

SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2017

JAMADA ALTHANI 27, 1438 AH

No: 17178

**British police  
widens probe,  
arrest 10 terror  
suspects**



**Saudi Arabia  
faces \$6bn  
US lawsuit  
over 9/11**



**Brazil destroy  
Uruguay 4-1;  
Messi revives  
Argentina**



150 Fils

## EGYPT'S MUBARAK FREED, FINAL CHARGES DROPPED

6 YEARS AFTER UPRISING, MUBARAK'S ALLIES REGAIN INFLUENCE



Min 16°

Max 24°



In this Oct 16, 2016 file photo, ousted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak waves to his supporters from his room at the Maadi Military Hospital as they celebrate the 43rd anniversary of the Oct 6, 1973 war. An Egyptian security official said yesterday that the country's ousted President Hosni Mubarak returned home, after his release. — AP

CAIRO: Hosni Mubarak, the Egyptian president overthrown in 2011 and the first leader to face trial after the Arab Spring uprisings that swept the region, was freed yesterday after six years in detention, his lawyer said. The 88-year-old was cleared of the final murder charges against him this month, after facing trial in a litany of cases ranging from corruption to the killing of protesters whose 18-day revolt stunned the world and ended his 30-year rule.

"Yes, he is now in his home in Heliopolis," Mubarak's lawyer, Farid El Deeb said when asked if Mubarak had left Maadi Military hospital in southern Cairo where he had been detained. Heliopolis is an upscale neighborhood where the main presidential palace from which Mubarak once governed is located. Mubarak was initially arrested in April 2011, two months after leaving office, and has since been held in prison and in military hospitals under heavy guard.

Many Egyptians who lived through his presidency view it as a period of stagnation, autocracy and crony capitalism. Arabs watched enraptured when the first images of the former air force commander, Egypt's modern-day Pharaoh, were beamed live on television, showing him bed-bound in his courtroom cage. The overthrow of Mubarak, one of a series of military men to rule Egypt since the 1952 abolition of the monarchy, embodied the hopes of the Arab Spring uprisings that shook autocrats from Tunisia to the Gulf and briefly raised hopes of a new era of democracy and social justice.

His release takes that journey full circle, marking what his critics say is the return of the old order to Egypt, where authorities have crushed Mubarak's enemies in the Muslim Brotherhood, killing hundreds and jailing thousands, while his allies regain influence. Another military man, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, stepped into Mubarak's shoes in 2013 when he overthrew Mohamed Morsi, the Brotherhood official who won Egypt's first free election after the uprising.

A year later, Sisi won a presidential election in which the Brotherhood, now banned, could not participate. The liberal and leftist opposition, at the forefront of the 2011 protests in Cairo's Tahrir Square, is under pressure and in disarray. Years of political tumult and worsening security have hit the economy, just as Mubarak always warned. Egyptians complain of empty pockets and rumbling bellies as inflation exceeds 30 percent and the government tightens its belt in return for loans from the International Monetary Fund.

"The economic crisis we are living in and the high prices take priority over everything, as does the fear of terrorism. That is what preoccupies ordinary citizens, not Mubarak," said Khaled Dawoud, an opposition politician who opposed the Islamists but also condemned the bloody crackdown on them. "When you see the group of people who show up and cheer and support him, you are talking about 150, 200 people," he said, referring to occasional shows of support outside the Maadi hospital when Mubarak was there.

In the turmoil of the Arab uprisings, Tunisian President Zine Al-Abidine Ben Ali fled into exile in Saudi Arabia, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi met an ignominious death at the hands of rebels and Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh resigned. But early hopes of democratic change in the region have eroded. In Syria, Bashar Al-Assad still holds the presidency in a country ruined by a civil war that has drawn in global and region powers. Yemen's Saleh joined his erstwhile enemies in a new battle for power that has driven into famine a country on the fringes of the Gulf, one of the world's richest oil-producing regions. — Reuters

## GULF AIRLINES EYE FREE WIFI

### AIRLINES GRAPPLE WITH US LAPTOP BAN

ISTANBUL: Turkish and Gulf airlines are touting free WiFi and better in-flight connectivity for smart phones as they scramble to mitigate the impact of a ban on laptops in plane cabins bound for the United States. The restrictions could deal a blow to fast-growing Gulf airlines, which depend on business-class flyers stopping over in Dubai or Doha for far-flung destinations, and to Turkish Airlines with its high volume of transit passengers.

A Turkish Airlines official said it was working on rolling out a system to allow passengers to use 3G data roaming on mobile phones to connect to the Internet in-flight, and planned to make WiFi freely available on some aircraft from next month. "We've sped up infrastructure work after the latest developments ... If the work is complete, we're planning on switching to free WiFi services in our Boeing 777 and Airbus 330 aircraft in April," the official said.

Emirates said on Thursday it was introducing a "laptop and tablet handling service" for US-bound flights which would allow passengers to use their devices until just before they board. The devices would be "carefully packed into boxes" and returned on arrival in the United States, it said. Emirates passengers can access limited free WiFi or pay \$1 for 500 MB. Fellow Gulf carrier Etihad encouraged passengers to pack their electronics in check-in luggage but said it would also allow devices to be handed over at boarding, a spokesman said. Turkish said it had introduced a similar measure.



BEIRUT: A Syrian woman travelling to the United States through Amman opens her laptop before checking in at Beirut international airport. — AFP

Qatar Airways did not respond to questions on how it planned to mitigate the impact of the new security measures, but in a Facebook posting this week it said its in-flight entertainment was "the only entertainment you'll need on board". Royal Jordanian also took a tongue-in-cheek approach, listing on Twitter "12 things to do on a 12-hour flight with no laptop or tablet", including reading, meditating, saying hello to your neighbor, or "reclaiming territory on your armrest." — Reuters



# KUWAIT HOST MEETING FOR JOINT OPEC AND NON-OPEC COMMITTEE

## KUWAIT OIL PRICE UP 12 CENTS TO \$47.45 PB

**VIENNA:** Kuwait will be hosting, a meeting for the joint OPEC and non-OPEC members' ministerial committee tasked with monitoring the decision in late 2016 to reduce oil production. The meeting today will be headed by Kuwaiti Minister of Oil and Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq and will include the participation of ministers from OPEC members Kuwait, Algeria, and Venezuela in addition to non-OPEC countries Russia and Oman.

OPEC and other major producers pledged late last year to reduce output by 1.8 million barrels. Three months have passed since the decision took effect in mid-January. OPEC's current production is at 32.5 million barrels per day (bpd). The decision was made to stable the global price. Speaking on the issue, Kuwait's permanent delegate to the headquarters of international organizations in Vienna and its Ambassador to Austria Sadeq Marafi said that the one-day meeting will be crucial for OPEC and

major states efforts to reduce the surplus in the global market.

Choosing Kuwait as the venue for the grand meeting was a reflection of the global oil community's trust and confidence in the Gulf state, said Marafi who revealed that his country played an integral role in formulating the decision to cut down production last year. Meanwhile, an OPEC source, preferring anonymity, said that a report-issued in January by the committee monitoring the output reduction-revealed that commitment within the organization was at 86 percent and there was still hope to bring the number to 100 percent.

On the upcoming meeting, the source affirmed that commitment reflected by the committee's member states was a positive sign, hoping that the outcome of the event will further bolster aims for a stable price at the global market. According to energy experts, the committee's meeting in Kuwait will look into whether the deci-

sion to reduce production was effective in stabilizing the prices. The committee has the authority to call for urgent meetings whenever possible if the agreeing parties did not fulfill their output reduction quota. OPEC's recent monthly report revealed that the organization's basket price had recorded an increase by 2 percent, reaching \$53.37 per barrel in February.

### Kuwait oil price up

Meanwhile, the price of Kuwaiti oil went up by 12 cents to \$47.45 per barrel Thursday after being at 48.33 pb the day before, said Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) yesterday. Globally, oil prices were down due to investors concerns regarding the OPEC-led bid to lower production due to minimize US crude oil reserves. The price of the Brent crude was also up 8 cents to \$50.56 per barrel, however the West Texas Intermediate was down 34 cents to \$47.70 pb.



Photo shows some of the houses in Turkish city. Istanbul led Turkish cities in real-estates' sales in February, with sold units amounting to 458. — KUNA

# KUWAIT'S OIL EXPORTS TO CHINA JUMP 16.5%

## KUWAIT RANKED THIRD IN PROPERTY TRADES IN TURKEY

**TOKYO:** Kuwait's crude oil exports to China in February grew 16.5 percent from a year earlier on daily basis to 1.07 million tons, equivalent to around 281,000 barrels per day (bpd), government data showed. In the first two months of this year, Kuwait exported 266,000 bpd to the world's second-largest oil consumer, up 6.6 percent on the year, according to the General Administration of Customs. China's overall imports of crude oil in February increased 3.5 percent year-on-year on daily basis to 8.32 million bpd, the second-highest level on record. Saudi Arabia remained country's top supplier, though its shipments fell 9.8 percent to 1.25 million bpd, followed by Russia with 1.12 million bpd, up 8.2 percent.

Angola became third, with imports from the country plunging 29.5 percent to 853,000 bpd. Iraq ranked fourth and Oman fifth, respectively. China drastically increased the quota for non-State crude imports in 2016 as it seeks to attract more private capital in the largely monopolized sector. In 2015, the government gave private refineries, known as "teapot" refineries, the green light to directly import crude oil. These private refineries are with relatively small capacities, ranging from 20,000 bpd to 100,000 bpd.

### Property sales

In another development, Kuwaitis came third after Iraqis and Saudis in property trades in Turkey last February, according to the Turkish Statistical

Institute. Kuwaiti nationals bought 115 realty plots in February - ranking third after the Iraqis who bought 282 units and the Saudis, 143. Overall, property sales in the country dropped by 17.6 percent compared to the same period last year, the institute said, noting that the total sales of plots amounted to 1,306. Istanbul led Turkish cities in real-estates' sales in February, with sold units amounting to 458. Sales to foreigners rose 49 percent last year in contrast to 2013, where up to 18,189 plots were sold, in 2015, compared to 12,181 in 2013. However, the sales last February dropped by 0.2 percent compared to the same month last year, where up to 101,468 estates were sold all over the nation. — Agencies

## News

In brief



Chairwoman of the Council of Arab Businesswomen Sheikhha Hessa Al-Sabah is pictured during the honoring ceremony.

### Cairo University honors Sheikhha Hessa Al-Sabah

**CAIRO:** Chairwoman of the Council of Arab Businesswomen Sheikhha Hessa Al-Sabah was honored late Thursday by the esteemed Cairo University's School of Medicine. On the sideline of the 190th anniversary of the school of medicine and 110th anniversary of the obstetrics and gynecology department, a service was held for Sheikhha Hessa in honor of her "advance" work for women issues within the GCC and Arab scenes. Speaking to KUNA, Sheikhha Hessa, also President of the federation of Arab-African businesswomen, said that Arab women have an important role in the development and progression of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Sheikhha Hessa thanked Cairo University for the honoring, saying that she dedicated it to the Kuwaiti leadership and people in addition to all the members of the Arab businesswomen council.

### Top Arab attorney calls for safeguarding Arab nations

**MANAMA:** Chairman of the Arab Lawyers Union Sameh Ashour said yesterday that the Arab nation is in dire need for "real action" to safeguard security of the GCC states and the whole nation. Ashour, speaking at the opening of the union conference hosted in Manama under the theme, "the Gulf security is inseparable from the Arab nation's security," said the region is "currently at a dangerous crossroad," alluding to "conspiracies aimed at partitioning the Arab countries for service of the Zionist entity." The Arab common security is unattainable without unified industries and remedying crucial issues namely the youth unemployment, he added. He criticized reports by international human rights agencies saying that they "are selective and tuned to the mood of some politicians." Huda Al-Mehze, chairperson of the Bahrain Bar Society, said the conference "coincided with plots targeting the Arabian Gulf to undermine its security and stability and spread sectarian discords."

### GCC top bankers endorse a firm for settling payments

**MANAMA:** Governor of Bahrain Central Bank Rashid Al-Mearaj said that governors of GCC monetary institutions and central banks have adopted technical and executive details related to founding a company for settling financial payments among the council member states. He said in a statement at conclusion of the 67th relevant committee meeting that the company would be owned by the institutions and the central banks. The Riyadh-headquartered company will function based on a profit-commercial system, he said. However, he did not specify its capital. It will be tasked with speeding settlement of commercial trades among the GCC countries, limit costs and time. Money transfer among the member states will be faster and easier, for they will be processed through a common and secured network. The committee meeting also endorsed a system for credit information swap. Central Bank Governor Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel represented Kuwait at the meeting.

## Photo

o f t h e d a y



Photo shows the Al-Jahra Gate. Al-Jahra is a town located 32 kilometers west of Kuwait City. — KUNA

### AFC CANDIDATES CLEARED FOR FIFA COUNCIL ELECTIONS

**MANAMA:** Candidates vying for the four available Asian Football Confederation (AFC) seats on the FIFA council have been cleared to stand for election by the world governing body, the AFC said yesterday. The four successful candidates at May's AFC congress in Bahrain will represent Asia on the body along with Bahraini vice president Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al-Khalifa, also the head of the AFC, and members from Japan and Malaysia. The four spots include one reserved for women.

Australian Moya Dodd, formerly a co-opted member of the old FIFA Executive Committee, will take on Mahfuza Ahkter of Bangladesh, Han Un-gyong of North Korea and Susan RA Shalabi of Palestine. Chinese Football Association general secretary Zhang Jian, South Korea's Mong Gyu Chung, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah of Kuwait and Mariano V Araneta Jr of Philippines will contest for the other three spots.

Olympic Council of Asia President Sheikh Ahmad, who heads the Association of National Olympic committees and is an influential International Olympic Committee (IOC) member, has a FIFA Council seat currently, the term of which ends in May. The FIFA Council replaced the largely discredited Executive Committee as FIFA's decision-making body under reforms instituted in the wake of the 2015 corruption scandal in soccer's world governing body. Last September, the AFC extraordinary congress, called to conduct the elections for the FIFA Council, was postponed over the disqualification of a Qatari candidate.—Reuters

### KUWAIT, S KOREA AGREE TO ENHANCING COOPERATION

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait and South Korea yesterday discussed means of cementing their bilateral relations at the political, economic, and academic and health levels. The Kuwaiti embassy in Seoul said in a statement the Kuwaiti Assistant Foreign Minister for Asian Affairs ambassador Ali Suleiman Al-Saeed headed the Kuwaiti delegation that engaged in talks with Korean officials topped by the Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs, Lee Jeong-Kyu. The meeting was held in the South Korean capital. Ambassador Al-Saeed in remarks, expressed deep satisfaction at outcome of the discussions that dealt with cooperation and bilateral relations in the political, economic, and academic and health sectors.— KUNA

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL AGREES DRAFT AGENDA FOR THE ARAB SUMMIT

**DEAD SEA:** The Arab Economic and Social Council concluded its senior-level meeting here on Thursday after working out draft resolutions for the 28th Arab Summit, due on Wednesday, March 29. The draft economic and social agenda of the summit will be submitted to the Council's minister-level meeting next Sunday for preliminary endorsement ahead of final approval by the summit, said the Arab League's Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Affairs Kamal Hussein.

"On top of this agenda are the report of League's Secretary General on socio-economic joint action and review of the implementation of the relevant resolutions adopted by the Nouakchott summit last July," he told reporters this evening. "The Secretary General's report deals with joint mega projects in the areas of socio-economic development and economic integration, as well as the progress towards launching the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA) and the Arab Customs Union," Kamal revealed. Under a draft resolution, the report tasks the Council with developing a framework strategy for maximizing industrial contributions to the GDPs of the Arab League member countries and increasing the inter-GAFTA trade exchanges. The planned strategy ensures sufficient financing by Arab financial institutions for trade in products of Arab origin, and facilitating and regulating trade exchanges, he went on.

Another draft stipulates working out a strategy to implement the Arab Customs Union, upgrading the customs outlets, cementing the security of trade amid the current security threats and increasing support to the least-developing Arab countries, particularly Palestine, Yemen and Sudan. The Council approved a draft resolution for the development of fisheries under a recommendation of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development

with a view to augment food security.

It also approved a draft on the second stage of the framework executive plan for Arab food security (2017-2021), Kamal noted. In this connection, the Council reviewed the initiative of Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir for Arab investment in his country to enhance Arab food security and approved a draft resolution on setting up a mechanism to implement and finance this initiative. The Council also debated impacts of the large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons in the Arab region on the economies of host countries and agreed to support the affected countries, he added.

Regarding the social dossier, the League's Assistant Secretary General for

Social Affairs Badr-Eddin Al-Alali said the Council highlighted commitment to cooperation to combat poverty, women empowerment and youth, and enhance health and education. "A draft has been developed approving the outcomes of the ministerial meeting on 'terrorism and social development - causes and remedies,' hosted by Sharm El-Sheikh last February. "The draft approves the Arab declaration on terrorism and development," Al-Alali said. The Council also reviewed the Arab strategy for scientific and technological research, which was developed by the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), and the women development agenda 2030, he added.—KUNA

### KFAED, IVORY COAST SIGN KD 5 M LOAN AGREEMENT

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and Ivory Coast have signed a loan agreement worth KD five million (\$17 million) to finance building a vocational school so as to improve education. The project aims to support social and economic development, as well as human resources in Ivory Coast through improving and expanding vocational education, the Fund said in a press statement late Thursday.

It will meet needs of national labor qualified for commercial and industrial markets, it added. The project also seeks to improve education and training vocationally and this will positively affect indications of economic and social development across the country, it noted. It includes constructing new buildings, and

providing furniture, equipment and tools of workshops and training staff of school.

The loan was inked in implementation of the initiative of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah declared during the Arab-African Summit hosted by Kuwait in 2013, in which one billion dollars was allocated to fund projects in African countries within five years, the statement said. It is the fifth loan provided by KFAED to the country; the previous ones were estimated at KD 19 million (\$64.9 million) for financing projects in different sectors. It also provided technical loans and grants worth KD 250,000 (\$850,000). The loan was inked Minister of Finance Adama Kone of Ivory Coast and KFAED's deputy director general Ghanem Al-Ghunaiman.—KUNA





Kuwait Ambassador in Baghdad Salem Al-Zamanan speaks during the distribution ceremony. — KUNA photos



## KUWAIT HELPS IRAQI WIDOWS OPEN BUSINESSES

**BAGHDAD:** 'Kuwait Besides You Campaign', funded by the Kuwait Society for Relief, has distributed in-kind aid and equipment to displaced Iraqi widows to help them have their businesses. The aid was doled out in a ceremony held at Iraqi Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the presence of Kuwait Ambassador in Baghdad Salem Al-Zamanan and Secretary General of the Iraqi Cabinet Mahdi Al-Alaq. Addressing the audience, Al-Zamanan pointed out that 2,500 women from the five Iraqi governorates of Baghdad, Anbar, Saladin, Diyala, and Nineveh benefited from the project. The goal is to economically empower the widows and help them have a permanent source of income for their families, Al-Zamanan said.

He unveiled that the beneficiaries would launch poultry breeding, beauty salons for women, dressmaking, and bakery businesses. The ambassador noted that the program to train the widows and provide them with the required equipment and kits for their

enterprises have cost \$1.045 million. For his part, the Secretary General of the Iraqi Cabinet Al-Alaq commended Kuwait's aid to Iraqi widows. He stressed that this aid would empower the war-traumatized widows and relieve some of their suffering. He announced that the international community with the support of Kuwait would

organize an international conference for rebuilding Iraq in the coming period.

Also, the 'Kuwait beside you' campaign yesterday delivered food supplies to displaced people in northern city of Mosul in Iraq. The United Iraqi Medical Society (UIMS), the local partner of the KRS, said teams delivered 2,600 food baskets to relocated people,

currently settled at Haj Ali camp. Chairman of UIMS Dr Ahmad Al-Hayti said that the supplies were handed over under supervision of Nineveh Governor Nofal Hammadi and Iraqi parliament member Zahed Al-Khatoni. Kuwait has recently established a number of health centers and schools in Mosul for the displaced people there. — Agencies



'Kuwait beside you campaign' delivers 2,600 food parcels in Iraq.

### Crime

Report

#### Kidnap attempt

**KUWAIT:** A search is on for an unidentified person who had tried to kidnap a Filipina in Salmiya area, said security sources. The woman reported that while returning home from work, the suspect followed her and then stepped out of his vehicle - trying to kidnap her. She said the suspect ran away when she screamed. In another development, a 43-year-old female citizen reported that someone driving a 4X4 vehicle with a GCC license plate number tried to stop her along Fahaheel expressway and when he failed, he started insulting her. A case was filed.

#### Luxury vehicle stolen

A Kuwaiti reported that a female citizen stole his luxury vehicle. The female citizen made away with the vehicle after depositing KD 250 as a down payment but never returned the vehicle. The man told the police that he only knew the woman's mobile phone number.

#### Serious skin burns

A female citizen was recently admitted to Mubarak hospital with very serious skin burns she sustained after using a so-called slimming ointment she purchased online. The girl said that the burns started within an hour after using the cream.

#### Fugitive nabbed

A 69-year-old citizen, who had been wanted for several cases in which he was sentenced to the total of 99 years in prison was recently arrested at his own house while trying to escape. Separately, a citizen with a criminal record was recently arrested with illicit drugs, said security sources. — Al-Anbaa/ Al-Qabas

## 'A FIREMAN AT EVERY HOUSE'

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** KFSD PR Department recently concluded a one week training course themed 'A fireman At Every House'. The conclusion ceremony was held in the presence of the Firemen Training Center Manager Lit Colonel Abdullah Al-Ansari. KFSD's PR manager Colonel Khalil Al-Amir said that 60 civilians took part in the course. Graduating participants were honored.

#### Fire at a hospital

A limited fire recently broke out at Al-Salam International Hospital. Firemen rushed to the scene and stopped the fire from spreading to other parts of the hospital. No casualties were reported.

#### 4 injured in accident

Four people were seriously injured yesterday in a road accident along Al-Salmi highway. Security sources said three vehicles collided together opposite Jahra cemetery. The sources added that one of the injured victim was trapped and special hydraulic equipments had to be used to release him. All the injured were rushed to Jahra hospital for treatment.





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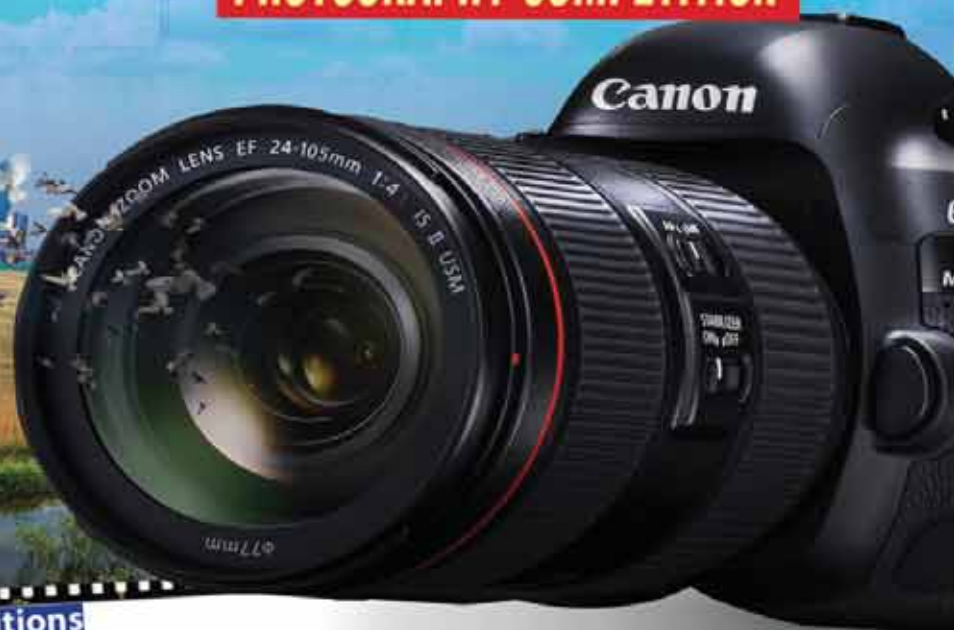
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Kuwait Times

# Shoot & Win KUWAIT SCENERY & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Till April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## Rules & Conditions

### First prize

- Canon Camera EOS 5D MARK II BODY + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Second prize

- Canon Camera EOS 80D +18-55MM IS STM + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Third prize

- Canon Camera EOS 750D 18-135 IS STM + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Fourth prize

- EOS 750D 18-55 IS STM +Free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Fifth prize

- EOS 750D 18-55 IS STM + Free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Sixth prize

- Canon Camera Dsc Ixus 310 HS + Free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Seventh prize

- Canon Camera PSD 30 BLUE + free Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Eighth prize

- Canon Camera PSD 30 BLUE + Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Ninth prize

- Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK + free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

### Tenth prize

- Canon Camera IXUS 180 BLACK 2085 + free Camera Bag.
- One Economy class ticket Kuwait - Dubai - Kuwait by Jazeera Airways\*.

\* For all Jazeera Airways tickets terms and conditions are applied

The photo contest begins on March 12, 2017 and ends on April 6, 2017.

