

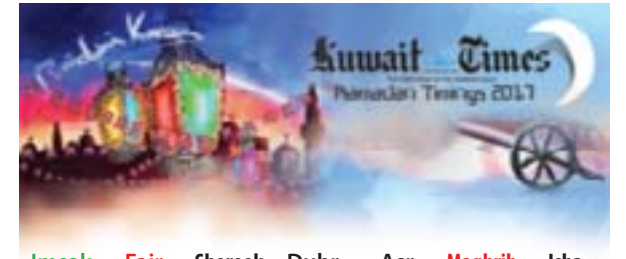
Researcher talks about arms trade in Kuwait



Al-Jazeera a target in Gulf confrontation with Qatar



Nobody's perfect: Cavaliers thump Warriors to avoid sweep



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# TRUMP BERATES QATAR AS GULF STAND-OFF ESCALATES

SAUDI ARABIA AND ALLIES HAIL TRUMP WARNING TO QATAR

Min 32°  
Max 49°  
High Tide 01:52 & 12:08  
Low Tide 06:50 & 19:55



## ISLAM IN NUTSHELL

By Teresa Leshner

The essence of Islam can be found in a single statement, the "kalimah," which embodies both its doctrine and practice. We hear this statement five times a day from the minarets: "There is no god except Allah and Muhammad is His messenger." Any true religion should offer sound doctrine and clear practice, and this simple statement sums it up. The doctrine is that our Creator - the Lord of the universe - is the only one deserving of our worship; all matters of faith revolve around that.

To understand the significance of this statement, consider Islamic art- the geometric, symmetric, and possibly infinite continuation of lines, curves and patterns - which always begins with a single point on a page or canvas. It is from this point that a line or circle is first drawn, and from which a beautiful work of art takes shape. Without that point of reference, without the consideration that each line and curve originated from that point, and without respect for the relation that every intersecting point has with the original one, the whole pattern will be imperfect, unbalanced and eventually unrecognizable.

Islam, as the inspiration for this beautiful art form, is identical in that it, too, has as its epicenter a single point from which every thought, intention, action and hope begins. That point of reference is God. When someone makes God the single reference point in his life, from which all expression originates, his life can be one of both precision and beauty, of discipline and creativity. In Islamic art, the original point is simply a dot on a page.

In Islam, a single, unique God is the focal point, around which all of life revolves. The second part of the statement instructs us of the practice of Islam: that Muhammad (PBUH) is God's messenger, a man whose role was to convey the message and implement it in all spheres of human conduct. Thus, he is a role model for humankind. He is the teacher with textbook in hand, and his role was to apply the teachings of the Book, answering the questions of his students along the way.

Continued on Page 13



DOHA: A man sings with children on the stage at a Garangao event, a traditional Gulf-region children's party celebrated after breaking fast in Qatar's capital of Doha. — AFP

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has accused Qatar's leadership of bankrolling extremists and demanded a halt to that funding, drawing praise yesterday from Saudi Arabia and its allies. Their approval came as Washington joined intensifying international efforts to heal the rift between the key Western Gulf allies, which has escalated into the region's worst diplomatic crisis in years.

Russia yesterday urged dialogue between the parties, as Qatar's foreign minister arrived in Moscow seeking support from abroad in the dispute. Trump's warning overshadowed an earlier declaration from US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson who encouraged Saudi Arabia and its allies to ease their land and sea "blockade" of Qatar.

Tillerson said the blockade was hindering the US-led campaign against the Islamic State group and having humanitarian consequences for ordinary people. But US officials insisted both men were sending the same message that the countries of the region should not allow their differences to hinder the fight against extremism. Qatar is home to the largest US airbase in the Middle East, making it a key ally in the US-led coalition against the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria.

But it has fallen out with its Arab neighbors, who accuse it of sponsoring extremist groups, some of them allegedly linked to arch Saudi foe Iran, fomenting trouble across the region. The neighbors also resent Qatar's ties to the Muslim Brotherhood movement and its sponsorship of the pan-Arab satellite television network Al-Jazeera, which has given opposition figures a platform. Qatar has denounced the allegations of terror funding as baseless and has received the support of its close ally Turkey, which has approved the deployment of troops to defend the emirate.

Continued on Page 13

## MOH TO RAISE EXPATS' HEALTH INSURANCE FEES

KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr Jamal Al-Harbi said yesterday that he will meet with Ministry of Health (MoH) undersecretaries after Eid holidays to discuss the increase in health insurance fees for expatriates. Al-Harbi added that the meeting will discuss gradual fee increases - starting with imposing health insurance fees on visitors (those arriving on visit visas) - and then on expatriates. Al-Harbi stressed that the raise is inevitable. The health insurance fee increase

was scheduled to take effect last February as MoH undersecretaries Council had approved the recommendations. The study recommends that the new prices would be 20 percent less than those provided by private hospitals. Health sources said that the medical services fees in Kuwait had remained the same for too long while the cost of medicine and equipments have increased thus putting a huge burden on the state's budget



BANNU, Pakistan: Pakistani father Gulzar Khan (center) 57, who has 36 children from his three wives, walks with his children as they return home after school in the northwestern town of Bannu. — AFP

## AMNESTY BEMOANS COST OF GULF CRISIS

LONDON: Amnesty International warned yesterday of the "heartbreak and fear" being suffered by potentially thousands of ordinary individuals because of the political dispute in the Gulf that has isolated Qatar. "Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates are toying with the lives of thousands of Gulf residents as part of their dispute with Qatar, splitting up families and destroying people's livelihoods and education," the London-based human rights watchdog said.

On Monday, the three countries, along with Egypt and other Arab allies, cut diplomatic and transport links with Qatar over its alleged support for extremism, a charge Doha denies. Qatar's neighbors have also given its citizens 14 days to leave and instructed their own nationals to return. "For potentially thousands of people across the Gulf, the effect of the steps imposed in the wake of this political dispute is suffering, heartbreak and fear," said James Lynch, deputy director of Amnesty's Global Issues Program, who was in Doha last week.

"These drastic measures are already having a brutal effect, splitting children from parents and husbands from wives," said Amnesty after its researchers interviewed dozens of people affected by the crisis. "People from across the region... risk losing jobs and having their education disrupted." Amnesty, quoting Qatar's National Human Rights Committee, said more than 11,000 nationals of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE live in Qatar, while many Qataris are residents of the three other Gulf states. It gave the example of a Saudi man, a resident of Doha with his Qatari wife and children, who had been unable to visit his sick mother hospitalized in Saudi Arabia because he would be blocked from returning to his family.

"I go home, I can't see my wife. I stay here, I can't see my mum," he was quoted as saying. Amnesty also pointed out that Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE had warned of harsh punishments, including up to 15 years in jail, "if they dare to criticize these measures" against Qatar. "Prosecuting anyone on this basis would be a clear violation of the right to freedom of expression. No one should be punished for peacefully expressing their views or criticizing a government decision," said Lynch. — AFP



DOHA: Customers are seen shopping at the Al-Meera market in the Qatari capital Doha yesterday. The writing in Arabic reads: 'Let's support national products.' — AFP

## 3 MEN, 96 CHILDREN PAKISTAN'S POPULATION BOOMS

BANNU: Three men who have fathered nearly 100 children among them are doing their bit for Pakistan's skyrocketing population, which is being counted for the first time in 19 years. But in a country where experts warn the surging populace is gouging into hard-won economic gains and social services, the three patriarchs are unconcerned. Allah, they say, will provide. Pakistan has the highest birth rate in South Asia at around three children per woman, according to the World Bank and government figures, and the census is expected to show that growth remains high.

"God has created the entire universe and all human beings, so why should I stop

the natural process of a baby's birth?" asks Gulzar Khan, a father of 36, citing one of the strongest influences in the region: the belief that Islam prevents family planning. Tribal enmity is another factor in the northwest, where the 57-year-old lives in the city of Bannu with his third wife, who is pregnant. "We wanted to be stronger," the 57-year-old tells AFP, surrounded by 23 of his offspring-so many, he observes, they don't need friends to play a full cricket match.

Polygamy is legal but rare in Pakistan, and families like Khan's are not the norm, though the beliefs he holds are widespread.

Continued on Page 13

## US LEADER PUNCHES BACK, ACCUSES COMEY OF LYING

WASHINGTON: Punching back a day after his fired FBI director's damaging testimony, President Donald Trump yesterday accused James Comey of lying to Congress and said he was "100 percent" willing to testify under oath about their conversations. Trump cryptically refused to say whether those private exchanges were taped - a matter at the heart of the conflicting accounts of what passed between them at a time when Comey was leading an FBI investigation into Russia's interference in the presidential election and its ties to the Trump campaign.

He asserted that nothing in Comey's testimony to the Senate pointed to collusion with Russia or obstruction of justice. "Yesterday showed no collusion, no

obstruction," Trump said. He further denied ever asking Comey for his "loyalty," contradicting Comey's detailed sworn testimony about a private dinner the two men had in the White House. "No I didn't say that," Trump stated abruptly, taking questions at a joint press conference with Romanian President Klaus Iohannis in the Rose Garden. Asked if he would make that denial under oath, he said, "100 percent."

Trump's aides have dodged questions about whether conversations relevant to the Russia investigation have been recorded, and so did the president, in series of teases. "Well, I'll tell you about that maybe sometime in the very near future," Trump said. Pressed on the issue, he insisted he

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**KUWAIT:** (From left) His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem and MP Abdullah Al-Roumi attend the iftar.—Amiri Diwan photos



Ministers and MPs in attendance.



MPs and officials attend the gathering.



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah greets His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



MP Safa Al-Hashem greets His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

## AMIR HOLDS IFTAR FOR MINISTERS, MPs

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah held an iftar banquet for members of the executive and legislative authorities at Dasman Palace on Thursday. It was attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, Deputy Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and Minister of the Amiri Diwan Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. —KUNA



The world is busy these days following up the current crisis between Saudi Arabia and Qatar as an important case on the global level. But the question remains - is what's happening now lead to a possible outbreak of a new war in the region, or is it just a passing crisis?

Although the severing of Saudi-Qatari relations was a surprise and bad news for the public, differences between countries, both within the organization of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) or outside, is normal for a large country like Saudi Arabia, which has international strategic weight both as an oil country and due to the presence of Makkah and Madinah, towards which the hearts of all Muslims are directed. This is something that must be taken into consideration when talking about Saudi Arabia. Any dispute - whether political or economic - with any country is normal, even if it is a neighbor. Sometimes, clear and straight confrontation is necessary, and this is what happened.

On Thursday, Saudi Arabia and its key allies issued a list of those whom they accuse of being linked to insurgents and terrorists. The list includes 49 people and 12 charitable organizations and groups supported by Qatar. It seems that the current crisis between Qatar and Saudi Arabia revolves around two issues - the Qatari position towards Islamist groups and Iran. We must not forget that the dispute between the two is an old one - whether it is about borders or support for extremist political groups of all nationalities.

The new announcement is the first official reaction by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, especially with regards to closing the borders between the two countries and consequent decisions. So it is not just a passing crisis, but a real international crisis that needs solutions. It needs a major diplomatic move to reach a solution that satisfies all parties. Despite the clarity of the Saudi position and the formal procedures and measures announced by Riyadh, the Qatari situation is ambiguous, and Doha is annoyed by the explicit accusation of funding terrorism and the boycott procedures. The Qatari position remains to reject the accusation and strengthen new and old ties with well-known Muslim states, with a repeated rejection of the Saudi claim or offers to reconcile or respond to some if not all allegations. I believe that the Qatari silence will not last long and the coming days may witness a remarkable development, perhaps radically.

The Qatari Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said on Thursday that "Qatar does not expect any military escalation in the current crisis with Saudi Arabia and its Arab allies who are accusing Doha of supporting terrorism." This statement indicates that the Doha has not made a final decision and is still studying all the possibilities. This could be an entry for foreign countries' diplomatic measures.

The Egyptian media had several media campaigns against Qatar in the past, which claimed that Qatar is interfering in Egyptian affairs through the support of the Muslim Brotherhood. We should not blame the United Arab Emirates for its alliance with Saudi Arabia, because UAE lost many of its young soldiers in the Yemen war, and it was close to winning that war. But the discovery that a brother country is supporting the enemy is a painful and cruel find. So, does Qatar deserve this boycott? Of course, exclusion cannot be a solution, but this is the first time that Gulf policy has been shown as transparent, direct and public, which is unusual in light of what is known about Arab or Gulf policies. It is a case study.

Will the siege succeed? I think that whether we agree or not, the Qatar boycott will have a negative impact on the overall climate of the region, and mobility will undoubtedly be difficult for Qataris and other employees in Qatar. But hopes remain that major countries will intervene in persuading Qatar to stop its current policy of provocation in the region, especially by the Al-Jazeera channel and alliances with extremist Islamist elements.

The interference of ignorant people with foul comments on Twitter and loyalists of the Muslim Brotherhood is expected, yet it will not change the reality. Saudi Arabia is a large country with a religious influence on the world. It has a key geographical location and relations with all countries, whether economic or political, so negotiations should be held now to prevent a war between brothers in the region.



MP Shuwaib Al-Muwaizri greets His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as other lawmakers look on.



MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaei greets His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem greets His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

## US SUPPORTS KUWAIT MEDIATION EFFORTS IN GCC DISPUTE INVOLVING QATAR: TILLERSON

**WASHINGTON:** The US supports mediation efforts of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait to bring about a peaceful resolution to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) dispute with Qatar, as well as progress toward eliminating all forms of support for terrorism-military, financial, moral or ideological, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said on Friday.

"Yes, we will support these mediation efforts, along with the (His Highness) Amir of Kuwait" Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Tillerson said in remarks at the State Department. Three weeks ago, President Donald Trump joined members of the GCC "in a strong show of partnership, repudiation of extremism and a plan to defeat terrorism of all kinds in the region and around the world," Tillerson said. "Now the situation in the Arabian Gulf over the last few days is troubling to the United States, the region and to many people who are directly affected."

The US wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the spirit of the summit held last month in Riyadh, he said. "As we combine efforts to defeat the military, financial and ideological support of terrorists, we expect to see progress in the Arab world toward greater political expression," he said. "An important pathway to attack Islamic extremism and to prevent political activism from escalating into violence is to allow marginalized voices opportunities for political expression." But this process requires regional and global consensus, and mutual understanding, he said. The GCC Summit creates a platform to achieve this consensus and understanding, he added.

### Thoughtful dialogue

"We call for calm and thoughtful dialogue with clear expectations and accountability among the parties in order to strengthen relationships," Tillerson said. "We ask that there be no further escalation by the parties in the region. "We call on Qatar to be responsive to the concerns of its neighbors," he said. "Qatar has a history of supporting groups that have spanned the spectrum of political expression, from activism to violence." The Amir of Qatar has made progress in halting financial support and expelling terrorist elements from his country, "but he must do more, and he must do it more quickly," Tillerson said.

Others must also continue to eliminate factions of support for violent organizations within their own borders, he said. "Again, that was a commitment made by

all at the summit," he said. "We call on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt to ease the blockade against Qatar."

There are humanitarian consequences to the blockade, Tillerson said. "We are seeing shortages of food, families are being forcibly separated, and children are being pulled out of school," he said. "We believe these are unintended consequences, especially during this holy month of Ramadan, but they can be addressed immediately." The blockade is also impairing US and other international business activities in the region, Tillerson

their grievances they have with each other," he added.

### Full support

Meanwhile, EU High Representative Federica Mogherini expressed on Friday the European Union's full support to mediation efforts by His Highness the Amir to defuse tensions in the Gulf region. Speaking to reporters after a meeting with Qatari foreign minister Sheikh Mohammad Al Thani in Brussels this evening, she said the EU has two main messages for the Gulf countries. "One is to avoid any further escalation and

Mogherini said she will continue contact with the parties in the coming days "always with one purpose to support the work that Kuwait is doing." She said she had a "very long, substantial and good meeting" with the Qatari foreign minister who arrived in Brussels from Berlin and departed for Moscow. He did not make any statements to the press.

Mogherini said the EU has good relations with all the Gulf Cooperation Council countries and "we will keep good relations will all countries in the Gulf." "We also believe that regional cooperation in the Gulf and around the Gulf is key to have an effective work on counter terrorism," she said. "We have a direct EU interest because of the work on security. We are together in the coalition against Daesh we are together in our efforts to find a way out of Syrian crisis besides economic and trade interests," she noted. "The region of the Gulf has to understand that what happens there is relevant for many parts of the world in term of security and stability," she said and warned that "we see a clear risk of the situation escalating further and spreading in an unpleasant and dangerous manner beyond the region of the Gulf." Mogherini added that she is ready to travel to the Gulf region if needed.

### Deep gratitude

His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah on Thursday lauded His Highness the Amir's efforts to tackle strains in relations among GCC countries and his bids to re-establish the Arab and Islamic solidarity. His Highness the Premier, addressing the final session of the parliament's 15th legislative term, expressed deep gratitude to His Highness the Amir for his efforts to remedy the disarray in the GCC ranks and his bids to bring the Arabs and Muslims together. "We pray to His Almighty to crown his bids with success," he said. His Highness the Premier boasted of "our democratic practice according to guidelines of His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown prince."

His Highness the Amir had also received a phone call from Tillerson on Thursday which discussed with the exemplary ties between their two friendly countries on Thursday. The two sides also dealt with the latest developments in the region and other issues of common concern. The US State Secretary congratulated His Highness the Amir on the holy month of Ramadan, according to a statement released by the Amiri Diwan. —KUNA



**WASHINGTON:** US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson speaks about Qatar at the State Department in Washington, Friday June 9, 2017. —AP

said. It has created a hardship on the people of Qatar, and the people whose livelihoods depend on commerce with Qatar, he added. "The blockade is hindering US military actions in the region and the campaign against ISIS," he said, referring to the so-called Islamic State.

"In the last few days I've spoken to many leaders in the region, and as I've said to all of them, we know you're stronger together," Tillerson said. "It is clear to me based on these conversations that the elements of a solution are available," he said. "The GCC must emerge united and stronger to show the world the GCC's resolve in its fight against violence and terrorism, and its commitment to countering the threat from terrorism." "Our expectation is that these countries will immediately take steps to de-escalate the situation, and put forth a good-faith effort to resolve

second engage in a political dialogue in particular taking advantage of the mediation efforts that Kuwait is putting in place," she said.

"We do not want to multiply mediation efforts. For us it is clear that there is one mediation effort in place that is the one which succeeded during a similar but less dramatic crisis in 2014. We believe that the Kuwait effort can be the one succeeding. We support their work and we have put the EU help and support at their disposal to accompany it in the best possible manner," she stressed. Mogherini said she had a long telephone conversation with the Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Sabah on Thursday, and just before Friday's meeting Mogherini had a second phone call in 24 hours with the Saudi foreign minister Adel Al-Jubeir.



# RESEARCHER TALKS ABOUT HISTORY OF TRADING IN WEAPONS IN KUWAIT

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** Trading in weapons is part of Kuwait's pre-oil history. Dr Mohammad Al-Habib, a researcher in Kuwait's history, has conducted detailed academic research on this issue, and shared the information with Kuwait Times. He also addressed a presentation on this study titled 'Arms Trafficking between Muscat and Kuwait during Mubarak's Reign (1896-1915)' at Kuwait University.

Arms trafficking surged in the Arabian Gulf in 1879 due to the outbreak of the Third Anglo-Afghan War, which led to increased demand for weapons in the region. "Local demand found its way to the domestic tribes in the interior of Persia and Afghanistan near the Indian border, where the British colonial center was located. In the British view, any attempt to deliver arms through Afghan tribes to the Indian border could've jeopardized its position in India, with the view of a possible revolution against its sovereignty," Habib told Kuwait Times.

"In 1881, Britain prevented the import and export of arms to Persia and the Gulf without its consent, because such acts could lead to losing its control of the arms trade in a way that served its political and economic interests. Therefore, Britain claimed that smuggling of arms could lead to weakening the security of the Gulf region and thus affect trade routes between India and Britain. Britain's fears were because of the critical political period that Arab states were going through. This period coincided with the formation of Arab sheikhdoms and attempts by rulers of the Gulf to assert their sovereignty over their territories and transform themselves into legitimate emirates through a series of official treaties signed with the British government," Habib explained.

### Local wars

"Local wars between regional powers in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula, such as the Ottomans in Al-Ahsa and Basra, Ibn Saud in Najd and his rivals Mohammed Ibn Rashid in Hail, Sharif Hussein in Hijaz, Mubarak Al-Sabah in Kuwait and his opponent Yusuf Al-Ibrahim in Duraq, Saadoun Basha Sheikh of Muntafiq in southern Mesopotamia and Jassim Ibn Thani in Qatar, were also part of the regional conflict during that time," he noted.

Therefore, securing weapons - whatever the means to obtain them - became necessary for Arab rulers to stabilize their political rule and to secure their emirates from internal or external enemies that sought to overthrow them. The



**KUWAIT:** Dr Mohammad Al-Habib makes a presentation on his study at Kuwait University.

process of obtaining weapons was of equal importance to Arab tribes to prepare for any military confrontation, revenge or even an invasion.

### New market

"As a result, from 1890 to 1914, the Gulf region became a new market for European firms (including the British) as part of European capitalism. Cities such as Manchester, London, Cardiff, Newport, Dover and Folkestone in the United Kingdom, Marseilles in France and countries like Belgium, Germany and Romania supplied weapons to the Gulf region via the port of Muscat where there was no restricted policy for trade," Habib told Kuwait Times.

After signing a protectorate treaty with the ruler of Kuwait Mubarak Al-Sabah in 1899, Britain became concerned about the stability of Kuwait because of the constant import of arms and ammunition from Muscat, which could put Kuwait in a position of being a central hub of the arms trade in the northwestern Gulf region.

"At the commencement of his reign, Mubarak promised to assist the British to reduce arms trafficking, signing a contract in 1900 prohibiting the import and export of arms in Kuwait via 'Kuwaiti' merchants and

shipmasters by giving permission for the British to inspect any Kuwaiti vessels with suspicious cargoes within Kuwaiti territorial waters. Mubarak needed arms for his tribal wars, and so he did not keep his promise. However, he pretended to warn 'Kuwaiti' merchants and shipmasters against the arms business," recalled Habib.

This happened especially when the British refused to give him permission to import weapons and ammunition with the excuse that Mubarak had asked for more than the local demand. "The official British recognition of Mubarak and his descendants in 1907 as the only legitimate family to rule Kuwait, and the Anglo-Ottoman convention a few years later which confirmed the Kuwaiti political status quo as under British protection, reassured Mubarak and made him more responsive to British pressure. He did not, however, fully committed to British regulations regarding arms trafficking in the Gulf," Habib added.

"Such regulations did not deter the Maarafi and Ibn Ghalib families and others from engaging in the arms trade, as British documents testify. Plenty of documents in British sources discuss the role of Maarafi and Ibn Ghalib merchants in the arms smuggling trade between Muscat and Kuwait during Mubarak's reign. During his reign, British

Year	Country	Total Value (US Dollars)
1902-03	United Kingdom	888,000
1903-04	United Kingdom	875,000
1904-05	United Kingdom	1,020,000
1905-06	United Kingdom	888,000
1906	United Kingdom	888,000

**The total value (in US Dollars) of arms imported from United Kingdom and France to Muscat (1902-1906) (Source: British archive).**



sources show local khans and sheikhs of Persian tribes in towns and villages, especially the Tangistanis and Dashtis, usually sent their representatives to purchase arms and ammunitions from members of the Maarafi and Ibn Ghalib families - the two major Ajam merchants that controlled the weapons trade not only in Kuwait, but also in the northern Gulf zone," he pointed out.

"Mubarak himself benefited from Maarafi's and Ibn Ghalib's business, obtaining arms without permission from the British from Muscat to Kuwait in two ways. Firstly, a constant quantity of arms and ammunition secured his needs for wars against rivals without taking regular permission from the British. Secondly, a regular additional income was added to Mubarak's treasure due to the tax imposed by him on each rifle that entered the customs house of Kuwait, with an extra percentage on weapons exported from Kuwait's port to elsewhere in the Gulf region," Habib said.

Between April 1905 and Oct 1906, Kuwait imported arms and ammunitions 25 times from Muscat using either steamer ships or local ships belonging to some 'Kuwaitis'. "Despite the extensive British monitoring on arms movements, Mubarak exceeded his permitted order of arms to make a personal profit by selling them in Kuwait or to regional arms dealers through Najaf, as the accounting book of Najaf indicates," he told Kuwait Times.

"With these primary sources that discuss arms trafficking between Muscat and Kuwait, one can conclude that although the British government made every effort to restrict arms trafficking in the Gulf region through various policies and practical procedures, it did not, however, succeed in stopping arms smuggling. This was, firstly, due to the challenge that was faced by other international powers in the Gulf region, mainly the French, who refused to compromise with the British when the latter refused to give some political and economic privileges to the French in other British colonial areas," Habib stated.

"Secondly, the expenses that the British navy faced to continue inspecting local ships during the sea blockade initiated by the British on the Makran coast in 1910, political circumstances associated with constant political disturbances in Arabian states and among the tribes motivated them to obtain arms by various methods, even by smuggling. However, the outbreak of the First World War relieved the British and suspended the arms trade temporarily. Britain after that successfully brought the entire Gulf region under its sphere of influence," concluded Habib.



## FIREMEN TACKLE BLAZE AT INDUSTRIAL SHUWAIKH

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** A fire broke out in a deserted building in Shuwaikh industrial area located over an area of 1,500 square meters, said security sources, noting that firemen rushed to the scene and managed to prevent the fire from spreading to other buildings. Firemen found a number of cooking gas cylinders stored in the building and managed to remove them before they caught fire.

No casualties were reported except for a fireman who suffered a knee injury and was evacuated to Al-Razi hospital.

### Inspection

Mubarak Al-Kabeer municipality inspectors conducted a campaign in which they inspected number of food stuff, wholesale and retail store and restaurants. Mubarak Al-Kabeer emergency team leader Nasser Al-Hajri said that

three citations were filed in Abolhssaniya for operating without a license. He added that citations for 186 illegal ads and three parks built in violation to public property were filed while 10 buildings were inspected. Separately, Hawally municipality inspectors launched a campaign that resulted in filing 20 citations involving hiring laborers who have no health certificates, violating cleanliness conditions and operating prior to having a license issued.

## COOPERATION TO CONTROL PRICES

By A Saleh and Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's (MSAL) assistant undersecretary for cooperatives affairs Shikhah Al-Adwani said that cooperation was in progress amongst MSAL, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) and Kuwait Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies (KUCCS) to control goods' prices in various co-ops during Ramadan. KUCCS Chairman Ali Al-Kandari stressed that the union is keen on controlling prices in various co-ops and fighting any unjustified price increase.

### Housing units

Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmad Al-Manfouhi stressed that it was not one of the municipality's executive body duties to distribute the Municipal Council's constituencies. Manfouhi added that the municipality has handed over more land plots to the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW), which will help build over 250,000 housing units.

### Teachers' payroll

Director of the Islamic Studies Department at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Marzouq Sultan Al-Hait expressed gratitude to both the legislative and executive authorities for approving the amendments on the teachers' payroll last Tuesday. Hait stressed that teaching was a very tiring profession and teachers should receive special treatment at both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. He also expressed hopes that the new amendments will be approved by the Civil Service Commission soon.



Gulf Bank team and Saveco team.



Gulf Bank team.



LOYAC team.

## GULF BANK PARTNERS WITH SAVECO TO DONATE FOODSTUFF BOXES TO FAMILIES IN NEED KUWAIT FOOD BANK AND LOYAC TO DISTRIBUTE BOXES

**KUWAIT:** On the occasion of the Holy Month of Ramadan, Gulf Bank is carrying out a series of Ramadan activities to engage with the people of Kuwait during this blessed month. The first of these initiatives is distributing 'maachla' foodstuff boxes to families in need across Kuwait.

This is the second year Gulf Bank partners with Saveco and LOYAC in this initiative, and this year we are pleased to also be working with the Kuwait Food Bank. The foodstuff boxes, assembled by teams from Saveco and Gulf Bank, include essential non-perishable food items, sufficient enough to cover each family's needs for approximately one week. Distribution of the boxes will be carried out by the Kuwait Food Bank and LOYAC's community service program to previ-

ously identified families around the country.

Khaled Al-Otaibi, Manager, Corporate Communications at Gulf Bank said: "After the positive impact of last year's Ramadan initiative, we were pleased to again partner with Saveco in this charitable activity. By working with the newly established Kuwait Food Bank, in addition to LOYAC's community service program, we were able to broaden the reach of the food distribution and engage with additional community partners. We extend our gratitude and appreciation to all our partners in this initiative and look forward working together again in the future."

Noor Al Qatami, CEO of Saveco stated: "We are proud to partner with Gulf Bank on this project as it brings smiles to a

lot of families every year. Both companies are committed to social responsibility in Kuwait by continuously giving back to the community."

Salem Al Hamar, Kuwait Food Bank Society Secretary General, commented: "Our aim at the Kuwait Food Bank is to provide the underprivileged with basic food stuff and ultimately reduce food waste. This Holy Month, we were able to put this plan into action by providing those in need with food supplies, through this cooperation with Gulf Bank. We look forward to taking this to the next level and to more similar collaborations in the very near future."

During the Holy Month of Ramadan, Gulf Bank will be supporting and conducting several other activities. The Bank is

sponsoring the 'Women Football Tournament' which has already kicked off. The tournament encourages women to lead a fit and healthy lifestyle with sports activity being a key component. The bank will also be visiting several hospitals to celebrate gergean with children and participating in gergean celebrations with other Kuwaiti institutions.

Saveco is an all-inclusive mega market in Kuwait that has quickly grown to be known for its wide range of products and its award-winning customer service. The Kuwait Food Bank is a charity established to provide food to the needy in Kuwait and to spread awareness about the importance of reducing food waste. LOYAC is the Lothan Youth Achievement Center, a non-profit organization for empowering youth.



## KUWAIT

Heritage



This picture taken at a vegetables market in Kuwait during the 1970s shows shoppers gathering around a buyer and a seller who are in the middle of an argument over the price of oranges. (Source: 'Kuwait, Miracle on the Desert', by David Cooke, New York, 1970. Prepared by Mahmoud Zakaria Abu Alella, heritage researcher in the Ministry of Information)



Mohammad Anis

## PERFORMING WELL AT WORK SERVES SOCIETY

By Ben Garcia

Each of us can contribute to making Kuwait a better place for all of us to live. In our daily deeds and actions, we can find - if we choose to look - opportunities for improving Kuwait's environment. From not littering on the streets, to choosing to be kind and helpful to others, each individual here can have a positive impact on the society as a whole. Kuwait Times wants to know what can you do?

\*\*\*\*\*

Mohammad Anis is 27-year-old from Rajasthan, India. He works as a sales associate, and is single. When asked how he could contribute to make Kuwait a better place, he had the following to say:

"As an expat, I can only help so much. But I am willing to care for and help by contributing monetary funds to the needy. As a Muslim, I have been a regular participant in charity donations and I find this as an effective way to help the nation. Also as an expat of this country, I will always follow its laws and regulations, and will respect the traditions followed here. I am also part of a team of a luxury brand in the Avenues Mall; and it is our responsibility to help our customers and make sure they are satisfied. Performing well at work is a great form of service to the society. If one is of considerable benefit for the company it will reflect in his everyday life, family, community, as well as his countries of residence and nativity."

## OOREDOO EMPLOYEES ENJOY ANNUAL GHABQA GATHERING

### IN JUMEIRAH HOTEL, ATTENDED BY CEO AND GENERAL MANAGER



Ooredoo CEO and General Manager Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, held its annual ghabqa in Jumeirah Hotel on Monday evening under the traditional Kuwaiti theme 'Sanduq Embayyat'. The event was attended by employees of Ooredoo Kuwait and its subsidiaries, as well as the company's CEO and General Manager Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani and members of the executive management.

#### Kuwaiti Heritage

The event started a traditional musical performance Janadriya Band, and was followed by a number of activities around the Kuwaiti-themed entrance hall which included a counter for selling traditional artifacts such as miniature dhow ships and wooden chests, known colloquially as "Sanduq Embayyat." These boxes were used in the 18th and 19th century in most homes of people from the Arabian Gulf, to store jewelry and valuables. Visitors to the booth were able to engrave their names on their boxes, before enjoying traditional Arabic coffee, dates and sweets in Gahwat Bu Shamel, a play on the name of traditional Kuwaiti coffee shop names such as Gahwat Bu Nashi, with Shamel being Ooredoo's biggest postpaid plan for employees. Visitors have also enjoyed instant photos taken with a traditional Kuwait heritage backdrop.

#### Thanks and appreciation

During his opening speech at the event, Ooredoo Kuwait's General Manager and CEO Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani expressed his thanks and gratitude to all employees for their continued dedication and hard work, urging them to continue with the pace despite market challenges and high competition.

He added: "We're proud to have started the Holy Month of Ramadan with a series of activities focused on humanitarian aid,

through our award-winning volunteer program which we launched for the third consecutive year. Personally, I am happy to see the big participation whether in our Iftar tent or the Ooredoo Truck, which distributes meals in key locations across Kuwait. It's a reason to be proud when you see young men and women across Kuwait racing to participate in this program, including a number of our own employees."

#### Competitions and Prizes

During the event, attending employees enjoyed a number of activities and competitions presented by the famous radio personality Osama Fouda. The event was also attended by a number of social media influencers such as Bibi Alabdulmohsen and Alexandros Kasimis, who participated in Ooredoo's Ramadan television commercial for this year.

#### Token of appreciation

On behalf of all the employees in the company, Ooredoo Kuwait's Chief Corporate Legal and Regulatory Affairs Officer Dr Yusuf Al-Selili handed a trophy of appreciation to the company's CEO and General Manager Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani. The award comes to show gratitude and appreciation from all Ooredoo Kuwait's staff to their company's general manager for all his efforts and dedication to the company throughout the past three years since he took office.

#### Continued success

During his speech, Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub highlighted a number of activities since the beginning of the year, thanking all staff behind these achievements for their efforts. Since the beginning of the year, Ooredoo sponsored a number of outdoor

markets that focus on entrepreneurs and small and business enterprises, such as Murouj Market and Festum Festival for youth.

Ooredoo has also kicked off its third football tournament for employees, which is one of the biggest and most anticipated internal activities of the year. It took place on Hassan Abul Sports Center in Dasma and saw a big attendance from employees of all departments. The event comes in line with the company's commitment towards cultivating a healthy environment for all employees.

Alayoub also noted "In line with our ongoing commitment to being the biggest supporter of youth in Kuwait, we have sponsored a number of activities and initiatives in cooperation with the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs. This includes sponsoring The Arab Youth Capital 2017 initiative, which is one of the biggest initiatives for youth regionally. We're also proud of sponsoring Kuwait's biggest volunteer program in Kuwait for the third consecutive year, which managed to attract hundreds of participants from across Kuwait."

#### Volunteer activities

Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, kicked off its Ramadan program of activities, with distributing meals to the needy in Ooredoo's iftar tent, strategically located across the head office of the company on Soor Street. Ooredoo's volunteer program this year is also using a truck to deliver meals to those in need in different locations across Kuwait. The volunteer activities are in collaboration with Spread the Passion, which is collaborating with Ooredoo for the third consecutive year. Additionally, Ooredoo held an iftar feast for the children at the Kuwait Down Syndrome Center, to connect with the families and children in addition to the staff of the center during this holy month.

Ooredoo stated that supporting volunteer



Dr Youssef Al-Selili hands CEO of Ooredoo Kuwait a trophy of appreciation.



Social Media Influencers Bibi Alabdulmohsen (right) and Alexandros Kasimis (left) with CEO of Ooredoo Kuwait.



Ooredoo CEO and General Manager Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani

work stems from its deep-rooted values of caring, connecting and challenging, noting that this support comes to foster an environment that supports volunteer work and giving selflessly to help others, noting that this is especially true during the holy month of Ramadan which instills the values of caring for others.

Ooredoo is also proud to be working with different entities, such as the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science and the non-profit organization Spread the Passion which have put together a training program for youth, with lectures and workshops delivered by people with expertise in the field of volunteer work.

Ooredoo Kuwait also proudly participated in Boubyan Bank's initiative Mashrouk, by donating the excess food from its ghabqa to the bank's initiative. The initiative aims to preserve excess food and distribute it on the needy and poor families and individuals.

#### Products and Services



Ooredoo Kuwait's Corporate Communications Senior Director Mijbil Alayoub delivers his speech.

Ooredoo proudly launched a state-of-the-art data center, further reiterating the company's commitment to being one of the leading companies in information technology solutions, and the company of choice for prospective clients searching for ICT solutions, catering especially for the needs of corporates and businesses.

#### Ooredoo's Nojoom

Ooredoo has also recently announced the launch of its newly revamped Nojoom rewards program which offers its customers the best exclusive discounts. Accessible to all Ooredoo customers, the program offers members free upgrades, vouchers and discounts from a large variety of partners, ranging from service providers, retailers and hotels, and airline companies. In addition, customers use their Nojoom points to buy products from the Nojoom Online Rewards Store. More information about the program can be found on nojoom.ooredoo.com.kw.



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Crime

Report

JAIL TIME FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING PRODUCER

**KUWAIT:** The criminal court sentenced a Kuwaiti producer for 10 years in jail and fined him KD 50,000, while his Iraqi partner was sentenced to seven years, a KD 35,000 fine and deportation after being convicted of money laundering and trading in drugs. The Interior Ministry had announced the arrest of the suspect and charged him with trading in drugs using his show business company as a cover for his illegal activities as he turned his office into a laboratory producing the 'chemical' (spice) drug chemical. It said the suspect was importing raw material from abroad and took advantage of the fact that the substances are not included in the list of restricted material, as he imported them in as cosmetics material.

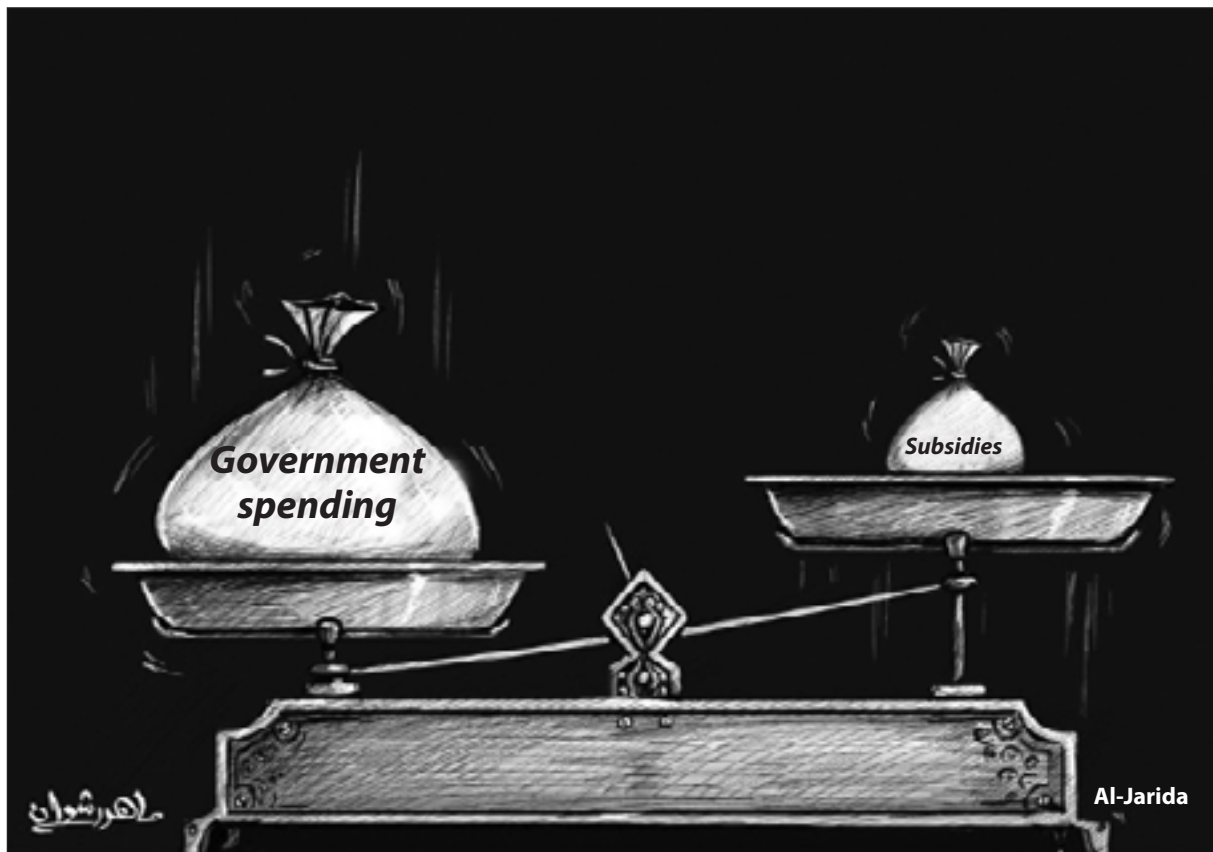
Scam

Detectives put an end to a Jamaican man's activities who cheated Asians by telling them he can turn KD 200 in KD 2,500, as they shut down his Instagram account. The '@Jesscampbell\_477' account was being monitored by detectives when they learned it was used for swindling by targeting people in Kuwait and making them believe they can make quick profits. Detectives found out about the account's activities and were able to determine the identity of its owner, named Shamar Christie from Jamaica, but there was no data about him in the database of the Interior Ministry. So, Instagram officials were contacted and the account was closed down. Interpol is being contacted to arrest the suspect. Separately, a citizen fell victim to three ex-convicts who sold her a "non-existing" real estate in the United States for KD 27,329, and was to receive rent money for it. The woman complained against a citizen and two Egyptians who offered her a house in the US during an exhibition and she was convinced with the idea and gave them the money. A security source said the woman waited for a call to be informed about the date for transferring the house, but to no avail, and discovered that she was swindled. When the identity of the suspects was checked, they were found to be in central prison where they are jailed for another case.

Accident

A Bangladeshi expat sustained several bruises when he was hit by a car while chasing two sheep belonging to his sponsor after escaping. The Bangladeshi was unloading three sheep from his sponsor's pick-up, when two of the sheep ran away, so he chased the other two and while crossing the street he was hit by a car driven by a woman, as the two sheep disappeared.

— Translated from the Arabic press



الانباء

Al-Anbaa

DEPENDENT VISA, LAWFUL RIGHT

By Mohammed Al-Jalahma

Some decisions are subject to cancellation or freezing because they do not rhyme with public tendencies. This applies for the recent decision not to renew residency visas for expatriates' parents and siblings. Some people hailed the decision with the excuse that it would reduce pressure on health services and facilities. However, very few bought such justifications before lawmakers and columnists criticized the decision. The main motive for rejecting such a decision was the negative impact it might have on Kuwait's reputation, namely after earning the title of the Humanitarian Center. For long decades, Kuwait has been building and funding the construction of scores of hospitals worldwide in the form of lending a hand of benevolence to various people who took our side during the Iraqi invasion crisis. In addition, we have so many businessmen whose benevolence is very graceful to use. Kuwait has been known as a state of luxury and benevolence for which we are so thankful to almighty Allah and it would be okay if we assist some needy people. What about those living amongst us? In my article last week, I said that expatriates have come to Kuwait legally. They did not come out of the blue or suddenly appear as desert truffles. They must be welcomed as long as they respect our laws. We can solve the demography problem in some other way. We must fight fake companies, especially those so many dare not to approach instead of turning the lives of expats, working hard to earn a living and build modern Kuwait, into hell.

— Translate by Kuwait Times

الجريدة

Al-Jarida

CONTINUITY

By Ali Khajah

What is needed today is that Kuwait's diplomatic status remains stable and unchanged by time. It should remain as the permanent resort to solve regional disputes regardless of the activities and experience of the head of the state who, himself, should benefit from Kuwait's status, not the other way round. For the past ten years or more, Kuwait has been viewed as a vital mediator in bridging gaps and easing regional tensions. His Highness the Amir plays a major role in calming things down amongst neighbors whenever disputes take place. Kuwait's major role as a diplomatic mediator was not a coincidence. It was the result of a long experience in diplomacy and international relations His Highness the Amir possesses. Such an experience enabled Kuwait to solve many hot regional disputes over years, which is a source of pride for us all as Kuwaitis.

Will Kuwait still have the same diplomatic role and regional weight after 20 years?

I know that what I am going to bring up might be too sensitive and so many writers would avoid writing about. Yet, I find it necessary to point this out: Will Kuwait still have the same diplomatic role and regional weight after 20 years? Is the vital role that Kuwait is currently playing only related to the person of His Highness the Amir or to Kuwait as a state and entity in itself? I personally believe that Kuwait's current diplomatic status is closely linked to His Highness the Amir, which makes us all very proud. However, it makes one worry about our distant future because, with all due respect to the diplomatic efforts exerted by the foreign ministry, this status is linked to His Highness instead of being the result of an institutional work that would maintain it through various times and occasions. To me, a high diplomatic status is not to be used just for bragging to be a Kuwaiti. It should act as a safety valve for Kuwait against any possible regional developments that might be dangerous.



Kuwait Airways employees attend the ghabqa.

KUWAIT AIRWAYS HOSTS GHABQA WITH OPEN DISCUSSION

**KUWAIT:** As is the time honored tradition at this time during Ramadan, Kuwait Airways, the official national airline of the State of Kuwait, welcomed around 400 employees to a special ghabqa evening event, held at Kuwait Airways head office. The event was attended by the top two senior executives at Kuwait Airways, Chairman Sami Fahad Al-Rushaid and CEO Ebrahim Al-Khuzam. Deputy Director-General of the Aviation Safety, Air Transport and Safety Management Coordination Centre, Eng. Emad Al-Juluwi, was also in attendance. The event was organized by KAC's Director of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Fayeze Al-Enezi.



(From left) Ebrahim Al-Khuzam, Sami Fahad Al-Rushaid, Emad Al-Juluwi, Fayeze Al-Enezi.

This year's KAC ghabqa event saw a huge turnout from employees, all of whom were given the opportunity to engage with the senior management, in a Q&A session, to discuss some of the airline's many developments. Commenting on the evening's events, Enezi said: "Employees were able to engage with the top management on a variety of conversation topics and were updated on a number of ongoing developments, here at Kuwait Airways. The evening was a huge success."

NBK SHARES TRADITIONAL GERGEAN MOMENTS AT NBK'S CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

**KUWAIT:** On the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) held its annual gergean event at NBK Hospital, Sabah Medical district, to share with the children the happy moments of gergean and present them with treat bags and gifts. The event was attended by NBK Public Relations Team and a number of NBK Staff members.



The visit to NBK Hospital comes as part of an extensive social outreach program specifically mapped out and implemented by NBK to show the bank's commitment to the community. NBK believes that helping the children and their families is an integral part of the bank's culture and practices that reflect its deep commitment to its corporate social responsibility. This was the main reason that led NBK to build its children hospital at Sabah Medical district many years ago. NBK Family's visit to the hospital was emotional and overwhelming for both the children and the team. It is a well rooted tradition that has been carried out by NBK each year in its efforts to continuously have an active role in the Kuwaiti society.

ZAIN DISTRIBUTES GERGEAN TO CHILDREN IN HOSPITALS

COMPANY'S TEAM VISITED BIGGEST HOSPITALS IN KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, shared the joys of the tradition of gergean with children and patients in a number of the biggest hospitals in Kuwait. The company's team visited the hospitals during this blessed time of year to distribute gifts and gergean to children and their families and celebrate the occasion in a family atmosphere full of joy and happiness. Zain organizes visits to hospitals several times a year in many occasions, most importantly the holy month of Ramadan. The initiative, which comes under the umbrella of Zain's Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility strategy, aims at sharing the blessings of the holy month with the children, their parents, as well as the medical staff who take care of them. Zain's team, including staff and volunteers, distributed gifts and gergean candy to children in a number of Kuwait's biggest and most prominent hospitals including Zain Hospital, Al-Amiri Hospital, Al-Razi Hospital, Ibn Sina Hospital, and NBK Hospital. Zain expressed its heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to all the parties involved in organizing the visits including hospital staff, officials, children's families, and the volunteers themselves, who all helped draw a smile on the faces of the children. Zain highlighted that the aim of undertaking the annual hospital visits during special occasions is part of the company's commitment to celebrating the Holy Month of Ramadan through ongoing social activities that generate a sense of generosity and caring. As a responsible telecommunications company, Zain looks to improve the lives of the people within the communities it serves. Zain affirmed that its social and Corporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility campaign during the holy month of Ramadan includes an extensive array of initiatives and programs that will focus on helping less fortunate people to enjoy Ramadan happily, as well as celebrating the true spirit the Holy month brings.



VIVA VISITS CHILDREN AT SABAH AND AMIRI HOSPITALS

AS PART OF ITS CSR PROGRAM

**KUWAIT:** VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, organized a visit to the children at Sabah and Amiri Hospitals as part of its CSR program in the holy month of Ramadan. VIVA's Public Relations team took the opportunity to spread joy and happiness among children and draw smile on their faces to relieve their pain. The Visit included magician show, face painting and gifts. VIVA is keen to continue its ongoing socially responsible role in the community by spreading the spirit of goodness amongst Kuwaiti society. We believe at VIVA in taking a holistic approach to our CSR activities, one that engages our employees, and creates goodwill in our communities with a focus on helping to grow and develop the State of Kuwait. VIVA's Corporate Social Responsibility 'CSR' activities can be reviewed on the company's website at <https://www.viva.com.kw/csr>. This offers a description of each CSR initiative that VIVA has supported, or taken on since its inception.







IS propaganda hard hit by killings and battlefield setbacks

## TEMER WINS VICTORY IN BID TO KEEP POWER - FOR NOW

# US FORCES BACK PHILIPPINE TROOPS IN MARAWI

## MILITANTS KILL 13 PHILIPPINE MARINES IN WAR-TORN CITY

**MARAWI, Philippines:** United States special forces are providing support to the Philippine military battling to dislodge Islamist militants in a southern city, the US embassy said yesterday, as 13 Filipino marines were killed in fresh fighting. Philippine troops are struggling to defeat hundreds of fighters, who rampaged through Marawi on May 23 flying black flags of the Islamic State (IS) group, and have used civilians as human shields, bomb-proof tunnels and anti-tank weapons to fortify their positions.

Friday's ferocious, street-to-street gunbattles with the militants saw 13 troops killed, in a dramatic surge in the toll from the conflict, Philippine military spokesmen said. A 15-year-old boy was also killed by a stray bullet as he took part in Friday prayers at a mosque in Marawi as the skirmishes raged outside, an AFP video journalist said. It was among the heaviest fighting seen in mainly Muslim Marawi as the air force battered parts of the city with strikes to support ground troops. Some 40 marines were wounded in the gun battles that lasted 14 hours, according to military spokesman Colonel Edgardo Arevalo.

As the conflict intensified, the US embassy in Manila said American forces were providing assistance to the Filipino troops, although it declined to give details for security reasons. "At the request of the government of the Philippines, US special operations forces are assisting the (Philippine military) with ongoing operations in Marawi," the embassy said in a statement.

### 'Intense firefights'

Marawi-based military spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Jo-ar Herrera confirmed the US help, adding that the special forces were not fighting, but "providing technical support". He told AFP Friday's deaths amounted to the military's biggest single-day loss in the campaign. Herrera also said there are "strong indications" that Omarkhayam and Madie Maute, two leaders of the Marawi attack, were killed in separate operations. But he added the military is still "validating" the report and there is no way of independently confirming it.

"There were intense firefights, house-to-house gun battles," Herrera said at a news conference in Marawi earlier in describing Friday's gun battles, adding that the total number of government troops killed in the conflict was 58. Over 20 civilians have been confirmed killed due to the fighting, according to the government, but the true number is likely to be higher with authorities yet to fully assess the roughly 10 percent of Marawi still being held by the militants.

Tens of thousands have fled Marawi, which



**MARAWI, Philippines:** The body of Abdillah Masid, 15, is surrounded by his family inside the Camp Ranao Mosque in Barangay Saber on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao on Friday. Abdilla died after a stray bullet hit him in the neck during Friday prayers inside the mosque. —AP

is the Catholic country's most important Muslim city, as the fighting ripped through residential neighborhoods, with more than 200,000 displaced people now living in precarious conditions and vulnerable to deadly health risks, the International Committee of the Red Cross warned Friday. About 2,000 people are also believed to still be trapped in militant-held areas as insurgents continue to entrench themselves two weeks into the conflict, which saw them take a Catholic priest hostage, open up two jails and destroy many buildings.

Herrera said security forces were struggling to contain the fighters without causing civilian casualties. "The local terrorist groups are using the mosque, they are entrenched there. They also used civilians as human shields... we are very precise in our operations to avoid collateral damage."

President Rodrigo Duterte has said the militant attack was part of a wider plot by IS to establish a base in the southern region of Mindanao, and declared martial law there to quell the threat. The announcement of US help in the embattled southern region of

Mindanao comes after Duterte has sought to reduce the Philippines' reliance on the United States and build much closer ties with China and Russia. The US Embassy said Washington would "continue to work with the Philippines to address shared threats to the peace and security of our countries, including on counterterrorism issues" in its statement Saturday.

The US on Monday gave the Philippines hundreds of machine guns, pistols and grenade launchers, which a local commander said would be used in the fight against Islamist militants. Philippine military leaders

have said their troops unexpectedly interrupted plans by the fighters to take over Marawi in a spectacular event to show that IS had arrived in the Philippines and was intent on carving out territory. They initially estimated there were about 100 gunmen but later said there were as many as 500, supplemented by foreign fighters from Chechnya, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The gunmen have also had a surprisingly large arsenal of military hardware, including rocket-propelled grenades and a so-far inexhaustible amount of ammunition. —AFP

# MAY FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL

## PRIME MINISTER'S TOP TWO AIDES QUIT

**LONDON:** British Prime Minister Theresa May was fighting for survival yesterday after a failed election gamble undermined her authority and plunged the country into a major political crisis, days before the start of talks to leave the European Union. May's bet that she could strengthen her hand by crushing what she believed to be a weak opposition Labour Party backfired spectacularly on Thursday as voters stripped her Conservative Party of a parliamentary majority.

The stunning outcome leaves May battling to unite different factions in her party and reliant on a handful of Northern Irish parliamentarians just nine days before Britain starts the tortuous process of negotiating its departure from the EU. May's two top aides, Nick Timothy and Fiona Hill, announced they had quit on Saturday, following sustained criticism of the campaign within the party.

Britain's typically pro-Conservative press savaged May yesterday and questioned whether she could

remain in power, only two months after she started the clock ticking on the two-year EU divorce process. The best-selling Sun newspaper said senior members of the party had vowed to get rid of May, but would wait at least six months because they feared a leadership contest could propel Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn into power. "She's staying, for now," one Conservative Party source told Reuters.

The outcome risks upsetting the political balance in Northern Ireland by aligning London more closely with the pro-British side in the divided province, and increases the chance that Britain will fall out of the EU in 2019 without a deal. May called the snap election to win a clear mandate for her plan to take Britain out of the EU's single market and customs union, so she could slash immigration. But her party is deeply divided over what it wants from Brexit and the result means British businesses still have no idea what trading rules they can expect in the coming years. The

British pound tumbled against the US dollar and the euro after the election result.

### National Emergency

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she assumed Britain still wanted to leave the European Union and that talks must start quickly. But Elmar Brok, a German conservative and the European Parliament's top Brexit expert, told the Ruhr Nachrichten newspaper the talks would now be more complicated. "May won't be able to make any compromises because she lacks a broad parliamentary majority," he said. If she is to succeed in delivering the wishes of 52 percent of the public and take Britain out of the EU, she must find a way to secure the full support of her party to pass legislation preparing for and enacting the departure.

