainder of the fine was for two offences during the match, including being docked a point after a heated argument with Alves. Medvedev earned £57,000 for reaching the second round.

It is not the first time Medvedev, who knocked out Stan Wawrinka in the first round, has been in hot water over his conduct towards officials. At the Charleston clay court event last year, the 21-year-old was defaulted from a match after saying umpire Sandy French was "friends" with his opponent Donald Young. Both French and Young are black, but Medvedev denied he intended to be racist, claiming it was a misunderstanding. — AFP



**WIMBLEDON:** A combination of pictures created in Wimbledon, southwest London on July 6, 2017 shows Australia's Bernard Tomic (L) reacting during his men's singles first round match on the second day of the 2017 Wimbledon Championships at The All England Lawn Tennis Club in Wimbledon, southwest London, on July 4, 2017 and Russia's Daniil Medvedev (R) speaking during a press conference after losing his second round match on the third day of the Championships. — AFP



News

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## CASILLAS EXTENDS PORTO CONTRACT

**LISBON:** Spanish goalkeeper Iker Casillas has extended his contract with FC Porto by a year. "Very happy to carry on for one more season with FC Porto! Impatient to face the upcoming challenges!" the 36-year-old Casillas said on twitter. The former Real Madrid shot-stopper, capped a record 167 times by Spain, joined Porto in 2015 after racking up 510 first team games over a 16-season stretch in the Spanish capital.

### Torres extends Atletico deal for an extra year

**MADRID:** Striker Fernando Torres will stay at Atletico Madrid until the end of next season after signing a contract extension, the La Liga club announced on Wednesday. The former Spain international's contract had run out, but he will now stay at Atletico until June 30, 2018. The capital-city side are under a transfer ban, but it has been a successful close-season so far for coach Diego Simeone, having also seen key forward Antoine Griezmann pen a new deal to keep him at the club until 2022. "I am really happy to continue one more year together," Torres said on the club's website. Torres joined Atletico's academy at the age of 11, and went on to score 91 goals in 244 games for the senior team from 2001-2007. He rejoined his boyhood club from Chelsea, where he won the 2012 Champions League title, in 2015 on loan, before signing a permanent contract last summer. The 33-year-old netted a brace in Atletico's final match at the Vicente Calderon against Athletic Bilbao in May, ahead of their move to the new Estadio La Peineta for the coming season. Torres also scored 38 international goals for Spain, winning Euro 2008, when he scored the only goal in the final against Germany, and the 2010 World Cup.

### Germany back atop FIFA rankings

**PARIS:** Germany leapfrogged Brazil and Argentina to move back atop the FIFA rankings released Wednesday thanks to the team winning the Confederations Cup last week. The world champions beat Chile 1-0 in the Russia-based tournament a year out from the 2018 World Cup to ensure a first return to the top of the rankings in more than two years. Brazil fall to second and Argentina third, just ahead of European champions Portugal.

### Podolski arrives with promise to boost Japan

**TOKYO:** German World Cup winner Lukas Podolski yesterday vowed to bolster enthusiasm for Japanese football after arriving to join Vissel Kobe, bucking a trend of big-name players moving to cash-rich China. "I know the J-League is the strongest in Asia and I am determined to enliven (the league) with my team," Podolski told a news conference shortly after he arrived in Kobe, near Osaka, to join the city's J-League club. The 32-year-old forward, who had played for Turkey's Galatasaray since 2015, said it is "a big change" for him to play in Asia for the first time. But the veteran of three World Cups and the scorer of 49 goals for Germany said he did not feel any pressure. "We have to go hard, train hard and fight on the pitch 90 minutes and try to get three points every game," he said. Kobe did not give details of the deal, although Podolski is understood to have signed a multi-year contract worth an annual \$5.3 million. Podolski's decision to opt for Japan came as a surprise with many big-name footballers making megabucks moves to China in the twilight of their careers and he had initially been linked with Beijing Guoan. It also represents something of a coup for the J-League, which used to attract luminaries such as Brazil's Zico and England's Gary Lineker when it began in 1993 but has struggled to attract marquee players in recent years. Hiroshi Mikitani, the online shopping magnate who owns Vissel, said he hopes Podolski's transfer to the team would prompt more world-class players to come to Japan. "Today is a new, memorable day of departure for the J-League," Mikitani told the news conference.



Germany's Marcel Kittel celebrates as he crosses the finish line during the 216 km sixth stage of the 104th edition of the Tour de France cycling race yesterday between Vesoul and Troyes. — AFP

## TEARFUL KITTEL WINS TOUR DE FRANCE SIXTH STAGE

**TROYES, France:** Marcel Kittel won his second stage of this year's Tour de France yesterday, sprinting to victory in the sixth stage before again breaking down in tears. The burly German, who now has 11 Tour stage wins in total, had also won the second stage on Sunday, before the tears started to flow that time as well. Frenchman Arnaud Demare was second with Andre Greipel of Germany third on the 216km sixth stage as reigning champion Chris Froome retained his race lead. But unlike the previous two stages that ended in bunch sprints, this time there was no crash.