To ensure eligibility for the contest, please submit files in high resolution:

• **Photographic Camera:** Please submit original files (entries should include metadata if possible) in jpg format on CD or flash memory with hard copy on photo paper (size 300 x 400 millimeters or 11.81 x 15.75 inches)

• **Mobile phone or tablet Camera:** Please submit original files in jpg format on CD or flash memory with hard copy on photo paper (A4 size - 210 x 297 millimeters or 8.27 x 11.69 inches).

• **All photographs** should accurately reflect the subject matter and the scene as it appears. 'High Dynamic Range' images are acceptable. Photos that have been digitally altered beyond standard optimization (removal of dust, cropping, reasonable adjustments to exposure, color, contrast, etc.) will be disqualified.

**Caption information should include:**

• Location - Detailed caption of subject matter

If you choose to include people in your submission, you are responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions from the individuals depicted, and must be able to provide copies of these to Kuwait Times upon request.

• **Kuwait Times & Jazeera Airways** has all rights to use the photograph in internal and external communications materials including but not limited to websites and web publications, fact sheets, fundraising publications, advertising, multimedia, presentation and membership services, annual reports and Kuwait Times' magazines, or by other individuals and organizations for Kuwait Times' use in news stories, newsletters, reports, displays, web pages, videos, membership premiums and the like.

• Winners will be chosen by a panel of independent judges.

• Original coupon should be stuck on the back of each photo with complete information of the participant.

Shoot & Win KUWAIT SCENERY & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

2017

## Participation Form

If you are interested in participating fill in the form and send it to Kuwait Times.

Name: .....

Tel: ..... Civil ID: .....

e-mail: .....

DSLR Camera ☐ Mobile phone or tablet camera ☐

Caption information: .....

Kuwait Times Canon

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## BURGAN BANK HONORS THE FIRE SERVICE DIRECTORATE

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank recently hosted a ceremony to honor the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) for their continued support with in-house safety drills for the Bank's employees. The ceremony which took place at the Burgan Bank headquarters was dedicated to the KFSD for their role in offering their extended support to the Bank and dedication to civic duty. Tokens of appreciation were gifted to Mohamed Al Shatti- Dean of Kuwait City branch, Fahad Al Azmi - Head of Firefighting Center in the city, Bashar Al Nafe' - Head of Hilali Center, Mishari Al Sahaf - Head of Shuwaikh Industrial Center and Mohamed Al

Kandari - Serving at the General Administration of Fire Station, respectively.

Burgan Bank applies the highest standards in ensure the health and safety of its employees. Through these emergency drills, the bank ensures stringent security protocols are in place. The drills assess employee readiness to quick and efficient response time, proper evacuation techniques and fire safety measures in the case of an outbreak. Burgan bank and KFSD will continue to work together to maintain the highest standards of safety and application of sustainable protective measures.

## KIB VISITS AL-MULLA PRIMARY SCHOOL

**KUWAIT:** As part of its ongoing efforts to engage with all segments of the community and in particular - students, a team from the Corporate Communications Unit at Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently organized a visit to Al-Mulla Sualiman Al-Khenaini Primary School for Boys. Speaking on this occasion, Team Leader of Corporate Communications at KIB, Fahad Al-Sarhan, stated: "This visit presented us with the perfect opportunity to introduce students to the importance of savings and various savings methods.

At KIB we believe that encouraging students to focus on their studies will help equip them with the necessary tools to build a

bright future for Kuwait. We wish the students a successful academic semester and a bright and fruitful future." Al-Sarhan also praised the efforts of the Public Relations team at KIB, who presented a lecture to the students on the values and fundamentals of savings. At the end of the visit, the team presented the students with a variety of gifts and mementos.

Through its leading social responsibility program, KIB devotes special attention to the education sector. The Bank is keen on supporting student initiatives and cultural activities that nourish the minds of students and further their knowledge, believing that they are the key to the development of the community.



## CBK AT MARINA MALL

**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) has announced its presence at the Marina Mall throughout the weekend. The aim is to enlighten the mall visitors about

the privileges of the cards jointly issued by CBK and the British Airways including granting holders special awards - through collecting Avios points.



**KUWAIT:** With the presence of the National Guards Chief of Staff and Operations Brigadier Bader Abdullah Hamad, the national Guards recently concluded its training course senior for officers and commanders. It was organized by the Moral Guidance Department with participation of officers from Kuwait and Bahrain.



# International

SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2017

**IS gunmen hit civilians fleeing Mosul by night**

8

**US-backed fighters reach IS-held dam**

9

**Russia's Putin hosts Le Pen in Kremlin**

10



Khalid Masood

**LONDON:** London Mayor Sadiq Khan looks at floral tributes to victims of Wednesday's attack outside the Houses of Parliament in London yesterday.—AP

## UK POLICE ARREST 10 IN LONDON ATTACK PROBE

ATTACKER MASOOD KNOWN IN A NUMBER OF OTHER NAMES

**LONDON:** British police are combing through "massive amounts of computer data," have searched more than 20 sites and have contacted thousands of witnesses in a vast operation to trace how a British man became radicalized and launched a deadly attack on Parliament, a senior official said yesterday.

In a briefing outside Scotland Yard, London's top counterterrorism officer, Mark Rowley, said more "significant" arrests had been made, bringing to 10 the number of people in custody over Wednesday's attack, which killed four people and the assailant. Police said the attacker, Khalid Masood, was born Adrian Russell Ajao in southern England in 1964. He was also known as Adrian Elms and "may also be known by a number of other names," police said.

The latest arrests were a man and a woman detained early yesterday in Manchester, northwest England. Police believe Masood acted alone but Rowley said police were trying to determine whether others "encouraged, supported or directed him."

The Islamic State group has claimed responsibility for the attack on Westminster Bridge and at Parliament. Detectives have searched 21 properties in London, Brighton, Wales, Manchester and the central English city of Birmingham in one of Britain's biggest count-

errorism operations in years. Wednesday's attack was the deadliest in Britain since suicide bombers killed 52 commuters on London's transit system in July 2005.

"We've seized 2,700 items from these searches, including massive amounts of computer data for us to work through," Rowley said, adding that contact had been made with 3,500 witnesses. "We've received hundreds of uploads of video images to our online platform. Given this attack was in the heart of the capital we also, of course, are dealing with statements from a wide range of nationalities." Masood drove his car into crowds on Westminster Bridge before fatally stabbing a police officer on Parliament grounds. He was shot dead by police.

An American man from Utah, a British retiree and British female school administrator were killed on the bridge, and police officer Keith Palmer was stabbed to death at Parliament, police said. The latest victim, a man who died in a hospital Thursday, was identified as 75-year-old Leslie Rhodes from south London.

### Poignant reminder

More than 50 people of a dozen nationalities were wounded in the attack, 31 of whom required hospital treatment. "Those affected include a real cross-section of ages from at least

12 nationalities," Rowley said. "It's a poignant reminder, I think, that the impact of this attack on the capital will reach around the world."

Rowley said two police officers targeted in the attack have significant injuries. Two other people also remain in critical condition, one with life-threatening injuries. The 52-year-old attacker was born in southeastern England and had most recently been living in Birmingham, where several properties have been searched by police. Police say Masood has had a string of convictions

between 1983 and 2003 for offenses including assault and possession of an offensive weapon. Prime Minister Theresa May said Thursday that Masood was "investigated in relation to concerns about violent extremism" some years ago. But she called him "a peripheral figure." The manager of a hotel in the beachside city of Brighton in southern England, where Masood stayed the night before the attack, said he seemed unusually outgoing and mentioned details about his family, including having a sick father.—AP

## NEW VIDEO SHOWS CONFUSION IN LEADING MAY OUT OF PARLIAMENT

**LONDON:** Newly published video showing British Prime Minister Theresa May being rushed out of Parliament while an attack unfolded nearby seems to show some confusion and delays on the part of her security detail.

Yesterday, The Sun newspaper showcased the 73-second video, taken by a bystander in Parliament on Wednesday. May had been voting in Parliament when

the attacker in a SUV ran over a number of pedestrians on Westminster Bridge and rushed onto Parliament's grounds, where he was shot dead after fatally stabbing a policeman.

In the video, there are times when May is seen standing exposed to possible sniper fire. At one point, she wanders off for a few moments without a security escort before she is ushered into her Jaguar sedan.—AP



## SAUDI FACES \$6BN US LAWSUIT BY SEPT 11 INSURERS

**NEW YORK:** Saudi Arabia is facing a renewed \$6 billion lawsuit by dozens of insurers seeking to hold it responsible for business and property damage caused by the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. The lawsuit filed late Thursday in the US District Court in Manhattan is the latest effort to hold Saudi Arabia liable for the attacks. Nearly 3,000 people died when hijacked airplanes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon near Washington, DC, and a Pennsylvania field.

Insurers, including Liberty Mutual, Safeco, Wausau and many Lloyd's syndicates, accused Saudi Arabia and a state-affiliated charity of providing funding and other material support that enabled Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda to conduct the attacks. The Saudi government has long denied involvement. Lawyers for the government and the charity, the Saudi High Commission for Relief of Bosnia & Herzegovina, yesterday declined to comment or could not immediately be reached for comment. Saudi Arabia long had broad immunity from Sept. 11 lawsuits in the United States.

That changed in September, when Congress overrode a veto by former President Barack Obama and adopted the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act, permitting such lawsuits to proceed.

The insurers said they plan to show that the Sept. 11 attacks were an "act of international terrorism" within the meaning of JASTA. They are seeking more than \$2 billion in compensatory damages, plus triple and punitive damages. At least seven lawsuits were also filed in the Manhattan court on behalf of individuals. These include a lawsuit on Monday by families of about 800 attack victims, as well as 1,500 people injured after responding to the New York attack.

Until last month, the insurers had been appealing a Sept. 2015 dismissal of their case by US District Judge George Daniels in Manhattan, who oversees many Sept 11 lawsuits. But the appeal was vacated after Saudi Arabia, the insurers and other plaintiffs agreed in a joint court filing that JASTA "was intended to apply" to their cases, and that Daniels should review its impact. The case is *The Underwriting Members of Lloyd's Syndicate 53 et al v. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia et al*, US District Court, Southern District of New York, No. 17-02129. —Reuters

## LONDON ATTACK BEARS IS 'SIGNATURE' BUT NO LINK

**CAIRO:** The "Islamic State soldier" who killed four people in an attack on the British parliament may have been inspired by calls to arms against the West but the militant group has given no evidence yet that he acted on specific instructions.

British-born Muslim convert Khalid Masood mowed down pedestrians in his car and stabbed a policeman to death in a high-profile killing which echoed other deadly attacks in Europe claimed by the ultra-hardline Islamists. Almost 24 hours after the killings the group issued a brief statement calling Masood one of its soldiers. But it offered no details to suggest that Islamic State's leadership - losing ground to enemies in Syria and Iraq - knew of his plans in advance.

That in itself does not rule out coordination between Masood and militants in the shrinking, self-styled caliphate. Islamic State frequently delays releasing video footage or other material showing the planning and implementation of operations.

But the nature of Wednesday's killings, carried out by a single assailant armed only with a hire car and a knife, matched a pattern of recent attacks which require no training, military expertise or outside guidance. Islamic State spokesman Abu Mohammed Al Adnani called on sympathisers across the world to carry out exactly those kind of attacks in an appeal issued when the group was at the peak of its power in late 2014. "If you can kill a disbelieving American or European ... smash his head with a rock, or slaughter him with a knife, or run him over with your car, or throw him down from a high place, or choke him, or poison him," said Adnani, who was killed in a US air strike in Syria last August.

British counter-terrorism police say they are still trying to establish whether Masood, a criminal with militant links, acted alone, with support or under instruction of others. — Reuters



**MOSUL:** Displaced Iraqis from Mosul walk towards refugee camps yesterday after fleeing their city during the government forces ongoing offensive to retake the city from Islamic State (IS) group fighters. —AFP

## IS GUNMEN TARGET CIVILIANS FLEEING MOSUL BY NIGHT

### FLOW PICKS UP AS CONDITIONS GROW MORE DESPERATE

**MOSUL:** Islamic State gunmen are opening fire on men, women and children as they try to flee Mosul under cover of darkness, civilians who escaped the besieged Iraqi city said yesterday.

Hungry and exhausted, thousands sloshed through the mud, past wrecked buildings and shattered pavements, to reach an army checkpoint. Some carried suitcases or bags, others had fled with just the clothes on their backs. They came by foot or piled into carts, and some pushed relatives in wheelchairs.

A black-uniformed intelligence officer said about 6,000 people had come through on Thursday, the most he had seen at this exit, and a similar flow had poured in yesterday since about 4 am. Relieved to reach the safety of the checkpoint, some of those escaping described running a gauntlet of fire.

"The snipers are professional, they do not care. Anybody that moves, they kill," said Faris Khader, from Al-Abar district. The battle for Mosul, Islamic State's last major urban stronghold in Iraq, has now lasted more than five months. Government forces recaptured the east side in January and are besieging the militants on the western side of the Tigris river. At least 500,000 civilians are trapped inside, battered by government and US-led air strikes and artillery, caught in the crossfire of ground fighting, or targeted by IS gunmen. The militants sometimes use residents as human shields.

Khader blamed the government and international coalition for some of the death and mayhem. An IS sniper had

been firing from the roof of his home when an air strike hit, he said.

"There are many people dead under the rubble. Some in my family died. Nobody can take the bodies out. They were killed by an air strike."

### 'No food, no water'

Omar, a car mechanic, described life under IS. "It's very difficult. There's no food, no water. They are killing a lot of people. They kill anyone who goes out, they kill them in the street."

"We have no money. We have suffered for three years," he said, clutching his young son to his shoulder. Salwan, 19, pushed his sister Noor, 21, who is paralyzed and deaf, for more than two hours in her wheelchair to reach safety after their house was blown up. They were shot at during the trek, he said. Sweat poured from the face of Khaled Khalil as he trudged up the last stretch of the debris-strewn boulevard with his young son slung on his shoulder and his wife and three other children behind. He had no coat, no bag, and just a pair of plastic sandals on his mud-spattered feet. "I came like this. We had the chance so we fled," said the 36-year-old. "We have been travelling since yesterday. We are very tired but now we are safe."

He was a carpenter but his shop had been destroyed.

### Taking the risk

Then an army jeep drove up with a wounded man on a stretcher. He was laid on the ground by an abandoned building. Bashar Hazem, 43, and Ali, 29,

had carried out their brother Maan, 32, overnight. He was shot in the right thigh 20 days ago. He was bandaged up in the Jamhori hospital inside an IS-held area but left for home after three days because it was dangerous. He had no painkillers and grimaced as his brothers spoke. "We had no food. That's why we decided to risk escaping," Bashar said.

They made a run with a big group in the early hours of yesterday. But IS gunmen starting shooting at them and the group was split up. They saw three women shot in the legs. "Even if you are injured, they shoot at you. Our family is still inside but they are coming soon, God willing," Ali said.

At the checkpoint, soldiers separated the women and children from the men. They waited, tired but visibly relieved, for buses to take them to a United Nations reception camp at Hamman Al-Alil about 20 km (15 miles) away. The men were gathered in a park, sitting on the ground under guard by soldiers and awaiting questioning.

"We do a first check here. Anyone we suspect of working with Daesh (IS), we pull to one side," the intelligence officer said. Some IS fighters had tried to leave disguised as women, their faces concealed by veils, he said, scrutinizing arrivals. The men were then loaded onto trucks and taken to a centre for more thorough checks. An avuncular Sergeant Hussam Imad told jokes to a group of women and children waiting to be transported to the reception camp. They boarded the bus with smiles on their faces. — Reuters



## DECLINE OF ANCIENT TRADE ROUTE DEEPENS YEMENI FOOD CRISIS

**SHARJAH:** Captains of small wooden dhows are carrying food and wares from the United Arab Emirates to war-torn Yemen. But supplies are falling even from this centuries-old Arabian sea route that is one of the last lifelines to a country on the brink of famine.

A two-year-old civil war has severely restricted the flow of food into the main Yemeni cargo ports of Hodeidah and Salif on the Red Sea, where all the large grain silos are located.

The small wooden boats sailing from souks in the UAE are moving small but vital supplies by making for the smaller ports to the south coast that are of little use to larger vessels - and often sidestepping military inspections that choke traffic by dropping anchor at secluded coves nearby.

The deals originate in the sprawling Al Ras Market, a collection of dusty alleyways near the Dubai Creek where an array of food and spices are on display including colourful sacks of Pakistani and Indian rice. The dhows - plying the ancient trade route that once carried the likes of pearls, frankincense and myrrh - supply 14,000 to 18,000 tons of foodstuffs a month to Yemen, according to traders. That represents a drop of about 30-40 percent over the past year because of problems with payment, as well as adverse sailing conditions.

"The Yemeni currency is destroyed, sometimes we can't get paid enough. We can only go once a month because the seas are too rough," said trader Mohammed Hassan, at a docking station at nearby Port Khaled in Sharjah "Sometimes we have to wait 40 days." The volumes of food carried on this route represent a small fraction of the supply to Yemen, which relies on imports for 90 percent of its food. But it has become increasingly important as fighting has raged, the economy has collapsed and Yemen has needed all the help it can get.

### Port damage

Thousands of people have been killed in the civil war pits the Iran-allied Houthi group against a Saudi-backed coalition - which includes the UAE - fighting to restore the government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. The conflict has choked imports. Sixty percent of Yemenis, or 17 million people, are in "crisis" or "emergency" food situations, according to the United Nations. While vessels seeking access to Houthi-held areas must face inspections for smuggled weapons, the government-controlled south has less restrictions. Food imports into Hodeidah have fallen relentlessly, with only a few ships arriving each week - compared with dozens before the war - and more shipping lines pulling out due to the growing risks, according to aid and shipping sources.

In recent weeks damage to infrastructure in the neighboring port of Salif has also cut food deliveries, aid officials said. "The country is living on its reserves," said Robert Mardini, International Committee of the Red Cross regional director for the Near and Middle East in Geneva this week.

"There is a lack of liquidity, no payment of salaries, which means that the spending power has collapsed and that the price of food is soaring whenever it is available."

### 'Pay thugs'

UAE-based dhow captains avoid these snarl-ups by steering clear of the big Red Sea ports and instead ply their trade to the south, often docking at informal inlets. The average journey takes about five to eight days, with the boats capable of taking up to 2,000 tons of goods, still small fry compared with cargo ships that could provide more relief to one of the poorest and most unstable countries in the world. —Reuters



**DAMASCUS:** A general view shows smoke rising from buildings following an air strike on Jobar, a rebel-held district on the eastern outskirts of the Syrian capital Damascus yesterday. —AFP

## US-BACKED SYRIAN FIGHTERS REACH IS-HELD DAM IN NORTH PUSH TOWARDS TISHRIN DAM TO LIBERATE RAQQA

**BEIRUT:** US-backed Syrian fighters reached a major dam held by the Islamic State group in northern Syria yesterday as Syria's UN ambassador said hundreds of American personnel are "invading my country," insisting that any effort to liberate the city of Raqqa - the de facto capital of the Islamic State group - should be done in coordination with the Damascus government.

The push toward the Tishrin Dam came three days after US aircraft ferried Syrian Kurdish fighters and allies behind IS lines to spearhead a major ground assault on the IS-held town of Tabqa where the dam is located. Tabqa is west of the city of Raqqa. Cihan Sheikh Ehmed, the spokeswoman for the Syrian Democratic Forces, said the fighting is ongoing at the entrance of the dam, adding that there have been casualties among IS fighters. She gave no further details.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said SDF fighters are marching slowly toward the buildings of the Tishrin Dam because of mines and explosives planted by IS.

To the east of Raqqa, SDF fighters clashed with IS gunmen inside the village of Karama, according to the Observatory and Mohammed Khedhr of Sound and Picture Organization, which documents IS violations. Karama is about 15 kilometers (10 miles) east of Raqqa, making it a strategic village to capture.

The attacks on the Tabqa and Karama were ongoing under the cover of airstrikes by the US-led coalition, according to the activists.

SDF fighters have been on the offensive since November under the cover of airstrikes by the US-led coalition with the aim of eventually surrounding Raqqa and storming it. In France, the country's defense minister said the campaign by international forces to take back IS' de facto capital will start in the coming days. Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said Raqqa is a "major objective" for the US-led coalition trying to quash IS extremists in Syria and Iraq.

Le Drian spoke on CNEWS television yesterday. He said: "Today we can say that Raqqa is encircled and that the bat-

tle will begin in the coming days. It will be a very hard battle but it will be an essential battle." As the coalition advances in its battle to retake the IS stronghold of Mosul in Iraq, the US has been intensifying involvement in Syria's conflict ahead of the battle for Raqqa.

In Geneva, where peace talks between the Syrian government and opposition resumed yesterday, Syria's ambassador to the UN Bashar Al-Ja'afari insisted that "American warplanes" had bombed a school in the village of Mansourah, west of Raqqa, a day earlier and were responsible for the deaths of 237 civilians among some 500 people fleeing Raqqa. He did not elaborate.

Al-Ja'afari said any military presence in Syria without government approval was "illegitimate." Using the Arabic acronym for the Islamic State group, he said: "Those who are truly fighting Daesh are the Syrian Army with the help of our allies from Russia and Iran."

The US has deployed more than 700 advisers, marines and Rangers to Syria to support fighters battling Islamic State militants. —AP

## AUB IN BEIRUT SETTLES US LAWSUIT FOR \$700,000

**BEIRUT:** American University of Beirut, a recipient of US government aid, has agreed to pay \$700,000 to settle a civil lawsuit over accusations that it assisted three organizations linked to the militant group Hezbollah, federal prosecutors said. As part of its deal with the US Attorney's Office in Manhattan, a party to the lawsuit, the university also agreed to revise its policies, prosecutors said in a statement on Thursday. The agreement resolved a case originally filed under seal by an unnamed complainant. American University of Beirut receives funding from the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

Acting Manhattan US Attorney Joon Kim said in the statement, "For years, the American University of Beirut accepted grant money from USAID, but failed to take reasonable steps to ensure against providing material support to entities on the Treasury Department's prohibited list." The US Attorney's Office said the university in the Lebanese capital admitted to training representatives of Al-Nour Radio and Al-Manar TV, media groups that the US Treasury Department lists as branches of the Iranian-backed Hezbollah.

Between 2007 and 2009 the university provided the training in workshops to representatives

from Al-Nour and Al-Manar, who were allowed to participate among a larger group of journalists, a statement from the US Attorney's Office said.

For instance, one workshop was titled "Citizen/Online Journalism" and provided instruction on how to produce blogs, videos and podcasts, prosecutors said. Federal prosecutors said the university used its website to connect students with Jihad Al-Binaa, another organization that the US Treasury Department has said is linked to Hezbollah. American University of Beirut (AUB) said in a statement on Friday that its conduct had been neither "knowing, intentional or

reckless." "AUB is pleased to have reached the settlement and looks forward to continuing to provide a world-class education to students of all backgrounds," the statement said. The university, founded in 1866, centers its teaching on the American liberal arts tradition. "With today's settlement, the university is being made to pay a financial penalty for its conduct, and importantly, it has admitted to its conduct and agreed to put proper precautions in place to ensure that it does not happen again," Kim said in a statement. The \$700,000 penalty levied on the university will be paid to the US government. —Reuters





**MOSCOW:** Russian President Vladimir Putin (right) shakes hands with French far-right presidential candidate Marine Le Pen, in the Kremlin in Moscow yesterday. — AP

## RUSSIA'S PUTIN HOSTS FRENCH CONTENDER LE PEN IN KREMLIN

LE PEN SAYS SHE, PUTIN AND TRUMP REPRESENT A NEW WORLD

**MOSCOW:** Russian President Vladimir Putin granted an audience to French far-right party leader Marine Le Pen in the Kremlin yesterday, bestowing a level of international recognition that has so far eluded her in the countdown to France's presidential election. Opinion polls show Le Pen, who has said she admires Putin, getting through to the second, decisive round of France's presidential election on May 7 but then losing to centrist candidate Emmanuel Macron.

Le Pen backs the lifting of the European Union's economic sanctions imposed on Russia over its role in the Ukraine conflict - a stance she reiterated yesterday.

"We attach great importance to our relations with France, but at the same time we try to maintain equal relations both with the current authorities and with representatives of the opposition," Putin told Le Pen at their meeting. "We do not want to influence events in any way, but we reserve the right to talk to representatives of all the country's political forces, just as our partners in Europe and the United States do." Putin added that Le Pen represented a range of political forces that was gaining momentum.

Le Pen's meeting with Putin is likely to go down well with her core supporters in France, many of whom admire the

Russian leader's conservative stance on social and moral issues. Other French voters, however, may be put off by her association with a leader widely seen in the West as autocratic.

### 'Fake news'

The meeting also showed that the Kremlin is not shying away from actions that could influence foreign elections, even after the storm over US intelligence agencies' allegations that Russia tried to interfere in the US presidential election to help Donald Trump win the White House. Russia has denied trying to influence the US vote, and has also dismissed allegations that Kremlin-funded media outlets are spreading "fake news" in an attempt to interfere in the French presidential race.

Putin would benefit from getting the sanctions lifted, especially as he is expected to seek a fourth term in office next year. They are curbing Russia's recovery from an economic slowdown caused by low oil prices. Le Pen's party took a 9-million-euro loan from a Moscow-based bank in 2014 and is actively seeking new sources of funding.