Anand Menon, professor of politics at King's College London, said her lack of a majority made it far more likely that Britain would leave the EU without a deal. "Imagine she survives until autumn of next year," he told Reuters. "You will have a very fractious parliament. It is far from guaranteed to vote the deal through." A failure to get legislation through parliament could eventually result in the need for another election. Party insiders are placing bets on how long May will last, less than a year after Britain's surprise referendum decision propelled her into Downing Street. "Theresa May is certainly the strongest leader that we have at the moment," lawmaker David Jones told the BBC. When asked about her future, senior Conservative lawmaker Owen Paterson said "Let's see how it pans out". The Times newspaper's front page declared "May stares into the abyss". It said Britain was "effectively leaderless" and the "country all but ungovernable". Its cartoon depicted May in a coffin with her feet sticking out and a speech bubble saying "Nothing has changed", a line she repeated several times as she reversed a key policy on social care during the campaign.

"The Conservatives have not yet broken the British system of democracy, but through their hubris and incompetence they have managed to make a mockery of it," it said in an editorial. "The task of restoring orderly government in order to make sense of Brexit is now a national emergency, and it falls to them." The Telegraph newspaper said senior Conservatives including Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, interior minister Amber Rudd and Brexit minister David Davis were taking soundings over whether to replace May. —Reuters



**LONDON:** Anti-Conservative Party and anti-Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) demonstrators gather with placards in Parliament Square in front of the Houses of Parliament yesterday. —AFP

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## IS PROPAGANDA HARD HIT BY KILLINGS, BATTLEFIELD SETBACKS

**BEIRUT:** Supported by crutches and a fellow Islamic State militant, Abu Shuaib Al-Maslawi hopped on his left leg toward the explosives-laden black SUV that he would minutes later plow into a group of Iraqi troops in the northern city of Mosul. Then, turning toward the camera, the one-legged suicide bomber spoke his final words, urging Muslims in the West who cannot come to the extremists' self-declared caliphate in Iraq and Syria, to carry out attacks inside their home countries.

"I urge you in the name of God that before sunset may your swords be dripping with the infidels' blood," said Maslawi, who appeared to be in his 50s, with a long grey beard and a black Islamic skull cap. "Every drop of blood that is spilled there will reduce pressure on us," he added, gripping the steering wheel. Drone footage then showed the heavily armored SUV careening into a line of Iraqi troop vehicles parked outside a building in Mosul, followed by an explosion, a huge fire ball and a cloud of black smoke.

Posted by IS on social media in late May, the video contains a change in message and tone that reflects the pressure the extremist group is under as it continues to lose ground in Iraq and Syria. The Islamic State group's propaganda machine used to be confident, promising that its self-declared caliphate would be "lasting and expanding." But in recent months, as the group's territory has shrunk, its messages have as well.

Far from the boastful, self-aggrandiz-

ing videos of the past, the group is now urging fighters to resist and not run away from the battlefield. The quality of the videos has dropped as well after some of the extremists' most prominent propagandists and producers were killed. Slickly produced IS propaganda videos shot from multiple angles with religious songs in the background used to spread fear among the group's opponents, with gruesome footage of beheadings, shootings, confessions of detainees and sophisticated attacks against their rivals.

In the videos, the group boasted that Muslims from all over the world were flocking to what they called the "first caliphate" since the fall of the Ottoman Empire a century ago. Now the videos mostly urge fighters to be steadfast and call on the local population to join the group after hundreds of IS fighters have been killed over the past months. "The propaganda of the organization has become zero to be frank. It indicates their collapse and that the group is retreating," said Omar Abu Laila, a Syrian opposition activist now based in Germany who is originally from Syria's eastern province of Deir el-Zour, held by IS. "Their calls for people to join the group are signs of weakness."

### Major Blow

A major blow came in August, when an airstrike in Syria killed Wael Al-Fayadh, better known as Abu Mohammed Al-Furqan, who was in charge of producing highly professional propaganda videos. One of the group's main media arms, Al-Furqan Media, was named after him. He was replaced by



**MOSUL:** This undated frame grab from video posted online May 17, 2017 by supporters of the Islamic State militant group shows an American fighter identified as Abu Hamza Al-Americi sitting next to rocket launchers said to be manufactured by IS. — AP

senior commander who was known for fiery speeches that used to boost the morale of fighters. In 2014, after the group declared its caliphate, al-Adnani vowed to conquer Baghdad as well as the Shiite holy cities of Najaf and Karbala in southern Iraq.

Another blow came in October when a US airstrike in Syria killed Wael Al-Fayadh, better known as Abu Mohammed Al-Furqan, who was in charge of producing highly professional propaganda videos. One of the group's main media arms, Al-Furqan Media, was named after him. He was replaced by

Abu Bashir Al-Maslawi, who was killed a short time later. In late May, the founder of the group's Aamaq news agency, Baraa Kadak, was reportedly killed along with his daughter in an airstrike in the eastern Syrian town of Mayadeen.

A video released last month titled "Answer the Call" urged young men to join IS to make up for the loss of manpower. "What are you waiting for? The infidels have gathered around us from all over the world," it said, showing scenes of IS fighters trying to persuade men in mosques and clubs to join the fight as suicide bombers. Another titled, "We will

guide them to our path," showed two men, one from Canada and the other from Britain, carrying out a suicide attack in Mosul. The video also tried to market the group as an organization that can produce its own weapons, such as rocket-propelled grenades, shells and remote-controlled small vehicles that can carry mines.

"They have produced 158 videos since November ... and none of them were professional like 'Salil al-Sawarem,'" said Hisham Al-Hashimi, an expert on IS who advises the Iraqi government. He was referring to a video - "Crack of the Swords," in English - that was released days before IS captured Mosul in the summer of 2014 and was widely believed to have helped speed the collapse of Iraqi forces defending the city. "Today ... there is nothing that differentiates between their (videos) and those of other ... rebel factions," Hashimi said. "It only calls for defensive operations, suicide bombings and to be steadfast. Nothing more."

Despite the battlefield setbacks in Iraq and Syria, IS has been quick to claim responsibility for recent overseas attacks in Britain, Iran and elsewhere. The Iranian Intelligence Ministry said five assailants in the twin attacks this week in Tehran had previously fought for IS in Iraq and Syria, and the extremist group's Aamaq news agency released a 24-second video purportedly filmed inside parliament during one of the attacks. — AP

## AL-JAZEERA A TARGET IN GULF CONFRONTATION WITH QATAR

### NETWORK HAS LONG ANGERED MIDEAST GOVERNMENTS

**DOHA:** The Arabic news network Al-Jazeera has been thrust into the center of the story as Qatar came under virtual siege by its Gulf neighbors, pressuring it to shut down the channel that has infuriated them with its coverage for 20 years. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt severed ties with Qatar this week over allegations it supports terrorism and, more specifically, that it uses Al-Jazeera as a mouthpiece to destabilize the region.

The Qatar-based network, one of the most widely seen Arabic channels in the world, had

bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani. He said the allegations are based on "false and fabricated news."

But as Qatar became more isolated this week, so too did Al-Jazeera. Qatar's opponents shut down access to the channel and its affiliate websites in their territories two weeks ago. On Monday, they blocked airspace to Qatari flights; Saudi Arabia sealed Qatar's only land border; and it and Jordan closed Al-Jazeera offices on their soil. Qatar's opponents reportedly demand a slate of actions, including shutting down or dramatically changing the tone of the network.

stances of Saudi Arabia and its fellow Sunni monarchies in the Gulf. For example, it has maintained good ties with Iran, Saudi Arabia's regional nemesis, and backed the Brotherhood, which Gulf governments and Egypt have branded a terrorist group. Similarly, Al-Jazeera has been a renegade in the Arab media landscape.

American viewers became familiar with Al-Jazeera after the attacks of Sept 11, 2001, when its golden-hued Arabic logo became synonymous with video messages by America's then-Most Wanted Terrorist, Osama bin Laden. The channel aired the messages it received, sparking frequent complaints by then-President George W. Bush's White House. The station defended its policy, saying the messages were newsworthy.

### Telling the Truth

Al-Jazeera was the first Arab satellite news channel to offer a range of views outside of heavily censored state media. It was the first Arab-owned news outlet to host Israeli officials and commentators, which some analysts note coincided with Qatar's ties with Israel at the time. Acting Director General of the Al-Jazeera Media Network, Mostefa Souag, told the AP he believes Al-Jazeera is being targeted because "we tell the truth." "Certain people maybe don't like the truth," he said, or possibly too because of the network's "relationship with Qatar." "Al-Jazeera is going to continue with its editorial policy. We're doing the job to the best that we can," he added.

Bassam Awaidah, media professor at Bir Zeit University in the West Bank, said despite Al-Jazeera's insistence that it is editorially independent, the region's media are tools in the hands of governments. "Al-Jazeera's coverage is clearly biased in favor of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood," Awaidah said. "When there is a Hamas wrongdoing, Al-Jazeera hides it, and when a similar or lesser action comes from (the rival) Palestinian Authority, Al-Jazeera reports it and exaggerates it."

Al-Jazeera's counterweight is largely seen as Al-Arabiya, a Saudi-owned news channel that closely reflects Saudi policy. It was launched in 2003, the year after Al-Jazeera's coverage of a Saudi peace plan with Israel prompted the kingdom to pull its ambassador from Qatar for six years. Al-Arabiya and other media outlets across the Gulf and Egypt have released an avalanche of criticism of Qatar, accusing it of terrorist activities. Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain warned that anyone who supporting Qatar on social media could be fined and jailed. — AP



**DOHA:** In this June 8, 2017 photo, Al-Jazeera staff work at the TV station. — AP

long angered Mideast governments, since at its start it was one of the few that presented alternative viewpoints. Critics say it has in past years turned to promoting Islamist movements as a tool of Qatar's foreign policy. The region's rulers see many of these movements, including the Muslim Brotherhood, as threats.

Qatar and the station deny the accusations. Qatar's foreign minister told AP there was no way the country would silence Al-Jazeera, which says its channels reach 100 countries and 310 million homes worldwide. "If anyone thinks they are going to impose anything on my internal affairs or my internal issues, this is not going to happen. We are an independent country with our own sovereignty," said Sheikh Mohammed

The UAE's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said the decision to block the channel is "not about Al-Jazeera, it's not about the media." "The media aspect of it is part of what I would say an overall support for extremism," he said. Al-Jazeera and Qatar have been intertwined since it was launched in 1996, with financial backing from the ruling emir at the time, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani - just months after the Qataris accused Saudi Arabia of a failed coup attempt. Throughout its existence, the station has been mostly funded by the Qatari government. Its chairman is a member of Qatar's ruling Al-Thani family.

Energy-rich Qatar has long pursued an ambitious foreign policy, bucking many of the



**MOSUL:** Iraqi government forces stand at attention in western Mosul's Zanjili neighborhood on Friday during ongoing battles to retake the city from Islamic State (IS) group fighters. — AFP

## IRAQ ON CUSP OF MOSUL VICTORY THREE YEARS AFTER MAJOR DEFEAT

**MOSUL:** Three years after the Islamic State group routed them in Mosul, Iraqi forces are now on the cusp of retaking the city from the militants and avenging a historic debacle. The fall of Mosul was the worst defeat that Iraqi forces suffered in the war with IS, and regaining it would cap a major turnaround for security forces that broke and ran despite outnumbering the militants who attacked the second city in 2014. "Of course, we celebrate the successes of the military" three years after the city's fall, said Staff Lieutenant General Abdulghani Al-Assadi, a senior commander in Iraq's elite Counter-Terrorism Service, which has spearheaded the battle.

When IS seized Mosul on June 10, 2014 and drove south toward the federal capital, the atmosphere was not one of celebration, but rather fear. "Three years ago, around this time, Daesh... was moving rapidly towards Baghdad," said Brett McGurk, the US envoy to the international coalition against IS, using an Arabic acronym for the group. "Mosul fell, seven divisions of the Iraqi security forces simply disintegrated," he said.

Iraqi forces "were not prepared for a threat like that" posed by IS in 2014, said coalition spokesman Colonel Ryan Dillon. IS "was knocking on the doors of Baghdad." At that time, recovery "looked almost impossible, and many were saying, 'Well, this is the end of Iraq,'" McGurk said. A combination of factors ultimately stopped the militants short of Baghdad, and they were not able to launch a large-scale conventional attack on the capital. Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the country's top Shiite cleric, called for volunteers to battle IS, and pre-existing Iran-backed Shiite militias fought under that banner to first halt the militants and then slowly push them back, while new volunteer units were also established. The United

States meanwhile launched an air campaign against IS in Iraq about two months after Mosul's fall, which became an international coalition effort also involving training and other support for Iraqi forces.

### Better, but still flawed

The Iraqi security forces have since recaptured much of the territory seized by IS, including three cities, and have retaken most of Mosul, the fourth and largest. In Mosul, "nothing remains for Daesh except three or four neighborhoods in which it is surrounded," Assadi said. When IS seized Mosul, "the units that were present were in fact lacking some preparations and some equipment... and therefore the fall (of the city) happened quickly," he said. "Now the units are well prepared and their relationship with the citizen - and this is a very important point - is a good relationship and the citizen cooperates with the units," Assadi said.

"Success in the Mosul operation will highlight how far the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) have come since their collapse in June 2014," said Patrick Martin, Iraq analyst at the Institute for the Study of War. But Martin noted that "recapturing terrain in Mosul should not obscure the fact that the ISF remains incomplete and flawed," including that "they still have insufficient manpower to clear and hold the country."

Pushing the militants back has taken a massive toll on Iraq: years of battles have left thousands dead and hundreds of thousands displaced, and laid waste to swathes of the country, while many suffered under brutal militant rule. "Nineveh province in general and Mosul specifically passed through a major tragedy," said Staff Lieutenant General Abdulwahab Al-Saadi, another senior Counter-Terrorism Service commander. — AFP

## HAMAS DENIES IT BUILT TUNNEL UNDER UN SCHOOLS

**JERUSALEM:** Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas has denied that it or any other militant group built a tunnel under two UN schools in Gaza after its discovery drew a strong UN protest. Over the years, Gaza's Hamas rulers have built a labyrinth of tunnels, some passing under the border into Israel which they used to launch attacks during their last conflict in 2014. On June 1, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) found "part of a tunnel that passes under two adjacent agency schools in the Maghazi camp" during construction work, spokesman Christopher Guinness said on Friday.

Hamas "strongly condemned" the UNRWA statement, saying it would be exploited by Israel to "justify its crimes". Hamas had clarified the issue "with all factions and resistance forces, who clearly stated they had no actions related to the resistance in the said location," the movement said, adding that it respected UNRWA's work. But Israel's UN envoy Danny Danon said the Jewish state viewed the tunnel discovery "with the utmost seriousness".

"The discovery of this terror tunnel operating directly under the classrooms of young children is not an isolated incident, but rather the latest of deeply concerning attempts by Hamas terrorists to systematically exploit the organs of the UN," he said. "The latest finding verifies once again that the Hamas cruelty knows no limits including endangering centers of education and using children as human shields," Danon

said. Guinness said that the tunnel "has no entry or exit points on the premises nor is it connected to the schools or other buildings in any way." "UNRWA condemns the existence of such tunnels in the strongest possible terms. It is unacceptable that students and staff are placed at risk in such a way," he said. Guinness said the agency had "robustly intervened and protested to Hamas in Gaza". He said UNRWA will seal the tunnel, which was discovered while the schools were empty during the summer holiday.

Attack tunnels were a key weapon for Hamas during the 2014 Gaza war. Hamas also built a vast network of tunnels under Gaza's border with Egypt to smuggle goods and allegedly weapons. The Israeli army found and destroyed several tunnels during the 2014 war. Israel and Hamas have fought three wars in the Gaza Strip since the group wrested control of the territory from the rival Fatah movement of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas in 2007. — AFP



**GAZA:** A picture taken yesterday shows a general view of the entrance of a UN school at the Al-Maghazi refugee camp, located in the center of the Gaza Strip. — AFP

## IRAN ARRESTS 8 SUSPECTED OF SUPPORTING TEHRAN ATTACKS

**TEHRAN:** Iranian authorities have arrested eight suspects for allegedly supporting the Islamic State-claimed attacks on Iran's parliament and the shrine of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini that killed 17 people in Tehran, the state-run IRNA news agency reported yesterday. The report quoted Ahmad Fazelian, chief justice of Alborz province west of Tehran as saying: "These agents who were supporters of the two terrorist groups, and had full coordination with them, were arrested and they were delivered to Tehran's judicial and security authorities."

Meanwhile, Iran police chief Gen Hossein Ashtari said several people with connections to the attackers were arrested around the capital area. Two guards, 10 government staffers and five civilians were killed in the attacks that simultaneously targeted the country's parliament and the shrine of the late founder of the

Islamic Republic Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The Interior Ministry in a statement increased the number of wounded to 52.

On Thursday, Iranian authorities said the assailants were Iranian nationals and that they had arrested six suspects, including one woman, since the attack Wednesday in Tehran. On Friday, the Intelligence Ministry announced that it had detained 41 suspects in Tehran and the western Kurdish provinces. It called the detainees "elements of the Wahhabi IS group", and said they were involved in operations, communication and logistics for the local Islamic State group cell. Last August, the government announced it had executed a number of Kurdish Islamist extremists from a group known as Towhid and Jihad after convicting them of armed robbery, killing civilians and planning bomb attacks. — AP



## TRUMP LEANS ON FAMILY AS DON JR COMES OUT SWINGING

**NEW YORK:** In business as in the White House, Donald Trump leans on family. While daughter Ivanka deflects criticism by projecting tolerance on social issues, elder brother Donald Jr has come out swinging for his father. When Trump jets off to his New Jersey golf club on Friday, he leaves behind a US capital buzzing after the dramatic testimony from sacked FBI director James Comey about what he called the US president's "very concerning" behavior.

Just a week ago, the president had sparked global outcry over his decision to walk away from the Paris climate accords, defying months of apparent lobbying from Ivanka, an unpaid White House advisor and long his close confidante. But if Ivanka kept her head down a week ago - by not attending the Paris announcement, which coincided with the Jewish holiday of Shavuot - her elder brother moved center stage as Comey testified on Thursday.

Don Jr blasted out a Twitter tirade and delivered a fiery television appearance as the 70-year-old president stayed uncharacteristically silent on Twitter, allowing his son and personal lawyer to do all the talking. "This has been a 10-month witch hunt," he told Fox News. "Give the guy a chance. Let him do what he was elected to do and he will do a phenomenal job." "You see how disgusting the swamp really is," he

followed up, in a nod to his father's "Drain the Swamp" slogan about cleaning up Washington. "It's going to make 2020 that much easier."

### Mouthpiece

Intelligent, articulate and with the bravado typical of a New York businessman, it was a return to the spotlight for Don Jr, a respected surrogate during last year's campaign who is thought to harbor political ambitions of his own. Analysts say it is natural for the president to lean on his family. "It makes sense, given that Trump himself can't get involved in talking about the investigation now that there is a special prosecutor," says Ronald Kessler, an author, former investigative reporter and friend of the president.

"He is very close to his family," agreed Jeanne Zaino, a professor of political science at Iona College. "Trump Jr was really being the mouthpiece of his father, saying exactly what his father would have said would he have been able to tweet," she told AFP. To many on both sides of the political divide, Don Jr and Ivanka have been reasonable and more measured than their father - devoted surrogates who could each have political futures if they desired. It was telling in last year's toxic election campaign, when Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton replied: "His children," when

asked for one thing she respected about Trump, praising them as "incredibly able and devoted".

### No estrangement

Of course, Don Jr's sudden explosion back onto the scene does not mean Ivanka is suddenly out of favor after the climate change fallout. "There is no way that the kids are ever going to feel any estrangement from their father," Kessler told AFP. "Ivanka is not a tweeter like her father," said Zaino. "It's not a surprise he turned to somebody else - it would not be a good use of her public image and the work they have her doing," she explained.

The 35-year-old mother of three, former model, businesswoman and reputed favorite child prefers to stay away from attack-dog politics. Photographed leaving her home for the White House in a parade of dresses and shoes from her label, she carefully cultivates a more moderate image, returning to Twitter after the climate decision to voice her support for LGBT rights. Regular photographs of her children posted on her social media accounts also evoke a softer side to the Trump family - a tactic that Don Jr has also favored.

But if both children's futures depend on how their father's presidency plays out, Don Jr also treads a fine line between politics and the business.

Running The Trump Organization with younger brother Eric in their father's absence, they are not supposed to discuss business with their father - an

arrangement that came under fire from political opponents and ethics experts. "So far so good, but it's only been a few months," said Zaino. —AFP



**NEW YORK:** Donald Trump Jr, executive vice president of The Trump Organization, discusses the expansion of Trump hotels on June 5, 2017. —AP

## TRUMP SAYS US COMMITTED TO NATO'S MUTUAL DEFENSE

### US PRESIDENT TO VISIT POLAND

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump said Friday that the United States remained committed to NATO's mutual defense pledge, after he failed to endorse it in a speech in Brussels last month. Amid worries by Washington's European partners that the US leader had not fully bought into the Atlantic alliance, Trump told reporters: "I'm committing the United States to Article Five. Certainly we are there to protect." "That's one of the reasons that I want people to make sure we have a very, very strong force, by paying the kinds of money necessary to have that force," Trump told a joint press conference with visiting Romanian President Klaus Iohannis.

The US president stunned Europe's leaders at a summit in Brussels on May 25 when he failed to publicly back the now 29-member bloc's founding mutual defense guarantee. Instead he castigated the allies for failing to pay their way with contributions to NATO forces, singling out especially Germany. According to Politico, Trump's defense and security advisors included in his prepared speech a clear endorsement of the mutual defense pledge, but Trump himself struck it out just before speaking. Doubts have remained since then, despite US diplomats and military leaders themselves restating the pledge.

Just days before his Jan 20 inauguration, Trump rocked the post-World War II western alliance by calling NATO "obsolete". Article Five has been the core of the NATO treaty's strength since it was formed amid a budding Cold War with communist states - particularly the Soviet Union - in 1949. It has only been invoked once - in support of the United States, after the Sept 11, 2001 attacks. On Thursday, Democrats on the House Armed Services Committee had called on Trump to declare his support for Article Five.

Trump's pledge on Friday came

shortly before the White House announced that he would travel to NATO ally Poland ahead of the Group of 20 summit in early July. "The visit will reaffirm America's steadfast commitment to one of our closest European allies and emphasize the administration's priority of strengthening NATO's collective defense," the White House said.

### 'Money pouring in' to NATO

Speaking beside Iohannis, Trump suggested his pressure on other NATO members had had an effect. "As you know, I have been an advocate for strengthening our NATO alliance through greater responsibility and burden sharing among member nations," he said. "Because of our actions, money is starting to pour in to NATO.... Other countries

are starting to realize that it's time to pay up. And they're doing that. Very proud of that fact." "Because together we can confront the common security challenges facing the world," he added.

Trump praised Iohannis for boosting his country's defense spending. Romania joined the NATO alliance in 2004. "We hope our other NATO allies will follow Romania's lead," Trump said. Iohannis said NATO's mutual defense commitment was a crucial part of a defense against an aggressive Russia. "In my opinion, we have to be very clear, very simple, very straightforward if we talk about Russia, and with Russia," he said. "In my opinion, we need dialogue. But on the other hand, we need what we all together decided in NATO - a

strong deterrence."

Republican Senator Tom Cotton called Trump's explicit statement of commitment to Article Five "a good thing". "But make no mistake: uttering magic words does not deter aggressors like [Russian President] Vladimir Putin. Only the credible threat of military force does," he said in a statement. "And until Democrats and our European allies get serious about funding our common defense, deterrence in Europe will remain dangerously weak."

Jorge Benitez, a NATO specialist at the Atlantic Council, said Trump's statement was less than a whole-hearted commitment. "Trump keeps using caveat: 'I want people... paying the kind of money necessary to have that force,'" Benitez said on Twitter. —AFP



**HAVANA:** In this March 21, 2016 file photo, Cuban President Raul Castro (right) lifts up the arm of US President Barack Obama at the conclusion of their joint news conference at the Palace of the Revolution. —AP

## TRUMP EXPECTED TO UNVEIL CUBA POLICY 'NEXT FRIDAY'

**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump is expected to visit Miami as early as next Friday to announce a new Cuba policy that could tighten rules on trade and travel, rolling back parts of former President Barack Obama's opening to the island, according to a US official and people familiar with the matter. Trump's aides are nearing completion of a review of relations with Cuba and are expected to send recommendations to his national security team and then to the president in coming days, a US official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Plans are in the works for Trump to roll out his new approach on June 16 in a speech in Miami, where he is expected to claim fulfillment of a campaign promise and justify it, at least in part, on human rights grounds, the sources said. But they cautioned that a delay in the announcement is still possible if it takes longer for Trump to make a final decision.

While specific changes have not yet been finalized, the sources say Trump is likely to unveil a partial rather than complete rollback of Obama's actions, which included restoration of relations and reopening of embassies after a diplomatic breakthrough in 2014 with America's former Cold War foe. Among the options under consideration are banning US companies from doing business with Cuban enterprises tied to the military - which controls a large part of the communist-ruled island's economy - and tightening rules on Americans traveling there, according to people familiar with the discussions.

With the Cuba review approaching its final stages, both sides of the issue have recently stepped up lobbying to sway Trump's decision. In the letter sent to Trump on Friday, seven of his fellow Republicans warned that rescinding Obama's policies would "incentivize Cuba to once again become dependent on countries like Russia and China."

Senior officials at the National Security Council met on Friday to begin finalizing a list of recommendations, the sources said. Trump's changes are expected to stop short of breaking diplomatic relations restored two years ago after more than five decades of hostility, administration officials say. But divisions remain within the Trump administration over how far to go, especially given that rapprochement with Cuba has created opportunities for American companies.

### Internal Debate

Some aides have argued that Trump, a former real estate magnate who won the presidency promising to unleash US business and create jobs, would have a hard time defending any moves that close off the Cuban market. But other advisers have contended that it is important to make good on a promise to Cuban-Americans whose support they considered significant winning Florida in the 2016 election. Miami is home to the largest Cuban-American community.

The US airline and travel industries have made clear they do not want to see reinstatement of Cuba restrictions. "Imposing new regulations on travel to and trade with Cuba would be bad politics, bad policy, and bad for US business," said James Williams, president of Engage Cuba, a Washington-based lobbying group. But Trump has come under heavy pressure from Cuban-American lawmakers, including Senator Marco Rubio and Representative Mario Diaz-Balart, to roll back Obama's rapprochement.

Rubio, a member of the Senate foreign relations and intelligence committees, is seen by Trump's aides as an important figure to cultivate at a time when the members of his administration are under investigation over contacts with Russian officials. Rubio and other Obama critics have argued that he gave away too much to Cuban President Raul Castro for too little in return, especially on human rights. Trump's aides are considering ways to make future engagement moves contingent on the Cuban government's improvement on human rights and political freedoms, US officials say.

Such an emphasis would contrast sharply with Trump's approach in other parts of the world where he has insisted the United States would stop lecturing other countries on the issue. "Trump - friend of Putin, Sissi, Salman, Duterte, Erdogan - will cite human rights to justify hurting the Cuban people," tweeted Ben Rhodes, Obama's former deputy national security adviser and an architect of his Cuba détente policy. Trump threatened shortly after his election in November to "terminate" Obama's approach unless Cuba made significant concessions, something it is unlikely to do. Obama implemented his normalization measures through executive actions, and Trump has the power to undo much of it. —Reuters

## MINNESOTA COP SAYS MOTORIST HAD HAND ON GUN WHEN SHOT

**ST PAUL, Minnesota:** A Minnesota police officer charged in the death of a black motorist testified Friday that he was "scared to death" and fired because the man was pulling out his gun and ignoring commands to stop. Officer Jeronimo Yanez, facing a manslaughter charge in the death of Philando Castile, said he could clearly see the gun that Castile had just told the officer he was carrying. "I was scared to death. I thought I was going to die. My family's faces popped up in my mind, my wife and baby girl," the 29-year-old Yanez said, his voice choked with emotion. Closing arguments were expected tomorrow.

Prosecutors say Yanez's actions were unreasonable. Yanez had pulled the 32-year-old cafeteria worker over because of a faulty brake light. Castile had a permit for his gun, and prosecutors have sought to portray him as being cooperative when he volunteered to Yanez, "Sir, I have to tell you, I do have a firearm on me." The shooting last July drew widespread attention in part because Castile's girlfriend - who was a passenger in the car along with her then-4-year-old daughter - streamed the aftermath on Facebook.

A central question at trial has been what Yanez saw before firing seven times, barely a minute after he approached the car and just seconds after Castile said he had a gun. Squad car video recorded him telling a supervisor after the shooting that he did not know where the gun was, although it also recorded him saying he told Castile to take his hand off it. Witnesses tes-

tified that the gun was in a pocket of Castile's shorts when paramedics removed him from his vehicle. Asked to explain the recording, Yanez said: "What I meant by that was I didn't know where the gun was until I saw it in his right thigh area." Prosecutor Rick Dusterhoft asked Yanez about a statement to investigators that he saw the barrel of the gun before he fired. Dusterhoft said that was significant because it would have meant Castile had the gun all the way out of his pocket when he was shot. Yanez said he meant to tell investigators that he saw the top of the slide, on the back part of the gun, rather than the barrel. Elliot Erdman, a fellow officer who described Yanez as a close friend, testified that Yanez told him about the misstatement the day after the shooting. He recounted Yanez

as saying: "Crap, I told them barrel. I meant the slide." Prosecutors have argued that Yanez could have taken lesser steps when Castile told him he was carrying a gun, such as asking to see Castile's hands or asking where the gun was. After Castile told the officer he had the gun, Yanez told Castile, "OK, don't reach for it then," and, "Don't pull it out." On the squad car video, Castile can be heard saying, "I'm not pulling it out," as Yanez opened fire. Castile's last words were, "I wasn't reaching for it."

Yanez said he felt he had no choice but to shoot. Castile "had total disregard for my commands," he said. "Did I want to shoot Mr Castile at all? Those were not my intentions," he said, taking off his glasses at one point and wiping his eyes with a handkerchief. Yanez said he pulled Castile's car over because the driver gave him a "deer in the headlights" look when he drove past. The officer said he was on alert for a pair of suspects in a convenience store robbery and thought Castile resembled one of the suspects.

Earlier Friday, a use-of-force expert, Emanuel Kapelsohn, testified for the defense that Yanez was justified to shoot if he believed he saw a gun or that Castile was pulling one. Prosecutor Jeff Paulsen, on cross-examination, asserted that "the ultimate question" in the case was whether Yanez saw a gun. Kapelsohn disagreed, saying the central question to him was whether Yanez "reasonably believed that Castile was pulling out a firearm." —AP



**Jeronimo Yanez**



## YOUNG RWANDA ACTIVIST CHALLENGES LONGTIME LEADER

**KIGALI:** In Rwanda, where rights groups say many people fear to speak up against the ruling party, Diane Shima Rwigara thought she knew the risks of challenging one of Africa's longest-serving leaders. Then, two days after declaring her candidacy for president, nude photographs allegedly of her were leaked on social media. The 35-year-old women's rights activist quickly disowned the images, calling it a smear campaign. It is not clear who was behind the leak, and Rwanda's government has not commented.

"Do you think practicing politics is easy in these countries?" Rwigara asked, laughing, during an interview with AP. She said those behind the photographs want to "kill" her politically as she works to expose abuses she blames on the government. "But the issue has made me more resilient." As slim as her chances at defeating President Paul Kagame in the August election may be, Rwigara has intrigued Rwandans by

speaking openly in a country known for its devastating 1994 genocide and recovery.

She acknowledges that much has improved under Kagame, who has a reputation for stabilizing the East African nation but faces rights groups' accusations of authoritarianism. The government has strengthened the economy, reduced child mortality and is sending more children to school. Kagame also has pushed for more women in political office, and Rwanda now has a higher percentage of women in parliament - 64 percent - than any other country in the world.

"They developed an ingenious system of women's councils ... where women learn political skills and move up into greater power. Now women running for office is the norm," said Swanee Hunt, a former US ambassador and author of the book "Rwanda Women Rising." She did not respond to questions about alleged harassment of presidential challengers,

including Rwigara. But Kagame's government also may be the most complicated in Africa, Rwigara said. "People disappear, others get killed in unexplained circumstances and nobody speaks about this because of fear," she said. "We must end this silence." The US-educated, soft-spoken businesswoman recognizes the dangers of speaking out from inside the country, instead of from exile like others, but she said: "I trust in god." She has never been elected to public office. She doesn't belong to any political party. But she says the issues she raises are important to everyday people.

Rwigara was unknown until the death in 2015 of her father, business tycoon Assinapol Rwigara. While police called it a vehicle accident, his family suspected foul play. The death stunned them. For years, the prominent ethnic Tutsi family had worked closely with the ruling party. Then there was a falling-out, followed by alleged harassment by officials. — AP



**KIGALI, Rwanda:** In this photo taken May 14, 2017, women's rights activist and presidential candidate Diane Shima Rwigara, 35, is photographed at her home. — AP



An undated handout photo issued by the Metropolitan Police, London, and made available yesterday shows the interior of the van used in the London Bridge attacks. (Inset) One of the knives used in the attacks. — AP photos

## LONDON BRIDGE ATTACKERS TRIED TO RENT LARGER TRUCK

### MAN USED PINK CERAMIC KITCHEN KNIVES

**LONDON:** The three Islamists who killed eight people after driving a van into pedestrians on London Bridge and then attacking nearby revellers had initially tried to hire a 7.5 tonne truck, the head of the UK capital's counter-terrorism unit said on Friday. Commander Dean Haydon also revealed that the men had a stockpile of petrol bombs in the back of their van and carried out their deadly attack with pink ceramic knives. Officers also discovered a Holy Quran in their safe house, opened at a page on martyrdom.

The discoveries, especially of the plan to hire a truck, suggested more could have been killed. "Getting hold of a 7.5 tonne lorry - the effects could have been even worse," Haydon told reporters. Although Islamic State militants have claimed responsibility for the attack, Haydon said there was no evidence the attackers - Pakistani-born Briton Khuram Butt, Italian Youssef Zagbba and Rachid Redouane who had links to Libya, Morocco and Ireland - were directed by anyone else, either in Britain or abroad.

"We're not looking for a wider network," said Haydon, head of London's Counter Terrorism Command, adding that officers were still trying to piece together how the three men had met. "How did they know each other? They are a diverse bunch," he said. Haydon provided unusually extensive details of last Saturday's

attack, the deadliest in London since suicide bombers killed 52 people on the city's transport network in 2005.

#### Ringleader

On Saturday morning, Butt, who Haydon said was believed to be the ringleader, tried to rent a 7.5 tonne truck but did not provide payment details. It was not clear why he could not pay, or if he lacked the necessary licence to drive such a vehicle. But his attempt echoed last July's attack in Nice, France, when a 19-tonne truck was driven into crowds, killing 86 people. Shortly before 1700 GMT, Butt received a text message confirming his hire of a Renault van instead.

At about 1730 GMT, the men drove to pick up the van before heading to Zagbba's home in east London. At 1838 GMT they left and two hours later the van reached London Bridge which they drove along twice before targeting pedestrians on the sidewalk on their third run. Three people on the bridge were struck and killed by the van, believed to have been driven by Butt, before the men abandoned the vehicle and began to attack people in bars and restaurants in the nearby bustling Borough Market area.

The men were armed with identical 30-cm pink ceramic knives, strapped to their wrists with leather bound around the handle. They were also wearing fake suicide belts - plastic

water bottles wrapped in duct tape. Eight minutes after police were alerted, armed officers arrived at the scene and fired 46 rounds, killing all three men. Their victims were three French nationals, two Australians, a Canadian, a Spaniard and a Briton.

In the attackers' van detectives found 13 wine bottles, filled with lighter fuel with rags wrapped round them to make Molotov cocktail petrol bombs. There were also two blow torches which Haydon thought could have been used to light the homemade bombs as part of a possible secondary attack. "They were still fairly close to the van. There is a possibility that they could have come back," Haydon said. There were also office chairs, a suitcase and two bags of gravel which Haydon said might have been to add weight or to act as a cover story for their activities to friends and family.

He said Redouane's home, an apartment in Barking, east London, was the men's safe house where they put their plot together and prepared the attack. They found an English-language copy of the Holy Quran which had been left open on a page describing martyrdom, along with other items linked to their attack. Haydon said since last Saturday they had taken 262 statements from people from 19 different countries and numerous international inquiries were ongoing relating to the attackers and the victims. — Reuters

## CATALAN WORKERS CAUGHT IN REFERENDUM CROSSFIRE

**BARCELONA:** Whose orders to follow? Civil servants in Catalonia may not know which way to turn if the Spanish region holds an independence referendum that Madrid deems illegal. Carles Puigdemont, Catalonia's fiercely secessionist president, announced Friday that he would go ahead with a vote on Oct 1 despite Madrid's opposition, drawing a sharp rebuke from Spain's central government - and concern from public workers. They will be called upon to organize a referendum which the Constitutional Court has ruled is unlawful, by carrying out such steps as opening schools to serve as polling stations, or policing the 7.5-million-strong region in Spain's northeast.

As a result, they may be forced into a delicate position - having to choose between obeying their immediate superiors and facing possible sanctions for disobeying Spanish law, or sticking by the Constitution. "Many have called us, concerned," said Joan Escanilla, president of the Catalan branch of Spain's CSIF civil servants union, which has close to 9,000 members in the region out of a total of 300,000 public workers. "The problem that we civil servants have is that we're in the middle of the railway tracks, and we're going to be hit by one train or another."

#### Not risking 'my salary'

In Catalonia, like in the rest of Spain, civil

servants are first and foremost under obligation to respect Spain's Constitution. If they disobey orders by their Catalan bosses, they could face disciplinary sanctions. But if they obey, they will go against Spanish law and will therefore face sanctions, which may even entail losing their jobs. Josep Miquel Milagros, an agent in Catalonia's Mossos d'Esquadra police force, summed up the situation: "I'm pro-independence but I'm not going to risk my salary."

The 17,000-strong Mossos d'Esquadra force is under the control of the regional government but is also bound to respect Spanish law. "We could find ourselves between a rock and a hard space," says Milagros, who is also spokesman for the USPAC police union. "As police officers, we have to obey the law, we have no other choice."

#### Disconnection law

Exactly how Catalonia is going to go against Madrid and organise a referendum deemed illegal by the courts remains unclear. In a bid to circumvent all the legal and practical challenges in organizing such a vote, the regional government has drafted a law seeking to extract Catalonia from Spain's legal system. It is expected to present the bill in the next few weeks to the regional parliament, where pro-independence lawmakers have an absolute majority. — AFP



**BARCELONA:** President of the Catalan regional government Carles Puigdemont (center), flanked by president of the Catalan parliament Carme Forcadell (left) and Catalan regional vice-president and chief of economy and finance Oriol Junqueras (right), announces that the referendum on independence will be held on Oct 1, 2017 at the Palau de La Generalitat on Friday. — AFP

## MOB JUSTICE FEARS AFTER GHANA SOLDIER'S DEATH

**ACCRA:** An off-duty soldier in Ghana who was lynched while out running was laid to rest with full state honors on Friday, in a case that has sparked fears about the "growing menace" of mob justice. Maxwell Mahama was beaten and burnt to death near the central city of Kumasi on May 29, after locals mistook him for a robber because he was wearing sports clothing and carrying a pistol. The brutal attack on the 31-year-old - described as a "heinous crime" by President Nana Akufo-Addo - was captured on film and the horrific images and video shared on social media.

The tragedy has shaken Ghana, which prides itself on respecting democratic values and prioritizing peace in a wider West African region so often blighted by violence and instability. Mahama, whose coffin was draped with the country's red, yellow and green flag, was posthumously promoted from captain to the rank of major and given a full state funeral in the capital Accra. Vice-President Mahamudu Bawumia told mourners: "May the death of Major Mahama serve as the death that heralded the death of impunity in our nation. 'We are truly sorry that your fellow Ghanaians did this to you.'"

Akufo-Addo, government officials, colleagues and friends have vowed that Mahama's death will not go unpunished. Forty-four people have so far been arrested.

#### No faith in authorities

Since Mahama's death, television and radio talk shows in Ghana have been dominated by discussions about mob justice, which police chief David Asante-Apeatu has called "a growing menace". But the problem, which is fuelled by distrust in the capability of police and the courts, is seen as having no quick fix. A lack of faith in the authorities to handle criminal cases contributes to the public taking matters into their own hands, according to a study of the phenomenon published in 2014.

Mob justice has been around "since time immemorial", said police spokesman Superintendent Cephas Arthur, attributing an apparent increase to a recent spike in armed robberies. Nevertheless, police do not yet collect data on attacks and instead rely on anecdotal reports. Mob violence is "scattered", said Arthur. Officers may hear of four cases in a month, then nothing for the following six, he added. — AFP



**ACCRA:** Soldiers pay their respects by the casket of Major Maxwell Mahama during a state funeral ceremony on Friday. — AFP

## FINNISH NATIONALISTS PICK HARDLINER

**JYVASKYLA, Finland:** Finland's eurosceptic Finns party, which is part of the ruling coalition, elected an anti-immigration hardliner as chairman yesterday in a move that analysts said might lead to a break-up of the three-party government. At a Finns party congress, 56 percent of its members voted in favor of European Parliament member Jussi Halla-aho while 37 percent backed the more moderate Sampo Terho.

Halla-aho, who wants Finland to leave the European Union, has said he would push his

centre-right coalition partners to tighten immigration policies, and would not stick to the three-party government at any cost. "We must be more aggressive in raising the topics that distinguish us from other parties... it is important to push our priorities forward more vigorously within the government programme," Halla-aho told reporters after the vote.

However, the co-ruling pro-EU National Coalition Party (NCP) said it might not want to cooperate with Halla-aho who was fined by

Finland's Supreme Court in 2012 for comments on a blog that linked Islam to pedophilia and Somalis to theft. "This (leader change) requires serious consideration. The Finns party is not the same party anymore," Finance Minister Petteri Orpo told Verkkouutiset, an online news site close to his NCP party, but did not comment further.

As snap elections are very rare in the Nordic country, a possible break-up of the coalition would likely mean that Prime Minister Juha Sipilä from the Centre Party would try to form a new coalition from the current parliament. That could derail healthcare and local government reforms central to Sipilä's plan to balance public finances. Sipilä, who has yet to comment on the government's future, is due to meet Halla-aho and Orpo on Monday.

#### Right-Wing Populism

The Finns party has rural roots but Halla-aho is expected to lead it towards a more hardline right-wing populism. Formerly known as True Finns, the party is known for complicating EU bailout talks during the euro zone crisis. After becoming the second-biggest party in parliament, it softened its nationalist and anti-EU stance but support for Finns plunged from 17.7 percent in a 2015 election to about 9 percent in a poll this month.

Mari K Niemi, a researcher at University of Turku, said the government may break up due to the change. "The image costs to NCP for cooperating with the Finns party led by Halla-aho may be quite considerable. NCP joined the coalition with a populist party that partly sought to represent underprivileged people in the rural side. That party is now becoming a more radical right-wing populist party with a focus on criticizing immigration." — Reuters



**JYVAESKYLAE, Finland:** Finnish politician and Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Jussi Halla-aho is pictured after he was elected to become the new chairman for the Finns Party at the party's congress yesterday. — AFP



## FUMING OVER BREXIT, YOUTH HELP SWING UK VOTE

**LONDON:** A surge in youth turnout fuelled by last year's shock Brexit vote played a pivotal role in stripping British Prime Minister Theresa May of her parliamentary majority, observers said yesterday. An energizing campaign by Labour's firebrand leader Jeremy Corbyn and simmering anger among many voters over uncertain plans to leave the European Union sent young Britons streaming to the ballot box. Corbyn, a 68-year-old staunch leftist, harnessed popular anti-establishment sentiment to lead Labour to beat expectations and gain an estimated 29 seats in the House of Commons.

After a campaign marked by rallies that had the buoyant mood of music festivals, Corbyn said his success was built on hope for change. "Politics isn't going back into the box where it was before," he told cheering supporters. "What's happened is people have said they've had quite enough of austerity politics... and not giving our young people a chance they deserve in our society."

Some 56 percent of under-35s voted, according to an exit poll for NME magazine, which recently

splashed Corbyn's face across its cover. They showed overwhelming support for Labour, at 60 percent, with 36 percent of them being first-time voters, according to the survey among 1,354 voters. Half cited Brexit as the "main factor" in their decision to cast a ballot. While an official breakdown of voting patterns was still outstanding, official data showed a spike in both youth registrations ahead of the vote as well as turnout in districts with large numbers of younger voters on election day.

By contrast, only 45 percent of British voters aged 18 to 34 voted in 2015, compared to 84 percent of over-55s, which the OECD has called the biggest gap in the Western world. A year later, a failure to drum up the youth vote was blamed for turning the Brexit referendum in Leave's favour. "The movement of Remainers and young voters towards Labour explains why the Conservatives have lost their overall majority," political scientist John Curtice of the University of Strathclyde said Friday.

Commentators said Corbyn had successfully presented himself as a true alternative to politics-as-

usual. They credited his idealism and folksy charisma, a savvy social media presence, and a parade of celebrity supporters including singer Lily Allen and comic Ricky Gervais with drumming up "Corbynmania" among the young. He drew comparisons with US leftist senator Bernie Sanders' ability to whip up youth support in his ultimately unsuccessful presidential bid last year.

### Remainers' revenge'

"Jeremy Corbyn appeals to a generation of young people who feel they have never known an honest, decent politician," wrote Rhiannon Lucy Cosslett in the Guardian. "Last night's result shows youngsters have gained some revenge, with claims Theresa May's 'hard Brexit' mandate has been destroyed," pro-Labour tabloid Daily Mirror said. The Economist cited a deep generational schism in Britain pitting uncertain young voters against baby boomers they accuse of selfishness and insincerity in politics. Corbyn targeted specific youth issues in his campaign, including pledging to cut university

tuition fees, lower the voting age and improve the employment rights of interns.

### Failure to engage

Many young voters expressed surprise at their own ability to swing the election given that most opinion polls predicted a decisive May victory. "I thought she was going to win it. I had heard a lot of people going for her, so I was like, Labour aren't going to get in now, but I'm pleased because Labour have a chance now," said Jemma Bell, 23, told AFP in Wakefield, northern England. "I know a lot of people that didn't vote last year and I think now they've realized that we could actually go to crap, in a sense, if they don't vote," she added, referring to last June's Brexit referendum.

Gus McKay, a 38-year-old Conservative voter at Euston station in central London, said he was "frustrated" May had failed to connect with younger voters. "She didn't do enough to engage. Younger people want to engage more with their politicians. It looks like Corbyn did a better job." — AFP



**EDINBURGH:** Scotland's First Minister and leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) Nicola Sturgeon speaks during a press conference at Bute House on Friday following the results of the snap general election. — AFP

## SCOTTISH NATIONALIST'S HOPES FOR INDEPENDENCE DENTED

**GLASGOW:** Scotland's leader Nicola Sturgeon on Friday promised to "reflect" on major losses for her Scottish National Party in Britain's general election, admitting the poor performance was in part down to her independence plans. "Undoubtedly the issue of an independence referendum was a factor in this election result, but I think there were other factors in this election result as well," she told a press conference. "We will reflect on these results, we will listen to voters and we will consider very carefully the best way forward for Scotland."

Last year's vote for Britain to leave the European Union had fuelled separatists' ambitions to take Scotland out of the 300-year-old British union, but the election results could serve to dash them again. "Nobody will condemn the First Minister if she now decides to re-set her course. This is her opportunity to do so - and I urge her to take it immediately. She must take it off the table," Scottish Conservative leader Ruth Davidson said. Davidson led her party to its best result in Scotland for three decades, in contrast to Conservative Prime Minister Theresa May's dismal showing elsewhere in the UK.

### 'Utterly disappointing'

The separatist Scottish National Party

(SNP) lost 21 seats of their 56 parliamentary seats on Thursday. The SNP remains Scotland's biggest party despite the punishing losses, including former first minister Alex Salmond as well as the party's current deputy leader Angus Robertson failing to win seats. Sturgeon said that while the SNP finished first in Scotland "it is an inescapable fact that we also suffered some bitterly disappointing losses".

Scotland voted by 55 percent against independence in a 2014 referendum, but the defeated nationalists voted en masse for the SNP in 2015 handing them 56 out of the 59 seats in Scotland. May called the snap general election in an attempt to strengthen her hand in forthcoming Brexit talks - and quell the nationalists' ongoing agitation for a second independence referendum. She lost her parliamentary majority following a late surge for leftwing Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and Conservative wins in Scotland.

The Labour party, which used to dominate Scottish politics, was reduced to just one Scottish lawmaker in 2015. The figure rose to seven in Thursday's voting. Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale said her new MPs will be firm opponents of a second independence referendum. "The SNP vote is crumbling in their heartlands...it's a very bad night for the SNP," she said. — AFP

## FOR LABOUR'S CORBYN, STRONG RESULT TURNS DEFEAT INTO WIN

### UNORTHODOX CAMPAIGN WORKS

**LONDON:** Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn lost Britain's election, but his beaming smile and enthusiastic thumbs up the morning after was the demeanor of a man who knew he was nevertheless the winner. The party piled on votes and gained more than 20 new seats in Thursday's election. It fell short of victory, but managed to frustrate Prime Minister Theresa May's hopes of a landslide that would strengthen her position in negotiating Britain's exit from the European Union.

The success marked a huge turnaround for Labour and its uncompromisingly left-wing leader, who were given up for dead when the campaign began. The gap narrowed over the seven-week election as May was criticized for a lackluster campaign amid a series of missteps, most importantly a proposal to force elderly people to pay for more of their care. Corbyn, 68, capitalized with promises to soften Brexit and proposals to boost spending after seven years of austerity.

"This was looking like the Blitzkrieg: it was going to be all over in a few weeks and Mrs May was going to be victorious," said Ben Page, chief executive of pollster Ipsos MORI. "But instead, Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party have put up much more of a fight than anybody was anticipating." Pre-election expectations were also upset by two terror attacks in as many weeks that killed 30 people in Manchester and London, twice forced the suspension of campaigning and focused attention on the Conservatives' record on security.

May called the early election in hopes of extending a slim majority in Parliament as opinion polls showed the Conservatives had a wide lead over Labour. Instead, May's majority evaporated and she was left with just 318 of the 650 seats. Labour has 262. While May portrayed Corbyn as untrustworthy and out of touch with average voters, Labour painted the Conservatives as the party of the rich and special interests. Labour's pitch was summed up in the slogan "For the many, not the few." That translated into proposals to raise taxes on corporations and the wealthy, while increasing funding for schools and the National Health Service. Labour appealed directly to young people by promising to scrap university tuition fees and suggesting it might cancel debts run up by recent graduates. The party also said railroads, water companies and the Royal Mail should be returned to public ownership.



**LONDON:** Britain's opposition Labour party Leader Jeremy Corbyn gives a thumbs up as he arrives at Labour Party headquarters in central London on Friday after results in a snap general election showing a hung parliament with Labour gains and the Conservatives losing its majority. — AFP

Turnout figures by age have not yet been released, but Ipsos MORI said 77 percent of people 24 and younger planned to vote in this election, compared with 55 percent during the last election two years ago. Young people have borne the brunt of austerity measures embraced by Conservative-led governments since 2010, said Tim Bale of Queen Mary University of London. "They're worried about housing, tuition fees, the gig economy, stable jobs - it's no surprise they are fed up," he said.

By contrast, May built her campaign on the idea that she could provide the "strong and stable leadership" needed to negotiate Britain's divorce from the EU. Her support dropped after the Conservatives said people's homes should be included in the assets used to pay for their care in old age, something opponents described as a "dementia tax". Corbyn has had troubles of his own building party unity. He ignored a vote of no confidence in him by Labour lawmakers last year and had difficulty filling his top parliamentary team, surrounding himself with lawmakers who share his left-wing views rather than the centrist policies that former Prime Minister Tony Blair used to win three elections.

### 'Authentic'

But those battles also helped Corbyn learn how to campaign before a national audience. In the process, he forged an image that Bale describes as "eccentric uncle-slash-grandfather". "He is authentic where (May) is robotic," Bale said. "That clearly doesn't help the Conservatives." It was unorthodox, but it worked. By the end of the campaign he was addressing rallies of thousands of boisterous, and largely young, supporters and getting endorsements from well-known actors, rock stars and grime musicians.

Victoria Honeyman, an expert on Labour at the University of Leeds, cautioned that despite the Corbyn surge, many still don't see him as a potential prime minister. Nowhere was this more obvious than the issue of nuclear weapons. While Labour supports maintaining a nuclear deterrent, Corbyn has in the past voted against funding for Britain's Trident missile system. That question came up during the campaign in a town hall-style question-and-answer session during which audience members heckled Corbyn when he refused to give a definitive answer about whether he would launch a retaliatory nuclear strike. — AP

## IN LE PEN COUNTRY, ROOTING FOR A VOICE

**HENIN-BEAUMONT, France:** Bunched around a bar in the half-deserted center of a former mining town, regulars drinking morning coffees and beers were full of contempt for Emmanuel Macron, France's centrist, pro-business president. "Macron wants you to think everyone's going to get rich," one said. "Macron's an idiot, that's all there is to it," said another. As the French go to the polls on Sunday to vote in a new parliament, the depressed town of Henin-Beaumont is set to elect far-right leader Marine Le Pen to the chamber with a landslide.

But Le Pen's hopes that her anti-immigration, anti-EU National Front (FN) will win enough seats to form a parliamentary group - a minimum of 15 - are not borne out by the poll numbers. Still, she told AFP in an interview: "We will be the only opposition force" in a country whose political map has been redrawn by the 39-year-old Macron's

unexpected, meteoric rise. Although Le Pen, 48, lost to Macron by about 20 percentage points in the presidential runoff, she argued it was a "historic" result for a party that has notched up records in past regional, European Parliament and presidential elections.

"And I'm sure we will do it again in the legislative elections," Le Pen said at the FN's modest campaign office in Henin-Beaumont, where she received more than 60 percent of the vote in the presidential race. But analysts say the FN can hope for just 12 seats in the 577-seat National Assembly, where Macron's *Republique en Marche* (REM) party and a small centrist ally are tipped to win a thumping majority of between 385 and 415 lawmakers. The FN has only two seats in the outgoing parliament.

"Most of the (rightwing) Republicans have offered support to the president, and the Socialist

Party has been absorbed by REM," Le Pen said scornfully. In particular, the Republicans will back Macron's efforts to reform France's complex labour laws, Le Pen said, adding: "We won't." "We are witnessing the recomposition of French political life" after the splintering of the traditional left and right, she said. "So we're at the beginning of the story."

### 'Kick and scream'

Ludovic Seynaeve-Dausse, a farm sector clerk just a year older than Macron who was hanging out at the town's brasserie, savored the idea of Le Pen being in opposition, saying she was "going to kick and scream" against Macron. Le Pen and the FN have benefitted from a confluence of factors including the 2015 migrant crisis and the string of jihadist attacks that have claimed 230 lives in France since early that year.

The party has a particular populist appeal in France's northern rustbelt, which is dotted with shut-down factories and mines. Le Pen has also spent the past six years since taking charge of the FN trying to expunge the xenophobic, anti-Semitic ethos engendered by her father Jean-Marie Le Pen, who co-founded the party in 1972. But the presidential race raised doubts over Le Pen, who stumbled badly in her one-on-one debate with Macron ahead of the vote. Her suggestion late in the campaign that France could retain the euro while also reviving the franc left many scratching their heads.

