

The city with  
three walls;  
Kut 'nucleus  
of Kuwait'



MP calls for  
monitoring  
expat money  
transfers



Kyrgios stuns  
Djokovic again;  
Federer races  
past Nadal



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المحل مغلق اليوم  
بسبب رفع الإيجار من قبل  
الشركة الجديدة  
إيجار شهر فبراير 2017  
(2280 د.ك.)  
والمطلوب إيجار شهر  
مارس 2017  
10850 د.ك.

(Inset) Sign reads in Arabic: This shop is closed today (Thursday) in protest against the rental increase from the new management company from KD 2,280 for February 2017 to KD 10,850 for March 2017. — Photos by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

## MUBARAKIYA REOPENS AS PM INTERVENES

SEE PAGES 4 & 5

Local Spotlight

# REPUBLIC OF JLEEB AL-SHUYOUKH



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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**R**epublic of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh - I don't know who made up this name, but they probably have their reasons. Let's see why. Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh is an area near Kuwait International Airport mostly inhabited by Asian expatriate workers, with some Arabs and a few Kuwaiti families. Kuwait has a population of about 4 million, including 2.8 million expatriates from many different countries. The population of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh was 265,000 according to the 2010 census. We are in 2017, so this figure has surely increased over the years.

Wikipedia describes this area, and I quote: "The US State Department's travel advisory for Kuwait describes Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh as a 'high-crime area' and advises US citizens to avoid the area, especially at night." Well, they said the truth!

Why is this area considered dangerous, especially at night? In Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, everyone seems to live in accordance to their own system that has been adopted for years, aimed at providing for

## This poses a threat to the security of a small country like Kuwait

their needs as they wish and not according to the laws and regulations of the country. This encourages outlaws to hide in this crowded area, and they continue with their illegal and unethical activities until they get caught by the police.

'Bachelor' residents often seek to rent small rooms in old houses, so it is natural to see 10 people live in one room! The area has seen several blazes due to a lack of security and safety conditions, and the crowded streets usually delay the arrival of firefighters. Overcrowding is the main reason for the crimes there.

So, I guess this makes this area a republic, because it lives on its own terms. This is not acceptable at all and makes no sense. The area has become a threat to families because it has turned into a nest of residency violators. This poses a threat to the security of a small country like Kuwait.

In recent months, the interior ministry has been strict in applying residency laws and searching for violators through continuous inspection campaigns. Excellent job, but Mol still needs the help of other government bodies. There must be a role for them in cooperation with the Mol to clean up this area, and the municipality comes first.

There have been calls to fix and organize this area, but so far, solutions are few. There is a need to address the problems of Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh with a collective effort and effective radical solutions. Setting up decent labor zones is a must and the Mol should never slow down or ease its hunt for violators in this area.

Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh is just another area in Kuwait, and we should not let it become more than this.

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Vintage cars and trucks in Kuwait City. — Photo by Ghazi Qaffaf

kaffeeklatsch

# IGNORE NATIONALISTS AT YOUR OWN PERIL!



By Shakir Reshamwala

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**I**n this new era of alternative facts and fake news, traditional media are forced to walk a thin line. Faced with declining circulations, low viewership and falling revenues, they can ill-afford to avoid giving a platform to nationalists. Social media have no problem lapping up every word these rightwing leaders say, and have become the main sources of news for most people who eschew mainstream newspapers and TV channels. These online sites are not constrained by fact-checking what they publish, and are content to shoot first and ask questions later, if any. Their only concern is to drive traffic to their websites and monetize the clicks.

This has put traditional mainstream media in a bind, and they have to devote time, money and effort to also pursue such stories. This can be seen in the US, where despite being labeled as 'fake' and 'failing' by the president, most respectable news outlets still report his every outrageous utterance and tweet lest they are viewed as leftwing elitists, or worse, become irrelevant. There is a fear of being left out and ignored, or falling behind in this age where clickbait stories and silly listicles are viewed as legitimate journalism by many millennials.

In Kuwait too, statements by MPs against expats make the headlines on a daily basis. Most of what they say is inapplicable, irrational or wildly inaccurate, but is wholeheartedly consumed by citizens and expats alike, who then dissect these comments by cheering or dissing them in online forums. Unlike the 'letters to the editor' of yore that provided a glimpse into reactions to various stories, and which were

selectively published at the discretion of the media outlet, the Internet provides instant feedback. How a particular story is trending can be immediately gauged by the number of 'likes', comments and shares it elicits.

Call it the democratization of the media landscape. For better or worse, the stranglehold of traditional media outlets over the dissemination of news has been weakened. Apart from a host of independent and sane voices, this liberalization of the media has resulted in a free-for-all, allowing those with racist, sexist, xenophobic and other deviant views to get equal billing with mainstream media on social networks. Traditional media are now straining to make their voices heard by people who are in their own social and search bubbles and echo chambers, where news outlets of all stripes are mostly preaching to the choir.

So it is no surprise that many politicians and personalities have figured it out that the only way to promote their brand is by making offensive and shocking statements that the mainstream media cannot ignore to avoid being seen as haughty. These comments then go viral, bringing publicity to these people, and ironically, monetary gains for the media outlets too. This is a vicious circle that cannot be easily broken. Historically, it has been seen that boycotters only hurt themselves. Politicians who boycott elections - even though they may have a valid reason to do so - very often find they are ignored by the regime and voters and risk being sidelined or forgotten. The media too faces this dilemma. It seems in today's world, the moral high ground can be a very lonely place.

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# MUBARAKIAH REOPENS; PM INTERVENES

By Nawara Fattahova , Athoob Al-Shuaibi, Azzgencies

**KUWAIT:** Al-Mubarakiah market reopened yesterday evening after it was shut down by protesting shop owners and merchants over a rent increase. The merchants reopened their shops after His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah intervened - promising to resolve the issue. The Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Rodhan visited the market yesterday to address the shop owners. "The decision (to increase the rent) won't be applied until we solve the issue. Also the Speaker of the House Marzouq Al Ghanim has agreed to correct any legislative mistakes in order to resolve the problem," he stated during his tour yesterday. He promised to resolve the issue and apologized to the people of Kuwait for any mistakes in the contracts.

His Highness the Prime Minister affirmed his keenness on resolving dispute. "The approach aims at preserving the rights,

interests in a fashion that would safeguard the traditional features of the market," the Prime Minister said. The government's statement added that the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh, the Minister of Commerce and Industry and the Acting Minister of Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan have met with the shopkeepers at the market. They assured them on the government's keenness on preserving the rights of all those working at the market in a manner that would not be at expense of its traditional features.

### Feeling upset? go to Mubarakiya

There's a local saying in Kuwait, "Whenever you feel upset, go to Mubarakiya". But on reaching Mubarakiya yesterday morning, anger and sadness overtook the cheerful soul of that place. At Souq Al-Gharabally in Mubarakiya, all the shops were closed on the day people all over the gulf region came to mark the beginning of the weekend. The first and top generation of traders and merchants in Mubarakiya closed their shops in

protest against the high rental cost that increased to 500 percent. Senior Kuwaitis like to visit Mubarakiya every day. For them, it is more than a heritage place. It is their childhood and a place that was defined by their ancestors.

The Kuwait Commercial Markets Complex Company ran the market for twenty years with a BOT contract. In 2016, the company raised the rents 150%. Mubarakiya is like the Speaker's corner at the Hyde Park of London. In each corner, you will see a mob around someone who desires to be heard. A number of traders, media and political figures came to show their support and send a message to the competent authorities - demanding solutions to the crisis. Media veteran Aisha Al-Yahya stated "I was there yesterday and I saw elderly women crying inside the mosque after they heard about the rent increase. Millions of tourists from the Gulf region do visit Mubarakiya every weekend. This is a space where you can respire the essence of the past. This is a terrible injustice. Greed would wipe out what is garnered."





KUWAIT: The Minister of Commerce and Industry Khaled Al-Rodhan and some Kuwait MPs visited the market yesterday to address the shop owners. — Photos by Joseph Shagra, Athoob Al-Shuaibi and Fouad Al-Shaikh



MP Safa Al Hashem addresses the shop owners yesterday. Al-Mubarakiah market reopened yesterday evening after it was shut down by protesting shop owners and merchants over a rent increase.



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# POST OFFICE ABANDONMENT

By Nawara Fattahova

The first impression you get on entering almost any post office in Kuwait is one of neglect. Rundown buildings, staff shortages, outdated communications systems, lack of security and limited efforts to keep the posts office working are clear for all to see.

The post offices and postal service in Kuwait suffers from many shortages which causes hundreds of mails and parcels to go missing. The lack of security is scary, especially for female employees.

"It was scary, when a drunk man entered the post office one evening and harassed us. He wasn't ready to leave and it was only two of us, both females at the office. Luckily our supervisor was nearby and rushed to our rescue," the female employee told Kuwait Times. The employees have sent thousands of complaints to the Ministry of Communication, but there is no response from their side.

"We complained repeatedly to the Ministry demanding a security staff to be working here especially past noon, but never received a reply. Also we don't have any security machine to check the parcels that people bring in for delivery. There used to be one 12 years back, which stopped working. On asking the Ministry to fix it, they simply removed it and never replaced it," complained the director of the same post office, who wished to stay anonymous.

There is no security at all. The backdoors to the post office are open to the street and any unauthorized person can enter in. The ministry has banned the office from locking the back entrance, also the lock to the room containing important parcels is broken, and so anyone can easily steal objects. The staff working at the post office has to fix the broken objects on their own expense. "It's ridiculous to ask the employees to replace lamps, door locks, printers, and many more things from their own pocket."

"We also have to buy shelves, gloves or any stationary needed. Despite of all this, we never receive any allowances or security from any dangerous situations. We once found a mouse in the big sack of letters. Some

It was scary, when a drunk man entered the post office one evening and harassed us. He wasn't ready to leave and it was only two of us, both females at the office.

parcels can also contain dangerous materials or even a bomb, that we won't be aware of due to lack of security, added the director.

Due to shortage of staff, the basement containing the P.O. boxes remains closed in the afternoon. "I think it's sad that people cannot reach their mails in the afternoon, knowing that most people are employees who work in the morning, and that they can only access the boxes from 8 am to 12 pm. And they don't receive it within a month, the mails are gathered in a big sack and burnt. This process is

followed for mails that are not registered or they are sent back to the sender if it is not received by the recipient.

"The officials at the ministry are aware of all the issues and yet don't care unless, it is related to them or an important person. Once, a European secretary of a minister came looking for her parcel and complained about the poor services. We then received calls from the minister's office asking to resolve the issue. They did find the parcel, not at the post office but at the airport," concluded the director.





"Al Shaab" gate one of the third remaining fence gates.

# The city with three walls

By Mahmoud Zakaria AbouAlella

**D**o you know that a small fort (kut) was the nucleus of Kuwait and its history and that Kuwait derives its name from this famous structure? It was situated where the Amiricani Cultural Center stands today on Arabian Gulf Street close to the National Assembly. According to historical accounts, the date of construction of the fort was around 1669, when Barrak bin Ghurair held the reins of power as the first chief of the region's powerful Bani Khaled tribe.

The years after 1700 saw a proliferation of clans due to immigration to this new 'country'. In those years, Al Sabah, the current rulers of Kuwait, immigrated from Najd in central Arabia and settled in Kuwait. They took the reins of power in 1718.

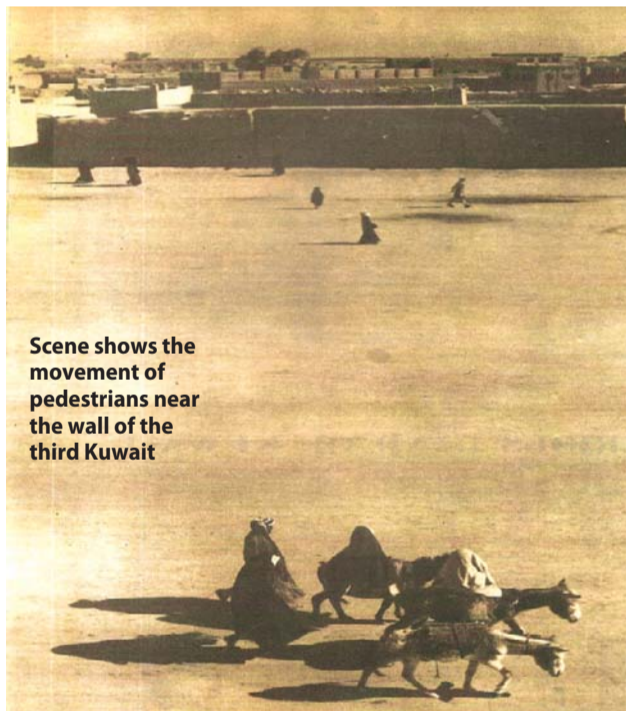
The main problem that affected Kuwait in that period was water shortages and lack of potable water, so the people imported water from the Shatt Al-Arab area of Iraq. The water was transported in tanks by the famous Kuwaiti al-boom dhows.

The main economic activity of Kuwait since its inception was pearl diving and maritime trade, such as palm and timber trade with both India and Iraq and other trades and professions that have been associated largely with maritime activity, such as shipbuilding. But the pearl industry was decimated by the global recession and by the appearance of cheap Japanese cultured pearls in 1934.

From the distance, Kuwait and its bay looked small, like some early watercolor landscape. The wind was clean and strong, made of pure air and saltwater. It hung in the tents heavy as a royal cloak and gave a luminous quality to the shadows inside.

The wall represented one of the historical monuments of Kuwait. You can describe it by saying it was a city with three walls, that inspired other cities to build fences. The wall was to protect Kuwait from attacks by aggressors. The walls were made of mud and surrounded the city from the land side. They contained many large gates that worked according to daily schedules. The doors opened in the morning and closed in the evening. Guards worked at these gates to organize the entry and departure of people and goods.

Freya Stark wrote about these guards: "They lounge in their seat or squat in the windowless den brewing coffee, keeping their eye on



Scene shows the movement of pedestrians near the wall of the third Kuwait

who goes in or out, and in their toothless way, uphold the rule of law. They wait for the approaching end of their days with that dignity which is the keynote of Arabia, made of poverty and leisure and of a complete unconsciousness of dress as an asset to respectability, or of physical comfort as an essential to happiness."

Kuwait knows these three walls defined its history. They represented the defensive line for Kuwait against any possible attacks.

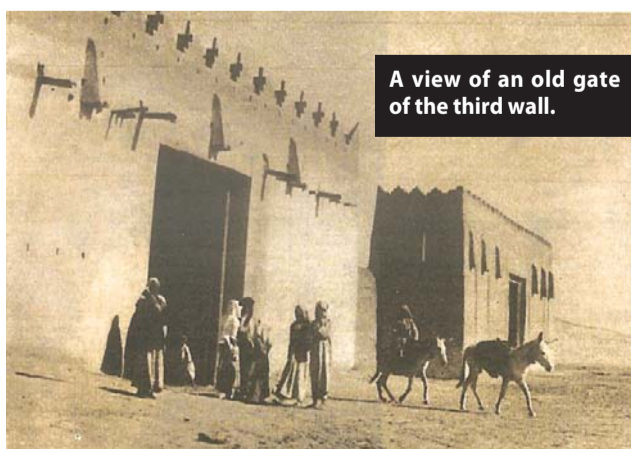
With the discovery of oil and the subsequent economic and urban development in various fields, the wall was demolished in 1957.

The fence has been linked in Kuwait's memory with numerous stories and anecdotes - in springtime, when most Kuwaitis picnic in the desert, groups of women trail their black abayas, their faces hidden, under the gateway. Small donkeys with enormous ears trot in with lime and head out with water. Smugglers move about the village of huts which has grown since the customs law of neighboring Iraq made the risk worthwhile. And a sight most beautiful, no doubt seared in our unconscious memories from the very earliest days of tribal man: In the late afternoon, flocks of goats return with their goatherds, pouring like black velvet through the nail-studded door across the empty open space with the sunlit wall and its towers behind them, until they reach the appointed place where their owners (who pay three annas a month for this service) come to separate them and take them to their homes.

This open place within the walls is also used by boys with time on their hands to lure the common little blue and brown kite from the sky. A decoy is tied to a stone as they sit demurely in the dust, trying, like unhappily married Victorians, to look as if they like it. Nearby, traps are arranged - circular concave metal discs that close with a snap when the spring is released. A white caterpillar is tied by its waist (if a caterpillar's figure comprises such a thing), that wriggles slowly round and round like a semaphore, succulently obvious from above.

The boys wait at distance and trap four or five birds daily. They then sell them to children who like to walk about with a bird at the end of a string in their hand. It seems all the missionary efforts by Kuwait over a period of many years hasn't succeeded in eradicating this simple pleasure!

AbouAlella is a researcher in heritage for the Ministry of Information.



A view of an old gate of the third wall.

- The first wall around Kuwait City was built in the era of Sheikh Abdullah bin Sabah II (1776-1814) in 1793. Its total length was 750 m.
- The second wall of Kuwait was built in 1811. It took two months to build, with a total length of 2,300 m. This wall had five gates (darwazas) made of wood. Historical sources indicate that this fence was in place for about 70 years until it was destroyed by climatic factors.
- The third wall of Kuwait was built in 1920 in the era of Sheikh Salem Al-Mubarak (1864-1921), the ninth ruler of Kuwait. With a total length of 6,400 m, work on this wall began in the holy month of Ramadan in the summer. It witnessed the dedication of the people of Kuwait, and many of them donated a lot of money, while some donated various construction tools. This wall had five gates - Darwaza Dasman, Darwaza Al-Shaab, Darwaza Al-Shamiya, Darwaza Al-Jahra and Darwaza Al-Meqsab.



An old image shows the traditional houses in old Kuwait



# AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS TO BOOST KUWAIT GNP

**KUWAIT:** The Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAF) is working hard on a multitude of agricultural and development projects to increase its share in Kuwait's GNP projects, Director General Faisal Al-Hasawi has said. This is part of the state efforts to diversify the sources of national income, Al-Hasawi said in an interview yesterday.

The authority has cut a long path in the implementation of a variety of development projects, and many others will follow, he said.

A major venture is that of food security PAAF has adopted for the reorganization and development of the agricultural sector on modern economic, professional, and scientific basis, to encourage national investments in the field, the PAAF chief said. This aims to create a national organized agricultural sector that contributes to economic development, he said, adding that part of the project was breeding sheep and growing animal feed in Al-Abadly, north of Kuwait. "It is an integrated project that reduces reliance on imported fodder and meat, consisting of 200 farms, thus lessening the burden on the state budget," Al-Hasawi stressed.

The food security plan also includes a



**Director General of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAF) Faisal Al-Hasawi**

cattle-fattening project of 50 lots of land, with total area of 170,000 square meters. Unluckily, this promising project has temporarily been suspended, as a railway line connecting Kuwait with GCC countries is planned to go through it. PAAF has been offered a new area of land which is being prepared to resume production, Al-Hasawi said. Many chicken breeding and fish farming projects are also targeted for food security. He noted that the main project employs modern agricultural researches and techniques for boosting production.

As for fish wealth, Al-Hasawi said they are working on a host of projects on two

major directions; the first of which is protecting the marine environment against depletion of natural resources through establishing natural protectorates. The second is developing and diversifying the sources of fish wealth through fish farming to provide production at considerable prices through the year. Al-Hasawi pointed to the close cooperation between PAAF and the Environment Public Authority (EPA) for preservation of the marine environment.

Meanwhile, PAAF Director General, said that authority is always on alert to protect the country against animal epidemics and diseases, through consolidating quarantines and providing them with state of the art equipment and expertise, as well as coordinating with the concerned state bodies such as the General Administration of Customs and the Interior Ministry. Al-Hasawi pointed to PAAF's scientific cooperation with the world's organizations and leading centers such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD). Coordination is underway for opening offices for the FAO and AOAD in Kuwait, he said. —KUNA

# TURKEY LAUDS KUWAIT

**ANKARA:** A Turkish MP thanked Kuwait for supporting democratically elected government in Ankara against the failed coup attempt, which took place mid-July 2016. His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah supported the Turkish people shortly after the failed coup bid, and condemned the attempt, MP Dr Halil Ozcan said in a statement to KUNA, on the occasion of the state visit of His Highness the Amir to Turkey.

Ozcan, who chaired the Turkish-Saudi Friendship Committee at the parliament, said Kuwait has been standing by Turkey in the face of the "terrorist" groups, foremost Fethullah Gulen organization. His Highness the Amir's talks with Turkish leaders would focus on the fight against terrorism, regional security, conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, in addition to bilateral economic relations, he added.

Ozcan underlined utmost importance of security cooperation vis-a-vis terrorism, and should be followed by political, economic and strategic cooperation. He urged politicians and businesspersons to join hands to achieve stability and security in the region. Ozcan believed that Turkey was currently witnessing political and economic stability, anticipating the April 16 referendum on constitutional amendments to pave way for more openness in Turkish-Kuwaiti relations.

He meanwhile called for formation of civil society organizations that would help bring Turkish and Kuwaiti citizens closer. Asked about humanitarian issues, Ozcan said Turkey opened its doors for the Syrian people since the crisis in their country



**Turkish MP Khalil Ozcan**

broke out in March 2011. He said Turkey received three million Syrians and spent more than \$25 billion to build shelters and provide services. Ozcan praised Kuwait public and private sectors for offering huge humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees. He called for setting up a partnership between humanitarian institutions in Turkey and Kuwait to carry out relief programs in disaster zones, especially in Africa. —KUNA

## News

in brief

### Russia pleased with level of ties with Arab nations

**MOSCOW:** Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday expressed satisfaction at the existing ties between his nation with Arab and Islamic states. Putin, during a ceremonial reception of new ambassadors' credentials at the Kremlin, expressed support for the Iraqi Government's efforts aimed at confronting international terrorism and extremism, according to the Russian Television. The president emphasized necessity of preserving Iraq's territorial sanctity and unity "with consideration to interests of all ethnic and religious communities" in the country. On Moscow's ties with Doha, Qatar, Putin boasted of the level of the current relations between the Russian and Qatari leaderships, noting coordination at committees' level for holding some matches of the forthcoming World Cup, to be held in the two countries. Moreover, Russia and Qatar are bonded with mutual interests in financial and investment realms, he said, also indicating at coordination between Moscow and Doha over pending regional issues, namely terrorism and resolving conflicts in the Middle East.

### Kuwait organizes a soccer tourney for the displaced

**IRBIL:** The Kuwaiti diplomatic mission in northern Iraq has expanded and diversified its efforts to relieve war-relocated Iraqis by organizing a soccer tournament that involved up to 20 teams. The championship was organized at the shanty towns housing the displaced Iraqis, Hassan Sham and Al-Khazer. A concluding ceremony was held, with attendance of Irbil Governor, Nawzad Hadi yesterday. Kuwait General Consul in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kanderi, said in remarks to Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), yesterday, that the Kuwaiti mission organized the tournament with the aim of encouraging sports in the northern regions. Moreover, such activity helps in boosting morale and co-existence among these Iraqis, who have been forced to seek safety in the region, fleeing fighting in other areas of the country. Hadi for his part expressed gratitude to Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), the Kuwait Relief Society and other philanthropic associations for helping the displaced in coordination with the government of Kurdistan's region.

### Capricious weather in Kuwait ahead of summer - forecast

**KUWAIT:** Volatile weather patterns are expected in Kuwait during this transitional period as winter slowly subsides to herald the arrival of summer season, meteorologist Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi said yesterday. Speaking to KUNA, Al-Qarawi said that weather is typically unstable during this time of year, where temperatures gradually begin to rise with winds spewing out dust that could reduce visibility. Yesterday's weather was mostly sunny with northeasterly winds that later turned northwesterly at speeds of 15-50 km/h, he noted. Moreover, weather is expected to be moderate with light northwesterly winds between 10-35 km/h, while temperatures will be within the range of 14-16 degrees. Warm weather will prevail with light to moderate northwesterly winds between 10-32 km/h, as temperatures are forecasted to be between 25-27 degree Celsius during the day and 12-15 degree Celsius at night. Al-Qarawi noted that light northeasterly winds between 10-32 km/h will be expected tomorrow.

### Kuwait, Egypt ink \$55 million loan accord

**CAIRO:** The Egyptian Government and Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) signed yesterday the second loan accord, worth KD 18.5 million (\$55 million). The new agreement, designed to contribute to financing construction of a sea water desalination plant in East Port Said, was signed by Egyptian Minister of International Investment Dr Sahar Nasr and KFAED Director General Abdulwahab Al-Badr. The plant, with a projected 250,000 cubic meter per day capacity, will secure drinking water to East Port City, currently under construction. With its building, due to end by 2019, up to 150,000 cubic meter of water will be initially secured per day. A 700-km-long network of pipes will be built, along with reservoirs, electrical and mechanical installations.



Crime

Report

'Abnormal' maid

**KUWAIT:** A domestic helper from Madagascar was seen walking half naked in Nuzha area before being arrested by police, who discovered that she has Psychological problems. A citizen saw her walking with only a towel wrapped around her body and posted the video clip on the social media. The maid was earlier returned to the office by a citizen who noticed she was acting abnormally.

Doctor sentenced

The Court Of First Instance sentenced an Egyptian doctor to two years in jail and deportation for forging a medical certificate showing that a former legal advisor at KPC was infected with hepatitis-C. The case goes back to 2014 when the doctor who worked at KOC hospital before being fired produced a certificate stating that the advisor was infected with hepatitis-C. The doctor was sacked. Investigations proved the certificate was forged, so the advisor filed a complaint, leading to the court's sentence.

Ethiopian killed

An Ethiopian, who is in violation of the Residency Law was killed in a bakery shop. Security sources said she was crushed by a dough making machine. Detectives and forensics who went to the bakery said that the machine pulled her - causing a head injury which led to her death. The case is considered involuntary manslaughter.

Inmate attempts suicide

A bedoon sustained fractures when he jumped from the first floor at the Central Prison in an attempt to commit suicide. An investigation will be launched to find the motive. The incident happened few days after another prisoner hanged himself in a solitary cell. A security source said the prisoner is serving a 4-year jail sentence on a felony case, and denied that he is suffering from Psychological problems.

Dead bodies found

Bodies of an Asian and a Kuwaiti have been found and recovered by a coroner. The first (a decomposing body) was found in a car in Hawally, while the body of a citizen was found in his house in Mahboula. — Al Rai/ Al Anbaa

KUWAIT WOMEN PLAY VITAL ROLE IN DECISION-MAKING

**NEW YORK:** Kuwaiti women play a big role in their country's plans for growth, becoming key partners in implementing the 2030 sustainable development strategy, said a Kuwaiti diplomat late Wednesday. In a speech to the 61st session of the UN General Assembly Commission on the Status of Women, member of the Kuwaiti delegation Huda Al-Shaiji said that Kuwait was keen on providing integrated care and decent living for women and developing their role in society.

Kuwaiti women have become competitors to men in various development projects, she said, adding that her country attached great importance to the health and education of women and renounced all forms of violence against them. She affirmed that Kuwait has signed a number of international agreements relating to women and called the international community to intensify efforts to protect women against acts of violence and cruelty. Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN headquarters in New York, Ambassador Mansour Al-Otaibi attended the meeting, which is part of UN gatherings that will last till March 24. — KUNA



Member of the Kuwaiti delegation Huda Al-Shaiji seen during the 61st session of the UN General Assembly Commission on the Status of Women. — KUNA

MP CALLS FOR MONITORING EXPAT MONEY TRANSFERS

LAWMAKERS INQUIRES IF THERE IS A PLAN TO TAX EXPAT TRANSFERS

**KUWAIT:** Shiite MP Khalil Al-Saleh yesterday called on authorities to impose tighter monitoring on huge money transfers by expatriates, which he said amounted to KD 21.2 billion between 2010 and 2014. In questions to the Finance Ministry, the lawmaker asked if the ministry has any plans to impose taxes or charges on the money transfer by expatriates. Several MPs have already called for taxing expatriates' money transfers in a bid to check the outflow of money from Kuwait. Last week, MP Safa Al-Hashem proposed a five percent tax on expatriate money transfers.

The lawmaker also asked the Finance Minister about the size of money transfers made by expatriates in the past two years. He added that the size of the money transfers did not include trans-

fers made through unofficial channels. He said that the size of money transfers made by expatriates every year must be monitored by authorities especially with the regards to prove they are proportional to their income, especially in light of the delicate security conditions in the region.

MP Saleh said authorities must ensure that expat transfers are not connected to terrorism or money laundering especially that transfers by foreigners in Kuwait are one of the highest in the Gulf. In his questions to the finance minister, the lawmaker asked about the department that is overseeing money transfers of expatriates in Kuwait and if there is any mechanism for monitoring such transfers. He pointed out that if there was no mechanism to oversee

expat transfers, the reasons for that must be known and the ministry must introduce such a mechanism.

Saleh asked if the Finance Ministry receives periodical reports about money transfers by expatriates, especially those which have some suspicions. The lawmaker asked if the Finance Ministry has reported cases in which the size of transfers by expats was not proportional to their income which raises suspicion. He demanded the number of such cases reported in the past five years and what measures were taken against them. He asked if the central bank or the finance ministry have received security notifications from the interior ministry about suspicions over money transfers for expatriates and what measures were taken against them.



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Al-Jarallah and UK Under-Secretary of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Tobias Ellwood are pictured during a press conference. — KUNA

BREXIT 'PATH TO GREATER BUSINESS' WITH KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** The British-Kuwaiti ties are deep-rooted and special, particularly in politics and commerce, Ellwood stated yesterday. The two countries' political and commercial relations have expanded significantly in recent years as a result of their mutual trust, which is due to their long years of joint action, and understanding of joint interests, Ellwood noted. He also indicated that the Kuwait-UK Joint Steering Group, which recently held its ninth meeting in Kuwait, is a clear evidence of solidity of the British-Kuwaiti ties, which dates

back centuries ago, adding that the two countries' royal families share historical years of close relations and mutual trust.

The Group has been so significant in boosting, enhancing, and strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries in various sectors, including energy, education, health, security, and aviation, said the British minister. On recent developments of situations in the region, Ellwood said that the Middle East is currently witnessing tensions and crisis, particularly in Yemen, Iraq, and Syria, affirming his country's

commitments toward restoring the region's security, stability, and development despite difficulties facing such commitments due to the ongoing wars in the region.

Meanwhile, the British Minister said, in a joint press conference with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Khaled Al-Jarallah, that preserving the security of Kuwait and the region is linked to his country's security as well, affirming Britain's keenness in supporting its allies, and commitment toward security of Gulf countries. — KUNA

# International

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2017

**Trump, Saudi Arabia in mutual embrace**



**Irish leader's White House visit has serious undertones**



**At least two hurt in shooting at French school**



**PARIS:** French Police officers secure the scene near the Paris offices of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) yesterday in Paris, after a letter bomb exploded in the premises. —AFP

## ONE HURT IN LETTER BOMB BLAST AT IMF PARIS OFFICE

### FRENCH PRESIDENT SAYS PARIS IS STILL TARGETED

**PARIS:** A letter bomb exploded at the Paris offices of the International Monetary Fund yesterday, injuring a secretary who suffered burns to her hands and face, police said. Employees were evacuated from the building near the Arc de Triomphe monument in the heart of the capital "as a precaution" after the late morning explosion, a police source said. IMF chief Christine Lagarde condemned it as a "cowardly act of violence". She reaffirmed "the IMF's resolve to continue our work in line with our mandate", according to a statement issued by her office.

"We are working closely with the French authorities to investigate this incident and ensure the safety of our staff." French President

Francois Hollande called it an "attack", saying it showed that "we are still targeted." The victim, a secretary for an unnamed senior manager, suffered light burns from the blast which might have been caused by a firework, a police source said, asking not to be named. Armed police and soldiers were seen securing the area around the IMF offices.

France has been the victim of a series of deadly attacks by Islamic extremists since 2015. Although no link has been established at this stage, a Greek far-left group claimed yesterday that it had sent a parcel bomb to the German finance ministry in Berlin, more than six years after waging a similar campaign targeting European officials.

#### Claim by Conspiracy of Fire

The Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei group admitted responsibility in a statement posted on an anti-establishment website, but only mentioned Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble's office as a target. German police said they had discovered the "explosive" package at Schaeuble's office on Wednesday, a day before he was due to host his new US counterpart Steven Mnuchin.

Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei, listed as a terrorist organization by the United States, in 2010 sent letter bombs to foreign embassies in Greece and to three European leaders—then European Commission chairman Jose Manuel Barroso, German Chancellor Angela

Merkel and then Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi. A Greek police source said the claim was "most probably" authentic.

Germany and the IMF are blamed by many Greeks for imposing years of public sector cuts and reforms in exchange for bailout packages needed to prop up the recession-hit country.

Greece's interior ministry said authorities in both Greece and Germany were working together on the case. A Greek police source said the package had a Greek stamp. The "sender" of the parcel was given as a deputy leader of the opposition New Democracy party along with his real address.—AFP

## ADOPTING IS TACTIC, IRAQI FORCES WEAPONRIES SMALL DRONES

**MOSUL:** Inside an armored vehicle in Mosul, a colonel scans live footage from a drone flying above the Iraqi city, hunting targets for a new weapon deployed against jihadists. The Islamic State group has used small commercial drones to drop explosives on advancing Iraqi forces since they launched the offensive to retake Iraq's second city in October. As the battle now focuses on recapturing west Mosul, Colonel Hussein Muayad's federal police forces have adopted the tactic, equipping their own remote-controlled surveillance drones with 40 mm grenades that are usually fired from grenade launchers.