Speaking to reporters in a Moscow hotel after her meeting with Putin, Le Pen denied that she had discussed financial aid for her party, echoing an earlier denial from the Kremlin. Le Pen said the discussion had focused on what she said were shared Russian and French interests in the fight against Islamist terrorism. "A new world has emerged in these past years. It's the world of Vladimir Putin, it's the world of Donald Trump in the United States, it's the world of Mr (Narendra) Modi in India, and I think that probably I am the one who shares with these great nations a vision of cooperation and not a vision of submission." — Reuters

## SERBIA SAYS NO TO NATO ON AIRSTRIKES ANNIVERSARY

**BELGRADE:** Serbia's prime minister pledged yesterday that the Balkan country will never join NATO or any other military alliance as Serbia marked the 18th anniversary of the start of NATO airstrikes that stopped its crackdown in Kosovo.

Aleksandar Vucic spoke at a ceremony near a railway bridge in southern Serbia where the Western military alliance's missiles struck a passenger train, killing at least 28 people and injuring dozens.

"We will never be part of the alliance which killed our children, nor of any other alliance," Vucic said. "They wanted to destroy and humiliate small Serbia and kill its children."

Anti-NATO sentiments run high in Serbia since the 78-day bombing in 1999 over a bloody crackdown by

Serbian forces against Kosovo Albanian separatists. Serbian officials claim that more than 2,000 people were killed in the airstrikes while independent estimates put that figure at about 800, mostly soldiers and police.

Some 10,000 people died and 1,660 are still missing from the 1998-1999 Kosovo war that ended with the NATO intervention and the withdrawal of Serbian troops from its former, majority ethnic Albanian-populated province. Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008, which Serbia doesn't recognize. Although it is a member of a NATO outreach program and is formally seeking EU membership, Serbia has lately been boosting its military cooperation with Russia, which has agreed to deliver fighter jets, tanks and anti-aircraft systems. — AP

## ICC AWARDS 'SYMBOLIC' \$250 EACH TO CONGO WAR CRIME VICTIMS

**THE HAGUE:** In its first such decision, the International Criminal Court yesterday awarded \$250 dollars as "symbolic" damages to each victim of a former Congolese warlord, a sum swiftly dismissed as meaningless by those who lost homes and loved ones in a militia attack on their village 14 years ago.

The reparations order was a landmark step for the tribunal, set up in 2002 to prosecute the world's worst atrocities, marking the first time it has placed monetary values on the harm caused by such crimes. Presiding judge Marc Perrin de Brichambaut acknowledged at the tribunal in The Hague that the amount of \$250 to each of the 297 victims of Germain Katanga "does not make up for the totality of the crimes", estimating the total damage caused at \$3.7 million.

But in unveiling the collective and individual reparations, he said he hoped it would bring some "measure of relief" and help victims in the Democratic Republic of Congo rebuild their lives.

The ICC sentenced Katanga to 12 years in jail in 2014 after convicting him of five charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity for the February 2003 ethnic attack on Bogoro, a village in troubled Ituri Province. He was accused of supplying weapons to his militia which went on a rampage, shooting and hacking to death with machetes some 200 people.

Katanga, who watched the proceedings by video-link from a jail in Kinshasa where he is on trial over separate charges, was also found liable for \$1 million in compensation, though the court recognised that he was penniless, or "indigent", and had no home or possessions.

It asked that he consider making a public apology or writing a letter to the victims, or even attending a public reconciliation ceremony.

### 'Two days of beer'

"These individual reparations don't have any symbolic value. Today \$250 doesn't mean anything in the DRC," Salomon Kiseembo Byaruhanga, a local tribal chief, told AFP. "Those who will get it will most likely waste it all away on beer in two days," he added, saying it would be far better to rebuild a village or construct a memorial. Perrin de Brichambaut said the court had assessed the total damage at \$3,752,620, and said collective reparations should go towards projects to help the victims with housing, education and "income-generating activities".

The court asked the Trust Fund for Victims, an independent body set up under the tribunal's founding guidelines, to consider using its resources to pay for the reparations and to come up with a plan by late June. Court officials said the fund could release up to \$1 million for reparations in the case. Legal representatives for the victims had assessed the damage at \$16.4 million in a filing to the court last year. They calculated that 228 homes were destroyed, that the school was lost and that hundreds of cattle and other livestock had fled or been killed.

In its ruling, also watched via video-link by victims in Bunia, the provincial capital of Ituri Province, the court set the cost of each destroyed Bogoro home at \$600, while the value of each harvest lost that year was \$150. Victims who suffered psychological harm after the death of a loved one were entitled to \$8,000 for a close family member, or \$4,000 for a more distant relative.

### 'We've buried our dead'

"What will \$250 change in our lives?" asked Jean Bosco Lalo, a coordinator for the Ituri Civil Society group of local associations. "Our communities have already turned the page. Everyone has rebuilt their homes. We've buried our dead."

The Trust Fund for Victims has \$5 million available, of which \$1 million has been set aside for the case of Thomas Lubanga, sentenced in 2012 to 14 years for conscripting child soldiers in the DRC. In October, judges approved "symbolic reparations" to create a "living memorial" to remember and raise awareness about child soldiers. But a final decision on collective reparations for Lubanga's victims is still awaited. — AFP



## NEW ZEALAND SAS RAID IN AFGHANISTAN UNDER FIRE

**WELLINGTON:** Pressure mounted on the New Zealand government yesterday to call an inquiry into a botched special forces raid in Afghanistan that reportedly left six civilians dead, including a three-year-old child. A book published this week alleges the SAS staged the 2010 raid as a "revenge attack" after a New Zealand soldier was killed, but faulty intelligence meant they targeted villagers rather than insurgents.

"Hit and Run", written by investigative journalists Nicky Hager and Jon Stephenson, also claims the Wellington government and military covered up the failure, insisting no civilians died when they knew otherwise. One of the centre-right National government's coalition partners, United Future, called for an investigation yesterday after several sources emerged to challenge the official version of events.

"New Zealanders are rightly proud of the reputation of our SAS and armed forces generally, and do not wish to see that diminished, so they deserve open reassurance that our forces have not behaved inappropriately," United Future leader Peter Dunne said. "The current saga of claim and counter-claim will not provide that, therefore some form of independent inquiry is appropriate."

Amnesty International has also called for a probe while a team of New Zealand human rights lawyers announced Friday they were representing affected Afghan villagers and wanted an independent investigation. New Zealand sent a reconstruction team and a small special forces contingent to join the NATO-led operation in Afghanistan in 2003.

In early August 2010, Lieutenant Tim O'Donnell became the first of New Zealand's 10 military deaths in Afghanistan when his patrol was hit by a roadside bomb. The SAS raid in the northern province of Baghlan, planned by the New Zealanders and carried out with US helicopter support, took place about two weeks later on August 22. In the following days Mohammad Ismail, a district chief for Tala Wa Barfak, where the incident occurred, told AFP that eight people died in the raid, all civilians. The New Zealand military initially kept silent about its involvement, then when it emerged said nine insurgents were killed and no civilians harmed. But then-defence minister Wayne Mapp conceded for the first time this week that he knew as early as 2014 that civilians died.

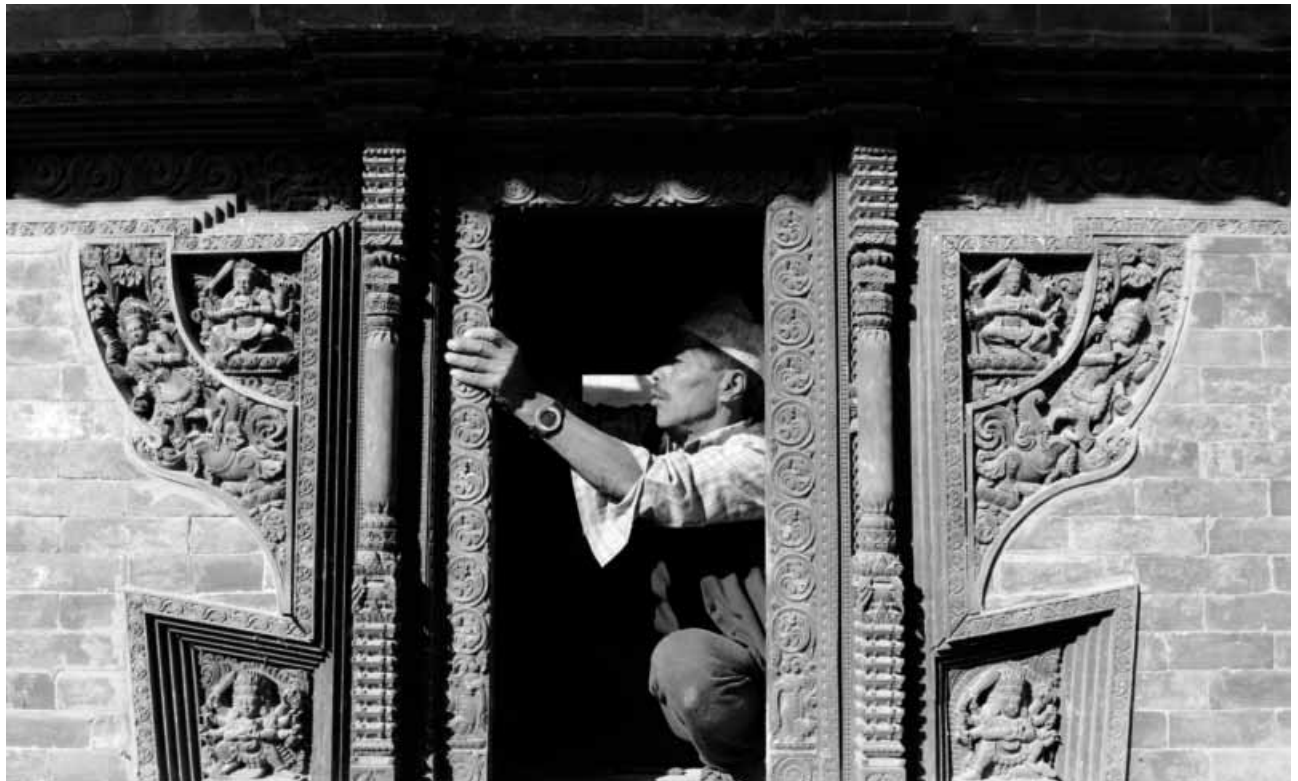
"I'm sure everyone is remorseful about that," he told Newshub. "At the time of the attack they (New Zealand forces) thought they were being attacked by insurgents." The book, citing interviews with villagers and unnamed military sources, says six civilians died, including a three-year-old girl named Fatima. It also alleges soldiers failed to provide medical treatment to wounded civilians and further punished villagers by returning 10 days after the raid to blow up their rebuilding efforts. Hager, co-author of the book, has suggested that such conduct, if true, could constitute a war crime.

### Russia denies supplying Taliban

In other related news yesterday, Russia denied allegations by the commander of NATO that Moscow may be assisting the Taliban as the insurgents fight US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. "These claims are absolutely false," Zamir Kabulov, head of the Russian foreign ministry's department responsible for Afghanistan and the Kremlin's special envoy in the country, told RIA Novosti state news agency. "These fabrications are designed, as we have repeatedly underlined, to justify the failure of the US military and politicians in the Afghan campaign. There is no other explanation."

NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, US General Curtis Scaparrotti, who also heads the US military's European Command, told lawmakers in Washington on Thursday that he had witnessed Russia's influence grow in many regions, including in Afghanistan. In a statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee, Scaparrotti said Moscow was "perhaps" supplying the Taliban.

In February General John Nicholson, the US commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, testified that Russia is encouraging the Taliban and providing them with diplomatic cover in a bid to undermine US influence and defeat NATO. Kabulov in 2015 said that Russia was exchanging information with the Taliban and saw shared interest with them when it comes to fighting the Islamic State jihadist group. Russia considers the Taliban a terrorist group and it is banned in the country, along with the Islamic State group. Taliban fighters on Thursday captured Afghanistan's strategic district of Sangin, where US and British forces suffered heavy casualties until it was handed over to Afghan personnel.—AFP



**KATHMANDU:** In this picture taken on February 8, 2017, a worker renovates a heritage site at Durbar Square. — AFP

## LOWEST BIDDERS THREATENING NEPAL'S QUAKE-HIT HERITAGE

### GOVERNMENT DISMISSING COMMUNITY, SACRED RITUALS

**KATHMANDU:** Caretaker Deepak Shrestha padlocked shut the quake-ravaged remains of the Trailokya Mohan Narayan temple in Nepal's capital Kathmandu to keep out the contractors who are meant to be rebuilding it. The 17th century monument's three-tiered pagoda completely collapsed in a 7.8 magnitude earthquake that hit the Himalayan nation in April 2015, leaving the main statue standing exposed on a high plinth.

Shrestha, whose family has looked after the Hindu temple for generations, is now on a mission to protect it from a government system that grants contracts to rebuild the quake-damaged heritage sites to the lowest bidder. "We had our doubts about the contractors but it was confirmed when they started digging the foundations haphazardly, disregarding the community's involvement and our sacred rituals," Shrestha, 56, told AFP. "We don't believe the cheapest contractors will rebuild our temple sincerely. We demand that the government dismiss such a system." The temple was among more than 700 heritage sites damaged in the disaster which killed nearly 9,000 people and destroyed half a million homes. Nepal's laws state that construction contracts valued at more than 500,000 rupees (\$4,670) must be granted through a tender process to the lowest bidder — and the same rules govern the restoration of ancient temples and buildings.

The system has raised alarm over the quality and techniques being used to rebuild historical sites with experts saying the Kathmandu valley's status as a UNESCO World Heritage site could be under threat. "The lowest bidder is not necessarily the best," Christian Manhart, head of UNESCO in Nepal, told AFP. "There are strong chances that it can be in the world heritage in danger (list)," he added. When the UNESCO World Heritage committee met in July last year, it narrowly

avoided putting the Kathmandu Valley on its "List of World Heritage in Danger", but warned it could be added in 2017 if progress is not made.

### 'Attack on our heritage'

The government estimates that rebuilding the centuries-old temples and monuments damaged by the quake will cost over \$300 million. Several countries who have pledged support to help Nepal rebuild its cultural heritage have also expressed concerns about the tender process and the slow pace of work.

Nearly two years since the earthquake struck, only ten monuments have so far been rebuilt—some totally bypassing the government's rules. In November last year, the Boudhanath stupa—the country's largest and one of the holiest sites of pilgrimage in Tibetan Buddhism—reopened having been restored with donations from international Buddhist groups.

The restoration was largely community-led and cost \$2.1 million, including over 30 kilograms of gold. Bhesha Narayan Dahal, chief of Nepal's archaeology department, said he is aware of concerns regarding the construction contract sys-

tem and is hopeful the government will respond. "The demands of local communities are justified... but we are helpless, we cannot work beyond the limits of the government's laws, acts and rules," Dahal said.

In deeply religious Nepal, where temples and heritage sites are an integral part of people's lives, other communities are now demanding that the government process be scrapped and they be allowed to take lead in rebuilding. However, dozens of contracts to rebuild cultural monuments have already been granted and more are in the process. Experts also worry that contractors who lack experience of working on heritage projects won't have the contacts to hire traditional wood carvers, stone sculptors and metal workers. Birendra Bhakta Shrestha, who is leading a campaign to rebuild Kathmandu's Kasthamandap temple with community involvement, said locals will continue to battle against the tender process. "Our ancestors have made it and it is our moral right to rebuild it," Shrestha said. "Lowest bidders cannot maintain quality... Residents of Kathmandu can tolerate anything, but cannot tolerate an attack on our heritage." — AFP

## PAK POLICE PREVENT CLERICS' RALLY AGAINST BLASPHEMY

**ISLAMABAD:** Pakistani police have blocked a rally by clerics in Islamabad seeking to press their calls for the death of social media activists accused of insulting Islam. Security forces sealed off and surrounded the Red Mosque and the home of the leader, Maulana Abdul Aziz, preventing his followers from staging the gathering yesterday. Meanwhile, the Center for Inquiry, a US-based advocacy group, has appealed to Facebook not to consider demands by

Pakistan to help identify Pakistanis suspected of blasphemy so that authorities can prosecute them or pursue their extradition. Pakistan has harsh blasphemy laws under which insulting Islam is an offence that carries the death penalty. Pakistan's media have been increasingly attacked by religious hard-liners. The government has asked Facebook and Twitter to censor religiously offensive material emanating from Pakistan.—AP



## AUSTRALIA WON'T CHOOSE BETWEEN CHINA AND US

**CANBERRA:** Australia does not have to choose between the United States and China, the Australian prime minister said yesterday as he announced a new beef export deal with the Chinese. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang oversaw signing of bilateral agreements that will expand their two-year-old free trade pact.

China also agreed to remove a cap that allows only 11 Australian beef exporters to sell 400 million Australian dollars (\$300 million) in frozen meat to the burgeoning ranks of the Chinese middleclass. China will be open to all eligible Australian beef exporters. "Australia is the only country in the world with this market access," Turnbull told reporters. "This new agreement will drive significant future growth."

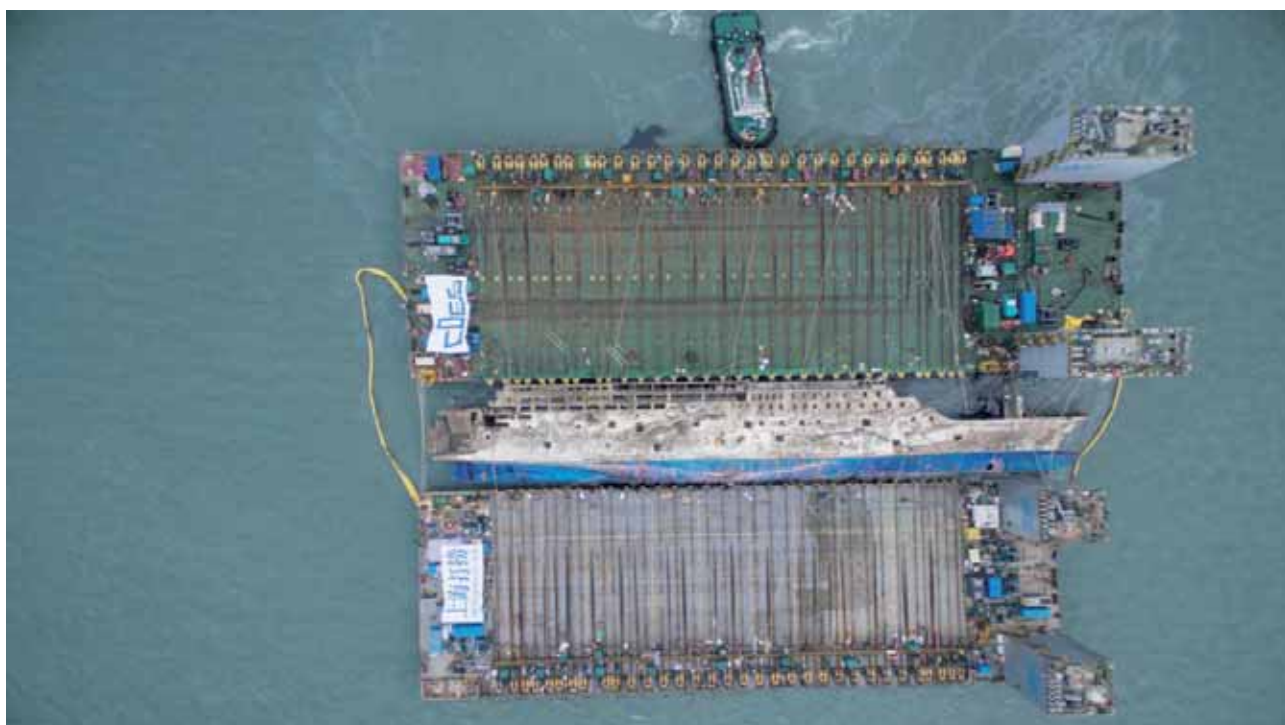
Turnbull later rejected arguments that Australia must choose between its most important security partner, the United States, and its most important trading partner, China, as tensions escalate between the world's two largest economies. "We have a staunch, strong ally in Washington - a good friend in Washington - and we have a very good friend in Beijing," Turnbull told reporters.

"The idea that Australia has to choose between China and the United States is not correct," he said. Li, who on Wednesday warned Australia against "taking sides, as happened during the Cold War," agreed with Turnbull. "We believe China-Australia cooperation will bring good to other countries and regions, and this cooperation will not be targeted at any third party," he said through a translator, referring to the United States.

The United States has questioned aspects of the rapidly evolving commercial relationship between the Chinese and Australians, including Australia's decision to allow a Chinese company, Landbridge, to secure a 99-year lease over the strategically important Port of Darwin. Darwin has become training hub for US Marines in northern Australia. Yesterday, the two witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between China State Construction Engineering Corp. and New Zealand-owned BBI Group to build a AU\$6 billion iron ore mine in Australia. — AP



**SYDNEY:** Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull (R) and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang (L) attend the 6th Australia-China CEO roundtable meeting in Sydney.—AFP



**An aerial view shows the salvage operation of the Sewol ferry, off the coast of South Korea's southern island of Jindo. —AFP**

## SOUTH KOREA'S SUNKEN SEWOL FERRY STARTS FINAL JOURNEY

**JINDO:** South Korea's sunken Sewol ferry was sailed away from its watery grave yesterday, beginning its final journey nearly three years after it went down with the loss of more than 300 lives. A flotilla of powerful tugs towed the wreck, lying on its side on a platform between two giant salvage barges, towards a semi-submersible that will finally bring it into port.

The 145-metre ship was brought to the surface in a complex salvage operation believed to be among the largest recoveries ever of a wreck in one piece, a key demand of the families of the dead. "The Sewol began its move towards the semi-submersible at 16:55," (0755 GMT) the maritime ministry said in a statement.

The rusted, silted hull stood high out of the water, with both its white superstructure and blue bulbous bow exposed as it was taken towards the Dockwise White Marlin, a huge vessel standing by in deeper waters to bring it to Mokpo on the mainland, for investigations and a search. Almost all the dead were schoolchildren and it is thought that nine bodies still unaccounted for may be trapped inside the sunken ship.

"Today is the last day of the neap tide and we must finish loading the Sewol to the submersible," Lee Cheol-jo, a ministry official in charge of the operation told reporters earlier, referring to when tides are at their weakest. Around 450 workers were involved

in the painstaking salvage. The Sewol has a displacement of 6,825 tons but is now estimated to weigh between 8,000-8,500 tons including the silt piled up inside.

It came as the third anniversary approached of one of the country's worst-ever maritime disasters, which dealt a crushing blow to now-ousted president Park Geun-Hye. Several relatives watched the much-anticipated operation unfolding from a boat near the site. "I had seen footage of the vessel from time to time, but there are no words to describe what I'm feeling to see it above water," said Jung Seong-Wook, a father who lost his son in the deadly accident. "I cried. I could only think about my son," he told AFP after a boat trip to the wreck site. Jung is among a handful of bereaved family members who have kept watch at a camp on a hilltop on the nearest island Donggeochado, just 1.5 kilometers away.

### 'My heart stops'

Other bereaved family members gathered at Paengmok harbor on the nearby larger island of Jindo, huddled in front of a small computer monitor for any updates to the salvage operation. "From time to time when the news mentions a possible obstacle, my heart stops," said Yoo Young-Hwa, who lost her daughter on the Sewol.

The vessel was lying more than 40

meters below the waves off southwestern South Korea and the operation, originally scheduled for last year, had been pushed back several times because of adverse weather. The disaster was a crippling blow to the now-ousted leader Park Geun-Hye, whose dismissal over a corruption scandal was confirmed by Seoul's top court only two weeks ago. She stayed at her residence for the first few critical hours after the disaster while officials were frantically sending updates and asking for guidance.

She has never specified what she was doing for the seven hours, sparking wild rumours including a tryst and cosmetic surgery. A permanent Sewol protest site targeting her was subsequently set up in the centre of Seoul. Investigations into the disaster, in which 304 people died, concluded it was largely man-made-the cumulative result of an illegal redesign, an overloaded cargo bay, inexperienced crew and a questionable relationship between the ship operators and state regulators.

Even though the vessel took around three hours to sink, many of those on board never heard any evacuation order, while the crew were among the first to escape to safety. Captain Lee Jun-Seok was sentenced to life in prison for "murder through wilful negligence" and 14 other crew members were given terms ranging from two to 12 years. —AFP

## TAIWAN NGO WORKER 'MISSING IN CHINA'

**TAIPEI:** A Taiwanese NGO worker who promoted democracy in China has gone missing after entering the mainland earlier this month, authorities said. Taiwan said yesterday that Chinese authorities had not responded to their enquiries on Lee Ming-cheh's whereabouts, as his wife pleaded for help to locate him. Ties between China and Taiwan have worsened since President Tsai Ing-wen took office in May and Beijing has cut off all official communication with Taipei.

Taiwan has been self-ruling since 1949 following a civil war on the mainland, but it has never formally declared independence

and Beijing still claims it as part of its territory. Chinese authorities deeply mistrust Tsai's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), which is traditionally pro-independence.