### 'Mainly selfies'

Compared with her frenetic presidential bid, Le Pen has run a low-key parliamentary campaign. She skipped the first local television debate for the Henin-Beaumont seat, then showed up at the last minute for the second one, on Wednesday. "She's been keeping it mainly to selfies at marketplaces," said the green candidate for Henin-Beaumont, Marine Tondelier. A one-time Le Pen supporter, Bernard Bonnaille, 66, was among a record 11.5 percent of voters who cast a blank ballot in the May 7 presidential runoff. "You go back to the franc and then what?" asked Bonnaille, a retired shipping company employee, at the Henin-Beaumont brasserie. — AFP



**HAUTE-VIENNE, France:** French President Emmanuel Macron smiles during a commemoration ceremony marking the 73rd anniversary of the World War II massacre in Oradour-sur-Glane yesterday. On June 10, 1944, SS troops massacred 642 inhabitants of the village of Oradour-sur-Glane. — AFP

## MACRON PARTY READIES FOR PARLIAMENTARY ASSAULT

**PARIS:** The year-old centrist party of French President Emmanuel Macron prepared yesterday for the first round of parliamentary elections looking set to grab the lead in the race for a clear majority. Macron swept away far-right candidate Marine Le Pen to win the presidency on May 7, but has only achieved half the job. Macron's *Republique en Marche* (Republic on the Move, REM) party, which he only founded in April 2016 as a platform for his presidential bid, now needs a commanding majority in the National Assembly for him to implement the reforms he promised on the campaign trail.

A host of opinion polls show Macron's party could take around 30 percent of the first-round vote today, which would put it in pole position to secure an absolute majority in the second round a week later. That could equate to as many as 400 seats in the 577-seat chamber. "A wave or a tsunami?" asked the front page of the leftwing daily *Liberation* yesterday. REM has already had a boost after its candidates came first in 10 of

the 11 French overseas constituencies that have already voted.

The legislative elections are, like the presidential contest, held over two rounds. If no candidate wins over 50 percent in the first round, the two top-placed go into the second round - as well as any candidate who won the votes of over 12.5 percent of the electorate.

### Breaking the mould

French voters have traditionally rallied behind their new leader in the legislative elections that always follow the presidential ballot. Macron's predecessors Francois Hollande in 2012, Nicolas Sarkozy in 2007 and Jacques Chirac in 2002 all won outright majorities. Unlike Macron, however, they all came from long-established parties. REM has broken the mould of French politics. Initially dismissed by Macron's opponents as a movement of metropolitan bright young activists without any real roots, it will field 530 candidates today. — AFP



**CALAIS:** President of the French far-right Front National (FN) party Marine Le Pen delivers a speech during a campaign rally on June 8, 2017 in support of the local candidate for the upcoming parliamentary election. — AFP



## LAW, CORPORATE WORK, POLITICS? WHAT'S NEXT FOR COMEY

**WASHINGTON:** So what's next for James Comey? The former FBI director boldly challenged the president who fired him, accused the Trump administration of lying and supplied material that could be used to build a case against President Donald Trump. But after stepping away from the Capitol Hill spotlight, where he's always seemed comfortable, the 56-year-old veteran lawyer now confronts the same question long faced by Washington officials after their government service. His dry quip at a riveting Senate hearing that he was "between opportuni-



**Former FBI director James Comey testifies before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, June 8, 2017. —AP**

ties" vastly understates the career prospects now available to him - not to mention potential benefits from the public's fascination with a man who has commanded respect while drawing outrage from both political parties. Comey was pilloried for his handling of the Hillary Clinton email investigation, yet is now seen as a critical cog in the inquiry into possible connections between Russia and the Trump campaign. He may be called upon to provide more detail about his interactions with Trump even as he turns attention to potential opportunities in law, corporate work or perhaps even politics.

"There's some jobs where the controversy would not be a benefit, but that's why I see him ending up in a place where he can be himself," said Evan Barr, a former federal prosecutor in New York City who worked under Comey in the US attorney's office. "If he were the president of a college or an important think tank, he could pursue the issues that mean the most to him and not be worried about trying to make anyone happy."

Comey is unlikely to play any sort of direct role in the investigation now led by special counsel Robert Mueller, his predecessor as FBI director. But he almost certainly would avail himself as a witness to Mueller in any obstruction of justice investigation centered on his firing, or to further discuss requests he received from Trump that he interpreted as directives.

Comey's carefully crafted memos are laden with contemporaneously recorded details and verbatim quotes that could easily lay down a path for investigators, and already have been turned over to Mueller. In one memo, Comey says Trump cleared the room before encouraging Comey to end an investigation into Trump's national security adviser, Michael Flynn. Comey's decision to share with reporters, through an intermediary, details from those conversations, and his insistence on testifying in

public attest to his determination to confront the president head-on. "I do think he is unquestionably, if this thing goes anywhere, one of the star witnesses," said Robert Anderson, a retired FBI executive assistant director. "It really comes down to his testimony, in some avenues." Career options are generally plentiful for departing FBI leaders and attorneys general. Both Mueller and former Attorney General Eric Holder, for instance, took jobs with prestigious law firms after leaving public service. But few if any have as public a profile as Comey or have generated such intense feelings. Even Democrats who disagree with his firing remain stung by his revival of the Clinton email investigation days before the November election. Republicans, pleased some seven months ago but who support Trump, may concur with the president's assessment of Comey as a "showboat". Companies that do business with the government might find it risky to bring aboard someone who's so publicly at odds with the current administration.

### Politics

Comey's name over the years has been floated in politics, though it's not clear the former Republican - now an independent - has any interest. Educated at William & Mary University, where he wrote his senior thesis on a 20th century theologian, Comey went on to law school at the University of Chicago. The bulk of his work has been in government, with the exception of private practice legal work in Virginia early in his career, lucrative general counsel stints at defense contractor Lockheed Martin and a Connecticut hedge fund, and a teaching job at Columbia University.

He was the US attorney in Manhattan who in 2003 charged Martha Stewart with obstructing justice in a stock trade investigation. He then became deputy attorney general, the No. 2 spot at the Justice Department,

where he famously faced down fellow Bush administration officials over a surveillance program authorization. In 2013, he was sworn in as FBI director, a job he's called the honor of his life.

Friends and colleagues say the father of five reveled in his public service. "Anyone who has ever worked with Jim as far as I know, certainly speaking for myself, holds him in incredibly high esteem," said Sharon McCarthy, who worked for him at the US attorney's office. "You'd be working late, he'd have a Coke in his hand and he'd come in, sit down, put his feet on your desk and start talking."

Comey joked at a Senate hearing one week before his May 9 firing that he perhaps regretted picking up the phone when he was recruited for the FBI job while living comfortably in Connecticut. But he has peppered speeches with cracks about the "soulless" private sector. He would urge young audiences to imagine asking themselves on their death beds who they would want to have been, saying he hoped everyone's answer would be that they tried to help others. Comey also has noted in speeches how he felt depressed at a law firm despite the matching furniture, parking space and Colonial-style home that accompanied the job.

"You do not make much money working for the FBI. You will not get famous working for the FBI. But you will be rich beyond belief if you look at it from (the public service) vantage point," he has said. One other question for Comey will be how much he chooses, either directly or through intermediaries, to respond to allegations from Trump or Republicans rallying to the president's defense. On Friday, Trump strongly suggested Comey had lied about their encounters and accused him of being a "leaker." "In the days to come," Comey friend Ben Wittes wrote on his Lawfare blog, "we're going to see a full-court press against Comey; indeed it is already well under way." —AP

## BRAZIL'S TEMER WINS IN BID TO KEEP POWER - FOR NOW

### HAND OF BRAZIL PRESIDENT STRENGTHENED

**BRASILIA:** Brazilian President Michel Temer defied predictions of his imminent political demise when a court acquitted him on charges of having won election thanks to dirty money. And after Friday's vote in the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) he promptly went on the offensive in his battle to survive additional corruption accusations. Despite being branded by opponents a political "zombie" and

donations and bribes. That clears him to serve out the rest of his term to the end of 2018. Dissenting judges painted a grim picture of the way Brazilian corporations seek to buy politicians in Latin America's biggest country. But with the panel drawn at 3-3, the TSE's president Gilmar Mendes cast the deciding vote, urging cool heads at a time of national turmoil. "You don't switch the president of the republic every

backed up Temer's strategy of arguing that corruption accusations against him are a dangerous distraction when he is needed to put Brazil back on the economic rails.

Eurasia Group consultants said Temer's chances of being toppled before the end of his term have now dropped from 60 to 30 percent. "We underappreciated the ability of the presidential palace to weave a narrative that Temer's per-

functioning of Brazilian democracy," his spokesman said. However, the decision dismayed those pushing for Brazil to face up to its massive corruption problems. "No democracy can come out unharmed from the institutional free-for-all that Brazil is going through," said Rio State University political scientist Mauricio Santoro, slamming "the degradation of the rules and of public life.

Opponents will now get another chance to bring down Temer. Prosecutor General Rodrigo Janot alleges that Temer agreed to payments of hush money to former lower house of Congress speaker Eduardo Cunha, who is in prison for corruption. But again, Temer is fighting back and the TSE verdict gave him new momentum. On Friday he rejected a deadline given by Janot to answer 82 questions in a written deposition. Instead, his lawyers called for the investigation to be shut down, calling it a "comedy," an "inquisition" and "arrogant." Analysts say Janot's next salvo may be a request for formal charges.

Under the constitution, the lower house would have to approve the charges by a two-thirds majority before a trial could start in the Supreme Court. That approval process in Congress could be lengthy and Temer is working daily to maintain enough support among legislators to defeat any eventual charges. If he goes, the speaker of the lower house would take over for 30 days during which legislators would choose a new interim president to serve through 2018.

The lack of a clear consensus figure is thought to be the major reason why allies have not yet deserted Temer. The main partner to his PMDB party in the ruling center-right coalition, the PSDB social democrats, has shown signs of jitters and was due to meet next week on its stand. —AFP



**BRASILIA: Brazil's President Michel Temer smiles as he receives military honors during a ceremony on Friday. —AP**

likened to characters from "The Walking Dead" television series, the scandal-plagued president's acquittal in the TSE showed he still has plenty of political life.

The TSE judges voted 4-3 against stripping Temer of his mandate on the grounds that the 2014 presidential election was contaminated by undeclared campaign

hour," he said. "There are serious proven facts but not enough to annul the mandate."

That spared recession-ravaged Brazil being plunged into its second leadership crisis in 14 months, following the impeachment of leftist president Dilma Rousseff last year and her replacement by her then-vice president Temer. It also

manence in office represented the best bet for institutional and economic stability until the 2018 elections," Eurasia Group said.

### Trouble to come

Temer was clearly invigorated, greeting the TSE victory as "a sign that the national institutions continue to guarantee the smooth



**ORLANDO: Messages and mementos adorn a section of the makeshift memorial outside the Pulse nightclub one year after the massacre on Friday. —AFP**

## ALIVE BUT REELING A YEAR AFTER ORLANDO SHOOTING

**ORLANDO, Florida:** Kaliesha Andino has spent the last year running from gunshots. At night, she flashes back to her hiding spot behind a bar in a Florida nightclub, where a bullet ripped through her arm during the deadliest mass shooting in modern US history. The date her life shattered, June 12, 2016, is tattooed in Roman numerals on her other arm, along with images of clouds and an eye to memorialize a friend who was among the 49 people killed at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando.

Like others who got out alive, Andino, 20, has spent the year since the attack navigating the line between victim and survivor. Her physical wounds have healed. But she searches for exits in crowded rooms and has not been working. "I will never have closure," she said, adding: "I've got to live right now. I have to cope with the situation."

The death toll in the attack marked the worst in a spate of US shooting rampages in recent years - from Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut to an office party in San Bernardino, California - that stoked debate about gun control and left communities grappling with deep emotional and physical wounds. Counseling and medical needs have consumed many survivors working to establish a new normal after gunman Omar Mateen opened fire at Pulse during Latin music night. Some saw their trauma magnified when the tragedy at the gay club outed them as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT).

One survivor recently had a lodged bullet removed. Others have struggled at times to leave home after the rampage, which also left more than 50 people injured. Mateen held hostages inside for three hours before he died

in an exchange of gunfire with police. "They are still so raw," said attorney Antonio Romanucci, who is suing Mateen's ex-employer and widow on behalf of dozens of victims, including Andino and relatives of some of the deceased. "They are still living it."

Approximately 300 people who were at the club or directly tied to the victims still receive support services from the Orlando United Assistance Center. That is down from the more than 800 helped in the immediate aftermath, said Michael Aponte, director for the resource hub, which involves government and community groups.

### Not Ready to Move on

Rainbow-colored banners adorn the chain-link fence around Pulse. People from around the world have left mementos and scrawled notes, now fading in the sun. "Never stop dancing," reads an inscription on a parking lot barrier. To honor the one-year mark tomorrow, June 12, Pulse owner Barbara Poma plans to open the club gate so survivors and victims' relatives can gather inside at 2:02 am, when the first shots were fired. "Everybody is still in very different places," Poma said. "I would not say there is anybody that is ready to move on."

At unexpected moments, 31-year-old Juan Jose Cufino's thoughts return to the night that started as a celebration with friends two days before he was to return to his native Colombia. He hears bullets pounding the floor and people screaming, he said in Spanish through a translator. He smells blood. The first shot to hit him struck his right arm. Two more tore into his legs. Falling to his knees, Cufino waited for a fatal blow. A fourth shot pierced his back. —Reuters

## KANSAS MAN ACCUSED OF HATE CRIME

**KANSAS CITY, Montana:** A man accused in a bar shooting in suburban Kansas City that left one Indian national dead and another wounded was indicted by a federal grand jury on hate crime charges, the US Justice Department announced Friday. The indictment against Adam Purinton, 52, of Olathe, Kansas, comes after a Feb 22 shooting at Austin's Bar and Grill in Olathe, Kansas. Witnesses have said Purinton, who is white, yelled "get out of my country" at two 32-year-old Indian nationals, Srinivas Kuchibhotla and Alok Madasani, before he began shooting. Kuchibhotla died and Madasani was injured. A third man, Ian Grillot, was wounded when he tried to intervene.

The shooting raised fears of more attacks on immigrants following President Donald Trump's election and his call for a ban on immigrants from some countries. Officials in India also expressed concern about their citizens' safety in the US, where many work in technology and other industries. Kuchibhotla and Madasani had come to the US from India to study and worked as engineers at GPS-maker Garmin. An affidavit released in March said Madasani told detectives that the gunman asked if their "status was legal" before he opened fire. The indictment announced Friday alleges Purinton shot the two Indian men because of their "actual and perceived" race, color, religion and national origin. The indictment also alleges Purinton committed the crimes after premeditation and planning, attempted to kill more than one person and



**OLATHE, Kansas: In this May 15, 2017 file photo, Adam Purinton, charged in the Olathe Austins bar shootings, appears in Division 8 at the Johnson County District Courthouse. —AP**

created a grave risk of death to others at the scene. The indictment also accuses Purinton of violating federal firearms laws. After the shooting, Purinton drove 70 miles east to an Applebee's restaurant in Clinton, Missouri, where he allegedly admitted the shootings to a bartender, who called police.

The Justice Department said in a news release Friday that it would determine later whether Purinton should face the death penalty. Purinton was a Navy veteran who was a regular customer at Austin's. Neighbors in the quiet Olathe cul-de-sac where he lived told AP that Purinton had become "a drunken mess"

after his father's death about two years ago and had physically and mentally deteriorated before the shooting.

Olathe Mayor Michael Copeland said in a statement that the hate crime charge was appropriate. "The intent of this one act was to spread hate. It failed miserably," Copeland said. "It has spread love, and it has brought this community even closer together." Police Chief Steve Menke said he hoped the charges would bring some comfort to Kuchibhotla's loved ones and friends and to the survivors of the shooting. Purinton is jailed in Johnson County, Kansas, on \$2 million bond on murder and attempted murder charges. His public defender, Michael McCulloch, did not immediately return a message seeking comment. Grillot, who was hospitalized for 10 days after the shooting, was honored by Indian dignitaries for his efforts to stop the shooting. Three officials from the Consulate General of India in Houston traveled to Kansas City to meet Grillot in the days after the shooting. Consul General Anupam Ray told Grillot that his bravery was more representative of America than the violence at Austin, the hospital said.

In March, Grillot received a \$100,000 check at a gala in Houston from The India House and three donors, with the money to be used toward buying a house. A message left Friday with the Consul General's office was not immediately returned. A message to the Indian Embassy in Washington D.C. also was not immediately returned. —AP

## AFGHAN POLICEMEN KILLED IN US AIRSTRIKE: OFFICIALS

**LASHKAR GAH, Afghanistan:** At least three Afghan policemen were killed and two wounded when an American military aircraft opened fire during an operation in southern Afghanistan, officials said yesterday. The so-called "friendly fire" incident occurred overnight, during a raid in Afghanistan's restive Helmand province, the US military command in Kabul said in a statement. The officers, members of the Afghan Border Police, were killed when a US aircraft "returned fire" during the operation, which included Afghan and American special forces, a military spokesman said.

"We would like to express our deepest condolences to the families of the ABP members affected by this unfortunate incident," the statement said. Omar Zwak, a spokesman for the Helmand governor, put the toll at three policemen killed and two wounded. Both Afghan and American officials said they were investigating the incident. Taliban insurgents have made widespread gains in

Helmand, seizing many of the province's districts and threatening the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah.

Hundreds of US Marines recently arrived in Helmand to take over an advising mission as part of the NATO-led coalition training and assisting Afghan forces. American troops, including special forces, also carry out separate counterterrorism missions. Airstrikes by American warplanes have greatly increased in recent months, as US President Donald Trump considers requests from military commanders for thousands more international troops.

Afghanistan has suffered a string of violent attacks in recent weeks after the Taliban launched their spring offensive, including attacks in the capital city of Kabul that killed and wounded hundreds. On Friday night, identified gunmen opened fire at a mosque in the eastern province of Paktia, killing three civilians and wounding nine others, the Afghan Interior Ministry said in a statement. —Reuters





JERUSALEM: Palestinian Muslim worshippers attend the second Friday prayers of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa mosque compound. — AFP

## ISLAM IN NUTSHELL

Continued from Page 1

Not only did Muhammad (PBUH) relate God's Word to the world, he answered, with his sayings and conduct, one of the most important questions ever asked: "How are we supposed to live?" He provided guidance in all matters of life, whether in the home, on the job, in the marketplace, or on the battlefield. He interacted with men and women, young and old, friends and foes. He taught us how to manage personal relationships and international treaties. He taught us to be fully human, yet quintessentially spiritual. The simple state-

ment, "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger" is a profound concept that sums up the thought and practice of a true Muslim. It is the vision, mission, objective and benchmark of life, all in one.

*Courtesy of the TIES Center, whose mission is to empower Kuwait's expats through social and educational services that promote a positive and productive role in society, and to facilitate opportunities for intra- and interfaith interactions that promote social solidarity. For more information, please call 25231015/6 or e-mail: info@tiescenter.net.*

## 3 MEN, 96 CHILDREN

Continued from Page 1

The last census, held in 1998, showed Pakistan had a population of up to 135 million. Estimates suggest the new census-carried out earlier this year, with the preliminary results due by the end of July-will put the figure closer to 200 million. The economy is expanding faster than it has in a decade, and last month Islamabad hiked its development budget by 40 percent.

But observers have warned the population boom is negating any progress, using up valuable resources in a young country where jobs are scarce and nearly 60 million people live below the poverty line. "It definitely is a problem because it is affecting health outcomes adversely and also eating into development gains," says Zeba A Sathar, country director for the UN population council. Sathar predicted the census would show growth has slowed due to lower fertility rates, though she added it would remain among the highest rates in the region. "There has to be a clear enunciation of need to slow growth as a positive policy lever," she said. "And then next a good, effective health system that provides information and services of quality."

### 'God will provide'

Khan's brother, Mastan Khan Wazir-one of his 15 siblings-also has three wives. So far, Wazir has only fathered 22 children but, like his brother, he says his grandchildren are too numerous to count. The 70-year-old, with his bushy moustaches and bejeweled fingers, is a minor celebrity in North Waziristan tribal district, where his blinged out jeep done in the style of Pakistan's famous "jingle trucks", with Pashto music pouring from the stereo is a familiar sight.

"God has promised that he will provide food and resources but people have weak faith," he said, wearing a traditional Waziristani turban. In the southwestern city of

Quetta in Balochistan province, Jan Mohammed-the father of 38 children-agrees, despite having previously called on the government to provide resources for his family. Jan spoke with AFP in 2016 to voice his desire for a fourth wife as he continues his mission of having 100 children. No woman has yet agreed, he says, but he has not given up. "The more Muslims grow, the more their enemies will fear them... Muslims should go for more and more children," he said.

### Empowering women

Denied their husbands' permission to speak, none of the three men's wives could give their views on family planning in Islam. But there is already "abundant" awareness in Pakistan about the need for birth spacing, or allowing a woman's body to rest for at least 18 months between pregnancies, Sathar said. "The need is for clear information about the methods available, how they work, their possible side effects and where to get them. That is missing," she added.

Giving women more of a choice in the matter could help, argues Aisha Sarwari, a feminist activist who has previously written on population and women's rights. "Access to birth control for women can be a game changer," she said. "Ultimately the impact is that there are more resources to go around ... Empowered women have fewer children, and this creates a mindset that leads to prosperity within families that is likely to be emulated across communities."

Khan, at least, admitted there could be some benefits to slowing down. For one thing, tribal enmity in the northwest has decreased in recent years, he said. "Now, with the grace of God, the situation has changed-war and fighting is finished-so, now, a decrease in the population would not be bad." It would also free him up for other leisure activities, he says, adding wistfully: "If one had fewer children, one would have more time to make love with his wives." — AFP

## TRUMP BERATES QATAR AS GULF STAND-OFF...

Continued from Page 1

"We appeal to the US administration to rely on their own sources and not on countries with political agendas," Qatar's ambassador to the US, Meshal Hamad Al Thani, wrote in Twitter. But its neighbors seized yesterday on Trump's remarks as vindication of their position and of the crippling sanctions they imposed on Monday. However, they ignored a US call for them to ease their economic blockade against Qatar. The United Arab Emirates welcomed "President Trump's leadership in challenging Qatar's troubling support for extremism".

### 'Blockade hindering military'

Saudi Arabia said an immediate change of policy by Qatar was essential. "Fighting terrorism and extremism is no longer a choice, rather... a commitment requiring decisive and swift action to cut off all funding sources for terrorism regardless of its financier," the Saudi Press Agency cited an official source as saying. Bahrain also said Qatar needed to "correct its policies" and fight terrorism. But the three governments made no mention of Tillerson's appeal for them to end their land and sea blockade of Qatar.

The US president's rhetoric on Friday did not appear likely to calm spirits in Doha. "The nation of Qatar, unfortunately, has historically been a funder of terrorism at a very high level," Trump told reporters in the White House Rose Garden, as Tillerson looked on. Less than two hours earlier, Tillerson had approached the crisis from a different direction-warning that the stand-off between the former Gulf allies was undermining the anti-terror fight. He did urge Qatar to be "responsive to the concerns of its neighbors" and immediately crack down on extremist funding.

But he also warned that the response-Bahrain, Egypt,

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates cut diplomatic ties on Monday and are trying to blockade Qatar by air and sea-could be counterproductive. "The blockade is hindering US military actions in the region and the campaign against ISIS," Tillerson warned. Although US officers had previously denied the blockade was a problem, Pentagon spokesman Captain Jeff Davis said the "evolving situation is hindering our ability to plan for longer-term military operations."

### 'Fighting terrorism'

Tillerson said he had spoken to many leaders in the Gulf region in recent days and supported efforts by the Amir of Kuwait to resolve the stand-off. The tough US line was a rebuff for Qatar's efforts to reach out for support from abroad. Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani landed in Moscow yesterday to meet with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. "We cannot be happy in a situation when the relations between our partners are worsening. We are in favor of resolving any disagreements through... dialogue," Lavrov said. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain released a joint statement listing 59 entities and individuals, including members of Qatar's royal family, as involved in "terrorist" activities.

Also named were Doha-based Muslim Brotherhood spiritual leader Yusuf Al-Qaradawi and Qatari-funded charities. A statement said the list shows that Qatar "announces fighting terrorism on one hand and finances and supports and hosts different terrorist organizations on the other hand." The crisis is drawing in more countries. Turkey's parliament has approved deploying troops to a base in Qatar and Iran has offered to send food. The moves taken against Doha include banning Qatar Airways from airspace and closing Qatar's only land border with Saudi Arabia. The Arab states have also ordered Qataris out within 14 days. — AFP

## US LEADER PUNCHES BACK, ACCUSES COMEY...

Continued from Page 1

wasn't "hinting anything," before adding, "Oh you're going to be very disappointed when you hear the answer, don't worry."

The House intelligence committee sent a letter Friday asking White House counsel Don McGahn whether any tape recordings or memos of Comey's conversations with the president exist now or had existed in the past. The committee also sent a letter to Comey asking for any notes or memos in his possession about the discussions he had with Trump before being abruptly fired last month. The committee is seeking the materials by June 23.

Comey told the Senate intelligence committee Thursday about several one-on-one interactions with the president, during which he said Trump pressed him to show "loyalty," to back off on the FBI investigation of his former national security adviser, Michael Flynn, and to disclose that Trump himself was not under investigation. Comey said he refused on all points, told senators of the detailed memos he had written after his conversations with Trump and said he hoped those conversations were taped because he is confident of their veracity.

Standing with the president of Romania, a NATO partner, Trump at last confirmed his commitment to the alliance's mutual defense pact, Article 5, uttering words he deliberately did not say when he spoke at NATO's gathering in Belgium last month. On Friday he said he was "committing the United States to Article 5." He also accused Qatar, a key US military partner, of funding terrorism "at a very high level," and said solving the problem in the tiny Arabian Gulf nation could be "the beginning of the end of terrorism."

It was a forceful endorsement of this week's move by Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab

Emirates to cut off ties to Qatar, but a very different message from the one delivered just an hour before by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. Tillerson had called on the Arab nations to immediately ease their blockade on Qatar. Trump also saluted the United States' relationship with Romania and praised its contribution to the global fight against terror.

The president had previewed his attacks against Comey in an early-morning tweet that broke his previous day's silence on his favorite social media megaphone. "Despite so many false statements and lies, total and complete vindication," Trump wrote. It was a stunning accusation, suggesting that the former FBI director had lied to Congress, while under oath. He also seized on Comey's revelation that he had directed a friend to release contents of memos he'd written documenting his conversations with the president to a reporter. "...and WOW, Comey is a leaker!" Trump wrote at 6:10 am.

He derisively repeated the "leaker" moniker when speaking to reporters in the Rose Garden. Trump's private attorney, Marc Kasowitz, seized on Comey's admission that he had orchestrated the public release of the information. Kasowitz is expected to file a complaint with the Justice Department inspector general next week, according to a person close to the legal team who agreed to speak before the filing on condition that the person's name is not used.

Richard Burr, the Republican chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, and Sen. Mark Warner, the top Democrat on the committee, both said Thursday they believed Comey's account of the events. "And I think you saw today the overwhelming majority of the intel members, Democrats and Republicans, feel that Jim Comey is credible. Even folks who have been his critics don't question his integrity, his commitment to the rule of law and his intelligence," Warner said.— AP

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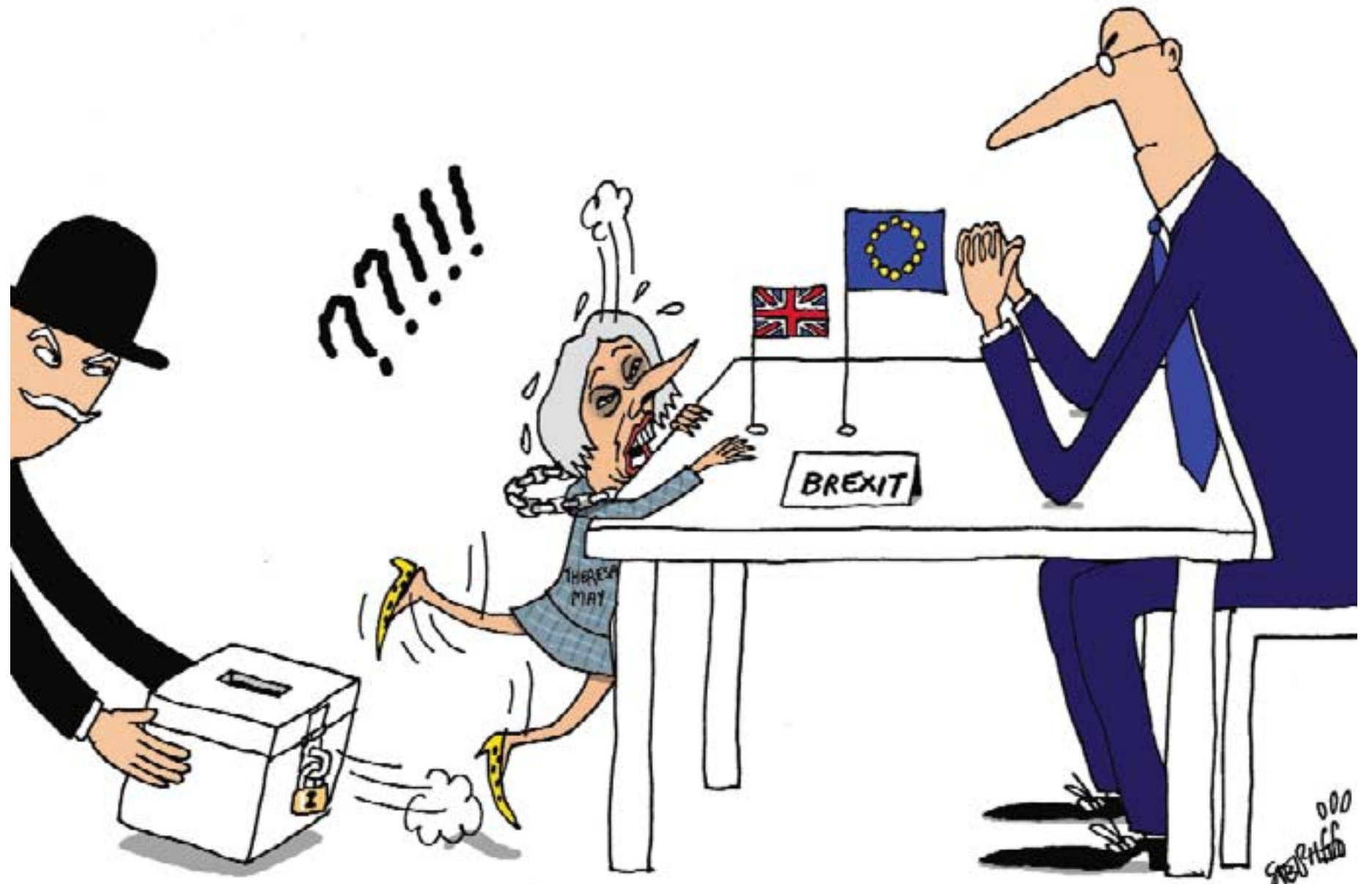
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## MAY FIGHTING TO HANG ON AFTER GAMBLE FAILS

By Gregory Katz

In the big book of political blunders, Theresa May's decision to hold a snap election to solidify her Brexit mandate will rank among the most memorable - and the most unnecessary. The British prime minister was cruising along two months ago with a solid majority in Parliament and several years to run on her party's mandate. There was no need for her to put her position on the line, and she had said earlier that an election was not needed.

But her party's huge lead in the opinion polls - 20 percent in most cases - made the prospect too tempting to pass up. At the time, it seemed to make sense. Her main opponent - Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, known for his left-wing views - was stumbling from mishap to mishap, unable even to muster solid support from his party's own lawmakers. May seemed virtually certain to add to her party's strength, win a mandate in her own name - not just as a stand-in for her predecessor, David Cameron, who quit after Britain voted to leave the European Union last June - and gain five years to negotiate a deal on Britain's exit from the European Union without facing a pesky national vote soon after the scheduled Brexit date of March 2019.

So she flung the dice - and lost. After Thursday's vote, May's Conservative Party still has the largest number of lawmakers, but lacks a parliamentary majority. It may well be able to form a minority government with the help of Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party in the coming days and weeks, but the prime minister's ability to cling to the keys of Number 10 Downing Street is very much in doubt, and her stated goal of unifying the country behind her ahead of the upcoming Brexit negotiations with EU leaders is utterly out of reach.

The result has caused a fresh bout of selling of the British pound, and made EU leaders still more uncertain about Britain's Brexit priorities. The inherent weakness of a minority government raises the prospect of another election later this year, which would undoubtedly cause more turbulence. It is too early to say with any certainty what the change from a majority to minority government will mean to Brexit. Some experts are calling the Conservatives' unexpected loss of seats a rejection of the "hard Brexit" May has advocated, which would take Britain out of the single market and the customs union and which could see tariffs slapped on British exports to the EU.

Voters may have been unimpressed with her refrain that "no deal is better than a bad deal" because it raised the prospect of Britain crashing out of the EU without a trade-and-immigration system to replace the existing, well-integrated procedures that have evolved over decades of European integration. Corbyn's newly energized Labour Party officially backs Brexit since voters endorsed it in a referendum last year - but many important figures in the party advocate a much "softer" approach, and their views now may carry sway. Corbyn's rise is one of the biggest surprises.

Since winning the Labour leadership in 2015, few commentators gave him much chance of doing well nationally - he was seen by many as too left-wing, too much of a pacifist, and tarnished by prior associations with the radical group Hamas and the IRA. The bearded, often rumpled Corbyn seemed to suffer from a chronic charisma deficit - until the campaign began. Then, he ran a disciplined, coherent campaign despite a few misuses, and deftly capitalized on May's mistakes.

May's campaign seemed to suffer from her refusal to debate and her propensity to appear only in carefully controlled situations. She was listening only to a small group of aides, and they failed to get her out and interacting with crowds. Unlike the Labor Party - which sweetened its platform with things like free tuition for university students - the Conservative Party contained little to get people excited. He gained ground when she outlined a policy on nursing care for the elderly that was swiftly derided as a "dementia tax" and in the final days repeatedly hammered May for cutting 20,000 police officers during her tenure as interior minister - an assertion that carried weight as major terrorist attacks hit Manchester and London.

Corbyn faced intense opposition from the right-wing tabloid press and from the Evening Standard, newly edited by former Treasury chief George Osborne, whom she fired when replacing Cameron last summer following the Brexit vote. Osborne used the front page of his newspaper to predict "Corbyn Chaos" - and Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson repeatedly ridiculed Corbyn in the campaign's waning moments. But the attacks did not seem to work. It is May, not Corbyn, whose career appears to be in tatters. Gregory Katz has covered British politics for two decades. — AP

## SANDERS IS RIGHT, VOUGHT'S NOMINATION SHOULD BE REJECTED

Dr James J Zogby  
 President Arab American Institute

While most of Washington was eagerly awaiting former FBI Director James Comey's Thursday appearance before the Senate Intelligence Committee, they may have missed an important confirmation hearing that occurred a day earlier. On Wednesday, Russell Vought, President Trump's nominee for Deputy Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) appeared before the Senate Budget Committee where he was subjected to stiff questioning by Senator Bernie Sanders.

At issue were a number of statements Vought had made in support of Wheaton College's decision, last year, to suspend and then fire a tenured African American professor, Larycia Hawkins. The reason: Wheaton College is a Christian school and Hawkins, who is Christian, not only donned a hijab in a gesture of solidarity with America's Muslim community but then later declared that Christians and Muslims "worship the same God".

In an article defending Wheaton's action, Vought argued that Hawkins' views were in error since "Muslims do not simply have a deficient theology, they do not know God because they have rejected Jesus (PBUH) Christ, His Son, and they stand condemned". At Vought's confirmation hearing, Senator Sanders read the above quote and then asked the nominee, "Do you believe that statement is Islamophobic?" Vought responded, "Absolutely not, Senator. I'm a Christian and I believe in a Christian set of principles based on my faith. That post [the one quoted by Sanders] ...was to defend my alma mater, Wheaton College, a Christian school..."

**Sanders:** "...Do you believe people in the Muslim religion stand condemned?"

**Vought:** "Again Senator, I'm a Christian and I wrote that piece in accordance with the statement of faith at Wheaton College."

**Sanders:** "...What about Jews? Do they stand condemned too?"

**Vought:** "Senator, I'm a Christian..."

**Sanders:** "I understand that you are a Christian, but this country is made up of people who are not just [Christian]...there are other people of different religions in this country...In your judgment, do you think that people who are not Christian are going to be condemned?" Vought: "...As a Christian, I believe that all individuals are made in the image of God and are worthy of dignity and respect regardless of their religious beliefs. I believe that as a Christian that's how I should treat all individuals."

**Sanders:** "You think that your statement...[that] they do not know God because they rejected Jesus (PBUH) Christ, His Son, and they stand condemned, do you think that's respectful of other religions?". Sanders concluded his questioning saying, "I would simply say, Mr. Chairman, that this nominee is not really someone who this country is supposed to be about." Following this exchange, Sanders was attacked for what one National Review writer termed, a "disgraceful and unconstitutional line of questioning" and in a few more mainstream publications for "imposing a religious test for public office". I cannot agree with Sanders' critics. He is right. Vought is not what America is "supposed to be about" and he is not fit to serve as Deputy Director of OMB for two important reasons. In the first place, it is

Vought, not Sanders who has used a religious test to support the firing of a tenured professor. His demonstrated intolerance is a disturbing trait for someone in public service. Vought may claim that all are "worthy of dignity and respect regardless of their religious beliefs", but when it came to Professor Hawkins, a fellow Christian, Vought behaved quite differently, precisely because her description of her faith did not comport with his narrow interpretation of Christian theology.

Secondly, OMB is the office in the White House that not only helps the President develop his budget, it also advises agencies on how to implement their programs in accordance with the priorities set by the Administration. To have a Deputy Director of OMB who has not only expressed intolerance toward those who do not share his interpretation of his faith, but who has also demonstrated this intolerance in practice is worrisome. This behavior calls into question his ability to implement policies and disperse resources without prejudice.

One wonders if we would even be having this discussion if the nominee were a Christian who claimed, as some have, that their faith holds: That Jews are condemned because they killed Jesus; or that Black people are the descendants of Noah's son Ham marked by God for their sin; or that women are inferior to men; or that gays are condemned, etc? Of course, individuals have the right to hold such beliefs, but when seeking a position of public trust aren't we entitled to know whether these beliefs will impact their judgments? As the ACLU noted in its comment on this controversial nomination, "Religious freedom is such a fundamental liberty that the framers of our Constitution enshrined it in the First Amendment."

## MACRON: MODERN PRESIDENT WITH MIDAS TOUCH

By Clare Byrne

He's the man with the Midas touch-so far at least. Since taking office four weeks ago French President Emmanuel Macron's star has shone bright, restoring a sense of national pride. From Germany's normally inscrutable Angela Merkel to India's nationalist Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Macron's youth, daring and optimism have bowled over world leaders who are lining up for photo-ops with "le Kid" as L'Express news weekly nicknamed the 39-year-old.

Resistance is futile, as US President Donald Trump found out when he tried but failed-to dominate Macron in a by now memorable white-knuckle handshake. A few days later Trump dropped a bombshell when he confirmed plans to pull the US out of the Paris climate accord. But he was arguably again upstaged by Macron, who replied with an English-language appeal to the world to "make our planet great again"-a slogan that has become a rallying cry for Trump critics.

"France is in vogue again, France is cool," Spain's El Pais newspaper wrote, comparing the Macronmania to the Obamania that swept the US after Barack Obama was elected president in 2008. At home, Macron's rivals have been trying to hold on as scores of lawmakers from across the left-right divide jump ship and join his centrist camp. Given no chance two months ago of winning a majority, polls now show his year-old Republique en Marche (Republic on the Move, REM) party romping home in the June 11-June 18 parliamentary vote with between 385 and 415 seats in the 577-member National Assembly.

### Macronmania

"At the moment you could take a goat wearing a Macron badge and it would have a good chance of being elected," joked BFMTV political commentator Christophe Barbier. The son of two doctors from the northeastern city of Amiens had made a career out of breaking the mould. The former investment banker is married to his 64-year-old former teacher Brigitte Macron, a glamorous divorced mother of three whom he fell for as a teen. Their rela-

tionship was the subject of deep fascination during the presidential campaign, which the media-savvy Macron worked to his advantage. His path to France's highest office is as unusual as their inter-generational love story.

Macron had never held elected office before throwing his hat into the ring to replace Francois Hollande, two years after Hollande promoted him from political unknown to become economy minister. In a country where political careers have traditionally been built over decades, he took the risk of founding his own centrist En Marche (On the Move) party from scratch rather than seek the nomination of the right or left. It was a gamble that paid off among voters disillusioned with the existing political class. But it was initially met

with cynicism, with rivals writing off the ambitious upstart as too inexperienced.

### First slip-up

Macron pressed on, using his image as a modernizer to draw in thousands of volunteers to En Marche, which was modelled partly on Obama's 2008 grassroots campaign. The downfall of the Socialists and a scandal engulfing the conservative Republicans fuelled his rise, allowing Macron to lead the battle against the far-right's Marine Le Pen whom he beat soundly in the election run-off. En Marche was renamed Republique En Marche immediately after his victory.

While fans compare him to US president John F Kennedy he appears to be more inspired by Francois Mitterrand and Charles

de Gaulle, two French presidents remembered for their monarchical approach. Since his inauguration Macron has sought to restore lost grandeur to the presidency, delivering his victory speech in front of the Louvre museum-a former royal palace-and hosting Russian President Vladimir Putin at Versailles palace. He also kept a tight rein on communications, to avoid the excessive media exposure that soured voters on Hollande and his predecessor Nicolas Sarkozy and to minimise the risk of slip-ups.

He failed to prevent one early blunder from being caught on camera, however. During a visit to Brittany last week he was caught joking with officials about the flimsy "kwassa-kwassa" boats that transport migrants to the French Indian Ocean island of Mayotte in the Comoros archipelago. — AFP



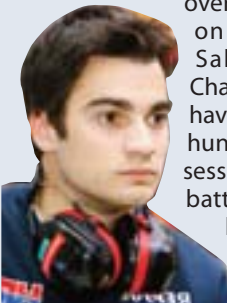
ORADOUR-SUR-GLANE: French President Emmanuel Macron (center) attends a commemoration ceremony marking the 73rd anniversary of the World War II massacre in Oradour-sur-Glane, Haute-Vienne, France yesterday. — AFP

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## PEDROSA ON POLE FOR CATALAN GRAND PRIX

**MONTMELO:** Dani Pedrosa claimed pole position for today's Catalan MotoGP after a qualifying session to forget for leading championship contenders Maverick Vinales, Valentino Rossi and Marc Marquez yesterday. Pedrosa banked his second pole of the season with a best time of 1min 43.870 to start ahead of Ducati pair Jorge Lorenzo and Danilo Petrucci on the front row. Marquez remarkably managed the fourth best time despite crashing twice in qualifying and four times overall on Saturday as the Spaniard struggled for grip on the modified Montmelo circuit following Luis Salom's fatal crash in last year's Moto2 race. Championship leader Vinales starts down in ninth after having to edge out Yamaha teammate Rossi by fourth hundredths of a second just to qualify for the second session. That left Rossi 13th fastest as he continues to battle back from chest and stomach injuries that saw him hospitalised in a motocross training accident last month. —AFP

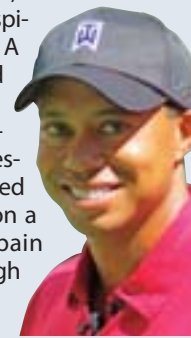


## ENGLAND UNDER-20 TEAM CHASES RARE GLOBAL TITLE

**SEOUL:** If England defeats Venezuela in the final of the Under-20 World Cup today, the country will celebrate its first soccer world title for more than 50 years. Since winning the World Cup back in 1966 on home soil, England has underachieved on the global stage. "It's our time," said Liverpool striker Dominic Solanke, who has scored four goals in the tournament. "The determination we have is what drives us on. We know that even if we're losing, we can bring it back." England has won five of six games to get to the final at Suwon World Cup Stadium. After topping Group A with wins over six-time champion Argentina and host South Korea, England has defeated Costa Rica, Mexico and Italy. That 3-1 semifinal victory was the most impressive after Italy took a second-minute lead. England replied with two goals from Solanke and another from Ademola Lookman, who joined English Premier League team Everton in January. Venezuela was the most impressive performer in the group stage, defeating Mexico, Germany and Vanuatu, scoring 10 goals and not conceding any. —AP

## WOODS TOLD POLICE HE TOOK XANAX: REPORT

**MIAMI:** Tiger Woods told police that he was taking Xanax the night he was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence, an unredacted version of the police report obtained by the Golf Channel showed. The version of the Jupiter, Florida, Police Department report made public Friday after a request by the Golf Channel contained material redacted from the version released to media last week. Woods, 41, was found asleep at the wheel on May 29 and arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. A breathalyzer test showed no alcohol in his system, and the 14-time major golf champion has said an "unexpected reaction to prescribed medications" led to the incident. Xanax can be prescribed to treat anxiety and depression as well as insomnia. In the report originally released by authorities, Xanax was not among the drugs listed on a line for "medical conditions" which did include the pain reliever Vicodin and the anti-inflammatory Vioxx—although Woods indicated he hadn't used Vioxx for a year. —AFP



### MOTOR RACING

## TOYOTA CLAIMS ONE-TWO FINISH IN WEC 6 HOURS OF SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

**TOKYO:** Toyota GAZOO Racing took its second consecutive victory of the 2017 FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) season with a one-two in the 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps. Silverstone winners Sébastien Buemi, Anthony Davidson and Kazuki Nakajima, in the #8 TS050 Hybrid, again took top step of the podium to extend their lead in the drivers' World Championship to 17 points.

In a dramatic race, the #7 of Mike Conway and Kamui Kobayashi finished just 1.992 seconds behind in second place, for the team's first one-two since Shanghai in 2014. That moves Toyota into a lead of 8.5 points in the manufacturers' World Championship.

The #9 crew of Stéphane Sarrazin, Yuji Kunimoto and Nicolas Lapierre, competing together for the first time, completed a trouble-free race to finish fifth and gather valuable experience with the low-downforce TS050 Hybrid. Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief

Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation, said, "I congratulate the teams on this superb performance, which gives Toyota the lead in both the drivers' and manufacturers' championships. For Toyota, one of the goals of our participation in motorsports activities is to refine our cars and people under various types of extremely challenging road conditions and feedback the results to mass-production vehicles that will help us create 'ever-better cars'. The FIA World Endurance Championship provides an excellent platform for us to put this strategy into action. As always, the fan support was amazing and I extend my thanks to all those who cheered our team on."

On this occasion, Toshio Sato, Team President, said, "This was a dramatic race; I hope the fans enjoyed it. The #7 was unlucky with the two full-course yellows. These things can happen in endurance racing but it's really

frustrating for Mike, Kamui and the car crew. They had the quickest car in the race and didn't make any mistakes. Well done to the #8 car; they never gave up and got their reward. It's also been a very productive weekend from a technical point of view; having the chance to get data on the low-downforce package with the #9 is helpful for our Le Mans preparations. Le Mans is our big target and we will now make the final push to be ready."

Right from the start, the Toyota vehicles were challenging for the win, with first Sébastien then Mike putting the pole-position competitor car under pressure. On the 10th lap, Mike took the lead, while Sébastien took second three laps later. At the first driver changes, Yuji took over the #9 in fifth for his first-ever racing laps at Spa. He showed consistency and maturity throughout his two stints to navigate safely through the lapped traffic - a key stage in his acclimatization to WEC racing.

Kamui was consistently building a lead for the #7 as the race passed the halfway point, with Anthony in the #8 in second. But the race soon took a significant turn with two full-course yellow periods. The #7 was unlucky to be already in the pits on both occasions. Other cars pitted after the yellow flags and therefore conceded far less time due to the 80km/h limit around the lap. Mike, whose stops were made when the competitors were driving at racing speeds, lost around one minute.

Kazuki initially took the lead during the first full-course yellow then extended it significantly during the second. Mike, meanwhile, found himself dropping to third. Accident repairs to a competitor car meant Sébastien held a half-minute lead going into the final hour over Kamui, now second in the #7.

Kamui closed the gap but held position in the last laps, crossing the line just behind Sébastien, who took Toyota's 13th win since its

WEC debut in 2012. Nicolas completed a clean run for the #9 car, taking the flag in fifth, two laps behind.

The 6 Hours of Spa-Francorchamps this season was the first time that Toyota GAZOO Racing fielded three TS050 Hybrid cars in a race. To enhance its preparations for Le Mans, the #9 TS050 Hybrid - featuring Stéphane Sarrazin, Yuji Kunimoto and Nicolas Lapierre - used a low-down force configuration which is optimized for the long straights which characterize the Circuit de la Sarthe. Both the #7 and #8 crews, meanwhile, drove their TS050 Hybrid cars with a high-down force configuration, which concedes top speed in favor of more grip around corners.

Toyota GAZOO Racing now makes the short journey back to Cologne to accelerate preparations for the Le Mans 24 Hours on 17-18 June. Before that, all teams participate in the official Le Mans test day on 4 June.

### GOLF

## JOHNSON READY FOR LONG GAME IN US OPEN DOUBLE QUEST

**LOS ANGELES:** World number one Dustin Johnson is preparing for a battle of the big hitters as he defends his US Open title next week on what is set to be the longest course in major championship history.

Johnson, who clinched his first major victory at Oakmont last year, has been installed as the favourite for the tournament, which is being held at Erin Hills in Wisconsin for the first time. At 7,741 yards, the challenging par-72 layout outside Milwaukee will be the longest course in the history of major tournament golf.

United States Golf Association officials say the yardage may fluctuate, depending on adjustments to the set up which will be made based on the firmness of the ground and wind conditions.

But for Johnson, one of the longest hitters in golf, Erin Hills' potentially intimidating length augurs well.

The 32-year-old was perfectly positioned to win at Chambers Bay in 2015 — until this year the longest US Open course in history — only to three-putt on the 18th green of the final round to gift Jordan Spieth victory.

Yet he recovered from that setback to win at Oakmont last year, finally shaking off his majors jinx after a string of near-misses.

Johnson, who missed this year's Masters at Augusta after a freak accident on the eve of the tournament, revels in the US Open's reputation as the toughest test in golf.

"It's just a very, very difficult tournament to win," Johnson said. "It's always tough. Deep rough, greens are always firm and fast, gener-

ally. It's just a tough tournament to win."

This year promises to be no different. Erin Hills, which opens and closes with two monster 600-yard par-fives, is in keeping with the US Open's most demanding traditions and Johnson couldn't be happier.

"I like really tough golf courses," he said. "I tend to focus more and play better. I like knowing par is a good score for some reason. I don't know why. I play better when I'm playing for pars."

But the prospect of another intimidating US Open course is not to everyone's liking. Both 2016 venue Oakmont and 2015 hosts Chambers Bay attracted criticism, and Australia's Adam Scott believes the USGA is under pressure to deliver a controversy-free event this year. "They're going to have to try to run a really good event," Scott said. "The ball is in their court; they control it all. Hopefully they get it right this time, just from a playability standpoint," the world number 12 added.

"Let's just have something that's a challenge and interesting, not just playing brutal (golf)." With Tiger Woods still struggling to resurrect his career as he recovers from back surgery, and Phil Mickelson likely to skip the tournament to attend his daughter's high school graduation, this year's US Open could in some respects mark the end of an era. If Mickelson fails to show as expected he retains a tee-time despite vowing not to attend it will be the first time since 1994 that neither player has featured in the first round. —AFP



**OAKMONT:** In this June 17, 2016, file photo, Dustin Johnson lines up his putt on the seventh hole during the rain delayed second round of the US Open golf championship at Oakmont Country Club, in Oakmont, Dustin Johnson had the perfect temperament to handle such a mental test last year at Oakmont when he won the US Open. —AP



**MONTREAL:** Ferrari driver Kimi Raikkonen, of Finland, takes a turn at the Senna corner during the second practice session at the Canadian Grand Prix in Montreal, Friday. —AP

## RAIKKONEN ON TOP AHEAD OF HAMILTON

**MONTREAL:** Kimi Raikkonen topped the times ahead of Lewis Hamilton as Ferrari edged in front in a close scrap with champions Mercedes in Friday afternoon's second free practice for the Canadian Grand Prix.

The Finn, who finished a disappointed and controversial second in Ferrari's one-two triumph at last month's Monaco Grand Prix, clocked a best lap in one minute and 12.935 seconds to outpace the Briton, who was fastest in the morning's opening session, by 0.215 seconds. Championship leader and four-time champion German Sebastian Vettel was third fastest in the second Ferrari ahead of Finn Valtteri Bottas, who was fourth in the second Mercedes.

The top four were separated by only 0.375 seconds at the end of a closely-contested session that ended with Vettel complaining that three-time champion Hamilton was slowing him

down as he followed him. "He keeps making mistakes and backing off," said Vettel on the Ferrari team radio, a charge that could not be leveled at 2007 champion Raikkonen who was in scorching form. Dutchman Max Verstappen was fifth for Red Bull, before he pulled up in the closing stages with gearbox problems, ahead of Brazilian Felipe Massa of Williams and two-time champion Spaniard Fernando Alonso, who posted an excellent late lap for McLaren Honda to go seventh. Frenchman Esteban Ocon and his Force India team-mate Mexican Sergio Perez were eighth and 10th either side of Russian Daniil Kvyat in his Toro Rosso.

The session was packed with incidents with many cars struggling and spinning - including Frenchman Romain Grosjean of Haas, who spun three times, Vettel and Verstappen, as they sought the limits of their performance.

It began with Spaniard Carlos Sainz going out first in his Toro Rosso to try and make up for lost time after losing the entire morning session with an engine failure.

Vettel was soon fastest before Ricciardo reported "loss of power" as his Red Bull team were hit by the first of their problems on a difficult day. Hamilton displaced Vettel after 21 minutes before Raikkonen delivered his lap in 1:12.935 seconds to take over on top.

The session was then halted by a red flag with 18 minutes remaining when Verstappen, in the second Red Bull, suffered a gearbox problem and pulled up between Turns 7 and 8, a position regarded as dangerous.

The session re-started with 13 minutes remaining and almost the entire field, bar the two broken Red Bulls, on track. Perez, almost immediately, spun at Turn Two. — AFP



## US HOOPS LEADERS THRILLED FOR OLYMPIC 3-ON-3 HOOPS

**CLEVELAND:** Excitement abounds in basketball's birthplace about the fast-paced 3-on-3 version of the game being added to the Olympic lineup Friday by the International Olympic Committee.

With roots in Harlem's legendary Rucker Park playground games and the Gus Macker series that has toured US cities for 30 years, 3-on-3 has reached a renaissance that includes an eight-team US pro league tipping off in two weeks and Olympic status starting at Tokyo in 2020. "USA Basketball is excited that 3-on-3 basketball has been added to the 2020 Olympic Games," USA Basketball chief executive Jim Tooley said, adding: "3-on-3 is a great way to develop the

sport and expand it to parts of the world that might not otherwise be active in basketball."

While American teams of NBA and Women's NBA stars have dominated the familiar 5-on-5 version of the game on the Olympic stage, 3-on-3 offers nations with less depth the chance to compete at a global level much as Rugby Sevens does in its realm. "It is a popular and growing sport," Tooley said. It's non-stop, fast-paced, high energy and an exciting version of the game."

The NBA has conducted 3-on-3 events around the world, including stops in Brazil, China, Philippines, Japan, Mexico, Spain, Italy, Germany and

France. "Today's announcement by the IOC to include 3-on-3 basketball in the 2020 Olympics is great news and continues to signify the growing popularity of basketball around the world," said NBA deputy commissioner and chief operating officer Mark Tatum.

The Dew NBA 3X Tour, the first nationwide US elite 3-on-3 competition, is in its second year with events from May to October in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Washington and San Francisco. "The last few years, we have made a major push in 3-on-3 basketball with our nationwide Dew NBA 3X tour and several international 3-on-3 competitions and the Olympic stage will pro-

vide these elite athletes with the opportunity to further demonstrate their talents," Tatum said.

### 'WHAT FANS WANT'

Former NBA standouts Allen Iverson and Chauncey Billups are among players in the new Big3 league, where eight teams play a round-robin schedule of tournaments, four games each night in various cities with playoffs and a championship. "We would like to commend the Olympics for making 3-on-3 basketball, the most played sport in the world, an official Olympic sport," Big3 co-founders Ice Cube and Jeff Kwatinetz said in a statement. "This decision recon-

firms our gut instinct that 3-on-3 basketball is what sports and entertainment fans want to see." The Big3 tips off on June 25 at New York's Barclays Center.