"Residents would stare at the sky" during the Mosul fighting, fearing IS drones, says Muayad, wearing a black jacket over his federal police uniform. "Now it's the enemy whose eyes never leave the sky." The mustachioed police officer in his 40s is clearly proud of the new military tactic. "They used to hit us once. But we can hit them up to four times with a single drone," he says. Lieutenant General Raed Shaker Jawdat of the federal police—who are taking part in the battle alongside a special forces unit—says the "new military tactic" has been very effective.

"Dozens of terrorists have been killed and wounded. Jihadist movements have been paralyzed," Jawdat says. Muayad sits surrounded by four television screens, a black drone at his feet. A dozen oblong explosive devices tipped by the small, rounded grenades are nearby, pin near one end and a netted skirt taken from a badminton shuttlecock on the other. "That's so it keeps its balance as it falls," Muayad says.

Chain-smoking cigarettes, the colonel watches the live footage of a weaponized drone as it slowly buzzes over the devastated streets of west Mosul. The device slows to a hover above a white car near the front line. "A vehicle providing logistic support, used to transport fighters or food," Muayad explains. But there is no strike on the car, due to the presence nearby of a device designed to jam drone commands that Iraqi forces set up to protect themselves from IS attacks.

### Precise strikes

The colonel shows AFP footage of previous attacks. The munitions fall in slow motion on a group of fighters gathered in front of a mosque. More explosives are dropped on a car, small clouds of grey smoke erupting on the screen. "West Mosul is very populated. The roads are very narrow," Muayad says. "The point with these drones is to have very precise strikes to target the terrorists, not the residents." "Day and night, there are always 12 drones in the air, ready to strike," Muayad says.

But he refuses to say exactly how many drones—which can each carry up to four grenades—the police operate. The devices have been equipped with an extra battery to prolong their flight time and can now cover a distance of eight kilometers up from less than five kilometers before. Inside a ravaged courtyard in a neighborhood recently recaptured from the jihadists, Captain Baraa Mohammed Jassem from the Rapid Response Division silently observes a surveillance drone about to take off.

He too says his elite interior ministry force has "perfected" drones available commercially so they can drop explosives on the enemy. "We took the... idea from the Daesh terrorist organization," he says, using an Arabic acronym for IS. IS has carried out drone attacks throughout the Mosul operation, with the first record of a deadly attack coming a few days before drive was launched in October, killing two Iraqi Kurdish fighters and wounding two French special forces soldiers. —AFP



**MOSUL:** A picture in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul shows a drone carrying two grenades flying in a test flight by Iraqi forces which aim to use it against Islamic State (IS) group fighters. — AFP



**WASHINGTON:** US President Donald Trump and Saudi Deputy Crown Prince and Defense Minister Mohammed bin Salman speak to the media in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, DC. — AFP

## TRUMP, SAUDI ARABIA IN MUTUAL EMBRACE BOTH TO STRENGTHEN US-SAUDI STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP

**RIYADH:** US President Donald Trump may not be popular in much of the Muslim world but he has been embraced by Saudi Arabia and, in turn, has reached out to the oil-rich kingdom. A meeting Tuesday in Washington between Trump and the powerful Saudi Deputy Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, confirmed that the new government in Washington sees Riyadh as a critical partner for both security and investment, analysts say.

Prince Mohammed, 31, whose country is the birthplace of Islam, was one of the first foreign leaders to visit Trump, who has vowed to fight "radical Islamic terrorism". His trip followed a series of laudatory comments towards the new administration from Saudi Arabia, whose relations were increasingly frayed under former president Barack Obama. Trump "recognizes the Saudi leadership as the primary conduit to the Muslim world," said Salman al-Ansari, president of the Saudi American Public Relation Affairs Committee (SAPRAC).

The Washington meeting was an affirmation by Trump's team that the main source "for Middle Eastern stability, security and untapped mutual economic prosperity is Saudi Arabia," Ansari said from Washington. His committee is a private initiative to strengthen Saudi-US ties. Anwar Eshki, a retired Saudi general and founder of the independent Middle East Centre for Strategic and Legal Studies in Jeddah, said Trump invited Prince Mohammed "to make the plan for the Middle East" together. He said they want to counter both Shiite Iran and the Islamic State group of Sunni extremists who control territory in Syria and Iraq and have claimed attacks in other countries.

Leaders in Sunni-dominated Saudi Arabia have welcomed the Trump administration's views toward their regional rival Iran. US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis has described Iran as "the biggest destabilizing force in the Middle East". Trump has opposed the July 2015 nuclear deal between world powers and Iran that saw international sanctions lifted in exchange for guarantees that Tehran will not pursue a nuclear weapons capability.

Riyadh regularly accuses Tehran of interference throughout the region,

including in Syria where it backs the regime of President Bashar al-Assad, and in Yemen. Saudi Arabia has for two years led an Arab military coalition assisting the Yemeni government against Iran-backed insurgents. Washington gives intelligence, aerial refueling and weapons to the Saudi alliance, although Obama in December blocked the transfer of precision-guided bomb kits to Saudi Arabia because of concerns over civilian casualties.

### Critical strategic partner

Eshki said Trump's administration could step up military assistance for the Saudi coalition to help pressure the rebels into returning to peace talks. Anthony Cordesman, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington,

said it remains unclear "whether there will be practical plans" to better contain Iran and improve counter-terrorism. But Washington clearly sees Riyadh as "a critical strategic partner," Cordesman said. The United States is not the only target of the Saudi charm offensive.

While his son was in Washington, King Salman was in Asia on a month-long tour that has included stops in China, Japan, Malaysia and Indonesia to strengthen alliances in the region. Second in line to the throne, Prince Mohammed holds the post of defense minister, although much of his focus is on efforts to diversify the economy. A White House statement said Trump and Prince Mohammed seek "to further strengthen and elevate the United States-Saudi strategic relationship" in security, economic and other areas. —AFP

## EMIRATES, ETIHAD BOARDING AS USUAL AFTER 2ND TRUMP TRAVEL BAN BLOCKED

**DUBAI:** Passengers from six mainly Muslim countries who would have been barred from the United States under President Donald Trump's latest travel order will be allowed to board US-bound flights on Emirates and Etihad Airways now that a federal judge has blocked it, the Middle East carriers said yesterday. The executive order banning refugees and nationals of six Muslim-majority countries from travelling to the US was temporarily halted on Wednesday, hours before it was to go into effect, by a federal judge in Hawaii.

Emirates will follow guidance by US Customs and Border Protection, issued after the court's decision, that citizens of Iran, Libya, Syria, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen would be accepted for travel to the US if they possessed the necessary travel documents, an airline spokeswoman said by email. Etihad Airways "will continue to accept guests of all nationalities for travel to the US provided they have valid travel documents and, if necessary, visas," an airline spokeswoman said.

The Abu Dhabi-based carrier said it

would continue to assist passengers affected by the recent executive orders but was advising them to check with their nearest US mission as "US travel requirements are subject to change." The Wednesday court ruling is only temporary, until broader arguments in the case can be heard. Trump said it made the United States look weak, and promised to take the case "as far as it needs to go. A notice on Qatar Airways' website said passengers would still need to have valid travel documents after the executive order was "enjoined."

The revised order, which was less restrictive and removed Iraq from Trump's original list, was organized in coordination with airlines, industry group IATA has said, unlike the initial ban which came into immediate effect without notice. Trump signed the new ban on March 6 in a bid to overcome legal problems with the first order in January, which caused chaos at airports and sparked mass protests before a Washington judge stopped its enforcement in February. —Reuters

## UN PRAISES IRAN'S EXEMPLARY REFUGEE EFFORTS

**TEHRAN:** While Iranians would bear the brunt of Donald Trump's visa ban, which has been blocked on the orders of a US court, international officials say the country has quietly emerged as one of the most generous towards refugees. "The leadership demonstrated by the Iranian government has been exemplary in hosting refugees and keeping borders open," said Sivanka Dhanapala, who heads the UN High Commissioner for Refugees team in Tehran. "It's a story that's not told often enough."

Iran has been sheltering a million registered Afghans for almost four decades, and NGOs estimate there are some two million more living under the radar. That's the fourth-largest refugee population in the world, the UN says. On Wednesday a federal court in Hawaii halted Trump's new visa ban on six mostly Muslim nations including Iran, with a judge ruling there was a strong likelihood it would cause "irreparable injury" should it go ahead. If it comes into force, the executive order would have a particularly tough impact on the one million Iranians living and studying in the US, as well as their families.

Foreign NGO workers have noted the irony that Iran is targeted by the ban while it continues to deal with huge numbers who have fled an American-led conflict. Dhanapala highlighted the 2015 decree by supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ordering schools to take in all Afghan chil-

dren, documented or not—a move that left authorities scrambling to build the equivalent of 15,000 new classrooms. "We've also worked with the government on incorporating refugees into a government-sponsored health insurance scheme which is a groundbreaking development not just for Iran but globally for refugees," Dhanapala said.

### Bitter life

Officials are well aware that Afghans still face a harsh existence in Iran. As in many countries, Iranians are less than pleased to be hosting so many poor foreigners, especially when their economy has been battered by years of sanctions and mismanagement. The result is that Iran does a lot to discourage Afghans from staying, rounding up the undocumented and sending them home. "Even someone like me, who was born in Iran and has lived here 36 years is not yet an Iranian citizen and the discrimination I face in my education and work is suffocating," said one Afghan, a relatively well-established professional in Tehran, who asked to remain anonymous.

He is still grateful for his residency permit, which must be renewed every six to 12 months. "I have never seen Afghanistan, except for the bad images on the media and I truly fear returning," he said. "But for 36 years, I have lived in fear of my residency papers not being renewed and it has made life bitter for us."



**TEHRAN:** This file photo shows Afghan schoolchildren attending a class at the Shahid Nasserri refugee camp in Taraz Nahid village near the city of Saveh, some 130 kms southwest of the capital Tehran. —AFP

### Life in the shadows

Many Afghans are in Iran for work, and are a perennial sight on the margins of Tehran life as construction workers, parking attendants and rubbish-pickers. "What else can we do? I have two daughters and a son back in Afghanistan," said an undocumented 40-year-old who works as a cleaner and also asked not to be named. He gave up his refugee card so he could visit his family, and came back to Iran with a three-month visa which

he could not renew. "I haven't visited home for three years. If I go, it takes five to 12 months to get another visa," he said. He was 14 when he fled the Soviet war in the 1980s. "When they catch you on the street, it doesn't matter if you've been here one year or 100, they take you to the deportation camp and make you pay for the bus back to the border," he said. "I've been sent back a few times. Either you wait for a new visa or come illegally with traffickers. — AFP

## TURKEY SAYS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DUTCH LIBERALS AND FASCIST WILDERS

**ANKARA:** Turkey said yesterday there was "no difference" between the ruling Dutch liberals and the "fascist" anti-immigration politician Geert Wilders, after Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte defeated the far-right in elections. With Turkey locked in an explosive crisis with the European Union that erupted in the run-up to the polls, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu predicted that "religious wars" will start in Europe. "You look at the social democrats and the fascist Wilders, there is no difference, they have the same mentality," Cavusoglu said, quoted by state-run news agency Anadolu, referring to the ruling Liberal VVD party which won the most seats against Wilders and his Freedom Party (PVV).

Turkey and Europe have been locked in a diplomatic spat after the Netherlands and Germany blocked Turkish ministers from holding rallies to secure a "yes" vote in next month's referendum on expanding President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's powers. While Erdogan has repeatedly accused the countries of acting like "Nazis", the European Union has warned Ankara to show moderation in its language. "Where are you going, where are you taking Europe?" asked Cavusoglu, addressing Europe's leaders.

"You have begun to disintegrate Europe and take Europe to the cliff. Soon religious wars will begin in Europe," Cavusoglu warned. "Because they were of different faiths, they killed each other 100 years ago," he said, without elaborating further on what he was referring to. "But they learned a lesson from this and the European Union, the Council of Europe was set up," he said. "Europe is going back to those old days." Cavusoglu questioned The Netherlands' understanding of "humanity, democracy and freedom", insisting Turkey would not remain passive against such actions.



**THE HAGUE:** Netherlands' prime minister and VVD party leader Mark Rutte celebrates after winning the general elections in The Hague. —AFP

"You will see in the coming period, we will take further steps," the minister added without giving further detail. On April 16, Turks will decide whether to approve constitutional changes to create an executive presidency, which the government insists will be like that

of France or the United States but critics say it will lead to one-man rule. Late Wednesday, Cavusoglu threatened to unilaterally scrap a March 2016 deal that has substantially reduced the flow of migrants and refugees to the EU.—AFP

## MORE THAN 150,000 IRAQIS FLED WEST MOSUL FIGHTING

**BAGHDAD:** Iraqi authorities said yesterday that more than 150,000 people have fled fighting in and around west Mosul since security forces launched an operation to retake it from jihadists last month. The International Organization for Migration released displacement figures on Wednesday indicating that nearly 100,000 had fled, but those statistics included fewer people residing outside of camps. According to Iraq's ministry of migration and displaced, 152,857 people have fled the west Mosul area since the battle to recapture it from the Islamic State group began on February 19.

More than 98,000 are housed in camps, while more than 54,000 are staying in areas that have been recaptured from IS, the ministry said. IS overran large areas north and west of Baghdad in 2014, but Iraqi forces backed by US-led air strikes have since retaken most of the territory they lost. Iraqi forces launched the operation to recapture Mosul from IS in October, retaking the east of the city before setting their sights on the smaller but more densely populated west.

They have made steady progress against the jihadists, retaking a series of neighborhoods and important sites including the airport, the train station, Mosul museum and the provincial government headquarters. But the pace of the advance has been periodically slowed by bad weather, which makes air strikes more difficult and turns dirt streets into avenues of thick mud.—AFP

# GREEK NEO-NAZIS RETAIN SWAGGER DESPITE TWO-YEAR TRIAL

**ATHENS:** Nearly two years in the dock over an anti-fascist rapper's murder have done little to blunt the swagger of Greek neo-Nazi party Golden Dawn. The ultranationalist party remains the fourth largest in parliament, and the Greek authorities continue to grapple with how to confront the aggressive actions of many of its leading cadres. Thirteen Golden Dawn lawmakers—and another four ex-MPs—have been on trial since April 2015 accused of membership of a criminal organization over the fatal stabbing of rapper Pavlos Fyssas in a street clash in 2013.

Fyssas's murder shocked the country and sparked an investigation into the actions of Golden Dawn, which until then had not faced justice despite being linked to a campaign of violence against migrants

and political opponents. First elected to parliament in January 2012, Golden Dawn's lawmakers continue to occupy an ambiguous role in a country that for years denied it had a problem with racism. In January, Golden Dawn lawmaker Yiannis Lagos stormed into a school in his local Athens constituency of Piraeus to protest at the teaching of refugee children on the premises. Another lawmaker, Panagiotis Iliopoulos of Volos, was photographed brandishing a wooden rod outside a local TV station where a protest against his party was taking place last week.

### Lack of coherence

In the Fyssas trial, the prosecution is trying to prove that Golden Dawn operated as a full-blown,

tightly regimented criminal outfit that allegedly encouraged beatings and even killings. But the Greek authorities appear unable to take firm action against party members who have not been convicted of any crimes. In December, for example, Greek Defense Minister Panos Kammenos, head of the nationalist Independent Greeks (ANEL) party, was not able to prevent a neo-Nazi delegation from making a "patriotic" visit to islands facing Turkey.

The delegation included Golden Dawn's chief ideologue Christos Pappas—a noted admirer of Hitler—and party spokesman Ilias Kasidiaris, who has a swastika tattoo on his arm. "There is a lack of coherence in the state's response," said Costis Papaioannou, a professor and activist who was until recently the justice

ministry's general secretary for human rights. The trial "keeps pressure on the party but also sends the messages that state institutions are not very alert to the problem", he said.

### No lines to follow

"When it comes to deciding what to do with a parliamentary party whose leadership is on trial for crimes, there are no definite lines to follow," added Papaioannou, who has written a book on Golden Dawn. Pappas, Lagos, Kasidiaris and Iliopoulos are among the 13 Golden Dawn members on trial including party chief Nikos Michaloliakos. Another four defendants are either no longer MPs or have left the party. —AFP



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# IRISH LEADER'S WHITE HOUSE VISIT HAS SERIOUS UNDERTONES

## IRISH PM TO TALK ABOUT IMMIGRATION POLICIES

**WASHINGTON:** While shamrocks and smiles typically define the Irish prime minister's traditional St. Patrick's Day visit to the White House, with President Donald Trump the celebration could turn more serious. Taoiseach Enda Kenny has signaled that he will use the meeting - scheduled for yesterday, one day before St. Patrick's Day - to talk about Brexit and Trump's immigration policies. Kenny, who labeled Trump's language "dangerous" during the campaign, has said it is important to keep the standing date, which some critics have suggested he should cancel.

Speaking to The Irish Times, Kenny said, "European leaders need to be over here talking to Republicans, Democrats and the administration about what membership of the European Union means and the relationship that it can have with as powerful an entity as the United States." Earlier this year, Trump said Britain's decision to leave the European Union would "end up being a great thing" and predicted the bloc would continue to break apart. The

comments echoed Trump's rhetoric during his presidential campaign. Kenny will be the first European Union politician to meet with Trump after British Prime Minister Theresa May.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel was scheduled to come to the White House on Tuesday, but that visit was moved back to Friday because of the snow. Kenny also plans to push Trump on his plans for Irish people living in the country illegally. At a dinner in Washington Wednesday night, Kenny said, "We will of course raise with Congress and with President Trump himself that the necessary work will be done for our undocumented to be allowed to come in from the cold, feel the warmth of this great country and relieve the burden of having to live in that limbo land."

Trump ran on a promise to curtail illegal immigration. His revised travel ban, affecting travelers from six Muslim-majority nations, was set to go effect yesterday before it was put on hold Wednesday by a federal judge in Hawaii.

Richard Haas, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, a nonpartisan think tank, said this meeting is more serious than in past years largely because of the fallout from Brexit, which is raising concerns about Ireland's economic prospects and the future for Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom.

### Positive outcomes

He said, "You add all this up and this has become a much more substantive meeting." Kenny spokesman Feargal Purcell said Kenny wants to discuss ways to find "positive outcomes" for an estimated 50,000 Irish people in the country illegally, and he will "outline the positive engagement there can be between Europe and the United States, especially in a post Brexit context." The St. Patrick's Day White House event dates back to the 1950s and has become an important standing engagement for Ireland, which has strong emotional and ancestral ties to the United States.

The prime minister is set to have a one-on-one meeting with Trump yesterday, as well as attend a luncheon at the Capitol and an evening reception at the White House. Traditionally, the prime minister presents the president with a bowl of shamrocks to mark the occasion. Last year, Kenny was greeted warmly by a green tie-wearing President Barack Obama, who gave an affectionate speech, calling it one of his favorite events of the year, because "I get to welcome my people." According to Census data, 32.7 million United States residents claimed Irish ancestry in 2015, making it the second most commonly cited European ancestry, following German.

Trump earlier this month proclaimed March as Irish-American Heritage Month, as the president does every year. This may be the last year Kenny, Ireland's leader since 2011, makes the White House pilgrimage on behalf of Ireland. Kenny, who has faced pressure from party colleagues to resign over a stumbling response to a police scandal, has said he will address his political future when he returns from America. — AP



**NEW YORK:** In this file photo, Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny speaks in New York. —AP

# TRUMP: I MIGHT NOT BE HERE IF IT WASN'T FOR TWITTER

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump is defending his frequent-and often incendiary-use of Twitter by saying that the social media platform lets him bypass the "dishonest" press. "Maybe I would not be here if it wasn't for Twitter," Trump said in an interview with Fox News late Wednesday. "I get such a fake and dishonest press," he said, singling out the CNN news channel and the three main US networks-ABC, CBS and NBC. But Trump said he was "not including Fox because I think Fox has been fair to me."

Much of the press "is not honest... I have close to 100 million people watching me on Twitter, including Facebook and Instagram," he said. "I have my own form of media." The @realDonaldTrump account on Twitter has just over 26 million followers. "When I say things, the press does not cover me accurately," Trump said, while emphasizing that "Twitter is a wonderful thing for me." On March 4, Trump set off a furor when he tweeted that president Barack Obama had put a wiretap on communications at Trump Tower, the New York

home of the president and first family, before the November 8 election. Senior lawmakers with the House Intelligence Committee who are investigating the matter said they have seen no evidence to support the claim. But Trump told Fox News that the White House "will be submitting things before the committee very soon that hasn't been submitted as of yet," without offering details. Trump also directed particular ire at the NBC network. "I made a fortune for NBC with 'The Apprentice,'" he said, referring to the TV show he once hosted. "I was on for 14 seasons."

And now, "You see what happens when I am not on? It was a disaster." In January, Trump mocked the show's low ratings, blaming its current host, the Hollywood star and ex-California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, for a poor performance. Schwarzenegger said in March that he was quitting the show because it had too much "baggage"-specifically Trump's name in the credits as executive producer, which he said has scared away sponsors and viewers.—AFP



**SAN DIEGO:** Nadia Hanan Madalo, center right, hugs her mother, Alyshooa Kannah, center left, at the airport after arriving from Iraq in San Diego.—AP

# REFUGEE FAMILY LANDS IN US AMID FIGHT OVER TRAVEL BAN

**SAN DIEGO:** Just a week ago, Nadia Hanan Madalo and her family had received news that refugees like them have been waiting to hear: They had seats on a flight bound for the US from Iraq, with an arrival just before the latest Trump administration travel ban was to take effect. But until they set foot on American soil, they weren't sure. All Madalo's family knew was that they couldn't go back to their Christian village. Islamic State fighters had invaded several years ago, and only devastation remains. Roads are filled with land mines.

The town has been destroyed. And their family home was burned to the ground. "Thank God we ran from there and come here," she told her brother in Arabic, who translated her words to English after Madalo, her husband and four children arrived to the San Diego airport Wednesday. Tears streamed down her face as she gave him, her other siblings and mother long embraces. As Madalo and her family flew to the US on Wednesday, a federal judge in Hawaii put a hold on President Trump's newest ban - the latest development in a fight between the administration and the courts that has injected more uncertainty into the lives of refugees.

Resettlement agencies say more than 67,000 refugees were in the stages of being approved and allowed into the US when Trump's January order halted travel for 90 days from seven majority-Muslim countries: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. The order also suspended the refugee program for 120 days. After a federal court in California blocked the order in February, declaring it unconstitutional, thousands rushed to get in before the anticipated new order was issued. The Trump administration said the revised ban addresses the legal problems of the last one, and dropped Iraq from the list of countries.

### The law is clear

US District Judge Derrick Watson blocked the order, citing "questionable evidence supporting the government's national security motivation." Trump, who has said the order is necessary to prevent terrorists from entering the US, criticized the ruling, saying: "The danger is clear. The law is clear." Madalo and her family were booked on a refugee flight leaving Wednesday after originally offered yesterday, the day the travel ban was to go into effect. The renewed order allowed refugees with booked tickets by the end of Thursday to still come into the country until the end of the month.

They felt lucky, after waiting for four years to get into the United States. Madalo's sister in Lebanon is among those still waiting for approval. Before leaving, Madalo and her husband returned one last time to their village. The family had not been back in three years since IS fighters moved in. Government forces have since pushed the fighters out, but their home was in ruins - grim confirmation that they needed to leave. Still, it was a difficult moment. Madalo's husband, Salim Tobiya Kato, cried for hours as he said goodbye to his siblings, not knowing when he would see them again. "It's hard to leave my birthplace, where all my memories are, and where my parents are buried," he said. At the same time, he looked forward to reuniting with his 21-year-old son who got into the US a year earlier. — AP

# AT LEAST TWO HURT IN SHOOTING AT FRENCH SCHOOL

## PUPIL ARMED WITH A RIFLE, HANDGUNS, GRENADES ARRESTED

**NICE, France:** At least two people were injured in a shooting at a high school in the southern French town of Grasse yesterday which saw the head teacher targeted, police and local authorities said. One 17-year-old pupil armed with a rifle, two handguns and two grenades was arrested after the shooting at the Tocqueville high school, a police source said, asking not to be named. There was conflicting information about whether a second suspect was on the run, with police initially telling AFP they were looking for an accomplice. Another police source said the shooter acted alone.

According to a statement from the Grasse town hall, "two pupils shot at the principal." All schools in the town some 40 kilometers west of the Riviera resort of Nice have been locked down, education authorities said. France is still in a state of emergency after a series of



**GRASSE:** Police officers control traffic near the Tocqueville high school in Grasse, southwestern France, after a shooting occurred in the school yesterday.—AFP

terror attacks including an IS-claimed massacre in Paris in November 2015 in which 130 people died and a truck attack in Nice in

July last year. Authorities in the jittery nation have bolstered security outside schools. More than 3,000 reservists were called up to help keep watch outside the country's 64,000 primary and secondary schools for the return to the school year in September.

The shooting comes less than six weeks ahead of a two-round presidential election on April 23 and May 7. A crisis cell has been put in place, education official Emmanuel Ethis said on Twitter. Ethis urged worried parents not to travel to the school, saying that "pupils are safe". The French government initiated an attack alert via smartphone in the wake of the shooting. Local officials said that several pupils had fled and sought refuge in a nearby supermarket "which created panic and rumours of an attack". "The other pupils have been asked to stay in the school and not panic," local officials said.

### Security bolstered

Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve cut short a trip to the northern Somme area because of the Grasse shooting, as well as a letter bomb blast at the offices of the International Monetary Fund in Paris yesterday. The education minister was also on her way to the school.

France has had bitter experiences of attacks in schools. In 2012, an extremist from Toulouse, Mohamed Merah, shot dead three children and a teacher at a Jewish school in his city before being killed by police. Yesterday's shooting came just hours after the letter bomb explosion at the IMF offices, injuring a secretary who suffered burns to her hands and face. Employees were evacuated from the building near the Arc de Triomphe monument in the heart of the capital "as a precaution", a police source said. IMF chief Christine Lagarde condemned it as a "cowardly act of violence".—AFP

## TRUMP CALLS FOR PRIVATIZING AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL OPERATIONS

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump is calling for privatizing the nation's air traffic control operations in his budget proposal, a top priority of the airline industry. The proposal says spinning off air traffic operations from the Federal Aviation Administration and placing them under an "independent, non-governmental organization" would make the system "more efficient and innovative while maintaining safety." Airlines have been lobbying vigorously for the change, saying the FAA's NextGen program to modernize the air traffic system is taking too long and has produced too few benefits.

Industry officials say that privatization would remove air traffic operations from the uncertainties of the annual congressional budget process, which have hindered the FAA's ability to make long-term procurement commitments. The National Air Traffic Controllers Association, the union that represents the FAA's 14,000 controllers, is also backing privatization. Union officials have complained that the FAA has been unable to resolve chronic controller understaffing at some of the nation's busiest control facilities, and they say they've become discouraged by the modernization effort's slow progress.

But FAA Administrator Michael Huerta told an aviation industry conference earlier this month that the agency has made "tremendous progress" over the past decade in updating its computers and other equipment in order to move from a radar-based to a satellite-based control system. The modernization program has already delivered \$2.7 billion in benefits to airlines and other users of the system, and the FAA expects to produce another \$13 billion in benefits by 2020, he said. Airlines have an important ally in Rep. Bill Shuster, R-Pa., chairman of the House transportation committee.

### Opposing privatization

The committee approved an aviation bill sponsored by Shuster last year that would have removed air traffic operations from the FAA and placed them under the control of a private, nonprofit corporation. Opposition to the bill from other powerful House committee chairmen who oppose ceding Congress' oversight of the air traffic system to a private entity prevented Shuster from bringing the measure before the entire House for a vote. Lobbying groups representing business aircraft operators, private pilots and small and medium-sized airports also oppose privatization. They say they fear airlines will dominate the corporation's board and that they'll be asked to pay more to support the system while facing reduced services.—AP

# ANTI-AUSTERITY PROTESTS BREAK OUT ACROSS BRAZIL

**BRASILIA:** Demonstrators occupied Brazil's finance ministry, flooded the center of Sao Paulo and went on strike in a string of cities on Wednesday to protest reforms to the cash-strapped country's pension system. The biggest demonstration took place in the financial powerhouse Sao Paulo, where thousands of people filled a section of the main avenue. Organizers claimed that up to 80,000 people attended, saying the fiery former leftist president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva would address the crowd later.

A strike by metro and bus workers in Sao Paulo earlier had paralyzed the morning rush hour. During a dramatic protest in the capital Brasilia, hundreds of activists burst into the finance ministry before the start of the workday, occupying the building until late afternoon. Police said they vandalized the ministry and broke windows. Staff at public schools in Rio de Janeiro also went on strike, trash collectors stopped work in Curitiba and the metro was shut down in Belo Horizonte, according to the news portal G1. The unrest marked the most serious challenge in the streets so far to attempts by center-right President Michel Temer to tame the budget and restore an economy mired in two straight years of recession. "We're on strike for the future of the country," said Rio teacher Mirna Aragon at a protest with thousands of other people. "The rights of workers have been thrown in the gutter."

### Question of rights

A provision to set the retirement age at 65 is central to the pension reform—a shock to a country where many are able to draw pensions at 54. That reform is needed to prevent the pension system's "collapse," the hugely unpopular Temer said on Wednesday. "No one will have their rights taken away," he said in an address, describing the reforms as "saving the benefits of today's retirees and of the



**RIO DE JANEIRO:** A municipal guard in riot gear fires rubber bullets at protesters during a national strike against the government's social welfare reform bill in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.—AFP

young who will retire tomorrow." Arguing that the country will be driven to bankruptcy if austerity measures are not taken, Temer has already steered a 20-year budget freeze through Congress.

He got one piece of good news Wednesday when the Moody's financial ratings agency upgraded its outlook for Brazil from "negative" to "stable." However, leftist opposition organizations say Temer is punishing ordinary Brazilians already suffering the worst recession in the country's history, with unemployment at a record 12.6 percent around 13 million jobless. The popular actor Wagner Moura—who plays the drug lord Pablo Escobar in the Netflix series "Narcos"—added his voice, saying "this reform represents yet another enormous blow to the rights of Brazilian workers."

### Corruption probes

Temer took over last year after his leftist predecessor Dilma Rousseff was

impeached for illegally manipulating government accounts with unauthorized loans. He has made a return to economic health his main goal, saying he does not care if austerity measures decrease his already rock-bottom popularity. However, Temer's credibility among Brazilians is being hurt further by a ballooning graft scandal over embezzlement from the state oil company Petrobras.

The scandal entered new territory on Tuesday, when the prosecutor general requested the Supreme Court for the authority to investigate scores of politicians. They reportedly include five ministers as well as the presidents of both houses of Congress. Temer has said he will not fire ministers unless they are actually charged with crimes. However, earlier phases in the scandal have already claimed several ministers, raising questions over Temer's ability to keep a congressional coalition together for the all-important vote on pension reform.—AFP



**KUALA LUMPUR:** In this photo, Christian Burmese refugee students listen to a volunteer teacher during an English lesson in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.—AP

## MYANMAR REFUGEES MAY BE HURT MOST BY TRUMP RESETTLEMENT CUTS

### TRAVEL BAN TO KEEP THE BAD DUDES OUT BARS NEW VISAS

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Tin, her husband and five children have cleared years of refugee hurdles to come to the US: Blood tests, interviews, DNA and fingerprints, background checks. She has her one must-bring possession within reach, a well-worn Bible, and keeps their phone charged for the US Embassy to call. But the odds of that happening dropped precipitously. President Donald Trump's 16-page travel ban "to keep the bad dudes out" bars new visas for people from six Muslim-majority countries and shuts down America's refugee program through mid July.

His executive order had been set to take effect yesterday, but a federal judge put it on hold hours before it was to take effect. The order also includes a 55 percent reduction in refugee visas overall, from a planned 110,000 to 50,000 this year. This means, in some of the most desperate places in the world, 60,000 refugee visas are not going to be issued after all. Who are the 60,000 people who may have lost their chance to resettle in the US by September? An Associated Press analysis of 10 years of refugee data suggests that their most common country of origin is not any of the six nations in the travel ban, but Myanmar, also known as Burma.

Thousands, like Tin and her family, are Christians who were persecuted in their native country. They expected to resettle before September in the US, a place they consider home. More than 160,000 Burmese have resettled in the US in the past decade, more than any other group. They account for nearly 25 percent of new US refugees since 2007. "America is really our fatherland in terms of religion," said Tin, 38. "They sent their missionaries to our country and taught us to be Christians. And now we had to

escape. All we want is to be safe." Under an authoritarian regime in predominantly Buddhist Myanmar, Christians face religious and political discrimination. Tin and her community fled Chin state, where Human Rights Watch says more than 90 percent of the residents were adhering to the tenets the American Baptist Church by 2009, pitting them against a military campaign to elevate Buddhism over all other religions. Tin and others said that when they gathered for family prayers, people threw rocks at them. Soldiers busted into church services. They hid their precious Bibles for fear of attack.

School teacher Sang, 29, a Burmese refugee who learned English as a theology student, meticulously read through a copy of Trump's executive order last week and then looked up, nodding. He said that while he agreed with the need to keep terrorists out of the US, "We are not terrorists, we are Christians. We will never be a problem in the United States. We will get educations, we will work hard. We only seek safety." Tin and Sang are among more than 100,000 Christian Burmese refugees forced to flee in recent years.

They live out of suitcases in abject poverty in Malaysia. Their kids can't go to school, and they risk deportation or detention if they try to report a crime. And it's not just Christians. Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims have also been forced to escape the country of 51 million, where soldiers torched homes, raped women and killed them in a crackdown that began in October. Trump's "Executive Order Protecting The Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into The United States," says lowering the cap is necessary to US interests.