Lee, 42, works for a community college in Taipei and "lost contact" on March 19 after he entered the southeastern Chinese city of Zhuhai from Macau, said the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC), Taiwan's top China policy-making body. A former DPP employee, Lee had been sharing "Taiwan's democratic experiences" with his Chinese friends online for many years and often mailed books to them, according to the Taiwan

Association for Human Rights. "It's unreasonable that a Taiwanese citizen has been unaccounted for in China for more than five days for no reason," his wife Lee Ching-yu said in a statement.

"If Lee Ming-cheh has been arrested, please tell me on what charges ... whether he is alive or dead, and where he is," she said, adding that Lee has been following human rights issues in China. Lee has long supported civil society organizations and activists in China, according to Amnesty International, which added that he went there this time to arrange for his mother-in-

law's medical treatment.

His disappearance "raises serious questions about the safety of people working with civil society in China", said Nicholas Bequelin, Amnesty International's East Asia Director. Taiwan authorities say Zhuhai police have informed Lee's family that there is no record of his arrest. However the Taiwan Association for Human Rights said the Chinese government should prove that Lee is not under arrest, citing the incident of five Hong Kong booksellers who went missing in 2015 and resurfaced in detention on the mainland. —AFP



# ABE REDOUBLES EFFORTS ON CASH SCANDAL

**TOKYO:** Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe yesterday again rebuffed allegations that he made a donation to an educator at the centre of an intensifying political scandal that has gripped the country. Yasunori Kagoike, a controversial nationalist school operator, said under oath Thursday he had received a one million yen (\$9,000) donation from Abe, handed to him, he claimed, by the premier's wife in 2015. Kagoike's nationally televised testimony came as his purchase of government land

for the construction of a new school at a huge discount has dominated media coverage for weeks. Abe, whose high approval ratings have taken a hit, has repeatedly denied giving Kagoike money and on more than one occasion offered to resign if he was found to be involved in the land deal. Yesterday he issued a fresh denial, releasing emails between the first lady and Kagoike's wife.

"There is nothing at all like a one million yen transaction mentioned in the exchanges," Abe told

parliament, referring to the emails. "I disclosed all the emails to quash any misunderstandings," Abe said, blaming Kagoike for disclosing "only part of the information" during his sworn testimony. Analysts say such a donation in itself is unlikely to be illegal, but if proven could damage the prime minister's credibility given his steadfast denials.

Abe also denied putting political pressure on bureaucrats to favor Kagoike when he purchased the state land for his now scuttled plan to con-

struct a primary school. The scandal has drawn intense interest in Japan largely due to the character of Kagoike, whose views on education are widely out of step with mainstream society. He operates a kindergarten in the western city of Osaka that promotes hyper-nationalistic doctrine similar to that taught through the end of World War II. The prime minister also rejected calls by opposition parties that his wife be summoned for questioning. —AFP



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**NEW YORK:** This file photo taken on January 11, 2017 shows US President-elect Donald Trump whispers to his daughter Ivanka during a press conference at Trump Tower. — AFP

# IVANKA TRUMP: A WHITE HOUSE FORCE, JUST NOT AN 'EMPLOYEE'

## A BRAND ALL TO HER OWN

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump's daughter Ivanka Trump will have a security clearance, a West Wing office and the ear of her father on important policy matters. But don't call her an employee. When it comes to government work, "employee" is more than just a word. That designation triggers an array of transparency and ethical provisions, including a law prohibiting conflicts of interest. Government watchdogs are concerned that by refusing to call Ivanka Trump an employee, White House counsel Don McGahn could be attempting to give her a loophole if she improperly mingles her government policy roles with her business and financial interests.

In a letter yesterday to McGahn, they ask him to reconsider, saying the position as designed "creates a middle space that does not exist." It is signed by two former White House lawyers and three other transparency and ethics advocates, all of whom have been highly critical of the Trump administration's approach to ethics. "On the one hand, her position will provide her with the privileges and opportunities for service that attach to being a White House employee," they write. "On the other hand, she remains the owner of a private business who is free from the ethics and conflicts rules that apply to all White House employees." The White House rejects that notion.

### An unprecedented situation

As an adult first daughter with an interest in politics and a clothing and lifestyle brand of her own, Ivanka Trump is in an unprecedented situation. There's no protocol for this, said a senior White House official who requested anonymity to discuss a personnel matter. She's family, not an employee. Another person close to Ivanka Trump earlier told The Associated Press that Ivanka believes she can offer more independent perspective to her father by not serving as a White House staffer.

Richard Painter, one of the letter's signatories and President George W. Bush's chief ethics counselor, said he cannot recall a White House that had such high-powered "non-employees." One of the most politically active close relatives of a sitting president was Hillary Clinton. And she successfully fought to be considered a federal employee because of the privacy benefits it involves. A June 1993 ruling by a federal appeals court enabled Clinton to keep secret the details of the health care reform panel that she led.

Ivanka Trump is choosing to be in a less formal role than her husband, Jared Kushner, who is a senior adviser to the president and, as an employee, must follow the rules. She has relinquished control of her brand but, like her father, continues to own and financially benefit from her businesses. She will "voluntarily comply with the rules that would apply if she were a government employee, even though she is not," her attorney Jamie Gorelick said this week. Gorelick, who also helped Kushner through the White House appointment process, said McGahn's office agreed with the decision. Ivanka Trump and Kushner have said they will not accept government pay.

Fred Wertheimer, one of the authors of the letter to McGahn and president of the Washington watchdog Democracy 21, said Ivanka Trump "should not be treated differently than any other government employee just because she is the president's daughter." "This is untenable. She can make a decision at any time not to comply and there's no penalty or sanction whatsoever," he said. "We don't normally have White House employees voluntarily complying with rules that were enacted to protect the American people."

The senior White House official left open the possibility of altering the Ivanka Trump arrangement at some point - again stressing that this is new territory. Others in Trump's White House have drawn outside scrutiny for govern-

ment work without the usual set of rules that accompanies it. Billionaire Carl Icahn, a special adviser to the president on regulatory reform and one of his close friends, merited a 700-word press release when he agreed to join the administration. The announcement concluded that "he will not be serving as a federal employee or a special government employee and will not have any specific duties."

### Sprawling portfolio

Icahn has a sprawling business portfolio that is directly affected by government regulations, and at the same time Trump has tasked him to help fulfill his campaign promise of reducing regulations. Since Icahn isn't technically a White House employee, he's had to do nothing to clear out potential conflicts of interest. Bloomberg News reported earlier this month that Icahn is already making his mark on policy. He's lobbying the Trump administration to change a government rule that forces refineries - including his own - to buy renewable fuel credits.

Icahn's energy interests and his advocacy for Scott Pruitt as head of the Environmental Protection Agency prompted seven Democratic senators to write in February to McGahn demanding a fuller explanation of what exactly his White House role is. "Publicly reported facts suggest a conflict of interest between Mr. Icahn and advice he gave President Trump on the nomination of Mr. Pruitt," the senators wrote. Having received no answer, they followed up with a second letter to McGahn this month. Wertheimer calls the Icahn situation "possibly the worst conflict of interest I've ever seen."

White House spokeswoman Stephanie Grisham said Icahn is in no way a government employee or official. "He is simply a private citizen whose opinion the president respects and whom the president speaks with from time to time," she said. — AP

## THE WIRETAP FLAP FROM TWEETS TO CAPITOL HILL

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump's startling allegation that former President Barack Obama tapped his phones during last year's election is pitting the White House against U.S. intelligence officials, sparking grave concern in law enforcement circles and alarming Democrats and Republicans alike. A look at the controversy:

### Trump's allegation

On Saturday, March 4, while at his Florida estate, Trump angrily tweeted that Obama was behind a politically motivated plot to upend his campaign. He alleged that the former president conducted surveillance in October at Trump Tower, the New York skyscraper where he ran his campaign and transition. He also maintains a residence there.

He compared the alleged surveillance to "Nixon/Watergate" and "McCarthyism." Moreover, he called Obama a "Bad (or sick) guy." The tweets reflected the president's growing frustration with swirling reports about his advisers' alleged ties to Russia. Questions about his campaign's ties to Russia have been compounded by US intelligence agencies' assessment that Russia interfered with the election to help Trump triumph over Hillary Clinton, along with disclosures about his aides' contacts with a Russian official.

### Obama denies it's true

No president can legally order a wiretap against a US citizen. Obtaining one would require officials at the Justice Department to seek permission from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act court, which is shrouded in secrecy. Obama spokesman Kevin Lewis said a "cardinal rule" of the Obama administration was that no White House official ever interfered in Justice Department investigations, which are supposed to be conducted free of political influence. "As part of that practice, neither President Obama nor any White House official ever ordered surveillance on any US citizen," Lewis said, adding that "any suggestion otherwise is simply false."

### Trump kicks it to committee

A few days later, Trump asked Congress to investigate his allegations. Without saying where the president got the information that led to his tweets, White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Trump was "going off information that he's seen." If the allegation were true, she said, "this is the greatest overreach and the greatest abuse of power that I think we've ever seen and a huge attack on democracy itself."

### Trump stands alone

With Democrats and some Republicans on Capitol Hill refusing to embrace Trump's wiretap allegation, the president was out on a limb. Sen John McCain, R-Ariz, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, pressured Trump to provide the public with more information about his allegation. "The dimensions of this are huge. It's accusing the president of the United States of violating the law. That's never happened before," he said.

For a while, it appeared that the White House was walking back Trump's tweets. White House press secretary Sean Spicer tried to clarify Trump's comments, saying the president wasn't using the word wiretapping literally. "The president used the word wiretap in quotes to mean broadly surveillance and other activities," Spicer said. He also suggested Trump wasn't accusing Obama specifically, but instead referring to the actions of the Obama administration. But Trump himself didn't back down. He predicted in an interview with Fox News that there would be "some very interesting items coming to the forefront over the next two weeks." He didn't elaborate. It remains unclear if he's holding onto some evidence that justify his tweets.

### Comey talks

In testimony Monday at a politically charged congressional hearing, FBI Director James Comey brought the curtain down on speculation about the wiretap. "With respect to the president's tweets about alleged wiretapping directed at him by the prior administration, I have no information that supports those tweets, and we have looked carefully inside the FBI," Comey said. The same was true, he added, of the Justice Department. With the denial by the nation's top enforcement official, the controversy appeared dead. — AP



# BUSINESS

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**CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP:** Real estate signs mark the lots near one of the new homes for sale in a development for new homes in Cranberry Township, Butler County, Pa. Americans retreated from buying existing homes in February, a pullback after sales in January had surged to the fastest pace in a decade.—AP

## US CORE CAPITAL GOODS ORDERS DIP

### CAPITAL GOODS SHIPMENTS EDGE HIGHER marginally

**WASHINGTON:** New orders for key US-made capital goods unexpectedly fell in February, but a surge in shipments amid demand for machinery and electrical equipment supported expectations for an acceleration in business investment in the first quarter.

The Commerce Department said yesterday that non-defense capital goods orders excluding aircraft, a closely watched proxy for business spending plans, dipped 0.1 percent last month after rising 0.1 percent in January. Shipments of these so-called core capital goods jumped 1.0 percent after declining 0.3 percent in January. Core capital goods shipments are used to calculate equipment spending in the government's gross domestic product measurement.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast core capital goods orders rising 0.6 percent last month. Orders for machinery inched up 0.1 percent while shipments increased 0.9 percent. Orders for electrical equipment, appliances and components advanced 2.2 percent, the biggest

increase in seven months, and shipments rose 1.5 percent. US financial markets were little moved by the data as investors awaited the outcome of a vote later on Friday on a Republican-sponsored bill to replace Democratic President Barack Obama's 2010 Affordable Care Act. The vote is seen as the first significant policy test for President Donald Trump.

#### Manufacturing

A recovery in oil prices from multi-year lows is driving demand for equipment in the energy sector, helping to lift the manufacturing sector after a prolonged slump. Manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the US economy is also being underpinned by a burst of confidence amid promises by the Trump administration to slash taxes for businesses, boost infrastructure spending and repeal some regulations.

Details of the fiscal stimulus package, however, remain vague, resulting in only a modest increase in busi-

ness spending on equipment outside the energy sector. The Federal Reserve last week described business investment as appearing to have "firmed somewhat." Economists expect business spending on equipment to pick up in the first quarter after a 1.9 percent annualized growth pace in the fourth quarter.

Still, that will likely be insufficient to offset the drag on GDP from slower consumer spending and a wider trade deficit. The Atlanta Fed is forecasting the economy growing at a 0.9 percent rate in the first quarter after expanding at a 1.9 percent pace in the final three months of 2016. Last month, a 4.3 percent jump in demand for transportation equipment offset the dip in core capital goods bookings, and hoisted overall orders for durable goods, items ranging from toasters to aircraft that are meant to last three years or more, 1.7 percent.

Durable goods orders had increased 2.3 percent in January. Civilian aircraft orders soared 47.6 percent in February. Boeing reported

on its website that it had received orders for 43 aircraft last month, up from 26 in January. Orders for motor vehicles and parts fell 0.8 percent in February, while orders for defense aircraft declined 12.8 percent.

There were increases in orders for primary metals, but orders for

fabricated metal products fell as did those for computers and electronic products. Unfilled orders for core capital goods increased 0.2 percent last month after rising 0.5 percent in January. Inventories of overall durable goods rose 0.2 percent last month. — Reuters



**PITTSBURGH:** Washers and dryers appear on display for sale at a JC Penney store in Pittsburgh. The Commerce Department released its February report on durable goods. —AP



# MARKETS ON EDGE BEFORE KEY US HEALTHCARE VOTE

## AXE ON CORPORATE TAX LOOMING

**LONDON:** World markets wobbled in unsteady trading as investors looked to a key vote on US healthcare reform whose passage is seen as crucial to the future of Donald Trump's growth agenda. The four-month rally in global stocks came to a juddering halt this week as the new president struggled to garner enough support from his own Republican party for a bill repealing ObamaCare.

There are fears the bill's failure would throw a spanner in the works for his other big-ticket pledges on infrastructure spending, tax cuts and deregulation-key drivers of the markets' surge. A vote on the reforms pencilled in for Thursday was put back a day, with the White House saying it would definitely pass. Nevertheless Trump turned up the pressure on lawmakers yesterday.

"After seven horrible years of ObamaCare (skyrocketing premiums & deductibles, bad healthcare), this is finally your chance for a great plan!" Trump tweeted. Wall Street equities opened to the upside, while London and Frankfurt treading water in afternoon trading.

"The threat of a rejection in Congress for Trump's ObamaCare replacement has brought about significant doubts over his ability to pass his corporate tax cut this week," noted IG analyst Joshua Mahony.

### Move on to tax

"However, Trump has indicated that should the healthcare reforms not pass, he would simply move on to his other plans, such as cutting corporate taxes." The administration gave lawmakers an ultimatum Thursday, warning that if the



**NEW YORK:** Traders work on the Mizuho Americas trading floor in New York. Stocks opened higher on Wall Street yesterday led by gains in technology companies and banks. —AP

bill failed then Obamacare—which Republicans have vilified since its inception seven years ago—would stay in place and Trump would move on to the rest of his agenda.

Greg McKenna, chief market strategist at CFD and FX provider AxiTrader, added that the bill's success would be a major positive for Trump, who is struggling with a fractious Republican party, controversy over alleged links to Russia and record low popularity ratings. And Toshihiko Matsuno, head of investment information at SMBC Friend Securities, told AFP: "Even though the vote was

delayed, the fact that it will take place Friday probably means the Republican plan will pass."

However, McKenna added: "If it fails then the whole house of cards that's been built up since the election can come crashing down as traders and investors wonder what the heck will happen to tax and infrastructure plans." Tokyo ended 0.9 percent higher, with exporters lifted by a weaker yen against the dollar, having advanced on the US unit all week. Hong Kong added 0.1 percent, Sydney was up 0.8 percent and Shanghai closed 0.6 percent higher. — AP

# ABK ANNOUNCES FINAL WINNER OF ITS 'UPDATE YOUR CIVIL ID' CAMPAIGN

**KUWAIT:** Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) successfully concluded its 'Update your Civil ID' February promotion, as it held its fourth and last draw earlier this

month at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of Commerce.

The lucky customer for the fourth

'Update Your Civil ID' draw was Meshal Abdullateef, from Jahra 2 Branch, winning an Apple iPhone7. ABK rolled out this campaign to encourage its customers to make the necessary updates to their Civil ID details, while rewarding them for doing so. It also aimed to raise awareness of the different services that can be completed through ABK's ATM machines, which include withdrawing and depositing money, requesting account balances and mini-statements, changing a PIN number and transferring funds to other ABK accounts.

The Bank's activities and initiatives ultimately stem from its 'Simpler Banking' strategy, which aims to offer customers a simpler banking model while ensuring speed, security and convenience. ABK will continue to capitalize on this strategy and ensure that customers are receiving superior services that cater to their different needs.



## SHELL SELLS GABON ONSHORE ENERGY ASSETS

**LONDON:** Royal Dutch Shell has sold its onshore oil and gas interests in the central African nation of Gabon for \$587 million to private equity firm Carlyle Group, it said yesterday.

The Anglo-Dutch energy giant announced in a statement that it has sold the assets to Carlyle for the equivalent of 544 million euros in a deal expected to complete in mid-2017. Carlyle will also take on debt of \$285 million as part of the deal. It will make extra payments up to a maximum of \$150 million depending on production performance and commodity prices.

Shell will however retain exploration licenses for two offshore blocks west of Gabon, a company spokesman added. "Shell is very proud of the strong legacy we have built in Gabon over the past 55 years," said Upstream Director Andy Brown in the statement. "The decision to divest was not taken lightly, but it is consistent with Shell's strategy to concentrate our upstream footprint where we can be most competitive. Shell will continue to pursue opportunities in Sub Saharan Africa. "Together with recent divestments in the UK, Gulf of Mexico and Canada, this transaction shows the clear momentum behind Shell's \$30-billion divestment program, and it helps us to high-grade and simplify our upstream portfolio following the acquisition of BG."

The downstream business includes refining, marketing and distribution, while upstream comprises exploration and production. Yesterday's sale is part of a huge \$30-billion divestment plan as Shell streamlines its portfolio and cuts debt following the vast takeover of rival BG Group last year.

"I think it illustrates management's ongoing success of pivoting the company toward a more sustainable future, and their commitment to normalizing debt levels," Cantor analyst David Donnelly told AFP. "It's notable that the disposals tend to be focused on mature, oil based assets, thereby boosting the prominence of natural gas within Shell's portfolio, particularly following the BG deal." —AFP

## TUNISIA PUSHING 'ECONOMIC EMERGENCY' BILL TO SPUR GROWTH

**TUNIS:** Tunisia is drafting an "economic emergency" bill that will allow the government to bypass bureaucratic hurdles and speed up large-scale projects as it seeks to boost growth and create jobs, a senior official said.

Administrative delays and bureaucracy are one of the biggest obstacles for local and foreign investors in Tunisia, which has struggled economically since its 2011 uprising.

The move comes amid increasing pressure from international lenders to reform the state sector and cut a bloated public sector wage bill. "In two or three weeks the parliament will start debates on a new 'economic emergency' bill aimed at reducing the obstacles on major projects," Ridha Saidi, an economic advisor to Prime Minister Youssef Chahed, told Reuters.

The bill will allow the government to take rapid decisions and short-circuit some bureaucratic procedures on big infrastructure projects and other new investment.

"The new law will give a strong message for all investors that Tunisia is committed to providing a better investment climate," Saidi said. Opposition parties have raised concerns that by reducing bureaucratic checks, the proposed bill could increase corruption, already a major problem in Tunisia's economy. Saidi said anti-corruption controls would not be weakened.

Chahed's government has been pushing a raft of reforms aimed at ending years of stagnation and high unemployment. It expects the economy to grow between 2.5 percent and 3 percent this year.

Previous attempts at reform have been frustrated by political infighting and resistance from powerful trade unions and other interest groups. — Reuters



## NBK LAUNCHES FOREIGN CURRENCY PREPAID CARD

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has recently launched NBK Foreign Currency Prepaid Card; as part of its ongoing efforts to facilitate customers' banking transactions while traveling abroad, enabling cardholders to pay using the hosting country's currency. This new innovative card is the safest and most convenient means of payment, as it delivers a more secure and convenient experience for NBK customers during their travel, and gives them peace of mind knowing that they have recharged their prepaid cards before leaving home, thus avoiding any exchange fluctuation.

NBK Foreign Currency Prepaid Card is available in seven currencies: US dollar, euro, pound sterling, UAE dirham, Egyptian pound, Indian rupee, and the Jordanian dinar. Customers can

recharge their cards through NBK Online Banking, NBK's IVR, NBK Call Center, or any of NBK branches.

Commenting on the newly launched card, NBK Assistant General Manager-Consumer Banking Group, Hanadi Khazal said that this card is ideal for frequent travelers as it provides a full range of benefits to NBK customers and facilitates their purchase transactions outside Kuwait. The new card is an example of leveraging innovation to deliver on client needs, and builds on NBK's ongoing efforts to provid-



Hanadi Khazal



ing frequent travelers with the flexibility and security while paying for their purchases in any of the currencies provided by the card, be

it for online shopping, point-of-sale, or ATM withdrawals.

Moreover, NBK Foreign Currency Prepaid Card offers a range of benefits including: Travel insurance of up to \$100,000, exclusive offers and rewards from Visa, SMS Service, in addition to easy login to your account via NBK Online Banking, and other benefits that meet travelers' lifestyle and needs. In addition, customers can apply for the card with ease and convenience through NBK Online Banking or NBK Call Center, and the bank will deliver the card to them free of charge anywhere in Kuwait. NBK Credit Cards are widely accepted worldwide and are the safest, most convenient and rewarding way to pay, offering value added features, numerous discounts, and excellent rewards.

## EIB ASKS FRENCH DIESEL INQUIRY TO PROBE RENAULT'S USE OF LOANS

**PARIS:** The European Investment Bank has asked French investigators to find out whether 800 million euros (\$863 million) of EU-backed loans to Renault could have been used to develop test-cheating diesel engines, according to documents seen by Reuters.

The European Union lending arm wrote to judges leading a fraud investigation into preliminary findings that Renault diesel engines - like Volkswagen's - had been configured to manipulate nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions tests. Renault, which has consistently denied breaking any laws or emissions rules, had no immediate comment yesterday. The Paris prosecutor's office did not respond to requests for comment.

Since 2009, the European Investment Bank (EIB) has granted more than 8 billion euros in preferential loans to back development of vehicles with lower carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions by carmakers including VW, exposed in 2015 for using software "defeat devices" to dupe US regulatory tests. Technologies funded by the EIB have included diesel engines, because they emit less CO2 than gasoline equivalents. More recently, however, diesels have been shown to produce many times the legal limit of toxic NOx in real driving.

"The EIB has granted Renault several loans to finance projects including research and development to reduce vehicle CO2 emissions (amounting to more than 800 million euros)," the bank's chief fraud investigator told the French judges. The Jan. 30 letter also proposes a follow-up meeting "in order to establish whether our financing is implicated in your investigations and to offer you all possible assistance." It adds: "The EIB enforces a zero-tolerance policy towards fraud and corruption and strives to ensure that no illegal activity tarnishes its business." A spokeswoman for the Luxembourg-based bank declined to comment on the contact with French prosecutors. Two 400 million-euro loans granted to Renault in 2009 and 2013 have since been reimbursed, she said, and a third outstanding 180 million-euro facility did not cover any diesel development.

### Market fallout

Renault shares fell 7.8 percent in three days to end last week at 78.65 euros after excerpts of a November report by France's DGCCRF consumer fraud watchdog appeared in newspapers, wiping 2 billion euros off the company's value. The stock has since recovered some ground to 80.68 euros, as of 1235 GMT. Based on the agency's findings, prosecutors opened an investigation in January into fraud allegations against Renault and its Chief Executive Carlos Ghosn. If found guilty, the group could be fined up to 10 percent of annual revenue, or 3.58 billion euros.

The DGCCRF report, also seen by Reuters, cites engine software parameters from Renault's own technical documentation that partially or entirely deactivate anti-pollution functions such as exhaust gas recirculation (EGR) and "lean NOx traps" (LNT) outside predictable regulatory test conditions. —Reuters

## SPLINTERING EUROZONE DEBT MARKET DOWN TO DRAGHI

### MARKETS ANTICIPATING POLICY CHANGE AT ECB

**LONDON:** Big bond funds are becoming increasingly reluctant to lend to the eurozone's weakest members, looking past a crowded electoral calendar to an eventual winding down of the European Central Bank's ultra-loose monetary policy. In recent months, the funds have been hiking the premiums they demand to buy bonds from highly-indebted southern European states such as Portugal and Italy.

Many analysts have put much of that to fears that the anti-establishment wave behind Brexit and Donald Trump's US presidential election win could sweep anti-establishment parties to power in a series of European elections this year.

But the first of those votes in the Netherlands last week threw into sharp relief that for many investors there are more risks facing the bloc's weakest debt markets than just politics. There was little change in relative borrowing costs after Prime Minister Mark Rutte fended off a challenge from the far-right populist Geert Wilders in the Dutch election.

Top of the risks list is whether the European Central Bank will soon withdraw the life support that has kept many of the weaker economies functioning and compressed government bond yields. "The better the political outcome in all of these European elections, the more flexibility the ECB has to one day withdraw the stimulus," said Michael Krautzberger, the head of European fixed income at the world's biggest asset manager, BlackRock.