As the Court of Arbitration for Sport rejected an appeal by world champion Peter Sagan against his disqualification for elbowing Mark Cavendish into the metal safety railings, and out of the Tour, on Tuesday, this dash to the line

thankfully passed off without incident. And Kittel, as he had done on Sunday, proved too strong for his rivals, reaching a maximum speed of 71.17kph at one stage, according to official Tour data, as he surged from well down the field to breeze past all challengers and win.

"I took the right wheel and then attacked with 250 metres to go," explained Kittel. "I knew in finale if I had good legs, in the final kilometre I would be able to find a gap, and I found it with 250 metres left." That show of force suggested Kittel, 29, is back to form he showed in 2013 and 2014 when he won four Tour stages in each year. His victory took him level on stage wins with compatriot Greipel and only one behind the German record of 12 taken by Erik Zabel, who won six consecutive green jerseys from 1996-2001 — itself a record.

After Wednesday's fireworks on the climb to La Planche des Belles Filles, the overall race favourites had a quiet day in the saddle, with Geraint Thomas remaining second at 12sec from his British compatriot and Sky team leader Froome, with stage five winner Fabio Aru third at 14sec.

In fact the biggest drama they had was earlier in the day when a parasol blew across the road right in front of the peloton, causing several riders to take evasive action, although fortunately they were not going full throttle at that point. Demare, winner of Tuesday's fourth stage, may have been beaten into second but he had the consolation of taking enough points to hold onto the sprinters' green points jersey, although Kittel closed his lead to 27 points. — AFP

## US, MEXICO TO TRY NEW TALENT AT GOLD CUP

**LOS ANGELES:** The United States and Mexico are hoping to unearth a new crop of talent as they attempt to extend their reign of dominance when the CONCACAF Gold Cup kicks off today. The biennial football championship for North America, Central America and Caribbean gets under way at the Red Bull Arena in New Jersey with French Guiana taking on Canada before Honduras face Costa Rica.

The 12-team tournament is being staged at 14 venues across the United States, with the final to be held on July 26 at Santa Clara's Levi's Stadium, the home of the San Francisco 49ers NFL team. The United States will be aiming to atone for the disappointment of their 2015 campaign, when they flopped in the semi-finals of a tournament won by Mexico.

The tournament has been dominated by Mexico and the United States ever since its inception in 1991. The North American rivals have won every edition of the championship between them except from Canada's victory in 2000. While history suggests another Mexico-US battle for the title this time around, the playing field may have been leveled by the fact that neither nation is fielding its strongest team.

US coach Bruce Arena, whose priority remains the ongoing 2018 World Cup qualification campaign, has opted to rest several first-choice players from duty. Mexico coach Juan Carlos Osorio has adopted a similar approach, with El Tri only recently completing their campaign at the FIFA Confederations Cup in Russia.

"We have a large number of domestic players because our European-based players need a break," Arena said. "They had long seasons plus the June World Cup qualifiers, so they needed a break and then they need to start their pre-seasons

in July. That was the appropriate move." The Americans warmed up for their tournament-which will kick off against Panama on Saturday-with a 2-1 friendly victory over Ghana last weekend. The experimental line-up featured a crop of new faces, with the goals coming from MLS players Dom Dwyer and Kellyn Acosta.

### World Cup chance

England-born striker Dwyer, who became a US citizen in March, caught the eye with a lively display that included a debut goal. Arena has encouraged his youthful squad members to view the Gold Cup as a chance to force their way into his thinking for crucial World Cup qualifiers later this year.

"There's a great opportunity for these guys to lock down roster positions for our games in September and October as well," Arena said. "The roster has a nice blend of experience and talented players with less experience. It makes for good competition." Speaking after a training session on Tuesday, Arena said while the value of a Gold Cup victory was debatable, the US had only one thing on their mind-victory.

"There's no actual significance for this championship," Arena told reporters. "But it's important to win your confederation championship, and we're certainly setting our sights on that." The US should qualify comfortably from Group B, where along with Panama their opponents include minnows Martinique and Nicaragua. Mexico should also have a straightforward passage to the knockout rounds from Group C, which includes El Salvador, Curacao and Jamaica. Group A features Honduras, Costa Rica, French Guiana and Canada. — AFP





## “FCB Remuntada”

arrive in Brazil for Neymar Jr's Five World Final

**F**CB Remuntada team arrived to Brazil to compete in the World Final of Neymar Jr's Five. The champions will be representing Kuwait and competing against the winning teams from more than 50 countries.

Neymar Jr's Five by Red Bull is the world's first and only unique five-a-side championship with Neymar Jr's signature. This year, the fast-paced game opened its doors to participants between the ages of 16 and 25, and for the first time this year, the rules of the tournament allowed the participation of two players over the age of twenty-five, giving the opportunity to a larger segment of participants. Two teams of five players each play 10-minute games with no goalkeepers. When one team scores a goal, a player on the opposing team is eliminated until the whole team is completely out or 10 minutes are up.