#### Help other people

But the swift reduction in refugee visas interrupts work underway by federal law enforcement agencies and non-profits around the world to vet 110,000 people in 2017, the highest number in decades. It was an attempt to put a small dent in the record 65 million refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons worldwide. Nearly 38,000 have been admitted so far. Another 72,000 were preparing to arrive before the fiscal year ends in September. Instead, under Trump's order just 12,000 more will be allowed in.

Exceptions can be made if the secretaries of State and Homeland Security agree. "The safety and security of the American people is our highest priority," said a State Department official who provided a statement on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to talk on the record about it. The US defines refugees as people of "special humanitarian concern" who have been persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.

Refugees from Syria, in particular, have arrived in greater numbers in the past twelve months. Burma's share has dropped from 26 percent of all spots in 2015 to just 8 percent of the refugee caseload so far this fiscal year. About 210,000 refugees, largely Vietnamese and Cambodians, came to the US in 1980, the most in any year.

Refugee arrivals dropped to less than 30,000 after 9/11 prompted strict new immigration rules. But they have increased fairly steadily since 2004, and overall refugee admissions reached 85,000 last year. The journeys of Burmese refugees begin in some of the poorest places on Earth: remote villages in strife-ridden regions. — AP

## FOUR SUSPECTED MILITANTS KILLED IN BANGLADESH RAID

**NEW DELHI:** Four suspected militants from a banned Islamist group were killed during a police raid on a building in south-eastern Bangladesh, police said yesterday. Senior police official Shafiqul Islam said police have completed the overnight operation after cordoning off the building where the suspects stayed in Sitakunda in Chittagong district. He said one suspect possibly belonging to Jumatul Mujahedeen Bangladesh was killed by police fire and three others died when they exploded bombs or grenades inside an apartment during the raid.

Local media said one of the dead was a woman. Islam said two security officials were injured in a gunfight. Bomb experts were examining the building because explosives were found inside the apartment, which was rented by the suspects, the official said. Twenty other tenants were rescued after officials cordoned off the two-story building on Wednesday afternoon. Bangladesh has experienced a surge in attacks by suspected militants in recent years, with atheist bloggers and writers, foreigners, members of minority groups among the targets.

In July, 20 hostages, including 17 foreigners, were killed in a restaurant in the nation's capital, Dhaka. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for that attack but the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina rejected that, saying Jumatul Mujahedeen Bangladesh was responsible. The government insists the Islamic State group has no presence in the Muslim-majority country. In a separate development, a suspect from another banned militant group was killed in what police described as a gunfight in the eastern district of Brahmanbaria early yesterday.—AP



**SITAKUNDA:** A Bangladeshi policeman evacuates a family after cordoning off the area where suspected militants were holding up, in Sitakunda in Chittagong district of Bangladesh, yesterday.—AP

## PAKISTAN RAISES HOPE OF PERMANENT REOPENING OF AFGHAN BORDER

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan is raising hopes of a permanent reopening of the country's border with Afghanistan that was shut in the wake of deadly militant attacks last month. Pakistan's foreign ministry spokesman, Nafees Zakaria, said yesterday that Islamabad is taking steps to resume normal trade and movement of people across the border. He says there are hopes the border would reopen "soon."

The border's closure came after a string of suicide attacks that killed more than 125 people. Islamabad claims the attacks were orchestrated from militant safe havens in Afghanistan. The closure has triggered hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost trade even as tensions remain high between the two neighbors. Earlier this month, Pakistan temporarily reopened the border for 48 hours to allow 35,000 stranded Afghans to return home.—AP



**ISLAMABAD:** In this photo, Afghan nationals prepare to cross the Torkham border post in Pakistan en route to Afghanistan.—AP



## ETHNIC PARTIES WITHDRAW FROM NEPAL GOVERNMENT

**KATHMANDU:** Political parties from southern Nepal withdrew support from the government yesterday, weakening an already fragile administration and throwing long overdue elections further into doubt. An alliance of ethnic Madhesi parties joined the government when it formed last August on the proviso that the constitution be amended to grant the indigenous plains people greater political representation.

But the legislation has been deadlocked in parliament for months, angering the Madhesis who had warned the government they would not remain idle. "We had given the government a seven-day ultimatum to address our demands, but they did nothing," Laxman Lal Karna, a leader of the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF), said.

The office of the speaker of the parliament confirmed they had received a notice of withdrawal from the Madhesi alliance. The government had anticipated a rebellion by the Madhesi, and last week managed to cobble together enough extra support to ensure its brittle coalition retained a majority in parliament. "The government still has the numbers, but when it was formed it was to amend the constitution with the Madhesis," said Kathmandu-based political analyst Vijay Kant Karna.

"Now a new kind of conflict arises." The Madhesis have vowed to disrupt local elections slated for May—the first in nearly two decades—by striking across the lowlands that border India where around half of Nepal's population lives. The alliance would

"further intensify" its campaign against the long-awaited polls, the UDMF's Karna said, which has already seen clashes between government forces and Madhesi protesters.

Earlier this month, five minority Nepalis were killed when police opened fire as protesters tried to disrupt a rally by the main opposition party in Saptari, a Madhesi stronghold. Madhesis staged a month-long border blockade when Nepal's constitution was passed in September 2015, leading to a crippling shortage of essential goods in the landlocked Himalayan nation. More than 50 people died in clashes before parliament agreed to amend the constitution and redraw federal boundaries, a move that would grant Madhesis greater political clout. —AFP

## TROUBLED WATERS? INDIA FAST-TRACKS HYDRO PROJECTS IN DISPUTED KASHMIR

**NEW DELHI:** India has fast-tracked hydropower projects worth \$15 billion in Kashmir in recent months, three federal and state officials said, ignoring warnings from Islamabad that power stations on rivers flowing into Pakistan will disrupt water supplies. The swift approval of projects that had languished for years came after Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested last year that sharing the waterways could be conditional on Pakistan clamping down on anti-India militants that New Delhi says it shelters.

Pakistan has opposed some of these projects before, saying they violate a World Bank-mediated treaty on the sharing of the Indus river and its tributaries upon which 80 percent of its irrigated agriculture depends. The schemes, the largest of which is the 1,856 MW Sawalkote plant, will take years to complete, but their approval could prove a flashpoint between the nuclear-armed neighbors at a time when relations are at a low ebb.

"I say the way you look at these projects, it is not purely a hydro project. Broaden it to a strategic water management, border management problem, and then you put in money," said Pradeep Kumar Pujari, the top ranking official in the power ministry. Pakistan denies any involvement in the 28-year armed insurgency in Indian Kashmir and has repeatedly urged New Delhi to hold talks to decide the future of the region.

Pakistan's foreign ministry spokesman, Nafees Zakaria, said he would confer with the Ministry of Water and Power on the proposed Indian projects, saying it was a technical matter. He noted, however, that India would be attending a regular meeting of the Indus Commission later this month in Lahore, even though the broader peace dialogue was on hold. "It seems that finally India has realized the importance of this mechanism under the IWT (Indus Waters Treaty) for resolving water disputes related to the Indus water and its tributaries."

### Triple power

Six hydro projects in Indian Kashmir either cleared viability tests or the more advanced environment and forest expert approvals in the last three months, two officials in India's Water Resources Ministry and the Central Electricity Authority said separately. Together these projects on the Chenab river, a tributary of the Indus, would triple hydropower generation in Jammu and Kashmir from the current level of 3,000 MW, the biggest jump in decades, added the officials, declining to be named because the approvals had not yet been made public.

"We have developed barely one-sixth of the hydropower capacity potential in the state in the last 50 years," the senior official at the Water Resources Ministry said. "Then one fine morning, you see we cleared six to seven projects in three months; it definitely raises concern in Pakistan." Pakistan's water supply is dwindling because of climate change, outdated farming techniques and an exploding population. A 2011 report by the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations said New Delhi could use these projects as a way to control Pakistan's supplies from the Indus, seen as its jugular vein.

"The cumulative effect of these projects could give India the ability to store enough water to limit the supply to Pakistan at crucial moments in the growing season," it said. India says the projects are "run-of-the-river" schemes that use the river's flow and elevation to generate electricity rather than large reservoirs, and do not contravene the treaty. Environmental groups have questioned whether the government has followed proper procedures in fast-tracking projects located in a highly seismic area. —Reuters



**TOKYO:** US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, left, shakes hands with his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida, right, at the end of a joint press conference after their talks at the Iikura Guesthouse in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

## TWO DECADES OF EFFORTS TO DISARM N KOREA HAVE FAILED

**TOKYO:** Two decades of diplomacy aimed at curbing North Korea's nuclear ambitions have failed and a new approach is needed, the United States' top envoy said yesterday. During a visit to Japan at the start of an Asian tour, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said China needed to play its part in reining in its errant neighbor. In his first major foray into crisis diplomacy, the new US envoy is looking to reassure key Asian allies that Washington stands with them in the face of the accelerating nuclear and missile threats from North Korea.

But he warned that past policies and punishments have had virtually no effect on Pyongyang's ambitions. "I think it's important to recognize that the diplomatic and other efforts of the past 20 years to bring North Korea to a point of denuclearization have failed," he told a press conference with Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida. "In the face of the ever escalating threat it is clear that a new approach is required." He also said that the US will continue to work closely with Japan and South Korea in countering the threat, but also extended an olive branch to the country's people.

"North Korea and its people need not fear the United States or their

neighbors in the region who seek only to live in peace with North Korea," he said, suggesting that criticism was aimed at the regime in Pyongyang. President Donald Trump had caused consternation during his White House campaign by suggesting US allies Japan and South Korea need to do more to defend themselves, but since taking office has been careful to offer complete support. Tillerson, the former oilman Trump chosen to head his diplomatic team, reiterated that message.

"The US Japan alliance remains the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region," he told Kishida earlier at the start of their meeting, before he held talks Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. But he also stressed the importance of three-way cooperation with South Korea, calling it "critical in particular as we address North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missiles programs". Kishida, meanwhile, thanked Tillerson for US backing.

### Other actions

"I highly value the fact that you chose Japan as your first place to visit in Asia," he said, adding that it indicates the "importance" the US attaches to the relationship. The tour, which also

includes South Korea and China, is Tillerson's first major foray into crisis diplomacy, after brief trips to Bonn and Mexico City. After Tokyo, Tillerson will fly to Seoul for talks with South Korea's acting leader, and at the weekend he heads to Beijing amid reports he will seek to finalize plans for Chinese leader Xi Jinping to visit Trump in April.

US officials have been spooked by North Korea's accelerating progress towards building an intercontinental ballistic missile that could threaten US mainland cities. China is perhaps the last country with significant leverage over North Korea, which has ignored several rounds of UN-backed sanctions targeting its banned weapons program.

"We do believe they have a very important role to play," Tillerson said of Beijing. "We will be having discussions with China as to other actions that they should be undertaking." Beijing shares US concerns over Pyongyang's attempts to build an arsenal of nuclear devices, but has been much more measured in its reaction to the ballistic missile program. Xi's government is publicly more concerned about Washington's decision to deploy the THAAD missile defense program in South Korea. —AFP

## GOT ANY BETTER IDEAS? CHINA ASKS ON N KOREA

**BEIJING:** China insisted yesterday that its proposal for de-escalating tensions on the Korean peninsula was the “only feasible plan” and challenged the United States to come up with something better. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi called last week for North Korea to suspend its nuclear and missile activities in exchange for the US and South Korea halting military exercises to avert a dangerous confrontation.

But Washington has rebuffed Beijing’s proposal and yesterday US

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson signaled a harder American line, saying in Tokyo that diplomatic efforts to rein in North Korea over the past 20 years had failed. “Under the current circumstances, we believe that (China’s proposal) is the only correct, rational, feasible plan so far,” Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said.

“If the US or another country has a better plan, a better proposal, they can bring it out. “As long as the proposal is conducive to reducing the current ten-

sions, and to bringing the relevant parties back to dialogue and negotiation in order to resolve the Korean nuclear issue, we will have an open and constructive attitude.”

Hua spoke in Beijing at almost the same time that Tillerson made his comments in Tokyo, so it was not clear whether her statement was a direct response to the US secretary of state.

In Japan at the start of an Asian tour that will also take him to Seoul and Beijing, Tillerson said “a new approach” was required in dealing

with Pyongyang and that China needed to play its part in bringing its unpredictable neighbor under control. China is perhaps the only country with significant leverage over North Korea, which has ignored several rounds of UN-backed sanctions targeting its banned weapons program.

It has recently set regional alarm bells ringing anew with a nuclear test last September and missile launches more recently, all of which it is banned from doing by UN resolutions.—AFP



**BEIJING:** Saudi King Salman, left, and Chinese President Xi Jinping shake hands as they attend the Road to the Arab Republic - the closing ceremony of the artifacts unearthed in Saudi Arabia at China National Museum in Beijing, China, yesterday.—AP

## SAUDI KING’S CHINA TRIP NETS AGREEMENTS WORTH BILLIONS

CHINA PURSUES CHARM OFFENSIVE TOWARDS THE MIDDLE EAST

**BEIJING:** China and Saudi Arabia signed agreements potentially worth tens of billions of dollars yesterday, Beijing said, as President Xi Jinping welcomed Saudi King Salman on a state visit. The visit by the 81-year-old king comes as China pursues a charm offensive towards the Middle East, where it has previously kept a low profile. The trip returns the favor after Xi visited the kingdom last year as part of the first state visit to the Middle East by a Chinese leader in seven years.

No specifics were given about the 14 memoranda of understanding that were signed at Beijing’s Great Hall of the People, which included agreements in energy, and a range of other spheres. But China’s Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Ming told reporters various projects could be worth up to \$65 billion. King Salman arrived Wednesday with a reportedly massive entourage of around 1,000 people following stops in Japan, Malaysia and Indonesia as part of a month-long Asia tour.

Local media in countries they visited have fixated on Salman’s lavish travelling party, which is said to have included luxury vehicles, an 80-inch television and hundreds of tons of luggage. China is pivoting towards the Middle East, and Saudi

Arabia is strengthening its alliances in east Asia, as the United States’ global diplomatic stance under President Donald Trump remains unclear.

### A new approach

China depends on the volatile Middle East for oil supplies but has long taken a back seat in its disputes. But over the past year Xi has taken a new approach, with steps that include offering to host talks between the opposing parties in the Syrian conflict. Zhang said both the Syrian and Yemen wars were discussed yesterday, with the two parties agreeing that the crises should be resolved through political discussions. China is also pushing Xi’s signature “One Belt, One Road” policy, a strategy to increase trade links and market connectivity between China, Europe and regions in between, based loosely on the ancient “Silk Road” trading route.

“This visit will push forward and continue to improve the quality of our relations and bear new fruit,” Xi told the king, who entered their meeting walking gingerly with a cane and later arrived at the day’s closing ceremonies in a small green motorized cart. China has been Saudi Arabia’s largest trading

partner since 2015 and the kingdom was for years the biggest source of crude oil for the fuel-hungry Chinese economy. Russia last year supplanted the Saudis as China’s top oil source, according to official Chinese statistics.

The visit is the monarch’s first to China since taking the throne in 2015. Ties between Riyadh and Washington were strained during the Obama administration, and although they are expected to improve under Trump, the Saudis are keen to solidify east Asian ties as a hedge. “Past (China-Saudi) ties were good, but at least from a Saudi perspective, can use a significant boost,” said Joseph Kechichian, a senior fellow at Riyadh’s King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies.

In an interview with Chinese state news agency Xinhua, Saudi ambassador Turki Bin Mohamed Al-Mady emphasized his country’s potential role in the “One Belt, One Road” initiative. “In terms of strategic location, Saudi Arabia serves as the central hub connecting three continents—Asia, Africa and Europe—and has been an important part of the initiative,” Al-Mady said. Zhang said Salman pledged Saudi Arabia’s enthusiastic participation in the trade project.—AFP

## INTERPOL WARRANT ISSUED FOR FOUR NORTH KOREANS

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Interpol has issued an international arrest warrant for four North Koreans wanted by Malaysian investigators in connection with the assassination of Kim Jong-Nam, the country’s police chief said yesterday. The estranged half-brother of North Korea’s leader Kim Jong-Un was poisoned with the lethal nerve agent VX in a brazen Cold War-style killing on Feb 13 at Kuala Lumpur International Airport. Two women—one Vietnamese and one Indonesian—have been arrested and charged with the murder.

Airport CCTV footage shows them approaching the victim and apparently smearing his face with a piece of cloth. Investigators are also seeking seven North Korean suspects, four of whom left Malaysia on the day of the murder. The police chief has said he believes they fled to Pyongyang while the other three are hiding in North Korea’s embassy in Kuala Lumpur. “We have obtained a red notice for the four North Korean nationals who were at the airport on the day of the incident and who have since left,” police chief Khalid Abu Bakar told reporters.

“We... are hoping to get them through Interpol.” The red notice alerts police in Interpol member countries to share any information on the suspects with a view to potentially arresting and extraditing them to face justice. North Korea is not part of that network. The Interpol notice posted online shows four North Korean men aged between 32 to 56 years old. They are named as Hong Song Hak, Ri Ji Hyon, O Jong Gil and Ri Jae Nam.

Pyongyang has denounced the Malaysian investigation as an attempt to smear the secretive regime, insisting that the 45-year-old most likely died of a heart attack. Seoul has blamed Pyongyang for his death, but the North has rejected those claims and has never confirmed the identity of the victim, who was carrying a passport bearing the name of Kim Chol when he was attacked. Malaysia officially confirmed his identity on Friday, later revealing that authorities used his fingerprints and a DNA sample from one of his children to do so.

The killing has triggered a bitter row between Malaysia and North Korea, which have expelled each other’s ambassadors. Three Malaysian embassy staff and six family members are stranded in Pyongyang after North Korea barred Malaysians from leaving the country last week, prompting a tit-for-tat move by Kuala Lumpur. Kim’s wife and children, who were living in exile in the Chinese territory of Macau, went into hiding after the murder. There are fears his 21-year-old son, Kim Han-Sol, could be targeted next.—AFP



**PUTRAJAYA:** Royal Malaysian Police chief Khalid Abu Bakar, center, speaks to members of the media after an event in Putrajaya yesterday.—AFP

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2017

# Lifestyle

Friday Times

www.kuwaittimes.net

Goldfish swim in a bowl in Tehran yesterday, ahead of the Persian new year Nowruz. Iranians buy flowers, green sprouts and goldfish to celebrate Nowruz which is a Zoroastrian tradition still celebrated by Iranians even after Islam. — AFP

## Afghans find some escape as 'family cinema' opens in Kabul

## Disney appeals Malaysia cuts to 'Beauty and the Beast'

Disney has asked Malaysia to overturn a decision to cut a "gay moment" in its film "Beauty and the Beast", a senior official said yesterday, as the studio reportedly postponed its release to resolve the issue. The film, featuring "Harry Potter" star Emma Watson, has raised hackles worldwide among religious groups angered by its depiction of Le Fou, the sycophantic sidekick to antagonist Gaston, as a gay man, making him Disney's first ever out LGBT character.

After authorities in Muslim-majority Malaysia made cuts to a song featuring Le Fou, Disney initially said it would not show a

censored version of the film, effectively shelving plans to release it in the Southeast Asian nation. But on Thursday, Abdul Halim Abdul Hamid, head of Malaysia's Film Censorship Board told AFP "an appeal was sent by Disney to the home ministry". Disney has now postponed the Malaysian release of the film, originally slated to open yesterday, until March 30 to give the authorities time to rule on the matter, The Hollywood Reporter said. Disney did not respond to AFP's request for comment.

The film's director Bill Condon has revealed that the movie contains Disney's "first exclu-

sively gay moment", although some critics have said the reference is extremely mild and fleeting. Abdul Hamid said the cuts concerned a song featuring Le Fou.

"The way he dances is... gay and the dialogue and the lyrics of the song are too. In the same scene he also lifts up his shirt and shows a love bite on his tummy," he said. "Even I wanted to bring my grandchildren to watch it. But there are rules. We don't support LGBT." Homosexuality is illegal in Malaysia, where laws criminalizing sodomy can result in imprisonment, corporal punishment and fines.

Religious groups and Islamic scholars had

previously called for the film to be banned over concerns that it would promote "negative values" in the country. The film has also come under fire from religious figures in neighboring Singapore, while Russia slapped an adults-only rating on the movie last week following pressure by an ultra-conservative lawmaker who was pushing for a ban. Despite the controversy, the movie has already become the fastest-selling family film in history, outpacing previous record-holder "Finding Dory," according to online ticket seller Fandango, ahead of its release this week. — AP

There aren't many places for women in Afghanistan to hang out, they have a tough life, and this is a secure place.

## Afghans find some escape as 'family cinema' opens in Kabul



An Afghan family eat popcorn as they watch a Hollywood movie at the Galaxy Family Cinema in Kabul.

The lights go off, the projector whirrs, and for the first time in years Afghan families find themselves sharing popcorn and soda as Hollywood and Bollywood stars romp across the silver screen. A family-friendly cinema has opened in Kabul, creating a rare venue in Afghanistan's war-torn capital where women, usually confined to the home, can spend time in public with their husbands and children. Kabul's movie halls are popular with raucous male audiences who clap and whistle at screens wreathed in clouds of hashish and cigarette smoke.

As Zahra Sozan, a 25-year-old mother-of-one told AFP, it is not "traditional" for women or children to go to the movies. But when the Galaxy was built last year it became the first cinema in Kabul to ban single men for certain hours when families are inside, sheltering women and children from harassment, smoke, and unsuitable behavior. "It's my first ever experience visiting a cinema in Kabul, and the experience has been great," Sozan told AFP, smiling despite having just emerged from watching the 2016 Hollywood supernatural thriller Lights Out. "When the families are inside the hall nobody else is allowed to get inside, the families feel secure," said Abubakar Gharzai, one of the Galaxy's owners.

Sixteen years ago this simple pleasure would have been impossible, with the cinema halls destroyed by civil war and the Taliban regime forbidding nights at the movies. The queue at the Galaxy is an echo of a time before the Taliban's dark era, when Afghan

men, women and children openly attended films, theatre and concerts. Young couples wait for tickets, enjoying the novelty and boldness of being in public together-though many are still cautious, shying away from being interviewed. Its higher prices — 300 Afghans (\$6) for a ticket, six times the cost of other cinemas in Kabul-also puts it beyond the reach of many in the capital, where unemployment is rampant, adding to the sense of security for those who can afford it. "There aren't many places for women in Afghanistan to hang out, they have a tough life, and this is a secure place," Sozan's husband Hamed said.

### Defying tradition

Samira Sozan, visiting the Galaxy with her brother, agreed. "We have a bowling club,



An Afghan family queue to buy tickets at the Galaxy Family Cinema in Kabul.

recreational park, and Kabul zoo," the 22-year-old embassy worker told AFP, ticking off the public places suitable for women in the capital. Even at home women are usually too busy washing and cooking to enjoy time with husbands and children, she said. Then, her brother heard about the Galaxy. "We will come again and again," she told AFP. "It is not tradition to visit the cinema, but we do not care what people say. It is one of the few places for us to spend time with our families... We cannot ask for a better place to come."

Her happiness sums up why Gharzai chose to run his cinema the way he has. "We want to show the world the positive side of Afghanistan," he told AFP. "That Afghanistan is not about bombs and attacks, but there is also something which makes our people happy." The biggest threat to the cinema, he said, is piracy and online streaming. Afghan audiences prefer US and Indian movies to those produced by a homegrown film industry stunted by nearly four decades of war. However, by the time the Galaxy screens recent high-definition offerings such as Dangal, Ae Dil Hai Mushkil and Sultan, many would-be spectators have already watched them online. Horror films, Gharzai said, are popular. "We could not air horror movies because of the children, but the demand was very high, so now we show them." Afghanistan is still at war with a resurgent Taliban, and security fears at the Galaxy, located inside a Kabul shopping Centre guarded by armed police, extend beyond protection from wolf whistles and shame. Islamist militants have long villified Hollywood and Bollywood as vulgar and sinful, although no cinemas have been attacked in Kabul in recent years. "There are threats," admits Gharzai. "But we rely on the Almighty." — AFP



Afghan women wait to buy tickets at the Galaxy Family Cinema in Kabul.

## 'Empire's' Jussie Smollett gets political in new video

While TV star Jussie Smollett was in the recording studio working on his own music apart from "Empire," set for release later this year, he couldn't help but write a song about what's going in the world, from injustice to President Donald Trump. That's when he penned "F.U.W.," short for "(expletive) up world," around President's Day and immediately directed a music video to bring his words to life. The clip will debut late Wednesday on his YouTube page.

The black-and-white video features men and women of various ethnicities and highlights injustices, from human and LGBT rights to religious and racial prejudices. A woman wears a hijab in one scene, a boy wears a hoodie in another and four women put their fists up as they stand in front of the words, "My body, my rights."

"This song is for the oppressed. That's why I feel like people will connect with it because it is very broad, because oppression is so broad," he said in an interview Tuesday with The Associated Press. In another scene, a man in a wheelchair runs over a Donald Trump mask.

"That mask is a representation of this false idea of patriotism. And that mask is a representation of this idea of white male privilege," 34-year-old Smollett said. "It's so much bigger than him. It's what he represents, and it's because of that representation, that's why he's the president of the United States currently." "It's our opportunity to take those masks off and shatter them, so that's what I did," he added. Trump's apparent mocking of a disabled reporter was widely criticized last year. Some of Smollett's "F.U.W." lyrics focus on Trump and his administration: "Why are we back in the past?/It's the same script different cast/All of these alternative facts/Catch me outside how about that?/Why is it so hard to keep hope?/Who got that popular vote?/Was the whole thing just a joke?/Was the whole thing just one big joke?"

On Wednesday, Trump fired back at rapper Snoop Dogg days after the release of a music video in which he points a toy gun at a clown dressed like Trump and pulls the trigger. Trump tweeted: "Can you imagine what the outcry would be if @SnoopDogg, failing career and all, had aimed and fired the gun at President Obama? Jail time!" The White House did not immediately return a request seeking comment about Smollett's video, which also features a black man standing in front of a noose, images of barbed wire and two water fountains with "white" and "colored" signs above them. "We had written so many other great songs for my album, but this just felt like 'I can't wait for the album, I can't wait for a single,'" said Smollett, who plans to release an official single this summer. "You couldn't follow, you know, normal rules or normal protocol with this, you just had to get it out and luckily Columbia (Records) stood behind me."

During the presidential campaign, Smollett and other "Empire" cast members appeared in an ad endorsing Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton. Smollett, who was one of the kid stars of "The Mighty Ducks" film, is set to appear in Ridley Scott's science fiction film "Alien: Covenant" this year. He said it was "freeing" to release a song apart from his "Empire" persona, and he challenged himself by directing the video. "Because the song means so much to me and the message means so much to me, and what we're going through right now means so much to me, I wanted to do it justice. And I knew what was in my mind would do it justice," he said. — AP



File photo shows Jussie Smollett attends the 'Empire' NYC Event in Los Angeles. — AP



(From left) Producer Michael Bonfilio, musicians Seth Avett, Scott Avett, Joe Kwon, Bob Crawford, and Producer/director Judd Apatow attend the 'May It Last: A Portrait Of The Avett Brothers' premiere 2017 SXSW Conference and Festivals on March 15, 2017 in Austin, Texas. — AFP

## Director Jia Zhangke to host film festival in northern China

Chinese director Jia Zhangke, known for films exploring China's wrenching social changes, will host his own festival to showcase the work of young directors and movies from developing countries. Jia announced yesterday that the Pingyao International Film Festival will be held Oct 19-26 in the ancient city in the northern province of Shanxi, from where Jia hails. He told The Associated Press the festival aimed to present outstanding work from around the world and help promote talented young directors.

"During my time at film festivals, I was able to see many very good films from different countries and different cultures, and to consider people's lives, human nature and societies from different angles," Jia said. "These films are brilliant, but they badly need to be introduced to Chinese audiences." He added: "We mainly hope the films come from regions such as Asia, Latin America and Africa because there is less chance for them to be seen by Chinese audiences," as opposed to films from Europe and North America.

Swiss-Italian producer Marco Mueller, whose works include the Oscar-winning 2001 Bosnian film "No Man's Land," will be the festival's artistic director. Jia's credits include "A Touch of Sin," nominated for the Palme d'Or at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival. Many of his most acclaimed films failed to gain cen-



In this file photo, Chinese director Jia Zhangke poses after winning the Best Screenplay award of the Asian Film Awards in Macau. — AP photos

sors' approval to be shown in China. A company founded by Jia will host all film festivals in the city in conjunction with the local government. Pingyao was once a famous center of trade and finance and boasts an architectural heritage dating back 2,700 years. — AP

## Costume jewelry worn by Hollywood's Golden Age stars up for auction

From the coral necklace worn by Vivien Leigh in "Gone With The Wind" to Marilyn Monroe's gold and pearl drop earrings from "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," the glittering adornments made for Hollywood's stars will go up for auction this year.

About 700 pieces of ornate costume jewelry made by Hollywood costume jeweler Eugene Joseff will be exhibited in Ireland's Newbridge Silverware Museum of Style Icons from March until May before going under the hammer in November at Julien's Auctions in Los Angeles. "Buying a piece of this isn't like buying a diamond necklace from Cartier, you're actually owning a piece of Hollywood memorabilia," said Isabel Yeo, Julien's Auctions' jewelry specialist. The auction house has not yet set estimates for the jewelry.

Costume jewelry pieces do not tend to contain precious stones and metals. Joseff made custom pieces of jewelry for major film studios during the 1930s and 1940s, the early years of Hollywood's Golden Age of cinema, lending the items so that he retained the majority of his collection.

The jeweler died in a plane crash in the late 1940s and the pieces of his collection have not been offered for auction until now. Yeo said Joseff developed a special method of jewelry-making that involved plating metals to give it a softer glare under studio lighting, a secret formula that has been kept within his family. Highlights from the auction include Clark Gable's gold engraved cigar case from 1939's "Gone With The Wind" and a costume pearl and blue stone necklace worn by Bette Davis in 1955's "The Virgin Queen." — Reuters



A man works on a mural on the southern wall of Sanaa's University in the Yemeni capital during the Open Day of Art annual event. — AFP photos



A man works on a mural on the southern wall of Sanaa's University in the Yemeni capital during the Open Day of Art annual event. — AFP photos



A woman works on a mural on the southern wall of Sanaa's University.

# YEMEN ARTISTS PAINT ON WALLS TO PROTEST WAR

A warplane firing missiles. A gunman taking aim. A map of Yemen dripping with blood. A group of Yemeni artists took to the streets Wednesday, painting murals on the wall of Sanaa University in a visual protest against three years of war. The open-air exhibition and workshop attracted locals exhausted by a conflict with no end in sight. "I came here with my family to express how fed up we are with the way we're living because of the war," said Fouad Sharfeddin. "This event gives us a breather and hope for a return to a normal life."

The war between pro-government forces and Shiite Huthi rebels who control Sanaa has devastated Yemen and pushed it to the brink of famine. Since a 2015 intervention by a Saudi-led coalition, fighting has left at least 7,400 people dead and wounded 40,000, according to the United Nations. "Yemenis are lost," Sharfeddin's wife Maryam said. "We try to help the kids relax, even a little, by painting to express the feelings of repression we have inside." A young artist wrote "no dreams"

next to a stencil of a child, then sat on the pavement under a mural of three heavily-armed soldiers.

Another painted a bouquet of red roses next to a soldier pointing his weapon at a collection of hearts. The event was organized by an artists' collective led by Mourad Soubaye, in defiance of the rebels who control the capital. "This is a day for peace, against violence, war and the current situation," said Soubaye. It followed another rare demonstration, a three-day women's sit-in protest against the war. The artists wrote a leaflet addressed to Sanaa residents, saying they did not take a position in the conflict. "While war divides, art unites beyond borders and barriers," they wrote. They called their open day "an opportunity for people express their hope for peace and their rejection of violence." "All we want is to get out of the crisis," Soubaye said. — AFP



A man works on a mural on the southern wall of Sanaa's University.



A member of the security forces works on a mural on the southern wall of Sanaa's University.



This undated photo provided by Vern Yip shows a kitchen in Florida designed by Yip. — AP photos

## Kitchen trends and innovations for 2017

Americans briefly scaled back the scope of home renovation projects after the recession began nearly a decade ago, says interior designer and "HGTV Design Star" judge Vern Yip. But even during the peak of that focus on smaller, more sustainable living, the size and complexity of kitchen designs continued to grow.

"The kitchen is the heart of the home," Yip says, and people see it as good place to spend money and recoup the investment when they sell their home. What's trending in kitchen design as 2017 approaches? We've asked Yip and two other interior design experts - Caleb Anderson, co-founder of the New York-based design firm Drake/Anderson, and Brian Patrick Flynn, interior designer for HGTV's Urban Oasis 2016 home giveaway - to share their favorite innovations and thoughts on which trending design choices will stand the test of time.

### Think black and white

Black and white are the trendiest colors now for kitchen design, and Flynn points out that they're also timeless. A black and white palette works with virtually any accent color, he says, so "if you go black and white, you really only have to spend once." Right now, "black appliances with more of a matte finish" are among Flynn's favorites.



In this undated photo provided by HGTV, a large center island used for cooking prep and dining is shown in a kitchen in Ann Arbor, Mich, and can actually make a small kitchen seem larger, says Brian Patrick Flynn, who designed this kitchen for the HGTV Urban Oasis 2016 house giveaway.

Yip says cabinets in both black and white are popular, and look great mixed together. That's another trend all three designers are seeing: upper and lower cabinets done in different finishes and materials. Anderson recently designed a kitchen in London that has upper cabinets made of metal and glass, with lower cabinets made of cerused wood. "They need to complement each other," he says, "but everything doesn't have to match."