"I would expect that we have much more country differentiation in a scenario where the ECB finally withdraws from the market because that uniform factor falls away." At the start of April, the ECB will scale back the billions of euros it spends each month on a bond-buying scheme designed to prop up growth and inflation. That may be just the start. At its March meeting, ECB President Mario Draghi said its sense of urgency was over. Investors have begun to anticipate interest rate rises by the end of this year.

### 'Drugs don't work'

Some analysts warn that if the ECB tries to wind down its program quickly, borrowing costs for so-called peripheral



**ROME:** Demonstrators hold a banner reading: "Who sold his people is not welcomed. Tsipras out of the University" as they shout slogans against the planned visit of Greek Premier Alexis Tsipras at the Economy faculty in Rome on Thursday.—AP

countries relative to Germany-known as the spread-could widen by as much as 1-2 percentage points. For the likes of Portugal that would put borrowing costs back towards levels seen as unsustainable for managing debts.

In a similar way that some emerging countries suffered in the backdraft of US hints it would scale back monetary easing in 2013, the bloc's weakest links may be punished by markets.

"The drugs don't work already and when you take steps towards pricing in less drugs - QE - then you price in spread widening," said Richard McGuire, head of rates strategy at Rabobank. Spain and Italy have been among the poorest performing bond markets in the euro area this year. The German/Italian 10-year yield gap this week rose above 200 basis points to its widest in three years. There was little change in these spreads last week's Dutch election. Investors say French bonds could win some respite if the eurosceptic Marine Le Pen is defeated in May's presidential vote.

But it is unclear whether the same is true for the debt of Italy and Portugal, where governments have struggled to implement structural reforms and shore

up a fragile banking sector. "As the ECB gradually withdraws monetary stimulus this year and next, that will place a disproportionate challenge on the weaker countries to grow under the tighter monetary stance," said Andrew Bosomworth, head of portfolio management in Germany at PIMCO, one of the world's largest bond investors. "Hence we see valuations in peripheral countries as vulnerable, especially if they do not or cannot compensate for less monetary stimulus with stimulative fiscal policy or growth-enhancing structural reforms."

Election uncertainty in the eurozone has also been weighing down market inflation expectations in the bloc. Analysts say those expectations should snap back once the political hurdles are cleared, meeting the ECB's near 2 percent target and supporting the case for tighter policy. For the currency market, some argue the prospect of tighter policy is set to prove as least as important as politics over the next six months. Bets against the euro hit their lowest in nearly a year after this month's ECB's meeting and major banks have abandoned predictions for a fall to parity with the dollar. —Reuters



# HOW BANKS LOST THE EAR OF BRITAIN'S GOVT OVER BREXIT

'WE HAVE ENTERED A PERIOD OF SEVERE DANGER'

**LONDON:** One afternoon in mid-January, Prime Minister Theresa May walked into a meeting room in the Swiss resort of Davos to face Wall Street's most powerful bankers. May had delivered her vision two days earlier for pulling Britain out of the European Union's single market. Now the Wall Street banks, fearing Britain was headed for trouble, wanted to hear more about her strategy.

At stake was London's future as a global financial centre. Among those present were Lloyd Blankfein, chief executive of Goldman Sachs, Jamie Dimon, chief executive of JPMorgan Chase, and James Gorman, chief executive of Morgan Stanley. Blankfein, a former gold trader raised in the Bronx who worked his way up to lead one of the world's most powerful investment banks, was the most direct during the talks, according to two bankers and a government official with knowledge of the meeting.

"Lloyd asked where does the financial services industry stand in her list of priorities," according to one senior banking executive briefed on the discussion by his boss. "We contribute a double-digit percentage to Britain's GDP. We're the biggest taxpayer in the country."

## Questioning

May gave a reply about the importance of financial services but declined to answer the question directly, the sources said. Some of the bankers left questioning her commitment.

May and the banks declined to comment on the meeting. Over the past two decades, Goldman, like many of the other 250 foreign-owned banks in Britain, has consolidated its European operations in London to take advantage of the EU's \$16.5 trillion-a-year single market. They are set to lose this wide-open access to a market of 500 million people after May signalled her main priority is to restrict immigration, which can only be achieved by leaving the trading bloc.

Senior bankers expected special treatment from the government after Britain voted to leave the EU. They expected ministers to champion their cause, above other industries, to retain unrestricted access to the single market for financial services. It isn't working out that way. A series of other meetings between bankers and government ministers have also ended badly, Reuters has learned.

Bankers say May's ministers don't understand the industry and what is at stake, and don't want to hear negative news about Brexit. "We have entered a period of severe danger," said a Wall Street executive who runs the European operations of a global investment bank. "Parts of the government are being way too complacent."

May's office, in a statement responding to the findings of this article, said the government didn't "recognize this version of events." The government is engaging intensively with the financial services industry, the statement said.

Politicians say the bankers are exaggerating the threat. Some rebalancing of the economy away from financial services - which accounts for about 12 percent of Britain's economic output - will be good in the long run, they say. "It is all just lobbying. They make a brouhaha," said Peter Lilley, a pro-Brexit Conservative politician and former financier, who sits on the parliamentary committee

examining Britain's exit from the EU. "They always massively exaggerate."

The rift is in marked contrast to what's happening in the United States. There the populist backlash that made Donald Trump president has brought at least four former Goldman Sachs executives into senior positions in the new administration. But in Britain, the nationalist drive that produced Brexit delivered a prime minister determined not to be in thrall to bankers.

The result is that banks are preparing to move large numbers of staff from London, and Germany and France are trying to lure jobs to their financial capitals. Some bankers believe the big winner from Brexit will be New York because some business currently carried out in

term results of Brexit will be for the world's fifth largest economy and whether finance should remain the biggest driver of its wealth.

## Negotiators

The government is making two calculations, these people say. The first is that bank executives are bluffing over moving jobs. The second: The EU is so dependent on London to service its debt that EU negotiators will give UK financial services a special deal to continue to operate unrestricted across the single market. EU officials counter that finance is mobile and business will move to other locations. Britain's finance industry contributed a record 71.4 billion pounds (\$88.7 billion) in corporate and employee taxes to the govern-

ment. In an early phone conversation, he told one executive that the finance industry had damaged its relationship with the government by saying the economy would suffer from reduced immigration. The EU vote had delivered a clear message that immigration must be curbed, he said.

Davis publicly attacked banks in October in parliament. He accused them of "an extraordinary outpouring almost of grief, a 'blame Brexit' festival," and of lying that they were going to fire staff because of Brexit. Davis's aides also warned executives they need to be more positive about the opportunities of Brexit if the government is going to listen to them, two banking sources said.

Bank executives complain they feel they can't speak freely. "Everyone is worried about stoking up the Brexiters, fuelling the flames," said the chairman of one of Britain's biggest insurance companies.

A government official said the bankers' portrayal of the relationship doesn't accurately reflect the character of the meetings or the tone of the Davis team's engagement with financial services firms. The official declined to go into specifics. The appointment of Simon Kirby as minister responsible for financial services further raised concerns among some bankers. They doubted that Kirby, who founded a radio station and a chain of nightclubs before going into politics, was suitable to be the main government liaison to the industry, these bankers said.

In November, many of the most senior executives and chairmen of Britain's finance companies met him for the first time. Kirby failed to answer basic questions about the government's policy towards financial services, according to people who attended. "It was almost like he didn't know what a bank is or what it does," said one of the people present. Kirby declined to comment. A few weeks ago Kirby was quietly removed from his Brexit role. He will continue to work in the finance ministry, with responsibility for areas including regulation. The Treasury said it wanted a new minister to focus on assessing Brexit's impact on financial services.

## Masters of the universe

Jacob Rees-Mogg, a Conservative lawmaker and financier, says the government is relaxed about bankers' threats because the vote was a rejection of an economic system that benefited the banks. "It's condescension from the clever people, the masters of the universe," he said. "They don't like the fact that they've been overruled by the people who voted for Brexit."

He said banks historically don't follow through on their threats. At the turn of the century, some financial sector executives warned the failure to join the euro would lead to a withering in London's role as a hub for business. And after the 2007-09 financial crisis many banks also threatened to move operations overseas. On both occasions, Britain's finance sector expanded. Shanker Singham, a trade expert who has held meetings with the Brexit department, told Reuters the government has also been frustrated with the banks because they exaggerated how much they depended on EU "passporting," a set of regulatory agreements that allowed them to sell services across Europe. — Reuters



**LONDON: A European and British Union flags hang outside Europe House, the European Parliament's British offices in London. Britain's government will begin the process of leaving the European Union on March 29, starting the clock on the two years in which to complete the most important negotiation for a generation. —AP**

London would naturally revert to US headquarters. HSBC, UBS and Morgan Stanley have decided to move about 1,000 staff each from London in the next two years, according to sources familiar with their plans. This week Goldman Sachs said it would begin moving hundreds of people out of London as part of contingency plans for Britain leaving the EU.

## Not crying wolf

Since Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's "Big Bang" financial deregulation triggered a massive expansion of the industry 31 years ago, bankers have relied on being a powerhouse of Britain's economy to find a receptive ear in government. But in the aftermath of the vote to leave the EU, the sector is grappling with a new reality. Last year's vote triggered a change in leadership and tone at the heart of Britain's government. May pledged an industrial revival and to build an economy that works for everyone, not just the elite.

Reuters spoke to more than 40 senior bankers from big British and international banks, politicians, government officials and lobbyists to piece together how the relationship between these pillars of Britain's establishment became strained. Those people say there are conflicting opinions about what the long-

ment last year, according to the City of London Corporation. That is an amount equal to Britain's annual spending on primary education, the police, and the army. Put another way, finance contributes almost as much in tax as all taxpayers in Scotland and Wales combined. Nevertheless, May's ministers began telling bankers in the autumn they would not get any special treatment in the Brexit negotiations. The second most powerful executive at one of Britain's biggest banks said he and his colleagues felt wrong-footed. The executive said that he no longer receives phone calls from British cabinet ministers or invitations to Downing Street receptions as he did under previous governments.

"With May there is almost no interest or affection. She is keeping us at arm's length," the executive said. "I will probably never meet May." Brexit minister David Davis, who will decide the industry priorities in the upcoming Brexit talks, rammed home the message that the government's relationship with the financial sector was changing in his first few meetings with bankers.

Davis, a Eurosceptic from a working class background, bristles at being told what to do by bankers, according to colleagues and people who interact with him. Davis declined to



## RUSSIA CUTS KEY RATE IN BOOST TO ECONOMY

**MOSCOW:** Russia's central bank cut its key rate yesterday for the first time in six months and said more cuts were coming, offering a welcome boost to the country's struggling economy. Falling inflation gave the central bank the leeway to shave a quarter-point off its headline rate and to promise more easing down the road. The central bank announced the cut to 9.75 percent from 10 percent after a regular monetary policy meeting. Russia's economic activity is in sore need of a boost as it struggles to emerge from two years of recession caused by the slump in oil prices and Western sanctions imposed over Moscow's actions in Ukraine.

The central bank last cut its interest rate in September, by half a percentage point to 10 percent. Yesterday's move came as the "inflation slowdown overshoots the forecast, inflation expectations continue to decline and economic activity recovers," the central bank said. It said inflation had dropped to 4.3 percent from 5 percent in January. "Inflation risks have slightly dropped but remain elevated. In these circumstances, given the moderately tight monetary policy, the 4 percent inflation target will be achieved by the end of 2017," the central bank said. It said it was considering "the possibility of cutting the key rate gradually" in the second and third quarters.

### More to come

Previous to yesterday's meeting, many economists had expected the status quo to continue while others had predicted a softening of the very restrictive monetary policy followed by the central bank since the ruble collapsed at the end of 2014. William Jackson, Senior Emerging Markets Economist at Capital Economics, said falling inflation and a stronger ruble mean that Russia's easing cycle "has much further to run".

Jackson himself had even predicted a 0.5 point reduction at yesterday's central bank meeting. Inflation was set to fall further "and more quickly than the central bank anticipates," Jackson said. "That should provide substantial room for further easing." The ruble rose against the dollar after the rate move, trading at 57.10 against the greenback around 1200 GMT, compared to 57.40 just before the cut. A number of key indicators have improved recently, favoring easier credit, especially inflation, which is now approaching the central bank's four-percent target for this year. — AFP



**MOSCOW:** Russia's Central Bank chief Elvira Nabiullina gives a press conference in Moscow yesterday. — AFP

## PORTUGAL CUTS DEFICIT TO LOWEST RATIO SINCE DEMOCRACY

**LISBON:** Portugal slashed its public sector deficit by more than half in a single year, when measured as a proportion of GDP, the national statistics bureau said yesterday, taking the shortfall comfortably below eurozone limits. The deficit dropped to 2.1 percent of gross domestic product in 2016, a staggering reduction from its 4.4 percent level a year earlier.

This confirms Finance Minister Mario Centeno's prediction last month that the deficit would be "not more than 2.1 percent," its lowest share of GDP since the advent of democracy in 1974. Eurozone members are required to keep their public deficits to below three percent of GDP, but some are struggling to do so. Portugal's public deficit shot up into the double digits during the global economic crisis, and despite an international bailout it had difficulty bringing it back down to 4.4 percent in 2015. Portugal's economy expanded by 1.4 percent in 2016, the national statistics institute said in February, after growing by 1.6 percent the previous year on the back of stronger exports and private consumption. — AFP



**STEELE CITY:** In this Nov 3, 2015, file photo, the Keystone Steele City pumping station, into which the planned Keystone XL pipeline is to connect to, is seen in Steele City. The State Department recommended approval of the Keystone XL pipeline, clearing the way for the White House to formally approve it. — AP

# TRUMP GOVT APPROVES KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

## DECISION CAP YEARS OF LONG FIGHT

**WASHINGTON:** The Trump administration issued a permit yesterday to build the Keystone XL pipeline, reversing the Obama administration and clearing the way for the \$8 billion project to finally be completed.

The decision caps a years-long fight between environmental groups and energy industry advocates over the pipeline's fate that became a proxy battle over global warming. It marks one of the biggest steps taken to date by the Trump administration to prioritize economic development over environmental concerns. The State Department, responsible for reviewing the project because it crosses an international border, determined that building it serves US national interests.

That conclusion followed a review of environmental, economic and diplomatic factors, the department said. It wasn't immediately clear what, if anything, had changed since the State Department reached the opposite conclusion two years ago, other than the election of a new administration. President Donald Trump planned to address Keystone during an announcement yesterday morning, White House spokesman Sean Spicer said on Twitter.

### Presidential permit

TransCanada, the Calgary-based company that first applied for a presidential permit in 2008, called the decision a "significant milestone." "We greatly appreciate President Trump's administration for reviewing and approving this important initiative," said TransCanada CEO Russ Girling. "We look forward to working with them as we continue to invest in and strengthen

North America's energy infrastructure." But Greenpeace, one of the pipeline's most vocal opponents, said it sent a signal to the world that the US is "moving backwards" on climate and energy, and pledged to keep fighting it nonetheless.

"Keystone was stopped once before, and it will be stopped again," said Annie Leonard, the group's US director. The 1,700-mile (2,735 kilometers) pipeline, as envisioned, would carry oil from tar sands in Alberta, Canada, to refineries along the Texas Gulf Coast, passing through Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma. The pipeline would move roughly 800,000 barrels of oil per day, more than one-fifth of the oil Canada exports to the US.

Portions of Keystone have already been built. Completing it required a permit to cross from Canada into the US. Yet even with a presidential permit, the pipeline still faces obstacles - most notably the route, which is still being heavily litigated in the states. Native American tribes and landowners have joined environmental groups in opposing the pipeline.

TransCanada said yesterday it would continue engaging with "neighbors throughout Nebraska, Montana and South Dakota to obtain the necessary permits and approvals to advance this project to construction." In an unusual twist, the presidential permit was signed by Tom Shannon, a career diplomat serving in a senior State Department role, rather than by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson.

The former CEO of oil company Exxon Mobil recused himself after protests from environmental groups who said it would be a conflict of inter-

est for Tillerson to decide the pipeline's fate. Canadian Natural Resource Minister Jim Carr said the Canadian government is pleased with the decision. Ninety-seven percent of Canada's oil exports go to the US.

"Nothing is more essential to the American economy than access to a secure and reliable source of energy. Canada is that source," Carr said. Oil industry advocates say the pipeline will improve US energy security and create jobs, although how many is widely disputed. Calgary-based TransCanada has promised as many as 13,000 construction jobs - 6,500 a year over two years - although the State Department previously estimated a far smaller number. The pipeline's opponents contend the jobs will be minimal and short-lived, and say the pipeline won't help the US with energy needs because the oil is destined for export.

A Trump presidential directive also required new or expanded pipelines to be built with American steel "to the maximum extent possible." However, TransCanada has said Keystone won't be built with US steel.

The company has already acquired the steel, much of it from Canada and Mexico, and the White House has acknowledged it's too difficult to impose conditions on a pipeline already under construction. Environmental groups also say the pipeline will encourage the use of carbon-heavy tar sands oil which contributes more to global warming than cleaner sources of energy. President Barack Obama reached the same conclusion in 2015 after a negative recommendation from then-Secretary of State John Kerry. — AP



## EUROPE'S FINANCIAL LIFELINE FROM LONDON IN DOUBT

**FRANKFURT:** For companies in the European Union, London is the chief gateway to finance. Rerouting the financial lines that run through London will be complex, experts say.

London dominates wholesale banking in Europe, a 5.8 trillion euro (\$6.2 trillion) industry that includes financing for companies from big multinationals to family-owned firms that are the backbone of Germany's economy. London is also the first port of call for companies, such as Italian lender UniCredit, selling shares or raising debt. This is because many fund managers and asset managers have a base in Britain. The Bank of England estimates that half of the debt and equity issued by EU borrowers involves financial groups in Britain. This could be a London bank organising a sale of European company bonds, for example.

And London houses the bulk of Europe's derivatives market, where car makers buy protection against swings in the US dollar or airlines guard themselves

against a spike in the price of oil. More than 7 trillion euros of trading in such instruments is processed in London daily.

Experts expect EU firms and banks gradually to reduce their reliance on London. Governments in France and Germany want to establish alternatives to London in Paris and Frankfurt.

Over time, some of London's wholesale funding will move to other centres in Europe. Thinktank Bruegel predicts that London's share of this market will eventually shrink from 90 percent to 60 percent. If mismanaged, however, the migration could raise the cost of funding for European companies, the thinktank said.

Bruegel's Dirk Schoenmaker said that if wholesale funding operations are spread across several locations that could lift costs by between 6 billion and 12 billion euros each year because of the expense of using multiple financial centres. That is equivalent to up to 0.1 percent of the remaining 27 EU countries' economic out-

put. Shifting the multi-trillion euro derivatives business would be difficult, regulators and bankers said. Some derivatives have a term of many decades. It is unclear, bankers said, what will happen when Britain, where the contracts were drafted, leaves the European Union.

They said that the cost of holding such instruments could rise sharply for European banks if a clearing house in London that processes the deal, for example, is not recognised in the European Union. A transition period, after initial exit talks of two years, could win extra time. But many bank executives, speaking privately, have said they are working on the assumption that there will be no transition.

EU officials familiar with the bloc's preparations for negotiations have told Reuters that they too fear a "cliff-edge" departure of Britain from the bloc. They are pinning their hopes on banks moving to the continent in time and believe this will minimize any fallout for their economies. — Reuters



**PARIS:** French Junior Minister for Budget Christian Eckert (right) listens to Finance minister Michel Sapin speaking during a press conference to present the latest figures on France's public deficit yesterday at the Economy ministry in Paris. — AFP

## EUROZONE ECONOMY SPARKLES, LIGHTS WAY FOR ECB PULL-BACK

### FRANCE, GERMANY HEADING FOR Q1 GROWTH

**LONDON:** If the latest surveys of business intentions are to be believed, the eurozone economy is sparkling, growing at a pace that easily explains the hints from some European Central Bank policymakers of a pull-back from their easy-money regime. IHS Markit's euro zone Flash Composite Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), an influential guide to the buying plans of businesses and hence growth, hit a near six-year high this month.

It climbed to 56.7 from February's 56.0, its highest reading since April 2011 and better than any predictions in a Reuters poll. At the same time, flash surveys for the currency bloc's two largest economies-Germany and France-also stormed past expectations to register near six-year highs, conditions likely to play into elections in both countries this year.

"This is a really solid rate of expansion. It's an economy firing on all cylinders," Chris Williamson, chief business economist at IHS Markit, said of the euro zone.

He added that it implied first quarter economic growth of 0.6 percent quarter on quarter, which would be the joint highest reading since the first quarter of 2011.

One immediate impact may be to put pressure on the ECB to begin rolling back its historically easy monetary policy, a combination of zero to negative interest rates and a large asset-buying program.

Earlier this month the ECB pledged to extend its bond-buying program to at least the end of the year, citing weak underlying inflation and lacklustre growth in the euro zone. It will, however, reduce its monthly spend from April. It also highlighted that it no longer felt a "sense of urgency" to take further action. Since then some ECB policymakers, notably Austria's Ewald Nowotny and Italy's Ignazio Visco, have spoken of a rate hike within or just after the period of the bond-buying program.

"These (PMI) numbers will likely reinforce the ECB's view that downside risks are diminishing. But the central bank will only tighten gradually," Morgan Stanley said in a note. The key will be inflation, control of which is the ECB's primary mandate. Markit's euro zone PMI sub-index measuring prices charged by businesses rose to a near six-year high of 53.3.

Inflation in the euro zone was 2.0 percent in February- around the ECB's target.

"What we are picking up is an increase in suppliers' ability to hike prices due to strong demand. If that continues to intensify the ECB should become more worried," Markit's Williamson said.

#### Fracturing the forecasts

All nine of yesterday's PMI reports-manufacturing, services and composite for the eurozone, France and Germany-beat even the most optimistic forecasts in Reuters polls of economists. France's composite registered 57.6 in March from 55.9 in February, a particularly significant rise given the country's economy is generally lagging and this put it above Germany. How such data plays into the French presidential election, the first round of which is in April, remains to be seen.

National Front candidate Marine Le Pen will be hoping to capture votes from those angry with their economic lot. But the two other leading candidates, Emmanuel Macron and Francois Fillon are both calling for economic reform. A hefty chunk of the electorate has yet to decide who to vote for, if the polls are anything to go by. — Reuters

## SRI LANKA RAISES RATES AS GROWTH SLOWS, INFLATION SPIKES

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka raised its key interest rate by 25 basis points yesterday as inflation spiked and foreign reserves fell, compounding problems caused by slowing economic growth.

The Central Bank of Sri Lanka said it raised the benchmark lending rate from 8.5 percent to 8.75 percent as year-on-year inflation increased to 8.2 percent last month, sharply up from 6.5 percent in January. Sri Lanka enjoyed blistering economic growth rates averaging more than 8.0 percent for two years after a prolonged civil war ended in 2009.

But growth has been slowing ever since, hitting 4.4 percent last year, according to central bank data. Foreign reserves fell to \$5.6 billion at the end of February compared to \$6.0 billion in December 2016. "The Monetary Board was of the view that further tightening of monetary policy is necessary as a precautionary measure, in order to contain the buildup of adverse inflation expectations," it said.

A drought gripping parts of the island and unfavourable external conditions were hurting the economy, the bank said. Last June, the government received a \$1.5 billion bailout from the IMF after facing a balance of payments crisis.

Earlier this month, the IMF said Sri Lanka's current account remained stable, but the financial account weakened with the resumption of capital outflows. The IMF also warned that a prolonged drought in the island could raise food and oil imports with adverse impacts on economic growth, inflation, and the country's balance of payments. — AFP

## UK CONSUMERS SPEND MORE IN FEBRUARY

**LONDON:** Official figures show retail sales in Britain bounced back strongly in February but that the underlying picture remains gloomy as the country prepares to start two years of discussions to leave the European Union. The Office for National Statistics said Thursday that retail sales rose 1.4 percent in February from the previous month. An increase had been expected following three monthly declines. On a three-month basis, however, retail sales are still down by 1.4 percent. That's the worst three-month performance since March 2010.