World governing body FIBA had 3-on-3 in the 2010 Singapore Youth Olympic Games and in the 2014 edition of the event in Nanjing, China, the sport now becoming the first Youth Olympic discipline to be included in the Olympic program.

"Three-on-3 has proven to be a global sport and one of the most popular spectator sports," Tooley said. "USA Basketball hopes the addition of 3-on-3 to the Olympics will help grow participation in the sport worldwide." — AFP

## REAVIE, SCHWARTZEL, MUNOZ SHARE PGA ST JUDE LEAD

**LOS ANGELES:** Chez Reavie fired three birdies and an eagle in a five-under par 65 that boosted him into a three-way tie for the lead with Charl Schwartzel and Carlos Munoz Friday in the PGA St. Jude Classic. South Africa's Schwartzel had five birdies and a bogey in his four-under par 66 while Colombia's Munoz carded a 67 that featured four birdies and a bogey.

They were one stroke in front of overnight co-leader Stewart Cink, who carded a 68 for 132, with Ben Crane, winner of this tournament in Memphis, Tennessee, on 133 after a 65.

Reavie started the day two shots off the lead. He picked up three birdies on the front nine and eagled the par-five 16th to go into the weekend poised to strike for a second career win to go with his 2008 Canadian Open title. Reavie said he'd stay aggressive over the weekend. "There's no way that I can change my mindset and go out there and try and make pars. I won't win the golf tournament if I do that," he said. "I need to just keep doing the same thing I'm doing, attack the holes that suit my eye and make as many birdies as I can."

Schwartzel, the 2011 Masters champion, teed off on 10 and birdied four of his first eight holes. He was alone atop the leaderboard after a birdie on the par-four second but bogeyed the eighth.

He was expecting a demanding weekend in the final tuneup before next week's US Open at Erin Hills in Wisconsin.

"If you're missing fairways, with the greens, you're going to miss a lot of greens, you're going to struggle," he said.

"So if you want to move forward and win this golf tournament, I think all parts of your game are going to have to be in top form." Munoz, whose late charge on Thursday gave him a share of the first-round lead with Cink, Scott Brown and Matt Every, teed off on 10 and was even through nine after a birdie and a bogey. He picked up three birdies coming in to maintain a share of the lead.

"I'm super happy," the 24-year-old Munoz said. "I'm really proud of the way I played today. I had one mistake, but I think a pretty good bogey on 18, so I was just happy to be able to step it up." —AFP

### RUGBY

## FOLAU, SPEIGHT TRY DOUBLES AS AUSTRALIA BEAT FIJI

**MELBOURNE:** Israel Folau and Henry Speight scored try doubles as Australia launched their international season with a 37-14 win over Fiji in Melbourne yesterday.

Fullback Folau was outstanding in attack, running over 150 metres for the match, and Fijian-born winger Speight finished well as the Wallabies outscored Fiji five tries to two after leading 18-0 at half-time. Fly-half Bernard Foley kicked three conversions and two penalty goals to finish with 12 points.

The Wallabies began well and dominated the first half, but the Fijians had more success in the second half with tries to Vereniki Goneva and Timoci Nagusa.

It was a tonic for the Wallabies to win their season opener by 23 points, with Test debutant Karmichael Hunt catching the eye at inside centre along with towering lock Adam Coleman.

Hunt, whose introduction to rugby in 2015 was blighted by a cocaine scandal stemming from his days in the Australian Football League, was making his Wallabies debut aged 30.

Hunt and Folau are the only players in Australian history who have been dual rugby internationals and played the AFL at senior level.

"It's very satisfying. Obviously, my journey hasn't been an easy one, self-inflicted, but I put my hand up from the start and I just wanted work my way into form and this year I've done that," Hunt said.

"For me to pull on the Wallabies jumper is a huge honour for my family and everyone else that has helped me get to this point, so I am very lucky."

Flanker Michael Hooper, who was named captain ahead of 117-Test hooker Stephen Moore, who started on the bench, said it was a good start to the year for the Wallabies. "I am really happy with the guys, the intent was really strong and the work-

rate was there," Hooper said.

"We probably left two or three tries out there, but the Fijians are pretty hard to deal with at times."

### FAST START FROM WALLABIES

It was Australia's 14th straight win over Fiji since a 3-3 draw in Melbourne in 1961. Their last defeat to the Pacific Islanders was way back in 1954. The Wallabies hit the ground running and were 15-0 up in the first 11 minutes.

Foley aimed a high kick to the right wing for Folau, who out-jumped fullback Kini Murimurivalu to score the opening try in the fourth minute.

The Wallabies were in again when forwards Coleman and Scott Higginbotham exchanged passes and gave the opening for Speight to score out wide.

The Wallabies went a man down when Folau was yellow-carded for a high tackle but they added three more points through a Foley penalty goal while he was off the field. Foley took off from his own quarter with an intercept off a Ben Volavola pass but was he run down, before he added a further penalty for an 18-0 lead at half-time. Fiji-born centre Tevita Kuridrani had a try disallowed for the Wallabies when he put his foot into touch early in the second half. But Foley put Folau through a gap on halfway and he burnt off the Fijian cover defence to score his second try and stretch the Wallabies' lead to 25-0.

Goneva scored Fiji's first try after he beat off Speight's diving tackle, before Moore came off the substitutes' bench to score a pushover try. Winger Nagusa dived over for Fiji's second try with three minutes left. But the Wallabies kept the ball alive after the fulltime siren and were rewarded with Speight's second try after great passing from replacement Quade Cooper and Hunt. — AFP



**CLEVELAND:** LeBron James #23 of the Cleveland Cavaliers drives to the basket against the Golden State Warriors in Game 4 of the 2017 NBA Finals at Quicken Loans Arena on Friday in Cleveland, Ohio. — AFP

### BASKETBALL

## LEBRON, CAVALIERS THUMP WARRIORS TO AVOID SWEEP

**CLEVELAND:** Kyrie Irving and LeBron James unleashed one of the NBA's greatest scoring onslaughts Friday, powering Cleveland over Golden State 137-116 to doom the Warriors' bid for a perfect playoff run. Irving scored 40 points while James added 31 points, 10 rebounds and 11 assists and Kevin Love contributed 23 points as the defending champion Cavaliers snapped Golden State's NBA-record post-season win streak at 15 games.

The Warriors still lead the best-of-seven series 3-1 and can claim the crown by winning game five at home on Monday in Oakland, California.

"It was do-or-die. The job is still far from over," Irving said. "We're still in a hole. But this is a good start." No team has escaped a 3-0 deficit to win an NBA playoff series but the Cavs made the greatest NBA Finals comeback last year from 3-1 down to beat the Warriors.

Opening the game with the highest-scoring quarter and half in NBA Finals history, the Cavaliers became the first finals team trailing 3-0 to force a fifth game since the 1996 Seattle SuperSonics. "We have championship DNA as well," James said. "We showed that. We were in attack mode." The only finals team down 3-0 to force a seventh game was the 1951 New York Knicks. The Cavaliers shot 24-of-45 from 3-point range, setting a record for Finals hoops from beyond the arc and finishing one shy of matching the league's all-time record.

The ninth career NBA Finals triple-double by James broke the all-time record he shared with Los Angeles Lakers legend Magic Johnson. No one else has more than two. "It's going to be even tougher in game five," James said. "But we look forward to the challenge." Kevin Durant led Golden State with 35 points while Draymond Green added 16 points and 14 rebounds and Stephen Curry had 14 points, but the Warriors—who never led—could not manage the ninth sweep in finals history.

### 'CAVS IN SEVEN'

Cleveland led 86-68 at half-time after the highest-scoring half in finals history, the Cavaliers setting a record for the most points in any quarter with 49 in the first and the most by one team in any half also.

A James 3-pointer put Cleveland ahead 115-96 entering the fourth quarter. James rested for the first 97 seconds of the fourth quarter but two quick Warriors' 3-pointers hastened his return as Golden State surged within 115-104.

But they never got closer. Cavaliers fans were chanting, "Cavs in seven" in the final minutes. James and Durant had a heated verbal exchange for an extended stretch midway into the third quarter while referees were reviewing a foul by Love on Durant, but they slapped hands when they returned to play. Fans anticipating a historic NBA night were rewarded early, but likely not with what they expected.

### HIGHEST-SCORING FIRST HALF

The Cavaliers produced the highest-scoring half in NBA Finals history to seize a 86-68 half-time edge, powered by 28 points from Irving, 22 by James and 17 from Love. The old mark of 81 points in a half was set by the 1982 Philadelphia 76ers. It was also a record for the most total points in any finals half and the Cavaliers, who made 28-of-46 from the floor in the first half, set another record by connecting on 13-

of-22 3-pointers in a half, eclipsing Golden State's two-day old mark of 12.

Irving, who shot 11-of-14 in the first half and 4-of-6 from 3-point range, scored a 3-point play with 1:07 to play in the second quarter to give the Cavs their largest lead of the finals at 83-61.

James, who shot 7-of-11 from the floor and 6-of-10 from the free throw line in the first half, added eight assists and six rebounds in the first half. Love, James, Irving combined for only one less point in the first half than the entire Warriors squad. Cleveland

opened with the highest-scoring quarter in NBA history, seizing a 49-33 lead after the first quarter, doing it despite missing eight free throws.

"They brought a lot of force and we weren't ready for it," Kerr said. In the historic opening period, Love scored 14 points, Irving added 11 and James contributed eight points, six assists and four rebounds. James, who passed Michael Jordan for third on the all-time NBA Finals scoring list with his first basket, sank a layup to give the Cavaliers their biggest lead of the finals to that point at 48-31. —AFP

## 'RELIEF' AS FARRELL BOOTS LIONS TO MUCH-NEEDED WIN

**CHRISTCHURCH:** Coach Warren Gatland admitted a sense of relief yesterday as a much-improved British and Irish Lions ended the Canterbury Crusaders' unbeaten run 12-3 in the best performance of their New Zealand tour. Owen Farrell kicked all the points as the Lions wasted several try-scoring opportunities but impressed in defence and won the aerial battle to hand the Southern Hemisphere's leading club their first loss of the season. The Lions were lacklustre in their first two tour games—including Wednesday's shock defeat to the Auckland Blues—but Saturday's performance is likely to make the All Blacks sit up and take notice, two weeks from their three-Test series. Captain Alun Wyn Jones called it a "confidence-boosting win", as Gatland singled out the Lions lineout and the tactical kicking of Conor Murray for special praise.

The New Zealander described the victory as "obviously a bit of relief because we've been under a bit of pressure". But Gatland was not impressed with the number of missed tries which showed his tourists were not yet in form. "We knocked a couple on, lost a couple, there's still lots of things for us to work on and improve," he said. Jones was also unimpressed with the

poor finishing by the outside backs. "We can be pleased with our defence but we probably have to be a bit more clinical with some of those line breaks, particularly when we get in the 22," he said. "But we're happy with the turnaround. I wouldn't say we're back on track, I don't think we were off track. I think we continued the momentum." While the Lions could not find the try line they did keep their own line intact, shutting down the famed Crusaders attack, with Farrell pivotal to the transformation.

Together with Murray, he generally kicked short to make the ball contestable, a tactic which caused the Crusaders problems. Apart from one misfired pass which potentially cost Jonathan Davies a try, Farrell's running game was damaging. With travel fatigue now out of the system, the Lions needed to make a statement and ironically their cause was helped when Davies went off injured in the first half, allowing Johnny Sexton to take the field as a second playmaker. In a match viewed as a fourth Test, Gatland fielded his strongest XV of the tour so far, minus injured captain Sam Warburton, and under the alternative leadership of Alun Wyn Jones the Lions took control from the start. —AFP



**CHRISTCHURCH:** Canterbury Crusaders outside centre Jack Goodhue makes a run past British and Irish Lions defenders during their match in Christchurch, New Zealand, yesterday. —AP



**MELBOURNE:** Fiji's Kini Murimurivalu (R) tries to tackle Australia's Israel Folau during the rugby union Test match between Australia and Fiji in Melbourne yesterday. —AFP





PHOENIX: Milwaukee Brewers' Brett Phillips (33) slides safely into second base as the baseball bounces off him while Arizona Diamondbacks' Nick Ahmed, right, reaches out to make a play during the fifth inning of a baseball game Friday, in Phoenix. The Brewers defeated the Diamondbacks 8-6. — AP

BASEBALL

# ROCKIES ESCAPE LATE JAM, BEAT CUBS 5-3 FOR 6TH WIN IN ROW

**CHICAGO:** Rockies closer Greg Holland walked the bases loaded in the ninth inning before escaping as Colorado held off the Chicago Cubs 5-3 in Major League Baseball on Friday for their season-high sixth win in a row. After three straight one-out walks, Holland retired Ben Zobrist on a short flyball and struck out Jason Heyward for his major league-best 23rd save. The Rockies posted their National League-leading 40th win this season and have their longest winning streak since 2014. Chris Rusin (3-0) won in relief. Seth Frankoff (0-1) lost in his major league debut. Cubs shortstop Addison Russell returned to the team a day after the club told him not to come to Wrigley Field while Major League Baseball investigates a domestic abuse claim. Russell, who didn't play, had been accused of hitting his wife in a social media post that has since been deleted. Russell denied the allegation.

**BRAVES 3, METS 2**

Dansby Swanson turned a normal grounder up the middle into a hustle double, then dashed home on a single by pinch-hitter Rio Ruiz in the ninth inning to lift Atlanta over New York. With one out in the ninth, Swanson hit a bouncer through the infield and ran hard out of the batter's box. As center fielder Curtis Granderson took a casual approach to the ball, Swanson never let up as he rounded first base and slid head-first into second. Josh Edgin then relieved Fernando Salas (0-2), and Ruiz followed with a single to left. Swanson skipped out of the way of the ball, sped home and slid in safely. Jim Johnson (4-1) pitched a scoreless ninth.

**MARLINS 12, PIRATES 7**

Giancarlo Stanton smashed a home run over the batter's eye at PNC Park, Tyler Moore went deep twice as Miami pounded reeling Pittsburgh. Moore hit a two-run homer off Tyler Glasnow (2-6) in the second and took reliever Dovydas Neverauskas deep over the left field wall in the seventh. Dustin McGowan (4-0) won in relief. The Marlins have won 11 of 15, the Pirates have lost four straight to drop into last in the NL Central division.

**RANGERS 5, NATIONALS 2**

Andrew Cashner quieted the National League's top-hitting lineup, Jonathan Lucroy and Rougned Odor homered, and Texas topped Washington. The Rangers advantage of three errors and won for just the fourth time in 15 games. Cashner (3-5) allowed one run and six hits in seven innings. Matt Bush got two outs for his seventh save. Tanner Roark (6-3) took the loss.

**CARDINALS 3, PHILLIES 2**

Aledmys Diaz hit a solo home run and Michael Wacha pitched six strong innings as St. Louis ended a seven-game losing streak. Earlier in the day, the Cardinals reassigned some members of the coaching staff and released veteran infielder Jhonny Peralta. Philadelphia lost its third straight game. Seung Hwan Oh pitched the ninth for his 14th save in 16 chances. Left fielder Tommy Pham made a diving catch on a line drive by Freddy Galvis to end the game, stranding a runner at third. Wacha (3-3) allowed two runs. Jeremy Hellickson (5-4) took the loss.

**YANKEES 8, ORIOLES 2**

Aaron Hicks homered twice and rookie Jordan Montgomery pitched seven stellar innings to lead New York over Baltimore. Starlin Castro also connected for the American League East leaders, who won their third straight. The Yankees have outscored rivals Boston and Baltimore 25-3 over the last three nights. Montgomery (4-4) set a career high with eight strikeouts in the longest outing of his 11 major league starts. He was coming off six innings of three-hit ball in a 7-0 win at Toronto. Dylan Bundy (6-5) tossed six solid innings but lost for the fourth time in his past five starts.

**RED SOX 5, TIGERS 3**

Jackie Bradley Jr. hit a two-run homer in the eighth inning to lift Boston over Detroit. The Red Sox rallied for three runs in the inning, capped by Bradley's two-out shot off Alex Wilson (1-3). Matt Barnes (4-2) pitched one inning and Craig Kimbrel picked up his 18th save. The Tigers have lost three straight.

**ANGELS 9, ASTROS 4**

Cameron Maybin starred in his return from the disabled list, finishing with three hits and a career-high four steals to help Los Angeles beat Houston. Maybin missed nine games with an oblique injury. He doubled, had two infield singles and scored four times while moving into first place in the American League with 17 steals. Matt Shoemaker (6-3) pitched seven solid innings. Houston starter Brad Peacock (3-1) allowed a season-high seven hits in just three innings.

**INDIANS 7, WHITE SOX 3**

Edwin Encarnacion hit a go-ahead, two-run homer and Corey Kluber won his second straight start since coming off the disabled list as Cleveland beat Chicago. Encarnacion had three hits. Chicago slugger Jose Abreu left in the seventh inning after being hit on the left leg by Andrew Miller's pitch. Abreu fell to the ground and couldn't put any weight on his leg while being helped to the dugout. Chicago said he has a bruised leg and will be re-evaluated Saturday. Kluber (5-2) allowed three runs in six innings. Miguel Gonzalez (4-7) took the loss.

**RAYS 13, ATHLETICS 4**

Tampa Bay tied a season-high with five home runs and Alex Cobb went six strong innings in a win over Oakland. Steven Souza Jr., Malle Smith, Logan Morrison, Tim Beckham and Corey Dickerson all homered for the Rays. Cobb (5-5), coming off a start Saturday at Seattle in which he allowed nine runs and 14 hits over five innings, gave up one run and four hits. Andrew Triggs (5-6) struggled for the fourth consecutive start.

**TWINS 4, GIANTS 0**

Ervin Santana pitched a four-hitter for his third shutout of the season and hit a three-run double to lead Minnesota to a victory over the Giants. Santana (8-3) recovered from a seven-run shelling last Saturday against the Angels to shut down the Giants in an efficient 91-pitch outing. He struck out five, walked one and started 26 of the 31 batters he faced with first-pitch strikes. Santana has allowed at least five runs in three starts this season and followed all of them with scoreless outings, including two game shutouts. Matt Moore (2-7) allowed four runs in six innings to extend his winless streak to five starts. The Giants have lost eight of 11 overall and have just three wins in Moore's 13 starts this season.

**BREWERS 8, DIAMONDBACKS 6**

Manny Pina had three hits - two doubles - and two RBIs and the Brewers ended Arizona's nine-game home win streak. Jake Lamb hit a three-run homer for the Diamondbacks, losers at home for only the ninth time in 33 games this season. David Peralta added three hits and an RBI. Brewers second baseman Jonathan Villar was taken off the field on a cart with an injury after making a diving stop in short right field to rob Chris Herrmann in the eighth inning. Hernan Perez homered for the Brewers and Orlando Arcia had three singles and a sacrifice fly.

**DODGERS 7, REDS 2**

Justin Turner hit a two-run homer in his first at-bat off the disabled list, Enrique Hernandez added a solo shot and Rich Hill and Kenta Maeda combined on a five-hitter to lead the Dodgers to a victory over the

Reds. Reds starting pitcher Amir Garrett (3-5) left the game in the second inning after taking a shot to his bare left hand. Hill (3-2) started and went five innings for the Dodgers, holding the Reds to one run on two hits. He walked three and struck out five. Making his first relief appearance since his 2008 rookie season in Japan, Maeda threw the final four innings to earn the save. He gave up three hits, including a ninth-inning solo home run to Joey Votto, while striking out six.

**MARINERS 4, BLUE JAYS 2**

Danny Valencia and Jarrod Dyson had RBI singles as part of Seattle's seventh-inning rally, and the Mariners beat the Blue Jays for their 10th win in 12 games. The Mariners rallied with two runs in the seventh after struggling to get anything started all night against Toronto starter Joe Biagini (1-5). Valencia's single scored Robinson Cano with the tying run, and Dyson followed with a liner to center scoring Kyle Seager and giving Seattle a 3-2 lead. Seager added a two-out RBI single in the eighth inning.

**PADRES 6, ROYALS 3**

Pinch-hitter Matt Szczur hit a go-ahead home run in the seventh inning and the Padres beat the Royals to end a five-game losing streak. Szczur was pinch-hitting for starter Jhoulys Chacin (5-5), who had given up a tying two-run homer to Salvador Perez in the fifth. Szczur's second homer came off rookie lefty Matt Strahm (1-3) and gave San Diego a 3-2 lead. Rookie Franchy Cordero hit a two-run double in the eighth off reliever Chris Young, a former Padres starter, and Yangervis Solarte followed with an RBI single. — AP

MLB results/standings

Minnesota 4, San Francisco 0; LA Dodgers 7, Cincinnati 2; San Diego 6, Kansas City 3; Seattle 4, Toronto 2; Milwaukee 8, Arizona 6; St. Louis 3, Philadelphia 2; LA Angels 9, Houston 4; NY Yankees 8, Baltimore 2; Atlanta 3, NY Mets 2; Cleveland 7, Chicago White Sox 3; Boston 5, Detroit 3; Tampa Bay 13, Oakland 4; Miami 12, Pittsburgh 7; Texas 5, Washington 2; Colorado 5, Chicago Cubs 3.

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division				
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	Atlanta	Miami	Philadelphia	
NY Yankees	35	23	.603	-	38	22	.633	
Boston	33	27	.550	3	27	32	.458	
Baltimore	31	28	.525	4.5	27	33	.450	
Tampa Bay	32	31	.508	5.5	25	33	.431	
Toronto	29	32	.475	7.5	21	38	.356	
Central Division				Central Division				
Minnesota	31	26	.544	-	Milwaukee	33	29	.532
Cleveland	30	28	.517	1.5	Chicago Cubs	30	30	.500
Detroit	29	31	.483	3.5	Cincinnati	29	31	.483
Kansas City	26	34	.433	6.5	St. Louis	27	32	.458
Chicago White Sox	25	34	.424	7	Pittsburgh	26	35	.426
Western Division				Western Division				
Houston	43	19	.694	-	Colorado	40	23	.635
LA Angels	32	32	.500	12	LA Dodgers	37	25	.597
Seattle	31	31	.500	12	Arizona	37	26	.587
Texas	28	32	.467	14	San Francisco	25	38	.397
Oakland	26	34	.433	16	San Diego	24	38	.387



CHICAGO: Colorado Rockies' Nolan Arenado hits an RBI single against the Chicago Cubs during the seventh inning of a baseball game Friday, in Chicago. — AP



## ZAIN: MORE SURPRISES TO COME AT AL ROUDHAN TOURNAMENT

**KUWAIT:** Zain, the Diamond sponsor of the 38th edition of Al Roudhan Ramadan Football Tournament, announced the continuation of its daily participation in the event's many activities and programs. Zain is organizing a number of competitions with valuable prizes for the attending thrill-seeking crowds on a daily basis in Martyr Fahad Al Ahmad Hall in Daiya Area.

Al Roudhan Ramadan Football Tournament, sponsored by Zain for the second consecutive year, is considered the most prominent sporting event in Kuwait during the Holy Month of Ramadan of every year. Football fans in Kuwait look forward to it with great passion, given the fact that it witnesses high levels of professionalism through both the competing local teams as well as the international football stars hosted.

Zain is present at Al Roudhan Tournament on a daily basis, where it interacts with the attending audiences through various competitions, activities, and entertainment programs. The company also distributes valuable prizes and holds daily challenges and competitions on its official social media channels and more.

Every year, Al Roudhan Tournament's most anticipated pro-

grams include the participation of international football legends that have millions of fans around the world. The tournament already hosted Wales and Manchester United legend Ryan Giggs, and the upcoming days will see more star players including Spain and Barcelona legend Andrés Iniesta, Spain and former Real Madrid legend Iker Casillas, as well as Egypt and Al Ahli legend Mohammed Abutrika.

Zain, being a leading National company supporting this major Kuwaiti sporting event, did not miss the chance to include the traditional aspect into the event. The company organized a Gergiaan activity where it distributed gifts and candy while hosting a traditional performance. The company also participated in a special friendly match between ministers and members of the parliament, which was held under the patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al Hamad Al Sabah.

Zain's support to this unique event is in line with the company's belief in the importance of supporting the youth and sports sectors and encouraging the various sporting initiatives that cater to young people in Kuwait. The event witnesses impressive participation of foot-



ball enthusiasts from across Kuwait and the GCC, and Zain will remain committed to supporting and sponsoring sports, emphasizing its dedication to the elevation of Kuwaiti youth and sports.

Zain stressed that it has always been keen to organize a number of social and humanitarian initiatives during Ramadan

to support the various sectors of the Kuwaiti society, and the company is keen on reflecting the religious as well as traditional humanitarian values and principles to enrich the art of giving and to increase bonding between individuals.

The company further affirmed its Corporate Sustainability and Social

Responsibility campaign during the Holy Month of Ramadan, which includes an extensive array of programs that cover different areas. The initiatives and programs include humanitarian, voluntary, cultural, religious, sports, and recreational activities to cater to the different segments of society.

CRICKET

# SHAKIB, MAHMUDULLAH STUN NEW ZEALAND

**CARDIFF:** Shakib Al Hasan and Mahmudullah both made superb centuries as Bangladesh kept their hopes of a Champions Trophy semi-final alive with a stunning five-wicket victory over New Zealand at Cardiff on Friday.

Bangladesh, chasing a modest 266 for victory, had collapsed to 12 for three when left-hander Shakib (114) came in. And they were not much

India, while for Bangladesh it was another memorable triumph in Cardiff following their shock 2005 ODI win over Australia on this ground. "We just said keep going," explained Shakib, the man-of-the-match, at the presentation ceremony.

"We didn't talk about the target, we just wanted to bat for 40 overs and see where we got to. It's very important, and a big thing for us.

out recording a single win. "It was certainly an innings of two halves," beaten New Zealand captain Kane Williamson told BBC Radio's Test Match Special. "The first 20 overs were simply outstanding. The way our bowlers applied themselves was brilliant.

"Hats off to Shakib and Mahmudullah, they batted simply superbly." Bangladesh's run chase suffered a dreadful start when Tamim Iqbal, fresh from scores of 128 and 95 against England and Australia respectively, was lbw for a second ball duck to Tim Southee.

Southee then had Sabbir Rahman caught behind. And when Soumya Sarkar was lbw to Southee, Bangladesh were 12 for three. Bangladesh lost another key batsmen cheaply when Mushfiqur (14) was bowled by Milne.

They were now 33 for four in the 12th over but, importantly, still had plenty of overs left in which to chase down their target. Mahmudullah got the Bangladesh fans in a sparse crowd cheering when he pulled Jimmy Neesham for a six and a four off successive deliveries. In a desperate bid to break the stand, Williamson brought himself on to bowl his occasional off-spin but Mahmudullah hit him for six over long-on and Shakib drove him for a four.

Nothing Williamson tried worked, with Shakib completing his century in style when he pulled Milne for six. When left-arm paceman Trent Boult bowled him to end a 115-ball innings also featuring 11 fours, Bangladesh were almost home at 257 for five. Mahmudullah followed Shakib to a century by launching Boult over square leg for his eighth four in 102 balls.

Earlier, Bangladesh restricted New Zealand to 265 for eight after Williamson won the toss.

Recalled bowlers Mosaddek (three for 13 in three overs) and Taskin Ahmed (two for 43 in eight) did the bulk of the damage. New Zealand were well set while Williamson (57) and Ross Taylor (63) shared a partnership of 83.

But, as happened in their no-result washout with Australia and defeat by England, they stumbled once the experienced batsmen were out in quick succession.

Williamson, who made 100 and 87 against England and Australia respectively, needlessly ran himself out when he set off for a non-existent single after Taylor turned Shakib behind square to Mosaddek. Taylor exited soon afterwards when caught at short fine leg after mistiming an extravagant 'ramp' shot off Taskin and the innings never recovered. — AFP



**CARDIFF:** Bangladesh's Mahmudullah (R) celebrates their victory in the ICC Champions Trophy match between New Zealand and Bangladesh in Cardiff on Friday. Bangladesh beat New Zealand by five wickets in their Champions Trophy Group A match. — AFP

better off when Mahmudullah (102 not out) walked out at 33 for four.

But their fifth-wicket partnership of 224 — Bangladesh's highest-ever one-day international stand, surpassing the 178 shared by Tamim and Mushfiqur Rahim against Pakistan at Dhaka in 2015, turned the match on its head. Shakib fell just before the end but when Mosaddek Hossain, who'd earlier justified his recall with three wickets, edged Adam Milne for a four, the Tigers had finished on 268 for five and won with 16 balls to spare. This was the latest upset in a week of surprises at the Champions Trophy, a tournament featuring the world's top eight ODI sides, after Pakistan's win over top-ranked South Africa and Sri Lanka's defeat of title-holders

From here, we can only go forward," Mahmudullah added: "We had to stay positive. Once the ball stopped swinging it became easier to bat on." But despite this latest success in the Welsh capital, Bangladesh still need already-qualified England to beat Australia at Edgbaston on Saturday or hope that the match ends-as both Australia's previous Group A fixtures have done-in a no result if they are to reach the semi-finals.

**'INNINGS OF TWO HALVES'**

Defeat ended New Zealand's hopes of reaching the last four and meant that for the first time in 25 International Cricket Council tournaments (World Cup, World Twenty20 and Champions Trophy), they had taken part with-

## SCOREBOARD

**CARDIFF, United Kingdom:** Completed scoreboard in the Champions Trophy Group A match between Bangladesh and New Zealand at Cardiff on Friday:

New Zealand	(1w); Mosaddek 3-0-13-3.	Bangladesh	
M. Guptill lbw b Rubel Hossain	33	Tamim Iqbal lbw b Southee	0
L. Ronchi c Mustafizur Rahman b Taskin Ahmed	16	Soumya Sarkar lbw b Southee	3
K. Williamson run out (Mosaddek/Shakib)	57	Rahman c Ronchi b Southee	8
R. Taylor c Mustafizur Rahman b Taskin Ahmed	63	Mushfiqur Rahim b Milne	14
N. Broom c Tamim Iqbal b Mosaddek Hossain	36	Shakib Al Hasan b Boult	114
J. Neesham st Mushfiqur Rahim b Mosaddek Hossain	23	Mahmudullah not out	102
C. Anderson lbw b Mosaddek Hossain	0	Mosaddek Hossain not out	7
M. Santner not out	14	Extras (lb2, w18)	20
A. Milne b Mustafizur Rahman	7	Total (5 wks, 47.2 overs)	268
T. Southee not out	10	Did not bat: Mashrafe Mortaza, Taskin Ahmed, Rubel Hossain, Mustafizur Rahman	
Extras (w6)	6	Fall of wickets: 1-0 (Tamim), 2-10 (Sabbir), 3-12 (Soumya), 4-33 (Mushfiqur), 5-257 (Shakib)	
Total (8 wks, 50 overs)	265	Bowling: Southee 9-1-45-3 (4w); Boult 10-0-48-1 (4w); Milne 9.2-0-58-1 (3w); Neesham 4-0-30-0 (1w); Santner 10-0-47-0 (2w); Anderson 3-0-19-0; Williamson 2-0-19-0	
Did not bat: T Boult		<b>Result:</b> Bangladesh won by five wickets	
Fall of wickets: 1-46 (Ronchi), 2-69 (Guptill), 3-152 (Williamson), 4-201 (Taylor), 5-228 (Broom), 6-229 (Anderson), 7-240 (Neesham), 8-252 (Milne)		Man-of-the-match: Shakib Al Hasan (BAN)	
Bowling: Mortaza 10-1-45-0 (1w); Mustafizur 9-0-52-1 (3w); Taskin 8-0-43-2; Rubel 10-0-60-1 (1w); Shakib 10-0-52-0			

## AFGHANISTAN STUN WINDIES IN ODI SERIES OPENER

**GROS-ISLET:** Rashid Khan destroyed the West Indies batting line-up with outstanding figures of seven for 18 to bowl Afghanistan to a stunning 63-run victory in the opening fixture of a three-match One-Day International series at the Darren Sammy Stadium in St Lucia on Friday.

After opener Javed Ahmadi's 81 provided the foundation for the visitors' total of 212 for six batting first, the leg-spinner Khan tore through an inept home team batting line-up to claim the fourth-best bowling figures ever in an ODI, routing the Caribbean side for 149 off 44.4 overs to take a 1-0 lead in the series ahead of the second match at the same venue today.

Surprisingly brought on as the sixth bowler by his captain, Asghar Stanikzai, with the West Indies at 68 for two after 22 overs, Afghanistan's premier bowler had an instant, devastating impact, removing Jason Mohammed and debutant Roston Chase with his first two deliveries and then repeating the feat at the start of his second over in prising out topscorer Shai Hope (35) and captain Jason Holder.

At that point he had taken four for one and he added the scalp of Ashley Nurse shortly after to have the hosts tottering at 90 for seven. Jonathan Carter and Alzarri Joseph then added 45 runs for the eighth wicket before Gulbadin Naib had Carter caught on the midwicket boundary, paving the way for Khan to return to finish off the match with the wickets of Joseph and Miguel Cummins in quick succession to seal a famous victory.

"I have worked hard on my bowling and this was a really special effort for the people of Afghanistan who have suffered so much in the past week," said Khan on receiving the "Man of the Match" award and acknowledging the devastating truck

bombing that killed more than 150 people in Kabul last week, an attack that has sparked anti-government protests. "West Indies are a big team and to achieve this against them is brilliant."

**'NO EXPLANATION'**

Holder was left bewildered by both his team's capitulation and the painfully slow batting which preceded it. "There's really no explanation for what happened out there other than we were not professional in the way we went about getting those runs," he stated. "I won't even respond to suggestions that we underestimated Afghanistan but will expect us to come with a totally different effort on Sunday." Earlier, the Afghans were struggling to get any momentum in their innings despite Ahmadi's effort which equalled his previous best in ODIs.

He never really dominated the bowling and when he eventually departed in the 37th over with the score at 131 for five, Afghanistan were desperately in need of acceleration. His innings spanned 102 deliveries and included two sixes and eight fours. That much-needed urgency was finally injected into the innings with the arrival of Naib at the crease as he belted an unbeaten 41 off 28 deliveries, dominating an unbroken seventh-wicket partnership of 58 with Mohammad Nabi (27 not out).

Holder was the main sufferer in the late assault, conceding 36 runs off his last three overs. In an attack dominated by pacers, off-spinner Nurse emerged as the most successful of the West Indies bowlers, taking two for 34 off his ten-over allotment.

"I knew on this pitch a total of 220 would have given us a chance," said a delighted Stanikzai. "We weren't at our best in the T20's and I am happy we are now showing what we are capable of." — AFP



**GROS ISLET:** Gros Islet, Saint Lucia: Ashley Nurse (R) of West Indies is dismissed by lbw by Rashid Khan (L) of Afghanistan during the 1st ODI match between West Indies and Afghanistan at Darren Sammy National Cricket Stadium, Gros Islet, St. Lucia, Friday. — AFP

PREVIEW

# CAPTAIN KOHLI READY FOR INDIA'S CRUNCH CLASH

**LONDON:** Virat Kohli says India will thrive under pressure in their make or break Champions Trophy clash with South Africa today. After slumping to a shock defeat against Sri Lanka on Thursday, holders India must win their final Group B fixture at The Oval to avoid an embarrassing exit.

India came into the tournament as favourites to lift the silverware, but failure to build on their opening match thrashing of Pakistan has put their title defence in jeopardy. Although he is well aware of the criticism that would come with elimination at the group stage, India captain Kohli is remaining upbeat and he called on his players to embrace the high-stakes nature of their showdown with South Africa.

"It's become very exciting. Every game is effectively a quarter-final now," Kohli said.

"In our group especially, all teams are on two points, and you have to win your next game to go through, which is an exciting position to be in for all teams.

"It's a great scenario where you literally have two matches now which are going to be even more competitive cricket.

"So we are pretty clear about the whole situation. It certainly opened up the whole table

for sure." South Africa also come into the final fixture on the back of a defeat, against Pakistan on Wednesday, but Kohli warned his team not to underestimate the Proteas.

"We are against a very high quality side and we have to go out there and play good cricket," he said. "So there's no room for complacency in a tournament like this, and we as a team certainly don't feel that.

"Even if we had four points on the board right now, we still would have gone out there to try to beat South Africa, and that's exactly the mindset we are going to take into the next game." Although India posted a solid score of 321 against Sri Lanka, their batsman failed to push on for an unassailable total.

India's bowlers were even more culpable after a lacklustre effort allowing Sri Lanka to win for the loss of just three wickets.

**COMBINATIONS**

Kohli hinted changes are on the agenda as he looks to find the right balance in his bowling attack.

"We will have to sit down and think of how we match up against the opposition that we're playing against," Kohli said.

"As I said, all options are open. We had cer-

tain things in mind which didn't come off well against Sri Lanka.

"There will be a lot of things discussed, what went wrong and what combinations we can come out within the next game.

"If you want to bring in a bit more balance into the bowling attack by changing it up a little bit, that will be up for discussion as well."

South Africa go into the game with question marks over the form and fitness of captain AB de Villiers, who was dismissed for his first ODI golden duck against Pakistan.

De Villiers's maiden first-ball exit came during South Africa's shock 19-run loss.

Also nursing a hamstring injury suffered against Pakistan, De Villiers has managed just four runs in the tournament.

However, South Africa coach Russell Domingo expects his side's talisman to come good. "He's a quality player, everybody gets first-batters, it's just taken him 200 games! I've got no concerns with AB de Villiers," he said.

"He did pick up a bit of a niggle with his hamstring but the medical team will have a look at it. "But I'm expecting a big performance from him today. He's that type of player that when the team needs him he'll turn it up, I'm sure about that." — AFP



## DEVILISH ALLI CONFRONTS HIS ENGLAND DEMONS

**GLASGOW:** England midfielder Dele Alli says he and his team-mates have had to revisit some "dark places" in order to come to terms with their humiliating Euro 2016 elimination by Iceland.

Alli was one of the 11 players who traipsed from the pitch in Nice last June after Iceland had condemned England to their most galling defeat since a 1-0 loss to the part-timers of the United States at the 1950 World Cup.

Now four points clear in their World Cup qualifying group, England are back on track under manager Gareth Southgate and Alli says being forced to confront their demons has helped the squad to move on. "We've done a lot of work in the camp," the Tottenham Hotspur midfielder told reporters ahead of yesterday's World Cup qualifier against Scotland in Glasgow. "We've talked about it and I'm sure Gareth's aware of how hard it is to talk about it as players, such a low point in our careers. "You don't

really want to talk about it or think about it because it's such a hard thing, you know? It still makes your heart go and you get a lump in your throat. "But I think it's important that we do go to those dark places to improve as a team. You need to go through it and see what happened and where we went wrong.

"When you have the chance to improve as a team, you have to take it, even if it does mean going through something like that." Exuberantly talented but also tough, Alli is an emblem of the new future Southgate intends to forge for England. The 21-year-old scored 18 goals in the Premier League as Spurs finished runners-up to Chelsea and was voted England's Young Player of the Year by his peers for the second season running. He plays with a touch of devilment and was sent off in February for an awful, dangerous foul on Anderlecht's Brecht Dejaegere in the Europa League.

### 'STAND YOUR GROUND'

The previous season, he was banned for three games for punching West Bromwich Albion's Claudio Jacob, but while he accepts his challenge on Dejaegere was "horrible" and "a mistake", he is determined not to lose his edge.

"I know there are a lot of mixed opinions about it, but that's the player I am and it's been in my game ever since I was a youngster," said Alli, who earned his spurs in England's rough-and-tumble third tier with Milton Keynes Dons.

"That's not something I'm looking to change, to be honest. Obviously I've made a few mistakes and hopefully you can tell that I've learnt from them, but like I say, it's not something that I'm worried about.

"Maybe if I didn't have that in my game, I wouldn't have achieved as much as I have done at this age. "I've had to look after myself for a long

time in the football world. You don't want players to think they can walk all over you. So it's important you stand your ground."

Now one of Europe's most coveted young players, Alli accepts his future may lie away from White Hart Lane, but says he will not allow his mind to be clouded by thoughts of a move to a European glamour club. "It's not really something I'm thinking about too much," he said.

"I think people get too worried about where they're going to end up and lose focus on the journey and not enjoying it. So for me as a player, I'm signed at Tottenham and I'm enjoying it.

"Whether I stay at Tottenham for the rest of my career or if I do happen to go somewhere else, I'm sure if I do go somewhere else, it will be at a time when I think that's what's needed.

"Who knows where I'm going to end up, but I'm enjoying the journey." — AFP



**GLASGOW:** Fans are searched before entering the stadium for the World Cup Group F qualifying soccer match between Scotland and England at Hampden Park, Glasgow, yesterday. — AP

## LALLANA RELISHES SCOTLAND CLASH

**GLASGOW:** Liverpool midfielder Adam Lallana believes time has done nothing to wear away the lustre of the rivalry between England and Scotland ahead of World Cup qualifying match in Glasgow. Beginning with their first encounter in November 1872, the two neighbours faced off almost every year until 1984, when the British Home Championship was abolished.

Their meetings since have been scarce and with Scotland having not qualified for a major tournament since the 1998 World Cup, a gulf has emerged between the teams. But Lallana said: "It's a historic game. We proved in a good position at the moment, so we want to capitalise and put the season to bed." The clash at Hampden Park arrives with the two teams in familiar situations.

England are four points clear atop UEFA qualifying Group F and closing in on a place in Russia, while Scotland, six points back in fourth place, face a scrap just to secure a play-off berth. It is 18 years since the Scots last overcame the auld enemy, Don Hutchison's goal securing a 1-0 win at Wembley, but Craig Gordon says his side are fully capable of bringing that wait to an end. "We're confident in our own abilities," said the Celtic goalkeeper. "Of course England are going to go in as favourites. You look at their players and they have fantastic attributes right across the team. "Without a doubt we have players who are capable of hurting England and if we get enough of the ball and create chances, we fancy our chances to take one or two."

### CELTIC CONTINGENT

Four points above second-place Slovakia, England have won four and drawn one of their five games to date and are the last team in European qualifying still to concede a goal. Scotland were comfortably beaten when the teams met in November, but Gordon Strachan's men pulled off a precious 1-0 win over third-place Slovenia on their last outing. Scotland full-back Kiernan Tierney will wear a gum shield after injuring his mouth during Celtic's Scottish Cup final win over Aberdeen, while Leigh Griffiths has been passed fit despite missing training on Monday. Gordon, Tierney and Griffiths make up half of a six-strong contingent from all-conquering Scottish champions Celtic and Strachan hopes their presence has a positive impact.

"It would be stupid of me not to use that enthusiasm and that run of games they're on and the pride they've got in themselves," said the Scotland manager of Celtic's triple trophy-winners.

Tottenham Hotspur hitman Harry Kane will captain England for the first time on his first appearance under manager Gareth Southgate, having missed six games through injury. Fellow striker Jamie Vardy withdrew from the squad on Wednesday due to a "minor" injury, while one-time captain Wayne Rooney was again overlooked.

Danny Rose's ongoing absence due to a knee problem means Southampton's Ryan Bertrand is likely to keep his place at left-back. Recent terror attacks in London and Manchester mean there will be enhanced security measures in place, with armed officers outside the stadium and bag searches in operation. England's supporters will be under particular scrutiny after two fans received lifetime bans for making Nazi gestures during March's friendly defeat against Germany in Dortmund. England's last game in Scotland, a 3-1 friendly win at Celtic Park in November 2014, was marred by chants about Irish paramilitary organisation the IRA being aimed at Celtic's pro-Irish fans. — AFP

## ARGENTINE TOWN BRACES FOR MESSI'S WEDDING

**ROSARIO:** Soccer superstar Lionel Messi's Argentine hometown is preparing to host footballing and showbiz celebrities when he marries childhood sweetheart Antonella Roccuzzo this month in Latin America's wedding of the decade.

Colombian popstar Shakira, wife of Messi's Barcelona teammate Gerard Pique, has said she hopes to attend.

Media such as local Rosario newspaper La Capital also expect other current and former Barcelona stars such as Luis Suarez, Neymar, Cesc Fabregas and Xavi Hernandez to be among the invitees.

The Barcelona forward's agents confirmed in a statement that the couple will wed in Rosario on June 30, a week after Messi's 30th birthday. The guest list, venue and party details are the subject of a swirl of rumors.

Sources in the city's cathedral contacted by AFP denied reports that Messi and Roccuzzo would have a religious wedding ceremony there.

### BARCELONA STARS

The couple still have friends and family in this northern city, where Messi discovered his love of football—and of his brunette future bride. It is also where their two children were baptized—Thiago, 4 and one-year-old Mateo, both born in

Barcelona. Some media predicted 600 guests, but La Capital said no more than 250 were expected, including 21 Barcelona players.

National newspaper Clarin said Argentine singer Karina, wife of Manchester City striker Sergio Aguero, will be a guest and also hired to sing at the wedding.

A source in the city hall told AFP it was considering security measures for the crowd of major football stars visiting.

"Messi always moves around naturally in the city, but we have to gauge the implications of the arrival of world football stars in Rosario," the source said. In a country where football and politics are closely linked, the wedding planner is reported to be Barbara Diez, the wife of a close ally of President Mauricio Macri.

### SPANISH-DESIGNED DRESS

La Capital said the bride would wear a dress by Spanish designer Rosa Clara.

Some 20 hairdressers will be hired for the guests, it reported. As wedding gifts, the couple have reportedly asked for donations to the player's children's charity, the Leo Messi Foundation. Shakira recently denied rumors that she would miss the wedding due to a quarrel with Roccuzzo. — AFP

## US EYE REVENGE IN MEXICO WCUP TEST

SOCCER

**MEXICO CITY:** Christian Pulisic admitted the United States are looking for revenge when they face bitter regional rivals Mexico in a crucial 2018 World Cup qualifier here today.

Borussia Dortmund star Pulisic, still only 18, has breathed fresh life into the US qualifying campaign this year and scored twice in a 2-0 win over Trinidad & Tobago in Colorado on Thursday.

The 18-year-old's sixth and seventh international goals, which followed a mesmerising display against Honduras in March, have revived a US qualifying campaign which began last year with back-to-back defeats.

The first of those losses came against the Mexicans in Columbus, Ohio, last November, a politically-charged encounter which occurred just days after the election of US President Donald Trump.

Trump's recent history of stinging anti-Mexico rhetoric means that the latest instalment of the most intense rivalry in North American football is certain to have an added edge before a full house at Mexico City's iconic Azteca Stadium, which regularly draws crowds of 100,000.

Pulisic, however, is only thinking of the result and taking all three points off Mexico, who are leading the six-team final round of CONCACAF qualifiers by a five-point margin with 13 points from five games.

"It's going to be a tough one down there definitely but we really want revenge on them for when they got us earlier in the campaign," Pulisic said, referring to the last-gasp 2-1 loss in Columbus.

"We're really confident going into that game and we'll come out with a win there too," Pulisic added bullishly of the trip to Mexico.

### 'NO BIGGER GAME'

US captain Michael Bradley summed up the stakes of what is involved when the Americans face their neighbours across the southern border. "For us there's no bigger game," Bradley said following Thursday's win. "With three important points under our belt tonight, it sets up nicely.



**MEXICO CITY:** Mexico's Hirving Lozano controls the ball during their World Cup 2018 CONCACAF qualifiers football match against Honduras in Mexico City, on Thursday. US are looking for revenge when they face bitter regional rivals Mexico in a crucial 2018 World Cup qualifier here today. — AFP

We can go there and be ready to give them a real game in an amazing stadium."

Recent history augurs well for Bruce Arena's side. The Americans battled to a 0-0 draw at the Azteca during qualifying for the 2014 World Cup and won a friendly at the stadium 1-0 in 2012.

This time around a point would probably be a satisfactory result for Arena, who is mulling changes to his line-up following the exertions of playing at altitude in Colorado on Thursday.

"I think we have to see how our players recover," Arena said. "We have a sense of where guys will be after this game (Thursday) and realize we'll need some new bodies on the

field on Sunday. "We've been training that way for the last week to ten days. We have that plan in place. We might make a couple changes to that, but we're pretty set on what we're going to do today."

Mexico meanwhile warmed up for Sunday's game with a comprehensive 3-0 defeat of Honduras on Thursday. Manager Juan Carlos Osorio rested stalwarts Rafael Marquez and Javier Hernandez, but both are expected to return to face the Americans on Sunday.

"It's going to be a very important game against difficult opponents," said Osorio, who is also preparing Mexico for this month's FIFA Confederations Cup in Russia. — AFP



## KIB HOLDS SEVENTH RAMADAN FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT FOR STAFF

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently concluded its 7th Ramadan Football Tournament, which the Bank organizes annually for its staff. As part of its leading social responsibility program taking place throughout the Holy Month of Ramadan, KIB has organized a number of activities and initiatives, covering a wide range of different areas, such as sports, culture, religion, as well as various humanitarian initiatives.

In this year's football tournament, 64 participants from different departments across KIB were placed into 8 teams. While all teams showed a remarkable competitive spirit, the winners of this year's tournament were Al-Boushra Deposit team, who displayed exceptional performance and skill during the tournament. The winning team players included: Mohammad Mustafa

Abdullah, Tarek Kamel, Mohammad Ashmar, Atef Rehani, Ibrahim Mahmoud, Mahmoud Kamib, and Yousef Al-Sharifi.

On his part, Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, said: "This tournament was designed to allow for our staff to come together in a fun and active social context - providing a great opportunity for team bonding, a fun competitive environment for players, and a chance to meet new people from across the Bank. We are proud to say that our staff eagerly awaits the tournament every year, and as such the number of participants in this tournament grows more and more."

It is worth noting that KIB has organized a number of initiatives and activities for its customers, its staff and their families, which are set to take place throughout the

Holy Month of Ramadan. The Bank has paid particular attention to supporting and sponsoring youth-related and sports activities during

Ramadan, as part of its solid commitment to promoting sports, health, and fitness across all segments of the local community.





# Sports

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ROCKIES ESCAPE LATE JAM, BEAT CUBS 5-3 FOR 6TH WIN IN ROW

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PARIS: Latvia's Jelena Ostapenko, right, holds the trophy after winning the women's final match of the French Open tennis tournament against Romania's Simona Halep, left holding the runner-up trophy, at the Roland Garros stadium, in Paris, France, yesterday. — AP

## OSTAPENKO STUNS HALEP TO WIN FRENCH OPEN

PARIS: Latvia's Jelena Ostapenko stunned third seed Simona Halep 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 yesterday to win her maiden Grand Slam title and become the lowest-ranked champion in French Open history. World number 47 Ostapenko is the first unseeded player to lift the Roland Garros title in the Open era and the first Latvian major champion in history. The 20-year-old is the youngest French Open winner since Iva Majoli in 1997 and the first player to win a debut tour-level title at a Slam since Gustavo Kuerten in Paris that same year.

"I am really happy. I have no words. It was my dream," said Ostapenko, who will rocket to 12th in the rankings.

She trailed by a set and 3-0 but launched a memorable comeback with a remarkable display of fearless shotmaking. "I was just trying to stay aggressive. A couple of games, everything turned my way. I was 3-0 down but I was fighting for every point. I still cannot believe it. It was my dream always. When I was a child I

was watching. It's amazing to play here. I just enjoy it so much." For Halep, bidding to join compatriots Ilie Nastase and Virginia Ruzici as major winners, it was a second final defeat in four years at Roland Garros. The 25-year-old would have replaced Angelique Kerber as world number one with victory, but Halep was overpowered as Ostapenko blasted 54 winners to the Romanian's 10.

"I am sick in the stomach with emotions but hopefully I can win this one in the future," said Halep.

"I want to congratulate Jelena. All the credit for what you have done. Enjoy it, be happy and keep it going because you're like a kid." Ostapenko set the tone immediately on a raucous Court Philippe Chatrier, disguising any nerves with an array of bruising groundstrokes to break Halep in the opening game. But the Romanian delivered a swift counter-punch, hitting back straight away on the Latvian's serve before holding with ease for 2-1.

### OSTAPENKO HARNESSES POWER

More crisp striking from Ostapenko nudged the 20-year-old ahead once more, but the errors flew off her racquet just as regularly and Halep pulled 4-3 in front.

Ostapenko's wildness betrayed her as she served to stay in the set at 4-5, netting a forehand to offer Halep set point and drilling long to gift the Romanian the set.

The Latvian's mood soured further when Halep escaped from 0-40 down to begin the second set, the third seed then breaking Ostapenko to compound her frustration. Halep consolidated with a gritty hold for 3-0 before Ostapenko fought off a trio of break points to stall her rival's momentum and spark an incredible comeback.

The Latvian moved level on serve when Halep hooked a forehand wide and then earned another break to chalk up a fourth game on the trot. The errors crept back into her game and Halep responded for 4-4,

but Ostapenko promptly broke to love to leave herself in sight of a deciding set. She conjured up three set points with a laser forehand down the line, forcing the match to a third set with another sweetly-struck winner. Ostapenko continued her feast or famine style but watched two break points flash by as Halep withstood a sustained assault.

Halep broke for 3-1 when Ostapenko drilled long, but the latter retrieved it the next game with a thumping return. The Latvian stepped in to pummel a weak second serve for 15-40, with Ostapenko grabbing a huge slice of luck when a wayward backhand clipped the net and dropped just over for a 4-3 lead.

Halep, who saved match point against Elina Svitolina in the quarter-finals, had no response this time and Ostapenko sealed a breathtaking triumph with another break by hammering a backhand down the line. — AFP

## RONALDO FIRES PORTUGAL, FRANCE COMPLICATES PATH TO RUSSIA

PARIS: France complicated their task of ensuring automatic qualification to next year's World Cup in Russia after falling to a dramatic 2-1 defeat in Sweden yesterday.

Sweden snatched victory with an Ola Toivonen goal from the half-way line in extra time after a poor clearance from France goalkeeper Hugo Lloris.

The freak goal sent the massed ranks of yellow clad fans in Stockholm into a wild frenzy, but more importantly with four games to go it sent Sweden top of Group A, level on 13 points with France.

Only the winners of each group are guaranteed a place at next year's finals in Russia, with the eight best second-placed sides competing in the play-offs.

The French will now play a crucial tie on August 31 against the Netherlands, who remain in the running after thrashing Luxembourg 5-0, while Cristiano Ronaldo led Portugal's 3-0 triumph in Latvia.

France had pulled ahead through Arsenal striker Olivier Giroud after 37 minutes, but the Scandinavians levelled before the break thanks to Jimmy Durmaz (43).

And after more than three minutes of regular time Toivonen took advantage of a poor clearance from France captain Lloris with a soaring shot into the back of an empty net.

"It was a catastrophic scenario," said coach Didier Deschamps, a World Cup winner in 1998 as a player with France. "I'm not going to heap blame on Hugo, he has often been decisive for us, but it cost us."

The coach added that "the draw was not the ideal result but would have been a good point, which would have allowed us to keep Sweden behind".

For Deschamps's side it was the first defeat in qualifying and they next face a tough test against the Netherlands in Paris. Veterans Arjen Robben (21) and Wesley Sneijder (34) laid the groundwork for a Dutch victory in coach Dick Advocaat's first game in charge.

In the second half Georginio Wijnaldum (62) and Quincy Promes (70) scored with Vincent Janssen, adding a penalty six minutes from time. "We have the means to cause a surprise in Paris, the group has found a positive dynamic, we will go there to win against the Bleus," said a defiant Robben. Advocaat, who started his third stint as Oranje coach this week, was also confident. "Of course we are capable of winning in France, the players will be ready, I have a good feeling," he said.

### RONALDO SHOW

In Group B, Switzerland remain top after

beating the Faroe Islands 2-0, thanks to their stars Granit Shaka (36) and Xherdan Shaqiri (59), and are three points ahead of Portugal, the reigning European champions, who beat Latvia thanks to another Ronaldo goal scoring display.

In keeping with his great season finale, the Real Madrid star was decisive with two goals (41 and 63) and an assist for André Silva to score the third (67).