### Get creative

Anderson also notes that it's popular to design a kitchen island out of different materials than the cabinets and countertops. That puts a personal stamp on the room, especially if you make your island out of a distinctive piece of furniture, like a vintage cabinet. By using popular materials in unique ways, you can design a kitchen that feels current but won't look dated as trends change. Flynn is fan of that approach: For HGTV's Urban Oasis giveaway house this year, he chose a reflective, black marble mosaic tile for the kitchen walls, from the counter all the way up to the ceiling. The look is on-trend, but has a classic beauty that won't need renovating in a few years.

He also used concrete for the countertops, a popular option now but one with a classic simplicity. Along with concrete, Anderson and Yip says quartz countertops are popular. Quartz is



This undated photo provided by HGTV, shows a portion of a kitchen in Ann Arbor, Mich.



This undated photo provided by HGTV, shows a portion of a kitchen in Ann Arbor, Mich.

more durable than marble, which can easily stain, and more consistent in color throughout a large slab. Textured and colored glass is another way to jump on a trend in ways that reflect your own style, Anderson says. He's seeing glass used to surround the hoods above stoves, for backsplashes, and as cabinet fronts.

### Mix your metals

Gold, brass and other yellow-toned metal finishes have been popular for several years, says Yip, and now white metal finishes like chrome, pewter and stainless steel are catching on too. Anderson recently used a mix of black and steel finishes in one kitchen, along with brass. All three designers suggest going with your favorites and feeling free to mix and match.

"The hardware in your kitchen is sort of like the jewelry," and you can have fun adding that bit of bling, Yip says. Changing your hardware is a nice way to update the kitchen without having to change the cabinets. You can also bring in a light fixture with a metal that's different from your cabinet hardware. Yip is seeing many clients opting to splurge on dramatic lighting in the kitchen, rather than in the dining room. "The old way of thinking is you spend thousands of dollars on the crystal chandelier over the dining table, but lighting over the kitchen was practical," he says. Now, there's more emphasis on kitchen lighting "that doesn't feel functional but has a really polished aesthetic quality."

### Tech isn't an afterthought

Flynn used a wifi-enabled oven (easily controlled from a smartphone) in the Urban Oasis house, as well as a refrigerator equipped with cameras accessible from a digital app, so you can see what you have inside it. "While you are out, you can decide on the fly what to buy and bring home to be stocked up for dinner," he says. Smaller appliances are a priority for many homeowners.

"People tend to clutter their countertops with small appliances or put them in the cabinet and have to pull them out," Anderson says. So designers now routinely figure in storage space where small appliances can be concealed but easily accessed. Also, says Anderson, "Clients have so many devices, smart devices," that they need "an area in the kitchen that's devoted to USB ports and chargers." — AP



Photo shows a block-long, intricately designed carpet made of colored sawdust on a cobblestone street in Antigua, Guatemala. — AP photos



Photo shows a man creating a carpet with tropical flowers and rose petals in honor of the first of the elaborate Easter processions in Antigua.



People creating a colored sawdust carpet in the main square of Antigua.

# Antigua Guatemala rolls out the flower carpet for Easter

The rising sun hasn't lit up the cobblestone streets of this colonial city yet, but people of all ages are busy covering them with brightly colored sawdust mosaics and carpets made of flowers and fruits. Many have worked overnight on these elaborate masterpieces that will disappear in a couple of minutes under the feet of dozens of men carrying in procession a 3-ton religious float. Whether shouldering massive sacred images or decorating the streets where they will pass, the people of Antigua Guatemala create one of the world's most dazzling and moving displays of Easter devotion.

That makes early spring an ideal time to visit this volcano-ringed city that looks remarkably as it did 500 years ago when it was the capital of Spain's Central American empire. Easter festivities kick off the fifth Sunday of Lent - April 2 this year - with the first procession revering Jesus's passion. A group of 90 "cucuruchos," as the purple-robed and hooded volunteers are called, shoulders a block-long wooden float at the parish of San Bartolome Becerra at 6 am.

Every 100 meters (yards) on the 12-kilometer (7.5-mile) route, a new group will relieve the sweating, swaying men, until the antique sculpture of Jesus falling under the weight of the cross has made its way through the city center. There are approximately 9,000 carriers. Some are from Antigua but they also come from across Central

America and even from the United States, with Guatemalans living elsewhere coming home for the celebration.

It will be 1 am the next day before the last group deposits the float back at San Bartolome, said Hiram Salazar, spokesman for Hermandad de Jesus Nazareno de la Caida, the Catholic confraternity in charge of this procession first recorded in 1902. As the float inches its way on top of the first green, yellow and red carpet, a hush comes over the crowd squeezed against whitewashed houses to let the cucuruchos walk through. Incense mixes with the fragrance of crushed tropical flowers and candlewax wafting from small chapels. By Easter Sunday, these scenes are repeated as a dozen other processions carry sacred images past Antigua's crimson and gold single-story homes, arcaded palaces, tree-lined plazas, and monumental churches and convents like the canary yellow, sculpture-filled La Merced.

In the past few years, hundreds of thousands of visitors descended on Antigua for Easter festivities. But if you go early enough in the morning, the streets still belong to two teenagers perched on a wooden plank patting down violet sawdust or a man fashioning a large cross of red rose petals among a giant square of white calla lilies and pink snapdragon blossoms. — AP



Photo shows two young men putting the finishing touches on an elaborate sawdust pattern created on top of a cobblestone street in Antigua.



Photo shows a man watering one of the hundreds of flower carpets that line the route of the first Easter season procession in Antigua.



Photo shows the cucuruchos, volunteers who carry on their shoulders in procession a three-ton wooden float with religious images, arriving on the outskirts of Antigua.

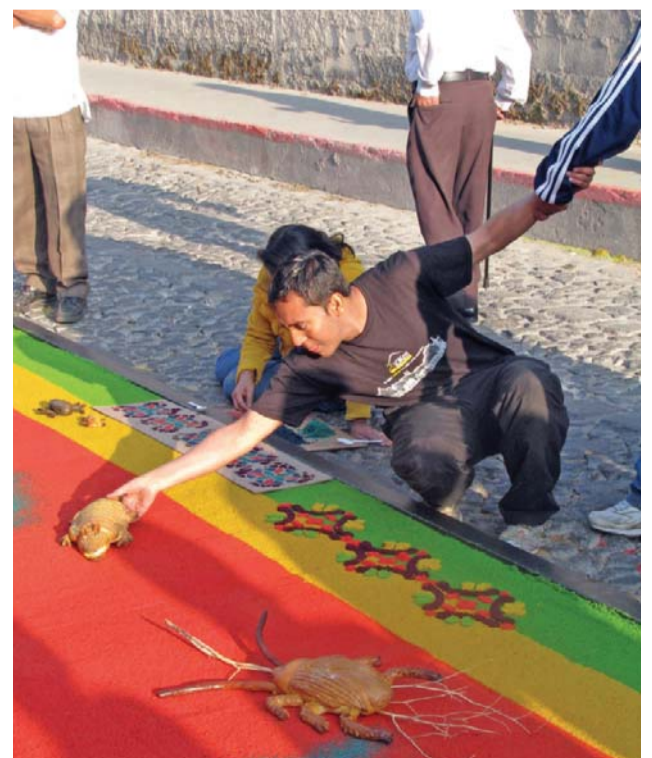


Photo shows a man putting the finishing touches on a colored sawdust carpet decorated with figurines made of bread in Antigua.





A piece entitled 'Hermecea' by Jan Kerr is seen as part of The 'WOW - World of Wearable Art' show.



A piece entitled "American Dream" by Sarah Thomas is seen as part of The 'WOW - World of Wearable Art' show.

## What is wearable? Exhibit pushes boundaries on clothing, art

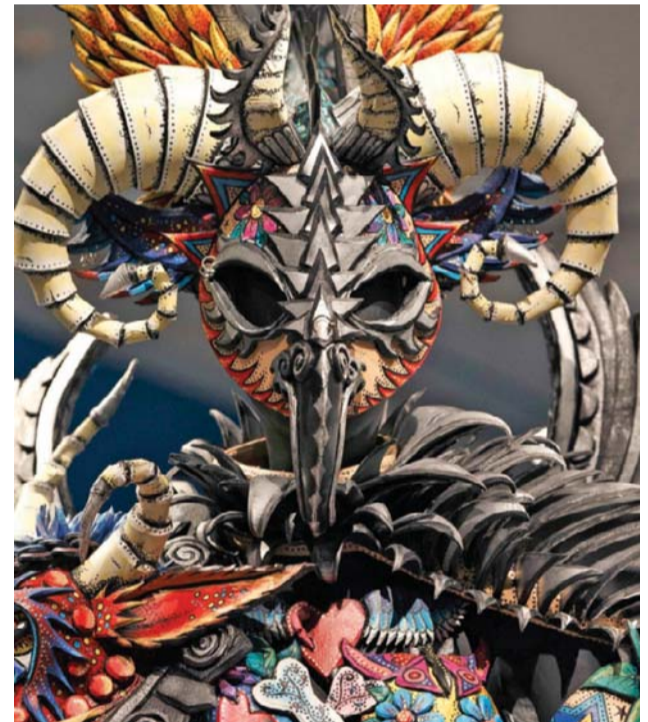
They are outfits you might expect to see in Lady Gaga's closet: a flamingo pink Fiberglas frock and a wooden one-piece replica of Notre Dame Cathedral. But these wild and whimsical ensembles are part of the "WOW - World of Wearable Art" exhibition opening Saturday at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. The quirky show, a collision of art and the craziest of couture, offers visitors a chance to view 32 award-winning costumes from the New Zealand-based design competition of the same name. Nearly three decades ago, the contest began when organizers asked an eclectic international mix of boat builders, taxidermists, amateur enthusiasts and others to push the boundaries of clothing and artwork.

"What do all these people have in common? Basically, it's the ability to use the body as a blank canvas," said Lynda Roscoe Hartigan, the exhibition's coordinating curator. Garment submissions must be made to fit the models who wear the artwork in an elaborate stage show. "This exhibit asks the question, 'What is wearable?'" Roscoe Hartigan said. With each ensemble, there are central ideas for viewers to ponder.

One example is a piece called "Inkling," by Gillian Saunders. The horned body armor with a protruding dragon head and red heart on the belt was conceived after Saunders wondered what the human body might look like if it had more tattoo ink than

blood running through its veins. Lynne Christiansen's "Gothic Habit," the wearable Notre Dame Cathedral, was inspired by the spiritual feeling some get when entering a church, temple or mosque. Christiansen wondered if wearing a miniature edifice could capture the same sentiment.

Yet some of the ensembles take on a more solemn tone. "Beast in the Beauty," created by Alaskan carpenter David Walker, reflects his late wife's battle with breast cancer. Worn with the wooden dress is a blond helmet representing her chemotherapy-induced baldness. Walker's wife was a collaborator on the project and died before it was finished. "This shows just how much people have invested of themselves in these ensembles," Roscoe Hartigan said. Carol Boisvert, of Wilmington, Massachusetts, said she was struck by the numerous almost-hidden details contained within each piece. "It's deceptive because you don't know what you're truly looking at until you're up close," she said. Tracey Cahalane, of Salem, New Hampshire, was impressed by the wide-ranging color spectrum in the works on display. "The amount of color the artists used is astonishing," Cahalane said. "WOW - World of Wearable Art" runs through June 11. — AP



A piece entitled 'Inkling' by Gillian Saunders is seen as part of The 'WOW - World of Wearable Art' show at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass. — AP photos



A woman examines a piece entitled "Lady Curiosity" by Fifi Colston, which is part of The 'WOW - World of Wearable Art' show.



A guard stands amongst pieces included in the 'WOW - World of Wearable Art' show.



People view a piece included in the 'WOW - World of Wearable Art' show at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass.

## Black beans and mango combine in a delicious, filling salad

Melissa D'arabian

**C**anned beans are fantastic convenience food. For a little over a buck, you can stock your pantry with a shelf-stable protein source that works in main dishes or in side dishes. You can even use cooked canned beans as an inexpensive way to stretch pricier proteins: Serve seared salmon on a bed of sauteed creamy white beans, and you'll only need a few ounces of fish to make the meal feel hearty. Boost the filling factor in pasta dishes by adding a cup of rinsed canned beans to your family's recipes. Or, let beans turn a ho-hum salad into a filling comfort dish. In this week's recipe, I pair black beans with fresh mango and the result is spectacular, especially given how quickly this recipe comes together.

The hardest part about this salad is cutting the mango, navigating around its long, flat seed. You can easily purchase mango already cut in the packaged produce section, but you can save several dollars for about 3 minutes of work if you are willing.

To slice or cube a mango, first cut it lengthwise just a little off-center, parallel to the seed, removing two large "cheeks." Score (or slice) the mango flesh right in the cheek with the skin intact,

and then scoop out the recipe-ready cubes or slices with a spoon, scraping against the skin. Slice the remaining mango flesh from the edges of the seed, and either cube or just eat them. (Because you deserve a little treat after all that slicing, right?)

Mango is an excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin A, and it makes the salad feel bright and tropical. I add yellow pepper and corn (straight from the freezer; it thaws quickly) which make it pretty. Texture (and niacin!) comes from a light sprinkle of cashews and just a few smashed corn tortilla chips, which you can buy or make by roasting corn tortillas in the oven until crisp, about 15 minutes at 350 F. The tasty dressing is a result of a simple weeknight dressing hack: I add fresh lime juice and a little olive oil to prepared salsa.

I use shredded kale for this salad, but use any hearty dark green - you get more vitamins with the darker greens, and the bold flavors and textures on this salad need a green that can stand up to them. Feel free to swap out the fruit or other ingredients to match your pantry - as long as you have some kind of canned beans in the cupboard, you can make some version of this hearty and versatile salad work.

### BLACK BEANS AND MANGO SALAD

#### Ingredients

Start to finish: 15 minutes

Servings: 4

6 cups shredded kale, or other dark leafy greens  
1 cup cooked black beans, rinsed and drained if canned  
1-1/2 cup cubed fresh mango, about 1 large mango  
1 cup organic frozen corn, thawed  
1 cup chopped tomato, about 2 roma tomatoes  
1/2 yellow bell pepper, chopped  
1/2 large avocado, cubed  
2 green onions, chopped  
1/4 cup cashews, chopped  
8 baked organic corn chips, lightly crushed  
Chopped cilantro or parsley, for garnish

#### For the dressing

1/4 cup prepared tomato (or tomatillo) salsa  
3 tablespoons lime juice  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon black pepper

#### Preparation

Lay the greens on a platter or individual plates. Place on top of the greens: beans, mango, corn, tomato, bell pepper, and avocado. Sprinkle on the green onions, cashews, crushed corn chips and cilantro. In a small bowl, whisk together the dressing ingredients and pour on the salad. Serve.

#### Nutrition information per serving

296 calories; 114 calories from fat; 13 g fat (2 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 0 mg cholesterol; 393 mg sodium; 42 g carbohydrate; 11 g fiber; 13 g sugar; 9 g protein.



# Getting the most flavor and juice out of lemons

**F**resh lemon - including the juice and the peel - is one of my all-time favorite ingredients, in part because it's just so versatile. It can be the star of the show (as in this recipe) or a brilliant supporting actor (as in so many of my everyday dishes). It's indispensable in fish dishes and pairs beautifully with all sorts of vegetables, raw and cooked. I also reach for it regularly to brighten up soups, stews and sautés.

The great thing about lemon peel, also known as the zest, is that it adds intense lemon flavor to a recipe without all the acid that is found in the juice. I use grated lemon zest in scrambled eggs and creamy pasta dishes and combine it with chopped herbs as a finishing touch for braised meats.

Whichever parts you use, it's important to start with the best possible lemons. The winning candidates will boast a bright yellow color and a thin skin. A thin skin signals more juice and less pith (the bitter-tasting white layer between the peel and the fruit itself). When grating the peel, you want to stop short of the pith. How do you know a given specimen has a thin skin? It will give a little when you squeeze it.

Once home with your lemons, scrub each one lightly under

water to remove the edible wax with which it was covered to protect the fruit on its journey to the market. If your recipe calls for zest and juice, grate the zest before you juice the lemon. But don't grate the zest until just before you're ready to add it to the recipe. Zest quickly dries out and loses its oomph if it sits around for very long.

My favorite tool for grating zest is a wand-style grater. Once upon a time, the tool of choice was the fine side of a four-sided grater. Unfortunately, this gadget often grabbed too much of the pith - not to mention the tips of your fingers - in the process. I do my grating over a piece of kitchen parchment, which allows me to pick up and measure the zest easily. The yield is roughly 1 tablespoon of zest per large lemon. If your recipe calls for zest but not juice, wrap the unused lemon in plastic wrap when you're done and do your best to use it up within a few days. A lemon stripped of its protective layer of zest dries out pretty quickly.

There are several ways to make sure you squeeze the maximum amount of juice from your lemon. First, soften up the fruit by rolling it on the counter and pressing down as you do.

Second, heat it, either by microwaving it for 20 seconds or so or by stashing it in the oven at 350 F for 10 to 12 minutes. Finally, cut the lemon in half crosswise and juice it.

I like to juice using an old-fashioned and brightly colored Mexican hand press. But there's also a more unorthodox, if equally effective, way to do it. Place the cut lemon half in between the two arms of a set of tongs, right at the top where the arms are joined. Then squeeze the bottom ends together. I learned this little trick from Ming Tsai, who picked it up from Jasper White, two of my favorite chefs. One large lemon will give up about 1/4 cup of juice. These muffins are quite rich, better suited to dessert than breakfast (though they would indeed be a delightful morning splurge on a special occasion). Made with juice and zest, their deep lemon flavor is complemented by the raspberries.



## LEMON RASPBERRY POUND CAKE MUFFINS

### Ingredients

Start to finish: 45 minutes (15 minutes active)  
Servings: 8  
1 cup (4-1/2 ounces) cake flour (not self-rising)  
1/2 teaspoon baking powder  
1/4 teaspoon table salt  
1/4 cup grated lemon zest  
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened  
3/4 cup granulated sugar  
3 large eggs  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1/4 cup heavy cream  
2 tablespoons plus 1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice, divided  
1 pint raspberries  
1/4 cup plus 2 teaspoons powdered sugar

### Preparation

Heat the oven to 325 F. Line a cupcake tin with 8 paper cupcake liners. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt and lemon zest. In a large bowl with an electric mixer, beat together the butter and granulated sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition, then beat in the vanilla. Add half the flour mixture and mix just until combined. Beat in the cream and 2 tablespoons of the lemon juice. Add the remaining flour mixture, beating just until combined.

Spoon the batter into the prepared muffin cups, filling them halfway. Press 4 raspberries gently into the center of the batter in each cup, then top with more batter, filling the cups just up to the tops of the liners. Bake the cupcakes on the oven's center shelf until golden on top and a toothpick inserted at the center comes out clean, about 30 minutes. Transfer the cakes to a wire rack and let cool completely. While the cupcakes are baking, make the glaze. In a small bowl whisk together the powdered sugar and remaining lemon juice until smooth. When the cupcakes are cooled, drizzle the glaze over each cake. — AP

Friday Times

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2017

# Travel

**Luxury and local life:  
Mixing it up in the**

**Maldives**



A peaceful place to watch the waves.

**Some 1800 years ago, Arabic traders gave the Maldives a moniker that remains relevant to this day: The 'Money Isles'. Back then, the archipelago's abundant cowrie shells (boli) were a powerful international currency, and these paradisiacal islands have evolved into a playground for the rich and even richer. For many, world-class luxury resorts are still the major drawcard, but there are two sides to every coin, or cowrie shell. Combining resort indulgence with a cultural encounter on one of the Maldives' dozens of inhabited islands can make a trip here all the more enriching.**

#### Appreciating the Maldives' natural riches

Nicknames aside, the etymology of the word 'Maldives' refers to the remarkable geography of this scattered archipelago. The 'garland islands' are indeed draped like a necklace across the Indian Ocean, hanging below the teardrop-shaped earring of Sri Lanka. And this is a treasure crafted from only the finest materials: White-gold sands with a turquoise trim, diamond-clear waters and sparkling sunsets framed by a curtain of palms. Every second spent here is a pinch-me moment.

The Maldives is the world's lowest country in terms of elevation, and therefore first in the climate change firing line, which makes its natural wonders seem all the more precious, particularly when you meet the wildlife. Keen spotters, snorkelers and scuba divers should head to the southernmost atoll, Addu (also known as Seenu), to see spinner dolphins, sea turtles, whale sharks and white terns - a striking seabird found nowhere else in the Maldives. Addu is also home to some of the islands' most novel landmarks - a nine-hole golf course with lagoon views, one of the longest roads in the Maldives (a whole 16km, best travelled by bike) and the nation's tallest mountain, which looms above Villingili, a staggering five metres high.

#### A taste of the inhabited islands

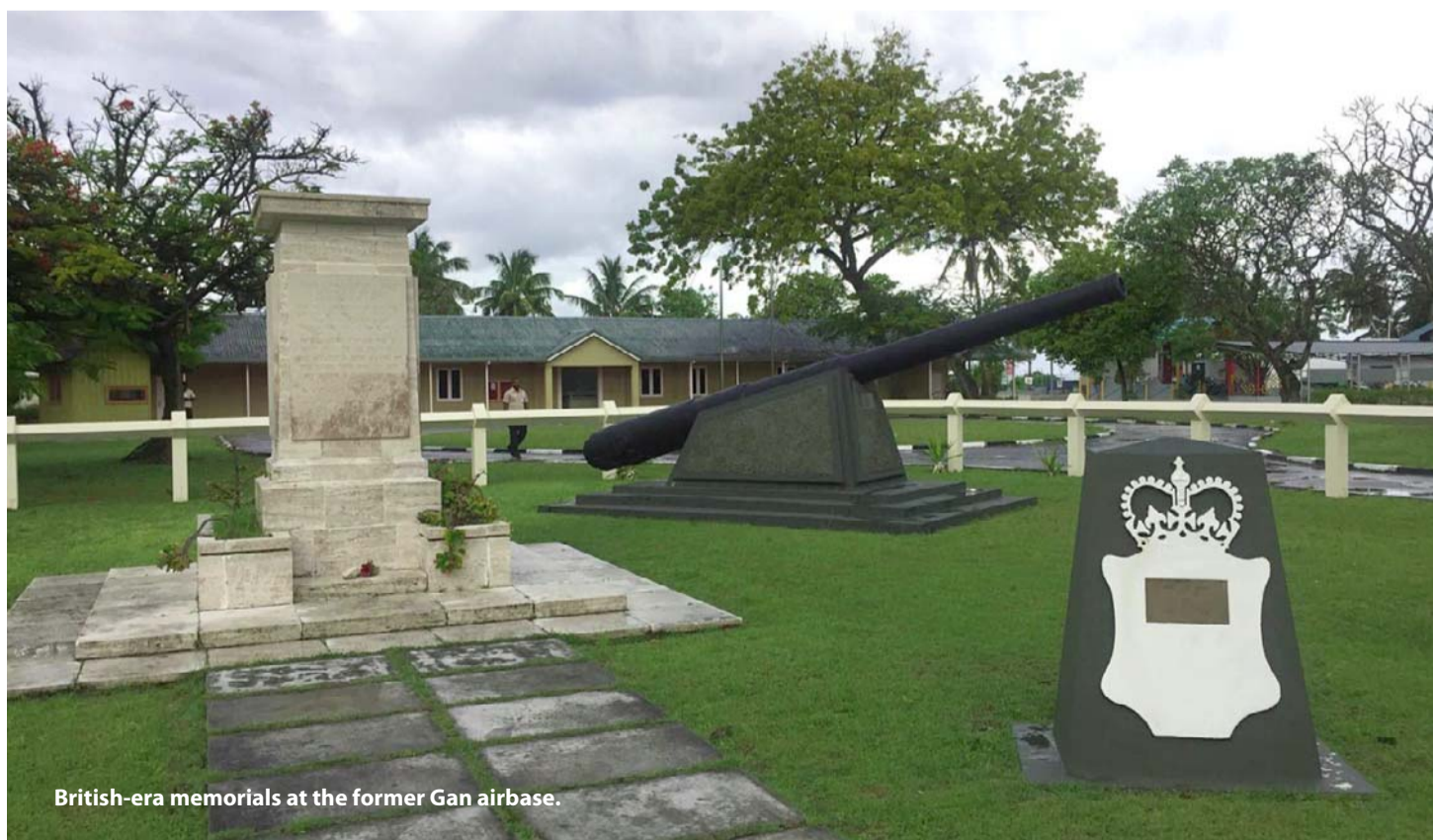
Staying at a luxury resort for 24/7 pampering is part of the Maldives experience, but spa treatments and five-star dinners are only half of the story. To really get a feel for island life, you need to visit one of the officially designated inhabited islands, where most of the islands'

345,000 people make their homes. Until 2009, government restrictions meant visitors to the Maldives needed a permit to explore and stay on non-resort islands, but today, many uninhabited islands are open for day trips or even

overnight stays, and 50% of resort staff are required by law to be local, making island culture far more accessible.

After living it up at the Shangri-La Villingili Resort & Spa on the southern atoll

of Addu, I joined local guide Azmy for a cycle tour of Addu City - a sleepy string of inhabited isles just across the lagoon from my blissful bubble - for a gentle introduction to the 'real' Maldives.



British-era memorials at the former Gan airbase.



Mali's handsome Old Friday Mosque.

In this laid back 'city', an unhurried island vibe pervades (there's only so much pace one can gather this close to the equator) but political street art, a multitude of mosques, busy tea shops and welcoming smiles reveal an unexpected community buzz.

'We don't lock our doors here - everyone knows everyone,' explained Azmy with a smile as we parked our bikes outside his family home. I'd wangled an invitation in order to see - and try out - an undholi, the traditional Maldivian swing seats found in most houses in the atolls. Azmy's wife and mother-in-law seemed bemused by enthusiasm for trying out the fancy wooden hammock in their living room, but were graciously accommodating. And yes, it was as good as it sounds.

#### A wealth of history and culture

People on Addu generally speak excellent English, as the British ran various military bases on Gan island between the 1940s and 1970s. Azmy's grandfather worked there as a cook and his father, a local councillor, hopes to open a military museum one day to tell the story of the base, considered a hardship posting for British airmen because of the remote and secluded location.

But there's plenty of history to discover even without a museum. As we pedalled, we passed a disused post office blanketed in moss, poppy-strewn memorials, a retro-looking cinema (still in occasional use), and an eerie old quarantine centre for sufferers of 'elephant foot', a mosquito-borne malady only officially wiped out in 2016. Needless to say, I declined to take a closer look at these last facilities.

These days the RAF barracks form part of Equator Village, one of many budget resorts springing up across the archipelago, and the airstrip has swapped bombers for commercial planes. Gan Airport received the first international passenger flights from Colombo in late 2016 and tourism is expected to boom in the southern atolls, so now is a good time to come and beat the rush.

#### Make time for Male

While island life is what the Maldives is all about, the capital, Male, remains the central transport hub and it's well worth a stopover to see its miniature take on 'big city' life. It may only cover 5.8 sq km, but compared to the far-flung isles, this densely populated speck in the ocean is positively cosmopolitan. Residents often juggle two jobs, commuting by moped through traffic-clogged streets overshadowed by high-rise banks and office buildings. Markets bustle. Tarmac sizzles. The call to prayer cuts through the urban thrum.

If you do one thing in Male, make time for the Old Friday Mosque. Built from coral stone in 1656, its walls are intricately decorated, and - just like the coral you'll find in the ocean - rough to the touch. The graveyard's time-

worn headstones (the tops of which are pointed for men, smooth for women) stand off-kilter, like a crowd of spectators vying for a glimpse of the mosque's timeless grace. The simple tomb of Abdul Barakat Yoosuf Al Barbary, the man credited with converting the Maldives from Buddhism to Islam in the 12th century, can be found just across the street.

#### The ocean's bounty for food lovers

Walking the streets in the tropical sun can be hungry work - and even spa-goers and sun-bathers need to eat. The territory of the Maldives covers 90,000 sq km of ocean, so it should come as no surprise that seafood is the staple here, and tuna is catch of the day, every day. Find this flavoursome fish in mas huni, a breakfast dish combining chilli,

coconut, onion and tuna, eaten with roti flatbread. Tuna is also the key ingredient in a host of spicy 'short eats' - popular deep-fried snacks - and in the tuna curry that locals enthusiastically chow down on morning, noon and night.

Many resorts and tour operators offer fishing trips - a chance to witness the traditional pole-and-line technique still used in the Maldivian fishing industry today and try your hand at casting for big game fish. Alternatively, swing by Malé's fish and produce markets early to see the catch hauled in for hungry shoppers and hunt for souvenirs. If fishy crisps, smoked tuna or tuna paste aren't to your taste, 'bounty', a tasty local snack made of coconut meat, sugar and honey, makes a sweet alternative.

—(www.lonelyplanet.com)



A spinner dolphin playing in the spray.



**Aries (March 21-April 19)**

Making your mark on the world for now may come as a team player. Achievement, ambition and authority are motivating factors in your decision-making process. Professionally, you will find yourself organizing and administering people often. Your favorite scenario from a professional stance, however, is what happens when groups are gathered to accomplish, perform or change ideas, laws or lifestyles. You like your life best when you are involved in group goals and you have a lot to offer, whether it is in the workplace or the hobby club. Stay aware of the urges that motivate you. Carry your enthusiasm in the professional world, to your private world. A hobby club can be of benefit to the less fortunate. This evening you enjoy something unusual.



**Taurus (April 20-May 20)**

Demands from work can be exhausting and you are learning to streamline your energy by focusing on one thing at a time. You could receive unexpected backing for what you want to accomplish and, in general, your efforts are successful in reaching your goals. This is a time during which you are driven to complete the old and begin the new. You may even find yourself moving in new and unexpected directions by this afternoon. There is optimism and faith—a time when you can put your practical insights into words and convey them to others. Communication with authority figures is also prevalent. Tonight you may try a little dancing. You will see that the movement of the body helps to expel the negative and relieve you from the stress of the day.



**Gemini (May 21-June 20)**

You are ready to widen your scope of education and may find yourself attending a class or actually enrolling in a nearby community college. You should be attentive in all the work you do particularly today as there could be a tendency to gloss over mistakes. Be especially cheerful in the business transactions you handle with the public now—someone is in a grouchy mood and could challenge you. You can be very eloquent or forceful in speaking or communicating; people will understand just what you mean. You might enjoy attending a home or computer show this evening. There are some new storage ideas as well as new inventions to view. There should be some interesting developments in finances through the end of this month.



**Cancer (June 21-July 22)**

Business is looking good today. As much as you like to have everything the same, make an effort to become more flexible and adaptable. Things could change in the twinkling of an eye. Interestingly enough, you may seek professional placement in a job that demands you to be flexible. For you, change is the ultimate challenge. Your home life may get some changes occasionally, but unless you are pushed, become angry or just need the change, you will probably keep your lifestyle the same for a very long time. A good investment is as close as your computer screen and you have a way of weeding out the good from the bad. When you get ready to actually invest, check out the people who will be taking your money for the investment.



**Leo (July 23-August 22)**

There may be a bit of a slowdown in business today. Don't be too surprised if commerce and cash flows slowly. Some stabilizing factors can be beneficial, however. For example, this slowdown will give you a chance to catch your breath and plot and plan for the next phase. A love relationship can be intensified now. Financial security and enjoying the finer things in life, appreciating and creating things others long to have, assume a high priority. You enjoy music and may enjoy some get-together with other musicians after the workday has ended. Several of you from the workplace might join an aerobics group. You want to be in great shape for the summer-aerobics, competitive sports and other activities that burn calories are all favored.



**Virgo (August 23-September 22)**

Your dream could become a reality, in a most unexpected way. You might think you would like to be in a different field of work or department, but you should investigate all the angles before making any moves just now. You seem to be guided by sensible actions. Coordinate plans for the evening with a companion whose lifestyle and preferences you admire. Talk at the noon break centers around some law that seems unjust. You and a few others talk of ways to change this law. You will find your mind beginning to turn away from the material and become more concerned with the inward and spiritual. Spend some time out-of-doors today. This is a time of exploring your feelings: a kind of restlessness for new emotional experiences.



**Libra (September 23-October 22)**

You are not easily swayed by others' opinions, especially today. You could become involved with an exciting play of conversation this morning. You see no problem in expressing yourself vociferously in almost any situation, but be careful to make sure your opinion is really requested—especially in the work world. There are people around you that keep up with the news and it would not hurt for you to do the same. Keeping up-to-date will help you to make suggestions on product improvements. You are charming and graceful with eloquence in speech and writing. Consider writing short stories, especially if you have not tried your hand at this work yet. You are inventive, original and high tech. This is a great time to celebrate new beginnings!



**Scorpio (October 23-November 21)**

Although this can be a stressful day, it is a great day for making money. There is a feeling that anything is possible. There are optimism, faith and a tendency to take chances at the deepest emotional levels. This afternoon is a great time to reflect and understand your own situation, just how you feel about your goals and your progress. Emotions in particular—or the feelings of those around you—may be very clear. Bigger and better is the theme when it comes to creativity, romance and self-expression. This is a time when taking chances pays off beyond your wildest expectations. A social event may be just what is needed to give you a lift and encourage your energies. The evening is yours to enjoy. Everything conspires to reveal you at your most elegant.