Analysts say the underlying picture suggests that households are reining in spending ahead of Prime Minister Theresa May's upcoming triggering of the two-year Brexit process as well as rising inflation largely related to higher energy prices. — AP



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- Competition is open to ages from (6 - 8) (9 - 11) (12 - 14) (15 - 17) and Special needs.
- The competition is open for all schools in Kuwait (Government and Private)
- **The competition will start on March 19th and will continue till April 20th 2017.**
- 10 winners from each category will receive valuable prizes.
- All participants will receive a certificate of appreciation.
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- the competition will receive an appreciation plaque.
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- Drawing sheets will be given to schools FREE of charge.
- Only drawing sheets provided by the Kuwait Times will be allowed.
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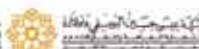


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SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2017

Kuwait Times



# Weekender

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A model presents a creation by Iraqi designer Zead Al-Athary during a fashion show at Basra International Hotel in Basra, 340 miles southeast of Baghdad, Iraq, Thursday, March 23, 2017. — AP



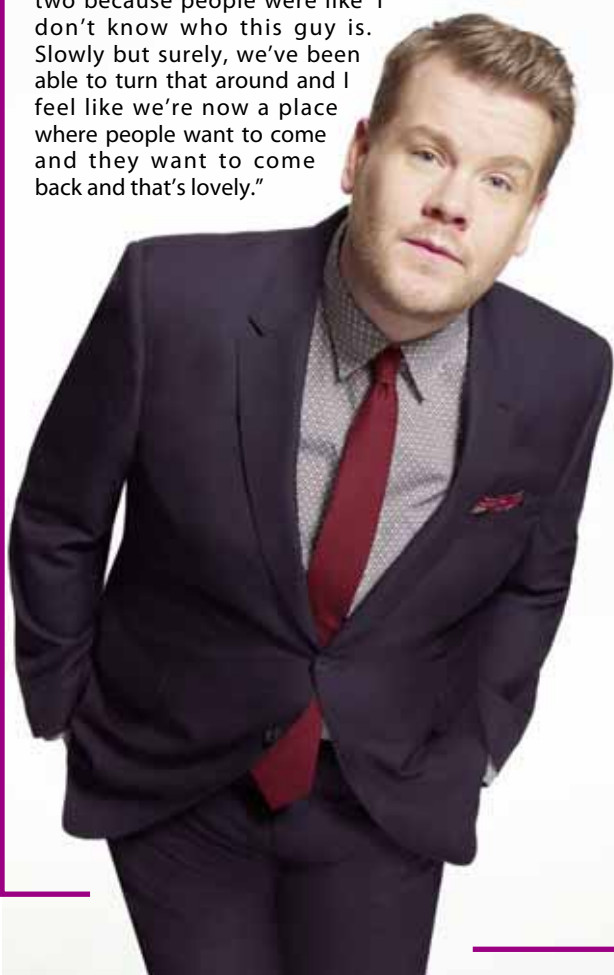
**T**he 20-year-old model can't wait to start having children as she wants her kids to be teenagers by the time she is 40. Asked where she'd like to be in 20 years, she said: "I think 20 years is a lot to think about, but by that time I would like to have a couple of children and be married and raising a family. "There'll definitely be some kiddos in the picture by then. I want to be a young parent, so I want to be 40 and have teenage kids." And Hailey feels lucky to have her famous family - including father Stephen and uncles Alec, William and Daniel - to talk to about her career and is keen to follow in their footsteps and try her hand at acting. She added: "I can talk to any of my uncles or my dad about anything. I can call up my uncle [Alec Baldwin] and be like, "hey I need your help, or I need to talk to you about this", and he'll give me his advice or opinion or tell me if that happened to him or if he had to go through that. It's good. I enjoy that aspect ... "I think it has to be the right project and I think it has to be the right thing. I think it would be unfortunate if no one in our family, none of the kids, decided to carry that on, because it's a whole entire family ... All things considered, I'm not bad at it either!" And the blonde beauty has started her acting career by securing herself a cameo in the upcoming 'Ocean's Eight' movie.

**Hailey Baldwin  
wants to have  
children at  
a young age**



## Corden 'humbled' by the success of his show

**T**he 38-year-old British actor first launched the American talk show in March 2015, and the funnyman is "very proud" of the program because he believes it has "surpassed" everybody's expectations, although he was "nervous" at first about setting it up. Speaking to E! News about the channel, which has seen celebrity guests including Sir Patrick Stewart, Idris Elba and Allison Williams quizzed by the former 'Gavin and Stacey' star, he said: "I don't know that there was anything I could read that would make me more nervous than I was or want to make a better show. I just wanted to make the best show I could, you know? I felt like we had a good team and the only positive you can take is you're not starting on a negative. "I feel very, very humbled by it. I'm very proud of the two years we've had. I think it surpassed anybody's hopes or estimations of what we could have achieved. "Now that people know what the show is [it's easier]. I think when we launched our first week, we didn't have anyone booked for week two because people were like 'I don't know who this guy is. Slowly but surely, we've been able to turn that around and I feel like we're now a place where people want to come and they want to come back and that's lovely."



## Kim and Kanye at t e n d s sel f- hel p seminar



**T**he couple - who share North, three, and Saint, 15 months - were seen at the Unleash The Power Within seminar, run by Tony Robbins, alongside Kim's sister Khloe Kardashian and their mother Kris Jenner. The group splashed out on the Diamond Premiere VIP pack, giving them front row seats to Tony's inspiring talks. Taking to Instagram, Kris shared a video of the day, captioning it: "So this happened today!!! Thank you @tonyrobbins for the amazing day today!! You are truly so remarkable and my family and I appreciate you so very much. #lifechanging #gamechanger #best-dayever #tonyrobbins #bestenergy (sic)" Kim and Kanye have had a tough time of it recently after the 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' star was robbed at gunpoint in Paris last October and the 'Only One' rapper was hospitalised with exhaustion a couple of months later. And Kim is understandably still shaken by all that happened in Paris as she admitted reliving it all is still "very tough" for her. Referring to the recent episode of her E! reality show where she opened up about the robbery, she said: "Tonight's episode is going to be very tough for me. However, I thought it was important to share this story through my eyes & not in an interview where my own words could be twisted. I have always shared so much & I'm not going to hold back when this was probably one of the most life changing experiences for me. "I would never wish this experience upon anyone, but have learned some valuable lessons & feel so blessed to be safe home w my babies & husband. To my friends, family, and loved ones I can't thank you enough for being there when I needed you the most. To the French police, thank you for your incredible hard work (sic)."



## Amy Schumer's boyfriend is 'very protective'

**T**he 'Trainwreck' star has been dating furniture designer Ben Hanisch - who relocated from Chicago to live with her in New York City - for over a year and she is thankful he is always "really cool" with the attention that comes with life in the public eye. She said: "He's very protective of me. Like, not overprotective, but if someone's taking pictures of me or filming in a restaurant, he'll start taking pictures of them. "He's really cool; it's not a problem to be around any of the sorts of people who are at these events. He takes it all in his stride. "But when I say, 'Shall we get out of here?,' he's like, 'Yes!'" Amy feels "so lucky" to be with Ben, and claims he had never seen any of her work before they met. She added to the upcoming new issue of Britain's Glamour magazine: "I'm so lucky that I met him. And he hadn't seen any of my work before we met..." Despite being a household name, the 35-year-old star insists she never wanted to be famous and was "terrified" at the thought of everyone knowing who she is. She said: "No, I did not ever want to be famous, honestly. It didn't occur to me until it was already happening. The fame aspect is not something that appealed to me at all. And I was really kind of terrified of it." However, Amy insists she is "grateful" for even the downsides of fame, though it can be "distracting" and "embarrassing for everyone" she's with when her presence draws attention. She said: "I wouldn't trade it to wait tables or whatever. I live my life; I'm grateful for everything. It's mostly just really annoying. "I'm conscious for the people I'm with. Now when I go outside, I get photographed by the paparazzi. "I'm not to the level of some people some actresses where it's constant tabloids, but it's enough that it's really uncomfortable."



## Netflix/Marvel's 'Iron Fist' epic fail, say viewers, critics



This image released by Netflix shows Finn Jones, left, in a scene from the Netflix original series, "Iron Fist." —AP

If your web connection seems sluggish while you're watching "Iron Fist," don't blame your internet provider. The problem is the listless pace of this new Netflix series. But such languor isn't the only failing of this latest offering from the Marvel factory, judging from critical pans and fan unrest since the 13-episode season was unveiled last week.

Any Marvel project (and this is Netflix's fourth, following "Daredevil," "Jessica Jones" and "Luke Cage") is breathlessly awaited by fans. "Iron Fist" was no different. But even before anybody saw it, it was already drawing accusations of "whitewashing." The series centers on Danny Rand, the scion of a corporate titan who returns to New York 15 years after he and his parents died in a plane crash over the Himalayas. Well, actually, Danny didn't die. He was rescued by a mysterious order of monks. And in this intervening period, he trained in martial arts and gained the mystical power of the Iron Fist. Now he returns to New York to reclaim the corporate empire that was hijacked by brother-and-sister baddies (and his childhood friends) Ward and Joy Meachum. He is also, of course, on a quest to "get answers."

### Cultural problems

"Iron Fist" stars Finn Jones, who is best known for playing Loras Tyrell on "Game of Thrones." But casting him as Danny was a missed opportunity, according to disgruntled fans who argue that an Asian-American actor should have been chosen. Maybe, maybe not. But that would seem to be the least of the ills plaguing "Iron Fist." For instance, the Polygon website wielded iron fists of its own in declaring that the series' "problems with delivering exposition, crafting consistent characters, and even basic dialogue writing run right alongside ... problems with its portrayal of Asian cultures and Asian-Americans."

"Not one element of this plodding piece works," railed Variety, adding that the story line "is about as exciting as a slice of Velveeta cheese left out in the sun too long." The New York Times complained about "the dawdling featureless" of the early episodes. And how many viewers could be expected to stick with the series beyond those first installments? Calling it "the first complete misfire of Netflix's Marvel shows," the Uproxx website posed the question: "Why would anyone but the most devout, masochistic Marvel completist want to watch?"

The Twitterverse has been no kinder, with one typical post calling it "a great show if you're looking to sit back, relax and stare at your phone as it plays in the background." Another tweet likened the series' fight scenes to "an awkward junior high school dance." Even a forgiving Marvel neophyte who samples "Iron Fist" is likely to be put off. The conspicuous lack of action and of visual effects, at least in its early episodes, serves as a stark reminder of how lavish production values, unrelenting action and eye-popping visual effects are taken for granted by today's audience and jarring when they're absent.

Granted, the epic failure of "Iron Fist," now installed for eternity on the Netflix site, will register as just a blip on the Netflix/Marvel landscape. And since Netflix never discloses audience figures, no one will ever know how many viewers choose to avoid or abandon the series who might have watched a better "Iron Fist" faithfully. But every potential viewer is advised to note an exchange between two characters in an early episode:

"We need to know more before we can decide how we should proceed."

"So we just wait?"

"Yeah. And watch."

Such patience by "Iron Fist" viewers is doomed to go unrewarded. — AP

Grammy winning DJ-producer Tiesto(R) signs the arm of a fan Willem De Vries, on March 22, 2017 at the opening of Tiesto Miami.



## FOR TIESTO, CONNECTING TO AUDIENCE IS EVERYTHING

From his early raves to massive club shows, Tiesto has spent the past 20 years guiding the ebbs and flows of each audience. He finds the connection so intimate he has a ready comparison. "Basically it's like making love," he said. Tijs "Tiesto" Verwest, who is the world's second highest-paid DJ on the list of Forbes magazine, made his name in the trance scene of the 1990s, with his tension-building synthesizer flows and mid-tempo beats working sweaty crowds into literal trances.

Electronic dance music, or EDM, is no longer just for ravers. It is a constant on mainstream radio, with pop stars from Katy Perry to Enrique Iglesias setting their voices to electronic beats. For Tiesto, the dance subculture has evolved rather than ended, with the EDM on the radio remaining distinct from DJ sets at festivals.

"I think a lot of DJs adjust to pop music. The stuff on the radio is still pop music; it's not dance music as we know it at the festivals," he told AFP in Miami. "It's a good balance between DJs making pop music and then in the live sets they have different drops and make it more for the festivals," he said. The Dutch artist was visiting Miami for the Ultra Music Festival, a premier electronic music party that runs from Friday to Sunday. He is taking advantage of his visit to open a pop-up store in Miami Beach.

Tall and youthful for his 48 years, Tiesto spoke at the store that sells knapsacks, caps and T-shirts bearing his signature, as fans pressed their faces against the window to get a look at the world-famous DJ. "Music and fashion and merchandise are more one than ever before," said Tiesto, who has a residency in Las Vegas and became the first DJ to play the Olympics at the 2004 Summer Games in Athens.

### Not too quick or too slow

DJs, according to Tiesto, have a unique relationship with crowds as they mix in front of thousands of people in joyous, fast-changing motion. "I think that the only art in the world that gives you that with the audience is pretty much the DJ. Because there's always the surprise factor," he said. "You never know what you're gonna get from the audience, so that's why I think there is a very special feeling."



Grammy-winning DJ-producer Tiesto speaks to the media, on March 22, 2017, at the opening of Tiesto Miami. — AFP photos

But how can he manage the lows in each performance, bringing audiences down a level so they can take a breather rather than keeping them constantly on overdrive? "You've got to feel it out. That's an experience you learn with DJing over the years," he said. Like sex, "it has to be the perfect timing for everything: you don't want to be too quick or too slow." Tiesto laughed and blushed a little bit. "It's a very magical feeling," he said.

### Changing sound

In the world of EDM connoisseurs, Tiesto has generated controversy with his shift from his trance roots to a more mainstream house sound.

Tiesto was hesitant when asked about his sound but acknowledged his rising success. He said his break started in 2009 with his collaboration-heavy album "Kaleidoscope" and then "Red Lights," his 2013 radio hit with acoustic guitar off his album "A Town Called Paradise."

"I just always follow my gut feeling. I do what I like and I just play what I like," he said, without elaborating on his changing style. As for picking music to sample in his sets, Tiesto said he had diverse tastes from indie rock to R&B to soul, although he admitted he was less interested in hip-hop.

Nonetheless he said he could sample everything from rappers Kanye West and Drake to alternative rockers The Killers or more obscure indie bands. "My tracks always start to build from the underground. And then if they become mainstream that's a bonus, but I'm not focusing on it," he said. — AFP

## Jay Z to make feature on Trayvon Martin

The rap mogul Jay Z is partnering with the Weinstein Company to produce a feature film and documentary series about the killing of Trayvon Martin, the teen whose death in 2012 set off nationwide protests. They will make the film and six-part docu-series after winning a bidding war for the rights to two books about the killing of the unarmed black teenager by George Zimmerman, a neighborhood watch volunteer, the trade magazine Variety reported on Thursday.

The case ignited civil unrest across the country and a debate about racial profiling. It also gave birth to the Black Lives Matter movement. Zimmerman, who claimed he shot Martin in self-defense, was acquitted of a charge of

second degree murder in 2013 by a jury in Florida. The film and series projects will be based on the books "Suspicion Nation: The Inside Story of the Trayvon Martin Injustice and Why We Continue to Repeat It" and "Rest in Power: The Enduring Life of Trayvon Martin," Variety said.

"Suspicion Nation" recounts the experience of a reporter who covered the trial for NBC. "Rest in Power" is by Martin's parents. Another docu-series produced by Jay Z and Weinstein Television that touches on race relations—"Time: The Kalief Browder Story"—was aired last month. The six-part series follows the story of a teen arrested in 2010 while walking home for allegedly stealing a backpack. — AFP



# War film shows Warsaw zoo couple who hid Jews

**T**he director of Warsaw zoo and his wife always carried cyanide during World War II. Danger was ever-present but they were ready to take their secret to the grave. The couple hid nearly 300 Jews and resistance fighters on zoo grounds during most of the war, under the noses of the German Nazis occupying Poland.

It sounds like a Hollywood movie, and now it is. But "The Zookeeper's Wife", which opens in Polish cinemas this week before rolling out internationally, is based on actual events. Inside the zookeeper's villa, whose windowless cellar had a secret tunnel leading to the garden, Jan Zabinski and his wife Antonina gave refuge to the mostly Jews smuggled out of the city's ghetto.



**Teresa Zabinska, daughter of Jan Zabinski, attends the screening gala of "The Zookeeper's Wife" in Warsaw on March 7, 2017. — AFP**

"I remember squatting under this concrete shelf in the basement and keeping my hand over my sister's mouth to muffle her cries because she was constantly crying, day and night," said Moshe Tirosh, aged five at the time. "When someone slammed the door upstairs, fear would pass through me, lest they find us," the 80-year-old told AFP in a telephone interview.

The retired businessman and grandfather-of-seven, who has lived in Israel since 1957, still cannot believe what he lived through. "I saw children's dead bodies on the street. Terrible things... I remember wondering why everyone wants to kill us. I couldn't understand it," he said. All but two of the zoo's hidden guests survived the war and Nazi troops stationed on the bombed-out zoo grounds never unearthed the subterfuge.

## Piano warning

"My parents figured that it's always darkest under a lamppost," the zoo couple's daughter Teresa Zabinska said, citing a Polish saying according to which it is best to hide in plain sight. "My father knew that it wouldn't occur to the Germans that so many people could be hiding in a place like this with open windows and no curtains," the 73-year-old told AFP.

Most hid in empty animal enclosures or the villa's basement. Others were able to stay with the family upstairs by taking on fake identities as Antonina's tailor or their son Ryszard's tutor. Between 1940 and

1944, nearly 300 people found refuge, some for just a few hours or days, but others remained months or even years. "Around 30 people would stay here at once," said Olga Zbonikowska, 38, who works for the Panda Foundation that takes care of the villa now. The stakes were high. In occupied Poland, even offering Jews a glass of water was punishable by death.

## 'Remember the feeling'

Whenever a Nazi soldier got too close for comfort, Antonina would warn everyone by playing an operetta on the piano. The hidden guests would escape through the tunnel or hide in a wardrobe upstairs that opened on both sides like a magician's trunk. The couple also hid the Jews from their housekeeper out of fear she could give them away.

"The hardest was explaining away the increase in daily meals" to the housekeeper, Antonina wrote in her 1968 memoirs, saying the family fed the extra mouths by faking ravenous appetites. "I can't believe how much they eat! I've never seen anything like it!" she recalled the housekeeper muttering. Tirosh had suffered two years in the ghetto, marked by hunger, typhus and near deportation to the Treblinka death camp.

To escape Warsaw's Jewish quarter, his family paid off the guards and Tirosh and his sister were thrown over the wall in sacks while their parents climbed over. On arriving at the zoo, Antonina's empathy and reassuring calm told them they were in good hands. "She was extraordinary. I was a small boy who was very afraid of everything. But when I saw her face, I calmed right down. I still remember that feeling," Tirosh said.

## Helping animals and people

Before the family moved on, Antonina tried to make them "look less Jewish" by bleaching their hair lighter. "She locked herself in the bathroom with us and dyed our hair. She rubbed and rubbed and when we came out of the bathroom, Rysiek (nickname for the Zabinskis' son) cried out, 'Mum! What did you do? That's squirrel colour,'" Tirosh said, of the inadvertent reddish colour.

The family became known as The Squirrels. Others also had animal nicknames, including The Starling, The Hamsters and The Pheasants. "Theirs was a house where both animals and people always found help," said Teresa, who was born at the zoo and had a raccoon-like coat from Mexico as a childhood playmate. Aptly, her mother's memoirs-to-be republished this month-were entitled "People and Animals". They describe how Antonina pushed to raise funds to reopen the zoo after the war while Jan was in a Nazi German prisoner-of-war camp, having fought in the 1944 Warsaw Uprising.

American author Diane Ackerman relied heavily on the memoirs when writing her own 2007 nonfiction book "The Zookeeper's Wife", which inspired the movie. Directed by Niki Caro, it stars Golden Globe winner Jessica Chastain. The Zabinskis died in the early 1970s. The villa is now a museum where visitors can make an appointment to see the life-saving secret tunnel and basement. — AFP



**In this image released by Sony Pictures, Jake Gyllenhaal, left, and Rebecca Ferguson appear in a scene from, "Life." — AP photos**

## Film Review

# 'LIFE' IS A MEDIOCRE SCIENCE-FICTION THRILLER



**Ryan Reynolds appears in a scene from, "Life."**

**L**ife is a box of chocolates, a highway and, alas, a mediocre science-fiction thriller. In Daniel Espinosa's "Life," an international space station orbiting the Earth intercepts an automated capsule returning from Mars with samples: rocks, dust and, as it turns out, a tiny monocellular organism that proves the existence of life on another planet. The thing, though, about those monocellular organisms from Mars is that they grow up.

When Dr Hugh Derry (Ariyon Bakare) injects the cell with glucose, it begins rapidly growing bigger, beyond its petri dish. (Yes, "Life" is, above all, a lesson in the dangers of too much sugar.) The crew - including Jake Gyllenhaal's troubled veteran, Ryan Reynolds' cocky engineer, Rebecca Ferguson's microbiologist and Hiroyuki Sanada's new father - celebrate their remarkable discovery and observe its development. "You're going to be a daddy," Reynolds' astronaut tells the proud Derry.

Derry, the biological expert of the bunch, hopes the organism - dubbed "Calvin" - will teach the scientists about the origin, the nature "and maybe even the meaning of life." Such glories, however, aren't in store. The harsh revelation that Calvin brings is that life - violently striving for survival - finds a way.

Unfortunately, "Life," the movie, doesn't. Once the alien lifeform strengthens and gets loose, "Life" surrenders to a tiresome chase away from not just its ravenous creature but from the movies "Life" so obviously takes it cues from. "Life" certainly can't come anywhere near the well-earned horrors of "Alien," nor does it boast anything like the silky splendor of "Gravity."

Espinosa ("Safe House," "Child 44") claustrophobically encloses the drama in a fairly realistic space station that, lacking sufficiently cinematic production design, doesn't allow

for much movement. Unlike Hollywood's recent, more ambitious sojourns into space, "Life" is a grittier, clunkier B-movie monster movie in zero gravity. An extraterrestrial Frankenstein is hunted with implausible dimwittedness by a bickering human crew.

Calvin (sadly there is no Hobbes in sight) grows in size and shape, but he mostly looks like a super-powerful, fearfully smart starfish. As



**Jake Gyllenhaal appears in a scene from "Life."**

he slithers this way and that, he almost resembles the alien cousin of Hank, the equally resourceful octopus of last year's "Finding Dory." Penned by Rheet Reese and Paul Wernick ("Deadpool," "Zombieland"), "Life" doesn't have much of the sarcastic wit the screenwriters have shown before. Instead, it's merely a terse, prickly cheap-thriller. Not until the film's final moments - finally free of the space station - does the movie find its own bite.

"Life," a Columbia Pictures release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for "language throughout, some sci-fi violence and terror." Running time: 102 minutes. Two stars out of four. — AP





Visitors walk past Chinese artist Shen Shaomin's Mao.



A woman takes photos of Chinese artist Shen Shaomin's Ho Chi Minh.

## DEAD DICTATORS DRAW HONG KONG ART CROWDS

**A** “breathing” Fidel Castro is among several ex-communist leaders gathered in Hong Kong this week—one of the world’s centers of capitalism—as part of a cheeky exhibition at Art Basel. Lifelike replicas of Mao Zedong, Vladimir Lenin, Kim Il-Sung, Ho Chi Minh and the former Cuban leader are lying in state in the city’s harbor front convention centre, drawing curious, smartphone-snapping art enthusiasts.

Made from acrylic and silica gel and dressed in their signature uniforms, all lie in glass coffins, except for Castro, who can be seen “breathing” almost imperceptibly on his deathbed. The installation, called “Summit”, was created by Chinese artist Shen Shaomin who said the work was conceived as a response to the global financial crisis of 2008.

It was originally commissioned for the Sydney Biennale contemporary art festival in 2010 — when Castro was still alive—as an imaginary meeting of former dictators to parody the now defunct G8 grouping of wealthy industrialized nations. “Many Western scholars have become suspicious about capitalism, and compared and discussed theories of communism, so I have created the ‘G5’,” Shen told AFP at the Hong Kong fair. “People from different countries, different cultural backgrounds, different experiences have their own ways to interpret it,” said Shen,



In this picture taken on March 22, 2017, visitors sit behind Chinese artist Shen Shaomin's Fidel Castro, part of his ‘Summit’ project, at Art Basel in Hong Kong. — AFP photos

who jokingly inserted his iPhone into Castro’s hand. Gallerist Agnes Lin, who is representing the work at Art Basel, said she

had been doubtful whether the exhibit would be allowed into semi-autonomous Hong Kong, where concerns are growing that China is tightening its grip.

Mao remains a controversial figure on the mainland and there is general sensitivity about his image there. Despite that, Mao’s replica and the other bodies were made in Beijing, where Shen has a base. “(Art Basel) really fought hard to have this piece in,” Lin said. “I think Hong Kong is still free... we can still have the freedom to show this work and I’m so happy about that.” Shen said the bodies took a team of seven to eight artisans six months to create after intensively studying the leaders’ appearances, from their moles to their hair.

“It makes people want to learn more about them,” said Tiernan Breen, 18, a student from Fiji browsing Art Basel. “You ask yourself questions which you wouldn’t ask if you hadn’t actually seen them.”

Shen is not expecting a private collector to take home the bodies, but hopes the work finds a place in a museum. Since the Sydney Biennale, the installation has toured museums in Singapore and France. “It’s very unique, I love it... You get goosebumps, you know?” said Nesli Vetter, 54, visiting Art Basel from Germany. “All good old boys.” — AFP

## As US takes aim at immigration, musicians feel the pinch

**B**efore he staged a professional comeback last week, the rapper Kayem had disappeared from public life for two years. A US citizen by birth who remembers his relatives’ suffering at the hands of Moamer Kadhafi’s regime in Libya, he was lying low on legal advice after the US authorities crippled his career by putting him on a no-fly list. He blames profiling for the scrutiny he receives at airports.

“I’ve been on lockdown,” the rapper—who used to go by Khaled M.—said at South by Southwest, the pre-eminent global media and cultural festival in Texas where he made his reappearance. After initially planning to wait until summer, he changed his mind after President Donald Trump issued a ban on travelers from seven Muslim-majority countries in January, raising fears of future travel headaches.

Although courts subsequently suspended the ban—along with a second revised version this month—the new culture under the Trump administration is seriously complicating many travelers’ lives. At least eight foreign performers were turned away attempting to travel to the United States for South by Southwest. And among those artists who were able to play, worries are growing about how tougher immigration rules will affect their careers and the music world more broadly.