Ronaldo has scored 18 goals in his last eleven matches and after guiding Real Madrid to the Liga-Champions League double will try to extend his trophy collection with the Confederations Cup from June 17 to July 2.

The surprise result of the group was the defeat of Hungary against modest Andorra (1-0), leaving the Central European side virtually outside the World Cup.

Switzerland and Portugal will play the first place of the group, which qualifies directly for Russia-2018, and the second will have settle for a playoff.

In group H, Belgium took a big step towards qualifying by beating Estonia 2-0 with goals from Dries Mertens (31) and Nacer Chadli (86). Bosnia and Greece, the two teams pursuing Belgium, played out a goalless draw. — AFP



RIGA: Latvia's Kaspars Gorkss, left, Andris Vanins, right, and Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo fight for the ball during their World Cup Group B qualifying match between Latvia and Portugal at the Skonto Stadium in Riga, Latvia, Friday. — AP



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ATHENS: Dimitris Voutsinos, 40, a sound technician, rides his bike on his way to his part time job in Athens. Dimitris was fired in 2009 from a radio station, and has been working since then mainly in call centers. —AFP

## BOEING, IRAN'S ASEMAN FINALIZE \$3BN DEAL IRANIAN AIRLINE TO BUY 30 BOEING 737 MAX JETS

TEHRAN: Iran's Aseman Airlines has finalized an agreement to buy 30 Boeing 737 MAX jets for \$3.0 billion, the company said yesterday, with an option to buy 30 more. The deal, announced in April, was signed at a ceremony in Tehran and the first 30 planes are due for delivery between 2022 and 2024.

"I'm glad that we can... upgrade the air fleet in an appropriate manner so they can take over regional markets," said Labor Minister Ali Rabii at the signing, according to the ISNA news agency.

However, the deal could be scuppered if US President Donald Trump goes ahead with threats to reimpose sanctions on Iran. The White House is in the midst of a 90-day review to decide if it will stick by the 2015 deal between Iran and world powers, in which Tehran agreed curb on its nuclear program in exchange for an easing of sanctions. Washington must renew sanctions waivers every few months to keep the deal alive, and another set of renewals is due in the coming days.

Even if Trump sticks by the nuclear deal, the Boeing sale must be cleared by the US Office of Foreign Assets (OFAC). "We have finalized the deal and now we are waiting for OFAC permission within the next month," Aseman spokesman Amir Reza Mostafavi told AFP.

He said Aseman would pay five percent of the contract in cash, with the remainder paid through a financing deal organized by Boeing. Boeing, which is also building 80 planes for national carrier Iran Air, faces heavy criticism

from US lawmakers who say Iranian airlines have been used to ship weapons and troops to Syria and other conflict zones. The aerospace giant has therefore emphasized the employment potential of the deals, saying in April that the Aseman contract "creates or sustains approximately 18,000 jobs in the United States".

Iran has been desperate to renew its ageing fleet of planes, but was largely blocked from dealing with major aircraft manufacturers until the 2015 nuclear accord. The US has maintained

its own sanctions, which block almost all trade with Iran, but plane manufacturers were given a specific exemption under the nuclear deal.

OFAC approved the sale of the 80 Boeing as well as 100 Airbus planes to Iran Air. The first few Airbus jets have already arrived in Tehran. Aseman currently has a fleet of 36 planes-half of them the 105-seat Dutch Fokker 100s. Its three Boeing 727-200s are almost as old as the Islamic revolution, having made their first flight in 1980. —AFP

## RATINGS FIRMS EYE FALLOUT FROM SHOCK UK ELECTION

LONDON: The agencies responsible for Britain's credit rating said on Friday that inconclusive national elections could impact Brexit negotiations, lead to another snap poll and change the future path of economic policy. Voters dealt Prime Minister Theresa May a devastating blow in a ballot she had called to strengthen her hand in Brexit talks, wiping out her parliamentary majority and throwing the country into political turmoil.

May was attempting to form a working relationship with unionists from Northern Ireland to stay in power. The three biggest firms - Fitch, Moody's and

S&P Global - all have a negative outlook on their respective ratings for Britain. Ratings influence at what cost a government can borrow money in financial markets.

While no agency changed their rating on Friday, they all issued statements warning of the risks the new political questions pose on Britain, the world's fifth biggest economy.

"The UK general election result creates uncertainty over the policy platform, political cohesion and longevity of the next UK government," Fitch said in a statement. "This will have implications for

Brexit and potentially fiscal policy."

Fitch added that the hung parliament increased the range of possible outcomes to British talks on leaving the European Union - including a disorderly exit and potentially a "softer" deal. S&P Global said the election won't immediately affect the country's credit ratings but warned it could create further uncertainty by potentially delaying Brexit negotiations. "In our view, the lack of a majority for any party is likely to delay Brexit negotiations, scheduled to start very soon," S&P Global said in an emailed statement. "Furthermore, we do not exclude the possibility of another snap election. These considerations are reflected in our current negative outlook on the long-term ratings." S&P Global and Fitch downgraded the sovereign to AA immediately after a vote last June by the country to leave the European Union.

### Fiscal plans

The opposition Labor party ate into the ruling Conservative's majority in Thursday's vote by campaigning left-wing on an anti-austerity, pro-social spending platform. Analysts say this may encourage the government to relax its grip on spending, especially as there is a lack of momentum in the economy. But that could be a worrying sign for ratings firms. Moody's said that the UK's rating would depend upon the outcome of Brexit and fiscal developments given the country's budget deficit and rising public debt.

It said it was "monitoring the UK's process of forming a new government and will assess the credit implications in due course".

Moody's ranks the UK one notch above the other two agencies at Aa1, a rating it has held since February 2013. Fitch also added that the loss of 21 seats by the Scottish National Party reduced the possibility of a second Scottish independence referendum. —Reuters

## UAE BLACKLIST MAY SQUEEZE LIQUIDITY OF QATARI BANKS

DUBAI: A move by four Arab states to blacklist dozens of figures with alleged links to Qatar could squeeze liquidity at Qatari banks which get a significant amount of their funding from the region.

Qatari banks have around 60 billion riyals (\$16 billion) in funding in the form of customer and interbank deposits from other Gulf states, Chiradeep Ghosh, banking analyst at SICO Bahrain, said.

But the United Arab Emirates central bank has ordered local banks to stop dealing with the 59 individuals and 12 entities with alleged links to Qatar and to freeze their assets, state news agency WAM reported late on Friday. It has also told them to apply enhanced due diligence for any accounts they hold with six Qatari banks, including Qatar National Bank (QNB) which is the Middle East and Africa's largest bank, WAM said in its report.

The six banks-QNB, Qatar Islamic Bank, Qatar International Islamic Bank, Barwa Bank <IPO-BABK.QA>, Masraf Al Rayan and Doha Bank-did not respond immediately to requests for comment.

Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain had earlier branded as terrorists the same individuals, including Muslim Brotherhood spiritual leader Yousef al-Qaradawi, and entities including Qatari-funded charities Qatar Charity and Eid

Charity. The move followed the isolation of Qatar by the four states, which have cut all diplomatic and transport links. This pressure is likely to constrain the funding Qatari banks would be able to raise from Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain, one banker in the region told Reuters.

"All Qatari banks will struggle for liquidity and will have to pay a premium for funding from elsewhere outside these four countries," SICO Bahrain's Ghosh said.

Qatari banks, like their Gulf neighbours, have been struggling against a backdrop of lower oil prices, which has pushed up funding costs and raised non-performing loans.

"It is especially challenging as they're not very liquid as their loan to deposit ratios are already above 100 percent," Ghosh said. In recent years several have also expanded outside Qatar's small domestic market to grow their business, with QNB holding a presence in several countries including Egypt, Turkey, Nigeria and UAE either directly or via affiliates.

UAE banks would find it relatively easy to comply with the rules as many had invested in improving their compliance systems in recent years and already complied with sanctions against a range of other entities and individuals, another banker said. —Reuters



ABIDJAN: Ivorian Transport Minister Amadou Kone (C) and director of the Ivorian Transport Company (CITRANS) Zoumana Bakayoko (L) cut a ribbon during a ceremony to inaugurate boats, yesterday in Abidjan. —AFP



# US SHOPPERS' FIXATION WITH DISCOUNTS WORRYING STORES

## RETAILERS TRYING TO OFFER MORE EXCLUSIVE PRODUCTS

**NEW YORK:** US shoppers who got addicted to sales during the last recession have more tools than ever to cross-check prices and find bargains, creating a race to the bottom - particularly on clothes.

While retailers are trying to offer more exclusive products and improve the experience shoppers have in stores, online leader Amazon is expanding quickly into apparel, creating more discounting wars. Off-price stores and new discount chains keep the pressure on. "There is not a lot that I would pay full price for," said Sara Scoggins, a 30-year-old Los Angeles resident who uses apps like Hafta Have for scanning

shipping deals, sales and coupons. And for some shoppers, there's a thrill in outwitting the stores.

Marc Phillips, 26, who works in digital strategies and lives in Manhattan, says he mostly buys clothes at the end of the season and shops at outlets like Nordstrom Rack. "I have found some nice deals, like nice designer names," he said. "I consider myself brand-savvy and price-savvy. I understand the types of tricks that stores play."

The cycle feeds itself. People got used to getting great deals, retailers who tried to raise prices saw sales suffer, and shoppers got more bargains. Moreover, as shoppers gravitate toward services or experiences, demand for stuff

Ai, manager of marketing at Boomerang Commerce, a startup that helps retailers use data to make price adjustments. Amazon is poised to surpass Macy's this year as the largest US clothing seller, according to Cowen & Co. analysts. They forecast that Amazon's share of the US clothing market will increase from 6.6 percent last year to 16.2 percent by 2021 as it gains more Prime members and increases its clothing selection.

And in the meantime, US retailers are facing new competition from low-price international rivals, including the Primark chain that has started opening stores in the Eastern US. It offers jeans as low as \$7 and tops for \$4.

This all means retailers actually have less ability to raise prices now than during the recession, says Michael P. Niemira, chief economist at The Retail Economist LLC, based on an analysis of government data. Lyst, an online fashion platform, said that 30 percent of orders on the site last year included a discount, up from 23 percent in 2014. And First Insight, which helps retailers price new items, says its tests have found about 8 percent of products over the past three quarters could sell for full price or higher. That's down from the 11 percent average over the last several years. Even that drop "has a significant impact to the industry," says Greg Petro, president and CEO of First Insight. So is there anything stores can do to convince people that their items are worth full price?

Kleinhenz says stores need to differentiate their products to give people more incentive to buy without sales. JC Penney, which has called its previous level of discounts "unhealthy," plans to use a more data-driven approach to pricing to better manage discounting. Historically, Penney's decisions on pricing and promotions had been made more instinctively and with few analytics. Ai, meanwhile, thinks retailers like Macy's need to test a lower range of prices online with its store-label products, which could drive more shoppers to their site.

In the end, it's a shopper's choice whether to wait or jump. Leor Reef, 24, who works in public relations and is based in Chicago, says he learned about frugality from his parents, who always found good deals. He shops mostly online, uses browser extensions price-trackers like camelcamel.com, and tends to buy only when he sees a good deal. "It does put me in more in control as a consumer," he said. "As long as I am not in a rush, I can hunt around and use my tools to find the best price." The downside? Reef wanted the popular Wilson Evolution basketball and waited a month for the price to go down 15 percent, but then it was sold out - and he was left empty-handed.—AP



**CRANBERRY:** In this Feb 8, 2017 photo, a shopper leaves a Costco Wholesale store in Cranberry Township, Pa.—AP

items and tracking deals and Honey for coupons and promo codes. "There is always a deal. You are a sucker not to get a deal."

The bargain-hunting started in earnest during the Great Recession, when stores plied shoppers with discounts upon discounts to rid themselves of mounds of merchandise after consumer spending tanked. But even as the economy has perked up, Americans haven't let go of the search for deals.

"We've conditioned consumers especially coming out of the recession for promotions and discounting," said Jack Kleinhenz, chief economist at the National Retail Federation trade group. Shoppers have time and technology on their side. An ever-growing number of apps, websites and browser extensions will search for

like clothing has waned - meaning stores have an even harder time raising prices.

Department store and mall-based clothing retailers have wrestled with the biggest challenges. Even luxury names like Michael Kors and Ralph Lauren have struggled to get shoppers to buy without discounts. And experts expect the discounting to increase as Amazon becomes more aggressive in clothing sales.

Amazon has made a big push to expand its offerings under private labels like Lark & Ro designed to be as stylish as recognizable national brands. So shoppers looking for a skirt or pants are automatically shown that brand compared to a well-known label.

A Lark & Ro skirt could be 50 percent below a similar item from a national brand, says Michelle

# BIG US FIRMS JOIN RACE FOR INVESTORS LOOKING TO MAKE AN IMPACT

**NEW YORK:** If you haven't heard of impact investing yet, just wait. It's one of the hottest areas in investing, and the industry is racing to offer more opportunities for people to put their money into investments that deliver a positive impact on the world, along with positive returns. Think: projects and stocks of companies that are providing clean water or looking to prevent disease.

This formerly niche corner of investing has become increasingly mainstream, partly because it offers a tantalizing opportunity to target millennial customers. Big-name players are getting involved, such as Morgan Stanley, which has created an Institute for Sustainable Investing and recently raised more than \$125 million for a global impact fund. The prominent venture-capital firm Andreessen Horowitz is backing OpenInvest, which matches people with socially responsible investments. All the new entrants are bringing more credibility to the field, but they've also coincided with some growing pains.

Swell, a company backed by the insurance giant Pacific Life, is one of the latest entrants and offers a case study of how keen the industry is to tap into impact investing's growth. Swell launched last month, but it's already gone through a couple iterations.

After its first prototype didn't attract enough customers, Swell partnered with, of all things, a design company to help in its construction. IDEO is the same firm that designed Apple's original computer mouse, and it helped Swell develop everything from its web site to its philosophy on hiring.

### The stakes are high

Sustainable, responsible and impact investing accounted for \$8.7 trillion last year, or \$1 of every \$5 under professional management, according to US SIF, a trade group. That's up 33 percent in two years, and it far outpaces the 5 percent growth for US-registered investment companies overall.

With the recent US pullout from the Paris climate accord, one school of thought says impact investing could get even more popular. If Washington is leaving more environmental issues to the market to decide, some investors want to be sure to steer their dollars toward companies that they see as helping.

The fast growth is not universally welcomed. Investors who have long been in the space are encouraged to see big-name firms enter, but 71 percent of them also say it introduces the risk of "mission drift or impact dilution," according to the latest survey by the Global Impact Investing Network.

At Swell, the company's own approach has shifted as it heard more from customers about what they want. It started in 2012 when Dave Fanger, a financial actuary working in mergers and acquisitions at Pacific Life, wanted to help people invest with their values in

mind. He launched Swell and partnered with an online broker, and its first prototype came out in 2015.

### Portfolios

It allowed investors to choose from four portfolios, each filled with stocks of companies whose foundations are big contributors to causes, such as "Improve Education." Macy's stock was in the "End Cancer" portfolio because it donates to cancer research, for example.

But not enough customers were actually signing up. So Fanger, who was in business school at the time and had been learning about IDEO and its theory of design thinking, got in touch with the firm through a contact at Pacific Life.

After IDEO came in, they quickly zeroed in on a couple issues. One was that Swell's site pushed users to another web site, the broker's, to actually invest their money.

"And there was a gap between the promise of investing in companies that make the world a better place and the companies in the portfolio," said Bryan Walker, a partner at IDEO. Instead of investing in companies whose foundations donated to causes, customers wanted to put their money into companies that were directly doing things themselves. So, more a Mohawk Industries, which recycles plastic bottles to make carpet, than a Macy's.

Swell now offers six portfolios to invest in, each filled with stocks of companies looking to make changes in a certain field. Mohawk is in the "Zero Waste" portfolio, along with LKQ Corp, which recycles auto parts. The "Green Tech" portfolio includes electric-car maker Tesla Motors and Xylem, a water technology company. IDEO and Swell also put together prototypes to test what customers wanted. They asked whether customers were willing to give up some returns in exchange for greater social impact (they were not) and whether they preferred something with bigger risks and bigger potential rewards or something that was more stable (they wanted to go big).

Through its prototypes, Swell and IDEO also gauged what customers were willing to pay in fees. They set the minimum investment at \$500, with an annual fee of 0.75 percent, or 75 basis points. Testing showed that customers didn't know what a basis point was, so the web site says that it amounts to about the cost of a cup of fancy coffee, \$3.13 per month, on a \$5,000 investment.

With its specialized approach, Fanger acknowledges that it's likely to be a supplemental part to someone's investment portfolio, something that fits alongside their 401(k) account. But he hopes it broadens out. "This is the start," said Fanger. "This is the Tesla Roadster, where now they're talking about the Model 3 for everyone. Or how organic foods started as a small section in the grocery store. As people become more aware, we see it becoming more common."—AP

# SOMETIMES INERTIA HELPS: MORE WORKERS SAVE IN THEIR 401(K)

**NEW YORK:** Workers are more likely to be saving for retirement, at least among those eligible for a workplace plan, and lower-income employees have made some of the biggest gains in recent years.

Those are two of the encouraging trends borne out of numbers from Vanguard, which looks each year at how participants are behaving in 401(k) plans and similar retirement accounts for which it keeps records. Vanguard is one of the nation's big record keepers, working with 4.4 million participants in defined-contribution plans.

The outlook for retirement in the country is by no means cloudless: Many workers, particularly those in low-income households, still have no access to a 401(k) plan or similar account. And among those who do, experts say savings levels broadly still aren't high enough to guarantee that most households will be able to maintain their standard of living in retirement. But some signs point to progress. Here's a look at some of the trends found from Vanguard's survey, up and down:

### Workers are more likely to be saving

Across Vanguard's plans, 79 percent of all workers eligible to save in a 401(k), 403(b) or similar account are doing so. That's up from 68 percent a decade ago, and a big reason for it is that workers are getting a more forceful push to do so.

Nearly half of employer plans, 45 percent, sign their workers up automatically for the retirement plan. That's triple the rate from 10 years ago. Workers still have the choice to opt out, but requiring that extra step means more end up saving, and it's another example of trying to use inertia to help. Only 10 percent of workers in plans with automatic enrollment aren't participating, versus 37 percent at plans where signing up is voluntary.

Most typically, employers are enrolling workers to contribute 3 percent of their pay. Not only that, many have also set their programs to automatically raise workers' savings rates each year. Most increase contributions by 1 percentage point, most typically up to a cap of 10 percent.



**FORT WORTH:** In this Sept 24, 2013 file photo, freshly cut stacks of \$100 bills make their way down the line at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing Western Currency Facility in Fort Worth, Texas.—AP

● Lower-income workers are seeing the biggest increases in participation.

Workers pulling down big paychecks have always been the most likely to save in a 401(k). More than 90 percent of workers making \$100,000 or above participated in their plan last year, the same as it's been through the past decade.

The story hasn't been so good for lower-income workers, who likely feel less comfortable diverting some of their paycheck.

A decade ago, for example, only 45 percent of workers making less than \$30,000 annually participated in their plan. That was less than half the rate of the highest-paid workers.—AP

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.773
Indian Rupees	4.726
Pakistani Rupees	2.899
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.984
Nepali Rupees	2.956
Singapore Dollar	220.860
Hongkong Dollar	39.992
Bangladesh Taka	3.751
Philippine Peso	6.151
Thai Baht	8.945

GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.094
Qatari Riyal	83.523
Omani Riyal	789.761
Bahraini Dinar	807.490
UAE Dirham	82.795

ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.300
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.726
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.221
Tunisian Dinar	126.360
Jordanian Dinar	428.630
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.026
Syrian Lira	2.167
Morocco Dirham	31.656

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	303.900
Euro	344.320
Sterling Pound	393.700
Canadian dollar	226.690
Turkish lira	87.130

Swiss Franc	317.220
Australian Dollar	230.660
US Dollar Buying	302.700

GOLD	
20 Gram	261.980
10 Gram	133.910
5 Gram	67.800

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfr	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.900
Canadian Dolla	225.785
Sterling Pound	392.035
Euro	343.070
Swiss Frank	296.080
Bahrain Dinar	806.040
UAE Dirhams	83.135
Qatari Riyals	84.355
Saudi Riyals	81.935
Jordanian Dinar	428.454
Egyptian Pound	16.923
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.987
Indian Rupees	4.718
Pakistani Rupees	2.898
Bangladesh Taka	3.772
Philippines Peso	6.109
Cyprus pound	167.172
Japanese Yen	3.735
Syrian Pound	2.420
Nepalese Rupees	3.945
Malaysian Ringgit	71.750

Chinese Yuan Renminbi	45.135
Thai Bhat	9.880
Turkish Lira	86.480

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.381745	0.391745
Czech Korune	0.005009	0.017009
Danish Krone	0.041841	0.046841
Euro	0.335718	0.344718
Norwegian Krone	0.031777	0.036977
Romanian Leu	0.084278	0.084278
Slovakia	0.009085	0.019085
Swedish Krona	0.030889	0.035889
Swiss Franc	0.307592	0.318592
Turkish Lira	0.080639	0.090939
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.221219	0.233219
New Zealand Dollar	0.213510	0.223010
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.220578	0.229576
Georgina Lari	0.137347	0.137347
US Dollars	0.300000	0.304400
US Dollars Mint	0.300500	0.304400
<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003384	0.003968
Chinese Yuan	0.043282	0.046782
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037098	0.039848

Indian Rupee	0.004272	0.004960
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002685	0.002865
Kenyan Shilling	0.003031	0.003031
Korean Won	0.000260	0.000275
Malaysian Ringgit	0.067137	0.073137
Nepalese Rupee	0.002974	0.003144
Pakistan Rupee	0.002713	0.003003
Philippine Peso	0.006027	0.006327
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.214871	0.224871
South African Rand	0.017663	0.026163
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001607	0.002187
Taiwan	0.009735	0.009915
Thai Baht	0.008581	0.009131
<b>Arab</b>		
Bahraini Dinar	0.799209	0.807709
Egyptian Pound	0.013986	0.019894
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000190	0.000250
Jordanian Dinar	0.423553	0.432553
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000156	0.00256
Moroccan Dirhams	0.019770	0.043770
Nigerian Naira	0.001257	0.001892
Omani Riyal	0.783450	0.789130
Qatar Riyal	0.079239	0.084179
Saudi Riyal	0.080007	0.081307
Syrian Pound	0.001289	0.001509
Tunisian Dinar	0.121417	0.129417
Turkish Lira	0.080639	0.090939
UAE Dirhams	0.081370	0.083070

# MOODY'S DOWNGRADES S AFRICA ON GROWTH, POLITICAL WORRIES

**JOHANNESBURG:** Credit ratings agency Moody's on Friday said it had downgraded South Africa a notch over gloomy growth prospects and the political instability unleashed by corruption scandals engulfing President Jacob Zuma. Africa's most advanced economy was knocked down from Baa2 to Baa3 — one notch above junk status — with a negative outlook, Moody's said in a statement.

Fitch and Standard and Poor's, the other two main global ratings agencies, already downgraded South Africa to junk status after Zuma's shock purge of critical ministers in March, including respected finance minister Pravin Gordhan. The decision outraged the opposition and part of Zuma's own ruling African National Congress (ANC), with tens of thousands taking to the streets to demand the president's resignation. Moody's had

delayed its decision but finally announced the downgrade Friday citing "the weakening of South Africa's institutional framework" as well as worsening growth prospects and rising public debt, according to the agency's vice president Zuzana Brixiova.

The downgrade came after official statistics released on Tuesday showed South Africa entering its first recession since 2009 after the economy unexpectedly contracted by 0.7 percent in the first quarter.

South Africa has had sluggish growth for years, with record unemployment of more than 27 percent. "The urgent priority is reigniting confidence as well as reclaiming and maintaining the investment grade ratings," the Treasury department said in a statement, vowing to improve "investor and consumer confidence" through faster reforms.—APF



# FRENCH REFORM, BRITISH UPROAR AND A FED HIKE

## GLOBAL ECONOMY WEEKAHEAD

**DUBLIN/LONDON:** When British Prime Minister Theresa May called a snap election in April, then-French presidential candidate Emmanuel Macron was the one supposedly set to struggle to govern effectively with a parliamentary majority.

Seven weeks later, May has lost her majority and a novice party created by Macron looks set to win the biggest parliamentary majority for a French president since Charles de Gaulle's 1968 landslide.

European Union leaders fear May's dramatic electoral miscue will delay Brexit talks due to start this month and so raise the risk of negotiations failing, and the fallout will doubtless continue to dominate headlines in the coming week.

So will the US Federal Reserve's meeting, which is expected to bring a rise in interest rates. But just as significant for Europe is the fact that the week is bookended by France's two rounds of legislative elections, this Sunday and on June 18.

Predictions can go wrong, of course. Just ask May. But if Macron does succeed in stomping on the opposition as polls suggest, he will be starting his tenure with clout to steer an economy in need of a bit of help. French economic growth has been accelerating. The central bank said on Friday it now expected it to rise 1.4 percent this year, a tad above earlier projections.

Although that is the most since 2011, it is hardly robust and reflects what critics say is a rather sclerotic economic system-which Macron is promising to fix. This was underlined by industrial output unexpectedly slumping 0.5 percent in April.

The central bank also said France was again in danger of exceeding European Union budget deficit targets with a projected cap of 3.1 percent

versus the EU's 3.0 percent and the previous government's 2.8 percent target.

There is an audit due next month. Prime Minister Edouard Philippe says he is concerned the old government may have let things slip.

### Brexit blow

In the middle of Britain's expected week of political question, meanwhile, comes one of the bits of post-Brexit-vote economic data that UK citizens have actually felt-inflation.

It has risen sharply, mainly as a result of the pound's dive against the dollar and euro that followed the referendum. Economists polled by Reuters expect annual inflation to come in unchanged in May at 2.7 percent. It will not, of

course, reflect the pound's falls related to the election result.

Pay growth is meanwhile seen falling to 2 percent in the three months to April, excluding bonus-less than inflation and underscoring why many voters are unhappy.

May retail sales, on Thursday, are also expected to show some post-referendum blues, with a fall 0.8 percent month-on-month predicted, for a year-on-year rise of 1.4 percent versus April's 4 percent.

As for the Fed, its rate rise is pretty much expected, although recent weaker inflation data has added a bit of a question mark to what may come next. There are also some expectations that the Fed may announce how it will reduce its balance sheet-all those things it has bought during periods of stimulus-as it seeks to normalize policy nearly a decade after the global financial crisis began. — Reuters

## SPAIN'S SANTANDER BANK BUYS FAILING LOCAL RIVAL FOR 1 EURO

**MADRID:** Spain's Banco Santander is paying the symbolic sum of 1 euro to take over local rival Banco Popular, a long-troubled lender whose shares lost more than half of their value over the past week.

In a statement, Santander said it will take over all the stock in Banco Popular, which had 305,152 shareholders as of the end of March. It will raise around 7 billion euros (\$7.9 billion) in a share issue "to reinforce the balance sheet of Banco Popular."

The takeover was conducted in an auction sanctioned by the European Commission after the main banking regulator in the eurozone, the European Central Bank, said that it believed Popular was "failing or likely to fail." It was the first time the ECB had pulled the plug on a bank since it was given new powers aimed at preventing financial institutions from disrupting government finances through bailouts, as they did during the eurozone's debt crisis.

European leaders agreed to move banking supervision to the EU level - so-called "banking union" - due to concerns that national regulators were too slow to flag problems at their home banks. The ECB took over supervisory responsibility on in November 2014.

Madrid-based Popular has been struggling with 7.9 billion euros (\$ 8.9 billion) in non-performing assets, including 7.2 billion euros (\$8.1 billion) in real estate.

As confidence waned in Popular, shares in the bank fell about 38 percent last week and another 20 percent this week, to 0.32

euros per share before regulators halted trading in its shares ahead of Wednesday's market opening. The sale is "in the public interest as it protects all depositors of Banco Popular and ensures financial stability," said the European agency that manages failing banks in the 19-country eurozone, of which Spain is a member.

The Spanish government had previously ruled out bailing the bank with taxpayers' money. On Wednesday, Economy minister Luis de Guindos said the sale was "a good outcome" given the shortfall of the lender over the past weeks. The takeover "ensures the maximum protection for depositors and the continuity of the bank's activity," said De Guindos.

With the takeover, Santander becomes the largest Spanish bank by lending and deposits, reaching 17 million customers. The investment also covers Popular's assets in Portugal, bringing Santander's total customers in the neighboring country to 4 million.

"The combination of Santander and Popular strengthens the Group's geographic diversification at a time of improving economic conditions in both Spain and Portugal," said Santander Chair Ana Botin.

Santander said that the deal would not materially affect the Santander's financial health and that it expected to generate returns on its investment of 13-14 percent in 2020. Santander's shares fell 3 percent in early trading and then recovered to stand 0.4 percent lower at 5.77 euros. — AP



**WASHINGTON:** The exterior of the Trump International Hotel in downtown Washington. The Trump Organization says it will not ask guests at its hotels and resorts if they are using money from foreign governments to pay their bills, setting up a possible showdown with Democrats who accuse the president of violating the US Constitution. — AP

# GOVT SEEKS DISMISSAL OF SUIT OVER TRUMP'S BUSINESSES

## 'RELIEF SOUGHT BY PLAINTIFFS IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL'

**NEW YORK:** Justice Department lawyers sought the dismissal on Friday of a lawsuit alleging President Donald Trump is violating the Constitution by letting his businesses accept money from foreign governments.

In papers filed in Manhattan federal court, the government said none of the plaintiffs had suffered an injury that would give them standing to sue. It also said the relief sought by the plaintiffs is unconstitutional. The plaintiffs include the Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United Inc., and two individuals.

Deepak Gupta, a plaintiffs' lawyer, said the lawsuit has proper standing, in part because it includes plaintiffs who compete with the Republican president's hotels and restaurants for business from foreign governments.

"This is about whether the president is loyal to the American people and the American people alone," Gupta said. "There have been many presidents before him. No president has had the kind of business entanglement with foreign governments like Donald Trump."

The lawsuit earlier this year sought to force Trump to divest his business interests. But government lawyers say the Supreme Court has

long held that courts have no power to issue those kinds of orders against sitting presidents. The lawsuit pertains to the "emoluments clause" of the Constitution, which says the president may not accept foreign gifts or payments without the consent of Congress. The definition of what is a gift or payment is in fierce dispute. The Trump Organization insists the clause does not apply to "fair value exchanges" in which people pay for a service, like use of a hotel room.

"Given the president's unique status in the constitutional scheme, the framers envisioned only political means to ensure a president's compliance with constitutional provisions such as the Emoluments Clauses, not official-capacity injunctions against the president," according to the lawyers for the Justice Department's civil division in Washington.

### Defining the law

In the court papers, lawyers said the plaintiffs' efforts to define the law "would create absurd consequences." They wrote that plaintiffs believe a president cannot hold stocks in companies conducting business globally since some of those companies' earnings would stem from business with foreign governments.

"Before this suit, that conclusion had never been contemplated," the lawyers said.

A president also could not receive royalties from foreign book sales if the purchases came from a foreign government instrumentally, such as a foreign public university, the lawyers said.

Gupta said those claims were a mischaracterization of the plaintiffs' arguments. He said a ruling could occur as early as the end of the summer after additional arguments from both sides.

In a statement, the Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington said the government's papers showed "that they don't believe anyone can go to court to stop the president from systematically violating the Constitution. We heartily disagree and look forward to our day in court."

Norman Eisen, another plaintiffs' lawyer, said the government's arguments Friday followed a familiar pattern used to defend the travel ban against some predominantly Muslim countries and in a case involving so-called sanctuary cities. "They raise standing issues, talk about whether there is actual injury and say the court should not address the case at all. The government, the Trump administration, takes a strained reading of the Constitution," Eisen said. — AP



**BARCELONA:** People stand in front of a Banco Popular office in Barcelona. Spain's Banco Santander has acquired Banco Popular, the troubled lender that lost more than half of its shares value over the past week. — AP

## NORDSTROM FAMILY CONSIDERING BUYOUT OF DEPARTMENT STORE

**NEW YORK:** Members of the Nordstrom family including co-presidents Blake, Peter and Erik Nordstrom are considering making an offer to buy out the 70 percent of the department store's stock they don't already own. Nordstrom Inc said that the group also includes President of Stores James Nordstrom and Chairman Emeritus Bruce Nordstrom. Shares in the department store chain, which have fallen by about a third since December, rebounded more than 10 percent on the news.

Department stores in general have seen their sales and financial results battered as consumers shop more online and at off-price retailers, and are spending their money more on experiences and less on clothing, on which department stores are heavily dependent. Nordstrom said last month that its overall profit jumped 37 percent at its department stores in the first quarter, but a key sales gauge fell short of Wall Street expectations. The sales results at the company's own discount stores, Nordstrom Rack, were more encouraging.

"We view Nordstrom as the strongest retailer in the department store space," analysts at Credit Suisse said in a note published Thursday. "We see the company as one of the few retailers able to grow operating income over the next several years given what we view as appropriate investments in e-commerce and off-price assets."

A potential move to take the company private "makes strategic and financial sense for the Nordstrom family," according to analysts at KeyBanc Capital Markets, who said the company has been focused on navigating the long-term shifts in retail - sometimes to the detriment of earnings.

So such a move would give Nordstrom "increased flexibility to navigate a turbulent retail environment," they wrote. Nordstrom's board has formed a committee of independent directors to represent the company in any talks with the family over a potential sale. The chain traces its roots back to a Seattle shoe store opened by Swedish immigrant John Nordstrom and a partner in 1901. — AP



**SAN JUAN:** A woman arrives at a Nordstrom luxury department store, at The Mall of San Juan, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Members of Nordstrom stores' founding family, including some top executives, say they're considering buying out the 70 percent of the chain they don't already own. — AP

# HOUSEHOLD WEALTH TICKS UP 1.4% TO \$94.8 TRILLION IN US

**WASHINGTON:** Buoyed by higher stock prices, Americans' household net worth rose 1.4 percent to \$94.8 trillion in the first three months of this year, a trend that could support future spending. US stock and mutual fund portfolios jumped \$1.3 trillion in value in the January-March quarter, the Federal Reserve said. Home values increased \$499 billion.

Total household wealth includes checking and savings accounts, and subtracts mortgages and other debt. Unlike some other economic measures, household wealth has fully recovered from the Great Recession and gone far beyond pre-recession levels.

The proportion of American adults with jobs, for example, remains nearly three percentage points below where it stood in December 2007, when the recession began. And average hourly pay is rising more slowly than it was before the downturn.

But in the nearly eight years since the recession ended, US household net worth has soared past its pre-recession level of \$66.5 trillion. It fell to \$56 trillion in 2008 before slowly recovering. The figures aren't adjusted for inflation. That disparity between household wealth - which is highly concentrated - leaping higher while jobs and income growth lag reflects some of the unequal aspects of the economy's recovery.

Record-high stock prices are the primary driver of greater household wealth. The Dow Jones industrial average has more than tripled from its recession-era low of 6,547 to 21,174 on Wednesday.

Yet just 10 percent of the US population owns



**NEW YORK:** This Aug 24, 2015 file photo, pedestrians walk past the New York Stock Exchange. The Federal Reserve reported on household wealth for the January-March quarter. — AP

80 percent of stock market wealth. Meanwhile, middle income households derive most of their wealth from their homes. Nationwide, home prices didn't fully recover from the downturn until last September.

Americans typically spend a bit more when their home values and other wealth rises, which economists call "the wealth effect." Yet there are signs that the post-recession buildup in wealth hasn't led to as much spending as it may have in the past.

For example, US consumers haven't increased

their spending since the recession at the same pace as they did before. Consumer spending has increased at just a 2.3 percent annual pace since 2009, compared with 3.4 percent in the three decades before the downturn. One reason for the sluggish spending is that Americans are borrowing less for immediate consumption. Household debt has reached record heights, but the debt has been driven mostly by ballooning student and auto loans. Mortgage, credit card debt and home equity lines of credit still lag pre-recession levels. — AP



SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY				
Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %
OIL & GAS	9,130,742	4.91%	563,049	1.63%
BASIC MATERIALS	1,080,241	0.58%	564,459	1.63%
INDUSTRIALS	15,755,706	8.47%	5,731,179	16.60%
CONSUMER GOODS	2,119,145	1.14%	1,816,913	5.26%
HEALTH CARE	0	0.00%	0	0.0000%
CONSUMER SERVICES	2,676,961	1.44%	1,252,444	3.63%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	13,792,109	7.42%	2,650,981	7.68%
BANKS	44,554,529	23.96%	14,105,690	40.85%
INSURANCE	38,146	0.02%	13,772	0.04%
REAL ESTATE	41,572,324	22.35%	3,061,158	8.86%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	55,216,505	29.69%	4,760,119	13.78%
TECHNOLOGY	45,807	0.02%	12,213	0.04%

SECTORS INDICES PERFORMANCE				
Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
OIL & GAS	1,032.81	1,040.15	-0.71%	32.30%
BASIC MATERIALS	1,309.60	1,298.60	0.85%	30.33%
INDUSTRIALS	1,813.13	1,849.61	-1.97%	34.90%
CONSUMER GOODS	1,126.73	1,156.51	-2.57%	0.15%
HEALTH CARE	1,528.57	1,528.57	0.00%	22.83%
CONSUMER SERVICES	1,122.71	1,014.99	10.61%	21.43%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	601.70	614.02	-2.01%	-5.42%
BANKS	910.88	924.17	-1.44%	8.80%
INSURANCE	1,052.28	1,067.40	-1.42%	5.83%
REAL ESTATE	949.00	954.81	-0.61%	9.06%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	691.34	701.87	-1.50%	15.79%
TECHNOLOGY	704.01	703.94	0.01%	15.95%

# BOURSA KUWAIT EQUITIES FACE SELLING PRESSURE

## BAYAN WEEKLY MARKET REPORT

**KUWAIT:** Boursa Kuwait ended last week in the red zone. The Price Index closed at 6,783.42 points, down by 0.44 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index decreased by 1.45 percent after closing at 400.23 points, whereas the KXS-15 Index closed at 906.77 points declining by 1.30 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover decreased by 36.63 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 6.91 million, whereas trading volume average was 37.19 million shares, recording a drop of 37.79 percent.

Boursa Kuwait ended last week's trading with mixed losses to the three indices compared to its closing in a week earlier, in light of the selling trend that the market witnessed during most of the daily sessions of the week, which included many listed stocks headed by the leading and the heavy ones, and had a noticeable effect on the Weighted and KXS-15 indices in particular, the most declining indices by the end of the week. Also, the Boursa recorded its losses in parallel with the noticeable decrease in the trading activity, where the total cash liquidity declined during the five sessions of the week to reach KD 34.53 million only, and the volume dropped to 185.98 million stock during the week.

Moreover, the Boursa lost around KD 395 million during the last five sessions, whereas the market capitalization reached by the end of the last week KD 26.60 billion, down by 1.46 percent compared to its level in a week earlier, where it was KD 26.99 billion. On an annual level, the market cap for the listed companies in the market recorded growth of 4.69 percent from its value at end of 2016, where it reached then about KD 25.41 billion.

As far as the daily sessions of the week, the Boursa initiated its first session with mixed closing for its three indices, as only the Price Index was able to increase, benefiting from the purchasing powers that targeted some idle small-cap stocks that are being traded below its book and nominal values; while the Weighted and KXS-15 indices dropped affected by the profit collection operations executed on some leading stocks, especially after the increases such stocks realized during the previous week's trading. On the next session, the market was subject to the selling pressures that included many stocks of leading or small-cap, which negatively reflected on the three indices' performance to end the session in the red zone.

On the mid-week session, the three indices returned to fluctuate once again, where the Weighted and KXS-15 indices were able to record limited increases supported by the return of the purchasing operations to lead once again, and concentrated on some heavy stocks of previous decreases which reached tempting purchasing levels, while the Price Index remained in the red zone affected by the continued profit collection operations on the small-cap stocks.

On Wednesday's session, the market witnessed a continued fluctuated closing, whereas the Price Index was able to return to the green zone once again supported by the col-

lection operations on some stocks, especially in the Technology and Oil & Gas sectors, while the Weighted and KXS-15 indices declined by the end of the session affected by the profit collection operations executed on a number of leading and operational stocks.

The last session of the week witnessed a red zone closing for the Price and Weighted indices, while the KXS-15 Index was able to end the session's trading with good increase. The market realized such performance amid a decline in the trading activity, for both the value and volume, where the volume dropped by 20.46 percent compared to the previous session, and the value decreased by 20.85 percent. For the annual performance, the Price Index ended last week recording 18.01 percent annual gain compared to its closing in 2016, while the Weighted Index increased by 5.30 percent, and the KXS-15 recorded 2.46 percent growth.

### Sectors' Indices

Eight of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the red zone, while the other three recorded increases, whereas the Health Care sector's index closed with no change from the week before. The Consumer Goods sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 2.57 percent to end the week's activity at 1,126.73 points. The Telecommunications sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 2.01 percent, closing at 601.70 points, followed by the Industrial sector, as its index closed at 1,813.13 points at a loss of 1.97 percent. The Real Estate sector was the least declining as its index closed at 949.00 points with a 0.61 percent decrease.

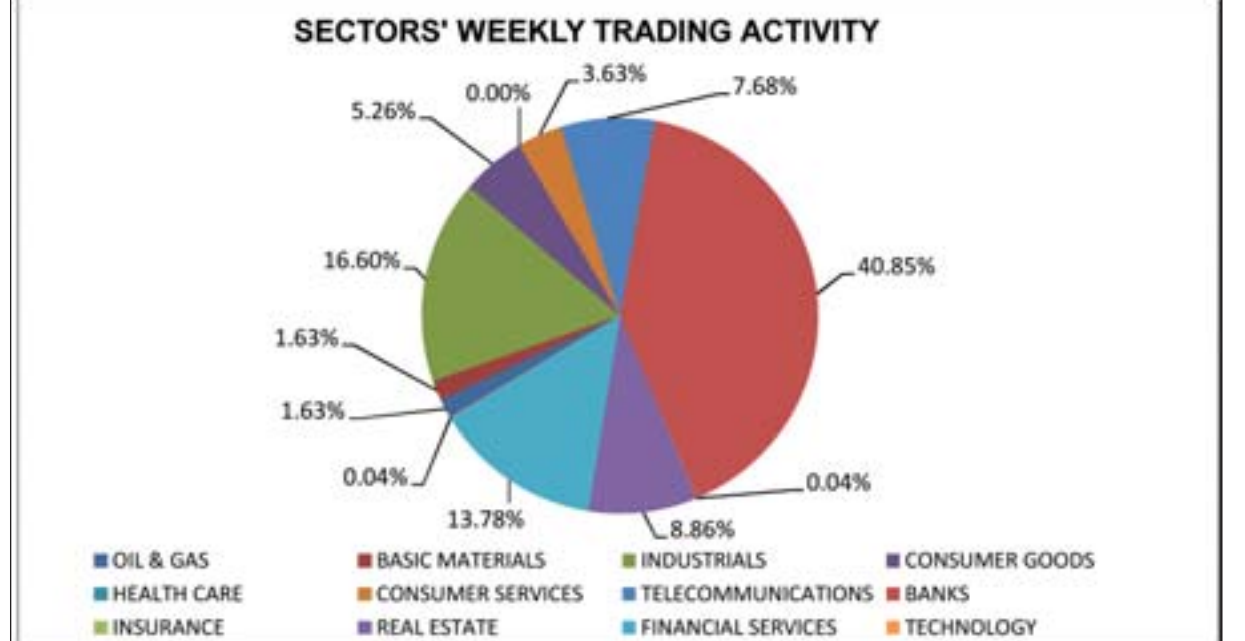
On the other hand, last week's highest gainer was the Consumer Services sector, achieving 10.61 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,122.71 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Basic Materials sector's index closed at 1,309.60 points recording 0.85 percent increase. The Technology sector came in third as its index achieved 0.01 percent growth, ending the week at 704.01 points.

### Sectors' Activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 55.23 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 29.69 percent of the total market trading volume. The Banks sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 23.96 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 44.56 million shares.

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around K.D 14.11 million or 40.85 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Industrial sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 5.73 million representing 16.60 percent of the total market trading value. —Prepared by: Studies & Research Department - Bayan Investment Co.

BOURSA KUWAIT INDICES				
		Price Index	Weighted index	KXS 15
Weekly	Last week	6,783.42	400.23	906.77
	Previous week	6,813.19	406.12	918.67
	Change (Point)	-29.77	-5.89	-11.90
	Change (%)	-0.44%	-1.45%	-1.30%
Annual	Last year	5,748.09	380.09	885.02
	Change (Point)	1,035.33	20.14	21.75
	Change (%)	18.01%	5.30%	2.46%



MARKET CAPITALISATION (K.D.)				
Last Week	Previous Week	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %	
26,599,750,362	26,994,039,247	-1.46%	4.69%	

TOP GAINERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
EYAS	1,187.00	850.00	337.0	39.65%
GFC	62.20	52.00	10.2	19.62%
REAM	400.00	335.00	65.0	19.40%
MARIN	75.00	68.00	7.0	10.29%
ASIYA	41.80	38.20	3.6	9.42%

TOP LOSERS OF THE WEEK				
Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
ASC	216.00	290.00	-74.0	-25.52%
NCCI	108.00	125.00	-17.0	-13.60%
RKWC	90.00	103.00	-13.0	-12.62%
TAM	360.00	410.00	-50.0	-12.20%
MADAR	19.20	21.50	-2.3	-10.70%

# DOW, RUSSELL 2000 HIT NEW HIGHS; STOCKS TURN UNEVEN

**NEW YORK:** Wall Street turned in an uneven finish Friday as investors unloaded their technology company shares in favor of energy and financial stocks. The tech-heavy Nasdaq composite, which has outpaced gains by other US stock indexes this year, fell the most. The Standard & Poor's 500 index closed slightly lower. Even with the sell-off in technology stocks, the Dow Jones industrial average and the Russell 2000 index of small-company stocks closed higher, each setting new highs.

"We're seeing investors rotate out of the international stocks and into the US stocks in general," said Sam Stovall, chief investment strategist at CFRA Equity Research. "And also a rotation out of technology and into energy, materials and financials."

All told, the S&P 500 index fell 2.02 points, or 0.1 percent, to 2,431.77. The Dow gained 89.44 points, or 0.4 percent, to 21,271.97. The Nasdaq declined 113.85 points, or 1.8 percent, to 6,207.92. The Russell 2000 picked up 6.09 points, or 0.4 percent, to 1,421.71. The indexes also closed out the week unevenly after several days of trading in a mostly narrow range. Despite the day's big tech stock slide, more stocks rose than declined on the New York Stock Exchange. US stocks were coming off a two-day winning streak, which included a record high for the Nasdaq on Thursday. They were on track to extend those gains early Friday, each at one point trading above their

most recent closing highs. But then investors began to unload technology stocks. The sell-off centered on the biggest companies in the stock market: Apple, Microsoft, Alphabet and Facebook. But the biggest decliner was chip-maker Nvidia, which lost \$10.34, or 6.5 percent, to \$149.60.

Alphabet, Google's parent company, fell \$34.16, or 3.4 percent, to \$970.12, while Apple slid \$6.01, or 3.9 percent, to \$148.98. "It's had a good run," said Scott Wren, senior global equity strategist for Wells Fargo Investment Institute. "People are taking a little money off the table." The technology sector fell 2.7 percent. It remains up 18.5 percent for the year.

Traders also bid up shares in energy companies as the price of crude oil rose. Helmerich & Payne added \$2.87, or 5.7 percent, to \$53.27. Rig operator Transocean picked up 39 cents, or 4.6 percent, to \$8.81.

Benchmark US crude gained 19 cents to close at \$45.83 a barrel in New York. Brent crude, used to price international oils, added 29 cents to settle at \$48.15 a barrel in London.

## WALL STREET WEEKLY MARKET REPORT



**NEW YORK:** Specialist Brian Fairbrother (left) and trader Robert Moran work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on Friday. Banks and energy stocks are leading US indexes higher in early trading on Wall Street. —AP

notable stock moves Friday. DuPont Fabros Technology jumped 9.8 percent after the data real estate investment trust and owner of wholesale data centers was acquired by another REIT, Digital Realty Trust. The deal is an all-stock transaction valued at about \$7.6 billion. DuPont Fabros Technology shares gained \$5.44 to \$60.80. Digital Realty slipped \$3.43, or 2.9 percent, to \$113.32.

Pandora Media rose on news that SiriusXM will invest \$480 million in the online radio company. SiriusXM, which is buying preferred stock and taking a 19 percent stake in Pandora, will also select three people to be named to Pandora's board. Pandora is breaking off a deal with investment firm KKR from last month. Pandora added 10 cents, or 1.2 percent, to \$8.52. SiriusXM slid 20 cents, or 3.7 percent, to \$5.20.

Several companies fell after issuing weak outlooks. VeriFone Systems shed 3.5 percent after the maker of terminals for electronic payments cut its forecasts and said it will sell or restructure several businesses. The stock lost 64 cents to \$17.68.

HNI slumped 12.6 percent after the maker of office furniture and fireplaces cut its forecasts because of slower sales and falling wholesale revenue. The stock slid \$5.64 to \$39.27. Bond prices fell. The 10-year Treasury yield held rose to 2.20 percent from 2.19 percent late Thursday. — AP

The dollar also strengthened to 110.20 yen from 109.94 yen late Thursday. The euro weakened to \$1.1195 from \$1.1222. The pound weakened to \$1.2724 from \$1.2943. Corporate deal news also led to some





# KFH HOLDS ANNUAL GHABQA

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) held its annual Ghabqa recently for its employees which was held at Kuwait Sheraton with the attendance of KFH executives, members of the fatwa and Sharia control authority members and a large number of KFH officials and employees.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman of the Fatwa Authority, Dr Sayyed Mohammed Al-Sayyed Abdul Razzaq Al-Tabtabae urged all employees to exert more efforts in serving this Islamic financial institution that has become a regional and international corner stone in Islamic banking. He also pointed out that KFH was launched 40 years ago during the holy month of Ramadan.



## UK'S MAY KEEPS HAMMOND AS FM, OTHERS STAY IN TOP JOBS

**LONDON:** British Prime Minister Theresa May kept finance minister Philip Hammond and other key members of her cabinet in their jobs on Friday, a day after she was weakened by failing to win a parliamentary majority in an election.

Before the election there had been widespread speculation in the British media that May would replace Hammond if she won a large majority.

As well as Hammond, foreign minister Boris Johnson, interior minister Amber Rudd, defence secretary Michael Fallon and Brexit minister David Davis will also remain in their posts.

"No further appointments will be made this evening," May's office said. Hammond's reappointment makes it less likely that the government will significantly relax its grip on public spending after the left-wing Labour Party secured a better-than-expected election result with a plan to invest more in public services. Hammond, 61, was named chancellor of the exchequer by May shortly after she took over as prime minister nearly a year ago, in the wake of Britain's decision to leave the European Union.

British media have reported strains between their teams since then, and their relationship has been more distant than the one between former prime minister David Cameron and his financeminister George Osborne.

Hammond took the blame for a policy U-turn in March when he quickly dropped a plan to raise social security tax for self-employed workers after Conservative lawmakers protested that it broke promises made by the party before an election in 2015.

May did not repeat those promises ahead of this year's campaign.

Hammond also annoyed many Conservatives who want a clean break with the EU by repeatedly stressing the need for a Brexit deal that allows companies to keep on hiring the migrant workers they need. In terms of fiscal policy, Hammond has slowed the push to turn Britain's budget deficit into a surplus, but he is wary about significantly relaxing the government's grip on spending or cutting taxes.

Media reports before the election mentioned interior minister Rudd and defence minister Fallon as potential replacements of Hammond.

"Markets would prefer to have 'Spreadsheet Phil' if either of those were the alternative," said Marc Ostwald, a strategist at ADM Investor Services. Before taking over at the finance ministry, Hammond served as foreign minister and defence minister. — Reuters

# MACRON EMBARKS ON PRIVATIZATION DRIVE

## FRENCH PRESIDENT LAUNCHES PROGRAM WITH AIRPORTS

**PARIS:** The government of new French President Emmanuel Macron looks likely to start a planned privatization program with airports operator ADP, according to three financial industry sources with knowledge of the matter.

Macron said before he won the presidency on May 7 that he wanted privatizations to help fund a 10 billion euro (\$11.2 billion) government drive to boost industry and innovation.

If he gets the parliamentary majority pollsters expect on June 18, he could go for a quick first deal that could raise funds for ailing French nuclear group Areva. Shares in ADP, which runs Charles de Gaulle and Orly airports outside Paris, are trading near record highs, and the government's 50.6 percent stake, worth nearly 7 billion euros, could be put on the block by state investment group APE within weeks or months of the election, the sources said. "We think that APE have made plans so that ADP is on top of the stack for the government," said one of the sources who has previously been involved in deals involving the French state.

None of the sources could say for sure the government would sell ADP soon, nor whether all or part of the stake would be up for auction. But a second source said APE had "very likely organised things" for ADP to be the first privatization.

ADP, the finance ministry, the president's office and the APE all declined to comment.

Despite its strong recent share price performance, ADP has an enterprise value (equity plus debt) of about 13 times forecast earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA), below an average of around 16 times for recent sector transactions.

The 2015 sell-off of Nice and Lyon airports, overseen by Macron himself as economy minister at the time, achieved multiples of 23 and 19 times respectively.

European and Chinese investors are interested in ADP, a banking source said. However, French infrastructure group Vinci, which already holds 8 percent and has made airport operation a core business, is seen as the most serious candidate, sources and analysts said.

Aside from the two Paris hubs, ADP manages or has stakes in 23 airports around the world, including in Belgium, Georgia, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Chile.

It said on Friday it would increase its stake in Turkish airport operator TAV Airports to 46 percent for \$160 million and expand with TAV in the EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) and Central Asia regions. Through public bank Caisse des Depots and holding companies Bpifrance and APE, the state has stakes in some 1,750 French companies with a combined value of nearly 100 billion euros, of which shares worth about 77.4 billion euros were listed on the stock exchange at the end of 2016.

### Pro-business

Investment bankers expect the sale of the state's corporate holdings to be spread over time and that it may not be a smooth process under Macron, given his inter-

ventionist approach during previous negotiations over deals involving state. These include the government's surprise move to increase its stake in carmaker Renault in 2015 and a stand-off between Macron and business tycoon Martin Bouygues during talks between Orange and Bouygues in 2016.

"Macron will no doubt be more authoritarian, and will not hesitate to intervene in certain industrial situations," a Paris-based investment banker said.

"We will not have a wave of fierce liberalism. But we will certainly have a more business-friendly government than the previous one."

Macron has gathered a team around him that has experience in managing state portfolios. Alexis Kohler, appointed secretary general of the Elysee palace, the most powerful role among presidential staff, spent a part of his career at APE. — Reuters



**BELLAC:** GM&S employees, threatened with liquidation, face gendarmes as they wait while a delegation meets French president, on Friday at the sous-prefecture in Bellac. — AFP



## AUB MAKES CUSTOMER'S DREAM COME TRUE WITH KD 250,000 GRAND PRIZE

**KUWAIT:** Ahli United Bank recently conducted its Al-Hassad Islamic account weekly draw, Kuwait's leading Sharia-compliant rewards program that offers a broad range of prizes to the largest number of winners, on the 07 June. The account provides 26 weekly prizes that are comprised of KD 25,000 as a grand prize and 25 other prizes valued at KD 1,000 each. AUB also offers four quarterly prizes that are valued at KD 250,000 to each winner allowing them to achieve their dreams of travelling, studying abroad, or owning their dream home or car.

On this occasion Ahli United Bank announced, "With this draw, we are adding 26 new winners and prizes to the

Al-Hassad Islamic account whereby, the total number of winners annually will include more than 1300.

The weekly grand prize winner of KD 250,000 is Hussain Abu Jendi Mohammad.