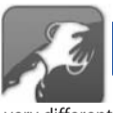
**Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)**

Work, success and ambition are things that mean a lot to you. You are at your mental best with sharp ideas and clear thoughts. This is an excellent time to make decisions and take care of mental work. This is a good day for moneymaking ventures. Make sure that you give yourself plenty of time to think through major decisions. Major relationships, especially family ones, are in a positive upswing. You may have a little time this afternoon to think on someone's life and how that person manages life, which may cause you to be very compassionate and understanding of him or her. There may be little time to see friends or family this afternoon or you may find yourself enjoying long conversations, writing letters and making special phone calls.



**Capricorn (December 22-January 19)**

You have a strong will and exhibit a great deal of ambition. Your situation in the business world is looking up, especially if you are in the construction business. Your accomplishments bring more respect your way. Today you find plenty of optimism, faith and a tendency to take chances. Close personal relationships are likely to undergo some testing. This is a time to cement your ties to others—to make sure they are rock-solid. If they are not, these ties are apt to crack under stress. Fairness with and responsibility to the other people in your life is emphasized now. There is fluency in your social skills, making this afternoon a good time to be with friends or loved ones. You may attract a new love interest while out having fun with friends later today.



**Aquarius (January 20- February 18)**

You may come face to face today with someone who has very different values than you. You could find yourself cast in a conflicting position that might require a compromise on your part. You do very well at solving problems—others learn from the way you handle yourself. The time or place is not right for you to make your feelings known and you are very good at moving on to another subject or project. At home or among your friends this afternoon, you can express your feelings freely. A clear-minded insight into your own plans is available to you. This is a very good time to communicate your goals and give them dates. Family or friends will give you great support. Your intimacy with a person you love will deepen at this time.



**Pisces (February 19-March 20)**

You have to be quiet in the workplace today. You must stop humming. Perhaps you can take a break and climb stairs or walk quickly around the block and hum at the same time. This way you can express some of that extra energy you are feeling just now. You keep a good countenance and can see yourself through most difficult times. You set a good example for others to follow. Music is captivating and you will often find a tune running around in your head that helps you maintain your calm manner, particularly as you work through the day. Good things happen today, which may mean a difficult person becomes a good friend or a lost transaction becomes found. Of course, this evening you enjoy a social gathering.

**COUNTRY CODES**

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



00:20 Street Outlaws  
 01:10 What On Earth?  
 02:00 Legend Of Croc Gold  
 02:50 The Wheel: Survival Games  
 03:40 Fast N' Loud  
 04:30 Storage Wars Canada  
 05:00 How Do They Do It?  
 05:30 How Do They Do It?  
 06:00 Made By Destruction  
 06:25 Made By Destruction  
 06:50 How Do They Do It?  
 07:15 How Do They Do It?  
 07:40 Impossible Engineering  
 08:30 Legend Of Croc Gold  
 09:20 Everest Rescue  
 10:10 The Wheel: Survival Games  
 11:00 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown  
 11:50 Storage Hunters UK  
 12:15 Storage Hunters UK  
 12:40 Manhunt With Joel Lambert  
 13:30 Wheeler Dealers  
 14:20 Diesel Brothers  
 15:10 Street Outlaws  
 16:00 Legend Of Croc Gold  
 16:50 Legend Of Croc Gold  
 17:40 Legend Of Croc Gold  
 18:30 Legend Of Croc Gold  
 21:00 Wheeler Dealers  
 21:50 Diesel Brothers  
 22:40 Street Outlaws  
 23:30 Rise Of The Warrior Apes

00:10 Hank Zipzer  
 00:35 Binny And The Ghost  
 01:00 Violetta  
 01:45 The Hive  
 01:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
 02:40 Hank Zipzer  
 03:05 Binny And The Ghost  
 03:30 Violetta  
 04:15 The Hive  
 04:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
 05:10 Hank Zipzer  
 05:35 Binny And The Ghost  
 06:00 Violetta  
 06:45 The Hive  
 06:50 The 7D  
 07:00 Jessie  
 07:25 Jessie  
 07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
 07:55 The Zhuzhus  
 08:20 Elena Of Avalor  
 08:45 Bunk'd  
 09:10 Stuck In The Middle  
 09:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place  
 10:25 A.N.T. Farm  
 11:15 Good Luck Charlie  
 12:05 Shake It Up  
 12:30 Shake It Up  
 12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse  
 13:00 Welcome To The Ronks  
 13:15 Gravity Falls  
 13:40 Hank Zipzer  
 14:05 Star Darlings  
 14:10 Austin & Ally  
 14:35 Jessie  
 15:00 Bunk'd  
 15:25 Kirby Buckets  
 15:50 Sunny Bunnies

15:55 The Zhuzhus  
 16:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
 16:45 Elena Of Avalor  
 17:10 Stuck In The Middle  
 17:35 Disney's Descendants  
 19:25 The Next Step  
 19:50 Austin & Ally  
 20:15 Star Darlings  
 20:20 Shake It Up  
 20:45 Backstage  
 21:10 Liv And Maddie  
 21:35 Cracked  
 21:40 Dog With A Blog  
 22:05 Best Friends Whenever  
 22:30 Jessie  
 22:55 Tsum Tsum Shorts



00:20 Henry Hugglemonster  
 00:35 The Hive  
 00:45 Loopdidoo  
 01:00 Henry Hugglemonster  
 01:15 Calimero  
 01:30 Art Attack  
 01:55 Zou  
 02:05 Loopdidoo  
 02:20 Henry Hugglemonster  
 02:35 Calimero  
 02:50 Zou  
 03:05 Art Attack  
 03:30 The Hive  
 03:40 Loopdidoo  
 03:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
 04:10 Art Attack  
 04:35 Loopdidoo  
 04:50 Calimero  
 05:05 Art Attack  
 05:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
 05:45 Zou  
 06:00 Art Attack  
 06:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
 06:45 Loopdidoo

07:00 Zou  
 07:15 Calimero  
 07:30 Loopdidoo  
 07:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
 08:00 Minnie's Bow-Toons  
 08:05 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
 08:15 Jake And The Neverland Pirates  
 08:30 Miles From Tomorrow  
 08:45 Goldie & Bear  
 08:55 The Lion Guard  
 09:20 PJ Masks  
 09:35 Jake And The Neverland Pirates  
 09:50 Doc McStuffins  
 10:00 Goldie & Bear  
 10:15 PJ Masks  
 10:30 Minnie's Bow-Toons  
 10:35 The Lion Guard  
 11:00 Sofia The First  
 11:30 Doc McStuffins Toy Hospital  
 11:55 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
 12:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh  
 12:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
 13:15 Gummi Bears  
 13:40 Sofia The First  
 14:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
 14:35 PJ Masks  
 15:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh  
 15:30 The Lion Guard  
 15:55 Unbungalievable  
 16:00 Sofia The First  
 16:30 Doc McStuffins Toy Hospital  
 16:55 Goldie & Bear  
 17:20 The Lion Guard  
 17:50 PJ Masks  
 18:15 Sofia The First  
 18:40 Doc McStuffins Toy Hospital  
 19:05 Jake And The Never Land Pirates  
 19:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse  
 20:00 The Lion Guard  
 20:30 The Lion Guard  
 21:00 Unbungalievable  
 21:05 Goldie & Bear  
 21:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse



06:00 Gravity Falls  
 06:25 Counterfeit Cat  
 06:50 Atomic Puppet  
 07:15 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
 07:25 Danger Mouse  
 07:40 Supa Strikas  
 08:10 K.C. Undercover  
 08:35 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures  
 09:00 Lab Rats  
 09:25 Lab Rats  
 09:50 Danger Mouse  
 10:20 Supa Strikas  
 10:45 Supa Strikas  
 11:10 Counterfeit Cat  
 11:35 Pair Of Kings  
 12:00 Pair Of Kings  
 12:30 Future-Worm!  
 12:55 Lab Rats: Bionic Island  
 13:45 Atomic Puppet  
 14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
 14:15 Counterfeit Cat  
 14:40 Supa Strikas  
 15:05 Lab Rats  
 15:30 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
 15:55 Right Now Kapow  
 16:25 K.C. Undercover  
 16:50 Future-Worm!  
 17:15 Gravity Falls  
 17:40 Lab Rats  
 18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
 18:10 Mighty Med  
 18:35 Right Now Kapow  
 19:00 Atomic Puppet  
 19:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
 19:55 K.C. Undercover  
 20:20 Kickin' It  
 20:45 Mighty Med  
 21:10 Danger Mouse  
 21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
 21:45 Marvel's Avengers Assemble  
 22:10 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6  
 22:35 Boyster  
 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am  
 KSA

16:00 Don't Tell The Bride  
 17:00 Tonight At The London Palladium  
 17:50 Home Fires  
 18:45 Emmerdale  
 19:45 Coronation Street  
 20:10 The Jonathan Ross Show  
 21:00 Don't Tell The Bride  
 22:00 Tonight At The London Palladium



00:15 This Is Brazil  
 01:05 Miguel's Feasts  
 01:30 Dog Whisperer  
 02:20 Top Chef Top Table: Seoul  
 02:45 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
 03:35 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
 04:25 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 04:50 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 05:20 The Wine Show  
 06:15 One Man & His Campervan  
 06:40 One Man & His Campervan  
 07:10 Miguel's Feasts  
 07:35 Dog Whisperer  
 08:30 Top Chef Top Table: Seoul  
 09:00 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
 09:25 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
 09:55 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
 10:20 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
 10:50 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 11:15 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 11:45 One Man & His Campervan  
 12:10 One Man & His Campervan  
 12:40 Miguel's Feasts  
 13:05 Dog Whisperer  
 14:00 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia  
 14:30 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
 14:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
 15:25 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
 15:50 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
 16:20 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 16:45 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 17:15 The Wine Show  
 18:10 One Man & His Campervan  
 18:35 One Man & His Campervan  
 19:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita  
 19:30 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
 20:00 Sara's Australia Unveiled  
 20:30 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 20:55 Valentine Warner's Wild Table  
 21:20 The Wine Show  
 22:10 One Man & His Campervan  
 22:35 One Man & His Campervan  
 23:00 Miguel's Feasts  
 23:25 Dog Whisperer



00:00 It Takes A Killer  
 00:30 It Takes A Killer  
 01:00 The First 48  
 02:00 The Jail: 60 Days In  
 03:00 Homicide Hunter  
 04:00 It Takes A Killer  
 04:30 It Takes A Killer  
 05:00 The First 48  
 06:00 The Jail: 60 Days In  
 07:00 Deadly Wives  
 08:00 Deadly Wives  
 09:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
 10:00 Homicide Hunter  
 11:00 Nightmare In Suburbia  
 15:00 Deadly Wives  
 16:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
 17:00 Homicide Hunter  
 18:00 Killers  
 19:00 It Takes A Killer  
 19:30 It Takes A Killer  
 20:00 The First 48  
 21:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
 22:00 Deadly Wives  
 23:00 The First 48



00:30 Prototype This  
 01:20 NASA's Greatest Missions  
 02:10 NASA's Unexplained Files  
 03:00 Destroyed In Seconds  
 03:25 Destroyed In Seconds  
 03:50 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor  
 04:40 How It's Made  
 05:05 How It's Made  
 05:30 Dirty Jobs  
 06:20 Mythbusters  
 07:00 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild  
 07:25 Awesome Adventures  
 07:50 Bondi Vet  
 08:40 How It's Made  
 09:05 How It's Made  
 09:30 Prototype This  
 10:20 Mythbusters  
 11:10 Bondi Vet  
 12:00 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor  
 12:50 How It's Made  
 13:15 How It's Made  
 13:40 Dirty Jobs  
 14:30 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild  
 14:55 Awesome Adventures  
 15:20 Mythbusters  
 16:10 Prototype This  
 17:00 Battle Bots  
 17:50 Breaking Magic  
 18:15 Breaking Magic  
 18:40 Destroyed In Seconds  
 19:05 Destroyed In Seconds  
 19:30 How It's Made  
 19:55 How It's Made  
 20:20 Mythbusters  
 21:10 Battle Bots  
 22:00 Breaking Magic  
 22:25 Breaking Magic  
 22:50 Destroyed In Seconds  
 23:15 Destroyed In Seconds  
 23:40 Bear Grylls: Born Survivor



BLUNT FORCE TRAUMA ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD



00:05 So Cosmo  
 00:55 So Cosmo  
 01:50 E! News  
 02:50 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
 05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
 06:00 Just Jillian  
 06:55 E! News  
 07:10 Just Jillian  
 08:10 E! News  
 09:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
 15:00 E! News  
 15:15 So Cosmo  
 16:10 So Cosmo  
 17:05 Botched  
 18:00 Botched  
 19:00 E! News  
 20:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
 21:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
 22:00 Revenge Body With Khloe Kardashian  
 23:00 E! News  
 23:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry



00:10 The Chase  
 01:00 Emmerdale  
 01:30 Coronation Street  
 02:00 Coronation Street  
 02:30 The Jonathan Ross Show  
 03:25 Don't Tell The Bride  
 04:25 5 Star Family Reunion  
 05:15 Home Fires  
 06:10 The Chase  
 07:05 The Jonathan Ross Show  
 08:00 Don't Tell The Bride  
 09:00 5 Star Family Reunion  
 10:00 Home Fires  
 10:55 The Chase  
 11:50 The Jonathan Ross Show  
 12:45 Emmerdale  
 13:15 Emmerdale  
 13:45 Coronation Street  
 14:15 The Chase  
 15:10 The Jonathan Ross Show



00:20 Asia's Deadliest Snakes  
 01:10 Bear Nomad  
 02:00 Lion Battle Zone  
 02:50 Secrets Of The Wild  
 03:45 Wild 24  
 04:40 World's Deadliest Animals  
 05:35 Lion Battle Zone  
 06:30 Secrets Of The Wild  
 07:25 Wild 24  
 08:20 World's Deadliest Animals  
 09:15 Snakes In The City  
 10:10 Europe's Wild Islands  
 11:05 World's Deadliest Animals  
 12:00 Death Of A Sea Monster  
 12:55 Blood Rivals: Lion vs. Buffalo  
 13:50 Ultimate Animal Countdown  
 14:45 Wild 24  
 15:40 Moody Beasts  
 16:35 Snakes In The City  
 17:30 Urban Jungle: Wilderness Rising  
 18:25 World's Deadliest Animals  
 19:20 Wild 24  
 20:10 Moody Beasts  
 21:00 Snakes In The City  
 21:50 Urban Jungle: Wilderness Rising



00:10 Inside: 21st Century Warship  
 02:00 Locked Up Abroad  
 02:55 Ultimate Airport Dubai  
 03:50 Air Crash Investigation  
 04:45 The Numbers Game  
 05:40 Car SOS  
 06:35 Crimes Against Nature  
 07:30 Mine Kings  
 08:25 Battleground Brothers  
 09:20 Street Genius  
 09:45 Street Genius  
 10:15 Locked Up Abroad  
 11:10 The Border  
 12:05 Route Awakening



FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2017

- 12:30 Route Awakening
- 13:00 Genius By Stephen Hawking
- 14:00 Miracle Hospital
- 14:30 Miracle Hospital
- 15:00 Crimes Against Nature
- 16:00 Locked Up Abroad
- 17:00 The Border
- 18:00 Taboo USA
- 19:00 A Brave Heart: The Lizzie Velasquez Story
- 20:00 Locked Up Abroad
- 20:50 The Border
- 21:40 Taboo USA
- 22:30 A Brave Heart: The Lizzie



- 00:19 Team Umizoomi
- 00:41 Louie
- 00:48 Louie
- 00:54 Olive The Ostrich
- 00:59 Olive The Ostrich
- 01:04 Max & Ruby
- 01:28 Wanda And The Alien
- 01:38 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
- 01:48 The Day Henry Met
- 01:53 The Day Henry Met
- 01:59 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 02:23 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 02:45 Zack & Quack
- 03:07 Team Umizoomi
- 03:30 Olive The Ostrich
- 03:35 Olive The Ostrich
- 03:40 Paw Patrol
- 04:03 Little Charmers
- 04:15 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
- 04:27 Dora The Explorer
- 04:49 Max & Ruby
- 05:13 Bubble Guppies
- 05:37 Shimmer And Shine
- 06:00 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
- 06:22 Zack & Quack
- 06:33 The Day Henry Met
- 06:38 The Day Henry Met
- 06:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 07:06 Paw Patrol
- 07:19 Paw Patrol
- 07:43 Dora The Explorer
- 08:00 Zack & Quack
- 08:22 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
- 08:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 09:10 Paw Patrol
- 09:35 Shimmer And Shine
- 09:58 Dora The Explorer
- 10:21 Paw Patrol
- 10:45 Little Charmers
- 10:57 Bubble Guppies
- 11:20 Fresh Beat Band Of Spies
- 11:40 Zack & Quack
- 11:52 Team Umizoomi
- 12:15 Team Umizoomi
- 12:38 Louie
- 12:45 Louie
- 12:53 Olive The Ostrich
- 12:58 Olive The Ostrich
- 13:03 Max & Ruby
- 13:26 Wanda And The Alien
- 13:35 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
- 13:46 The Day Henry Met
- 13:51 The Day Henry Met
- 13:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 14:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 14:41 Zack & Quack
- 15:03 Team Umizoomi
- 15:25 Olive The Ostrich
- 15:30 Olive The Ostrich
- 15:35 Paw Patrol
- 15:58 Little Charmers
- 16:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
- 16:22 Dora The Explorer
- 16:44 Max & Ruby
- 17:07 Bubble Guppies
- 17:31 Shimmer And Shine
- 17:54 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
- 18:17 Zack & Quack
- 18:29 The Day Henry Met
- 18:34 The Day Henry Met
- 18:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 19:00 Paw Patrol
- 19:13 Paw Patrol
- 19:37 Dora The Explorer
- 20:00 Zack & Quack
- 20:22 Dora And Friends: Into The City!
- 20:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines
- 21:10 Paw Patrol
- 21:35 Shimmer And Shine
- 21:58 Dora The Explorer
- 22:21 Paw Patrol
- 22:45 Little Charmers
- 22:57 Bubble Guppies



UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN ON OSN MOVIES COMEDY HD

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 00:00 I Am Soldier
- 02:00 Reign Of Fire
- 04:00 Jurassic Hunters
- 06:00 Code Of Silence
- 08:00 Close Range
- 09:45 Echo Effect
- 11:45 Reign Of Fire
- 13:30 Blunt Force Trauma
- 15:15 The World Is Not Enough
- 17:30 Die Another Day
- 20:00 San Andreas
- 22:00 Troy

OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY

- 00:00 American Girl: Saige Paints The Sky
- 02:00 Marvel's Iron Man & Captain America: Heroes United
- 03:30 The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement
- 05:30 Atlantis: The Lost Empire
- 07:30 Marvel's Iron Man & Captain America: Heroes United
- 09:00 Atlantis: Milo's Return
- 11:00 The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement
- 13:00 The Emperor's New Groove
- 15:00 Mars Needs Moms
- 17:00 The Sorcerer's Apprentice
- 19:00 The Haunted Mansion
- 21:00 Frankenweenie
- 23:00 Mars Needs Moms

OSN MOVIES HD

- 00:45 Adult World
- 02:30 War Of The Worlds
- 04:30 Finding Forrester
- 06:45 October Sky
- 08:45 The Chronicles Of Narnia: Voyage Of The Dawn...
- 10:45 War Of The Worlds
- 12:45 Up Close And Personal
- 15:00 McFarland, USA
- 17:15 S.W.A.T.
- 19:30 Blood Diamond
- 22:00 Straight Outta Compton

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 00:00 Bad Words
- 02:00 Kicking And Screaming
- 04:00 Under The Tuscan Sun
- 06:00 Trust Me
- 08:00 Kicking And Screaming
- 10:00 Under The Tuscan Sun
- 12:00 Trust Me
- 14:00 Paul Blart: Mall Cop 2
- 16:00 Confessions Of A Shopaholic

OSN MOVIES HD

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

- 00:00 Starred Up
- 01:45 Spotlight
- 04:00 Ed Wood
- 06:15 Still Alice
- 08:00 WarGames
- 10:00 The Man Who Wasn't There
- 12:00 Spotlight
- 14:15 We Are Many
- 16:15 The Yellow Handkerchief
- 18:00 Whiplash
- 20:00 The Rainmaker
- 22:15 2001: A Space Odyssey

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

- 01:30 Hey Arnold! The Movie
- 03:00 Columbus In The Last Journey
- 04:30 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
- 06:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
- 07:30 Cher Ami
- 09:15 The Adventures Of Rocky And Bullwinkle
- 11:00 Hey Arnold! The Movie
- 12:30 Columbus In The Last Journey
- 14:00 The Unbeatables
- 16:00 The Adventures Of Rocky And Bullwinkle
- 17:45 Big Baby
- 19:15 The Tale Of The Princess Kaguya
- 21:30 The Unbeatables
- 23:15 Cher Ami



- 00:40 Mythbusters
- 01:30 How Do They Do It?
- 01:55 Food Factory
- 02:20 Food Factory USA
- 02:45 Food Factory USA
- 03:10 Close Encounters
- 03:35 Close Encounters
- 04:00 Kings Of Construction
- 04:48 Mythbusters
- 05:36 How Do They Do It?
- 06:00 Food Factory
- 06:24 Food Factory USA
- 06:49 Food Factory USA
- 07:12 Close Encounters
- 07:37 Close Encounters
- 08:00 How Do They Do It?
- 08:26 Kings Of Construction
- 09:14 Mythbusters
- 10:02 Close Encounters
- 10:27 Close Encounters

- 10:50 How Do They Do It?
- 11:14 Food Factory
- 11:38 How The Earth Works
- 12:26 Kings Of Construction
- 13:14 Mythbusters
- 14:02 How Do They Do It?
- 14:26 Food Factory
- 14:50 Close Encounters
- 15:15 Close Encounters
- 15:38 Kings Of Construction
- 16:26 Food Factory USA
- 16:51 Food Factory USA
- 17:14 Mythbusters
- 18:02 Close Encounters
- 18:27 Close Encounters
- 18:50 Kings Of Construction
- 19:40 Mythbusters
- 20:30 Mythbusters
- 21:20 How Do They Do It?
- 21:45 Food Factory
- 22:10 Close Encounters
- 22:35 Close Encounters
- 23:00 Mythbusters
- 23:50 Kings Of Construction



- 00:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 01:00 Patton 360
- 02:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 03:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 03:50 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence
- 04:40 The Human Calculator
- 05:30 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 06:20 Patton 360
- 07:10 The Universe
- 08:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 09:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 10:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence
- 11:00 The Human Calculator
- 12:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 13:00 Patton 360
- 14:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 15:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 16:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence



- 00:20 Oprah's Master Class
- 01:10 Single Dad Seeking...
- 02:50 Love, Lust Or Run
- 03:15 Cake Boss
- 03:35 Oprah's Master Class
- 04:20 Little People, Big World: Wedding Farm
- 05:10 Toddlers & Tiaras
- 06:00 Little People, Big World: Wedding Farm
- 06:50 Little People, Big World: Wedding Farm
- 07:40 Little People, Big World: Wedding Farm
- 08:30 Little People, Big World
- 09:20 Designer Darlings
- 10:10 Ultimate Shopper
- 11:00 Ultimate Shopper
- 11:50 Love, Lust Or Run
- 12:15 Love, Lust Or Run
- 12:40 Love, Lust Or Run
- 13:05 Love, Lust Or Run
- 13:30 Love, Lust Or Run
- 13:55 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
- 14:45 Oprah's Master Class
- 15:35 Cake Boss
- 16:00 Cake Boss
- 16:25 Cake Boss
- 16:50 Cake Boss
- 17:15 Cake Boss
- 17:40 Cake Boss
- 18:05 Cake Boss
- 18:30 Cake Boss
- 18:55 Outrageous Kid Parties
- 19:20 Little People, Big World
- 20:10 Designer Darlings
- 21:00 Little People, Big World
- 21:50 Sister Wives
- 22:40 Too Ugly For Love?
- 23:30 Return To Amish

- 17:00 The Human Calculator
- 18:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 19:00 Patton 360
- 20:00 Cities Of The Underworld
- 21:00 The Universe
- 22:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence
- 23:00 Engineering Disasters



- 00:20 Battle 360
- 01:10 Outlaw Chronicles: Hells Angels
- 02:00 Search For The Lost Giants
- 02:50 Storage Wars
- 03:15 American Pickers
- 04:05 Pawn Stars
- 05:00 Mountain Men
- 06:00 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us
- 06:50 Time Team
- 07:40 Battle 360
- 08:30 Shark Wranglers
- 09:20 Ice Road Truckers
- 10:10 Swamp People
- 11:00 American Pickers
- 11:50 Counting Cars
- 12:15 Car Hunters
- 12:40 Pawn Stars
- 13:05 Pawn Stars Best Of
- 13:30 American Pickers
- 18:30 Shipping Wars
- 18:55 Shipping Wars
- 19:20 Alaska Off-Road Warriors
- 20:10 Ice Road Truckers
- 21:00 American Pickers
- 21:50 Ronnie O'Sullivan's American



- 00:00 Patricia Heaton Parties
- 01:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 02:00 Man Fire Food
- 03:00 Chopped
- 04:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 05:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 06:00 The Kitchen
- 07:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 08:00 Siba's Table
- 09:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 10:00 The Kitchen
- 11:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 12:00 Siba's Table
- 13:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 14:00 Chopped
- 15:00 The Kitchen
- 16:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 17:00 Chopped
- 18:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 19:00 Luke Nguyen's United Kingdom
- 20:00 Follow Donal... To Europe
- 21:00 Girl Eat World
- 22:00 Iron Chef America



BLOOD DIAMOND ON OSN MOVIES HD

WORD SEARCH

Real Estate 1

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 22 letters spell a common Real Estate phrase.

Grid of letters for word search: N E L A S O F M E C N A R U S N I U E T I S O P E D L W O L A G N U B T R I P L E X S K Y S C R A P E R V D U P L E X T E R I O R L S E L L A I L T I B U I L D I N G P O A A S C N N O I T A Z I T R O M A R S Q L A T O F F E R H E L R L R E S U E I N E E I S T T O L P A O T E A E O R C R U T T C A U T W F A T R A T X T Y I L I D A I S Y I L L E C V L N A L O A M E R I E S L D F I A E P T A T R V E N T R C O E O E L P R P S O B E T S M N T C E O S U R O P I S U R D E H E O N D T R A S P C A I Y N Z N K A D C E A L T P E M R O I N O I E R R N D G O I O R E P E N N I N G L A E O E A O S T S P D G N E D E R V M I C N N L Y P A Y M E N T C O E

- AGENT AMORTIZATION APPRAISAL ASSESSMENT ASSET BUILDING BUNGALOW BUYING CLOSER COLLATERAL CONDEMNED CONDO CONTRACT CREDITOR DEED DEPOSIT DEPRECIATION DUPLEX EXTERIOR FLIPPING FOR SALE HOUSE INSPECTOR INSURANCE INTERIOR LAND LAWYER LENDER LIEN LOAN LOFT MARKET VALUE OFFER PAYMENT PLOT PROPERTY REALTOR SELL SKYSCRAPER SOLD SQUARE FOOTAGE TAXES TIMESHARE TOUR TRIPLEX VACANCY VALUATION ZONE

Yesterday's Solution

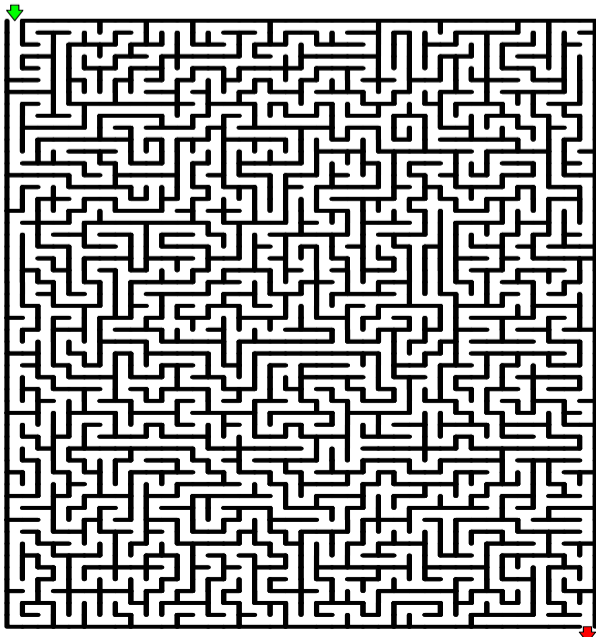
Radiohead Songs

Grid for Radiohead songs word search with words circled: PRATSUAFTHEFTOURIST, IMAERDECINLETDOWN, PSUECILOPAMRAKBE, CDIORDNADIONARAPE, OPROVEYOURSSELFRE, RRGAXEABRNEEGEST, DHANDEILLEMINIRRS, PHUUIRLCLGTPUMOEU, RPHNNBRKEHTPLOS, AIYINTATOLATANKNID, SIEMNINENTNERIT, KREFEINDNRIEFTMA, COFRBDSFGNORNUDAN, ANISRATTBGBUILOADR, SBLUNYUTTBISEWTL, UGMLLEEOCOAKCEP, SNEFILKNGLCREEP, KGRAALTHEBENDSSLL, IESENOBKNEVESOUTE

- AIRBAG ALL I NEED BLACK STAR BLOW OUT BODYSNATCHERS BONES CREEP ELECTIONEERING FAUST ARP FITTER HAPPIER HIGH AND DRY HUNTING BEARS IN LIMBO JUST KARMA POLICE KID A KNIVES OUT LET DOWN LURGEE MORNING BELL MY IRON LUNG NICE DREAM NO SURPRISES NUDE OPTIMISTIC PARANOID ANDROID PLANET TELEX PROVE YOURSELF PYRAMID SONG RECKONER RIPCORD SULK THE BENDS THE TOURIST TREEFINGERS VEGETABLE VIDEOTAPE

The hidden song is: SUBTERRANEAN HOMESICK ALIEN

CHALLENGING MAZE



CROSSWORD 1550

Grid for crossword puzzle 1550 with numbers 1-78 indicating starting positions for clues.

ACROSS

- 1. A caustic detergent useful for removing grease. 4. A Hindu sect worshipping Shakti. 11. Black honeycreepers with yellow feathers around the tail. 15. Feline mammal usually having thick soft fur and being unable to roar. 16. A spectator who shouts encouragement. 17. A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia. 18. Type genus of the Anatidae. 20. Lower in esteem. 22. Concerning those not members of the clergy. 23. A room or establishment where alcoholic drinks are served over a counter. 25. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984). 29. A light touch or stroke. 31. Any of several attractive evergreen shrubs of Australia grown for their glossy deep green foliage and flowers in rich blues and intense violets. 34. A reptile genus of Iguanidae. 37. The 2nd letter of the Greek alphabet. 40. Large crested fish-eating diving duck having a slender hooked bill with serrated edges. 42. Music composed for dancing the saraband. 44. A yellow trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group. 45. Japanese ornamental tree with fragrant white or pink blossoms and small yellow fruits. 46. A faucet for drawing water from a pipe or cask. 50. Of or relating to or involving an area. 52. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else. 53. A native-born Israeli. 56. A resident of Ohio. 61. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa. 64. (used of opinions and actions) Far beyond the norm. 66. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind. 67. (Greek mythology) A maiden who was first a sculpture created by Pygmalion and was brought to life by Aphrodite in answer to Pygmalion's prayers. 70. A mountain peak in the Andes in Peru (21,709 feet high). 72. Step on it. 73. Grown for its thickened edible aromatic root. 75. Cooking utensil consisting of a wide metal vessel. 76. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice. 77. That part of the ovary of a flowering plant where the ovules form. 78. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- 1. A burn cause by hot liquid or steam. 2. An island of central Hawaii. 3. Support consisting of a place to rest the foot while ascending or descending a stairway.

- 4. A white trivalent metallic element. 5. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC). 6. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables. 7. A drop of the clear salty saline solution secreted by the lacrimal glands. 8. The bureau of the Treasury Department responsible for tax collections. 9. The seat within a bishop's diocese where his cathedral is located adv. 10. A form of address for a man. 11. (British) A minicar used as a taxicab. 12. An edible seaweed with a mild flavor. 13. Injure or wound seriously and leave permanent disfiguration or mutilation. 14. Being the only one. 19. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae. 21. Marked by practical hardheaded intelligence. 24. The ninth month of the civil year. 26. An esoteric or occult matter that is traditionally secret. 27. (chemistry) P(potential of) H(ydrogen). 28. (Greek mythology) The winged goddess of the dawn in ancient mythology. 30. Any of various edible seeds of plants of the family Leguminosae. 32. Fleshy spore-bearing inner mass of e.g. a puffball or stinkhorn. 33. British admiral. 35. Long-tailed arboreal mustelid of Central and South America. 36. A unit of dry measure used in Egypt. 38. Explosive consisting of a yellow crystalline compound that is a flammable toxic derivative of toluene. 39. A public promotion of some product or service. 41. (Islam) The man who leads prayers in a mosque. 43. A bitter yellow powder used to treat skin diseases. 47. City in southern Malawi. 48. A partially opened flower. 49. A short sleep (usually not in bed). 51. (archaic or Scottish) Faithful and true. 54. The largest city of Cameroon. 55. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light. 57. A unit of weight for precious stones = 200 mg. 58. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man. 59. The seventh month of the Moslem calendar. 60. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River. 62. A sudden short attack. 63. On or toward the lee. 65. One of a pair of long straps (usually connected to the bit or the headpiece) used to control a horse. 68. A protocol developed for the internet to get data from one network device to another. 69. The fatty flesh of eel. 71. Fiddler crabs. 74. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.