### Inconsistencies on border

Despite the suspension of Trump’s travel bans, the president has vowed to ramp up

enforcement of existing rules. “One of the major problems with the ban is that even if it’s stayed, it’s very difficult to consider working with artists from those countries,” said Matthew Covey, an immigration lawyer who produced a South by Southwest showcase, ContraBanned, featuring musicians with ties to countries on Trump’s list. “It isolates those nations,” he said. “So the question is, ‘How do we counteract the narrative that we are receiving about the Muslim-majority countries?’”

Covey is executive director of Tamizdat, a non-profit cultural support organization that set up a free hotline in 2015 for artists encountering problems at the US border. He described an especially stubborn customs officer about whom Tamizdat documented six cases: “Five-foot-six (1.7 meters), moustache, bald, didn’t like DJs, didn’t think they were real artists.” Customs officers at New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport are more friendly to foreign artists, reflecting the kind of crossing-by-crossing, officer-by-officer unpredictability foreign artists can run into at the border, Covey said.

### Handcuffed at airport

Another group on its way to South by Southwest, the Italian post-punk band Soviet Soviet, said its three members were handcuffed and detained overnight with common criminals after being refused entry at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. It’s not clear to what extent Trump has affected such decisions. The



US-born Libyan-American rapper Khaled Ahmed, better known as Kayem, poses ahead of his live performance at the ContraBanned: MusicUnites South by Southwest (SXSW) music showcase at The Palm Door on Sixth on March 17, 2017 in Austin. — AFP

United States requires visas for performers on tour—even if they come from visa-exempt countries—but has traditionally made exceptions for appearances at showcases such as South by Southwest.

Cherine Amr, lead singer of the Egyptian-Canadian metal band Massive Scar Era, which was turned away at the border, said being

denied access to US events represents a massive impediment for artists. “Any musician here knows that in order to make it in the music business—especially for the metal scene—you have to make it in US,” she wrote on Facebook. The festival itself was not immune from criticism. South by Southwest’s artist contract said festival officials would potentially work to deport those found violating visas it sponsored.

Some artists criticized the clause in an open letter for being tone-deaf to the political moment at best. “In light of recent attacks on immigrant communities, this practice is particularly chilling,” they said. South by Southwest said it has never assisted in the deportation of any artist and would review its artist contract for 2018.

### Diminishing boundaries

Artists say music provides emotional connections with people who might not otherwise be exposed to foreign cultures—especially under the current climate. Dena El Saffar, who was born in the United States and explores her Iraqi heritage through music, says it provides a way to “diminish boundaries between people and cultures.” For rapper Emmanuel Jal, a former child soldier from South Sudan—which is not affected by Trump’s travel ban—music helps “represent the voices of those people who are not getting heard.” “My country’s still at war. People are still dying, kids are in refugee camps,” he said. “If I run away from representing their voice, I run away from a responsibility.” — AFP



# London greyhound racing goes to the dogs



**Greyhounds compete on the track during an evening of greyhound racing at Wimbledon Stadium in south London. — AFP photos**

Once a hugely popular working man's sport, Saturday marks the final demise of greyhound racing in London, closing a chapter of British social culture in the capital. More than 20 dog tracks have been dotted around London since modern greyhound racing was introduced to Britain in the 1920s, drawing in punters for a cheap evening's entertainment.

Wimbledon Stadium is the last one standing, but it, too, now faces the bulldozers—a victim of cultural shifts and the city's housing crisis. The timeworn ground, built in 1928, is set to be replaced by around 600 flats to service the soaring London property market, and a new 11,000-seater home for third-tier football team AFC Wimbledon. At the penultimate racing event, followers of the competitive sport lamented the closure.

Dressed in a flat cap, a beige overcoat, a blue spotted silk scarf and a yellow tie with greyhounds on, trackside bookmaker John Henwood, 68, has taken bets at almost every Wimbledon race meeting for 34 years. "It will be a really, really sad loss," he told AFP. "In days of yore, it was perceived as a cloth-cap sport enjoyed by the working man," he said. "But now we have a cosmopolitan clientele right across the age and social spectrum. And a big proportion of female attendees, which you didn't get before."

## Value of land

Once the mechanised way was introduced from the United States in 1926, greyhound racing in Britain boomed in now-demolished, giant London stadiums like White City and the original Wembley. Catford closed in 2003 and Walthamstow in 2008, leaving Wimbledon—home of the English Derby, the most prestigious race—the last venue with a London address.

An all-round cheaper alternative to horse racing, dog race meetings traditionally drew the working class as they took place in the city after work. Elsewhere in Britain, around 30 grounds are still going, although the sport has been in decline since betting shops were legalised in 1961, meaning greyhound tracks were no longer one of the few places to bet legally. "None of the tracks closed because they weren't popular; they all closed because of the value of the land," Henwood said. London land is at a premium. The average property price in the wider Wimbledon

area surpassed £500,000 (\$625,000, 575,000 euros) in December.

## Fizzypop Hazard, Mystical Charlie

Around 1,500 people filled the stadium's only remaining open stand to watch the penultimate set of 12 races, run every 15 minutes, for the entry price of £7. The racegoers are a mixture of old-timers, newcomers, hipsters, groups on a tipsy night out and families, some with babies. Many dressed up for the occasion, with men wearing blazers and shiny shoes and women in evening dresses.

"It's the whole vibe. It's cheap, sweet and fun. You have your £2 bet and have a laugh and you're so close up," said Theresa Ajid, who was trackside with her husband and young children. A fanfare announces each race and the six greyhounds are then paraded along the finishing straight. Punters size them up and rush to the bookmakers' stands to place bets, pint of beer and race card in one hand, banknote in the other.

They choose between greyhounds with colourful names such as Tashas Wee Nasty, Lenson Rambo, Oo Wants It, Jumeirah Maximus,

Art of Illusion, Fizzypop Hazard and Mystical Charlie. Once in the traps, the stadium lights drop and some dogs bark in anticipation. A bell rings, the traps snap open and the dogs burst out, chasing after the artificial hare, flicking up the sand off the track as they sprint past. Pressed right against the trackside fence, people cheer on their favourites as the greyhounds complete a 480-metre lap in 30 seconds.

## 'Chunk of history'

Most bets are small-scale but in the last race of the night, a stag party piles in all their remaining cash on 10/1 outsider Office Hazard, picked by the groom-to-be. As it triumphs, they erupt with joy, wildly bounce around cheering with beer flung in the air, before heading off into the night with their £850 winnings. "The excitement is unreal. I'm totally addicted," said pensioner Fred, 78, with the Racing Post newspaper tucked under his arm.

Fred, who declined to give his surname, said: "It's a crying shame. Eight million people and there'll not be a dog track in London. That's it; end of the line." Darren, 40, said he had been coming to the stadium for 20 years. "We're losing



**A race goer checks the odds at the greyhound racing track.**

a chunk of history here. Once it's gone, you won't get it back."

## Online betting shift

"This is an institution, not just a greyhound track," said the stadium's general manager Keith Hallinan. "Fewer people are coming to the tracks. People can watch on their phone and bet," he said. "But people don't realize if they don't come to the tracks, there's not going to be greyhound racing." Around 100 people work at the stadium and have been looking for new jobs. Hallinan said Saturday's farewell would be "very emotional". "We're not looking at it as a celebration but we are looking at it as a night to remember." — AFP



**Race goers watch the track during an evening of greyhound racing at Wimbledon Stadium.**



# Japan fashion's

## 'lost in translation' challenge

He's been hailed a "fresh new voice" by Vogue, won admiration from Giorgio Armani and bagged an award: Mitsuru Nishizaki is hot fashion talent in Japan. But that doesn't guarantee international stardom. Loud applause and uncharacteristic cheers erupted from the usually restrained Japanese fashion crowd at the 38-year-old's packed autumn/winter 2017 collection for brand Ujoh at Tokyo Fashion Week.

The models strode out to upbeat techno tempo, tearing up a multi-lane catwalk in a high-energy show starring preppy-grunge, sporty-tailored chic that would not look out of place in New York. It was eminently wearable with bright high-necked ribbed sweaters slashed at the side, a deconstructed pale pink trench coat and crisp shirts that button front and back to be styled how the wearer desires.

Shoes were trainer-meets-loafer-black with white soles and a yellow serrated grip, which he calls shark soles, worn with gypsy-style skirts, pin-stripped suits or slouchy velvet track bottoms. Nishizaki set up Ujoh in 2009 after seven years as a Yohji Yamamoto pattern cutter. Six years later he won a design award sponsored by DHL and then in 2016 staged a show in Milan.

Armani provided his theatre for the venue, though Nishizaki didn't meet the veteran Italian designer in person. Vogue wrote afterwards: "this is how cool girls dress now" and predicted a bright future for him. But what does it take to make it outside Japan? To follow in the footsteps of Issey Miyake, Yamamoto-Nishizaki's former boss and Rei Kawakubo, 20th century masters who have flown the nest to take their place among the greats in the fashion pantheon of Paris?



Models present creations from Ujoh by Japanese designer Mitsuru Nishizaki during his 2017 Autumn/Winter Collection show at Tokyo Fashion Week in Tokyo. — AFP photos

What are the hurdles that need to be overcome in a country where the fashion industry is embedded in exacting standards of tailoring, where creativity at times can take a back seat to doing it the right way? Ujoh is already stocked in more than a dozen foreign cities such as Barcelona, New York and Seoul. Still, Nishizaki's chief ambition is to expand further abroad. But it's a tough road to take domestic success to the next level.



### 'Give me ideas'

In an interview at his showroom in Omotesando, a chic neighbourhood heaving with high-fashion boutiques, he was polite and earnest, but also shy and nervous behind the wide brim of a black floppy hat. Nishizaki appears reluctant to present a compelling personal narrative in the rags-to-riches or fashion-ruled-my-childhood style that has helped many celebrated US designers market pret-a-porter to a mass audience.

When it comes to his collections, he says he works in the style to which he became accustomed at Yamamoto: having an open mind and designing freely without pre-selecting a particular inspiration. "It is a difficult question to answer and I wish you could give me some ideas," Nishizaki ventured when asked if he thought it was harder to break through as a designer from Japan than from Europe or America.

But he does admit that the Japanese calendar is stacked against quick success on the international circuit. Tokyo's bi-annual style fest in March and October comes several weeks after the main fashion merry-go-round in New York, London, Milan and Paris comes to an end. By then most international editors and buyers are too exhausted and saturated to board a long-haul flight to Tokyo. "What I really should do now is rearrange my brand schedule for press and sales not only in Japan but overseas," Nishizaki said. Misha Janette, a Tokyo-based stylist, creative director and blogger who has lived in Japan since 2004, said a major challenge for many Japanese designers trying to cut it in the West are different tastes.

She summed up the Japanese market as conservative and casual, rather than expensive and high fashion, warning that simple clothes were "not going to sell" in Paris.

"I think the most important thing is to have a balance of show pieces, interesting things that show their viewpoint with simple off the rack to satisfy both. That's hard," she told AFP. "Most Japanese brands don't have the investment, it's just girls and boys doing it alone out of their garage," she said. "Instead of having this balance of show pieces and wearable pieces it becomes either or." — AFP







# Tokyo Fashion Week



Models present the creations of Japanese designer Yuma Koshino during the 2017 Autumn/Winter Collection show of the Tokyo Fashion Week. — AFP photos





## SPACEWALKING ASTRONAUTS PREP STATION FOR NEW PARKING SPOT

**CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla:** Astronauts ventured out on a spacewalk Friday to prep the International Space Station for a new parking spot. NASA's Shane Kimbrough and France's Thomas Pesquet emerged early from the orbiting complex, then went their separate ways to accomplish as much as possible 250 miles up.

"We are ready to get to work," Mission Control informed them. Their main job involves disconnecting an old docking port. This port needs to be moved in order to make room for a docking device compatible with future commercial crew capsules, and provide more clearance. The new docking device - the second of two - will fly up late this year or early next and hook onto this port.

If all goes well, flight controllers in Houston will relocate the old docking port tomorrow, using the

station's robotic arm. Then next Thursday, the crew will conduct another spacewalk to secure the unit.

SpaceX and Boeing are developing capsules capable of flying astronauts to and from the space station. Until the SpaceX Crew Dragon and Boeing Starliner come on line - possibly next year - US astronauts will have to keep riding Russian rockets to orbit. Before working on the docking port, Kimbrough replaced a computer-relay box with an upgraded version. Pesquet, meanwhile, looked for signs of a small ammonia coolant leak in outdoor plumbing. He patted and tugged at hoses, but did not spot any frozen flakes of ammonia. A GoPro camera caught his every move for playback later.

"No flakes. All good," Pesquet reported. Also on the spacewalkers' to-do list Friday: replace a pair of

Japanese cameras and grease latching mechanisms on the end of the big robot arm.

NASA wants to cram in two and possibly three spacewalks before Kimbrough, the station's commander, returns to Earth on April 10. Before a third spacewalk can be conducted, however, Orbital ATK needs to launch a cargo ship to the space station with replacement parts. That shipment was supposed to be there by now, but repeatedly has been delayed because of rocket concerns. It's unclear when the Atlas V rocket will be ready to soar from Cape Canaveral, Florida.

NASA has been contracting out cargo deliveries since the end of the space shuttle program in 2011. The space agency is counting on private companies to do the same with astronauts. — AP



**SEOUL:** Shin Jong-kyun, president and co-chief executive officer of Samsung Electronics Co, left, and Yoon Boo-keun, attend the company's annual general meeting at the Seocho office building in Seoul yesterday. — AP

## SAMSUNG SHAREHOLDERS HAIL STOCK PRICE GAINS

### SOME LAMENT CORRUPTION SCANDALS

**SEOUL:** Shareholders of Samsung Electronics praised the company yesterday for big gains in its share price while lamenting its involvement in a massive corruption scandal that brought the arrest of the company's de facto leader.

Kwon Oh-hyun, Samsung's chief executive, told an annual shareholders meeting the scandal was regrettable, but the company did nothing illegal. Five Samsung executives, including its vice chairman and founding family heir apparent Lee Jae-yong, have been indicted on bribery and other charges.

The scandal resulted in the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye earlier this month.

Calls to reform Samsung and other conglomerates are gaining momentum after Samsung, Hyundai, SK, LG and other major businesses made big donations to foundations controlled by a friend of Park's who has been charged with meddling in state affairs. Some shareholders expressed concern over growing public hostility to Samsung, South Korea's biggest company.

The company's image has also taken a big hit from cases of overheating and sometimes exploding batteries of its flagship Galaxy Note 7 smart phones. Samsung ended up discontinuing the product just weeks after it was launched in August. Shin Jong-kyun, a Samsung president, promised shareholders the company will put "flawless" products through extensive safety checks. The precautions would be perfect, he said.

Samsung is due to unveil the Galaxy S8 smartphone next week, its first major smartphone launch since the battery fiasco. But the main focus of attention during yesterday's meeting was the scandal.

Some found fault with the company's apologies. One shareholder, who said he worked at the company for 26 years, demanded an explanation for how Samsung's board of auditors, which included a former national chief prosecutor, could have allowed corporate funds to be misused.

Kwon, the chief executive, denied

Samsung did anything unlawful in making the donations to Park's associate. "It was a donation that was traditional and customary," Kwon said. "The auditing committee found it was executed through normal procedures."

Samsung says it will require its board of directors to approve any donations of over 1 billion won (\$89 million) to prevent future scandals. A newly created committee to improve the company's governance structure will be appointed by next month, the company said. It is still searching for a global business leader to join its board. While shareholders were shaken by the scandal and resulting damage to the company's image, many praised the company for delivering strong results overall.

Samsung stock jumped more than 60 percent from a year ago thanks to strong performance of its semiconductor business, which offset the damage from the Note 7 battery troubles.

"I can't help rejoicing over how the value of my asset has gone up," said one shareholder surnamed Park. — AP

## WIKILEAKS: CIA HACKED APPLE DEVICES IN WAYS USERS CAN'T FIX

**NEW YORK:** New documents from WikiLeaks point to an apparent CIA program to hack Apple's iPhones and Mac computers using techniques that users couldn't disable by resetting their devices.

Security experts say the exploits are plausible, but suggest they pose little threat to typical users. They say that many of the tricks are older - the iPhone hack involves the 3G model from 2008, for instance. The techniques also typically require physical access to devices, something the CIA would use only for targeted individuals, not a broader population. "The most notable part of this latest WikiLeaks release is that it shows the CIA doing exactly what we pay them to - exploit specific targets with limited attacks to support our national interests," said Rich Mogull, CEO of the security research firm Securosis.

Apple didn't respond to a request for comment. The CIA has not commented on the authenticity of this and earlier WikiLeaks revelations, but has previously said it complies with a legal prohibition against electronic surveillance "targeting individuals here at home, including our fellow Americans." The agency declined further comment Thursday.

### Document dump

The leaks Thursday come about two weeks after WikiLeaks published thousands of alleged CIA documents describing hacking tools it said the government employed to break into computers, mobile phones and even smart TVs from companies like Apple, Google, Microsoft and Samsung.

The latest disclosures are much more focused and consist of just 12 documents, all involving Apple products. The documents describe techniques for rewriting devices' firmware in ways that would maintain a hacker's access even if a user resets a phone or computer to factory settings. Doing so wipes out all apps and the operating system and installs a clean version; it is an extreme measure sometimes used to deal with technical problems, but is also the sort of step that someone suspicious of surveillance might take when getting a brand new phone.

A December 2008 document describes "NightSkies," a tool apparently designed to target the iPhone 3G; the document claims it can retrieve files such as contact lists and call logs and execute other commands. WikiLeaks suggested in a press release that the "CIA has been infecting the iPhone supply chain of its targets since at least 2008."

However, the document describes only how to install the malware on a "factory fresh" version of the 3G - specifically, the iPhone 3G running the 2.1 version of Apple's operating system, both of which are now nine years old.

But infecting all phones somewhere in the manufacturing process would be extremely difficult, said Mogull, especially given multiple layers of inspections conducted by Apple and its contractors. At most, he said, the CIA might have shipped a rogue phone individually to a target. And while it's possible that the CIA developed similar techniques for later iPhone models, Mogull said iPhones from the past few years have much greater security, including digital security certificates that cannot be overwritten. A flag would be raised during the setup process if certificates do not match. Johannes Ullrich, director of the Internet Storm Center at the SANS Institute, said NightSkies might not even be a current project given that the document was last updated in 2008, while the leaks appear to have come in 2016. — AP



## DELL EMC LAUNCHES CLOUD ECOSYSTEM HUB

### HUB TO ENABLE CLOUD TRANSFORMATION, BUSINESS GROWTH

**BRACKNELL, UK:** Dell EMC and Intel have announced a new web-based Cloud Ecosystem Hub, to provide EMEA Cloud Service Providers (SPs) and end users with an online one stop site to unify and simplify access to Dell EMC's cloud proposition and resources. The hub will connect customers with SPs to help establish stronger marketing efforts, enabling digital transformation and significantly growing long term Cloud business.



Eric Velfre

This new unified platform demonstrates Dell EMC's commitment to providing choice and unique solutions to every customer and removing obstacles to cloud adoption through hosting an online cloud portal for Dell EMC Technology, making it easier for customers to select the right SP to address their needs. For SPs, the hub will be a platform to launch key initiatives and drive new business through the marketplace. With sales revenues in the hardware market decreasing and much of the Cloud market set to transition over to hybrid Cloud, it is expected that Cloud SPs will acquire a considerably larger market share over the next five years and Dell EMC and Intel will act as key business enablers to all parties.

"As a European leader in the secure management of online documents, Oodrive addresses the needs of the modern business by placing its expertise in security, ergonomics and innovation at the core of each of its solutions," said Cedric Mermilliod, Co-founder and Managing Director, Oodrive. "We are looking for business partners with the ability to deliver significant business impact and offer comprehensive support to the customer. With its state-of-the-art technologies, Dell EMC is certainly one of the key players and the Cloud Ecosystem Hub will allow us to facilitate new business more effectively whilst preserving the customer intimacy cherished by Oodrive."

#### New development

"Historically, vendors have failed to support Service Providers in their campaigns and the Dell EMC Cloud Ecosystem represents a game-changing development for both Service Providers and customers alike," said Eric Velfre, senior vice president, Compute and Networking Sales Dell EMC EMEA. "By simplifying access to the Dell EMC Cloud value proposition and offering content and support for co-marketing projects, we can generate awareness and enable new capabilities to achieve greater profitability for our partners. Through the Dell EMC Cloud Community we can also drive demand from the customer towards Service Providers and capture

feedback to help develop future Dell EMC Cloud technologies."

One Stop Site for enterprise customers, the Cloud Ecosystem Hub promises to help them understand how to transform their businesses, with a dedicated repository of up-to-date resources and assets explaining the value proposition and benefits offered by Dell EMC's Cloud technologies. Customers will be able to select SPs through bespoke searches to find the most relevant solutions for their businesses, with options to contact providers directly through the platform. The Cloud Ecosystem Hub will also allow customers to discover and register for broader industry events organised by SPs and Dell EMC.

#### One stop shop for lead generation

The Cloud Ecosystem Hub includes an array of new tools for SPs, including LeadPool demand generation, allowing partners to identify 'hot' vendor agnostic leads, along with additional resources to help promote offerings directly to customers.

The platform also provides the latest insights and information around Dell EMC's and Intel's Cloud technology offerings to help SPs build a stronger portfolio. In addition Dell EMC will allow SPs to run co-marketing campaigns with tools to assist in the creation of marketing assets, campaign building and client and influencer networking, featured within the marketplace.

## NO LAPTOP ON BOARD? JORDAN AIRLINE GIVES LIGHT-HEARTED TIPS

**AMMAN:** Say hello to the person next to you. Reclaim territory on the armrest. Think of the reasons why you don't have a laptop or tablet with you. This is some of the light-hearted advice dispensed by Royal Jordanian on social media Thursday, a day before the carrier is to enforce a new US ban on most onboard electronics on US-bound flights from 10 cities in Muslim-majority countries. Royal Jordanian flies to New York, Chicago and Detroit.

The US ban took effect Tuesday, with a today morning deadline for compliance. Britain announced similar restrictions. Earlier this week, Royal Jordanian was among the first to announce the US was banning most electronics, including laptops, on board certain flights. The airline later deleted the tweet because Washington hadn't announced the ban at the time. Since then, the carrier has been trying to cheer up passengers and potential customers with humorous Twitter messages. It posted a list of "12 things to do on a 12-hour flight with no laptop or tablet."

In another post, it took up rhyming, with a five-line poem that begins: "Every week a new ban. Travel to the US since you can." It promises that "No one can ruin our in-flight fun." — AP

## TWITTER EYES PAID 'PREMIUM' SERVICE FOR POWER USERS

**WASHINGTON:** Twitter has begun surveying members on a paid subscription service that would give frequent users more tools for using the social network for marketing, journalism and other fields. The survey this week showed Twitter is looking at building a more powerful version of Tweetdeck, the dashboard that many use to manage their accounts. An upgraded Tweetdeck would put Twitter in competition with third-party services for social media accounts such as Hootsuite or Social Flow, which allow users to manage multiple accounts and measure the impact of their messages.

"Twitter is considering offering a more advanced TweetDeck experience, with more powerful tools to help marketers, journalists, professionals, and others in our community find out what is happening in the world quicker, to gain more insights, and see the broadest range of what people are saying on Twitter," survey participants were told. "This premium tool set will provide valuable viewing, posting, and signaling tools like alerts, trends and activity analysis, advanced analytics, and composing and posting tools all in one customizable dashboard." — AFP

## FCC OKAYS MEASURES INTENDED TO COMBAT PRISON CELLPHONES

**COLUMBIA:** Federal officials took a step Thursday toward increasing safety in prisons by making it easier to find and seize cellphones obtained illegally by inmates. The Federal Communications Commission in Washington voted 3-0 to approve rules to streamline the process for using technology to detect and block contraband phones in prisons and jails across the US.

The vote doesn't make it legal to jam cellphone signals in prison, which corrections directors across the country say is what they need to shut down inmate cellphone use, once and for all. But commissioners including Chairman Ajit Pai said the step was one that could hopefully begin to combat the phones that officials say are the No. 1 safety issue behind bars.

The vote came after powerful testimony from Robert Johnson, a former South Carolina corrections officer who was nearly killed in a shooting that authorities said was the first in the country orchestrated by an inmate using an illegal cellphone inside prison. "I bled out three times," Johnson recalled, telling commissioners how he was shot six times at his home early one morning in March 2010. "My doctor said I should be dead. ... Last Wednesday, I had surgery Number 24, but who's counting?"

At the time, Johnson was the lead officer tasked with keeping contraband items like tobacco, weapons and cellphones out of Lee Correctional Institution, a prison 50 miles east of Columbia that houses some of the state's most dangerous criminals. The items are smuggled inside, tossed over fences or even delivered by drone.

#### Jamming signals

Since then, Johnson has become an advocate on the issue, saying prisons



**BEIJING:** In this file photo, customers try out Apple iPhone 6s models on display at an Apple Store in Beijing. New documents from WikiLeaks, posted on Thursday point to an apparent CIA program to hack Apple's iPhones and Mac computers such that the exploits persist even after the devices are reset to factory conditions. — AP

need to be able to jam cell signals, but that would require congressional changes to a decades-old communications law.