25 other winners won prizes of KD 1,000 and are as follows: Khajador Akoubkhaled, Bader Saleh Al Ajeel, Fahed Ahmed Al-Bannai, Naser Salem Al-Hajri, Suad Abdullah Al-Muraikhi,

Nawwaf Al Shammari, Mohammad Abdullah Haidar, Zenab Qartie, Mohamed Essa Haidar, Sunil Bahadur, Mubarak Obaid Al-Shammari, Rahman Rahim Rahimi, Husain Ali Husain, Mohd Dahi Al-Ajeel, Mohammed Ali Sshkani, Ahmad Al-Duwaisani, Abdulkhalig Hashem, Mohammed Ayoub Rahmatallah, Abdurassool Hameed Hasan, Hasan Ebrahim Hussain, Dillian Sonia, Manish Bali, Sarah Al-Rowaie, Masooma Mohsen, Mustafa Abraham. Ahli United Bank added, "There are increased opportunities that await our current customers and those who are interested in opening an Al-Hassad Islamic account to benefit from the wide

range of prizes and opportunities offered this year."

Al-Hassad Islamic account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the program's terms and conditions

Individual customers can open their accounts with a minimum deposit of KD 100, qualifying them to enter the draw. For every KD 50 deposited in the account, customers are given one chance to enter the quarterly draw. They must have held the minimum deposit requirement for at least two weeks prior to the draw date. The more deposits made, the higher the chances of winning on a weekly basis.



## CHEVROLET ALGHANIM DONATES TO CHARITY IN KUWAIT FOR EVERY TEST DRIVE MADE

**KUWAIT:** Yusuf A Alghanim & Sons Automotive (Chevrolet Alghanim), the exclusive distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in Kuwait, launched its "Drive for Good Test Drive" campaign in cooperation with the local charity association, Rahma International, in which the company pledges a donation for each test drive made by a customer or visitor of one of its showrooms to Rahma International Association.

The campaign adds to the series of charitable and goodwill initiatives launched by Chevrolet Alghanim ahead and during the Holy Month of Ramadan. The Company's commitment to charity and social welfare to help various segments of the society in need falls as part of its philanthropic mandate to help those in need and add value to the society it serves.

Chevrolet Alghanim invites everyone in Kuwait, whether they are looking into purchasing their

dream car or experiencing hands on the luxury and modern technology that are integrated in Chevrolet cars. Chevrolet fans are urged to test drive the car and in parallel increasing donations that will aid to build philanthropic projects. The

campaign runs until the end of the Month of Giving, and at Alghanim Chevrolet showrooms located at in Shuwaikh, Al-Rai (Safat Alghanim), Sharq, Fahaheel and Ahmadi.

All customers who purchase a Chevrolet from Yusuf A Alghanim &

Sons will receive the benefits of the Chevrolet Care Program, which entails new levels of post-sale support and trust. The Chevrolet Care is an exceptional customer service that is based on four main pillars: competitive and transparent service costs (especially for four-wheel drive vehicles), scheduled service appointment booking with same day delivery, quality service by certified technicians and 3yr/100,000km warranty with 24x7 roadside assistance for 4 years.

To stay tuned for the latest offers, events and announcements, customers are encouraged to follow the new and dedicated Chevrolet Alghanim instagram account is (@ChevroletAlghanim) as well as other social media channels featuring the same handler or call their new hotline 1800022, keeping in mind that Ramadan working hours are from 9 AM to 4 PM, and then from 8 PM to 12 AM (midnight).



## CERNER MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA STRENGTHENS CLIENT ALIGNMENT

**ABU DHABI:** Cerner Middle East & Africa yesterday announced the appointment of two additional general managers to strengthen its client engagement model in the Middle East. Adrian Dey has been appointed as the new general manager for Qatar, and Michael Schelper, chief operating officer in the Middle East & Africa, will take on the additional role of general manager for the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Kuwait.

The move comes at a time when Cerner Middle East & Africa has established a strong presence in the region and is working with client organizations to support a focus on population health management. Dey has more than 18 years of experience in IT managed services, with a primary focus on client relationships, transition, transformation, and service delivery. Before joining Cerner Middle East & Africa, Dey had leadership positions with Electronic Data Systems, Hewlett Packard and Injazat Data Systems (a Mubadala company).

Dey's new appointment is in support of the plans of Qatar's Ministry of Public Health and other leaders in the country. Dey will be responsible for advancing Cerner's government-level relationships with providers and suppliers to help facilitate improved health outcomes.

"Adrian will be a key member of our management team, identifying opportunities to collaborate more closely with the ministry and our existing client organizations to fulfill their strategic vision," said Mike Pomerance, vice president and managing director, Cerner Middle East & Africa. "I am confident that Adrian will lead Cerner on the next phase of our journey in Qatar."

Schelper joined Cerner in 2009 and has had various regional leadership roles, including in business development, sales, consulting, mergers and acquisitions and operations. As the chief operating officer for Cerner Middle East & Africa the past two years, Schelper has led Cerner's core business operations including quality, per-

formance management and new market entries. In his new role, Michael will oversee strategic client alignment and development with clients to shape the future of health care.

Schelper's focus will be to support the UAE and Kuwait governments to achieve a world-class, seamlessly integrated health care system that manages the population, one person at a time.

"Michael has proven to be both a dynamic leader and accomplished at strategy execution. Under his leadership, we'll continue working with Cerner's client organizations to enhance the health care experience for patients and caregivers," said Pomerance.

Over the past 26 years, Cerner has collaborated with leading health care organizations in the Middle East to create integrated health care systems designed to help improve the patient's experience with the person at the center of care. This highlights the region's vision to create a healthy population by having a health care system whose services are accessible to the entire community.

Dey and Schelper join Ali Slimani and Bachir Awad as Cerner Middle East & Africa general managers.

Slimani joined Cerner in 2005 and has had client-facing and implementation roles. As a general manager, Slimani manages all facets of the Cerner business development relationship with health care organizations to facilitate making the vision of these prospective clients a reality.

Awad joined Cerner in 2006 and has worked in different leadership capacities around the globe. In his current role, Awad oversees strategic collaborations with the United Arab Emirates' Ministry of Health and Prevention, Al Jalila Children's Specialty Hospital and the Abu Dhabi Health Services Company. The alignment between Cerner and its clients helps accelerate the use and adoption of health IT with the goal to improve the health and well-being of the UAE population.

## REGIONAL BANKS MAY KEEP LAGGING WITHOUT GOVT LIFT

### WALL STREET WEEKAHEAD

**NEW YORK:** A rough few months for most US bank stocks has been particularly unkind to regional banks, and that's not likely to change soon as hopes dim for higher long-term interest rates and timely policy relief from Washington. While some investors see bargains in lower valuations of regional banks' shares, few can point with any confidence to near-term catalysts for a turnaround in their fortunes.

After outperforming larger banks in the wake of the Nov 8 US Presidential election, the

to underperform as long as we don't get some of these policy decisions to move through," said Stephen Scouten, banking analyst for Sandler O'Neill in Atlanta.

Fading hopes for an economic boost from Trump's agenda has compressed the gap between short- and long-term interest rates, putting pressure on bank loan profit margins. This is a bigger issue for regionals which have a greater dependence on lending for their profits than bigger, more diversified banks. Also, com-

perform, concerns about the overall economy need to dissipate. Better economic growth usually leads to better lending growth and in that environment the yield curve steepens as well," said Brian Kleinhanzl, analyst at Keefe, Bruyette & Woods in New York.

Short selling has decreased in most regional and diversified banking sectors so far this year. But short interest in both the SPDR S&P Regional Exchange Traded Fund and SPDR S&P Regional Banking ETF increased as short sellers may be replacing exposure to individual banks with short bets on the sector.

Short interest in the S&P bank ETF is up 36 percent for the year while it is up 23 percent in the regional banking ETF. While tax cuts are viewed as one of the biggest boosts for regional banks of all Trump's policy proposals, investors are skeptical it will come any time soon. JPMorgan analysts on Thursday scaled back their forecast on the size of possible U.S. tax cuts and pushed out the timing to the second quarter of 2018 from the third quarter of 2017.

White House economic adviser Gary Cohn has said he expects US Congress to get tax reform done this year. But investors say 2018 would likely be the earliest this could happen.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin is expected this month to unveil plans for regulating the US banking sector including a relaxation of regulations for community banks, which have struggled with rules imposed after the 2007 to 2009 financial crisis.

While investors expect the administration to have trouble winning congressional support for legislative changes to regulations such as Dodd-Frank, some are hoping Trump will be able to appoint people to key regulatory positions. If Trump can replace the Federal Reserve's head of banking supervision, this might at least help slow the pace of regulation, said investment managers.

Trump is expected to nominate Carnegie Mellon University professor Marvin Goodfriend and former Treasury Department staffer Randal Quarles to fill two of three open seats at the Fed, according to a New York Times report.

"If they do get traction and get some of these (policy changes) done, even if they're more watered-down versions of what they had proposed, that's probably very good for sentiment and good for the fundamentals," said Miles Lewis, portfolio manager for American Century Investments' Small Cap Value fund. — Reuters



**NEW YORK:** Stock traders at the New York Stock Exchange watch former FBI Director James Comey on a television monitor as he testifies before a congressional committee in Washington. —AP

S&P 600 index of small cap banks are down 8.1 percent so far this year, data through Thursday showed, while the S&P 500 index of the biggest US banks is unchanged. The full S&P 500, meanwhile, is up 8.7 percent.

Last year, investors bet heavily that smaller, entirely US-focused banks would benefit most from Donald Trump's promises of tax cuts, deregulation and economic stimulus. But those hopes dwindled dramatically as it became clear that President Trump would have difficulty gaining enough support to deliver on any of his pro-growth proposals.

"I would expect (smaller banks) to continue

commercial and industrial loan growth has slowed this year after climbing steadily since late 2010. The Federal Reserve's latest Senior Loan Officer Opinion Survey, released May 8, showed domestic banks reporting weaker commercial and industrial loan demand from firms of all sizes in the first quarter.

### Waiting for clarity

Part of the problem is that companies are waiting for clarity on economic growth prospects and tax rates before making borrowing decisions, according to investors and analysts. "Eventually, for the smaller banks to out-

## WTO LARGELY BACKS BOEING IN TRADE ROW, FAULTS TAX BREAK

**GENEVA:** The World Trade Organization largely cleared the United States of maintaining unfair support for Boeing Co, but said it had failed to withdraw a tax break in its main planemaking state that continues to cause trade fireworks.

The ruling added another page to an exhausting 13-year-old battle between the transatlantic plane giants just as a US tribunal agreed separately to investigate Boeing's concerns about alleged price-dumping by Canada's Bombardier.

The WTO said the United States had failed to remove aid for Boeing, as alleged in a trade complaint brought by the European Union, but ruled that few of the subsidies hurt

EU interests. It found that one US subsidy program, a business tax rate reduction in the state of Washington, where Boeing builds most of its aircraft, had "adverse effects", involving customers from the United Arab Emirates, Canada and Iceland. Both sides claimed victory after the ruling, which is about whether Boeing complied with a 2012 decision that it had received billions of dollars of subsidies including aid from space agency NASA and tax breaks from Washington State.

"The panel found only one state-level program, which had an average value of \$100-110 million in the 2013-2015 period, to be contrary to

WTO rules. The United States disagrees and plans to appeal this limited finding," the office of the US Trade Representative said.

European planemaker Airbus insisted the United States had not complied with the WTO's earlier decisions in the case and claimed it had suffered \$100 billion of harm when combined with a follow-up complaint. "The amount of money involved completely distorts trade ... and the WTO should make it clear that no government or company can escape from their international responsibilities," Airbus Chief Executive Tom Enders said in a statement.

The WTO said Boeing had failed to comply with part of the earlier

2012 ruling relating to tax breaks in Washington state. Those tax breaks are now the subject of a new case, having been extended to cover Boeing's newest wide-body jet.

In November, the WTO defined the tax break to help Boeing develop its new 777X jet as a prohibited subsidy. That decision, contested by the United States, is now working its way through the WTO's appeals tribunal.

The ruling is part of a series of tit-for-tat transatlantic complaints about aircraft subsidies that together make up the world's largest trade dispute, involving mutual accusations of support for Airbus and Boeing. —Reuters

## TRUMP DROPS BINDERS ON FLOOR WITH LOUD THUD

**WASHINGTON:** President Trump is adding some theatrics to a speech about infrastructure.

During an appearance at the Department of Transportation headquarters, the president dramatically flipped through binders that he said contained pages of "nonsense" paperwork for an 18-mile road in Maryland, and then tossed them onto the floor. The binders containing environmental impact statements landed with loud thuds.

Trump was highlighting the time, money, paperwork and other hurdles it takes to get major projects like roadways and bridges approved. Some are aimed at protecting the environment and insuring community input. He is pledging to streamline the process to make it easier to build. President Donald Trump says he's working to streamline the permit process for infrastructure projects across the country to get them finished faster.

He calls the current process "painfully slow" and "unnecessarily burdensome" and says it's hurting the economy. He's announcing a new council aimed at helping project managers navigate red tape and an online dashboard that will

allow the tracking of major projects through the approval process.

Trump is speaking at the Department of Transportation's headquarters in Washington to an audience that includes members of Congress and state transportation officials.

Trump has pledged to improve the nation's roads, bridges and pipelines. But it remains unclear exactly how he wants to fund the projects beyond vague talk of public-private partnerships, teaming with states and streamlining the approval process.

President Donald Trump says that, thanks to him, US infrastructure will "once again be the envy of the world."

Trump is visiting the Department of Transportation's headquarters to highlight his goal of curbing regulations on infrastructure projects. Trump says at a round table discussion with White House and state transportation officials that his administration is working to streamline the permitting process. He claims that, right now, the country's infrastructure is being "laughed" and "scoffed" at and complains that highways take too long to build. —AP



# ISYX TECHNOLOGIES JOINS IFS PARTNER NETWORK



Sharoon Shamsuddin, ISYX, left, and Luis Ortega, IFS

**DUBAI:** IFS, the global enterprise applications company, has signed an agreement with Dubai-based ISYX Technologies, a fast-growing business technology consulting company, as a channel partner. The IFS and ISYX partnership will help deliver IFS's innovative product portfolio to customers across the Middle East and Africa. Drawing on the companies' long and successful track record in areas such as aviation, construction, manufacturing, and asset intensive industries, ISYX will work with IFS to build a strong customer base.

As part of the agreement, ISYX will market and deploy IFS's complete range of enterprise applications including enterprise resource planning (ERP), enterprise asset management (EAM) and field service management (FSM) for its customers across the

MEA region. ISYX is also investing in training and certification of its presales and delivery teams through the IFS Academy. By building local competency and capabilities in IFS Applications(tm), ISYX will help customers transition through the digital era.

"We are very excited to be developing joint opportunities with IFS and look forward to a rewarding partnership," said Sharoon Shamsuddin, CEO, ISYX Technologies. "IFS is a globally recognized leader in enterprise software, and coupled with our global presence in ten countries servicing 500+ customers, the partnership will empower organizations to advance their digital transformation by adding value and industry expertise."

Shamsuddin added, "Our approach is to adopt the role of an 'advisor' to our cus-

tomers, understand their business challenges and address them by providing fully integrated end-to-end solutions to support their complex business needs. Partnering with IFS has helped us further strengthen our solutions portfolio. We look forward to working closely with their global and local teams to provide our customers with the highest levels of service and support through all phases of the deployment and increase IFS's footprint and market share in the MEA region."

Luis Ortega, Managing Director for IFS in the Middle East, South Asia and Africa, said, "We are pleased to announce the partnership with ISYX Technologies and we expect that our cooperation will result in a growing customer base in the Middle East and Africa."

## FREE ANTI-RANSOMWARE TOOL ACHIEVES TOP MARKS IN INDEPENDENT TESTS

**DUBAI:** Security research company, MRG Effitas, has found that Kaspersky Lab's free solution, Kaspersky Anti-Ransomware Tool for Business, has achieved "100 percent protection" in all its tests, and been awarded with a certified ransomware protection badge. Testing involved the simulation of several delivery and infection methods using fresh samples selected from 13 crypto-ransomware and screen locker families found in the wild, when all previous lines of defence have fallen.

The results show that free, advanced protection is available to all businesses worried about WannaCry style attacks. Launched in 2016, Kaspersky Anti-Ransomware Tool for Business is suitable for companies that do not use Kaspersky Lab's solutions, or for those whose protection is not effective at blocking ransomware. It is a complimentary tool that is compatible with third-party security products. It is easy to install and does not require deep technical knowledge to configure and manage.

Vladimir Zapolyansky, Head of SMB Business, Kaspersky Lab, commented, "With proven effective protection available for free, Kaspersky Lab hopes that more companies can take the steps they need to safe-

guard IT systems from ransomware in the wake of the WannaCry attacks, which has become the largest ransomware infection in history. We are dedicated to making its effective protection available to everyone, and the MRG Effitas certification is testament to the robust nature of our products."

Ransomware is not the only security problem organisations are up against. SMBs are vulnerable in particular, because they generally have few or no dedicated security personnel. In addition, because they have a strong focus on business growth, they tend to pay limited attention to IT, making it hard for them to protect themselves from various threats. While the Kaspersky Anti-Ransomware Tool for Business helps address the ransomware challenge, SMBs still can fall victim to various other attack vectors, and require multilayered security technologies to protect their financial operations and maintain the confidentiality of their customers' information. As part of the tests, Kaspersky Endpoint Security and Kaspersky Endpoint Security Cloud were also found to have protected every file in all ransomware test cases, each product also earning the MRG Effitas certified ransomware protection badge.

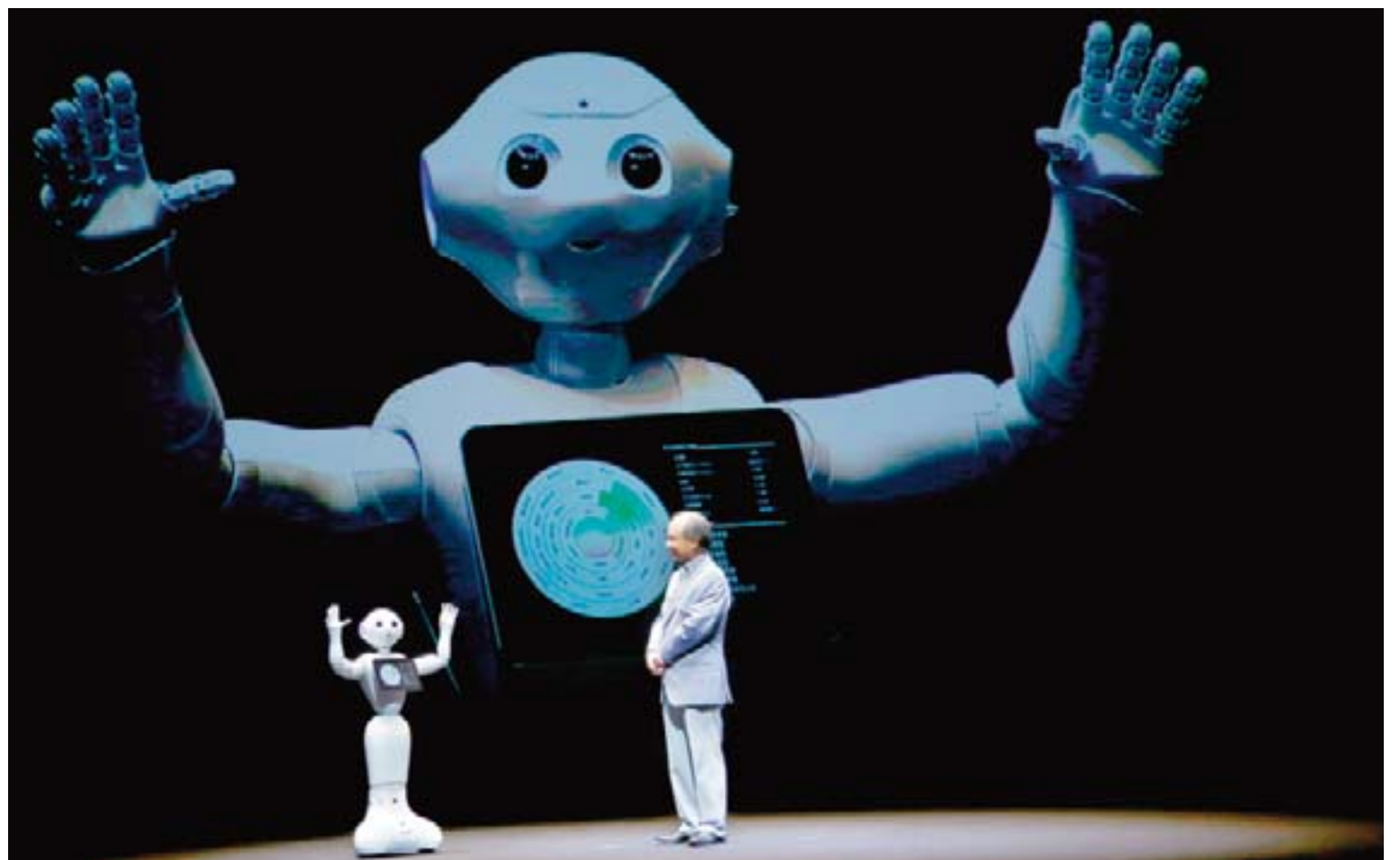
## GOOGLE TO TEACH SCHOOL KIDS ABOUT ONLINE SAFETY, ETIQUETTE

**MOUNTAIN VIEW:** Google is spearheading an educational campaign to teach pre-teen children how to protect themselves from scams, predators and other trouble. The program announced yesterday is called "Be Internet Aware." Google coordinated the curriculum with several online safety groups, including the Family Online Safety Institute, the Internet Keep Safe Coalition and Connect Safely.

The lessons are tailored for kids ranging from eight to 12 years old, a time when many of today's children are getting their own smartphones and other devices that connect to the internet. To make the experience more fun, Google and its partners developed a game called "Interland" to help teach children about the ins and outs of online safety. Google is encouraging teachers to use elements of its program in their classrooms, too.

### Amazon offers Prime discount

Elsewhere Amazon is offering a discount on its Prime membership for people who receive government assistance. Amazon says customers who get benefits like Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps, can pay \$5.99 per month for membership, which would include free shipping and unlimited streaming of movies and TV shows with Prime Video. The regular annual membership is \$99 per year. But those who cannot afford to pay up front have to pay \$10.99 a month for the same benefits. Amazon's Prime program, with the perks it brings, has created strong habits among shoppers as competition is keen. Amazon says it wants to make the program more accessible. Walmart, which has the second-biggest share of online sales, has been trying to close the gap with Amazon. — Agencies



TOKYO: In this file photo, SoftBank Corp. CEO Masayoshi Son speaks with the company's companion robot Pepper during a press conference in Maihama, near Tokyo. — AP

# SOFTBANK BUYS ROBOTICS LEADER BOSTON DYNAMICS FROM ALPHABET

**TOKYO:** Japanese internet, solar and technology company SoftBank Group Corp. is buying robotics pioneer Boston Dynamics from Alphabet Inc., Google's parent. Terms of the deal, announced Friday, including when it might close, were not disclosed. Tokyo-based SoftBank, which offers the chatty childlike Pepper companion robot, said the purchase underlines how robotics is a key part of its business.

Boston Dynamics makes various robots, including Big Dog and Spot, which are complex machines that walk and trot on four legs. Another is Atlas, which walks on two legs like a human. Atlas has arms and can open doors and lift items. Some were designed for military purposes. Under Friday's deal, SoftBank is also buying from Alphabet a company called Schaft that develops biped robots. Schaft's roots are in a research lab at the University of Tokyo.

Pepper has expressive arms but wheels for legs and does little more than sing songs and answer basic questions, and can't do any heavy lifting. Often it fails to understand even simple speech and will keep asking you to repeat sentences. Speculation had been growing recently

that Google might want to sell Boston Dynamics. Alphabet said it remains committed to robotics, such as connecting human-like motor skills, including hand-eye coordination, to machines so they can process images, speech, text and draw pictures.

It is also interested in research on helping robots learn from what they "experience," Alphabet said in a statement. "Robotics as a field has great potential, and we're happy to see Boston Dynamics and Schaft join the SoftBank team to continue contributing to the next generation of robotics," it said. SoftBank Chief Executive Masayoshi Son said robots will help solve problems that have been beyond human capabilities.

### Internet of things

"Smart robotics is going to be a key driver of the next stage of the Information Revolution," he said. "I am thrilled to welcome them to the SoftBank family and look forward to supporting them as they continue to advance the field of robotics and explore applications that can help make life easier, safer and more fulfilling," Son

said of Boston Dynamics and Schaft.

Japan, with its longtime culture of cartoons like "Astro Boy," has a soft spot for cute robots. Various companies, including automakers Toyota Motor Corp. and Honda Motor Co., have developed entertainment robots, designed to do nothing more than keep people company. But interest around the world is growing in the potential of robotics and artificial intelligence for everyday products like safer cars and connected home appliances.

SoftBank bought British semiconductor company ARM Holdings, an innovator in the "internet of things," last year. The first carrier to offer the Apple iPhone in Japan, SoftBank includes US carrier Sprint and Yahoo Japan in its group business. Son drew attention for hobnobbing with US President Donald Trump late last year and promising to create jobs and invest in the US. Marc Raibert, CEO of Boston Dynamics, said he looked forward to working with SoftBank on creating technology for "a smarter and more connected world." "We share SoftBank's belief that advances in technology should be for the benefit of humanity," he said. — AP



SHANGHAI: In this image taken from video, robots from Shenzhen-based startup Aelos Robotic Inc. perform with heightened dexterity at the Shanghai CES electronics show in Shanghai, China. — AP

## COMPANION ROBOTS FEATURED AT SHANGHAI ELECTRONICS SHOW

**SHANGHAI:** More than 50 companies are showcasing a new generation of robots at this week's Shanghai CES electronics show, built to serve as companions at home, attendants at shopping malls or just provide entertainment. Chinese companies including Shenzhen-based startup Aelos Robotic Inc. are displaying robots with heightened dexterity and skills. Beijing's Canny Unisrobot Technology Co. Ltd. is a pioneer in the field, with its Canbot, produced in cooperation with Microsoft, having entered mass production almost a decade ago.

Sales manager Zhang Jianting said Thursday that annual sales are about 150,000 units, with the home companion robots selling for \$130 to \$483 depending on size. However, Zhang said the robot market is growing ever more crowded, with many more players entering this year alone. "The robot market in China is increasingly diverse," Zhang said. "However, there are still some rough edges in R&D and comprehensive abilities. Every company is at initial stage. We are still learning and making progress in terms of technolo-

gy, R&D, and market." Artificial intelligence and virtual reality are also major features of the show, which features 400 exhibitors from 23 regions showing their innovations from June 7 to 9. For John T. Kelly, the senior director of CES Asia, the participation of more Chinese companies at global electronics shows illustrates how China is shifting from a manufacturing economy to one based on innovation. "Chinese companies continue to grow more and more in importance. They are creating partnerships with Western partners to really further their technology. So we are seeing development of technology advancing rapidly," Kelly said.

Among those leading the charge for artificial intelligence, or AI, is Rokid Corp., maker of the Pebble home companion device that can help seniors perform household chores, provide entertainment and help children learn new skills. "AI makes our life simpler. AI is replacing human beings in more fields. It saves humans' labor, so we can do more creative work," said Li Yuanpeng, the company's product manager. — AP

# TBWA\RAAD PARTNERS WITH GOOGLE MENA TO DRIVE DIGITAL GROWTH

**BEIRUT:** TBWA\RAAD, the Disruption Company, has today officially confirmed that it has entered into a strategic partnership with technology giant, Google, so as to further develop and enhance its talent and capabilities, in support of the agency's on-going mission to deliver innovative and disruptive digital ideas. Commenting on the partnership, Reda Raad, CEO for TBWA\RAAD Middle East said, "Brands today need to be communicating at the speed of culture; a culture that is driven by creativity and powered by Disruption." "We have partnered with Google this year to further strengthen our integrated vision and Disruptive thinking. We have been working to bring data led thinking front and centre in our creative process, the Google All Star Academy is a great way to empower our people to do this. We are going to continue our collaboration with Google on several fronts throughout the year and are very excited about the journey ahead," Raad added.

Alex Brunori, Creative Lead of Google MENA added, "In the Middle East region, Google collaborates with forward-thinking creative partners through digital acceleration programs to encourage knowledge-sharing and meet the growing demands of digital communications and engagement. To this end, we are delighted to have established another such partnership, with TBWA\RAAD, and look forward to a fruitful and mutually beneficial working relationship with one of the region's most dynamic creative agencies."

The strategic partnership is a customized solution that started in April 2017 with a four-day training program called, "Google All-Stars Academy". Here, 40 creative talents from TBWA\RAAD's UAE, Qatar, Algeria, Saudi, Lebanon and Kuwait offices joined people from Google (and its partner companies) in pursuit of accelerating regional digital advancement. Through the program, the participants had access to the knowledge-base of several



digital leaders, including training sessions conducted by companies such as The Zoo, Contagious, MENA CATS and Media Monks.

Noah Khan, Regional Head of Digital and Innovation - Africa and Middle East, said, "We are a radically open creative collective and our belief is that we are better working together with our partner than on our own. Through this exciting part-

nership with Google, we aim to produce incredibly disruptive work that speaks directly to a focused audience - at the right time, in the right space." In addition to the academy, Google and TBWA\RAAD will collaborate on multiple levels during the partnership, including extensive training, data-driven insight sharing and communications campaigns.





# CHOLERA: THE PLAGUE OF THE POOR

**PARIS:** Cholera, which has hit war-ravaged Yemen with 100,000 suspected cases and 789 deaths, is a highly contagious waterborne bacterial disease which can kill in a matter of hours. Caused by poor sanitation, it mainly affects poverty-stricken people, and goes hand-in-hand with misery, disaster and war. Cholera is an acute diarrheic infection caused by a comma-shaped bacterium called *Vibrio cholerae*, transmitted through water or food that has typically been contaminated by human faecal

matter. Despite being deadly if untreated, it can be cleared up quickly by rehydration if medical care is available quickly.

## Global threat

"Cholera remains a global threat to public health and an indicator of inequity and lack of social development," according to the World Health Organization (WHO). According to the organization, 42 countries were affected by cholera in 2015, with a total of 172,454 cases, 1,304 of which were fatal.

But WHO stresses that many cases around the world go unrecorded. Researchers have estimated there are roughly 1.3 to four million cholera cases annually with 21,000 to 143,000 deaths worldwide.

Providing safe water and sanitation is critical to control the transmission of cholera and other waterborne diseases. Filthy, crowded cities and refugee camps or displaced people whose basic needs for water and hygiene are not met, are typical risk zones. Cholera

spreads via population movements, helped by a lack of hygiene, unclean drinking water, inefficient sewerage and toilets, dirty hands, unsafe food and poor medical care.

## Disasters

Such conditions occur above all after natural disasters, such as the devastating quake which hit Haiti in 2010, or war, which is currently the case in Yemen. After an incubation period of two to five days, the illness manifests itself with

severe diarrhea which dehydrates the patient. Unless treated immediately by the replacement of fluids, salts and sugars, a stricken person can lose 10 percent of bodyweight in four hours and the disease is often fatal.

The efficiency of available vaccines is far from guaranteed and does not replace the need for hygiene precautions. The fight against an epidemic involves screening the ill and putting in place health cordons to prevent the spread of the bacterium.—AFP

## REPTILES FOUND INSIDE HOME

**CARLE PLACE, NY :** The SPCA says a Long Island home was found to be a real-life and illegal reptile house, with more than 100 of the animals crawling and slithering around the property. Police in Nassau County found out about the reptile collection inside the Carle Place home because the owners reported a break-in at the address. WCBS-TV reports, many of the animals are

banned in New York state and some, like a baby alligator and a boa constrictor, are considered extremely dangerous. A Nassau county SPCA spokesman says the animals were in bad shape, and at least 10 were found dead in the house. The reptiles along with three dogs, a cat, a rabbit, and several fish were transported to an animal sanctuary in Massachusetts for treatment.—AP

## US BACKS UN CALL TO SAVE OCEANS

**UNITED NATIONS:** The United States on Friday joined all 192 other UN member-states in releasing a "Call to Action" to save the oceans but disassociated itself from joint efforts to combat climate change. The declaration capped the UN's first-ever ocean conference, which opened on Monday under the shadow of the US exit from the 190-plus Paris agreement on climate change.

"The United States remains committed to working with all stakeholders, within and outside the UN system, to protect our ocean and promote development through its sustainable use," said David Balton, the US deputy assistant secretary for oceans and fisheries. But he went on to offer "clarifications" about the US position, recalling that President Donald Trump had announced the US withdrawal from the Paris agreement on June 1.

The "Call to Action" raised alarm over the impact of climate change on the ocean and recognized the "particular importance" of the 2015 Paris agreement to combat global warming. By signing on to the appeal, governments voluntarily commit to reduce the use of plastics, take measures to reduce

acidification and to address the harmful impacts of climate change on the ocean. Pacific island-states, which face oblivion from rising sea levels caused by global warming, led the charge at the conference for strong action to mobilize governments.

"Yes the ocean is rising," Palau's President Tommy Remengesau said at the closing session. "But so are we." The United States, the world's biggest carbon emitter after China, signed the Paris agreement last year under the previous administration, but Trump has argued that the deal would harm the US economy. During his address to the conference earlier in the week, Balton put the spotlight on global efforts to combat illegal fishing.

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres opened the conference with an appeal for countries to put aside national gain to save the oceans and avert a "global catastrophe." "Pollution, overfishing and the effects of climate change are severely damaging the health of our oceans," he asserted, singling out plastic pollution as particularly harmful. Guterres cited a recent study that showed plastic could outweigh fish by 2050 if nothing is done.—AFP

## MEXICO, DICAPRIO, SLIM TEAM UP TO HELP ENDANGERED PORPOISE

**MEXICO CITY:** Mexico's president, its richest man and actor Leonardo DiCaprio signed an agreement Wednesday to try to save the critically endangered vaquita porpoise. The vaquita is native to the northern Gulf of California, also known as the Sea of Cortez, where only about two dozen remain. They are threatened largely due to unauthorized gillnets set to catch totoaba, a fish whose swim bladder is a prized delicacy in China. The illegal nets can ensnare and kill the vaquitas.

The agreement struck by President Enrique Peña Nieto, multibillionaire telecoms magnate Carlos Slim and DiCaprio sets the goal of ending gillnet use in the upper Gulf and makes permanent an earlier temporary ban. "Mexico understands its responsibility as one of the countries with greatest biodiversity," Peña Nieto said. "That is why we have implemented a historic effort to avoid the extinction of a unique species in the world and also to protect important ecosystems."

Because illegal traders pay thousands of dollars per kilogram of the swim bladders, efforts to curb totoaba fishing have been ineffective and the number of surviving vaquitas has fallen rapidly. Authorities say that later this year they will begin capturing and enclosing the few vaquitas that remain

in a protected marine sanctuary as a last-ditch effort to save them from extinction. Enforcement against go-fast boats used by illegal fishermen is difficult, so the memorandum also includes a prohibition on night fishing and improved entry and exit control in the vaquita reserve.

The agreement will be backed by both the Carlos Slim Foundation and the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, which have committed to helping fund local development and non-gillnet fishing options to try to offset the economic impact of the bans. "This action is a critical step towards ensuring that the Gulf of California continues to be both vibrant and productive, especially for species like the critically endangered vaquita," DiCaprio said.

The foundations believe the fishing rules and tighter enforcement should help protect threatened ecosystems across the entire gulf. The effort has garnered the support of the Mexican environmental group Pronatura Noroeste. Executive director Gustavo Danemann said his organization is "encouraged by this recent announcement which signals a renewed sense of hope that we can turn things around for the vaquita." Other organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund, Sea Shepherd and the Marisla Foundation also backed the initiative.—AP



**MEXICO CITY:** This illustration of a Vaquita Marina, provided by Greenpeace, shows an image of the highly endangered sea mammal swimming in the sea.—AP



**ALASKA:** In this photo provided by the US Geological Survey, a polar bear walks across rubble ice in the Alaska portion of the southern Beaufort Sea.—AP

## FASTER-MOVING SEA ICE FORCES POLAR BEARS TO USE MORE ENERGY

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska:** Rapid global warming has sped up the movement of sea ice off Alaska's coasts, and already at-risk polar bears are paying a price, a new US study says. Most sea ice moves throughout the year and the iconic white bears are on a perpetual walk to stay within their preferred habitat, said US Geological Survey research ecologist George Durner, lead author of the study. He compares it to living on a treadmill that has picked up speed because ice is thinner, more brittle and moving faster because of wind and ocean currents.

"Increased sea ice drift rates likely exacerbate the physiological stress due to reduced foraging opportunity already experienced by many polar bears in the warming Arctic, adding yet another 'straw to the camel's back,'" Durner said. Polar bears were listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in 2008 amid the alarming loss of summer sea ice in recent decades and climate models indicating the trend would persist. However, the government said the act would not be used to regulate greenhouse gas emissions.

The US polar bear recovery plan says that without action to address climate change - the primary cause of diminishing sea ice - it is unlikely that polar bears could be saved. The plan released in January noted positive signs such as emission goals in the Paris climate agreement. President Donald Trump, however, withdrew from the international pact last week, arguing that it had disadvantaged the US "to the exclusive benefit of other countries," leaving American businesses and taxpayers to absorb the cost.

Trump also has called for expanded petroleum development in polar bear habitat, including offshore Alaska waters and parts of areas the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Margaret Williams, Arctic program managing director for the World Wildlife Fund, called withdrawal from the Paris agreement frightening but said private, state and local efforts to reduce carbon emissions and turn to renewable energy are a positive sign. "There's still a lot of hope," she said.

The political moves come as the Geological Survey and University of Wyoming study documented how polar bears use more energy to stay within their home range. Researchers made a conservative estimate that bears will have to kill one to three more seals a year to compensate for faster-moving ice, a challenge for bears already facing fewer hunting opportunities. Durner compared their plight to people living in a town hit by both inflation and rising unemployment. "For the polar bear, the Arctic is becoming more expensive to live in," he said.

## Climate change impact

Polar bears can go for extended periods without eating but then gorge on ringed and bearded seals. Ringed seals give birth on sea ice in spring and early summer, and polar bears sniff out their lairs.

Diminished sea ice has reduced access to prey in the southern Beaufort Sea off Alaska's north coast. Researchers have documented the polar bear's declining body condition, reproduction, survival and abundance. In the new study, researchers looked at data from radio-collared female polar bears in the Beaufort and the Chukchi Seas during two periods: 1987-1998 and 1999-2013. Sea ice changed in amount, thickness and composition in the second period as melting seasons lengthened. Researchers concluded that the bears must

kill 2 to 6 percent more seals per year to make up for burning more calories on faster-moving sea ice. The study did not address whether they walk faster or spend more time moving to keep up with the ice. Bears in the Chukchi Sea, off Alaska's northwest coast, had to walk farther and burn more calories than south Beaufort bears but are in better shape because more food is available, Durner said.

Amy Cutting, animal curator at the Oregon

Zoo, said in an email that the paper is a key piece in the growing literature examining challenges faced by polar bears. With decades of location and movement data on bears, she said, the Geological Survey is uniquely positioned to assess and quantify effects of changes in sea ice. "This kind of research is critical to understanding the specific mechanisms through which climate change is impacting polar bear biology," Cutting said.—AP

## KEY INGREDIENT OF LIFE FOUND CIRCLING STARS

**PARIS:** Two teams of astronomers said Thursday they have for the first time detected a key chemical building block of life swirling around infant stars that resemble our Sun before its planets formed. The molecule, methyl isocyanate, "plays an essential role in the formation of proteins, which are basic ingredients for life," said Victor Rivilla, a scientist at the Astrophysics Observatory in Florence, Italy, and co-author of a study published in Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society.

The findings could offer clues on how chemicals sparked into living matter on Earth several billion years ago. At the very least, they show that elements crucial for the emergence of life "were very likely already available at the earliest stage of solar system formation," said Niels Ligterink, a researcher at Leiden Observatory in The Netherlands, and lead author of a second study in the same journal. Scientists spotted the organic compound in a dense envelope of interstellar dust and gas circling three young stars some 400 lightyears from Earth in the constellation Ophiuchus, better known as the Serpent Bearer.

Using the Atacama array of radio telescopes in the northern desert of Chile, the two teams independently isolated the chemical signature of methyl isocyanate, and then followed up with computer modeling and laboratory experiments to probe the molecule's origins. "Thanks to the amazing capabilities of current telescopes, we are discovering more and more complex organic molecules around the birthplaces of stars and

planets," Rivilla told AFP.

## Life-giving but toxic

Scientists also recently detected sugars in space, including a compound called glycolaldehyde, which plays a role in the formation of DNA structure. Methyl isocyanate beyond our atmosphere was first discovered two years ago, but in a very different context: near complex, high-mass stars many times bigger than the Sun. These are not environments that can yield planetary systems like our own.

Earth and the other planets in our Solar System formed some 4.5 billion years ago out of matter left over from the Sun. At this very early stage of evolution, the material feeding the formation of the three-star system described Thursday-known prosaically as IRAS 16293-2422 — is rotating in a disk around each star. Some of the gas and dust will fall to the stars, and the rest will make up the planets. Paradoxically, methyl isocyanate and other chemical precursors to life are highly toxic, potentially lethal, to humans and other animals. "This makes laboratory work challenging," Ligterink noted dryly by email. Indeed, methyl isocyanate (CH<sub>3</sub>NCO) was the main poison in the 1984 Bhopal disaster in India, in which a leak from a pesticide factory on the night of December 2 killed more than 3,700 people. But in combination with other molecules, such as water, it transforms and can eventually lead to life-bearing compounds. One of the new studies contained a note in memory of the Bhopal victims.—AFP



**IN SPACE:** This handout picture shows a wide-field view of a spectacular region of dark and bright clouds, forming part of a region of star formation in the constellation of Ophiuchus (The Serpent Bearer).—AFP



## MODERATE DRINKING LINKED TO BRAIN DAMAGE: STUDY

**PARIS:** Even moderate drinking is linked to brain damage and a slight decline in mental skills, according to a study released yesterday that calls into question many national alcohol guidelines. Men and women who consume 14-to-21 drinks a week over decades are two to three times more likely than non-drinkers to show atrophy in the hippocampus, a part of the brain that governs memory and the ability to keep one's bearings, said the study, published in the medical journal BMJ.

They also performed more poorly on a specific verbal test, though other language functions appeared to remain unchanged. A single drink was defined as containing 10 milliliters of pure alcohol, the equivalent of a large glass of wine, a pint of five-percent beer, or a

shot of spirits such as whisky or vodka. Last year, the British government revised its guidelines for alcohol consumption, lowering the recommended maximum for men and women to 14 "units," or drinks, spread out over a week.

In other countries, that threshold is set higher for men: 35 units in Spain, 24.5 in the United States, 21 in Denmark and Ireland, and 19 in New Zealand. For women, however, guidelines for maximum weekly consumption in all of these nations, except for Spain, are 14 drinks or less. The negative impact of heavy drinking on the brain is well documented, but research on potential damage from "moderate" consumption up to now defined as two or three drinks a day, on average has been scant and inconclusive.

To probe further, researchers at the University of Oxford and University College London combed through data on 550 men and women monitored during 30 years as part of the so-called Whitehall II study. Volunteers reported periodically on their drinking habits, and scientists carried out brain tests at regular intervals. None were alcoholics at the outset. The effect of 14-to-21 units of alcohol on the hippocampus was clearly shown by imaging technology.

### Hidden damage

Mental performance tests were less conclusive: only one measuring language fluency showed a clear impact, while others showed no decline in brain function. "Alcohol consumption even at moderate levels is associated with

adverse brain outcomes," the researchers concluded. The findings "support the recent reduction in alcohol guidance in the United Kingdom, and question the current limits recommended in the United States," they wrote.

Nor did the scientists uncover any "evidence of a protective effect of light drinking over abstinence on brain structure or function," a tentative conclusion of earlier research. Because the new study was observational and not experimental, no firm conclusions could be drawn about cause and effect. The authors also acknowledged that the sample size was small. Outside experts gave the study mixed reviews. "It shows evidence for 'hidden' damage to the brain," commented Paul Matthews of Imperial College London, who highlight-

ed the value of the advanced imaging techniques used.

Jennifer Wild, a senior researcher in clinical psychology at the University of Oxford, said the results showed a "robust link" between what most people would consider casual drinking and brain degeneration later in life. Other scientists expressed skepticism about some of the methodology, and the self-reporting of alcohol consumption. "Over the 30-year period, weekly intake did not increase in the study participants," noted Carl Heneghan, director of the Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine at the University of Oxford. This flies in the face of a known pattern of increasing consumption through early adulthood, and a gradual tapering off into older age, he pointed out.—AFP

## ZIKA BIRTH DEFECTS IN 5% OF INFECTED WOMEN IN US

**MIAMI:** Five percent of women in the US territories who were infected with the Zika virus while pregnant had fetus or babies with defects, including microcephaly, government health data said Thursday. The report by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention covered the US territories of Guam, American Samoa, the US Virgin Islands, Micronesia, the Republic of Marshall Islands and Puerto Rico. The report is the first based on data from the US territories and the largest study of its kind to date.

CDC experts said the findings are consistent with previous findings about Zika cases in the mainland United States. "Women in the US territories and elsewhere who have continued exposure to mosquitoes carrying Zika are at risk of infection," said CDC acting director Anne Schuchat. "We must remain vigilant and committed to preventing new Zika infections." The rate of birth defects was slightly higher—eight percent, or one in 12 — in women whose infections were confirmed early in the pregnancy, during the first trimester, said the report.

The findings were based on the cases of

2,549 women with possible Zika virus infection who completed their pregnancies. Among these women, 1,508 had confirmed Zika virus infection from Jan 1, 2016 to April 25, 2017. Over 120 pregnancies resulted in Zika-associated birth defects, including infants born with unusually small heads, an irreversible condition known as microcephaly. Other complications in babies included seizures and problems with movement, coordination, eating and near constant crying. Zika can be spread by the bite of infected mosquito or via sexual contact. Pregnant women are urged to avoid areas where Zika is spreading.

Since Zika erupted on a large scale in mid-2015, more than 1.5 million people have been infected, mostly in Brazil and other countries in South America. Some 70 countries have been impacted. Zika may lead to an itchy rash and although it is dangerous for pregnant women and their fetuses, it often causes no symptoms in adults. In November 2016, the World Health Organization announced that the Zika virus outbreak no longer poses a world public health emergency; though it warned the epidemic remains a challenge.—AFP



PITTSBURGH: Willie Theison bottle feeds the new baby elephant calf at the Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium in Pittsburgh.—AP

## PITTSBURGH ZOO SAYS PREMATURE ELEPHANT BORN AT NATUR CENTER

**PITTSBURGH:** Pittsburgh Zoo and PPG Aquarium has unveiled an elephant calf born about a month prematurely. The calf was born at the zoo's International Conservation Center in Somerset County in May. It was unveiled on Tuesday. The female calf was born to Seeni, a 21-year-old elephant that's among three the zoo rescued from Botswana in 2011. Zoo president Barbara Baker says officials are waiting to see how the calf adjusts and is accepted by the rest of the zoo's herd before naming it. Baker says zoo officials don't want to "jinx it." The calf weighed 184 pounds at birth. A full-term calf typically weighs between 207 pounds and 280 pounds. Normal gestation for an elephant is about 22 months.—AP

## DINOSAUR-ERA MUSHROOM FOSSIL DISCOVERED IN BRAZIL

**WASHINGTON:** Scientists have discovered a rare 115-million-year-old mushroom fossil that sprouted during the era of the dinosaurs, the oldest such specimen found by far. The two-inch fungus, similar to its distant contemporary descendants, was found in Brazil, then part of the super-continent Gondwana. The enormous landmass later broke up to form South America, Africa, Antarctica, India and Australia.

Studying the fossil under an electron microscope, scientists found that the ancient mushroom had gills under its cap as well as spores, which help identify fungus species, said Sam Heads, a paleontologist with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign who co-authored the study in the June 7 issue of the journal PLOS One. The scientists called the specimen "Gondwanagaricites magnificus" in a nod to its place of origin. After falling into a river possibly during a flood, the fungus was carried into a lagoon where it was buried under sediment and fossilized, a scenario backed up by fossils of insects and plants found at the

same location. The water in the lagoon must have been salty and contained little oxygen, which helped preserve the mushroom, according to Heads. "The fact that this mushroom was preserved at all is just astonishing," he said. "Most mushrooms grow and are gone within a few days."

Mushrooms' soft, fragile structures decay rapidly, making the chances of fossilization extremely low, he said. Although fossilized remains of fungal filaments dating back hundreds of millions of years have previously been discovered, only 10 whole fossilized mushrooms have been found, the oldest of which dates back 99 million years. All those mushrooms were fossilized in amber.

Fungi evolved before land plants and are responsible for their transition from an aquatic environment, the scientists said. When "Gondwanagaricites magnificus" were growing, the very first flowering plants were appearing, undergoing major evolution, Heads said. "There were dinosaurs stomping around, pterosaurs flying around in the sky lots of different fauna."—AFP



FLORIDA: This file photo shows Barrington Sanders, left, and Joseph Blackman with the Miami-Dade County mosquito control department inspecting a neighborhood for any mosquitoes as the county works to eradicate mosquitoes carrying the Zika virus in Miami Beach, Florida.—AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



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## ALGHANIM MOTORS EMBRACE THE FUTURE WITH NANOTECHNOLOGY CERACOAT CERAMIC

Alghanim Motors has signed a deal with exclusive MENA distributors forward Echelon W L L to exclusively offer nanotechnology Ceracoat Ceramic as the only paint protection product approved by Alghanim Motors and the only nanotechnology product offered within the Alghanim Motors Genuine Accessory Range.

Following the continued growth year on year, sales of Nanotechnology Ceracoat Ceramic now account for more than 80 percent of paint protection purchased from dealers in the Middle East. Ceracoat high performance nanocoatings protects your vehicle surface against whether induced discolouration, fading, oxidation and loss of gloss, it also protects against damaged caused by tree sap bug splatter and bird droppings.

How? Ceracoat engineers their coatings along side NASA engineers which work at the Ceracoat Laboratories in Switzerland. And our active ingredient not only provides the best possible protection against damaging UV but because its reactive it helps break down surface contaminants and is complimented with its hydrophobic qualities commonly referred to as self cleaning properties.

Now although this does not eliminate washing, it significantly reduces time and cost needed to maintain your vehicle. Ceracoat hasn't forgotten about the interior, our interior nano coatings provide durable and invisible protection against commonly consumed food and drinks, And UV induced discolouration with the same limited life-time warranty.

Our vinyl, leather, fabric, alcantra and carpet protection prevents against permanent staining from commonly consumed food and drinks. Sills are easily removed, just blot with a clean cloth and vacuum dust away from fabric and carpets on a regular basis. What's really impressive about our fabric and carpet nano coating protection, that it contains a anti bacterial protection system, this is a remarkable product inhibiting mould and mildew and protects against harmful bacteria.

Many respiratory allergies are triggered by mould and bacteria and because our formula is water based it's not only safe for the family and pets its also kinder for our environment. Amer Alamer CEO of Ceracoat MENA commented: "We are delighted to be in sole partnership with Alghanim Motors to offer paint and interior protection and restoration to the market place. It is our intention to continue to supply new and innovative aftercare solutions and technically excellent products to Alghanim Motors."



## LEADERS GROUP COMPANY HOLDS GERGAI'AN FESTIVAL

Leaders Group Company for Development and Consultancies recently held a Gergai'an festival at the yards outside Bin Bahar mosque in Mubarakiya. The festival, which included various competitions for kids, was also attended by Real Estate House's

chairman of board, Abdul Rahman Al-Khannah, the company's CEO, Ali Al-Kulaib, leaders Group general manager, Nabila Al-Anjeri, tourism advisor, Mohammed Najia and Al-Mubarakiya Souq manager, Qais Al-Harb.



## THIS VACATION ENJOY BONDING WITH YOUR KIDS THROUGH FUN FILLED GAMES

As vacations begin parents try to find ways to engage and bond more with their kids. Family time is very important as it brings everyone closer together, creating an open communication between parents and their kids. Moreover family time builds strong family ties. This vacation, create lots of fun memories with your kids with Fantasy World's toys; as it offers a wide array of toys that encourage family bonding.

Play with Toys that induces family bonding, such as the Evergreen Monopoly, Pie Face, Jenga, Speak Out, Toilet Trouble, Boom Boom Balloon, and Wet Head. These toys promote quality time between parents and children. Monopoly is a classic board game that has been around for many years, it requires at least two players to play the game. This real-estate trading game encourages players to pretend to be real-estate tycoons, additionally it develops players critical, negotiation skills, and financial knowledge.

The Monopoly game has been developed as a mini simulation of the real world real estate enabling players to play in the quest to own the hottest properties, rail roads, and utilities. Invest in houses and hotels and then watch the rent come pouring in. Make deals to trade with other players and also look out for bargains at auction. Pie Face one of the most popular games around the world, which is designed for all ages. The game is filled with fun, excitement and suspense for kids and parents waiting for someone to get splatted.

The Pie Face has a spinnerwhoever's turn it is needs to spin the wheel and the number the arrow points that many number of times does the person need to twist the handle. This game requires at least 2 players, whip cream is placed on the on the throwing hand of the game, each person takes a turns, the handle can go off at any time, if it goes off the player gets the pie in his face. This game brings lots



of laughter and fun for kids and parents.

The classic Jenga is the perfect games for families as it combines suspense, lots of laughter and a great deal of fun. Jenga test's players luck through trying to defy gravity action, blocks of wood are stack vertically and players dive into taking turn pulling carefully pulling out the wood blocks. The object of the game is simple: You start with a stack of 54 blocks-three blocks across, 18 levels high. Each level of blocks should be perpendicular to the level below it. Each player must remove a block from near the bottom of the tower and place it on the top using only one hand at a time.

Eventually the tower becomes dangerously unstable, when the block topple the player is announced the loser. Jenga it the third most popular toy as it encourages children to bring out their structural engineering intuitive. Speak Out is one of the most wanted and loved game that is catching craze in the international markets. The game is played by having a player attempt to read nonsensical phrases whilst wearing a mouth piece, and their team mates have to guess what they're trying to say.

The game sounds very simple and straight forward however the mouth piece makes it very difficult to say the phrases, make the player sound funny. To win the game players must guess as many words as possible from the person trying to say the phrase while having the mouth piece. Another fun and engaging family game featured at Fantasy World is the Toilet Trouble. Players take turns spinning the toilet roll while pressing on the flush handle; you never know when the water squirts out from the toilet seat. Though the water in the toy is put by the player is good and hygiene but the mere experience of the water squirting out of the toilet seat up to your face seems very embarrassing while fun to the opponent viewer.

Boom Boom Balloon, is the latest craze, players take turns keeping the balloon from popping. Players take turn rolling the dice while carefully push the sticks as time passes by the balloon starts molding into funny and weird shapes until the click that makes the balloon to bust with a loud boom. The person whose move makes it boom cannot escape as the boom noise makes it clear for everyone.

Cool off the heat with your kids this vacation while playing with Wet Head. A player wear the Wet Head hat, the player must take turn pulling out the plastic stick, while waiting for the suspense of water pouring down their head. Who is going to be the next wet head is the mystery this summer. Harvey Dulku, Fantasy World's Retail Director, said: "At Fantasy World we are keen to bring toys that foster the parent and child relationship. Family time offers platform between the parent and child for an open communication, building trust and mutual understanding. Our objective is to nurture family time."

Fakhri Al Balki, Fantasy World's Retail Manager, said: "We ensure that toys that we offer to the kids are unique in a way that brings them enjoyment but also caters to their learning and induces bond with their parents. These games are not only is fun filled but also gives their parents an indication of what their kids are inclining towards are they good at money management, can they make a carrier in real estate (Monopoly), or are they good in engineering (Jenga), is embarrassment their



weakest point (Toilet Trouble/ Pie Face) and above all are they brave enough to take up challenges."