Yesterday's Solution

Grid for crossword puzzle solution with letters filled in: S C D C O R T L A N D B A D M A R A V A R I T I A A P R A R A B L E E L I N T C I A R E P A I R F I L E S C A B T W E L F T H T T G H A N A D A B H C A A T A R A X J S T A N D B Y L A H M T A U P E K I L O A K A B A A M P L E R O B S A B A H P E K A N S N O B Z A S S E T C A D D O A M I A C E K A I L D A B A H A S P E N D B A D I S R A E L I M B A P A R E N E S T A G H E A D A B A D E N P A R N A I B A C A B

Daily SuDoku

Sudoku grid: 9 | | | 2 | | | 5 | | | | | | 2 | 1 | | | | | 3 | | | | | | 9 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 7 | | | 3 | | | | | | 6 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 4 | | | 1 | | | 3 | | | 8 | | | | | | | | 6 | 7 | | 4 | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | 1

Yesterday's Solution

Sudoku grid: 6 8 4 | 5 7 3 | 9 2 1 | 3 9 7 | 2 8 1 | 6 5 4 | 5 1 2 | 4 9 6 | 3 8 7 | 7 4 6 | 9 5 8 | 1 3 2 | 1 2 8 | 3 6 4 | 7 9 5 | 9 3 5 | 1 2 7 | 8 4 6 | 2 7 1 | 8 4 9 | 5 6 3 | 8 5 3 | 6 1 2 | 4 7 9 | 4 6 9 | 7 3 5 | 2 1 8

## UNPROVEN STEM CELL THERAPY CAUSES 3 WOMEN TO GO BLIND

**MIAMI:** An unproven stem cell therapy that involves extracting a patient's fat tissue and injecting it into the eyes has caused three US women to go blind, a report said Wednesday.

The women, aged between 72 and 88, were treated in Florida in 2015 for a progressive eye disease called macular degeneration, said the report in the New England Journal of Medicine. They thought they were enrolling in a legitimate clinical trial, having found it under the title: "Study to assess the safety and effects of cells injected intravitreal in dry macular degeneration" on ClinicalTrials.gov, the US government website for such research. However, they immediately suffered complications, including retinal detachment and hemorrhage, which caused total loss of eyesight.

The clinic and patients involved were not named in the study, which was co-authored by Thomas Albin, associate professor of clinical ophthalmology at the University of Miami. Two of the patients sought treatment at the university's hospital for the complications they suffered.

"There's a lot of hope for stem cells, and these types of clinics appeal to patients desperate for care who hope that stem cells are going to be the answer," said Albin. "But in this case these women participated in a clinical enterprise that was off-the-charts dangerous."

### Red flags

The procedure claimed to use adipose-derived stem cells to restore vision. Patients had fat cells removed from their abdomens. This fat tissue was processed with enzymes in order to get stem cells, which would be mixed with platelet-dense plasma and injected into their eyes. Albin said the complications could have been caused by contamination during the mixing process, or the stem cells, once injected into the eye, could have changed into a type of cell that led to scarring.

Whatever happened, experts said there was no evidence to suggest the procedure would have helped restore vision, since so little study has been done on whether adipose-derived stem cells can mature into the kinds of retinal cells that are involved in macular degeneration. —AFP

## GREAT BARRIER REEF MAY NEVER RECOVER FROM BLEACHING: STUDY

URGENT ACTION NEEDED IN THE FACE OF INEFFECTIVE CONSERVATION

**PARIS:** Australia's Great Barrier Reef may never recover from last year's warming-driven coral bleaching, said a study that called for urgent action in the face of ineffective conservation efforts.

Record-high temperatures in 2015 and 2016 drove an unprecedented bleaching episode, which occurs when stressed corals expel the algae that live in their tissue and provide them with food.

Bleached coral is more susceptible to disease, and without sufficient time to recover—which can take one decade or several depending on the species—it can die. For the new study released late Wednesday, an Australian-led team examined the impact of three major bleaching events—in 1998, 2002 and 2016 — over the reef's entire 2,300-kilometre (1,400-mile) length.

In 2016, they found, the proportion of constituent reefs experiencing extreme bleaching was over four times higher than in the two previous episodes. Only nine percent escaped bleaching altogether, compared with more than 40 percent in 2002 and 1998.

"The chances of the northern Great Barrier Reef returning to its pre-bleaching assemblage structure are slim given the scale of damage that occurred in 2016 and the likelihood of a fourth bleaching event occurring within the next decade or two as global temperatures continue to rise," the team wrote. Earlier this month, researchers warned that the reef was already experiencing an unprecedented second straight year of bleaching.

Local reef protection "affords little or no resistance" to extreme heat, the researchers

wrote in the journal Nature. Current endeavors focus on better water quality and fisheries management, but "even the most highly protected reefs and near-pristine areas are highly susceptible to severe heat stress," they said.

researchers were re-mobilizing to conduct aerial and underwater surveys tracking the second year of bleaching now underway.

"We're hoping that the next 2-3 weeks will cool off quickly, and this year's bleaching won't be anything like last



A photo taken on September 22, 2014, shows fish swimming through the coral on Australia's Great Barrier Reef. —AFP

The findings have important implications for coral reef conservation efforts.

"Bolstering resilience will become more challenging and less effective in coming decades because local interventions have had no discernible effect on resistance of corals to extreme heat stress," the study said.

### Scientists re-mobilize

Coinciding with the study's launch, lead author Terry Hughes from Australia's Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, said

year," he said. "The severity of the 2016 bleaching was off the chart."

Co-author Janice Lough, from the Australian Institute of Marine Science, said the average sea-surface temperatures for the Australian summer in 2016 were the highest ever recorded on the Great Barrier Reef. "In each of the three events since 1998, the pattern of bleaching matches exactly where the warmest water was each year. That allows us to predict when and where bleaching is likely to occur this year," she added. —AFP

CLINIC  
PAGE



Kuwait Times  
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## KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (16/03/2017 TO 22/03/2017)

<b>SHARQIA-1</b>		KONG: SKULL ISLAND	2:45 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.1</b>	
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:00 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	5:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	11:30 AM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	2:30 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	7:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	2:00 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	5:00 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	10:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	4:30 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	7:30 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	12:45 AM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	7:00 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	10:00 PM			BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	9:30 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	12:30 AM			BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:05 AM
<b>SHARQIA-2</b>		<b>MARINA-1</b>			
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	11:30 AM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	1:00 PM		
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	1:30 PM	SLEEPLESS	1:30 PM	<b>AL-KOUT.2</b>	
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	4:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	3:30 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:00 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	6:30 PM	SLEEPLESS	6:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	3:00 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	9:00 PM	SLEEPLESS	8:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	5:30 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	11:30 PM	LOGAN	10:00 PM	SLEEPLESS	8:00 PM
		SLEEPLESS	12:45 AM	SLEEPLESS	10:00 PM
				SLEEPLESS	12:05 AM
<b>SHARQIA-3</b>		<b>MARINA-2</b>			
SLEEPLESS	12:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	11:45 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.3</b>	
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	2:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	2:15 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	12:00 PM
SLEEPLESS	4:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	4:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	2:30 PM
SLEEPLESS	6:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	7:15 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	5:00 PM
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	8:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	9:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	7:30 PM
SLEEPLESS	10:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	12:15 AM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	10:00 PM
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	12:45 AM			VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	12:30 AM
<b>MUHALAB-1</b>		<b>MARINA-3</b>			
SLEEPLESS	11:45 AM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	11:30 AM	<b>AL-KOUT.4</b>	
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	1:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	2:00 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	12:45 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	4:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	4:30 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	2:45 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	6:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	7:00 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	4:45 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	9:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	9:30 PM	HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	6:45 PM
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	11:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:05 AM	LOGAN	8:15 PM
				VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	11:00 PM
<b>MUHALAB-2</b>		<b>AVENUES-1</b>		SLEEPLESS	1:00 AM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:30 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	11:45 AM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	1:45 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	3:00 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	1:45 PM	KIKORIKI. Legend of the Golden Dragon	1:45 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	5:30 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	3:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST -3D	3:30 PM
SLEEPLESS	8:00 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	5:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	6:00 PM
SLEEPLESS	10:15 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	7:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST -3D	8:30 PM
SLEEPLESS	12:15 AM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	9:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	11:00 PM
		VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	11:45 PM		
<b>MUHALAB-3</b>		<b>AVENUES-2</b>			
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	11:30 AM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND -3D-4DX	11:30 AM	<b>BAIRAQ-1</b>	
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	2:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST-3D-4DX	2:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	1:00 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	4:30 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST-3D-4DX	4:30 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST -3D	1:45 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	7:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST-3D-4DX	7:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	3:30 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	9:30 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST-3D-4DX	9:45 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	6:00 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:05 AM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND -3D-4DX	12:30 AM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST -3D	8:30 PM
				BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	11:00 PM
<b>FANAR-1</b>		<b>AVENUES-3</b>			
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	11:45 AM	SLEEPLESS	12:45 PM	<b>BAIRAQ-2</b>	
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	1:45 PM	SLEEPLESS	2:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	11:45 AM
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	3:45 PM	SLEEPLESS	4:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	2:15 PM
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	5:45 PM	SLEEPLESS	6:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	4:45 PM
HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	7:45 PM	SLEEPLESS	8:45 PM	HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	7:15 PM
LOGAN	9:15 PM	SLEEPLESS	10:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	9:00 PM
VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	12:05 AM	SLEEPLESS	12:45 AM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	11:30 PM
<b>FANAR-2</b>		<b>360°-1</b>		<b>BAIRAQ-3</b>	
SLEEPLESS	12:15 PM	VENGEANCE: A LOVE STORY	11:30 AM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:00 PM
SLEEPLESS	2:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	1:30 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	2:30 PM
SLEEPLESS	4:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST -3D	4:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	5:00 PM
SLEEPLESS	6:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	7:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	7:30 PM
SLEEPLESS	8:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	9:45 PM	SLEEPLESS	10:00 PM
SLEEPLESS	10:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:30 AM	SLEEPLESS	12:05 AM
SLEEPLESS	12:15 AM				
<b>FANAR-3</b>		<b>360°-2</b>			
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	1:30 PM	LOGAN	1:15 PM	<b>PLAZA</b>	
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	4:00 PM	KIKORIKI. Legend of the Golden Dragon	12:00 PM	ANGAMALY DIARIES- Malayalam	3:30 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	6:30 PM	KIKORIKI. Legend of the Golden Dragon	2:00 PM	FRI+SAT	
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	9:00 PM	FRI+SAT		ORU MEXICAN APARATHA -Malayalam	3:30 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	11:30 PM	LOGAN	4:00 PM	NO FRI+SAT	
		LOGAN	6:45 PM	ORU MEXICAN APARATHA -Malayalam	6:30 PM
		LOGAN	9:30 PM	ORU MEXICAN APARATHA -Malayalam	9:30 PM
		LOGAN	12:15 AM		
<b>FANAR-4</b>		<b>360°-3</b>		<b>LAILA</b>	
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:00 PM	HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	1:15 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	3:15 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	2:30 PM	HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	1:30 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	5:45 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	5:00 PM	HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	3:00 PM	BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	8:15 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	7:30 PM	HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	4:45 PM	KONG: SKULL ISLAND	10:45 PM
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	10:00 PM	HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	6:30 PM		
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	12:30 AM	HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	8:15 PM	<b>AJIAL.1</b>	
		HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	10:00 PM	ORU MEXICAN APARATHA -Malayalam	3:30 PM
		HAMAH - Kuwaiti Film	11:45 PM	ORU MEXICAN APARATHA -Malayalam	6:30 PM
				ORU MEXICAN APARATHA -Malayalam	9:30 PM
<b>FANAR-5</b>					
KONG: SKULL ISLAND	12:15 PM			<b>AJIAL.2</b>	
				MACHINE- HINDI	3:45 PM
				TRAPPED -Hindi	6:45 PM
				MACHINE- HINDI	9:00 PM
				<b>AJIAL.3</b>	
				BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	5:00 PM
				BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	7:30 PM
				BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	10:00 PM

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I, **Dadi Setty Venkata Ramana** S/o Subbaiah, Passport No. N8640361 and Civil ID No. 271081603624 has changed my name to **Gobburu Sivaiah** S/o Chinna Subbarayudu, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by name of **Gobburu Sivaiah**.

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, **FRANK CORNELIUS GONSALVES** holder of Indian Passport No. G3303149, hereby change my Father name **JOSEPH** to **JOSE SANTANA ARQUIMEDES GONSALVES** and Mother name **ROSE** to **ROSARIA GONSALVES**. (C 5284)

I, **Dadi Setty Nagarathnamma** W/o Dadi Setty Venkata Ramana, Passport No. P1092521 and Civil ID No. 274061210819 has changed my name to **Gobburu Nagarathnamma** wife of **Gobburu Sivaiah**, hereinafter in all my dealings and documents I will be known by name of **Gobburu Nagarathnamma**. (C 5285) 17-3-2017

## EMERGENCY

**112**

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### PRAYER TIMINGS

**Fajr: 04:37**  
**Shorook 05:56**  
**Duhr: 11:57**  
**Asr: 15:22**  
**Maghrib: 17:57**  
**Isha: 19:14**



# Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2017

US GEARS TO CONFRONT TRADE PARTNERS AT G20 MEETING

Page 39

Page 38

## US FED RAISES RATE, SEES MORE HIKES CONSUMER AND BUSINESS LOANS LIKELY AS ECONOMY IMPROVES

**WASHINGTON:** The Federal Reserve has raised its benchmark interest rate for the second time in three months and forecast two additional hikes this year. The move reflects a consistently solid US economy and will likely mean higher rates on some consumer and business loans.

The Fed's key short-term rate is rising by a quarter-point to a still-low range of 0.75 percent to 1 percent. The central bank said in a statement that a strengthening job market and rising prices had moved it closer to its targets for employment and inflation. The message the Fed sent Wednesday is that nearly eight years after the Great Recession ended, the economy no longer needs the support of ultra-low borrowing rates and is healthy enough to withstand steadily tighter credit.

The decision, issued after the Fed's latest policy meeting, was approved 9-1. Neel Kashkari, president of the Fed's regional bank in Minneapolis, was the dissenting vote. The statement said Kashkari preferred to leave rates unchanged. The Fed's forecast for future hikes, drawn from the views of 17 officials, still projects that it will raise rates three times this year, unchanged from the previous forecast in December. But the number of Fed officials who think three rate hikes will be appropriate for 2017 rose from six to nine.

The central bank's outlook for the economy changed little, with officials expecting growth of 2.1 percent this year and next year before slipping to 1.9 percent in 2019. Those forecasts are far below the 4 percent growth that President Donald Trump has said he can produce with his economic program. The Fed's rate hike should have little effect on mortgages or auto and student loans. The central bank doesn't directly affect those rates, at least not in the short run. But rates on some other loans - notably credit cards, home equity loans and adjustable-rate mortgages - will likely rise soon, though only modestly. Those rates are based on benchmarks like banks' prime rate, which

moves in tandem with the Fed's key rate.

After the Fed's announcement, major banks began announcing that they were raising their prime lending rate from 3.75 percent to 4 percent. Mark Vitner, an economist at Wells Fargo, noted that the Fed's statement provided little hint of the timing of the next rate hike. The lack of specificity gives the Fed flexibility in case forthcoming elections in Europe or other unseen events disrupt the global economy.

"They don't want to prematurely set the table for a rate hike," Vitner said. "I think they're confident, but it's hard not to be cautious after we've had so many shocks over the years."

Stock prices rose and bond yields fell as traders reacted to the Fed's plans to raise rates gradually. The Dow Jones industrial average, which had been only modestly positive before the decision was announced at 2 p.m. Eastern time, closed up 112 points.

### Inflation pick-up

The Fed's statement made few changes from the last one issued Feb. 1. But it did note that inflation, after lagging at worryingly low levels for years, has picked up and was moving near the Fed's 2 percent target. And it adopted some new language hinting that it might be tolerant of higher-than-optimal inflation for some unspecified period. Economists said this suggested that officials could let inflation top their 2 percent target, just as inflation remained stuck below 2 percent for years after the Great Recession.

The new language "reflects the fact that inflation may run above 2 percent for some time," Michael Gapen, an economist at Barclays, said in a note to clients.

Many economists think the next hike will occur no earlier than June, given that the Fed probably wants time to assess the likelihood that Congress will pass Trump's ambitious program of tax cuts, deregulation and increased spending on infrastructure. In recent weeks, investors had seemed unfazed by the possibility that the Fed

would raise rates several times in the coming months. Instead, Wall Street has been sustaining a stock market rally on the belief that the economy will remain durable and corporate profits strong. A robust February jobs report - 235,000 added jobs, solid pay gains and a dip in the unemployment rate to 4.7 percent - added to the perception that the economy is fundamentally sound.

That the Fed is no longer unsettling investors with the signal of forthcoming rate increases marks a sharp change from the anxiety that prevailed after 2008, when

the central bank cut its key rate to a record low and kept it there for seven years. During those years, any slight shift in sentiment about when the Fed might begin raising rates - a step that would lead eventually to higher loan rates for consumers and businesses - was enough to move global markets.

The Fed has managed its control of interest rates with exceeding caution, beginning with an initial hike in December 2015. It then waited an entire year before raising rates again in December last year. —AP

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**DESCRIPTION**  
Date of Birth: [redacted] Place of Birth: [redacted]  
Date of Issue: August 26, 2012 Date of Expiration: [redacted]  
Sex: Male Race: White  
Physical Description: [redacted]

**REMARKS**  
[redacted]

**CAUTION**  
[redacted]

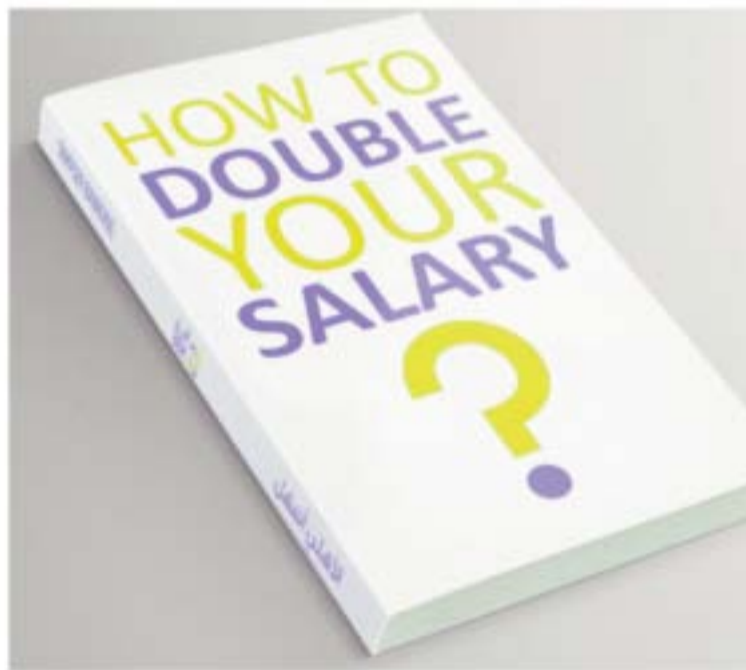
**Yahoo indictments may shed light on other hacks**



**NEW YORK:** Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen's news conference appears on a television screen on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange on Wednesday. The Fed's key short-term rate is rising by a quarter-point to a still-low range of 0.75 percent to 1 percent. — AP

### ABK Announces Winners of 45<sup>th</sup> 'Double Your Salary' Weekly Draws

Get KD 100 upon transfer of salary to ABK and be one of the lucky winners to double up!



**A**l Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held its 45th 'Double Your Salary' weekly draw on 6th March, 2017 at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce, announcing the names of the winners for this week. The promotion includes weekly draws, with two winners per draw. The campaign will run until 27th June, 2017.

The winners this week were:

- Sarah Abdulwahab A. Aldrais, University Branch
- Seham Mohammad Fuad A M AlSaadani, Jahra 2 Branch

New customers who transfer their salary to ABK receive KD 100 and will automatically be entered into the weekly draws to double their salaries. Existing customers who are already transferring their salary to ABK are entered into a separate draw.

# YAHOO INDICTMENTS MAY SHED LIGHT ON OTHER HACKS

## US IN BETTER POSITION TO FIGURE OUT ALLEGED RUSSIA ROLE

**WASHINGTON:** US authorities may now be in a better position to figure out if Russian hackers and Russian spies swayed last year's presidential elections.

A scheme uncovered during a federal investigation into a huge Yahoo security breach may have opened a window into other hacks potentially instigated by foreign governments, according to computer security experts. That includes a separate FBI investigation into whether the Russian government hired hackers to interfere with the November election that put President Donald Trump into the Oval Office.

"This makes you more optimistic that they will get to the bottom of what has been going on," said Robert Cattanaach, a former Department of Justice attorney now in private practice.

In the Yahoo case unsealed Wednesday, the Department of Justice alleged that two Russian intelligence agents hired a pair of

agency skepticism of their Russian counterparts, comes as US authorities investigative Russian interference through hacking in the 2016 presidential election. Officials said those investigations are separate.

UN Ambassador Nikki Haley said Trump should take both investigations serious. "We cannot trust Russia, we should never trust Russia," she said on NBC's "Today show" in an interview broadcast Thursday. Haley has been tougher on Russia than Trump, who has expressed hope for better relations with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

One of the Yahoo-related defendants, a Canadian and Kazakh national named Karim Baratov, has been taken into custody in Canada. Another, Alexsey Belan, is on the list of the FBI's most wanted cyber criminals and has been indicted multiple times in the US. It's not clear whether he or the other two defendants, Dmitry Dokuchaev and Igor Sushchin, will ever step foot in an American courtroom since there's no extradition treaty with Russia.

The indictment identifies Dokuchaev and Sushchin as officers of the Russian Federal Security Service, or FSB. Belan and Baratov were paid hackers directed by the FSB to break into the accounts, prosecutors said. Dokuchaev has been in custody in Russia since his arrest on treason charges in December, along with his superior and several others. Russian media have reported that Dokuchaev and his superior were accused of passing sensitive information to the CIA. The media reports also have contended that Dokuchaev was arrested by the FSB several years ago and offered a choice: serve a long prison sentence on hacking charges or sign a contract to work for the agency.

### Counterespionage

The FSB hasn't commented, and the Justice Department did not confirm that. Yahoo didn't disclose the breach until last September when it began notifying hundreds of millions of users that their email addresses, birth dates, answers to security questions and other personal information may have been stolen. Three months later, Yahoo revealed it had uncovered a separate hack in 2013 affecting about 1 billion accounts, including some that were also hit in 2014. US officials said it was especially galling that the scheme involved officers from a Russian counterespionage service that theoretically should be working collaboratively with its FBI counterparts.

"Rather than do that type of work, they actually turned against that type of work," McCord said.

Paul Abbate, an FBI executive assistant director, said the bureau had had only "limited cooperation with that element of the Russian government in the past," noting that prior US demands to turn over Belan had been ignored. Though the US government has previously charged individual Russian hackers with cybercrime - as well as hackers directly linked to the Chinese and Iranian governments - this is the first criminal case to name as defendants sitting members of the FSB for hacking charges, the Justice Department said. US intelligence authorities have concluded that Russian intelligence agencies were behind hacking efforts of Democratic email accounts in last year's election. Officials say this case is separate from that investigation, though one of the defendants in the Yahoo case, Belan, was among the Russians sanctioned last year by the Obama administration.

The indictment, which includes charges of economic espionage, trade secret theft and unauthorized access to protected computers, arise from a compromise of Yahoo user accounts that began at least as early as 2014. The Justice Department's assertion that the FSB was directing the hacking likely provides political and legal cover for Yahoo, which saw its multibillion-dollar deal with Verizon teeter after it was forced to warn consumers that their private information might have been exposed.

Companies are more likely to be blamed for security incompetence when their networks are compromised by thieves or wayward teenagers than when they become the targets of sophisticated espionage carried out by foreign governments.

### Easier prey?

But Yahoo probably wouldn't have been targeted in the first place if it hadn't been viewed as easier prey than other major tech companies, including Google and Microsoft, that also oversee email services with hundreds of millions of users, said Avivah Litan of Gartner Inc. "The criminals always go to the place of least resistance," she said. —AP

## TURKISH CB CAREFULLY TIGHTENS RATE POLICY

**ISTANBUL:** Turkey's central bank took another unorthodox tightening step yesterday, hiking the cost of funds from its "late liquidity window" by 75 basis points while leaving conventional policy rates on hold ahead of April's landmark political referendum. The bank's decision to hike the cost of borrowing from its late liquidity window came a day after the US Federal Reserve lifted rates. By leaving its three other rates, including the benchmark repo rate, steady, the Turkish central bank could fuel concern it is bowing to pressure from President Tayyip Erdogan.

Erdogan, an economic populist who has declared himself an "enemy" of interest rates, has railed against what he says is the high cost of credit in Turkey. Turks go to the polls on April 16 to vote in a referendum on a constitutional change that would give his office sweeping executive powers.

"The committee decided to strengthen monetary tightening in order to contain the deterioration in the inflation outlook," the bank's policy-setting committee said in a statement. "The central bank will continue to use all available instruments in pursuit of the price stability objective," it said, adding that food prices had contributed in recent months to sharp increases in inflation.

The Fed's move made it easier for the Turkish central bank to follow suit, said William Jackson of Capital Economics in a note to clients. "The Turkish central bank had good domestic reasons to tighten monetary policy today given growing concerns about inflation. But the Fed's rate hike last night made their job easier by providing some cover from political pressure," he said.

The bank raised the late liquidity window rate to 11.75 percent from 11 percent, less than the 100 basis point hike that had been predicted by 15 of 23 economists polled by Reuters.

However, it left its overnight lending rate at 9.25 percent, contrary to the expectations of a hike from nearly half the economists polled. It also left its benchmark one-week repo rate at 8 percent. All but one respondent in the poll forecast it would be unchanged.

It was unclear how the policy move would affect banks' lending to consumers and businesses. "The complexity of Turkey's monetary policy setup can make it difficult to interpret decisions, but today's move was clearly aimed at tightening monetary conditions," Jackson said. The lira firmed following the central bank's move. It was at 3.6390 at 1254 GMT, some 1 percent firmer on the day. —Reuters

## POLAND AIMS TO BE WINNER IN BREXIT BATTLE FOR BANKING JOBS

**WARSAW:** As Britain prepares to leave the European Union, the country hoping to win the most jobs from London's financial center is not Germany or France, but Poland.

While the likes of Frankfurt and Paris are competing for top investment bankers after Brexit, Poland has set its sights on mid-tier financial and technical work where salaries may not be astronomical but jobs are far more numerous. Since the country joined the EU in 2004, many Poles have gone to Britain to work; now the government wants to attract more jobs currently based in Britain for Poles to do at home. The Association of Business Service Leaders in Poland is working on projects with seven big financial firms about shifting jobs from London, said the Association's managing director Pawel Panczyj. The focus is on middle office functions such as risk management and information technology.

"We are talking with banks, insurance institutions and investment funds who want to move their middle office abroad. The main factor behind their decision (now) is Brexit," he told Reuters. Panczyj's efforts are likely to bear fruit. The regional head of one global investment bank told Reuters that he estimates as many as 20 percent of jobs at the lender's London base could eventually be done in Poland. Last year's referendum when Britons voted for Brexit has forced banks and other financial firms to seek new bases for some operations in a country that will remain in the EU, allowing them to continue serving clients in the bloc. They are also under pressure to cut costs as they look at how to reorganize their operations. In some cases, this includes work that could still be based in Britain from a regulatory point of view, but needs to be done more cheaply than is possible in Europe's dominant financial capital. —Reuters

**WANTED BY THE FBI**

**IGOR ANATOLYEVICH SUSHCHIN**

Conspiring to Commit Computer Fraud and Abuse; Accessing a Computer Without Authorization for the Purpose of Commercial Advantage and Private Financial Gain; Damaging a Computer Through the Transmission of Code and Commands; Economic Espionage; Theft of Trade Secrets; Access Device Fraud; Wire Fraud

**DESCRIPTION**

Aliases: Igor Sushin, Igor Sushin  
 Date(s) of Birth Used: August 26, 1973  
 Place of Birth: Moscow, Russia  
 Hair: Blond  
 Eyes: Blue  
 Sex: Male  
 Race: White  
 Nationality: Russian

**REMARKS**

Sushchin has Russian citizenship and is known to hold a Russian passport. Sushchin is alleged to be a Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) officer of unknown rank. In addition to working for the FSB, he is alleged to have served as head of Information Security for a Russian company, providing information about employees of that company to the FSB. He was last known to be in Moscow, Russia.

**CAUTION**

From at least January of 2014, continuing through December of 2016, Igor Anatolyevich Sushchin is alleged to have conspired with, among others, known and unknown FSB officers, including Dmitry Aleksandrovich Dokuchaev, to provide direct, face-to-face, and pay criminal hackers, including Alexsey Belan, Sushchin and his complicitors, access to, and full, gain or authorized access to the computer networks of and user accounts hosted at major companies providing access to websites and internet-related services in the Northern District of California and elsewhere.

A federal arrest warrant for Igor Anatolyevich Sushchin was issued on February 23, 2017, in the United States District Court, Northern District of California, San Francisco, California. That warrant was based on an indictment charging him with conspiring to commit computer fraud and abuse; accessing a computer without authorization for the purpose of commercial advantage and private financial gain; damaging a computer through the transmission of code and commands; economic espionage; theft of trade secrets; access device fraud; and wire fraud.

**SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AN INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT RISK**

If you have any information concerning this person, please contact your local FBI office or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate.

**This wanted poster provided by the FBI shows Igor Anatolyevich Sushchin, 43, a Russian national. A US indictment of two Russian intelligence agents and two hackers alleged to have stolen more than half a billion US email accounts in 2014 has cast a spotlight on the intertwining of the Russian security services and the murky digital underworld. According to the indictment, FSB agents Igor Sushchin and Dmitry Dokuchaev ran two hackers during the Yahoo operation and paid them. —AP**

hackers to engineer a heist that affected at least a half billion user accounts. In a scheme that prosecutors say blended intelligence gathering with old-fashioned financial greed, the four men targeted the email accounts of Russian and US government officials, Russian journalists and employees of financial services and other private businesses, US officials said.

### Personal information

Using in some cases a technique known as "spear-phishing" to dupe Yahoo users into thinking they were receiving legitimate emails, the hackers broke into at least 500 million accounts in search of personal information and financial data such as gift card and credit card numbers, prosecutors said.

"We will not allow individuals, groups, nation states or a combination of them to compromise the privacy of our citizens, the economic interests of our companies or the security of our country," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Mary McCord, the head of the Justice Department's national security division.

The case, announced amid continued US intelligence

## ICELAND BOOMING BUT NO CRASH IN SIGHT: CB

**REYKJAVIK:** Iceland's economy is booming and may overheat but there will be no repeat of the crash that plunged the country into a major financial crisis in 2008, central bank governor Mar Gudmundsson told AFP in an interview.

The North Atlantic island posted spectacular growth of 7.2 percent in 2016, one of the strongest rates in the world, on the back of a tourism boom. Wages are rising, as are investments, and real estate projects are flourishing. But Gudmundsson is not concerned about the possibility of another crash.

"There might be an overheating. That is why we have a somewhat tight monetary policy and we should have a tight fiscal policy and other tools to deal with that," he said on Wednesday. "But if there is overheating, the adjustment will not be a financial crisis or anything of that kind." The banking sector's excesses in the 2000s remain fresh in the memory of Icelanders. In October 2008, the country's three main banks collapsed after borrowing beyond their means to fund ambitious investments abroad. Before their collapse, their liabilities amounted to more than 10 times Iceland's total GDP.

The banks' collapse led to an unprecedented financial crisis, a deep recession and a bailout from the International Monetary Fund. For the central bank governor, there is no way that scenario will be repeated. This time around, the growth is tangible, not speculative, stemming from the hordes of tourists spending money to admire the country's breathtaking landscapes. "The banks are in much, much better shape, they are not (involved) in an international activity, the foreign exchange on the balance (sheet) of the banks is very tightly regulated, he explained, adding: "They have very high capital levels, they have very good liquidity."

"This growth that we're seeing, the boom we are seeing, is not credit-driven," he stressed. On Wednesday, the central bank left its key interest rate unchanged at 5.0 percent, recalling that it was keeping a close eye on inflation, which in February was moderate at 1.9 percent. — AFP

## G20 MAY SKIRT TRADE DUE TO DISCORD WITH US: SCHAEUBLE

**BERLIN:** The protectionist stance of the new US administration could complicate G20 talks this week and force policymakers to leave out the disputed trade issue, German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble told Reuters in an interview.

Speaking ahead of the G20 gathering of finance ministers and central bankers in the German town of Baden-Baden today and tomorrow, Schaeuble said it was still unclear if the G20 would keep joint language supporting free trade and open markets. "There are differing views on this subject," Schaeuble said, pointing to "America First" comments by US President Donald Trump and other senior US government officials. "It's possible that we explicitly exclude the topic of trade in Baden-Baden and say that can only be resolved at the summit of the state and government leaders." An early draft communique for the G20 meeting had suggested that the world's financial leaders might no longer explicitly reject protectionism, breaking with a decade-old tradition.

"This is not the ideal solution, but it would not be such a big deal," Schaeuble said about the possibility that the G20 members might fail to reach an agreement on trade.

The final communique of Baden-Baden should send the message that international cooperation is still robust in times of growing geopolitical risks, Schaeuble said. He said he believed the G20 would keep established language rejecting foreign exchange rate manipulation. "That's my expectation," Schaeuble said.

Schaeuble said he would ask his US counterpart Steven Mnuchin during talks in Berlin later to explain any plans to overhaul the US tax code and favor exports over imports by introducing a border adjustment tax.