The local qualifiers ran from 21<sup>st</sup> March to 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 150 teams signed up to the 6 national qualifiers showcasing their football skills in a first and only Neymar Jr signature football tournament where 5 players compete against 5 in a unique last man standing modus, with an eye on meeting Neymar Jr.

It was interesting that teams of young talents crowded to sign up in this year's round. The teams registered vying the dream of meeting their beloved star Neymar Jr, especially after learning about last year's unique experience. The ambience of last year's World Final spread through social media highlighting that qualified teams actually saw the Brazilian star Neymar Junior, who came to the stadium to share memorable moments with the teams and take pictures with them. He also crowned the winners and formed a team of five to play a five-game match against the winners.

During Kuwait's national final, the knockout games were both exciting and challenging amid the applause of the audience, FCB Remuntada managed to outplay their opponents until the championship approached to the end and neither teams could score any goal. In light of tying up, one player from both teams was nominated to compete in an one-on-one match. Hassan Mohamed Ali gave his team FCB Remuntada the winning







goal, guaranteeing the boarding pass on the plane that will fly the winning team to Brazil this summer.

When interviewed on their win in the national final, "FCB Remuntada" captain Ali AlMasri expressed great joy, saying: "We heard about the championship through a friend and we decided to register at the Hassan Abul qualifiers in Al Dasma, we participated in the championship with a plan to win and we did".

"We are very excited to be in Brazil and hope to be lucky enough to meet Neymar. We will do our best to win some matches during the world championship of Neymar Jr's Five and represent Kuwait in the best way possible".

FCB Remuntada's Ahmad El Hajj Hussein, Ali Sheet, Ali Al Masri, Hassan Jabak, Mohammed Khodor Al Masri, Yasser Al Najjar and Youssef Dayekh are looking forward to the grand prize for the crowned world champion team in Brazil which is meeting Neymar Jr in Barcelona, Spain, and being his guests at the famous Camp Nou in a game by Barcelona as VIPs.

Thousands of teams from 53 countries across six continents set out with the same dream of outplaying them all and making the Neymar Jr's Five World Final. Only the best will be at the Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr in Praia Grande, Brazil from July 7-8 to battle it out for the overall title.

The World Final programme begins on Friday, July 7 with a group stage featuring the national champions from 53 countries. The best 32 will make it through to the knock-out stages on Saturday, with a series of matches whittling the teams down to 16, and then to eight in the quarterfinals and four in the semi-finals before the top two battle it out in the final match.

The Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr is a private, non-profit association dedicated to social causes, set up by the player and his family. Located in Jardim Glória, in Praia Grande, where Neymar Jr spent much of his childhood, the Institute is an 8,400m2 education and sporting complex catering for 2,470 underprivileged children aged between seven and 14.





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# Sports

## LUKAKU SET FOR MAN U, ROONEY TO EVERTON

**LONDON:** Everton's Belgian international striker Romelu Lukaku is set to join Manchester United instead of champions Chelsea for a fee of £75 million (\$97m, 85.5m euros), according to the British media. Both the BBC and Press Association reported the deal was all but done for the 24-year-old Lukaku, who will be reunited with Jose Mourinho, who sold him to Everton in 2014 for £28m when the Portuguese coach was in his second spell as Chelsea manager.

Everton had offered the former Anderlecht star the most lucrative contract in the club's history after he scored 25 Premier League goals last season but he turned it down, saying he wanted to move on to another level. This alerted several clubs to his availability with Chelsea initially the favourites but Mourinho—who enjoys excel-

lent relations with his agent Mino Raiola—looks to have snatched him from under Antoni Conte's nose.

If the deal goes through Lukaku's arrival at Old Trafford would suggest United cease their interest in signing Alvaro Morata from Real Madrid. Raiola has had a profitable time since Mourinho took over at United last year, with the world's most expensive player Paul Pogba, attacking midfielder Henrikh Mkhitaryan and Zlatan Ibrahimovic, all his clients, arriving at the club in 2016.

### Rooney linked with Everton return

England and Manchester United's record goalscorer Wayne Rooney could be set for a return to Everton, the club where he made his name, according to the British media. The 31-year-old who flourished at Everton—burst-

ing onto the scene as a teenager and scoring 15 goals in 67 appearances—has become a peripheral figure at Manchester United since Jose Mourinho took over last year.

Rooney, who also lost his place in the England squad, has stated the only other Premier League side he would consider joining is Everton and with apparently interest fading from China either a return to Merseyside or a move to the United States looked to be his best options. The Daily Mail says Everton are hopeful of 'thrashing out a deal' while The Guardian noted that with one year remaining on his contract, United may demand a transfer fee but not a sizeable one for the player who joined the club in 2004 for £27 million (30.7m euros, \$35m). The paper also said the deal would also lighten United's annual wage bill by £13 million. — AFP



Romelu Lukaku

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