It is noteworthy to mention that Fantasy World goes that extra mile to bring in the latest and trendiest toys that kids request, and procured from all over the world, a factor that ensures originality and quality of the product. During new product releases, Fantasy World allows its customers value add of trying and

experiencing new toys and gizmos to ensure that they are completely satisfied before making a purchase. These toys and much more are available in all Fantasy World stores.

Customers are invited to visit any of Fantasy World's stores in Kuwait to explore and experience new toys, available at Al Rai, Bustan Mall, the Avenues, Souq Sharq and the Boulevard Mall.





# CADILLAC ALGHANIM SPONSORS RAMADAN BALLROOM AT JUMEIRAH

Wishing everyone a blessed month in a time for compassion and generosity, Yusuf A. Alghanim and Sons Automotive, the sole distributor of Cadillac vehicles in Kuwait, is sponsoring the annual Ramadan ballroom at the luxurious badriyah ballroom at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel. The Cadillac Alghanim-sponsored tent offers a unique Ramadan ambience that allows guests to celebrate the true spirit of the Holy Month of Ramadan with their family and friends, while enjoying a wonderful experience amidst the fine selection of cuisine and exceptional hospitality of the five-star hotel.

As part of the sponsorship, Cadillac Alghanim displays the latest 2017 models of the brand in the ballroom, including the ATS, CTS, Escalade and XT5. The brand has also launched offers on these cars exclusively for the Holy Month. Customers buying a 2017 ATS will be gifted four installments and free one-year golden insurance, while customers of the 2017 CTS will have 2000 KD above their highest trade in or an additional discount of 2000 KD. As for the 2017 Escalade, Cadillac Alghanim is gifting customers six installments or a KD 1,000 discount or a free one-year golden insurance.

Customers of the 2017 XT5 will have the first six installments paid off by the brand. During the holy month of Ramadan customers are encouraged to participate at Cadillac's social media campaign, for a chance to win a 2 night stay at Jumeirah's Grand Deluxe room and 2 spa packages. For a chance to win customers can visit the Cadillac display at Jumeirah, take a picture of the vehicle, tag @cadillacalghanim and include the hashtag #CadillacAlghanim.

Since the brand's promising arrival to Kuwait, Cadillac has unceasingly pushed the boundaries of design and engineering in the nation, earning much deserved recog-

ognition and status due to the groundbreaking cooperation it had with Yusuf A. Alghanim & Sons Automotive, Cadillac's exclusive distributor in Kuwait. Founded in 1932, the company's rich heritage and distribution services are synonymous with market leadership, determinedly built through a lifetime of trust and success with numerous affiliations and international commercial brands.

Within that same spirit, Cadillac has maintained its leadership in the world of luxury automobiles by redefining the design, performance and technology envisioned by its parent company, General Motors. And thanks to the premium services provided by its Kuwaiti distributor, the brand has managed to elevate its iconic vehicles to an even higher plane of prestige. From designing a range of refined interior features and sleek exterior lines, to adding raw power and finishing touches that enrich the driver's sense of individuality, Cadillac has intuitively managed to blend the worlds of dynamic engineering and contemporary chic lifestyle with a remarkable degree of success.

Alghanim enterprise has also provided Cadillac with the biggest and most advanced service center in the world, expertly managed by the most capable engineers and technicians, and equipped with the latest technology equipment for car maintenance. This all coalesces so beautifully with the company's award-winning customer service team who readily understands the unique needs and luxurious lifestyle of a Cadillac owner, whose loyalty and satisfaction are just one of the many awards enshrined in Cadillac's never-ending trophies stand.

Yusuf A. Alghanim and Sons Automotive was the first General Motors distributor appointed in the GCC, and whose ongoing commitment to achieving the excellent standards of General Motors has established it as one of the best local and international enterprises known for



superior customer satisfaction and service. Yusuf A. Alghanim and Sons Automotive also adopts the "1 Care" program that aims to implement professionalism and ethics. Moreover, the program aims to achieve leadership in customer service that is based on four main pillars:

direct communication, answering all customers' inquiries, representing the brand as the symbol of quality and exceeding the customers' expectations of high-quality service.



## SPECIAL RAMADAN EXPERIENCE AT MILLENNIUM HOTEL AND CONVENTION CENTRE KUWAIT

Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre Kuwait is ready to welcome its guests during the holy month of Ramadan with a wide variety of menus and buffets presented during Iftar, Ghabka and Suhour in an original Ramadan atmosphere that they can enjoy. On this occasion, Area General Manager of Millennium and Cophorne Kuwait, Dani Saleh, said: "Ramadan is a time for family, friends and reflection. Create unforgettable memories and fully embrace Ramadan traditions as we partake variety of offers designed to transport guests to unique Ramadan experience at the Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre Kuwait"

Lamar, the hotel's international buffet restaurant will bring a delight to this year's Ramadan through its finest Iftar dishes available daily from 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm. If you are looking for a dining place for 25 people,

Lamar International Restaurant offers a private room perfect for family, friends and coworkers to gather around. Selections of high quality coffee and tea that are available for guests to savor during break fasting at Library Cafe. We offers an exclusive Ramadan Suhour experience, opens daily from 8.00 pm to 2.00 am.

Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre Kuwait is dedicating the recently opened Nara Lounge for Ghabka lovers. A great way to unwind outdoor, over a wide selection of Ramadan hot and cold drinks including snacks and various flavors of sheesha every day after Iftar until 2.00 am. And continuously, the hotel offers Catering Services for events, Corporate with four different menus and a large variety of delicious options. Guest will definitely have bliss and unforgettable dining experience that will truly reflects the traditional Arabic hospitality.

## CBK HOLDS GERGA'AN FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN AT AMIRI HOSPITAL

Within its community service activities, The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently visited children hospitalized at the Amiri Hospital's pediatrics department where a special Gergai'an festival was held and the presents were distributed to the kids. CBK's assistant manager for PR and advertising, Amnai Al-Wer'a stressed that CBK was always keen on sharing joys with the kids on various occasions.



## TKS HOLDS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The Telugu Kala Samiti (TKS) election committee announced that the following members have occupied the positions in the organization in the TKS executive committee for the year 2017- 18. The elected members are: President Vasu Maguluri; Vice President Charles N; General Secretary Parthasarathi P; Joint Secretary Subba Rao Mudda; Treasurer Babu Naidu P; Executive Member (Abuhalfia) Sridhar Kethavarapu; Executive Member (Abuhalfia) Naga Jyothy Ravuri; Executive Member

(Abbasiya) Ravi Garne; Executive Member (Fahaheel/Mangaf/ Ahmadi) Srikanth A K; Executive Member (Farwaniya/Riggaee/Omaria/ City) Venkata Ratnam and Executive Member (Salmiya) Bhavani Vikram Joshi.

The election committee would like to express its appreciation for the unity and support displayed by all members in completing the election process successfully, and wishes the new executive committee great success during their tenure.



# LOYAC HOLDS ANNUAL GHABQA

LOYAC recently held its annual Ghabqa and a Gergai'an festivity for Little Loyacers at its headquarters in Qebila. The ceremony held under the title of 'Thanks to Benevolence Knights', was also attended by DOW Kuwait and Iraq PR manager, Rana Abdul Raheem, as representative of DOW. The event included Oud and violin performances by LAPA band in addition to various recreational competitions and activities.

Speaking on the occasion, LOYAC's board member, Fetouh Al-Dalali thanked participants for their efforts and stressed that DOW was a strategic partner. The voluntary and international programs manager, Ninar Qamis urged various voluntary program managers to create new methods to encourage more individuals join voluntary activities. On his part, Kuwait DOW manager, Ahmed Do'alah stressed that Gergai'an was major Ramadan tradition and that it was a great opportunity for socialization.





AM MOVIES ACTION

- 00:45 Harlock: Space Pirate
02:45 Diggstown
04:30 Rampage: President Down
06:15 I Am Number Four
08:15 Harlock: Space Pirate
10:15 Rampage: President Down
12:00 Diggstown
13:45 I Am Number Four
15:45 Road Wars
17:30 Beverly Hills Cop 3
19:15 Real Steel
21:30 Insurgent
23:30 Beneath

ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 00:45 Preposterous Pets
01:40 Preposterous Pets
02:35 Preposterous Pets
03:25 Preposterous Pets
04:15 Preposterous Pets
05:02 Preposterous Pets
05:49 River Monsters
06:36 Gorilla School
07:00 Gorilla School
07:25 Lone Star Law
08:15 The Lion Queen
09:10 Wild Ones
09:35 Wild Ones
10:05 Dog Rescuers
11:00 Wildest Africa
11:55 Animal Cops Miami
12:50 The Lion Queen
13:45 The Lion Queen
14:40 The Lion Queen
15:35 Preposterous Pets
16:30 Preposterous Pets
17:25 Preposterous Pets
18:20 Deadly Islands
19:15 Lone Star Law
20:10 Pit Bulls & Parolees
21:05 Lone Star Law
22:00 Deadly Islands
22:55 Tanked
23:50 Tanked

BBC FIRST

- 00:30 Doctors
01:00 Death In Paradise
01:55 Call The Midwife
02:50 Doctor Who
03:40 EastEnders
04:10 Rillington Place

- Patrol
05:55 Catch A Contractor
06:20 Catch A Contractor
06:50 Framework
07:40 Lip Sync Battle
08:05 Lip Sync Battle
08:30 Disorderly Conduct: Video On
Patrol
09:20 Sweat Inc.
10:10 Bondi Ink
11:00 Life Or Debt
11:50 Catch A Contractor
12:15 Catch A Contractor
12:40 Disaster Date
13:05 Disaster Date
13:30 Lip Sync Battle
13:55 Lip Sync Battle
14:20 Bondi Ink
15:10 Framework
16:00 Frankenfood
16:30 Frankenfood
16:55 Hungry Investors
17:50 Brotherhood
18:15 Brotherhood
18:39 Impractical Jokers
19:03 Disaster Date
19:27 Ridiculousness Arabia
19:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
20:13 Comedy Central Presents Comedy
20:37 Comedy Central Presents Comedy
20:37 Comedy Central Presents Comedy
20:37 Comedy Central Presents Comedy
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Nathan For You
22:00 Nathan For You
22:25 Ridiculousness Arabia
22:50 Ridiculousness Arabia
23:15 Lip Sync Battle
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah

Discovery Family

- 00:05 Guinness World Records
Smashed New Zealand
00:30 Nextworld
01:20 Nextworld
02:10 Storm Chasers
03:00 Storm Chasers
03:50 Ultimate Survival
04:40 Ultimate Survival
05:30 Ultimate Survival
06:20 How It's Made
06:40 How It's Made
07:00 Kenny The Shark
07:25 Kenny The Shark
07:50 Bear Grylls Survival School
08:15 Bear Grylls Survival School
08:40 How It's Made
09:05 How It's Made
09:30 How It's Made
09:55 How It's Made

- 03:35 Loopdidoo
03:50 Calimero
04:05 Art Attack
04:30 Henry Hugglemonster
04:45 Zou
05:00 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Loopdidoo
06:00 Zou
06:15 Calimero
06:30 Loopdidoo
06:45 Henry Hugglemonster
07:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
07:25 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
07:50 Goldie & Bear
08:15 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
08:40 Doc McStuffins
09:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
09:35 Sofia The First
10:00 The Lion Guard
10:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
11:00 PJ Masks
11:25 Goldie & Bear
11:55 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
12:25 The Lion Guard
12:50 Sofia The First
13:20 Sofia The First
13:45 Sofia The First
14:10 Sofia The First
14:40 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
15:05 PJ Masks
15:30 The Lion Guard
15:55 Miles From Tomorrow
16:25 Sofia The First
16:50 PJ Masks
17:05 Goldie & Bear
17:35 Doc McStuffins Toy Hospital
18:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
18:35 Sofia The First
19:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
19:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
20:05 Sofia The First
20:35 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
21:00 Goldie & Bear
21:25 Doc McStuffins
21:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
22:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
22:30 Sofia The First
22:55 PJ Masks
23:20 Henry Hugglemonster
23:35 The Hive
23:45 Loopdidoo

Discovery Channel HD

- 00:20 Wheels That Fall
00:45 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
01:35 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
02:25 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
03:15 Todd Sampson's Body Hack

EHD

- 00:00 Botched
00:55 Botched
01:50 El News
02:50 Celebrity Style Story
03:20 Celebrity Style Story
03:50 Hollywood & Football
04:40 Hollywood & Football
05:30 Celebrity Style Story
06:00 La Clippers Dance Squad
06:50 El News
07:20 La Clippers Dance Squad
08:10 El News
09:05 Botched
09:55 Botched
10:45 Botched
11:35 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
12:25 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
13:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
14:15 Second Wives Club
15:10 Second Wives Club
16:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
17:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
18:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
19:00 El News
20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
22:00 Second Wives Club
23:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

food

- 00:00 Man Fire Food
00:30 Man Fire Food
01:00 Restaurant Stakeout
02:00 Mystery Diners
02:30 Mystery Diners
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
06:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
07:00 Chopped
08:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
08:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
09:00 The Pioneer Woman
09:30 The Pioneer Woman
10:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
10:30 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
11:00 Bake With Anna Olson
11:30 Bake With Anna Olson
12:00 Man Fire Food
12:30 Man Fire Food
13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
13:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:00 Chopped
15:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
15:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
16:00 The Pioneer Woman
16:30 The Pioneer Woman
17:00 Siba's Table
17:30 Siba's Table
18:00 Bake With Anna Olson
18:30 Bake With Anna Olson
19:00 Man Fire Food
19:30 Man Fire Food
20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:00 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers
21:30 Rev Run's Sunday Suppers
22:00 The Big Eat - Middle East
22:30 Dinner At Tiffani's
23:00 Chopped

itv HD CHOICE

- 00:05 Coronation Street
00:30 Coronation Street
01:00 Shoot The Messenger
02:00 Coronation Street
02:25 Coronation Street
03:15 Coronation Street
03:35 Coronation Street
03:55 5 Star Family Reunion
04:45 Britain's Secrets With Anne Robinson
05:50 Paul O Grady: For The Love Of Animals - India
06:45 Who's Doing The Dishes?
07:40 Who's Doing The Dishes?
08:35 This Is England '86
09:30 Jekyll And Hyde
10:25 Shoot The Messenger
11:25 Grantchester
12:40 Catchphrase
13:15 Surprise Surprise
14:10 Masterpiece With Alan Titchmarsh
15:00 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Animals - India
16:00 This Is England '86
16:55 Britain's Secrets With Anne Robinson
18:00 Surprise Surprise
19:00 5 Star Family Reunion
19:45 Jekyll And Hyde
20:35 Britain's Secrets With Anne Robinson

- 21:35 This Is England '86
22:30 Shoot The Messenger
23:20 Safe House

HD HISTORY

- 00:20 Britain's Bloodiest Dynasty
01:10 Swamp People
02:00 Leepu And Pitbull
02:50 Storage Wars
03:15 Pawn Stars
03:40 Pawn Stars South Africa
04:05 Storage Wars Miami
04:30 Storage Wars Miami
05:00 Hoard Hunters
06:00 Leepu And Pitbull
06:50 Duck Dynasty
07:40 Counting Cars
08:05 Counting Cars
08:30 Pawn Stars
08:55 Pawn Stars
09:20 Storage Wars
09:45 Storage Wars
10:10 American Pickers
11:00 The Curse Of Oak Island
11:50 Duck Dynasty
12:15 Duck Dynasty
12:40 Swamp People
13:30 Ax Men
14:20 Mountain Men
15:10 Leepu And Pitbull
16:00 Storage Wars
16:25 Storage Wars
16:50 Pawn Stars
17:15 Pawn Stars
17:40 Billion Dollar Wreck
18:30 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...

NAT GEO people HD

- 00:45 Eat Street
01:10 The Food Files
01:40 The Shellbourne
02:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
02:35 The Game Chef
03:00 The Game Chef
03:30 The Peninsula: The Making Of A Gala
04:25 Chocolate Covered
04:50 Chocolate Covered
05:20 Home Strange Home
06:15 Straight To The Source: Korean Food
06:40 Street Food Around The World
07:10 Miguel's Feasts
07:35 Miguel's Feasts
08:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
08:30 Sara's Australia Unveiled
09:00 What's For Sale?
09:25 What's For Sale?
09:55 Dog Whisperer
10:50 Dog Whisperer
11:45 Andy And Ben Eat Australia
12:10 Carnival Eats
12:40 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
13:05 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
13:35 Bad Trip
14:30 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
14:55 Cesar's Recruit: Asia
15:25 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
15:50 Places We Go
16:20 Chocolate Covered
16:45 Chocolate Covered
17:15 Home Strange Home
18:10 Miguel's Feasts
18:35 Miguel's Feasts
19:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
19:30 Places We Go
20:00 Chocolate Covered
20:30 Chocolate Covered
21:00 Home Strange Home
22:00 Miguel's Feasts
22:25 Miguel's Feasts
22:55 Bad Trip
23:50 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

- 00:10 Evacuate Earth
01:00 I Wouldn't Go In There
02:00 Monster Fish
03:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
04:00 Primal Survivor
05:00 Megastructures
06:00 Lawless Island
07:00 Border Wars
08:00 Scam City
09:00 Locked Up Abroad
10:00 Breakthrough
11:00 I Wouldn't Go In There
12:00 Dog Whisperer
13:00 Cesar Millan's Dog Nation
14:00 Genius
15:00 Monster Fish



OCTOBER SKY ON OSN MOVIES HD

- 16:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
17:00 Genius
18:00 Brain Games
18:30 Brain Games
19:00 Monster Fish
20:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs South
20:50 Genius
21:40 Brain Games
22:05 Brain Games
22:30 Monster Fish
23:20 Ancient Megastructures

AM MOVIES HD

- 01:10 October Sky
03:15 The Finest Hours
05:15 Twister
07:15 Last Knights
09:15 People Like Us
11:15 The Finest Hours
13:15 Twister
15:15 The Bad News Bears
17:15 Reign Over Me
19:30 Air Force One
21:45 Jurassic World

NAT GEO WILD HD

- 00:20 1000 Days For The Planet
01:10 Savage Kingdom
02:00 Animal Fight Club 4.5
02:50 Wild Case Files
03:45 World's Deadliest Animals
04:40 Strangest Bird Alive
05:35 Battle Of The Swamp Dragons
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Hooked
08:20 My Life Is A Zoo
09:15 America's Deadliest
10:10 Extreme Animals
11:05 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
12:00 World's Weirdest
12:55 Animal Fight Club 4.5
13:50 Wild Case Files
14:45 Secret Life Of Predators (2016)
15:40 World's Deadliest
16:35 Hunter Hunted
17:30 Monster Fish
18:25 Wild Argentina
19:20 Secret Life Of Predators (2016)
20:10 World's Deadliest
21:00 Hunter Hunted
21:50 Monster Fish
22:40 Wild Argentina
23:30 World's Weirdest

SC DISCOVERY SCIENCE

- 00:30 How To Survive An Asteroid Strike: An Asteroid...
01:20 Telescope
02:10 51 Degrees North
03:00 Strip The Cosmos
03:48 How Do They Do It?
04:12 How Do They Do It?
04:36 How Do They Do It?
05:00 Food Factory
05:24 Food Factory
05:48 Food Factory
06:12 Food Factory
06:36 Food Factory
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:26 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
08:14 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
09:02 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
09:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
10:38 Speed Junkie
11:26 Mythbusters
12:14 Mythbusters
13:02 Mythbusters
13:50 Mythbusters
14:38 Mythbusters
15:26 Mission Asteroid
16:14 How To Survive An Asteroid Strike: An Asteroid...
17:02 Telescope
17:50 51 Degrees North
18:40 Strip The Cosmos
19:30 NASA's Unexplained Files
20:20 NASA's Unexplained Files
21:10 NASA's Unexplained Files
22:00 NASA's Unexplained Files
22:50 NASA's Unexplained Files
23:40 Food Factory

AM MOVIES HD FAMILY

- 00:40 Open Season: Scared Silly
02:10 Turner & Hooch
03:50 Inspector Gadget
05:10 Open Season: Scared Silly
06:40 The Haunted Mansion
08:10 Turner & Hooch
09:50 Zootropolis
11:50 Inspector Gadget
13:15 The Good Dinosaur
15:00 The Lizzie McGuire Movie
16:40 The Incredibles
18:35 Little Women
20:35 The Secret Of The Magic Gourd
22:00 The Good Dinosaur
23:35 The Lizzie McGuire Movie

AM MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 01:00 Ride Along 2
02:45 Twins
04:30 Daddy's Home
06:15 Taxi
08:00 Twins
09:45 Daddy's Home
11:30 Taxi
13:15 Baby's Day Out
15:00 Mr. Deeds
16:45 Miss You Already
18:30 Liberal Arts
20:15 It's Complicated
22:15 Mr. Accident
23:45 Turbo Kid

AM MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

- 00:45 Words And Pictures
02:45 Man In The Moon
04:30 Hoosiers
06:30 Ordinary People
08:30 Words And Pictures
10:30 Man In The Moon
12:15 Hoosiers
14:15 Batkid Begins
15:45 Land Of Mine
17:30 Love & Mercy
19:30 Selma
21:45 Rudderless
23:30 Batkid Begins

AM MOVIES HD KIDS

- 00:45 Ploddy Police Car On The Case
02:15 Memory Loss
04:00 Ghosthunters On Icy Trails
06:00 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
07:15 Savva
09:00 Blue Elephant 2
10:45 Ratchet And Clank
12:30 Ploddy Police Car On The Case
14:00 Vickie And The Treasure Of Gods
15:45 Blue Elephant 2
17:30 Albert
19:00 Big Baby
20:30 Vickie And The Treasure Of Gods
22:15 Savva
23:45 Albert

TLC HD

- 00:20 Cake Boss
06:00 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
06:50 7 Little Johnstons
07:40 Separated At Birth
08:30 Little People, Big World
08:55 Little People, Big World
09:20 Ugly House To Lovely House
10:10 Say Yes To The Dress
10:35 Say Yes To The Dress
11:00 Cake Boss
11:25 Cake Boss
11:50 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
12:40 Oprah's Classless
13:30 Say Yes To The Dress: The Big Day
14:20 Outdaughters: Busby Quints
15:10 Toddlers & Taras
16:00 Little People, Big World
16:25 Little People, Big World
16:50 Ugly House To Lovely House
17:40 Say Yes To The Dress
18:05 Say Yes To The Dress
18:30 Cake Boss
20:10 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners: Country House...
21:00 Cake Boss
21:25 Cake Boss
21:50 She's In Charge
22:40 Coach Charming
23:05 Coach Charming
23:30 Cake Boss
23:55 Cake Boss

travel CHANNEL

- 00:00 Manufactured
03:00 Expedition Unknown
04:00 Booze Traveler
05:00 Mysteries At The Museum
06:00 Expedition Unknown
07:00 House Hunters International
09:30 House Hunters International
10:00 Hotel Impossible
11:00 Flippin' RVs
12:00 Texas Flip And Move
13:00 Building Alaska
14:00 Building Alaska
15:00 Alaska Off The Grid
16:00 Rev Run's Renovation
16:30 Rev Run's Renovation
17:00 The Vanilla Ice Project
17:30 The Vanilla Ice Project
18:00 Flippin' RVs
19:00 Hotel Impossible
20:00 Texas Flip And Move
21:00 Mysteries At The Museum
22:00 Dangerous Planes: Airshow
23:00 Alaska Off The Grid



INSURGENT ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 05:05 Call The Midwife
06:00 EastEnders
06:30 Holly City
07:25 New Tricks
08:20 The Musketeers
09:15 Father Brown
10:15 Doctors
10:45 EastEnders
11:15 New Tricks
12:10 The Musketeers
13:05 Father Brown
14:05 Doctors
14:35 EastEnders
15:05 New Tricks
16:00 The Musketeers
17:00 Father Brown
18:00 Doctors
18:30 EastEnders
19:05 New Tricks
20:00 Unforgotten
21:00 Whitechapel
21:50 Ripper Street
22:45 Ripper Street
23:40 Doctors

- 10:20 How It's Made
10:45 How It's Made
11:10 How It's Made
11:35 How It's Made
12:00 How It's Made
12:25 How It's Made
12:50 Ultimate Survival
13:40 Ultimate Survival
14:30 Ultimate Survival
15:20 Ultimate Survival
16:10 Ultimate Survival
17:00 Nextworld
17:50 Nextworld
18:40 The Carbonaro Effect
19:05 The Carbonaro Effect
19:30 How We Invented The World
20:20 North America
21:10 Last Frontiersmen
22:00 What Happened Next?
22:25 What Happened Next?
22:50 What Happened Next?
23:15 What Happened Next?
23:40 What Happened Next?

- 04:05 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
05:00 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
06:00 How Do They Do It?
06:25 Gold Divers
07:40 Misfit Garage
08:30 What On Earth?
09:20 Garage Gold
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 How Do They Do It?
10:35 What On Earth?
11:25 Salvage Hunters
12:15 Todd Sampson's Body Hack
13:05 How Do They Do It?
13:30 Garage Gold
13:55 Garage Gold
14:20 Gold Rush
15:10 What On Earth?
16:00 Gold Divers
16:50 Misfit Garage
17:40 Street Outlaws
18:30 How Do They Do It?
18:55 How Do They Do It?
19:20 What On Earth?
20:10 Garage Gold
20:35 Garage Gold
21:00 Heavy Rescue
21:50 Life After: Chernobyl
22:40 What On Earth?
23:30 Misfit Garage

crime & investigation network

- 00:00 The Last Goodbye
00:30 The Last Goodbye
01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
02:00 Babies Behind Bars
03:00 Escaping Polygam
04:00 The Last Goodbye
04:30 The Last Goodbye
05:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
06:00 The First 48
07:00 The First 48
08:00 Killers
09:00 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath
10:00 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath
11:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
12:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
13:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
14:00 It Takes A Killer
14:30 It Takes A Killer
15:00 It Takes A Killer
15:30 It Takes A Killer
16:00 Homicide Hunter
17:00 Homicide Hunter
18:00 Cold Case Files
19:00 Cold Case Files
20:00 The First 48
21:00 Homicide Hunter
22:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
23:00 Crime Stories

ID

- 00:30 The Real Story With Maria Elena Salinas
01:20 Adnan Syed: Innocent Or Guilty?
02:10 Betrayed
03:00 Murder Chose Me
03:48 I Almost Got Away With It
06:12 I Almost Got Away With It
07:00 The Locator
07:25 The Locator
07:50 The Locator
10:20 The Locator
10:45 The Locator
11:10 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
12:00 Deadly Affairs
12:50 Deadly Affairs
13:40 Deadly Affairs
14:30 Deadly Affairs
15:20 Deadly Affairs
16:10 The Detectives Club: New Orleans
17:00 Southern Fried Homicide
17:50 Southern Fried Homicide
18:40 Southern Fried Homicide
19:30 Southern Fried Homicide
20:20 Southern Fried Homicide
21:10 Blood Relatives
22:00 Six Degrees Of Murder
22:50 Evil Kin
23:40 Grave Secrets

Disney Junior

- 00:00 Henry Hugglemonster
00:15 Calimero
00:30 Art Attack
00:55 Zou
01:05 Loopdidoo
01:20 Henry Hugglemonster
01:35 Calimero
01:50 Zou
02:05 Art Attack
02:30 The Hive
02:40 Loopdidoo
02:55 Henry Hugglemonster
03:10 Art Attack

COMEDY CENTRAL

- 00:05 Impractical Jokers
00:30 Impractical Jokers
00:55 The Jim Gaffigan Show
01:20 The Jim Gaffigan Show
01:45 Lip Sync Battle
02:10 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
03:00 The Daily Show - Global Edition
03:25 Life Or Debt
04:15 Sweet Inc.
05:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On



SELMA ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL



# CLASSIFIEDS



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## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO THURSDAY (08/06/2017 TO 15/06/2017)

Movie Title	Time	Movie Title	Time	Movie Title	Time
SHARQIA-1 Taht Al Tarabeza (Re-Release) Laf Wa Dawaran (Re-Release)	10:00 PM 12:15 AM	MARINA-2 Taht Al Tarabeza (Re-Release) Ashan Khargen (Re-Release)	9:45 PM 12:30 AM	360°-2 Taht Al Tarabeza (Re-Release) ALIEN: COVENANT	10:15 PM 12:45 AM
SHARQIA-2 Seats-428 Min 30 Sana (Re-Release) AL FERAN (KUWAITI)	9:30 PM 12:30 AM	MARINA-3 DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL Min 30 Sana (Re-Release)	10:00 PM 12:05 AM	360°-3 AL FERAN (KUWAITI) AL FERAN (KUWAITI) Ashan Khargen (Re-Release)	9:45 PM 11:15 PM 12:45 AM
SHARQIA-3 MINIONS (Re-Release) KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD	9:45 PM 11:45 PM	AVENUES-1 YO-KAI WATCH: The Movie ALIEN: COVENANT	9:30 PM 11:30 PM	AL-KOUT.1 Ashan Khargen (Re-Release) Min 30 Sana (Re-Release)	9:30 PM 11:45 PM
MUHALAB-1 Laf Wa Dawaran (Re-Release) KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	AVENUES-2 MINIONS (Re-Release)-3D-4DX KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD (3D-4DX)	10:00 PM 12:05 AM	AL-KOUT.2 AL FERAN (KUWAITI) AL FERAN (KUWAITI) AL FERAN (KUWAITI)	9:45 PM 11:15 PM 12:45 AM
MUHALAB-2 RAABTA (Hindi) AL FERAN (KUWAITI)	9:45 PM 12:45 AM	AVENUES-3 THE BOSS BABY HERE ALONE	10:30 PM 12:30 AM	AL-KOUT.3 Laf Wa Dawaran (Re-Release) KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD	10:15 PM 12:30 AM
MUHALAB-3 Ashan Khargen (Re-Release) Min 30 Sana (Re-Release)	10:00 PM 12:15 AM	AVENUES-4 ALIEN: COVENANT Laf Wa Dawaran (Re-Release)	10:15 PM 12:45 AM	AL-KOUT.4 Safra 5 Njoom (Kuwaiti Film) (Re-Release) Taht Al Tarabeza (Re-Release)	10:00 PM 12:05 AM
FANAR-1 RAABTA (Hindi) RAABTA (Hindi)	9:30 PM 12:30 AM	AVENUES-5 KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL	9:45 PM 12:15 AM	BAIRAQ-1 MINIONS (Re-Release) THE BOSS BABY	9:45 PM 11:45 PM
FANAR-2 DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL Taht Al Tarabeza (Re-Release)	10:30 PM 12:30 AM	AVENUES-6 AL FERAN (KUWAITI) Min 30 Sana (Re-Release)	10:00 PM 11:30 PM	BAIRAQ-2 DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL	10:00 PM 12:05 AM
FANAR-3 KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD Laf Wa Dawaran (Re-Release)	9:45 PM 12:15 AM	AVENUES-7 Ashan Khargen (Re-Release) Laf Wa Dawaran (Re-Release)	9:30 PM 11:45 PM	BAIRAQ-3 RAABTA (Hindi) AL FERAN (KUWAITI)	9:30 PM 12:30 AM
FANAR-4 Min 30 Sana (Re-Release) ALIEN: COVENANT	9:30 PM 12:30 AM	AVENUES-8 DIARY OF A WIMPY KID: THE LONG HAUL Taht Al Tarabeza (Re-Release)	10:15 PM 12:30 AM	PLAZA CIA: Comrade in America (Malayalam) RAABTA (Hindi)	9:30 PM 12:15 AM
FANAR-5 AL FERAN (KUWAITI) AL FERAN (KUWAITI) AL FERAN (KUWAITI)	10:00 PM 11:30 PM 1:00 AM	AVENUES-9 RAABTA (Hindi) THE EXCEPTION	9:45 PM 12:45 AM	LAILA Taht Al Tarabeza (Re-Release) KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD	9:30 PM 11:45 PM
MARINA-1 Laf Wa Dawaran (Re-Release) KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD	9:30 PM 12:15 AM	360°-1 KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD KING ARTHUR: LEGEND OF THE SWORD	9:45 PM 12:30 AM	AJIAL.1 CIA: Comrade in America (Malayalam)	9:30 PM

### FOR RENT

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 With terrace, sea view  
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6, street 107, opp Animal Health Department. For Indians, executive bachelor/ family/ working ladies. Contact: 66625901. (C 5316) 5-6-2017

#### ACCOMMODATION

Sharing accommodation available with separate room and other facility near Al-Rashid hospital Salmiya for a small Indian family or a working lady immediately. Contact: 99315825. (C 5318) 7-6-2017

#### CHANGE OF NAME

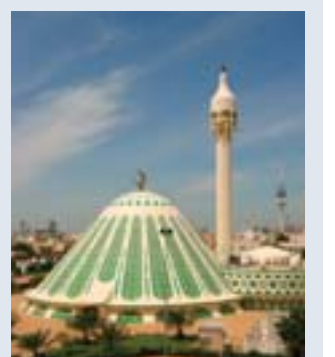
I, Ajay S/o Lokesh Attavar, holder of Indian Passport No: Z3585684 & Civil ID No: 288051103654 has changed my name to Ajay Lokesh Attavar hereinafter in all my dealing and documents. (C 5320) 11-6-2017

Sharing accommodation available in Farwaniya block



#### PRAYER TIMINGS

**Fajr:** 03:13  
**Shorook:** 04:48  
**Duhr:** 11:47  
**Asr:** 15:21  
**Maghrib:** 18:47  
**Isha:** 20:19



## Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

### DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Sunday 11/6/2017				Departure Flights on Sunday 11/6/2017			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	KAC	514	Tehran	13:10
JZR	553	Alexandria	00:15	KAC	393	Kozhikode	13:10
KAC	786	Jeddah	00:30	KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	13:35
JZR	267	Beirut	00:35	KNE	529	Jeddah	13:40
KAC	504	Beirut	00:45	KAC	672	Dubai	13:55
KAC	102	London	00:55	QTR	1078	Doha	14:05
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:15	KAC	618	Doha	14:20
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:45
UAE	853	Dubai	01:40	KAC	692	Muscat	14:55
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	KAC	788	Jeddah	14:55
KKK	6506	Istanbul	01:55	KAC	304	Mumbai	14:55
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:05	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:05
QTR	1086	Doha	02:05	OMA	645	Muscat	15:10
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	KAC	502	Beirut	15:25
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	KAC	412	Bangkok	15:30
KAC	418	Manila	02:50	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	SAW	705	Damascus	15:50
KAC	382	Delhi	03:15	RJA	640	Amman	16:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	FDK	801	Damascus	16:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:40	QTR	1072	Delhi	16:15
KAC	1544	Cairo	03:50	JZR	535	Cairo	16:20
CEB	018	Manila	04:00	KAC	118	New York	16:25
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	04:15	JZR	787	Riyadh	16:35
UAE	873	Dubai	04:15	NIA	361	Alexandria	16:50
KAC	358	Kochi	04:50	JZR	1771	Jeddah	16:55
KAC	784	Jeddah	05:00	KAC	542	Cairo	17:05
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
THY	770	Istanbul	05:05	KAC	215	Bahrain	17:30
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:35
QTR	8511	Doha	05:20	JZR	177	Dubai	17:45
KAC	344	Chennai	05:30	QTR	1080	Doha	18:05
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
BAW	157	London	06:05	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:40	KAC	776	Riyadh	19:10
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:50	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:55	KAC	154	Istanbul	19:30
KAC	156	Istanbul	07:05	KAC	616	Bahrain	19:40
JZR	1541	Cairo	07:10	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
KAC	354	Bangalore	07:50	KAC	620	Doha	19:50
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	KAC	104	London	20:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	OMA	647	Muscat	20:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	08:55	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:15
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20	QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:25	KAC	166	Rome	20:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	564	Amman	21:00
AXB	189	Delhi	09:45	KAC	172	Frankfurt	21:05
MSC	415	Sohag	10:15	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:10
IRC	528	Ahwaz	10:25	ALK	229	Colombo	21:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
SAW	703	Damascus	10:45	KAC	676	Dubai	21:35
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:50
PAL	668	Manila	11:00	QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
JZR	561	Sohag	11:10	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	22:25
KAC	522	Al Najaf	11:20	BBC	043	Dhaka	22:30
KAC	742	Dammam	11:45	JZR	241	Mumbai	22:55
KAC	774	Riyadh	12:45	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00
THY	766	Istanbul	12:50	MSR	2614	Cairo	23:30
FEG	1933	Sohag	12:55	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	PIA	205	Lahore	23:40
				THY	764	Istanbul	23:45
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:00				
KAC	413	Bangkok	12:20				
PAL	669	Manila	13:10				
JZR	176	Dubai	13:10				
JZR	786	Riyadh	13:10				
THY	767	Istanbul	13:45				
FEG	932	Alexandria	13:55				
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00				
AXB	394	Kozhikode	14:10				
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:00				
QTR	1079	Doha	15:15				
KAC	775	Riyadh	15:40				
KAC	563	Amman	15:40				
SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45				
KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55				
KAC	619	Doha	16:00				
OMA	646	Muscat	16:10				
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15				
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20				
KAC	615	Bahrain	16:30				
SAW	710	Latakia	16:50				
FDK	802	Damascus	16:55				
RJA	641	Amman	16:55				
KAC	675	Dubai	:00				
FDB	052	Dubai	17:10				
KAC	503	Beirut	17:15				
JZR	266	Beirut	17:15				
QTR	1073	Doha	17:25				
KAC	283	Dhaka	17:25				
JZR	552	Alexandria	17:25				
JZR	240	Amman	17:30				
KAC	361	Colombo	17:35				
UAE	858	Dubai	17:40				
KAC	357	Kochi	17:40				
NIA	362	Alexandria	17:50				
KAC	381	Delhi	17:50				
KAC	343	Chennai	18:00				
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15				
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20				
JZR	538	Cairo	18:30				
KAC	785	Jeddah	18:45				
QTR	1081	Doha	19:15				
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	19:20				
MSR	621	Cairo	19:30				
GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50				
ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00				
FDB	058	Dubai	20:30				
KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:35				
KAC	353	Bangalore	20:55				
DLH	634	Doha	21:00				
OMA	648	Muscat	21:05				
MEA	403	Beirut	21:15				
KAC	1543	Cairo	21:30				
KAC	301	Mumbai	21:40				
QTR	1089	Doha	21:45				
KAC	203	Lahore	21:45				
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50				
KAC	205	Islamabad	21:55				



CROSSWORD 1633



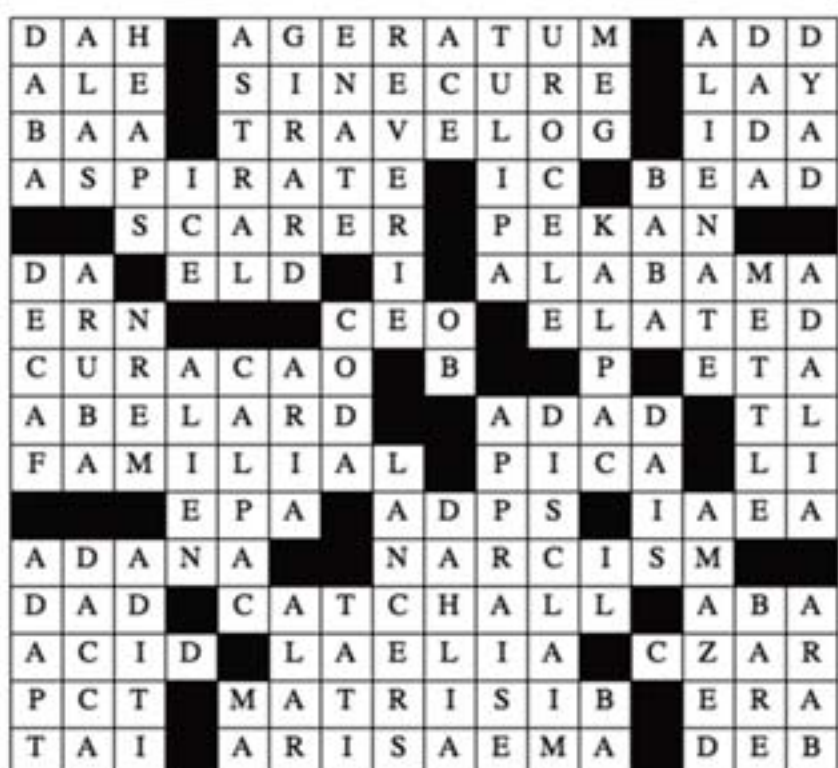
ACROSS

1. A federally chartered corporation that purchases mortgages.
5. A stiff protective garment worn by hockey players or a catcher in baseball to protect the shins.
12. A vehicle carrying many passengers.
15. Lacking excess flesh.
16. The capital of French Polynesia on the north-western coast of Tahiti.
17. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
18. Toward the mouth or oral region.
19. A public promotion of some product or service.
20. Congenital absence of fingers and/or toes.
22. The petals of a flower collectively forming an inner floral envelope or layer of the perianth.
24. A chest in which coins from the mint are held to await assay.
25. Swift timid long-eared mammal larger than a rabbit having a divided upper lip and long hind legs.
26. A domain in which something is dominant.
27. Make reference to.
29. A drug (trade names Atarax and Vistaril) used as a tranquilizer to treat anxiety and motion sickness.
32. A city and port in northern Jutland.
36. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
39. A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
40. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
41. Leafless East Indian vine.
45. Type genus of the Nepidae.
46. A state in New England.
47. Something serving to conceal plans.
49. The unit of frequency.
50. A deep pan with a handle.
53. Chinese tree cultivated especially in Philippines and India for its edible fruit.
55. A landlocked republic in central Africa.
57. Coating consisting of a thin layer of superior wood glued to a base of inferior wood.
58. Put a new heel on.
61. A unit of information equal to one million (1,048,576) bytes.
63. An uproarious party.
64. The eighth month of the civil year.
67. One of the two main branches of orthodox Islam.
71. (Greek mythology) Greek god of war.
74. Accumulate on the surface.
75. Denoting a quantity consisting of one more than eight and one less than ten.
76. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
78. A translucent mineral consisting of hydrated silica of variable color.
79. (British) Traditional jazz as revived in the 1950s.
80. African antelope with ridged curved horns.
81. 100 sene equal 1 tala.

DOWN

1. A small loosely aggregated mass of flocculent material suspended in or precipitated from a liquid.
2. Roman Emperor notorious for his monstrous vice and fantastic luxury (was said to have started a fire that destroyed much of Rome in 64) but the Empire remained prosperous during his rule (37-68).
3. A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
4. A small republic in the eastern Pyrenees between Spain and France.
5. Type genus of the Spalacidae.
6. Relating to the deepest parts of the ocean (below 6000 meters).
7. The sciences concerned with gathering and manipulating and storing and retrieving and classifying recorded information.
8. A less than average tide occurring at the first and third quarters of the moon.
9. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
10. Inability to coordinate voluntary muscle movements.
11. The last (12th) month of the year.
12. Common Indian weaverbird.
13. (Norse mythology) One of the Aesir known for his beauty and skill with bow and skis.
14. An infection of the sebaceous gland of the eyelid.
21. An inhabitant of ancient Thebes.
23. The process of leaching.
28. Considerate and solicitous care.
30. Infections of the skin or nails caused by fungi and appearing as itching circular patches.
31. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
33. The wood of an African obeche tree.
34. Strong snuff made from dark coarse tobacco.
35. United States physicist who invented the bubble chamber to study subatomic particles (born in 1926).
37. Sacred writings of Islam revealed by God to the prophet Mohammed during his life at Mecca and Medina.
38. Make amendments to.
42. Strike with disgust or revulsion.
43. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
44. Being five more than one hundred forty.
48. Bound or secured closely.
51. Having wrinkles.
52. An open vessel with a handle and a spout for pouring.
54. An ancient town on Crete where Bronze Age culture flourished from about 2000 BC to 1400 BC.
56. Naked freshwater or marine or parasitic protozoa that form temporary pseudopods for feeding and locomotion.
59. 100 aurar equal 1 krona.
60. Doglike nocturnal mammal of Africa and southern Asia that feeds chiefly on carrion.
62. A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.
65. Fastener consisting of a metal ring for lining a small hole to permit the attachment of cords or lines.
66. A small cake leavened with yeast.
68. A specific instance of feeling hopeful.
69. A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
70. (usually followed by 'to') Having the necessary means or skill or know-how or authority to do something.
72. The law enforcement agency in the Justice Department.
73. A rapid escape (as by criminals).
77. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may find yourself awake at an early hour this morning. You could be helping someone move or driving someone to the airport. Whatever the case, you are available to help. Sympathy and understanding are emotional qualities that take on a greater importance now. Even though it is the top of the morning when you help this person, you are reflective and may be a mirror for this person's focus. You are equality-minded and easy to talk with—a good mediator as well. As a sociable and slightly frivolous orientation sets in this afternoon, you may find yourself planning a neighborhood get-together. There is time to relax—perhaps a massage or some leisure time in a pool. You are driven to excel in any form of physical or creative expression today.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are good at relations regarding politics, diplomacy and sales—not to mention considerate and helpful. This is a good day for you to deal in sales or presentations. You have an inner urge to be all things to all people and would rather bend than argue. You will be helping a friend today because you are willing to listen and not criticize. You are a natural diplomat, always concerned with the comfort and welfare of others. You stay in the background, but are able to manipulate and bring out cooperation in others every time. A real estate profession is something you might seriously consider. This is a day you should enjoy—relax. With your strong drive to do and accomplish, every bit of relaxation you get will be beneficial.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Progressive people and idealistic groups or concepts play a more important role in your life now—a new cycle begins. There is a concern for something bigger than any one person—perhaps an interest in civic affairs or even some new recycling technique. You are very communicative, flexible, mental and other-oriented today. You will find many, particularly young people, listen to your ideas and advice. Your laser-like mind makes conversations fast-paced and illuminating. A ready wit and a great sense of humor create a rewarding day. You may join a self-help group or find yourself talking about a self-help book to a close friend this evening. Whatever the case, you have insight into your own emotions and drive. You can be a good mentor.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Easy does it—this is one of those busy days. If you need to concentrate on a particular chore, it would be a good idea to suggest that others either help you or leave you alone to do your work. This way, you will not get as many interruptions—and who knows—someone might help you with your special chore or project. A family gathering may be planned for later this day, perhaps a picnic. Tonight could complete your little gathering with a nearby outdoor concert. A music festival or some other type of fun activity with lots of children and unique exhibits just gives everyone the perfect opportunity to get to know each other better. There are opportunities to teach young people a sense of sharing and support of each other.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Having and appreciating things of beauty and value plays a big role in your life at this time. Making the most of what you have, striving for security and stability; that's the impulse that stirs in you now. You find yourself talking about investing and may even have a personal plan. Provided you do not spend the entire budget on the fancy things that catch your eye, a shopping expedition can be a financially favorable one for you now. Circumstances may expand your appreciation and enjoyment of your life situation. Your system of values may deepen, providing you with a better sense of discrimination and good taste. There is a desire to purchase items and you might forget when to stop adding to your basket. You are inspired to write poetry.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are not bound by relationships and are thus not much of a domestic. You find it easy to work with other people and tend to pour a lot of energy into those around you. Foreign affairs may catch your attention at this time. Perhaps an investment you are thinking about is beginning to show quite an upswing in potential. You will find support from others when you turn your attention to health, food, nutrition and areas where service or attention to detail is in high focus. You may enjoy working with a group of people that have similar thinking or politics. With your powerful spirit, you enjoy your strong emotions and have an active social life. There are opportunities to show off your charming side this evening at an upscale social affair.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You are very much the creature of habit. The encircling network of friends and relationships are crucial to your success or lack thereof from time to time. You are nourished in great measure by the atmosphere and conditions you are able to set up. You may, however, tend to fluctuate between uninspired routine and crazy binges. For the next few days you may want to spend some time in organizing your thoughts and goals-making lists. Do not forget to walk around your home and make any necessary notes about updates. This is a good time to change the air filters, set out a soaker hose, clean vents, etc. Enjoy a bit of time away from work and responsibilities, perhaps by short trips to fun places this weekend. Consider creating a butterfly garden.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

It is easy for you to express yourself to others—you always manage to make a good appearance. You have an easy manner and find it easy to communicate with just about anyone. You like beautiful surroundings, everything that is calm, tasteful and harmonious. You may be planning a water garden for those hot summer days—maybe a few goldfish. This afternoon you will find yourself involved in several fun conversations with those you love. You are very giving, conciliatory and even flattering in relationships, able to adjust to any situation. Budget restraints are definitely needed so that some item you want in the future will become more attainable. Suggestions by young members in the family will give you new ideas.



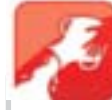
Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You would like your conversations and thinking to stay somewhere near the surface today. This is a day of rest, and deep problem-solving conversations are certainly not on your to-do list. You can create new subjects easily with all the interests you have. You will enjoy your friends today—you love to interact with them. There may be an occasion to teach someone how to write music or to put one of your poems to music. You appreciate change, variety and making local connections—there may be an open house or opening day for some new business. You have many avenues to explore this weekend and many positive things to accomplish. You are more attractive than usual. Intimacy with a person you love will go beyond the usual.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Circumstances may press you and tend to bring out the rebel in you. A little bicycle ride or just a change of scenery for a short while will help to bring your emotions back in balance. Self-control is the accepted and admired behavior, and you are able to respond in positive ways. Circumstances work together to bring out your ideals—making it easier to make your dreams real. You are very original when it comes to home and surroundings—the environment you build around you. This could also manifest in new ideas for unusual ways of supporting yourself in the future. Get outside and be with friends this afternoon—enjoy a breath of fresh air! This evening, literature is on your mind. That book you want to write or read may hold your attention.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

There are changes around your household that may not be the most pleasant for you. Change would be easier if you could have more control. However, if you are paying for these changes, you have the power! This doesn't mean you could be bossy, but it does mean you could become more influential with the price, color, style, etc. If you do not care about any of these, the changes will probably stay. Progressive people and idealistic groups or concepts play an important role in your life. This may be a special day when you have been looking forward to a trip to a museum, art show or the opening night of a play where a family member is performing. You enjoy a bit of culture from time to time and this experience is special.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Everything points to your taking the lead in today's activities. You could feel great support from those around you. You feel healthy and natural. You will find that today is packed full of communication with friends, especially those you may not have seen in some time. Perhaps it is time for a reunion. Practical and effective ideas are the ones that make the most sense—putting them to good use is a focus for you. Material things are foremost on your mind in many respects; an emphasis on the real rather than the ideal. This is the time you may decide to install a porch instead of a deck. Now when company comes, there will be a place to put them. If it is a porch with wide windows, you will enjoy sitting out there for meditations.

WORD SEARCH

Electronics

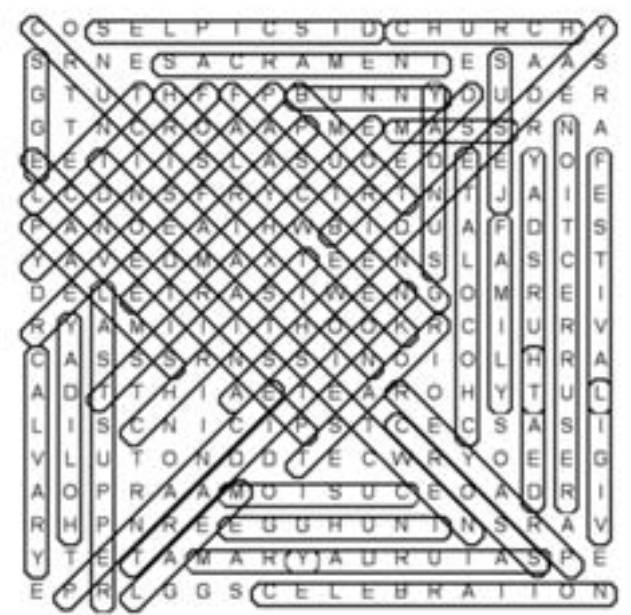
Find and circle all of the Electronics related terms that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of a common electronic component.



- |           |             |            |             |
|-----------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| AMPERE    | CURRENT     | INDUCTANCE | SOLDER      |
| ANALOG    | DIGITAL     | INSULATORS | SWITCHES    |
| ANODE     | DIODE       | LEAD       | THYRISTOR   |
| CAPACITOR | ELECTRICITY | NEGATIVE   | TINNING     |
| CATHODE   | ELECTRODE   | OHMS       | TRANSFORMER |
| CELLS     | ELECTRON    | POSITIVE   | TRANSISTOR  |
| CHIP      | FARADS      | POWER      | VACUUM TUBE |
| CIRCUIT   | FLUX        | RESISTANCE | VOLTAGE     |
| CONDUCTOR | GATE        | RESISTOR   | WATT        |
| CONTACTS  | IMPEDANCE   | SILICON    | WIRE        |

Yesterday's Solution

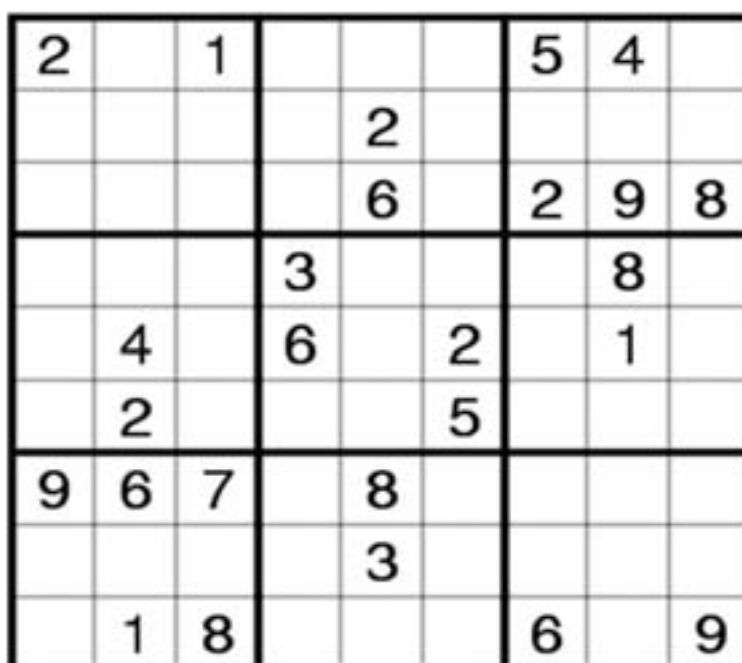
Easter



- |               |           |               |              |
|---------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|
| ASH WEDNESDAY | DEATH     | JESUS         | PENITENCE    |
| BREAD         | DISCIPLES | LAST SUPPER   | PRAYER       |
| BUNNY         | EGG HUNT  | LENT          | RESURRECTION |
| CALVARY       | EGGS      | MARY          | ROAST        |
| CELEBRATION   | EUCHARIST | MASS          | SACRAMENT    |
| CHOCOLATE     | FAMILY    | MEAL          | SATURDAY     |
| CHRIST        | FASTING   | NEW TESTAMENT | SUNDAY       |
| CHURCH        | FESTIVAL  | PALMS         | THURSDAY     |
| CROSS         | FRIDAY    | PARADE        | TOMB         |
| CRUCIFIXION   | HOLIDAY   | PASSOVER      | TRADITION    |
| CUSTOM        | HOLY WEEK | PENANCE       | VIGIL        |

The hidden message is: ONE EASTER TRADITION IS TO DECORATE EGGS

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution









GOSSIP

# Crow reaches out to Olivia Newton-John

The 'First Cut Is the Deepest' hitmaker - who underwent a lumpectomy and radiotherapy in 2006 after she found out she had non-invasive breast cancer - has reached out to the 'Grease!' star after she announced she has metastatic breast cancer that's spread to her sacrum - 25 years after she first fought the disease - and told her to stay strong spiritually and mentally in order to get through the ordeal.