"I'll tell him the arguments that from my point of view speak against changing the tax system of the whole world," Schaeuble said. "I hope that we'll achieve sensible results." Schaeuble also said that he did not expect Washington to roll back all financial market regulations after Trump ordered reviews of major banking rules put in place after the global financial crisis. — Reuters



In this Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2016 file photo, Steven Mnuchin, talks with reporters in the lobby of Trump Tower, in New York. U.S. President Donald Trump has vowed to get tough on trade partners like China, Mexico and Germany. Now his Treasury chief, Steven Mnuchin, will get his first opportunity to confront them all in one room. — (AP Photo/Evan Vucci, File)

## US GEARS TO CONFRONT TRADE PARTNERS AT G20 MEETING

CURRENCY MANIPULATION REMAINS ANOTHER TICKLISH ISSUE

**FRANKFURT:** US President Donald Trump has vowed to get tough on trade partners like China, Mexico and Germany. Now his Treasury chief, Steven Mnuchin, will get his first opportunity to confront them all in one room.

The meeting of the 20 most powerful economies' finance ministers in Germany this week is likely to be dominated by talk about whether to commit to free trade, as previous meetings have - or implicitly accept that some countries may put up barriers, like tariffs, as Trump has promised.

The officials are also due to discuss their longstanding ban on manipulating currencies to gain economic advantage. Weakening a currency can help a country's exporters, but can also end up dumping its troubles with business costs and competitiveness on its trade partners.

The gathering today and tomorrow in the southern German resort town of Baden-Baden will help set the tone for international commerce and finance and will give Mnuchin a chance to clarify what the US position is.

The focus will be on the final statement issued jointly by the finance ministers tomorrow. Last year's gathering of the Group of 20 finance ministers in Chengdu, China, issued a statement opposing "all forms of protectionism." This time, such unequivocal language could be softened to refer to trade that is "open" and "fair," without the absolute opposition to import restrictions to benefit domestic workers.

Trump has repeatedly emphasized that the US needs a tougher approach to trade that would put American workers and companies first. He has already pulled the US out of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement with Japan and other Pacific Rim countries and he has started the process to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada, both of whom are G-20 members.

Additionally, Britain is preparing to

pull out of the European Union and its free-trade zone that permits cross border business without import and export taxes, or tariffs, after voters chose to leave in a referendum last year.

"We are committed to open and fair trade," said a senior US Treasury official this week, who briefed reporters only on condition of anonymity to discuss the US position ahead of the talks. "That means a trading system that has a level playing field for our firms and our workers globally. We will be encouraging policies that lead to that level playing field."

The official would not comment on what language might be in the finance ministers' final statement this week. He also did not want to discuss what changes if any the United States might be seeking to the G20's statement on currency policy but said Mnuchin would press counterparts to live up to their commitments to refrain from manipula-

tion. During the campaign, Trump said he planned to name China a currency manipulator right after he took office. But since taking office, he has not discussed the topic.

Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen will join Mnuchin in representing the United States. Other prominent participants will be European Central Bank President Mario Draghi, China's finance minister, Xiao Jie, and the host finance minister, Wolfgang Schaeuble of Germany. The G20 is also due to discuss ways to strengthen the global economy and create more jobs. Other issues include international financial regulation and efforts to crack down on tax avoidance and evasion.

The summit is taking place with the global economy in relatively good shape: the International Monetary Fund predicts growth of 3.4 percent this year and 3.6 percent next year, compared with 3.1 percent last year. —AP

## UK CB SEEMS INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT INFLATION

**LONDON:** The Bank of England kept its interest rates at record-lows yesterday to avoid stalling economic growth as Britain prepares to leave the European Union. But one person on its nine-strong rate-setting committee voted for an increase - a surprise move that shows concern about the recent surge in inflation.

The bank's Monetary Policy Committee voted to keep its key rate at 0.25 percent, a day after the US Federal Reserve raised its benchmark rate. The vote was 8-1, with rate-setter Kristin Forbes voting for a rise to 0.5 percent. Her unhappiness was evident in minutes released along with the decision. The document pointed out that "one member" argued that inflation was rising fast and "likely to remain above target for at least three years."

It was the first non-unanimous vote since last summer. Inflation has risen in part due to the pound's plunge since June, when Britain voted to leave the EU. A weaker currency makes imports more expensive. Higher inflation is likely to eat into household income in coming months and years, particularly as wages are not growing as fast as before.

The inflation rate now stands at 1.8 percent, near the Bank of England's target of around 2 percent. Higher interest rates can weigh on inflation - but also on economic growth, a fact that presents the central bank with a dilemma.

The Bank of England has signaled it is willing to temporarily ignore the rise in inflation rather than risk reigning in the economy. —AP

# US FED RATE MOVES COULD SPELL END TO ASIAN EASING

MOVE PRESSURES EMERGING ECONOMIES DESPITE LOCAL CONDITIONS

**SINGAPORE:** The long cycle of falling interest rates in Asia could be over after the US Federal Reserve's third rate rise in 15 months was followed quickly by monetary tightening in the world's second-biggest economy, China. The Fed's widely anticipated rise of 25 basis points on Wednesday was also only its third since the global financial crisis, having reined in earlier temptations to raise rates out of concern for the impact on fragile emerging economies that still needed looser monetary conditions.

But the Fed signalled again that such reticence is over, repeating its projections for at least two more rate rises this year as the US economy strengthens.

"At the very least, the Fed's desire to step up the pace of policy normalization has changed the conversation at many central banks globally," said Sean Callow, an economist with Westpac in Sydney.

"Further monetary easing is now largely seen as only if needed to 'break the glass', not a plausible baseline." The People's Bank of China promptly raised the rates on the short-term funding operations it conducts for the country's banks for a third time this year yesterday.

The Fed's move would otherwise make it harder for China to stop its currency weakening and arrest a persistent outflow of capital. China also wants to cool a run-up in debt and the risk of a property bubble. The Bank of Japan (BOJ) announced the verdict of its regular policy meeting on Thursday, opting to stand pat with its 0.1 percent short-term interest rate target and a loose commitment to keep buying bonds, though core inflation is far below its ambitious 2 percent target.

Some analysts expect the BOJ will in due course have to raise its zero percent

yield target for 10-year Japanese government bonds. Broader evidence of the shift in central bank thinking will be on hand later in the day as central banks in Indonesia, Norway, Switzerland and Britain review policy.

## The currency challenge

The Fed's new policy path is a sea change for global markets used to a decade of easy money. And while emerging markets are showing some signs of strength, with a recovery in commodity prices and growth in exports, they are struggling to fire up domestic demand. But their freedom to fit domestic rates to local demand conditions is constrained by the need to keep hold of the foreign capital that flooded in seeking higher yields when developed world rates were at rock bottom. And they also need to prevent their currencies from tumbling against a rallying dollar.

"Even if domestic conditions warrant a cut, fears about exacerbating financial market volatility will keep central banks cautious," said Tim Condon, ING's chief Asia economist. "It definitely complicates life for those central banks that either needed to or wanted to cut rates."

Condon was expecting Indonesia's central bank to cut rates twice this year, but says he is now "uneasy" about that call. "To the extent that US rate hikes do put pressure on Asian central banks to tighten policy, it will be through currency movements," Gareth Leather, senior Asia economist at Capital Economics, said in a note.

Emerging markets have already had a dress rehearsal for such circumstances in 2013, when the threat of Fed policy tightening triggered a "taper tantrum" of volatility, prompting central banks in

India, Indonesia and elsewhere to defend their currencies via higher rates.

South Korea is also juggling competing pressures. Its policy rates are barely above the Fed's, it wants to avoid unsettling a highly indebted housing sector, but it also has a huge amount of foreign money in its bond market that could take off for greener pastures.

The Fed's raise was not the only piece of news that could encourage the world's central banks to a firmer stance. Elections in the Netherlands, where the anti-EU party of Geert Wilders won fewer seats than expected, came as a relief to markets, though next month's presidential election in France is still hanging over the continent, with the far-right Front National candidate Marine Le Pen showing strongly. For Switzerland, uncertainty has the opposite effect on its safe-haven currency, driving it higher despite negative interest rates.

The Swiss National Bank is not expected to change its rates later in the day. Its negative rate policy, in place since 2015, is aimed at curbing demand for the currency in a period of destabilizing elections across Europe that could boost anti-establishment parties. The Norwegian central bank, while keen to start raising rates, is likely to keep rates on hold, too, after a tumble in inflation as it worries about a strong currency. The dilemma for the world's central banks is that markets driven by the Fed's lead will force them to respond, regardless of domestic conditions.

Callow at Westpac said the domestic logic, "in any country or zone where wages growth is weak and core inflation not on a clear self-sustaining uptrend", would otherwise be to ease policy.

"Which is actually most of the world," he said. — Reuters



**BRASILIA:** The words "Temer Out" are stenciled in Portuguese on a column of the Economy Ministry headquarters during protest against pension reforms proposed by Brazil's President Michel Temer's government in Brasilia, on Wednesday. — AP

## ANTI-AUSTERITY PROTESTS BREAK OUT ACROSS BRAZIL

**SAO PAULO:** Demonstrators occupied Brazil's finance ministry, flooded the center of Sao Paulo and went on strike in a string of cities on Wednesday to protest reforms to the cash-strapped country's pension system. The biggest demonstration took place in the financial powerhouse Sao Paulo, where thousands of people filled a section of the main avenue.

Addressing a cheering crowd organizers said numbered up to 80,000 people, the fiery former leftist president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said the government wants to "end the achievements of the working class over the past years." "The people will only stop when they choose a government democratically," he said, alluding to the impeachment of his chosen successor Dilma Rousseff last year, which installed the current center-right President Michel Temer in office. Lula leads the polls ahead of elections next year.

In Sao Paulo, a strike by metro and bus workers in Sao Paulo earlier had paralyzed the morning rush hour. During a dramatic protest in the capital Brasilia, hundreds of activists burst into the finance ministry before the start of the workday, occupying the building until late afternoon. Police said they vandalized the ministry and broke windows.

Staff at public schools in Rio de Janeiro also went on strike, trash collectors stopped work in Curitiba and the metro was shut down in Belo Horizonte, according to the news portal G1.

Rio's protest ended in turmoil when some demonstrators clashed with the police, who threw tear gas and stun grenades, Globo TV reported. The unrest in more than 20 cities marked the most serious challenge in the streets so far to Temer's attempts to tame the budget and restore an economy mired in two straight years of recession. "We're on strike for the future of the country," said Rio teacher Mirna Aragon at a protest with thousands of other people. "The rights of workers have been thrown in the gutter."

### Question of rights

A provision to set the retirement age at 65 is central to the pension reform—a shock to a country where many are able to draw pensions at 54. That reform is needed to prevent the pension system's "collapse," the hugely unpopular Temer said in an address on Wednesday.

"No one will have their rights taken away," he said, describing the reforms as "saving the benefits of today's retirees and of the young who will retire tomorrow." Arguing that the country will be driven to bankruptcy if austerity measures are not taken, Temer has already steered a 20-year budget freeze through Congress.

He got one piece of good news Wednesday when financial ratings agency Moody's upgraded its outlook for Brazil from "negative" to "stable." However, leftist opposition organizations say Temer is punishing ordinary Brazilians already suffering the worst recession in the country's history, with unemployment at a record 12.6 percent-around 13 million jobless.

Popular actor Wagner Moura—who plays the drug lord Pablo Escobar in the Netflix series "Narcos"—added his voice, saying "this reform represents yet another enormous blow to the rights of Brazilian workers."

When Temer took over last year—after his leftist predecessor Rousseff was impeached for illegally manipulating government accounts with unauthorized loans—he made a return to economic health his main goal, saying he does not care if austerity measures decrease his already rock-bottom popularity. — AFP

## HEDGE FUNDS TO REAP BIG GAINS FROM BANKRUPTCY OF COAL MINER PEABODY

**CHICAGO/WILMINGTON:** When leading US coal miner Peabody Energy Corp emerges from bankruptcy next month, a group of seven investment funds could reap hundreds of millions of dollars in gains from an unusual sale of discounted company stock. Six hedge funds and a state investment fund together own about half of the company's unsecured bonds, according to a January disclosure statement from Peabody. They used that leverage to gain access to a private placement of company stock, which has become surprisingly valuable amid an unexpected coal resurgence.

The exclusive offering for institutional investors will be challenged in bankruptcy hearings starting Thursday by a group of individual investors who were shut out. Those investors — who said in court filings that they own between 5 and 7 percent of the unsecured bonds — will argue in US Bankruptcy Court in St. Louis that Peabody's reorganization plan should be rejected because it violates a bankruptcy statute requiring equal treatment for owners of the same securities.

"This is absolutely theft from a small group of people who are powerless," said Edward Hindelang, 69, a longtime investor in Peabody's stock who started buying its bonds when clouds gathered over the coal sector in 2015. St. Louis-based Peabody declined to comment, but has argued in court that its Chapter 11 restructuring plan maximizes value

for all investors and creditors. Extra benefits for major investors reflect their outsized role in negotiating and financing the company's bankruptcy exit, the company has said in court filings.

Two of the hedge funds — Elliott Management and Aurelius Capital Management — played a pivotal role cutting the deal. Elliott and Aurelius gained negotiating clout by threatening a protracted legal challenge aimed at using an accounting change to strip \$1 billion in collateral from a loan arranged by Citibank.

Elliott, Aurelius and Citibank declined to comment. Individual investors are being shut out of a private placement of \$750 million in newly minted Peabody preferred stock — at a 35 percent discount to the company's estimated valuation. The sale of stock, which comes with attractive dividends and other benefits, is only open to institutional investors who hold Peabody bonds, including the seven funds.

Individual investors can, however, buy stock at a discount of at least 45 percent in a separate \$750 million common stock offering, which is also open to major funds.

In both stock sales, the number of shares investors are allowed to buy is based on the amount of Peabody debt they hold. Individual investors argue they should have access to both opportunities, which would allow them to buy much more discounted stock. — Reuters



# BOJ HOLDS FIRE EYEING US ECONOMY, BREXIT RISK

**TOKYO:** Japan's central bank gave an upbeat assessment of the world's number three economy yesterday, but it flagged risks including "developments" in the US and Chinese economies, as well as Britain's exit from the European Union.

The Bank of Japan held fire on fresh policy measures, as expected, following its latest meeting, a day after the US Federal Reserve hiked interest rates and underscored its confidence in the world's top economy. BoJ policymakers pointed to a "steady recovery" in the economy, even as efforts to boost inflation remain well short of its two-percent target. It has not made a significant move for the past four policy meetings.

"The central bank has little reason to do more now—the economy is perking up, with a tight labour market stoking inflationary pressures and core consumer prices rising again," said Bloomberg Intelligence economist Yuki Masujima. Policymakers repeated previous con-

cerns about developments overseas, worried about how US President Donald Trump's protectionist leanings will affect Japan's trade picture.

"Risks to the outlook include the following: developments in the US economy and the impact of its monetary policy on global financial markets," the BoJ said. It also cited edginess about China's economy, which last year grew at its slowest pace in a quarter of a century, while Britain's exit from the EU could have implications for the huge trading bloc.

Later, bank chief Haruhiko Kuroda said the bank's monetary easing plan would remain in place for the time being—dashing hopes that he might give clues about a timeline for pulling back on its huge asset-buying program. "Since we're still far off the two-percent price target, it's appropriate to press on with powerful monetary easing," he told a press conference.

"The world economy has been on a solid recovery trend since late



**TOKYO:** In this Jan 29, 2016 file photo, a man walks past the Bank of Japan building. Japan's central bank opted yesterday to keep its monetary policy steady, as the US Federal Reserve tightens and European Central Bank edges in that direction. —AP

last year... but we think the downside risks for (Japan's) economy and prices still outweigh the upside."

## Weak pay hikes

Yesterday, the BoJ left its mas-

sive 80 trillion yen (\$705 billion) annual asset-purchase scheme unchanged and said it would press on with a plan to keep the yield on government 10-year bonds around zero. It also made no change to a

negative interest rate policy, designed to spur lending.

The measures are central to a broader bid to stimulate growth in Japan's economy. The US Fed's rate hike on Wednesday is a potential plus as it highlights strength in a major market for Japanese products. Rate rises also tend to boost the dollar against the yen, which is good news for the profitability of Japanese firms doing business abroad. But some of Japan's top companies on Wednesday announced their lowest wage increases in four years, laying out another challenge to the central bank and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's economic recovery scheme, dubbed Abenomics.

Abe has been calling for big wage hikes so workers have more money to spend. His growth plan—a mix of aggressive monetary easing and huge government spending along with reforms to the economy—was unveiled in early 2013. — AFP

## CHINA CONSUMER DAY SHOW SKEWERS NIKE SHOES, MUJI FOODS

**SHANGHAI:** China's annual consumer rights day television show turned its spotlight on US sports brand Nike Inc for misleading advertising and Japanese brand Muji for selling food products allegedly sourced from part of Japan affected by radiation. The state-run China Central Television (CCTV) show - which can have brands and their corporate PR teams scurrying to take evasive action - said Nike had misled consumers over high-tech air cushions in some of its "Hyperdunk" basketball shoes.

Similar to CBS network's "60 Minutes" in the United States, the CCTV show - known as "315" in reference to global consumer rights day on March 15 - has previously named and shamed firms from Apple Inc to Volkswagen AG. The two-hour show - a mix of undercover reports and song-and-dance - also highlighted Japanese brands including Muji, owned by Ryohin Keikaku Co, which it said sold food products in China from an area of Tokyo where high levels of radiation were detected in 2015.

A Ryohin Keikaku spokesman said yesterday the firm was "not selling any food products in China from areas banned from exporting due to concerns about radioactive contamination".

Muji's China website said it was a misunderstanding, as the company's registered address and the food production site were different. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said Japan had not given clear answers about the effect and extent of radiation leaks from the Fukushima nuclear crisis of 2011 and called for greater transparency.

Nike said in a statement it had sold 300 pairs of Hyperdunk shoes in China last year with "an inaccurate product description stating that the shoe contained airbags". The firm added it had apologized to consumers and offered compensation. "We will fully cooperate with the government regulators regarding their inquiries," the company said. The Greater China region accounts for over 10 percent of Nike's global sales.

The show also took aim at fake eye doctors for scamming patients, animal breeders for over-using medicines to make animals grow faster, and China's Wikipedia-like Baik.com.

The 315 show can hit a firm's reputation if singled out for bad corporate behavior. Apple was forced into a rare apology in 2013 after criticism on the show of its China after-sales service.

"Pretty much all the big corporations have their PR machines ready to jump into action because they've seen what happens when companies are not prepared," said James Feldkamp, Shanghai-based CEO of independent China consumer watchdog Mingjian. — Reuters

# CHINA LIFTS SHORT-TERM RATES TO STEADY YUAN, CURB DEBT

## BEIJING MOVES TO TIGHTER POLICY BIAS AS ECONOMY IMPROVES

**SHANGHAI:** China's central bank raised short-term interest rates yesterday in what economists said was a bid to stave off capital outflows and keep the yuan currency stable after the Federal Reserve raised US rates overnight.

The increase in rates was China's third in as many months, and came a day after the end of the annual session of parliament where leaders warned that tackling risks from a rapid build-up in debt would be a top policy priority this year. Hours earlier, the Fed raised its benchmark policy rate, as had been widely expected, and signalled more hikes were on the way as the US economy picks up steam.

"The timing says it all. China is no longer insulated from the Fed and, more generally, from international financial conditions," said Alicia Garcia Herrero, chief Asia Pacific economist at Natixis.

The People's Bank of China (PBOC) has left its benchmark lending rate unchanged since an October 2015 cut, and said specifically that yesterday's action should not be seen as full-blown policy tightening, like that of the Fed. But analysts and investors believe the PBOC is increasingly using money market rates and other policy tools as it struggles to contain financial risks from years of debt-fuelled stimulus and raise the costs for speculators betting against the yuan.

China's banks tend to rely heavily on short-term, interbank lending, which connect strong banks with weaker counterparts and shadow lenders. The PBOC has been allowing repo rates to rise since late 2016 by adjusting the amount of funds it injects.

"The higher US rates and tightening of US monetary policy could trigger further capital outflows and have some negative impact on China's financial system," Nomura economist Yang Zhao said. "I think they want to stabilize the currency at this time." The PBOC also

strengthened the yuan's daily mid-point reference rate by the most in about two months yesterday. The yuan ended the day up 0.2 percent. But benchmark 10-year treasury futures closed at their highest in over two months, as a big central bank cash injection calmed market jitters after the rate rises.

Last year the yuan fell 6.5 percent against a resurgent dollar and uncertainty over China's economy, prompting the government to clamp down on capital outflows to ease a drain on its foreign exchange reserves. The yuan has been largely stable this year as the dollar has paused, but China's government has remained alert as many market watchers expect the dollar will eventually resume its climb.

## More room

After years of super-loose policy, the PBOC has cautiously shifted to a modest tightening bias in recent months, though it is trading cautiously to avoid hurting growth. The economy is on steadier footing now, giving policymakers more room.

PBOC Governor Zhou Xiaochuan said on Friday that China's corporate debt levels are too high but stressed it will take time to bring them down to more manageable levels. In keeping with that cautious approach, most of the increases yesterday were a very modest 10 basis points (bps), or a tenth of a percentage point, the same as moves in various short- and mid-term policy instruments in January and February. The rate on open market operation reverse repos for seven-, 14- and 28-day tenors was bumped up for the second time in six weeks, with the seven-day rising to 2.45 percent.

The PBOC insisted the moves did not indicate a change in its monetary policy, though some economists say the seven-day reverse repurchase rate has become a de facto policy rate. Flexibility in rates

is favorable for deleveraging, "deflating bubbles" and risk prevention, the PBOC said. "(The market) does not need to over-interpret the amount and price of each operation," it said. "Changes in rates are normal and do not indicate a change in direction for monetary policy."

Economists expect further modest hikes in the seven-day rate over the course of the year, with ANZ expecting another 20 bps rise by year-end and London-based Capital Economics forecasting another 55 bps. The weighted average rate for the seven-day reverse repo rose to 2.7641 percent, from Wednesday's 2.5697 percent.

## Cash injections

The PBOC also raised the borrowing rate on its medium-term lending facility (MLF) loans, with the six-month rate now 3.05 percent and the one-year at 3.20 percent, after a similar move in late January. The MLF is a supplementary policy tool it uses to manage liquidity conditions in the banking system and money markets. Completing the daily triple-play, sources said the PBOC also raised rates on its standing lending facility (SLF) short-term loans later in the day.

The rate increase for overnight SLF loans was twice that of the other instruments at 20 bps, possibly signalling concern that very short-term funding was still being used in riskier ways despite pledges of a crackdown. The PBOC had no immediate comment.

The central bank also injected a large amount of fresh funds into the financial system to maintain liquidity. It lent 113.5 billion yuan (\$16.47 billion) of six-month MLF loans and 189.5 billion yuan of one-year MLF loans to 17 financial institutions yesterday. Economists polled by Reuters earlier this year expected China would keep its benchmark lending rate steady through at least the second quarter of 2018. — Reuters

# ASIAN GAMES: INDONESIA WANTS 37 SPORTS

**JAKARTA:** Host Indonesia said yesterday it wanted 37 sports at the 2018 Asian Games, lower than the maximum of 42 previously announced by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA). The maximum put forward by the OCA earlier this month had raised eyebrows as it was more than at the last games in South Korea, despite pressure to reduce the number of sports. The Incheon games in 2014 featured 36 disciplines, including the full Olympic program plus more obscure pursuits

like soft tennis, Indian wrestling-style sport kabaddi and Chinese martial art wushu.

Indonesia is already facing myriad challenges, from creaking infrastructure to graft allegations, and Vice President Jusuf Kalla signaled this week at an organizing committee meeting he wanted fewer sports than the OCA's suggested maximum. Following the decision by Kalla, who is leading preparations, Sports Minister Imam Nahrawi said: "We will convey to the OCA as soon as possible that we

are not ready to host 42 sports." Ministry spokesman Gatot Dewa Broto confirmed to AFP that Indonesia wanted to host 37 sports. Authorities did not say which disciplines they wanted dropped, but a task force has been established to carry out a review. In their announcement this month, the OCA had already said the number could be reduced, and indicated cricket, paragliding and jetski could be axed.

Indonesia, which was picked late to stage the games after Vietnam withdrew due to

financial problems, has a chequered history when it comes to staging multi-sport events. When the country hosted the Southeast Asian Games in 2011, the event was marked by a major corruption scandal, delays in getting venues and infrastructure ready and a deadly stampede at the football final. The 2018 Asian Games will be held in Jakarta and the city of Palembang from August 18 to September 2 next year. The country last hosted the Asian Games in 1962, in Jakarta. — AFP



**PHILADELPHIA:** Pittsburgh Penguins' Evgeni Malkin (71) cannot get a shot past Philadelphia Flyers' Steve Mason (35) as Travis Konecny (11) and Nick Schultz (55) defend during the first period of an NHL hockey game on Wednesday, March 15, 2017. — AP

## BRUINS END CALGARY WINNING STREAK

**CALGARY:** Brad Marchand scored his NHL-leading 36th goal, David Backes put Boston ahead after returning from an injury and the Bruins ended Calgary's 10-game winning streak Wednesday night with a 5-2 victory over the Flames. Marchand is also tied with Chicago's Patrick Kane and Edmonton's Connor McDavid for tops in the league with 76 points. Backes got tied up with Flames defenseman Mark Giordano and was taken into the corner boards 12 minutes into the game. Backes was favoring his leg as he was helped off the ice. But he returned seven minutes into the second period and on his second shift back he broke a 2-all tie. Backes took a pass from David Krejci on a 3-on-2 and from 30 feet whipped a wrist shot over the glove of Chad Johnson. David Pastrnak scored twice, and Matt Beleskey also scored for Boston. The Bruins' fourth straight win moved them within three points of second-place Ottawa in the Atlantic Division. Alex Chiasson and Dougie Hamilton scored for the Flames.

### FLYERS 4, PENGUINS 0

Wayne Simmonds scored the 200th goal of his career and Steve Mason made 23 saves to lead Philadelphia over Pittsburgh.

Sean Couturier, Claude Giroux and Dale Weise also scored for the Flyers, who closed within five points of the idle New York Islanders for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. Making the postseason remains a long shot for Philadelphia with just 13 games remaining and four teams to pass. Philadelphia snapped a three-game losing streak while handing the defending Stanley Cup champions their fourth shutout of the season. The road-weary Penguins completed an eight-day, five-game road trip that took them through four time zones as they traveled 4,763 miles. The journey got longer due to Tuesday's snowstorm in the Northeast, which caused the Penguins to fly home from Calgary late Monday night rather than directly to Philadelphia. Pittsburgh arrived in Philadelphia late Wednesday morning. With 95 points, Pittsburgh remained two behind idle Washington for first place in the Metropolitan Division and the best record in the NHL. Mason posted his third shutout of the season and the 33rd of his career.

### DUCKS 2, BLUES 1

Rickard Rakell scored his 30th of the season and Ryan Getzlaf added a short-handed goal as Anaheim defeated St. Louis.

Jonathan Bernier made 26 saves for his fourth straight win as Anaheim passed Calgary for second place in the Pacific Division. Ivan Barbashev scored his third career goal and Jake Allen made 20 saves, but the Blues' five-game winning streak was stopped. St. Louis missed out on its chance to pass Nashville for third place in the Central Division. The Blues still hold the second wild card in the Western Conference, four points ahead of Los Angeles. Rakell hit the 30-goal mark for the first time in his five-year career by putting the Ducks ahead 5:32 into the first period.

### AVALANCHE 3, RED WINGS 1

JT Compher scored his first NHL goal and Calvin Pickard stopped 27 shots in Colorado's win over Detroit. Matt Duchene scored his first goal in 12 games and Carl Soderberg added his first in 18 games as the NHL-worst Avalanche won at home for the third time in four tries. They are 11-22-2 at the Pepsi Center this season. Andreas Athanasiou scored for the Red Wings, who, like their once-hated rival, are well out of the playoff hunt. Jimmy Howard made 26 saves in his second start since returning from a knee injury that had kept him out since Dec 20. — AP

### MOTOR RACING

## PADDY LOWE JOINS WILLIAMS AS TECHNICAL HEAD, SHAREHOLDER

**LONDON:** Paddy Lowe has joined the Williams Formula One team from champions Mercedes with immediate effect as chief technical officer and shareholder in the group, Williams announced yesterday. The team did not say how big a stake Lowe had taken or where it had come from, with details expected to be made known at a later date. The Briton, who started his Formula One career at Williams in 1987, also joins the board of directors and will run the business with deputy principal Claire Williams and chief executive Mike O'Driscoll. "This is a game changer for us and once again makes us extremely excited about this team's future," said Claire Williams.

The Briton had been on 'gardening leave' from Mercedes, who have already replaced him with former Ferrari technical director James Allison. At Mercedes, Lowe played an integral role in the team winning the last three drivers and constructors' world championships. Before that he won titles with McLaren and Williams.

Mercedes have won 51 of the 59 races since the 1.6 litre V6 turbo hybrid power units were introduced in 2014. In his previous six-year stint at Williams, Lowe worked with co-founder Patrick Head and designer Adrian Newey and helped pioneer the active suspension system that took Britain's Nigel Mansell to the 1992 championship.

"It is a huge honour to return in this leadership position and to have the opportunity to become a shareholder," said Lowe. "I am extremely motivated to play my part in bringing success back to the team. "The vision for the future set out by the Williams Board is powerful and has compelled me to join an organization committed to building on its unique legacy and to reaching the pinnacle of Formula One once again." Claire Williams said Lowe's arrival was a boost for a team that last won a Formula One title with Canadian Jacques Villeneuve in 1997.

The current line-up also includes a Canadian, 18-year-old rookie Lance Stroll, alongside Brazilian veteran Felipe Massa following the departure of Finland's Valtteri Bottas to Mercedes in place of retired champion Nico Rosberg. "Having someone of Paddy's calibre and engineering competence is not only a morale boost for everyone at Williams, but I know it will also significantly support our efforts to return this team back to the front of the grid," she said.

"We want to win races and championships, but to do that you need the best talent in the business. In Paddy we believe we have just that as well as a leader who will drive change." The season starts in Australia next week. — Reuters

## SAME OLD PROBLEMS FOR NEW-LOOK MCLAREN

**LONDON:** Fernando Alonso, as frustrated as any double Formula One world champion would be in a slow and unreliable car, summed up McLaren's testing woes in terms guaranteed to make Honda executives wince. "We have only one problem, and that is the power unit.

There is no reliability and there is no power," the Spaniard told reporters. Alonso did not stop there, quoted by his home media as saying he was fully motivated, the chassis felt good and everyone in the team was ready to win "apart from Honda".

"I am driving at my best...I feel the best driver out there, I just need an engine that can run as quick as the others on the straights," he said. Once again, former champions McLaren are heading to the Australian season-opener with a distinct whiff of crisis

around them despite their best efforts to rebrand, regroup and put the immediate past at arms' length. Media reports in Britain and Spain have suggested McLaren, who have publicly stated their commitment to Honda, could trigger break clauses and split at the end of the year unless there is a major improvement.

Ron Dennis is gone already as McLaren's big boss, ousted and replaced late last year with the ever-enthusiastic Zak Brown as executive director. The look has changed, highly-rated Belgian rookie Stoffel Vandoorne has taken the seat vacated by 2009 champion Jenson Button, and the new black and orange car was launched with some optimism.

Testing in Barcelona took away a lot of the feelgood factor, however, with both drivers struggling to get laps

under their belts due to failing power units. A website hasmclarenbrokendown.com is already up and running, joining the enduring Twitter hashtag #placesalonsowouldratherbe.

### Tough start

"Clearly we have problems," said Brown last week. "I think Melbourne is going to be tough. I would be surprised if we are where we need to be and want to be by Melbourne. So it's going to be a tough start to the year." McLaren, who have not won a race since 2012 but remain the sport's second most successful team in terms of grand prix wins, finished sixth overall last season. That was a big improvement on the 2015 slump to ninth in the first year of their new partnership with the Japanese manufacturer, but still a long way off where they want to be.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, with team mates Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost fighting famous battles, Honda and McLaren were dominant but hopes of rekindling that magic are fading fast. The Woking-based team are looking for a title sponsor, having been without one since Vodafone left in 2012, and success on the track always helps. Alonso could walk away at the end of the season, even if he says that his future remains a discussion for the later part of the year. "It's only winter testing. I remember 2014, Red Bull were doing like seven laps in winter testing and won two or three grands prix that year," he said. "So let's say that the season is long enough that you can have time to react. "But right now there is no secret. We cannot pretend that we are happy and everything is going OK," he added.— Reuters

## TOP-RANKED KO SEEKING MORE MAGIC AT LPGA FOUNDERS CUP

**LOS ANGELES:** A runner-up finish in last year's LPGA Founders Cup sparked a back-to-back title run by top-ranked Lydia Ko, who returns this week hoping for more in the season's first US event. The 19-year-old South Korean-born New Zealand star has not won since last July, working on swing changes and even a new putting grip as she tries to remain world number one. Ko arrived at Wildfire Golf Club in Phoenix, Arizona, ahead of the start coming off top-10 showings in Thailand and Singapore in her past two LPGA events. "Definitely nice to see some good results the last couple weeks in Asia," Ko said. "I hit the ball pretty well in Australia. I really couldn't score and I couldn't make the putts... It was nice to see a few drop the last couple weeks.

"To see those kind of good results with all the changes that have happened gives me a little bit of confidence going into this stretch of events." It's a run where she shined last year, going from second at Phoenix to winning the Kia Classic, a title she defends next week, and her second major crown at the ANA Inspiration, a crown she tries to repeat in two weeks at Rancho Mirage, California. "It's always nice to be back to a place where you've played well," Ko said. "I love the west coast. No matter how well I play, I just enjoy these three stretch of events."

It comes as Ko is finding success after changing caddies, coaches and equipment providers. She is working on a new swing that goes to the core of her patterns. "Transition-wise has actually been very easy and pretty smooth," Ko said. "I guess the hard part is because I have my old habits and things that I've always done since I was like five. Those things will always creep in here and there."

Ko also decided it was time to adjust her putting grip this year to a more conventional one. "I came back from the off-season and said, 'Man, the left-hand low felt a little different.' It felt a little uncomfortable," she said. "Even short putts for the conventional grip and the numbers were just as good or even better. That was one of the reasons I changed." Ko has been atop the rankings for 73 consecutive weeks, which builds expectations she hopes to fulfill. "There are expectations because you're the number one ranked players you should play well every day, should be in contention every week," she said. "I would love that and I'm working towards being more consistent week in and week out."

### Ko pays tribute to Palmer

As Ko looked forward to seeing some of the original LPGA founding golfers this week, she pondered men's legend Arnold Palmer, whom she met at last year's Masters. "He was a people's man. No matter his good day or bad days, he was always there to support the fans that came out, the volunteers, his fellow players. That was what made him, him," Ko said. "Even though he was such an incredible, amazing player, he was so approachable." Ko remarked on how men's players this week at Bay Hill for the Arnold Palmer Invitational wore Palmer's trademark umbrella logo this week. — AFP

## KYRGIOS STUNS DJOKOVIC AGAIN AS FEDERER RACES PAST NADAL

**INDIAN WELLS:** Nick Kyrgios overpowered Novak Djokovic for the second time in as many weeks on Wednesday to book an Indian Wells quarter-final against Roger Federer, who swatted aside old foe Rafael Nadal. Kyrgios put on another stellar serving display in a 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) triumph that ended three-time defending champion Djokovic's 19-match winning streak in the first Masters tournament of the year.

Federer, who added another chapter to a storied rivalry with Nadal with an epic Australian Open triumph in January, dismantled the Spaniard 6-2, 6-3. It was the first time since their first meeting in 2004 that Federer and Nadal had met before the quarter-finals of a tournament. An oddity of the rankings had them and Djokovic with 44 Grand Slam titles among the three of them—all grouped in the same quarter of the draw.

Djokovic was the first to fall, in the face of relentless aggression from world number 16 Kyrgios. "The run was amazing," said Djokovic, who also won in Indian Wells in 2008 and 2011 before going on his roll from 2014-2016. "I am very proud of it. It had to end at some stage. Unfortunately, it was today." Kyrgios, 21, couldn't match the 25 aces he rained on Djokovic in a shock win in Acapulco this month. But 14 aces were plenty as he kept Djokovic off-balance with a welter of 100mph-plus serves. "That felt good to kind of prove it wasn't a one-off thing," Kyrgios said. "It felt good to back it up again."

A break in the first game of the match was enough to give Kyrgios the opening set. Djokovic saved two break points late in the second set as they battled to the tiebreaker which Kyrgios dominated, sealing the win, fittingly, with a final monster serve. "It's a gamble," Djokovic said of trying to anticipate Kyrgios's first serve. "His second serve, if you think you're going to have a look at it, you don't, because he goes for it as well." Kyrgios said that aggressive second serve is a cornerstone of his game. "It's a high percentage for me to go big under pressure," he said. "That's my game style. If I miss, I miss, but I know I



**INDIAN WELLS:** Novak Djokovic of Serbia serves to Nick Kyrgios of Australia during the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden on March 15, 2017 in California. — AFP

went down playing my game." Kyrgios, already the youngest player to record victories over Djokovic, Federer, Nadal, Andy Murray and Stan Wawrinka, now gets another crack at Federer, who needed just 68 minutes to dispatch Nadal. Federer broke Nadal to open the match, and seized a second break and 4-1 with a blistering backhand service return winner. A forehand volley sealed the set, and another forehand winner put Federer up a break at 2-1 in the second. Federer was firmly in control as Nadal served to save the match at 5-3. An unlucky netcord bounce, when Nadal's forehand clipped the net and rolled back, gave Federer a double match point, and with a backhand return down the line the 36th meeting between the two was his. The win marks the first time in the rivalry that Federer has strung together three wins over Nadal.

### 'Impossible to win'

"In Australia was a very close match,"

Nadal said. "I had good chances to win. Today, not. Today he played better than me. These kind of matches, when you're not playing your match, it's impossible to win." World number three Stan Wawrinka, the highest-ranked player remaining after the departures of Djokovic and world number one Andy Murray, labored past lucky loser Yoshihito Nishioka 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/4) to reach the quarters.

Nishioka, ranked 70th in the world, twice served for the match in the third set but was broken both times before Wawrinka subdued him in the tiebreaker. "I'm really happy to get through for sure," said Wawrinka. "You have to be a little bit lucky when he served twice for the match."

Fourth-seeded Kei Nishikori of Japan quietly reached the last eight with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over American Jack Sock, who beat Tunisia's Malek Jaziri 4-6, 7-6 (7/1), 7-5. — AFP



**RANCHI:** India's players appeal for the dismissal of Australia's Shaun Marsh (third from right holding bat), during the first day of their third test cricket match in Ranchi, India yesterday. — AP

# SMITH AND MAXWELL DRIVE AUSTRALIA IN RANCHI TEST

## KOHLI INJURES SHOULDER, TO UNDERGO SCANS

**RANCHI:** Australia captain Steve Smith struck a cultured unbeaten century to steer Australia to 299 for four wickets in the third test against India yesterday, signaling he has put the review controversy at Bengaluru behind him. Smith's 117 not out is only the second century in the spin-dominated series following his 109 in the first test in Pune as the 27-year-old joined the 5,000-run club in his 53rd test. Team mate Glenn Maxwell celebrated his return to test cricket with a career-best 82 not out, his burgeoning partnership with Smith already worth 159 runs on the opening day of the contest.

Home captain Virat Kohli injured his shoulder while diving to save a boundary in the 40th over and missed the rest of the day's play. Smith won an important toss and had little hesitation in batting first, something of a ritual on India's low-bounce tracks, and Matt Renshaw led their brisk scoring with a boundary binge. With an extremely fast outfield at the Jharkhand State Cricket Association (JSCA) Stadium hosting its first test match, Renshaw's first 24 runs all came via boundaries as the

tourists cruised to the 50-run mark in the 10th over.

Left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja got the breakthrough in his first over when David Warner slapped a juicy full toss back to the bowler to depart for 19. Renshaw looked good for his third fifty in the series before edging Umesh Yadav to slip, having played and survived an identical shot on the previous delivery. Renshaw's fluent 44 included seven elegant boundaries. "I thought we all got starts but just didn't get on with it and make a big score like Steve did. He showed us how to go today," Renshaw said, admiring how his captain managed to return his focus to the game after the review row.

"He's handled the whole situation really well and just showed that we're here for a cricket series and showed how to do it today." Australia were reeling at 89 for three when Smith and Peter Handscomb (19), protagonists of the review controversy in Bengaluru, joined forces for a half-century stand. Handscomb had advised Smith to gesture towards the dressing room in Bengaluru for advice on whether to review a leg-before-wicket decision, a move that drew explosive response from Kohli resulting in considerable acrimony in the middle of the four-test series.

### Disciplined Maxwell

Yadav trapped Handscomb (19) lbw with an inswinging yorker but Smith found an able partner in Maxwell, who eschewed his natural aggression, and played judiciously to justify his selection, replacing the injured Mitchell Marsh. Known for his destructive batting which makes him a limited-overs asset, Maxwell showed tremendous self-restraint, taking 57 deliveries to hit his first boundary. There were glimpses of his natural aggression as well, as when he hit Jadeja for the first of his two sixes to bring up his maiden test half-century. Maxwell surpassed in his very first innings of the series the 48 runs that Mitchell Marsh had totaled in his four during the first two tests and the all-rounder is not done yet. Australia also brought in paceman Pat Cummins, who is playing his second test after more than five years in the wilderness, to replace the injured Mitchell Starc. India welcomed back opener Murali Vijay, who missed the tempestuous Bengaluru test with a shoulder injury. —Reuters

## SRI LANKA DERAILED BANGLADESH WITH A FLURRY OF LATE STRIKES

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka took a flurry of late wickets to put the brakes on Bangladesh at the second Test in Colombo yesterday after the tourists made a promising start to their first innings with a 95-run partnership. Soumya Sarkar top-scored for Bangladesh with 61 while sharing a solid opening stand with Tamim Iqbal which gave the visitors the upper hand on day two before their innings unraveled late in the afternoon. Left-arm spinner Lakshan Sandakan claimed two wickets in two balls in the final hour as Sri Lanka reduced Bangladesh to 214-5 at the close. It means the hosts still lead Bangladesh by 124 runs after making 338 in their first innings, thanks largely to a fighting century by Dinesh Chandimal.

Bangladesh thought they were in a comfortable position after Soumya made his third fifty in the series in as many innings, and Tamim made 49 before being trapped lbw by Sri Lankan skipper Rangana Herath. Sandakan then trapped Imrul Kayes plumb in front to dismiss him for 34 and then successfully reviewed a not out decision to remove nightwatchman Taijul Islam off the next ball. Suranga Lakmal delivered a further blow to the visiting side when he removed Sabbir Rahman after he had scored 42, playing the lead role in a 62-run partnership with Imrul for the third wicket.

After Herath earned Sri Lanka's first breakthrough, Sandakan then bowled Soumya before finishing the day with 3-65. Shakib Al Hasan lived dangerously to see out the day with unbeaten 18 alongside skipper Mushfiqur Rahim, who was on two at the close. The hosts earlier added exactly 100 runs to their overnight 238-7 before they were all out on the stroke of lunch break. Chandimal, who was unbeaten on 86 overnight, made 138, his eighth in Test cricket, off 300 balls after an innings which contained more than its share of good fortune.

After surviving two TV reviews on the first day, he was again given out caught behind on Thursday off Mustafizur Rahman's bowling but the decision was overturned when replays showed the ball had not touched his bat. Bangladesh were hoping to wrap up the innings quickly once Shakib removed Herath for 25 in the ninth over of the morning session after the Sri Lankan skipper added just seven runs to his overnight score. Soumya managed to grasp the catch after several fumbled attempts but Chandimal and Lakmal then continued to frustrate Bangladesh as they put on a 55-run partnership for the ninth wicket. — AFP

## SCOREBOARD

**COLOMBO:** Scores at stumps on the second day of the second Test between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh at the P. Sara Oval Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

### Sri Lanka 1st innings (overnight 238-7)

D. Karunaratne c Mehedi b Mustafizur	7
U. Tharanga c Soumya b Mehedi	11
K. Mendis st Mushfiqur b Mehedi	5
D. Chandimal c Mosaddek b Mehedi	138
A. Gunaratne lbw b Roy	13
D. de Silva b Taijul	34
N. Dickwella b Shakib	34
D. Perera c Soumya b Mustafizur	9
R. Herath c Soumya b Shakib	25
S. Lakmal c Soumya b Roy	35
L Sandakan not out	5
Extras (n1, lb13, w6, nb2)	22
Total (all out, 113.3 overs)	338

**Fall of wickets:** 1-13 (Karunaratne), 2-24 (Mendis), 3-35 (Tharanga), 4-70 (Gunaratne), 5-136 (de Silva), 6-180 (Dickwella), 7-195 (Perera), 8-250 (Herath), 9-305 (Chandimal), 10-338 (Lakmal)

**Bowling:** Mustafizur 21-6-50-2 (w5), Roy 17.3-2-53-2 (nb2, w1), Mehedi 21-2-90-3, Taijul 17-2-40-1, Shakib 33-4-80-2, Mosaddek 4-0-11-0.

### Bangladesh 1st innings

Tamim Iqbal lbw b Herath	49
Soumya Sarkar b Sandakan	61
Imrul Kayes lbw b Sandakan	34
Sabbir Rahman c de Silva b Lakmal	42
Taijul Islam lbw b Sandakan	0
Shakib Al Hasan not out	18
Mushfiqur Rahim not out	2
Extras (b4, lb4)	8
Total (five wickets; 60 overs)	214

**Fall of wickets:** 1-95 (Tamim), 2-130 (Soumya), 3-192 (Imrul), 4-192 (Taijul), 5-198 (Sabbir)

**To bat:** Mosaddek Hossain, Mehedi Hasan, Subashis Roy, Mustafizur Rahman

**Bowling:** Lakmal 11-2-32-1, Perera 19-5-50-0, Herath 12-1-34-1, Gunaratne 4-0-25-0, Sandakan 14-1-65-3.

## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the first day in the third Test between India and Australia yesterday in Ranchi, India.

### Australia 1st innings

M. Renshaw c Kohli b U. Yadav	44
D. Warner c&b Jadeja	19
S. Smith not out	117
S. Marsh c Pujara b R. Ashwin	2
P. Handscomb lbw b U. Yadav	19
G. Maxwell not out	82
Extras (b-4 lb-11 nb-1)	16
Total (for 4 wickets, 90 overs)	299

**Fall of wickets:** 1-50 D. Warner, 2-80 M. Renshaw, 3-89 S. Marsh, 4-140 P. Handscomb

**Did not bat:** M. Wade, S. O'Keefe, N. Lyon, P. Cummins, J. Hazlewood

**Bowling:** I. Sharma 15-2-46-0 (nb-1); U. Yadav 19-3-63-2; R. Ashwin 23-2-78-1; R. Jadeja 30-3-80-1; M. Vijay 3-0-17-0.

# CELTICS ROLL OVER TIMBERWOLVES 117-104

## BLAZERS SURPRISE SPURS; DRAGIC POWERS HEAT OVER PELICANS

**LOS ANGELES:** Al Horford delivered 20 points and nine rebounds as the Boston Celtics continued their domination over the Minnesota Timberwolves with a 117-104 win on Wednesday. Boston won its 10th game in the last 11 thanks to a 21-6 run bridging the halves, a complete game by Horford and a stellar Isaiah Thomas performance. Horford just missed his second career triple double as he also had eight assists. "We needed (Horford) to be locked in tonight because (Karl-Anthony) Towns is a real talented guy. So Al had that assignment on the other end for a lot of the game," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said.

It marked the 11th consecutive win for the Celtics over Minnesota at the Boston Garden arena. Thomas scored 27 points, Avery Bradley had 18, and Kelly Olynyk and Marcus Smart both scored 10 off the Boston bench. Olynyk added six rebounds. "The guys were finding me a lot in the pick-and-roll action, and I was able to make plays," said Horford, who has 47 points, 21 rebounds and 16 assists in the past three games. "That's how I like to play, and I felt they really played through me a lot." Ricky Rubio led the Timberwolves with 23 points and seven assists. Andrew Wiggins and Shabazz Muhammad each scored 21 points and Towns finished with 17 points and 14 rebounds for Minnesota.

### Trail Blazers 110, Spurs 106

Damian Lillard scored 36 points, including four free throws in the final 5.2 seconds, as Portland stunned San Antonio. CJ McCollum added 26 points for the Trail Blazers. Nurkic had 16 points and nine rebounds, Noah Vonieh scored 12 points and Allen Crabbe hit for 10. Kawhi Leonard led the Spurs with 34 points while adding nine rebounds and six assists. LaMarcus Aldridge, who missed the previous two games because of a minor heart arrhythmia, had 19 points for San Antonio.

### Mavericks 112, Wizards 107

Harrison Barnes scored 22 points and Dallas opened the fourth quarter with a 24-7 run en route to victory over Washington. Dirk Nowitzki had 10 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter for the Mavericks, who swept the season series. Dallas had lost two in a row, including 100-78 at the Toronto Raptors on Monday. Seth Curry added 19 points for the Mavericks. John Wall had 26 points and 11 assists for the Wizards, but he limped off the court with 1:26 remaining in the first half. Wall sprained his left foot, but returned to finish off his 44th double-double of the season.

### Rockets 139, Lakers 100

Lou Williams scored 30 points off the bench against his former team and James Harden recorded his 17th triple-double of the season as Houston cruised past Los Angeles. Williams, acquired at the trade deadline, hit his first seven shots and finished 11-of-17 over 26 minutes. Harden delivered an uneven performance, posting 18 points, 12 rebounds, 13 assists and nine turnovers. Julius Randle paired a career-high 32 points on 13-of-17 shooting, with eight rebounds, for the Lakers. Rookie Brandon Ingram and Jordan Clarkson chipped in 18 points apiece.

### Jazz 97, Pistons 83

Gordon Hayward piled up 25 points, eight rebounds and six assists and Utah began a four-game road trip with a convincing victo-



**HOUSTON:** Los Angeles Lakers' David Nwaba (10) goes up for a shot as Houston Rockets' James Harden (right) defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game on Wednesday, March 15, 2017. — AP

ry. George Hill supplied 17 points for the Jazz, who have won six of their last seven games. Rudy Gobert added 12 points and nine rebounds and tied a career high with five assists, while Joe Johnson and Joe Ingles also tossed in 12 points apiece. Ish Smith's 16 points led Detroit, which was coming off a 32-point loss at Cleveland on Tuesday. Aron Baynes posted 12 points and 12 rebounds and Tobias Harris chipped in 12 points.

### Heat 120, Pelicans 112

Goran Dragic came back from an eye injury to score 33 points as Miami defeated New Orleans. Dragic missed Sunday's loss at Indiana after he got elbowed in the right eye by Toronto Raptors guard Cory Joseph in Miami's previous game. His right eye was swollen shut on Sunday, but he made a quick recovery. Hassan Whiteside had 20 points and 17 rebounds while reserve Wayne Ellington added 19 points. Anthony Davis recorded 27 points and eight rebounds for the Pelicans.

### Pacers 98, Hornets 77

Paul George scored a season-high 39

points, including 27 during the second half, as Indiana pulled away from Charlotte. George made 15-of-21 field goal attempts, including 6-of-10 from three-point range. Monta Ellis added 16 points for the Pacers, who shot 53.4 percent and outrebounded the Hornets 39-27. Jeff Teague had 11 assists. Frank Kaminsky led Charlotte with 20 points, Marco Belinelli added 11 and Michael Kidd-Gilchrist scored 10. Kemba Walker was limited to seven points on 3-of-11 shooting. The Hornets shot only 40 percent.

### Grizzlies 98, Bulls 91

Mike Conley and Marc Gasol scored 27 points apiece, and Memphis pulled away from Chicago. Tony Allen added 10 points and six rebounds as the Grizzlies earned their second consecutive victory. Memphis finished the game on a 15-8 run. Rajon Rondo led the Bulls with 17 points, eight assists and six rebounds. Jimmy Butler and Nikola Mirotic each contributed 14 points for Chicago.

### Kings 107, Suns 101

Rookie Skal Labissiere scored a career-

high 32 points, including Sacramento's first 16 of the fourth quarter, as the Kings won back-to-back games for the first time since winning four straight Feb 8-14. Labissiere, whose career high had been 15 points, scored 21 in the final period. He added 11 rebounds for his first NBA double-double. Willie Cauley-Stein had 14 points, 11 rebounds, five assists, four steals and four blocks for Sacramento. TJ Warren had 24 points and nine rebounds, and Devin Booker added 19 points for Phoenix, which was without Eric Bledsoe (rest). The Suns also lost Derrick Jones Jr. to a right hip contusion (X-rays negative) and Leandro Barbosa to illness.

### Bucks 97, Clippers 96

Khris Middleton and Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 16 points apiece, and Milwaukee ended an eight-game losing streak at Staples Center. Greg Monroe and Matthew Dellavedova chipped in 12 points each and Malcolm Brogdon and Mirza Teletovic both scored 11. DeAndre Jordan led the Clippers with 22 points and 17 rebounds. Blake Griffin finished with 18 points, while JJ Redick scored 16. —Agencies

## LIVERPOOL READY TO RISE TO OCCASION AT CITY

**LONDON:** If the Premier League contained only the current top six then Liverpool, not Chelsea, would be heading for the title. In nine games against those teams this season Liverpool are unbeaten and have taken an impressive 19 points which is why they will travel to third-placed Manchester City on Sunday brimming with confidence. Victory over City, which would be their sixth in seven against the Sky Blues in the league, would propel Liverpool above Pep Guardiola's side in what has become a five-club battle for second, third and fourth spots behind leaders Chelsea.

The higher calibre the opposition, the better Liverpool have played this season, with notable victories over Chelsea and Tottenham Hotspur, a double over Arsenal and a narrow home win over City who will also be deflated by their Champions League loss to Monaco. Juergen Klopp's side laboured to a 2-1 win over woeful travelers Burnley last weekend, when all the sides around them were in FA Cup action, but former Liverpool striker John Aldridge said points, not style, are now the priority. "It was a

crucial three points in terms of pushing for a Champions League spot," Aldridge, who won the title with Liverpool in 1987-88, told the club's website.

"Mentally, it was a big step forward for this Liverpool side. I know we've played two games more than both Arsenal and Manchester United but I'd rather have the points on the board than fixture congestion." Liverpool, who were neck-and-neck with City at the top of the table after 10 games of the season, are fourth with 55 points from 28 games, one less than City and second-placed Tottenham Hotspur, both of whom have played a game fewer. Significantly, they have a five-point cushion on Arsenal and six over United. What is more, Liverpool can concentrate on their final 10 games without the distractions their top-four rivals must contend with.

While bookmakers have not stopped taking bets on Chelsea winning the title yet, a 10-point lead with 11 games to go makes them overwhelming favorites. One thing is certain, though, two of Manchester City, Liverpool, Tottenham, Arsenal and United will be

shut out of the top-four this season. Tottenham can increase the pressure on City and Liverpool when they host Southampton earlier on Sunday chasing a 10th consecutive home victory in the Premier League, although they will be without injured top scorer Harry Kane.

Manchester United, for whom the top four has remained just out of reach since very early in the season, are away at relegation-threatened Middlesbrough on Sunday in their third game in six days. Antonio Conte's Chelsea, who beat United on Monday to set up an FA Cup semi-final against Tottenham, are away to Stoke City on Saturday looking to open a 13-point gap. Fifth-placed Arsenal begin the weekend schedule at West Bromwich Albion - a side they have never failed to score against in 21 previous Premier League clashes. Three defeats in their last four league games, however, mean Arsene Wenger's side have precious little margin for error in their quest for a 21st consecutive top-four finish. —Reuters



**MONACO:** Monaco's players celebrate at the end of the UEFA Champions League round of 16 football match between Monaco and Manchester City at the Stade Louis II on March 15, 2017. —AFP

## MONACO 'FEAR NO ONE' AFTER ELIMINATING CITY

**PARIS:** When Michael Owen tweeted that Monaco were a "good draw" for Manchester City, the remark raised a few eyebrows in France, and one of the most exciting Ligue 1 teams in years will fear no one when the Champions League quarter-finals draw is made today. Relying on a bunch of hyper talented youngsters, Monaco prevailed 3-1 on Wednesday to eliminate City on away goals after the tie ended 6-6 on aggregate, pressing and attacking like there was no tomorrow in a breathtaking first half.

Just as in the first leg, which they lost 5-3 after leading 3-2, they seemed to run out of steam in the second half but Tiemoue Bakayoko, one of five players to start the game aged 23 or less, headed the decisive goal with 13 minutes left. It was the first time a team coached by Pep Guardiola was knocked out as early as the Champions League last 16. Asked whether Monaco should fear a team in the quarter-finals or if they should be feared instead, coach Leonardo Jardim said: "The second option. "A lot of people thought we could not go through (after the first leg) but we are a great team. We had already scored three in Manchester. "We dominated a club who is second in the Premier League. It is time to say that our league is competitive."

Once again, Monaco, who groomed World Cup winners Lilian Thuram, Emmanuel Petit, Thierry Henry and David Trezeguet, owed their success to home-grown players, with the 18-year-old Kylian Mbappe standing out in the absence of the injured Radamel Falcao. The forward's pace was too much to handle for City and Mbappe put Monaco in the driving seat with a goal after eight minutes, proving a nightmare for the visitors' defense. In 17 starts this season, Mbappe has now scored 16 goals and is already at the door of a first France call-up. "Mbappe is the DNA of our club. I am so proud that he is growing so fast," said club vice-president Vadim Vasiliev. "What he does at his age is just huge," said former France and Monaco winger Ludovic Giuly. —Reuters

## MIDDLESBROUGH FIRE KARANKA

### ASSISTANT AGNEW TAKES OVER AT RELEGATION-THREATENED CLUB

**LONDON:** Middlesbrough sacked manager Aitor Karanka yesterday and handed the Spaniard's assistant Steve Agnew the pressing task of trying to keep the relegation-threatened club in the Premier League. "Both parties have agreed that it is in the best interests of the club to make this change," Middlesbrough, three points from safety and without a win in 10 matches, said in a statement. The club, promoted last season after a seven-year absence from the top flight, thanked Karanka for his work over the past three-and-a-half years.

Middlesbrough are 19th in the Premier League, with a game in hand over Hull City who are two points above them but three adrift of 17th placed Crystal Palace. With only 19 goals from 27 matches, and just four wins all season, 'Boro have scored the fewest goals in the top flight despite keeping a

tight defense. They were knocked out of the FA Cup after a 2-0 loss to Manchester City in last Saturday's quarter-final. Agnew will take charge for Sunday's big home clash against Jose Mourinho's Manchester United, who are on an unbeaten 17 match league run but will be without suspended top scorer Zlatan Ibrahimovic.

#### Critical of supporters

"I'd like to thank Middlesbrough for a wonderful opportunity and the players, staff and all the people at the club who I have worked with," Karanka, a former assistant to Mourinho at Real Madrid, said on the club website ([www.mfc.co.uk](http://www.mfc.co.uk)). "I'd also like to thank the fans for their support," added the north-eastern club's first non-British manager, who had said last week that he was confident he still had the backing of

chairman Steve Gibson. "This club will always hold a special place for me and I wish everyone connected with Middlesbrough Football Club the very best for the future."

Karanka had been critical of the club's supporters earlier this season, when they called openly for a change of tactics, and had bristled at the club's lack of activity in the January transfer window. There have also been spats with high-profile players such as former England winger Stewart Downing, who has been dropped for recent games. "We need to improve the team, and the club knew a month and a half ago the players that I wanted," Karanka had said at the end of January. "Teams in our position are signing players for 14 million pounds (\$17.17 million) — we are signing players that didn't play in the (second-tier) Championship." —Reuters

## GUARDIOLA FACES TEST OF RESOLVE AFTER 'PATHETIC' CITY'S EURO WOE

**LONDON:** Pep Guardiola faces the biggest crisis of his managerial career after spluttering Manchester City hit a new low in their dismal Champions League exit against Monaco. City's woeful defending cost them dearly as Monaco recovered from a 5-3 first leg deficit with a 3-1 win on Wednesday that took them through to the quarter-finals on away goals. Having fallen 2-0 down in the first half, City were given a lifeline by Leroy Sane's goal, which would have been enough to send them into the last eight.

However, City's star-studded and expensively assembled side were badly lacking in tactical discipline as they allowed Monaco to score again, condemning Guardiola to his earliest Champions League exit. As Guardiola blamed himself for failing to convince his players to attack more effectively during a lethargic first half, it was the 46-year-old's struggle to build a solid City defense that earned him most criticism. "They were too high, it's pathetic defending," former Manchester United and England centre-back Rio Ferdinand said on BT Sport. "You have to give yourself the chance to see the ball. If you stay that high you give the guy taking it an area to hit.

"There is no one in there who is commanding that box, dictating to the line of defence telling them where to be. There is no commander in there. That's the problem." Languishing 10 points behind Premier League leaders Chelsea, City are now reduced to focusing on securing a top four finish and beating Arsenal in the FA Cup semi-finals next month. That would be a meagre return given the hype that greeted Guardiola's appointment last year to replace Manuel Pellegrini, the Chilean who managed to lead City to the Champions League semi-finals with much less fanfare.

### Turmoil

Guardiola was hailed as a revolutionary who would dazzle the Premier League with his purist principles when he arrived at City from Bayern Munich. The Spaniard had impeccable credentials after winning La Liga three times and the Champions League twice at Barcelona, then adding three more league titles at Bayern. But Guardiola has found it much harder to thrive in England, where the competition provided by a host of mega-rich top clubs is far stronger than the opposition provided in Spain or Germany. Even though City won the first 10 matches of Guardiola's reign, his ruthless decision to axe goalkeeper Joe Hart foreshadowed the turmoil to come. When it became apparent that Claudio Bravo, Guardiola's hand-picked replacement for Hart, was even more flawed than his predecessor, the Spaniard immediately lost credibility. —AFP



Manchester City's Spanish manager Pep Guardiola



ADDIS ABABA: Ahmad Ahmad (2nd left) of Madagascar reacts after being elected the new president of the Confederation of African Football (CAF) in Addis Ababa yesterday. —AFP

## HAYATOU OUSTED AS CAF PRESIDENT AFTER 29 YEARS

**ADDIS ABABA:** Issa Hayatou was voted out as president of the African soccer confederation yesterday after 29 years in charge, losing to challenger Ahmad of Madagascar in a major shakeup for the sport on the continent. The 70-year-old Hayatou had ruled African soccer since 1988 and was FIFA's most senior vice president because of his status as the longest-serving executive at the world soccer body.

He also lost that position yesterday, and his place on FIFA's ruling council. Ahmad won 34-20 in the vote of Africa's 54 member federations. He will become a FIFA vice president and join the council. Hayatou left the congress room in Addis Ababa when the result was announced without commenting. "This is sweet victory," said Ahmad, who was held aloft by officials when his victory was announced and then hugged people around him. "When you work hard

for years and months and you succeed, that is great."

Ahmad takes over on an initial four-year term, and has promised to modernize CAF and make it more transparent. His first job, he said earlier yesterday, would be to introduce a new code of ethics for the African soccer body. He has also pledged to extend ethics checks on African soccer officials. Hayatou's departure is the end of an era in African soccer. The Cameroonian, who took power when Ronald Reagan was still president of the United States, was seeking an eighth term in office.

As the result became apparent, Ahmad's campaign manager shouted out "We won!" The campaign manager, Zimbabwe Football Association president Phillip Chiyangwa, predicted that Ahmad had won over 35 national federations to his cause, a credible claim in the end. Chiyangwa also fiercely criticized Hayatou

in the run-up to the election, saying he was too old and had led CAF for too long. "This was coming. He (Hayatou) knew it was coming," Chiyangwa said following Ahmad's victory.

Underlining his complete control over CAF for three decades, Hayatou had only been challenged in a re-election campaign twice before, and he won both of those votes in landslides. He was re-elected unchallenged in 2013 after engineering rule changes that favored his candidacy. Hayatou served as acting FIFA president following the world body's 2015 corruption scandal and had been touted as a possible candidate for the head of FIFA. He eventually decided not to stand. FIFA President Gianni Infantino was present for CAF's general assembly, and raised speculation that he was backing Hayatou's challenger when he appeared at a party hosted by Chiyangwa last month. —AP

## REAL'S VULNERABLE DEFENSE FACES TEST AT HOME SPECIALISTS ATHLETIC

**BARCELONA:** Real Madrid have returned to the top of La Liga but need to halt their recent trend of leaking goals in games if they want to stay there in tomorrow's trip to Athletic Bilbao, who have the second best home record in the Spanish top flight. Zinedine Zidane's side have conceded 10 times in their last six games in all competitions, falling behind in five of those, and are increasingly relying on late escape acts to get them out of trouble. Sergio Ramos came to their rescue in Sunday's labored 2-1 win over Real Betis with an 81st minute winner, while Alvaro Morata and Cristiano Ronaldo scored late against Villarreal and Las Palmas, salvaging a 3-2 win and 3-3 draw respectively.

Real leapfrogged rivals Barcelona at the league's summit after the Catalans' shock 2-1 defeat at Deportivo La Coruna and enjoy a two-point lead as well as having a game in hand in their pursuit of a

first title win since 2012, although their defense is still vulnerable. The spotlight has fallen particularly on goalkeeper Keylor Navas, who scored an embarrassing own goal against Betis and was fortunate not to be sent off, adding to costly mistakes against Las Palmas and in their 2-1 defeat to Valencia.

Real have won one of three visits to Athletic's new San Mames stadium, which opened in 2013, and the Basques have hit form, winning their last four league home games and beating local rivals Real Sociedad 2-0 in their last outing. "We're playing well, we are very confident and the derby win gave us an extra boost.

We want to keep up our great run at home and the fact we're playing Real Madrid makes us even more motivated," Athletic midfielder Benat Etxebarria told reporters. Athletic have only lost one home game in all competitions, to champions

Barcelona in August, and are set to welcome back top scorer Aritz Aduriz to the starting line-up for the first time in over a month after the veteran recovered from injury.

Barca host Valencia looking for a response from their surprise defeat to Deportivo, which came four days after their sensational 6-1 win over Paris St Germain in the Champions League. Barca are also set to welcome back Neymar, the hero of their amazing second leg comeback, after a thigh problem. Sevilla are third in the standings, having slipped five points behind Real with two consecutive draws. Their promising season further unravelled on Tuesday with a 2-0 defeat to Leicester City and elimination from the Champions League. Jorge Sampaoli's side visit Atletico Madrid, who are fourth in the standings and can cut the distance with Sevilla down to two points with a win. —Reuters

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Friday Times

# Sports

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## Celtics roll over 'wolves as Blazers surprise Spurs

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LOS ANGELES: Los Angeles Clippers center Marreese Speights (top) fouls Milwaukee Bucks guard Tony Snell during the second half of an NBA basketball game on Wednesday, March 15, 2017. — AP