Speaking to 'Entertainment Tonight', she said: "I've only met her maybe once, and I love her. I have a lot of respect for her. I was a huge fan, and still am a fan. So I'm wishing her the best. Olivia, I didn't know this but I know how strong you are and how spiritual you are and I know you're on top of your health. I'm wishing you the best." The 55-year-old singer - who found out she had a benign brain tumour in 2011 that doc-

tors are monitoring - wants to encourage people to look after their health. She explained: "I'm constantly telling people, particularly women because I have a very big female fan base, 'Make sure and know your family history and make sure and be diligent about getting your mammograms. Until we have a cure, early detection is the best we have.'"



## Apatow thinks Leslie Mann is the 'greatest thing'

The 49-year-old film producer couldn't help but gush about his wife for all to see on Instagram yesterday as they celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary. Alongside a black-and-white photograph of them on their wedding day, Judd wrote: "Today is the 20th anniversary of my marriage to the brilliant, hilarious, amazing Leslie Mann. The greatest thing that has ever happened to me. (sic)" The 'Trainwreck' star met the 45-year-old actress, who have two daughters Maude, 19, and Iris, 14, together, in 1995 and got married two years later in 1997. But Judd recently said he thought Leslie had "bad taste" because she married him. He said:

"She has no sense of what attractive is based on marrying me. She doesn't get it. There will be an ugly guy and she's like, 'He's cute,' and there it is." And the couple are so comfortable with one another that Judd doesn't mind rummaging through Leslie's beauty box and smothering his face with her products. The blonde beauty said previously: "He knows my whole routine by now. Though once, he began using my purple-tinted shampoo not knowing it's meant for blondes, and it turned his hair this weird color. He didn't understand what was happening."

## Kendra Wilkinson doesn't want anymore children

The 'Kendra On Top' star already has son Hank Jr, seven, and daughter Aljah, three, with her husband Hank Baskett, whom she married in 2009, and is adamant the pair won't be intentionally adding to their brood any time soon. Asked if she'll have more kids, the blonde beauty said: "Absolutely not. The next baby I will be having is a shot of patron and that will be tonight celebrating opening night of [her new show] 'Sex Tips'." The 31-year-old babe is currently playing the lead in the production 'Sex Tips for Straight Women From a Gay Man', which is based on the novel of the same name, in Las Vegas and has admitted she's missing her children so much. Speaking to E! News, she explained: "Being away from the kids is so hard. It's so hard. The longest I've been away was three weeks. It's already been a month. It's been really, really hard but the kids know that I'm here for them. I'm doing this for the family and I'm having a good time. Summer break is happening now so they're going to come out and stay with me for a while."



## Zac Efron proud he can 'blow spit bubbles'

The 'Baywatch' actor thinks he has a "pretty unique talent" that he is only too happy to show off when he goes to parties. He said: "I can blow spit bubbles with my tongue. That's a pretty unique talent. My mom taught me. It's weird, but it's a cool trick if you're at a party." The 29-year-old actor likes staying in hotels because he can "steal" things, and is particularly fond of the complementary footwear he finds in his suites. He said: "What have I not stolen from a hotel? The slippers are always fun to wear at the airport the next day. I was in Dubai recently and packed my shoes by accident, so what else was I going to wear? I wore those slippers all the way through customs, all the way back to the US, and started doing press in them." Zac has won a number of awards in his career, and while he gives most of them to his parents, he keeps the MTV Movie Awards in his own house because he thinks they look "cool" and joked they are honors for particularly "important" feats. He said: "The awards are in a very safe place. I give them to my parents my mom has some, my dad has some. I keep the surfboards in the house, because they kinda look cool. The surfboards are always the best because they're for things like Best Kiss or Shirtless Singing. The really important things." The 'High School Musical' star has a number of nicknames, and they have stuck with him just because his friends find it funny that their monikers annoy him.



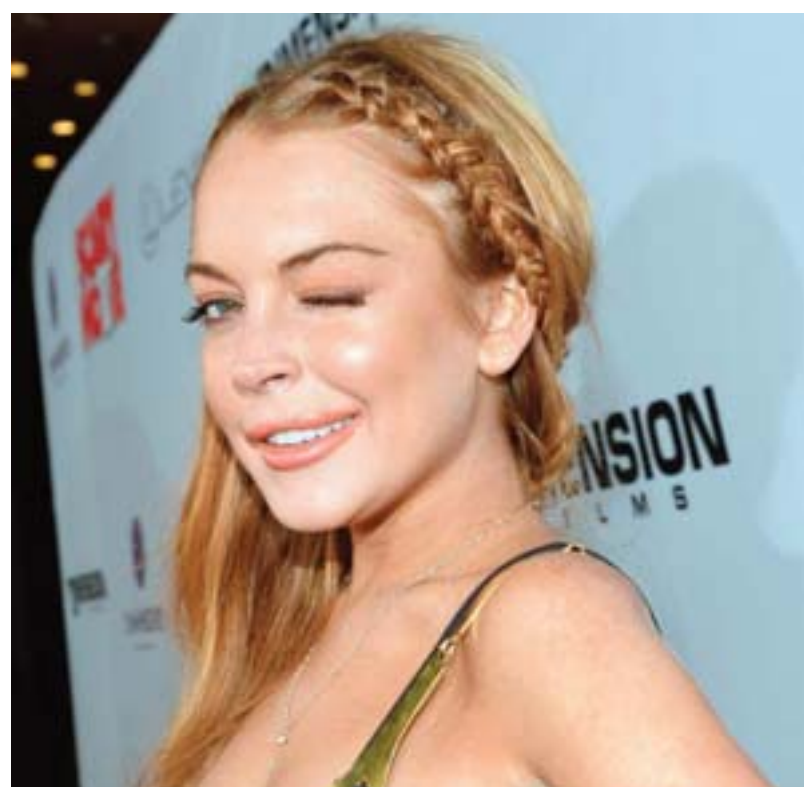
## LOHAN QUESTIONED BY POLICE OVER EX-FIANCÉ'S BELONGINGS

The 30-year-old actress parted ways with Egor Tarabasov last year amid allegations that the businessman was violent toward her and he recently claimed that she still had goods belonging to him worth £24,000. Lindsay reportedly attended three interviews at Charing Cross police station and has now returned a Rolex, jewels and clothes to her ex, according to the Daily Mail. A source told the newspaper: "Egor had been chasing Lindsay for months for the return of his personal belongings, but to no avail." In the end he felt he had no choice but to go to police and formally accuse her of theft. Lindsay has been in and out of the country, so police initially struggled to pin her down to be interviewed. "They finally got through to her after sending an email to her publicist, threatening Lindsay with arrest." It is fair to say there is no love lost between the two. Westminster police told the publication that Lindsay was "questioned under caution" and that they would not be taking further action. Lindsay previously accused Egor of assaulting her and said the relationship reminded her of her parents, Dina and Michael Lohan, when they were married. She said: "I notice and I look back and think I saw my mom going through this and I get it. I stayed because it was normal for me. Of course, as a child, you see, in psychiatry it's a study, those moments become almost like a safe chaos and you just think it's normal, but it's not normal, and I remember saying to myself that moment when he ran out of my house, 'Thank God.' I was like, 'Oh my God, I'm not going to put myself through what my mother went through, no. This ends now.' My father was never physically abusive to my mother in front of me, I never saw that. Before I was born, yes. I've seen those photos."



## Jerry Seinfeld finds the Kardashians offensive

The 63-year-old comedian admitted he lost his temper when he found his 16-year-old daughter Sascha watching their TV show 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians', because he hates reality TV so much. He told Mr Porter magazine: "The one time I really, really got upset was when my daughter was watching the Kardashians on her phone in her bed and I could not take that scene. For someone who for their whole life, television was the Olympics of being a comedian. It was only for the very best. You had to have everything. You had to go through all the different hierarchies of your career to get to television. I'm offended by reality television on many levels and that show of course is the premier example of reality television. These people are not doing anything interesting. I lost my temper with that one." Jerry also revealed that his daughter has watched 'Seinfeld' but he's not sure if she liked it. He said: "My daughter watched it and I'd watch her watching it, but I don't know what she thought of it. And I don't know if my sons have watched it. I'm really trying to give them just a little bit of the privacy that I had as a child. My parents had no idea what I was up to, ever. I think that's good. They should have their own life that I don't know anything about." The comedian sometimes tries out jokes on Sascha and her brothers, Shepherd and Julian, but they don't always appreciate them. He said: "They can be a tough audience. I had this joke the other day that I tried on them that I thought was really funny which was: 'Here's a statement never heard in the history of New York City: 'Hey why don't we get a new awning?'' They just looked at me and they went, 'Dad, that's not funny at all! They were wrong. I tried it at a nightclub and it got a huge laugh.'"



## Jon Hamm considering a return to teaching

The 'Mad Men' actor ran a drama class at the Edward R. Murrow High School in Brooklyn, New York, before finding fame in Hollywood and he admitted the death of his parents when he was young has made him appreciate the importance of "alternative parents" such as teachers. In an upcoming episode of 'Sunday Today with Willie Geist', he explains: "[Teaching] was always my fallback position if it all went sideways. Being a parent and being a teacher are parallel lines. Growing up without parents for a certain portion of my life and having certain 'alternative parents' for a larger portion of my life, I see that that's an important thing to provide for a kid. It can be the different between, literally, life and death - like a kid who lives a successful life and a kid who punks out in the gutter." The 46-year-old actor lost his mother to colon cancer when he was 10 and his father died just a few months before the star's 21st birthday. Jon has previously spoken about the loss of his parents and how he was "quasi-adopted by [his] friends' families." He said: "[My dad] was twice widowed. He was divorced from my mom when she died, but even so, there's a deep sense of tragedy in that. I never had the opportunity to, as an adult, sit down and talk to him about that. It's a real loss. Even today I get e-mails or cards from these women who, for lack of a better word, were my mom. We talk about what it means to be a family. Mostly it's about showing up. And being aware enough to check in and say, 'How are you doing?' I've been incredibly lucky to have these people in my life."





GOSSIP



## Ariel Winter's sister has slammed their mother

The 18-year-old 'Modern Family' actress became emancipated from her mother Chrystal Workman in 2015 and her sister Shanelle Gray - who took on the role of the star's guardian - says Chrystal's recent criticism of Ariel's clothing choices are simply a grab for attention. She told the New York Post's Page Six: "It's just the expectation. My mother has always been dreaming of the spotlight, which is why she had two daughters ... I think this is her way of keeping her name in the headlines. Ariel has no interest in our birth mother." Shanelle, 38, who has two young daughters, went on to praise her sister as a great role model. She said: "Ariel is wonderful and doing amazing. I'm not concerned at all. She's one of the smartest people I know. She is a classy, smart, beautiful woman inside and out and is a great, positive role model for women everywhere - especially to my daughters." Ariel also appeared to slam her mother, writing on Twitter:

"What's sad is that you lie consistently. Also, why is it that you only choose to talk to me through the press? I'm doing just fine. Toxic. (sic)" Shanelle and Ariel's comments come after Chrystal called for Ariel to "grow up" and stop wearing skimpy clothes. She said recently: "She needs to grow up. I would tell her to dress properly, be the beautiful person she is. I feel sad that she feels the need to expose herself when it's not necessary. Ariel is smart, beautiful, and talented. She is a legitimate actress. She does not need to do this. She is beautiful with her clothes on."

## Jared Leto's house is haunted

The 'Suicide Squad' actor lives in a converted Air Force base in the Hollywood Hills and believes the estate is inhabited by ghosts. He told the latest issue of ES magazine: "God knows what they did here, but it talks. We've already had ghost sightings reported by my housekeeper. A handyman quit the project as he had an encounter. But I feel quite at home up here. It's like a refuge. You're at the top of this mountain. There's this breeze coming through. It's hard to leave." And Jared, 45, also revealed he believes in Singularity, the theory that technological advances will lead to machines that are smarter than human beings and that man and technology will eventually merge. He said: "It's far away but

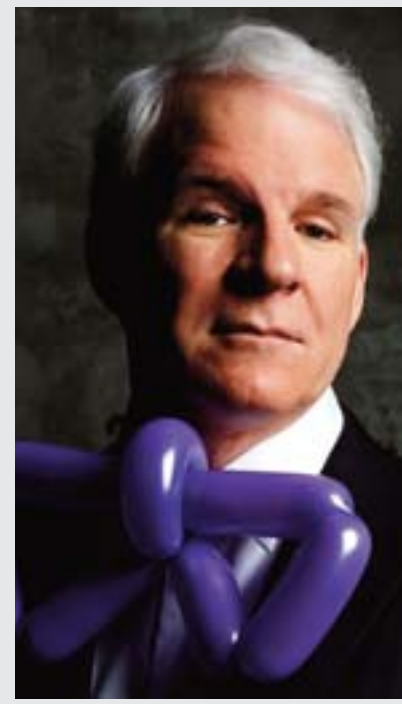
I don't think it's science fiction. I think it's reality. Haven't you had that thing, where you dream something and it sort of ... happens? It's inevitable that will happen at some point. You'd have to be a monkey not to see that. The difference between ourselves and our technology will be hard to decipher and determine. "I mean, this is a long time in the future, but we are going to become an interplanetary species. Culture and society will advance. And we will become indistinguishable from the technology that gets us there. If you refuse, you are going to be left behind in the Dark Ages. You won't even be able to talk to machines that are smarter than human beings and that man and technology will eventually merge. He said: "It's far away but



## Steve Martin pays tribute to 'genius' Glenne Headly

The 62-year-old actress passed away this week and her 'Dirty Rotten Scoundrels' co-star Steve took to Twitter to remember his friend. He wrote: "Our household mourns the sudden loss of beloved friend, actress, and comic genius, Glenne Headly." Glenne was working on the Hulu series 'Future Man' before her death and her co-star Josh Hutcherson posted a lengthy tribute on Instagram. He wrote: "I only knew the talented, empathetic, loving, beautiful Glenne Headly for a short time. She was powerful and strong and hilarious. Her eyes brought to life so many amazing characters over the years and her love brought to life a beautiful family. I'm gonna miss her presence, her smile, and the way she made me feel like her son before, between, and after they called action and cut. Grab onto those who make you feel loved. My heart is broken today and I can only imagine what those closest to her are going through. My broken heart goes out to all of you as well. I love my family and friends so much. I hope you all feel it. With lead hearts we are going to celebrate the irreplaceable Glenne Headly. LOVE (sic)." And Seth Rogen tweeted: "Devastated to hear about Glenne Headly's passing. She was an amazing person. Incredibly talented.

Incredibly kind. I will miss her." The 'Dirty Rotten Scoundrels' star's representative confirmed her death in statement, saying: "It is with deep sorrow that we confirm the passing of Glenne Headly. We ask that her family's privacy be respected in this difficult time."



## Bullock granted another restraining order against stalker

The 'Blind Side' actress locked herself in her bedroom cupboard after discovering Joshua Corbett in her house in the early hours of one morning in June 2014, and last month, he was ordered to stay away from the 52-year-old star for the next 10 years, and continue with his in-patient treatment at a mental health facility. However, this week, Sandra's lawyers successfully argued for another restraining order against Corbett after it was revealed that when he was arrested, police found a notebook detailing his plans to sexually assault the star, TMZ reports. According to the website, police also found 24 firearms at his home, including "machine guns, assault rifles and explosive devices". According to LAPD, Corbett suffers from bipolar schizophrenia. In early hearings in the case, the panicked call to the emergency services which Sandra made after discovering an intruder in her home was played in court. Breathing heavily, Sandra - who has children Louis, seven, and Laila, five - told the dispatcher: "I'm in my closet. I have a safe door. I'm locked in the closet right now." The 'Gravity' actress went on to give a description of the man and explained she had got out of bed after hearing a noise. She added: "I thought it was a wind blowing. Then I saw the person." Sandra tried to navigate police through security but was unable to open a gate at her driveway with her cellphone. She said: "Now my phone is not working so maybe they know how to override my system." When officers got in to the property, the 'Speed' star was heard tearfully thanking the dispatcher. Other evidence submitted included testimony from Los Angeles Police Officer Jose Bermudez, who described how Corbett was clutching a notebook containing a two-page letter to the actress and magazine photos of her when he was arrested. Corbett said: "I'm sorry. I love you Sandy."

## George and Amal are 'so happy and contented'

The 'Monuments Men' star and the human rights lawyer welcomed Alexander and Ella into the world earlier this week and Amal's mother Baria

ful, they were so happy, so contented. "You just look at them and you feel like they've been a mother and father for their whole lives." And Baria admits it was a "beautiful feeling" seeing the "joy" on Amal and George's faces when the babies arrived. She added to People magazine "Seeing these two angels, these stunningly beautiful babies ... cuddled together, and seeing the joy on Amal and George's faces, it's one of those deeply felt beautiful feelings you can't express in words." [It brought us] almost unrealistic pure joy [and left me feeling like] the most blessed human being on earth." It comes after George's father Nick revealed the twins have the same nose as the Hollywood actor. He said: "George, well, his eyes were glazed so I'm not sure that he was sober. We'll figure that out! Nina swears they have George's nose. I don't know what that means ... "They have enough on their plate to have some visiting grandparents coming in to London. So we'll leave that one entirely up to them ... [Amal] was telling us last week that she is as big as a house. Of course, for her, that's a very small house. But she's great ... Just as I, George married up."



Alamuddin says the couple are settling into parenthood well and look like they've been parents "for their whole lives". She said: "Oh my god, Amal and George were so beautiful,

## Rachel Weisz was expelled at school



The 'Bourne Legacy' star has confessed she was asked to leave her school as she "had an authority problem and was very disruptive". Speaking on The Graham Norton Show, she said: "I was very badly behaved and was expelled from school, although my mother likes to say, 'They asked you to leave,' which is an important distinction. "I didn't do just one bad thing it was multiple things. I had an authority problem and was very disruptive." Meanwhile, the 47-year-old actress - who is married to Daniel Craig - previously revealed she wanted to be a detective when she was younger. She said: "I wanted to be a detective [when I was young]. I had a detective club at school - we had secret

codes and secret handshakes and we were forever looking through the school gates and seeing 'crimes' that we believed were happening and that we were going to solve. One day we found a key lying on the ground and we thought it belonged to a stolen car, which was most exciting." Asked if she ever tried to pursue her dream career, she added: "No, but I did go to Cambridge University, which is where people are normally recruited to be spies. Nobody tried to recruit me though, and I was very upset about it." And Rachel - who has 11-year-old son Henry with her ex-fiance Darren Aronofsky - says she feels younger now than she did when she was a child.



## GOMEZ DIDN'T WANT TO HIDE RELATIONSHIP

The 24-year-old singer was first linked to the 'Starboy' singer in January and admitted she was happy to go public with their romance because she is so happy with him. Speaking on the radio show, 'On Air With Ryan Seacrest', she said: "Because I've been doing this for so long, I don't feel like there's anything that I would want to ... not necessarily hide, but I'm genuinely myself. I think it's really hard when I would want to spend so much time hiding things. It's too much pressure, and I think everyone gets over everything eventually. "I just want to be happy. If that's me just being myself, then I don't really care." Speaking about the difference between her feelings now and when she wrote the break-up song 'Bad Liar', she added: "I was just in a very much in a different place, and I

think it was more of just telling a story. [Now my music is] very moody. It's just comfortable for me. It feels good." Selena also spoke about the controversy surrounding her show '13 Reasons Why', which depicts teen suicide. Selena - who is an executive producer on the Netflix show - said: "The subject matter is a very complicated story to tell. It had this thriller, very dark, very weird kind of tone to it, and I think applying that and bringing it to a visual place is scary for people." Selena took time out from the spotlight last year and admitted herself to rehab to receive treatment for "anxiety, panic attacks and depression" and she revealed she is in no rush to release a new album as she is just getting used to fame again.





In this photograph taken on March 6, 2017, Afghan comedian Ibrahim Abed (R) and Ahmad Siar Matin perform humorous songs while filming a scene for the comedy television show Shabak-e-Khanda on the outskirts of Kabul.



Afghan comedians Ibrahim Abed (R), Gholam Nabi Roashan (C) and Ahmad Siar Matin (L) perform a mixed martial arts (MMA) scene while filming.



Afghan comedians Ibrahim Abed (C), Gholam Nabi Roashan (L) and Ahmad Siar Matin (R) perform humorous songs while filming a scene. — AFP photos

## Condoms, bribery, warlords: Afghans find truth in comedy

They are a thorn in the side of abusive Afghan warlords, corrupt policemen and double-dealing politicians, skewering them on television with laughter. Comedy can be a dangerous business in Afghanistan, but the stars of TV show "Shabak-e-Khanda"-or Laughter Network-are unabashed even in the face of threats of violence. Their skits calling out wrongdoing and incompetence with tongue-in-cheek nonchalance have garnered an avid following since the series first launched on Tolo Television.

A recent episode took a swipe at a senior minister who had a reputation for drifting off to sleep in official meetings. "Wazir sahib, when should I wake you up to defend the country?" the anchor crooned to a broken harmonium, reflecting public frustration over growing insecurity in Afghanistan. "You were sleeping when suicide bombers came to attack us," he joked. Another episode parodied a military commander who bet-and lost-a government humvee in a gambling spree.

And another lampooned a policeman who was dismissed for "bacha bazi", the entrenched practice of sexual slavery and abuse of boys. "Through comedy we show the reality of life in

Afghanistan," said the show's 27-year-old producer Rafi Tabee. "Comedy is funnier when there is truth to it. In a country full of tragedies, we make people laugh." The show is a rare uncensored voice that has built a reputation for poking the bear in the eye and speaking truth to power. And it appears to be getting more daring with each episode.

### Perils of comedy

A popular target is a formidable former warlord known for his drunken misdemeanors: portrayed on the show as wearing a bandolier belt filled not with bullets but alcohol bottles. Another audience favorite was a skit showing Afghanistan's president trying to coax another former warlord over the phone not to engage in celebratory shellfire after signing a government peace accord. "No celebratory fire is like making Kabuli pilaf without rice," reasons the stubborn warlord, flanked by a rocket launcher.

The line between satire and reality blurred to the point of vanishing when the show parodied a powerful MP whose electricity was cut off for not paying his utility bills. "If you

don't switch it back on, I will switch you off," the MP is shown threatening a power company official. In reality, the lawmaker got away with not paying, the way influential strongmen in Afghanistan usually do. But sometimes the humor cuts too close to the bone. In Afghanistan's hypermasculine society, being laughed at is the cultural equivalent of being emasculated, the ultimate humiliation that can easily devolve into violence. "Two armed men came to my house and said 'You make fun of our leaders? This should be the last time,'" said Siar Matin, one of the show's comedians.

Supporters of President Ashraf Ghani also warned another star of the show, Ibrahim Abed, against mocking him. He has gained popularity for near-perfect mimicry of the mercurial leader's sudden finger-jabbing outbursts. "Doing comedy is as dangerous as killing a cow in India," where the animals are worshipped, joked comedian Nabi Roashan.

### Power of mockery

But such is the power of outraged mockery that ordinary Afghans have started courting Shabake Khanda's crew to

expose wrongdoings and shame inept officials. "People come to us instead of going to MPs with their problems," said Siar. Humor is also a source of solace and escapism in a country where hope is fast receding, amid a worsening conflict, rising unemployment and political dysfunction.

"In Afghanistan they say laughing is a sin," said Roashan. "But people tell us 'you are doing the best job by making people laugh!' The program's rising popularity mirrors the evolution of the media in post-Taliban Afghanistan into a feisty watchdog despite funding pressures and the ever-growing threat of violence. Most episodes feature impromptu performances without proper scripts, including a recent segment that poked fun at Afghans too coy to directly ask for condoms from a chemist. "We laugh and perform. We perform and laugh," said Tabee, the producer. There is no dearth of powerful subjects worthy of ridicule. Massood Sanjer, the head of Tolo TV, explained: "People say 'don't do bad things or Shabak-e-Khanda will make a show on you.'" — AFP



Bill Cosby walks from the Montgomery County Courthouse during his sexual assault trial in Norristown. — AP

## Bill Cosby on the stand? Experts say it would be a huge risk

Entertainer Bill Cosby didn't answer when asked the question so many want to know, but his spokesman dangled the possibility. Cosby might testify at his sexual assault trial. Spokesman Andrew Wyatt told reporters on Friday that Cosby's team was still evaluating whether to have him take the witness stand.

Legal experts, however, say putting the 79-year-old on the stand would be an enormous risk as he fights charges he drugged and violated Andrea Constand at his suburban Philadelphia home in 2004. Cosby has said the encounter was consensual. Prosecutors would be able to grill the Cosby on the lurid details of his decade-old deposition testimony that jurors heard Friday, including admissions that he obtained quaaludes to give to women he wanted sex with.

Having Cosby testify also could spoil his lawyers' successful efforts to prevent jurors from hearing about the more than 60 other women who say he assaulted them since the 1960s. "He is potentially opening the door to a whole lot of cross-examination that they fought really hard to keep out," said Duquesne University law professor Wes Oliver.

Prosecutors rested their case Friday after five brisk days of testimony from 12 witnesses. They saved Cosby's damaging deposition testimony until practically the very end. The defense starts its case on Monday. Cosby didn't respond Friday when asked by The Associated Press if he would take the stand to defend himself against the charges that could put him in prison for the rest of his life. His lawyers also declined to disclose their strategy or say who will testify when they begin presenting their case.

### Rebuttal testimony

Prosecutors were limited to calling just two accusers to the stand: Constand and another woman who says Cosby assaulted her in similar fashion at a Los Angeles hotel bungalow in 1996. But if Cosby testifies, prosecutors could be permitted to call other accusers to rebut Cosby's testimony, said lawyer Joseph Amendola. His client, convicted child sex abuser Jerry Sandusky, had wanted to testify at his 2012 trial, but that would have allowed prosecutors to have his adopted son testify about alleged abuse during

rebuttal testimony. Testifying under oath in 2005, Cosby said he obtained several prescriptions for quaaludes in the 1970s and offered the now-banned sedatives to others, "the same as a person would say, 'Have a drink,'" according to the deposition read to the jury.

"When you got the quaaludes, was it in your mind that you were going to use these quaaludes for young women that you wanted to have sex with?" the comic and "The Cosby Show" star once known as America's Dad was asked. "Yes," he said. In the deposition, which became public nearly two years ago, Cosby said he gave Constand three half-tablets of the cold and allergy medicine Benadryl. Prosecutors have suggested he gave her something stronger - perhaps quaaludes, which were banned in the US in 1982.

Cosby gave the deposition as part of a lawsuit filed by Constand, the former director of women's basketball operations at his alma mater, Temple University. He later settled for an undisclosed sum. His testimony was sealed for years until portions were released by a judge in 2015 at the request of the AP. The release of the sensational testimony spurred Pennsylvania prosecutors to reopen their investigation and arrest Cosby a decade after the district attorney who originally investigated Constand's complaint decided the case was too weak to bring charges.

About five dozen women have come forward to say Cosby sexually violated them, but the statute of limitations for prosecution had run out in nearly every case. Constand is the only woman whose allegations have resulted in criminal charges. If Cosby testifies and prosecutors are then allowed to ask about those other women, said Oliver, the Duquesne University law professor, it would drastically tilt what, in the eyes of the jury, amounts to a "he said, she said" case. "The more she's there are, the worse it is for the defendant," he said. "It would be very bad for him for the jury to even begin to think about the other women." Cosby's wife, Camille, has yet to be seen in court. Wyatt said the TV star told her stay away so that she wouldn't have to endure the "media circus." — AP

## Polanski rape victim asks judge to close 1977 case as 'act of mercy'

An American woman raped by filmmaker Roman Polanski as a teenager four decades ago pleaded with a California judge on Friday to end the case so she could move on with her life. Samantha Geimer, who was 13 at the time of the assault in 1977, said she has been serving a 40-year sentence that has kept a cloud over her and her family.

"I would implore you to consider taking action which would finally bring this matter to a close as an act of mercy for myself and my family," the 54-year-old told Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Scott Gordon, reading from a statement. "I do not want to have to explain to my granddaughter why she can't go outside or answer the phone, or why there are cameras outside the home and eventually what happened to her nana in 1977," she said.

Geimer's testimony marked the first time she has appeared in court in the drawn-out case involving the 83-year-old Oscar-winning filmmaker, who fled to his native France in 1978 and has been engaged in a legal battle to avoid further jail time if he returns to the United States. Geimer, who now lives in

also unseal documents that Polanski claims prove he had struck a deal with the initial judge in the case. The Los Angeles judge commended Geimer for speaking out, telling her: "Your words mean a lot to this court."

### Treated as 'lying gold diggers'

Geimer, who has three sons, has said in the past that she has forgiven Polanski. Following the hearing, Geimer told reporters she empathized with the filmmaker, who was now facing the same type of abuse that she endured after the assault. "When this happened, my mother and I were (treated) as lying gold diggers who were attacking poor unfortunate Roman. It was a much different story," she said. "Now everyone calls him a pedophile and says terrible things about him that aren't true."

The director of "Rosemary's Baby" and "Chinatown" was accused of drugging the 13-year-old Geimer before raping her at the house of film star Jack Nicholson in Los Angeles. Polanski admitted statutory rape after the more serious charges that he drugged, raped and sodomized the teen were dropped, and spent 42 days in custody to undergo psychiatric evaluation before being released. His attorney Harland Braun also filed a motion to dismiss the case on Friday saying his client had served time for his crime.

The prosecutor objected to the motion. The director claims that he was promised that the six weeks he spent in custody would be the only time he would serve. But in 1978, convinced the judge was going to scrap his plea deal and send him to prison for up to 50 years, he fled to France. Polanski-who is married to French actress Emmanuelle Seigner, with whom he has two children-has since refused to return to the United States without assurances that he would not serve additional time in prison.

For decades, he has been engaged in a cat and mouse game with US authorities as they unsuccessfully sought to have him extradited from various countries. He was arrested in Switzerland in 2009 and placed under house arrest for nearly a year while fighting extradition. Polanski reportedly wants to return to the United States to visit the grave of his late wife Sharon Tate, who was murdered in 1969 by members of the Charles Manson family when she was eight months pregnant. — AFP



This combination photo shows director Roman Polanski at the photo call for the film, "Based On A True Story," at the 70th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, on May 27, 2017, left, and Polanski at a Santa Monica, California, courthouse on Aug. 8, 1977.

Hawaii and was accompanied to Friday's hearing by her husband of nearly 30 years, told the judge he could explore various avenues to settle the matter, including dismissing it, sentencing Polanski to time served or recalling an international arrest warrant against the director. She said Gordon could



Samantha Geimer, right, waves as she arrives at Los Angeles Superior Court for a motion hearing in Los Angeles Friday, June 9, 2017. — AP photos



This file photo taken on February 12, 2012 shows Glen Campbell performing at the Staples Center during the 54th Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. — AFP

## Voice strong as mind fades, country great says 'Adios'

His mind succumbing to Alzheimer's disease, country legend Glen Campbell can still summon strength through his voice and he has seized on it to bid farewell to the world. A fixture on country music charts since the 1960s, the 81-year-old on Friday released what with near certainty will be his final album, aptly entitled "Adios."

With Campbell's memory fading, he turns to music to rekindle a life's worth of souvenirs on songs such as "Arkansas Farmboy," which recalls his hardscrabble youth as one of 12 children of a sharecropper in the southern state. Yet Campbell, his voice clutching onto its sturdiness, is neither melodramatic nor melancholy on "Adios," instead throwing himself a bittersweet farewell party.

Campbell, who achieved crossover success on the US and British pop charts with hits such as "Rhinestone Cowboy" and "Wichita Lineman," recorded his latest album as a sort of last testament just as his Alzheimer's was becoming more severe. He went into the studio in Nashville after in 2012 completing a difficult final tour, which was documented by the movie "Glen Campbell: I'll Be Me."

The film, which generated the Grammy-winning song "I'm Not Gonna Miss You," showed the star still instinctively fluent on the guitar yet struggling to remember lyrics and setlists and, by the time of his final show in Napa, California, barely able to lead his band. Campbell's family released the final album as the singer enters the late stages of Alzheimer's, the disease most commonly experienced by seniors who lose their memory and gradually their bodily functions. Kim Campbell, the singer's fourth wife who has become an advocate for Alzheimer's caregivers, in March told The Tennessean newspaper that the artist had lost most of his ability to speak and understand language.

### 'Adios' with lightness and joy

Like many of Campbell's hits, the 12 songs on "Adios" primarily covers straddle the boundaries of country, incorporating the gentle arrangements of soft rock. A cello brings a new romanticism to "Postcard From Paris" as Campbell, the twang in his voice forceful and bright, recalls the City of Lights in a song by his longtime collaborator Jimmy Webb that was most famously performed by John Denver. Willie Nelson appears on "Adios" to duet with Campbell on "Funny How Time Slips By," which country music's premier outlaw had written early in his career for Patsy Cline.

Together Nelson and Campbell infuse the song with the feel of pop standards as they are jogged by lesser memories that they struggled to remember, like pillow talk with a former lover. On the title track, also originally by Webb, Campbell again says goodbye not with sorrow but wistfulness as he recalls the sunset on the California coast.

Campbell, even aware of his own mortality, brings a light optimism to "Don't Think Twice, It's All Right," the off-interpreted Bob Dylan tune whose original was a minimalist guitar confession. Rollicking with a folksy band instead, Campbell picks up the tempo as he updates Dylan's words: "I'm headed down that long, lonesome road, babe / Where I'm bound, I can't tell. "But 'adios' is just too good a word now / So I'll just say, fare thee well." — AFP



# Japan's godfather of art? Maezawa rings in new era

With a single post on Instagram, Yusaku Maezawa announced not only his purchase of a \$110.5 million Basquiat masterpiece, and his place in auction history, but arguably signaled a new era for art in Japan. The price, a record for the artist, is reminiscent of 1980s Japan when corporate big-spenders splashed out on Impressionist art-along with foreign property and businesses-in an asset-buying spree. But billionaire Maezawa insists he is just an "ordinary collector"-despite his extraordinary bank balance. His purchases are born out of love and driven by gut instinct, rather than the instructions of any art advisor.

"I buy simply because they are beautiful. That's all. I enjoy classics together with the history and stories behind them, but possessing classics is not the purpose of my purchase," he told AFP. Rather than squirrel away his latest purchase-Jean-Michel Basquiat's 1982 "Untitled", a skull-like head in oil-stick, acrylic and spray paint on a giant canvas-he plans to loan it out to galleries worldwide. "I hope it brings as much joy to others as it does to me, and that this masterpiece by the 21-year-old Basquiat inspires our future generations," he said after the New York sale last month.

## He's the one

The 41-year-old's style is a step change from the corporate image of Japan's traditional art collectors who possess paintings as investment tools or to cement their social status. Paper tycoon Ryohei Saito, who bought Vincent Van Gogh's "Portrait of Dr Gachet" in 1990 for \$82.5 million-a then record-and Pierre-Auguste Renoir's "Bal du Moulin de la Galette" for \$78.1 million-famously triggered outrage when he said he would have the canvases put in his coffin and cremated with him when he died. He later recanted.

"Many Japanese rushed to buy paintings for investment during the bubble economy," said Shinji Hasada, an official at Shinwa Art Auction, of the 1980s and 1990s boom period Customs figures showed works of art valued at \$246 million were imported in 1985, but



This undated handout picture provided on May 27, 2017 by the Contemporary Art Foundation shows 41-year-old tech billionaire Yusaku Maezawa at an undisclosed location. — AFP

the figure shot up to \$3.4 billion in 1990. But many of the bubble-era masterpieces were sold off in a fire sale when the Japanese economy collapsed. Today Japan's art collection market has shrunk to around one-twentieth of its peak, Hasada explained.

And while collectors such as former chairman of publisher Benesse Soichiro Fukutake, who helped transform a remote island into an art haven, have bolstered interest, Hasada believes Maezawa could inject new life into the sector. "In all eras of history, patrons have come out to boost the art world, and in that sense he is the modern one we have been waiting for," Hasada said.

An aspiring rock star as a teen, he moved on to sell-

ing music merchandise via mail order and then online. In 1998 Maezawa founded Start Today, which operates the nation's largest online fashion mall, ZOZOTOWN. Today, he is 11th richest person in Japan with a fortune of \$3.5 billion, according to business magazine Forbes.

## Young artists' champion

His Instagram feed, where he proclaimed to the world that he was the one who purchased Basquiat's painting, is peppered with shots of his luxury living - including private jets, yachts and designer watches, but also his beloved art. Many traditional collectors are more secretive-"Untitled" had previously not been seen in public for decades-but Maezawa wants to engage a new generation with his passion-some 73,000 people follow his posts.

"I think (Instagram) is helping promote contemporary art in terms of information sharing," he explains, adding that he has also used social media to discover and buy pieces from new talent. He founded the Contemporary Art Foundation in Tokyo, a boon for the city's talent who feel they have finally found a champion.

Yukimasa Ida, a 27-year-old contemporary artist who has won the foundation's special jury award, regards Maezawa as a "figurehead" of up-and-coming Japanese artists aiming to challenge the global art-world. "He is an encouraging collector, of a kind that has been hardly seen in Japan ... in terms of fostering and influencing young artists," Ida told AFP. Maezawa said he wanted to introduce upcoming artists to a broader audience.

"I'm happy that good works by young artists with limited chances will see the light of day by my purchasing them," he added. Next he plans to open a museum in Chiba, east of Tokyo, which will display his collection, which includes works by Pablo Picasso, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, and Jeff Koons. It will also showcase his Basquiat pieces-last year he paid \$57.3 million for the artist's painting of a horned devil. But he

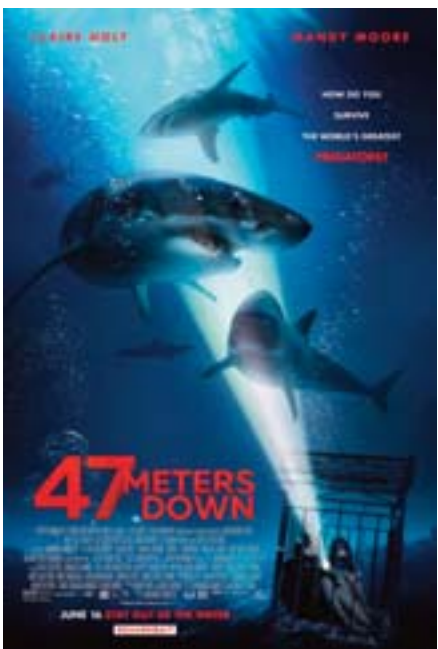


plans to tour "Untitled", which set a record for any US artist at auction, showcasing it at galleries around the world. He said: "I wish to loan this piece - which has been unseen by the public for more than 30 years - to institutions and exhibitions around the world." — AFP

Jean-Michel Basquiat's 1982 painting 'Untitled' depicts a face in the shape of a skull. — AP

## Hollywood seeks to scare new generation with shark thriller

More than 40 years ago, Americans were afraid to go into the water as "Jaws" scared the daylight out of a generation of ocean swimmers. Hollywood is hoping for a repeat this summer with the movie "47 Meters Down." There have been more than 50 shark movies since Steven Spielberg made cinematic history with "Jaws" in 1975. This year's shark movie, which will open in the US on June 16, takes place almost entirely under water.



Sisters Lisa and Kate-played by Mandy Moore and Claire Holt-are on vacation in the Gulf of California, and it becomes clear that they should avoid climbing aboard a flimsy boat belonging to Taylor (Matthew Modine). They also probably should not get inside Taylor's rusty shark cage to plunge into the water and observe the predators up close. Modine's character attracts the sharks by pouring blood into the water-before the cage breaks away from the boat and drops to the ocean floor. The two young women with little diving experience find themselves in the dark with less than an hour of air in their oxygen tanks-surrounded, of course, by hungry sharks.

## 'Physically taxing'

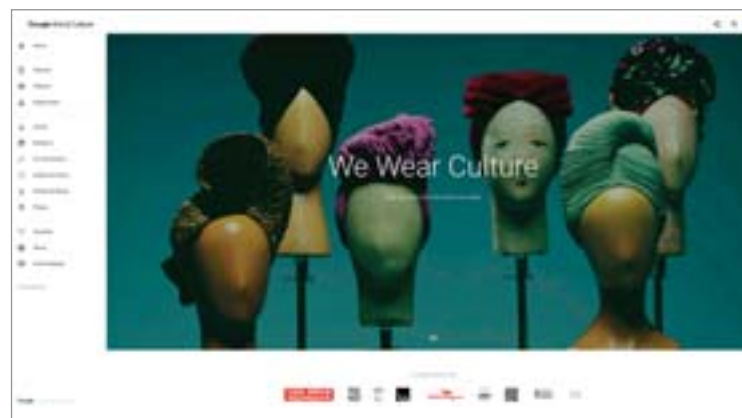
"What I found far more terrifying is the prospect and premise of drowning, of running out of air," Moore told reporters. "That's my biggest fear. That's far more terrifying than sharks, which are terrifying enough." Director Johannes Roberts decided that once the women plunged into the ocean there was no need for scenes on the surface. "I had no interest in going back to reaction shots with Taylor and the other boys on the boat," he said. "Imagine if in 'Gravity,' you kept cutting to ground control. It would have killed the movie," he said, referring to the 2013 Oscar-winning film about astronauts stranded in space.

For the film, Moore and Holt therefore spent eight hours a day for eight weeks inside a six-meter deep water tank. "47 Meters Down" was filmed mainly in sun-deprived Britain, far from Mexico's bright Pacific coast. A few scenes were made in the Dominican Republic. "We didn't realize how physically taxing it was going to be, all that time under water," Moore said. "In that sense we were kind of Guinea pigs because no one knew what effect eight weeks everyday under water would have." An especially large diving mask was designed so viewers could better see Moore and Holt's facial reactions.

The actresses could communicate via a special radio set, but communication with the rest of the film crew was via hand signs, while the director's instructions were delivered through a speaker inside the water tank. "I was pretty nervous," said Holt. "But we had great people taking care of us."

## Slim shark attack chances

Last year, just 81 unprovoked shark attacks were reported worldwide, according to the International Shark Attack File (ISAF). None were reported in Mexico. "We have a better chance of getting hit by lightning or eaten by a hippo than attacked by a shark," said Modine, who has been diving since he was a teenager. The chances of being attacked by a shark are nearly one in four million, according to the International Wildlife Museum based in Tucson, Arizona. And yet, a large mouthful of sharp teeth and fear of the deep sea add up to shark bait for Hollywood producers. — AFP



## New Google project digitizes world's top fashion archives

Anyone who has waited on a long, snaking line to get into a fashion exhibit at a top museum knows just how popular they've become - and more broadly, how fashion is increasingly seen as a form of artistic and cultural expression. Google Inc. is acknowledging this reality by expanding its Google Art Project - launched in 2011 to link users with art collections around the world, online - to include fashion.

The new initiative, "We Wear Culture", which launched Thursday, uses Google's technology to connect fashion lovers to collections and exhibits at museums and other institutions, giving them the ability to not only view a garment, but to zoom in on the hem of a dress, examine a sleeve or a bit of embroidery on a gown up close, wander around an atelier, or sit down with Metropolitan Museum of Art costume restorers.

The project partners with more 180 cultural institutions, including the Met's Costume Institute, the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, Japan's Kyoto Costume Institute, and the Musee des Arts Decoratifs in Paris. It comprises over 30,000 garments. The site also offers specially curated exhibits. You can click your way to, for example, a curated photo exhibit on Tokyo Street Style, or an exploration of women's gowns in the 18th century.

You can search by designer, or by their muse - examining, say, Marilyn

Monroe's love of Ferragamo stiletto heels, via the Museo Salvatore Ferragamo in Florence, Italy. At a preview demonstration this week, Amit Sood, director of the Google Cultural Institute and designer of the Google Art Project (now called Google Arts & Culture) explained that he wasn't initially clued into the possibilities for fashion, because at the tech giant, "we all wear hoodies."

But, he said, collaborating with an institution like the Met showed him that "art and fashion have a long history together." The idea behind the new project, he said, is to tell the story - or rather, the multiple stories - behind fashion. There are several virtual reality films included in the project. A 360-degree video displays the Met's conservation studio, with conservators explaining how they keep delicate clothing strong enough for display - one of them explaining, for example, how the team uses needles designed for eye surgeons.

It is the ultimate fragility of clothes, though, that makes the project appealing to museum curators, explained Andrew Bolton, the Costume Institute's head curator - whereas many garments are too delicate to be permanently displayed, digitizing a collection makes it viewable forever. — AP

## 'Beatriz at Dinner': Hayek Stars in film for Trump era

"Beatriz at Dinner"-a film that takes a hard look at class, racism and environmental destructions-is seemingly perfectly suited for the Trump era, even though it was filmed before the Republican billionaire took office. The film stars Salma Hayek as a Mexican immigrant living in the United States who was separated from her family after a failed real estate project decimated her small town.

The woman, who describes herself as "ugly, old and fat," now makes her living as a massage therapist among the wealthy in posh Orange County, in southern California. Hayek plays Beatriz in plain clothes, no make-up and awkward hair-a world away from the sultry good looks showcased in "From Dawn to Dusk" (1996), or her Oscar-nominated performance as Frida Kahlo in "Frida" (2002).

After finishing a massage session at the house of a wealthy patron, Beatriz's car breaks down. As she is far from home, where she lives with her dogs and a small goat, Beatriz's customer invites her to stay for dinner while she waits for help. The dinner turns into a free-for-all when Beatriz decides to dispense with decorum and take on another guest, billionaire real estate developer Doug Strutt (John Lithgow), who at first mistakes her for a servant.

## 'Where are you from, originally?'

At one point, Strutt-who builds projects with disregard for the environment and its effect on local residents-asks Beatriz where she is from. When she answers "From Pasadena," he presses: "Where are you from originally?" The painful exchanges that follow-including one about Beatriz's immigrant status-reflect the kinds of debates now commonplace in Donald Trump's America, and fueled by the president's promise to deport three million "illegal immigrants" and build a wall on the border with Mexico.

America's rich-poor divide is sharply depicted in the film: the petite, plain-Jane Beatriz is clearly out of place with the tall, white, well-manicured women in high heels and their husbands, who smoke cigars as they discuss business deals. "I love this character because it represents so many people," Hayek, who is of Mexican and Lebanese descent, told AFP in a telephone interview in Spanish. "People think that (Mexicans) still get around on donkeys. There is a lack of understanding over who we are, where we come from, what we feel and what we want."

## 'More relevant' with Trump

The movie, presented at the Sundance Film Festival in January, opens in the United States on Friday-one week after Trump announced that he is pulling Washington out of the Paris climate agreement. "There are things that my character says that seems like they were written now," said Hayek, who has earned some early Oscar buzz for her work. "With time, the movie will become more relevant."

Director Miguel Arteta and screenwriter Mike White say they were inspired by the slaying of Cecil the Lion by an American dentist in Zimbabwe in June 2015. There are people "who have a sense of entitlement and don't realize the consequence of their actions," Hayek said. In the middle of filming, Hayek turned 50. To mark the occasion, she was serenaded on set by a mariachi band. "It felt incredible, to share it with a director that I've been dreaming of working with for years and finally managed to do it at the age of 50," she said. "And for a writer, one of my heroes, to have written a film for me-you can't imagine (the joy)," she said. — AFP



Salma Hayek, director Miguel Arteta and John Lithgow attend the TimesTalks: The Allegory Of "Beatriz At Dinner" at New School's Tischman Auditorium on June 7, 2017 in New York City. — AFP

## 'Angels in America' resonates 25 years later as play, opera

Tony Kushner's "Angels in America" is playing to sold-out houses in a star-filled revival in London, and Peter Eotvos' operatic version gets its New York premiere Saturday at City Opera. A response to the AIDS epidemic and the lack of U.S. government action, the work still resonates in an era of polarized politics.

"The play in English has lasted now for 25 years, which is not long compared to 'Oedipus,' but it's pretty long for a contemporary play to still be able to generate excitement, and it's taught everywhere in colleges," Kushner said. "All of my stuff does best during Republican administrations because I hate them so much, and there is an anger in the plays that I think really speaks in times of political mischief of a high order."

Formally titled "Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes," the two-part play runs for nearly seven hours, not including intermissions. "Millennium Approaches" premiered in San Francisco in 1991 and "Perestroika" the following year in Los Angeles. Both parts won Tony Awards, and "Millennium Approaches" earned the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. An HBO miniseries in 2003 directed by Mike Nichols starred Al Pacino, Meryl Streep and Emma Thompson. When Paris' Theatre du Chatelet was seeking to commis-

sion a new work from Eotvos, a composer friend recommended "Angels."

## Feel of the city

"He asked me if I would prepare a libretto. And I said no. I said I don't quite understand how a 6 1/2 hour-long play can be turned into a libretto that's anything shorter than the Ring Cycle," Kushner said. "But I said that he was welcome to try." Eotvos' wife, Mari Mezei, took about a year to condense "Angels" to an opera of just over 2 hours. They traveled to New York, attended "Rent," "Cabaret" and other Broadway shows to get a feel for the city.

"I went out to Central Park at night and listened to the sounds," the 73-year-old composer said through a translator. "There were remote sounds of city in the background. There was actually a guitar playing, and that's where this guitar solo is actually coming from." "Angels" centers on Prior Walter, who has AIDS, the people in his life and controversial lawyer Roy Cohn. Central is Prior's vision of an angel, who declares him a prophet.

"The idea of the angel and the hallucinations was musical inspiration," Eotvos said. "Everything that is abstract can be put into the music." The opera version shifts the emphasis. "Politics is not the territory of music," Eotvos remembered telling Kushner. "The names of politicians are gone in a certain amount of

time, so they're not interesting anymore. It was much more important to emphasize this human condition."

A student of Karlheinz Stockhausen, Eotvos composed "Angels" with speech morphing into song, syn-copating percussion and electronic keyboards. The opera was given its world premiere at the Chatelet in 2004 with Barbara Hendricks and Julia Migenes. It has since appeared in Hamburg, Germany; Amsterdam; Boston; Fort Worth, Texas; Frankfurt, Germany; London; Wroclaw, Poland; and Los Angeles.

Michael Capasso, who brought New York City Opera out of bankruptcy last year, decided to cap the first full season of the company's return with four performances of "Angels" running through June 16, the first installment of a LGBT Pride Initiative that will include Charles Wuorinen's "Brokeback Mountain" next June.

And while the opera makes its New York premiere, Marianne Elliott's acclaimed staging starring Andrew Garfield and Nathan Lane is running until Aug. 19 at London's National Theatre. Kushner says it likely will transfer to Broadway next season. "It feels to me like I can stop worrying about it once and for all. I think it's going to last," said Kushner, who turns 61 next month. "I don't know if the human race is going to last. But I think that the play is." — AP



Japan's godfather of art?  
Maezawa rings in new era

Lebanese Mallawi-dancing group perform their traditional dance, in front of Lebanese citizens, Orphans and Syrian refugees, as they break their daytime fast, during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, in Beirut Waterfront, Lebanon, Friday, June 9, 2017. Ajialouna, a Lebanese charity organization, organized an Iftar, the meal to break the daily fast during Ramadan, for 5,400 people, the largest Muslim Iftar ever organized. The charity set the Guinness World Record for setting the largest table.— AP

## Palestinian violinist brings music to young refugees

As a boy, Ramzi Aburedwan found himself caught up in the first Palestinian uprising, a well-known photo at the time showing him holding stones to throw at Israeli soldiers. He has since become a respected musician and composer, who gives back to children from Palestinian refugee camps, like himself. Today, he provides musical training to around 2,000 of them through his project called Al-Kamandjati, or The Violinist, in Arabic.

Aburedwan, now 38 and who grew up in Al-Amari camp in the occupied West Bank's Ramallah area, says he hopes to create a "strong future generation capable of expressing itself" through such projects. He launched Al-Kamandjati in 2002, wanting to offer youngsters from the camps and other poor children access to expensive musical instruments and music theory classes. The violinist, who studied music in Angers in western France, began by collecting instruments donated by various institutions across Europe.

On his return to Ramallah, he extended the project in 2008 to Beirut's Shatila refugee camp as well as the Bourj el-Barajneh camp in Lebanon. Aburedwan's project now counts eight music schools and more than 2,000 students aged between five and 18. In March, Palestinian officials named him cultural figure of the year. The composer, with a neatly trimmed



beard, thinks back with pride to the old photo of himself as a child in a red jacket with stones in hand, taken in 1988.

At the time, "we had to protect our camp from the soldiers", he said of Al-Amari, one of the refugee camps set up to house Palestinians displaced by the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. With another mass exodus caused by the Six-Day War of 1967, almost eight million Palestinians are considered refugees, with most of them living in camps across the Middle East.

### Luck and hard work

The future is bleak for many who grow up in poverty, and that could have been the

case for Aburedwan had fortune not smiled upon him. As a teenager, he worked odd jobs to earn money where he could, hawking newspapers and doing gardening work for families in Ramallah. One of the women who hired him "heard something about a scholarship to learn music in France", he said. "She proposed my name and I landed in France, where I learned music before starting Al-Kamandjati," said Aburedwan.

Recently, a group of music students from the Qalandia refugee camp, north of Jerusalem, were training along with musicians teaching violin and cello as part of Aburedwan's program. "I started to learn music in the Qalandia camp with the

Kamandjati group when I was seven," said Tayib Al-Hamouz, 16. Teacher Montasser Jibreen, 25, started to learn music in 2005 with Kamandjati. "I played clarinet and after I finished school I got a grant for music at Angers University and was the conductor in the orchestra," he said.

Beyond teaching music, Aburedwan decided to spend this year inviting musicians from abroad to perform for Palestinians. Performances have been planned for camps, auditoriums, the ruins of ancient palaces in the West Bank, the blockaded Gaza Strip and Jerusalem. Dozens of performances were held over 18 days at the ruins of Hisham's Palace in the West Bank city of Jericho, including Rajasthan gypsy dancers with their colorful dresses.

At the Haram Al-Sharif in Jerusalem, the Jerusalem holy site that includes the Al-Aqsa mosque compound and the Dome of the Rock, whirling dervish dancers performed. However, Sufi music and dance did not please everyone: Aburedwan and other artists were escorted away from the site by offended worshippers. But it takes more than that to discourage the kid from the refugee camp. A few hours later, dozens of people applauded the Turkish dancers at another location on the outskirts of Jerusalem's Old City.— AFP



A Palestinian actor and two musicians perform in front of Palestinian schoolchildren during a festival organized by Palestinian musician Ramzi Aburedwan in East Jerusalem.— AFP photos

## U2 MAKE THEIR FIRST EVER US FESTIVAL APPEARANCE



The Edge, left, and Bono of U2 perform at the Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival on Friday, June 9, 2017, in Manchester, Tenn.— AP

U2 turned their first headlining appearance at a US music festival into Bono-roo. The Irish rockers performed a two-hour set on Friday night at the Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival in Manchester, Tennessee, as part of their world tour celebrating the 30th anniversary of their Grammy-winning "The Joshua Tree" album. They played the full album, as well as some of their other hits, including "New Year's Day" and "Beautiful Day", to tens of thousands of music fans.

Toward the end of the performance, lead singer Bono asked if they had made a mistake in not coming to the festival sooner, and later added, "Thanks for naming it after me." The band kicked off their tour last month in Canada, which hits the United Kingdom, Europe and Central America through October 19. The band has previously played the Glastonbury Festival, but their appearance on the Bonnaroo lineup this year was a huge get for the 16-year-old music festival. Prior to their set, U2 guitarist The Edge received the Les Paul Spirit Award in a presentation from the Les Paul Foundation on the festival grounds. The Edge, whose name is David Evans, called Paul an inventor and innovator who pioneered advances in electric guitars and recording.

"I owe him a great debt of gratitude not only for the contributions he made to music, but in terms of his contributions to the technology," Evans said. Hours before the band took to the stage, fans lined up to get a place close to the stage. Many held signs detailing the first time they had seen U2 play. The political nature of the album, which was inspired by the band's fascination with America, was reflected on the giant screens behind the band. The screens showed images of female activists, scenes of the American desert and poems from American writers. Often Bono would stop singing to let the chorus of voices from fans complete the song. As he ended the performance with their hit, "One," he called it "a night we will never forget." — AP