Previously, the FCC has said its hands are tied by a law that says the agency can grant permission to jam the public airwaves only to federal agencies, not state or local ones. South Carolina Corrections Director Bryan Stirling accompanied Johnson to Thursday's hearing, telling The Associated Press this week the pair would meet with members of Congress on ways they can address the issue.

The cellphone industry has been vocal in its opposition to the notion of jamming, arguing that legitimate cellphone users near prisons could be affected if jammers were in use. Officials with wire-

less trade group CTIA did not immediately respond to email message seeking reaction to Thursday's ruling.

Pai came to South Carolina last year to see the issue up close, touring the prison where Johnson worked and holding a field hearing at which the former officer testified. On Thursday, Pai said the approval of reforms to streamline the process so prisons can more easily begin using technology to find contraband cellphones was his way of making good on a promise to Johnson to take the issue seriously and do what he could to find a solution. "For far too long, the FCC did not move forward," Pai said. "I said then that it's time for the FCC to take action. ... We are finally doing something." — AP





00:50 In Search Of The King Cobra  
01:45 Bondi Vet  
02:40 Biggest And Baddest  
03:35 Tanked  
04:25 Stranger Among Bears  
04:50 Stranger Among Bears  
05:15 Gator Boys  
06:02 In Search Of The King Cobra  
06:49 Biggest And Baddest  
07:36 Call Of The Wildman  
08:25 Biggest And Baddest  
09:15 Rugged Justice  
10:10 Restoration Wild  
11:05 Gangland Killers  
12:00 Life At Vet University  
12:55 Bondi Vet  
13:50 In Search Of The Giant Anaconda  
14:45 In Search Of The King Cobra  
15:40 Weird Creatures With Nick Baker  
16:35 The Jeff Corwin Experience  
17:30 Devoured: Man-Eating Super Snake Returns  
18:25 In Search Of The Giant Anaconda  
19:20 Village Vets  
19:45 Village Vets  
20:15 Biggest And Baddest  
21:10 Restoration Wild  
22:05 Pit Bulls & Parolees  
23:55 Gator Boys



00:00 Monster In My Family  
01:00 50 Ways To Kill Your Lover  
02:00 My Haunted House  
03:00 The First 48  
04:00 Monster In My Family  
05:00 50 Ways To Kill Your Lover  
06:00 My Haunted House  
07:00 Crime Stories  
08:00 The First 48  
09:00 Killers: Behind The Myth  
10:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
11:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
12:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
13:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
14:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
15:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
16:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
17:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
18:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
19:00 It Takes A Killer  
19:30 It Takes A Killer  
20:00 I Didn't Do It  
21:00 The First 48  
22:00 Killers: Behind The Myth  
23:00 Nightmare In Suburbia



00:30 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?  
01:20 Battle Bots  
02:10 Breaking Magic  
02:35 Breaking Magic  
03:00 What Happened Next?  
03:25 What Happened Next?  
03:50 Ultimate Survival  
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 Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild  
07:50 Awesome Adventures  
08:15 Awesome Adventures  
08:40 Bondi Vet  
09:30 Bondi Vet  
10:20 Bondi Vet  
11:10 Bondi Vet  
12:00 Bondi Vet  
12:50 Mythbusters  
13:40 Mythbusters  
14:30 Mythbusters  
15:20 Mythbusters  
16:10 Mythbusters  
17:00 Prototype This  
17:50 Prototype This  
18:40 Battle Bots  
19:30 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
19:55 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
20:20 Now That's Funny  
21:10 Breaking Magic  
21:35 Breaking Magic  
22:00 What Happened Next?  
22:25 What Happened Next?  
22:50 What Happened Next?  
23:15 What Happened Next?



00:40 Mythbusters  
01:30 How Do They Do It?  
01:55 Food Factory  
02:20 You Can't Lick Your Elbow  
02:45 You Can't Lick Your Elbow  
03:10 Alien Encounters  
04:00 Da Vinci's Machines  
04:48 Mythbusters  
05:36 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 Food Factory  
06:24 You Can't Lick Your Elbow  
06:49 You Can't Lick Your Elbow  
07:12 Alien Encounters  
08:00 How Do They Do It?  
08:26 Da Vinci's Machines  
09:14 Mythbusters  
10:02 Alien Encounters  
10:50 How Do They Do It?  
11:14 Food Factory  
11:38 You Can't Lick Your Elbow  
12:03 You Can't Lick Your Elbow  
12:26 Da Vinci's Machines  
13:14 Mythbusters  
14:02 How Do They Do It?  
14:26 Food Factory  
14:50 Alien Encounters  
15:38 You Can't Lick Your Elbow  
16:03 You Can't Lick Your Elbow  
16:26 Da Vinci's Machines  
17:14 Mythbusters  
18:02 Alien Encounters  
18:50 How We Invented The World  
19:40 Mythbusters  
20:30 Mythbusters  
21:20 How Do They Do It?  
21:45 Food Factory  
22:10 Alien Encounters  
23:00 Mythbusters  
23:50 How We Invented The World



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  
02:15 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  
04:45 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 Eco Club  
07:55 Austin & Ally  
08:20 Rolling To The Ronks  
08:45 The Zhuzhus  
09:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir  
09:35 Elena Of Avalor  
10:00 Stuck In The Middle  
10:25 Disney The Lodge  
10:50 Bunk'd  
11:15 Disney Cookabout  
11:40 Teen Beach 2  
13:20 Girl Meets World  
13:45 Girl Meets World  
14:10 Girl Meets World  
14:35 Girl Meets World

15:00 Girl Meets World  
15:25 Jessie  
15:50 Jessie  
16:15 Austin & Ally  
16:40 Austin & Ally  
17:05 Descendants Wicked World  
17:10 Elena Of Avalor  
17:35 Stuck In The Middle  
18:00 Disney The Lodge  
18:25 Finding Nemo  
20:00 Eco Club  
20:05 Disney Cookabout  
20:30 Bizaardvark  
20:55 Bunk'd  
21:20 Shake It Up  
21:45 Disney The Lodge  
22:10 Best Friends Whenever  
22:35 Kirby Buckets  
23:00 Kirby Buckets  
23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



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  
Discovery HD  
01:10 Wheeler Dealers  
02:00 Diesel Brothers  
02:50 Deals, Wheels And Steals  
03:15 Deals, Wheels And Steals  
03:40 How Do They Do It?  
04:05 How Do They Do It?  
04:30 How Do They Do It?  
05:00 How Do They Do It?  
05:30 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 Storage Hunters  
06:25 Storage Hunters  
06:50 Storage Hunters  
07:15 Storage Hunters  
07:40 Storage Hunters  
08:05 How Do They Do It?  
08:30 How Do They Do It?  
08:55 How Do They Do It?  
09:20 How Do They Do It?  
09:45 How Do They Do It?  
10:10 Gold Rush  
11:00 What On Earth?  
11:50 Made By Destruction  
12:15 Made By Destruction  
12:40 Fast N' Loud  
13:30 Fast N' Loud  
14:20 Fast N' Loud  
15:10 Fast N' Loud  
16:00 Fast N' Loud  
16:50 The Wheel: Survival Games  
17:40 Running Wild With Bear Grylls  
18:30 Impossible Engineering  
19:20 Treasure Quest: Snake Island  
20:10 Racing Extinction  
21:50 Dark Woods Justice  
22:40 Alaskan Bush People  
23:30 Gold Rush



06:00 Supa Strikas  
06:25 Supa Strikas  
06:50 Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man vs The Sinister 6  
07:15 Right Now Kapow  
07:40 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
08:10 K.C. Undercover  
08:35 Milo Murphy's Law  
09:00 Becoming  
09:25 Lab Rats  
09:50 Counterfeit Cat  
10:20 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
10:45 Atomic Puppet  
11:10 Lab Rats Elite Force  
11:35 Gravity Falls  
12:00 Cars  
13:55 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
14:15 Milo Murphy's Law  
14:40 K.C. Undercover  
15:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
15:30 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
15:55 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
16:25 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
16:50 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
17:15 Kickin' It  
17:40 Lab Rats Elite Force  
18:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
18:10 Star Wars Rebels  
18:35 Cars  
20:30 Star vs The Forces Of Evil  
20:45 Mighty Med  
21:10 Star Wars Rebels  
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



00:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
00:55 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
01:50 E! News  
02:50 Catching Kelce  
03:40 Catching Kelce  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
06:55 E! News  
07:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
08:10 E! News  
09:05 Botched  
09:55 Botched  
10:45 Mariah's World  
11:35 Mariah's World  
12:25 Mariah's World

13:15 E! News  
13:45 Celebrity Style Story  
14:15 Celebrity Style Story  
14:45 Celebrity Style Story  
15:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
16:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
17:05 Rob & Chyna  
18:05 Rob & Chyna  
19:00 E! News  
20:00 Celebrity Style Story  
20:30 Celebrity Style Story  
21:00 So Cosmo  
22:00 So Cosmo  
23:00 E! News  
23:30 Celebrity Style Story



00:00 The Universe  
01:00 WWII: Europe's Secret Army  
02:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
03:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
03:50 Ancient Aliens  
04:40 True Monsters  
05:30 The Universe  
06:20 WWII: Europe's Secret Army  
07:10 The Universe  
08:00 Cities Of The Underworld  
09:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
10:00 Ancient Aliens  
11:00 The Universe  
12:00 The Universe  
13:00 Ancient Aliens  
14:00 Ancient Aliens  
15:00 Ancient Aliens  
16:00 Ancient Aliens  
17:00 Ancient Aliens  
18:00 Ancient Aliens  
19:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence  
20:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence  
21:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence  
22:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence  
23:00 Ancient Aliens: The Ultimate Evidence



00:20 Football: A Brief History By Alfie Allen  
01:10 Ultimate Wheels  
02:00 Lost In Transmission  
02:50 Pawn Stars  
03:15 Pawn Stars UK  
03:40 Pawn Stars UK  
04:05 Pawn Stars UK  
05:00 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us  
06:00 Storage Wars Miami  
06:25 Storage Wars Miami  
06:50 Pawn Stars Australia  
07:15 Pawn Stars Australia  
07:40 American Pickers  
08:30 American Restoration  
09:20 Ultimate Wheels  
10:10 Lost In Transmission  
11:00 Shipping Wars  
11:25 Shipping Wars  
11:50 Ice Road Truckers  
12:40 Ax Men  
13:30 Lost Worlds  
14:20 Hunting Hitler  
15:10 The Curse Of Oak Island  
16:00 Storage Wars Miami  
16:25 Storage Wars Miami  
16:50 Counting Cars  
17:15 Car Hunters  
17:40 Pawn Stars  
18:05 Pawn Stars Best Of  
18:30 Ice Road Truckers  
19:20 American Pickers  
20:10 Forged In Fire  
21:00 The Curse Of Oak Island  
21:50 Hunting Hitler  
22:40 Outlaw Chronicles: Hells Angels  
23:30 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...



00:15 World's Best Beaches  
01:05 Bangkok Airport  
01:55 Confucius Was A Foodie  
02:45 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt  
03:10 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt  
03:35 Testing The Menu With Nic Watt



28 WEEKS LATER ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD



SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2017

04:00 The Food Files  
04:25 The Food Files  
04:50 Poh & Co  
05:20 Grandma's Boy  
05:45 Grandma's Boy  
06:15 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Med  
07:10 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet  
07:35 Street Food Around The World  
08:05 Restoration Man  
09:00 The Wine Show  
09:55 Croatia's Finest  
10:20 The Food Files  
10:50 The Food Files  
11:15 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia  
11:45 Dog Whisperer  
12:40 Bangkok Airport  
13:35 Confucius Was A Foodie  
14:30 Chasing The Sun  
14:55 Chasing The Sun  
15:25 Cesar Millan: Viva Las Vegas!  
16:20 The Food Files  
16:45 The Food Files  
17:15 Grandma's Boy  
17:40 Grandma's Boy  
18:10 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet  
18:35 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet  
19:05 Chasing The Sun  
19:30 Cesar Millan: Viva Las Vegas!  
20:25 The Food Files  
20:55 The Food Files  
21:20 Grandma's Boy  
21:45 Grandma's Boy  
22:10 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet  
22:35 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet  
23:00 Bangkok Airport  
23:50 Confucius Was A Foodie

**itv hd CHOICE**

00:10 The Chase  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:30 Couples Come Dine With Me  
03:25 Don't Tell The Bride  
04:25 The Jonathan Ross Show  
05:15 The Trials Of Jimmy Rose  
06:10 The Chase  
07:05 Couples Come Dine With Me  
08:00 Don't Tell The Bride  
09:00 The Jonathan Ross Show  
10:00 The Trials Of Jimmy Rose  
10:55 The Chase  
11:50 Couples Come Dine With Me  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:45 Coronation Street  
14:15 The Chase  
15:10 Couples Come Dine With Me  
16:00 Don't Tell The Bride  
17:00 Tonight At The London Palladium  
17:50 The Trials Of Jimmy Rose  
18:45 Emmerdale  
19:45 Coronation Street  
20:10 Couples Come Dine With Me  
21:00 Don't Tell The Bride  
22:00 Tonight At The London Palladium

**NAT GEO WILD HD**

00:20 Hippo vs Croc  
01:10 Ultimate Animal Countdown  
02:00 World's Deadliest Animals  
02:50 The Invaders  
03:45 Nature's Greatest Talents  
04:40 Survive The Wild  
05:35 Safari Brothers  
06:30 Monster Fish  
07:25 Monster Fish  
08:20 Unlikely Animal Friends  
09:15 Snakes In The City  
10:10 World's Weirdest  
11:05 Call Of The Baby Beluga  
12:00 Sharktraz  
12:55 World's Deadliest Killers  
13:50 Strangest Bird Alive  
14:45 Nature's Greatest Talents  
15:40 Survive The Wild  
16:35 Savage Kingdom  
17:30 Africa's Hunters  
18:25 Dangerous Encounters  
19:20 Nature's Greatest Talents  
20:10 Survive The Wild  
21:00 Savage Kingdom  
21:50 Africa's Hunters  
22:40 Dangerous Encounters  
23:30 Sharktraz



X-MEN: FIRST CLASS ON OSN MOVIES HD

**OSN FIRST HD COMEDY**

00:30 Baby Daddy  
01:00 Baby Daddy  
01:30 Difficult People  
02:00 Difficult People  
02:30 The Big C  
03:00 Telenovela  
03:30 Telenovela  
04:00 According To Jim  
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
05:30 Cougar Town  
06:00 George Lopez  
06:30 The Bernie Mac Show  
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
08:00 According To Jim  
08:30 Cougar Town  
09:00 Telenovela  
09:30 Son Of Zorn  
10:00 The Mindy Project  
10:30 The Bernie Mac Show  
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
12:00 George Lopez  
12:30 According To Jim  
13:00 Cougar Town  
13:30 The Bernie Mac Show  
14:00 Telenovela  
14:30 Son Of Zorn  
15:00 The Mindy Project  
15:30 Baby Daddy  
16:00 Baby Daddy  
16:30 George Lopez  
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers  
18:00 Black-ish  
18:30 Kevin Can Wait  
19:00 The Goldbergs  
19:30 Fresh Off The Boat  
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon  
21:00 Baby Daddy  
21:30 Baby Daddy  
22:00 High Maintenance  
22:30 High Maintenance

**OSN FIRST HD**

00:00 American Horror Story: Roanoke  
01:00 Lethal Weapon  
02:00 Star  
03:00 Mr. Robot  
04:00 Suits  
05:00 Good Morning America  
07:00 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders  
08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
09:00 Drop Dead Diva  
10:00 Containment  
11:00 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders  
12:00 Suits  
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
14:00 Drop Dead Diva

**OSN MOVIES HD ACTION**

15:00 Live Good Morning America  
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show  
18:00 Blindspot  
19:00 Once Upon A Time  
20:00 Grey's Anatomy  
21:00 Frequency  
22:00 Timeless

**OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY**

00:00 Tommy Boy  
02:00 Twins  
04:00 How Do You Know  
06:00 Perfect Match  
08:00 Twins  
10:00 How Do You Know  
12:15 Perfect Match  
14:00 Shanghai Noon  
16:00 All About Steve  
18:00 Pixels  
20:00 Hits  
22:00 Superfast

**OSN MOVIES HD DRAMA**

01:00 Falsely Accused  
03:00 Wildlike  
05:00 The Yellow Handkerchief  
07:00 Matters Of The Heart  
09:00 No God No Master  
11:00 Wildlike  
13:00 The Yellow Handkerchief  
15:00 Don't Wake Mommy  
17:00 No God No Master  
19:00 The Disappearance Of Eleanor Rigby: Her  
21:00 The Zero Theorem  
23:00 Madame Bovary

**OSN MOVIES HD FAMILY**

01:30 The Lone Ranger  
04:00 The Education Of Little Tree  
06:00 Tuck Everlasting

**OSN MOVIES HD**

07:30 Treasure Planet  
09:15 Because Of Winn Dixie  
11:15 Tuck Everlasting  
13:00 Brave  
15:00 Black Beauty  
17:00 Emma's Chance  
19:00 Storm Rider  
21:00 Secretariat  
23:00 Black Beauty

**OSN MOVIES HD KIDS**

00:30 The Babadook  
02:15 Four Brothers  
04:15 X-Men: First Class  
06:30 October Sky  
08:30 Steve Jobs  
10:45 X-Men: First Class  
13:15 The Chronicles Of Narnia: Voyage Of The Dawn...  
15:30 Twister  
17:45 Casino Royale  
20:15 A Walk Among The Tombstones  
22:15 Swordfish

**OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL**

01:30 Go For Sisters  
03:45 The Lobster  
06:00 Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon  
08:00 Boychoir  
09:45 Brooklyn  
11:45 Jappeloup  
14:00 50 To 1  
16:00 Seabiscuit  
18:30 Cake  
20:15 Little Accidents  
22:00 Jayne Mansfield's Car

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD**

00:10 Apocalypse: The Battle Of Verdun  
01:00 Apocalypse: The Battle Of Verdun  
02:00 Locked Up Abroad  
02:55 Ultimate Airport Dubai  
03:50 Apocalypse: The Battle Of Verdun  
04:45 The Numbers Game  
05:40 Car SOS  
06:35 Classified: Terror/Counter Terror  
07:30 Dirty Rotten Survival  
08:25 Battleground Brothers  
09:20 The Numbers Game  
10:15 Locked Up Abroad  
11:10 The Border  
12:05 Wingsuit Daredevil  
13:00 Battleground Brothers  
14:00 Dirty Rotten Survival  
15:00 Classified: Terror/Counter Terror  
16:00 Locked Up Abroad  
17:00 The Border

**nick jr.**

00:15 Team Umizoomi  
00:38 Louie  
00:53 Olive The Ostrich  
01:03 Max & Ruby  
01:26 Wanda And The Alien  
01:35 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
01:46 The Day Henry Met  
01:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
02:19 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
02:41 Zack & Quack  
03:03 Team Umizoomi  
03:25 Olive The Ostrich  
03:35 Paw Patrol  
03:58 Little Charmers  
04:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
04:22 Dora The Explorer  
04:44 Max & Ruby  
05:07 Bubble Guppies  
05:31 Shimmer And Shine  
05:54 Dora And Friends  
06:17 Zack & Quack  
06:29 The Day Henry Met  
06:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
07:00 Paw Patrol  
07:37 Dora The Explorer  
08:00 Zack & Quack  
08:22 Dora And Friends  
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  
12:38 Louie  
12:53 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  
13:57 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  
15:35 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  
18:17 Zack & Quack  
18:29 The Day Henry Met  
18:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
19:00 Paw Patrol



THE LONE RANGER ON OSN MOVIES FAMILY HD



## BURGAN BANK SPONSORS THE THIRD GULF STUDIES SYMPOSIUM AT AUK

**B**urgan Bank recently sponsored the 2017 Gulf Studies Symposium organized by the Center for Gulf Studies at the American University of Kuwait. Themed under 'Mobilities and Materialities' of the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula, the third edition bi-annual event was held from 17-19 March at the central garden campus.

Renowned local, regional and international scholars gathered together under one roof to examine the long his-

torical development of people in the Gulf through an analysis of historical and archaeological evidence that ties the patterns of migration and settlement in the region to wider patterns of integration, globalization, and trade.

The bank's continued contribution to the annual symposium reflects the brand's mission to improve every segment of the Kuwaiti community as part of its full-fledged CSR program entitled 'ENGAGE' - Together to be the change.

This program sheds light on important aspects affecting every segment of the society by promoting social welfare through educational, cultural, social and health initiatives. Burgan Bank's approach to 'ENGAGE' begins with a vital principle that as a Kuwaiti financial institution, its conduct and policies should be aligned with the needs and interests of its community.



## INDONESIAN SOCCER LEAGUE 2017 CONCLUDES

**T**he Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, Tatang Budie Utama Razak officially closed the "Indonesian Soccer League 2017" that was held from 22 January until March 18, 2017, the participants of the tournament are Indonesian expatriates working in various fields such as engineers, petroleum, aviation, IT and nurses. The football league was organized jointly by the Indonesian embassy in Kuwait with the Indonesian Communication Forum in Kuwait (FKMI). The Indonesian Nurse Association in Kuwait (INNA-K FC) became the champion after beating the Sundanese Community In Kuwait (Bobotoh PPK FC) 1-0 in the final"







## NEW FACTORY REITERATES HEMPEL'S COMMITMENT TO KUWAIT AND THE REGION

**G**lobal coatings supplier Hempel inaugurated a new factory in Mina Abdullah in Kuwait last week. The factory, which meets ISO 9000 quality management guidelines, will meet growing demand for Hempel coatings and consolidate its position as market leader in the region.

Hempel is the number one coatings supplier in Kuwait. Over the years, its coatings have been used to protect and decorate some of the country's most iconic buildings, including the Kuwait Towers and the Kuwait Opera House, as well as numerous schools, mosques, hospitals, shopping malls and other important civil structures.

With a 40 percent higher capacity than Hempel's existing production facility in Safat, Kuwait, the new EUR 13 million factory in Mina Abdullah will help the company meet growing demand for its coatings in Kuwait and other countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. The new factory will be fully up and running by September 2017, and Hempel's existing factory in Safat will close later in the year.

Karsten Pedersen, Group Vice President of Hempel Middle East (West), comments: "The new factory is a state-of-the-art facility that will produce coatings that are trusted across the region to provide long-term protection to industrial assets, large buildings, homes and infrastructure. We are looking forward to continuing to be the market leader in the region, while increasing production and making our operations cleaner, faster and more energy efficient."

Built to ISO 9000 quality management guidelines, Hempel's Mina Abdullah factory is designed with sustainability in mind. It includes a solvent distillation unit that recycles solvents to reduce hazardous waste, as well as a water treatment plant that ensures much of the factory's wastewater can be reused for vegetation and cleaning.

The factory is also the first coatings production unit in Kuwait to include a regenerative thermal oxidiser unit, which removes volatile organic compounds during production to prevent atmospheric pollution.

The factory was opened at a ceremony attended by H.E. Ole Frijs-Madsen, the Danish Ambassador to the State of Kuwait, senior Hempel executives and employees, media representatives and other guests. At the ceremony, Khaled Al-Rashed, Board Member of DPME, Hempel's partner in Kuwait, said:



"We are proud that Hempel has grown to become the number one paint company in terms of production and distribution in Kuwait. This is a clear sign of our customers' trust in the quality of our products, which has now become

a benchmark for companies worldwide. Today, as we inaugurate the opening of this state-of-the-art factory, we are also celebrating a story of enduring partnerships that have lasted over 51 years."

Hempel's new factory in Mina Abdullah, Kuwait is the latest edition to its comprehensive global supply chain. In 2016 alone, the company completed a capacity expansion project in Malaysia and opened new factories in Russia and Vietnam, adding more than 28 million litres to its annual production capacity.

### Hempel's new Mina Abdullah factory at a glance:

- Will produce marine, protective and decorative coatings for Kuwait and other GCC countries
- Built to ISO 9000 quality management guidelines
- Includes a solvent distillation unit, wastewater treatment plant, and regenerative thermal oxidiser unit to reduce waste and water use
- Capacity: Up to 25 million litres per year
- Cost: EUR 13 million
- Inaugurated: 22 March
- Full production: By September 2017.





# UNAVOIDABLE TYPOS IN DNA HELP FUEL CANCER

GENE MUTATIONS CAUSE CANCER BUT WHAT CAUSES MUTATIONS?

**WASHINGTON:** Cancer patients often wonder “why me?” Does their tumor run in the family? Did they try hard enough to avoid risks like smoking, too much sun or a bad diet? Lifestyle and heredity get the most blame but new research suggests random chance plays a bigger role than people realize: Healthy cells naturally make mistakes when they multiply, unavoidable typos in DNA that can leave new cells carrying cancer-prone genetic mutations.

How big? About two-thirds of the mutations that occur in various forms of cancer are due to those random copying errors, researchers at Johns Hopkins University reported Thursday in the journal *Science*. Whoa: That doesn't mean most cases of cancer are due solely to “bad luck.” It takes multiple muta-

tions to turn cells into tumors - and a lot of cancer is preventable, the Hopkins team stressed, if people take proven protective steps.

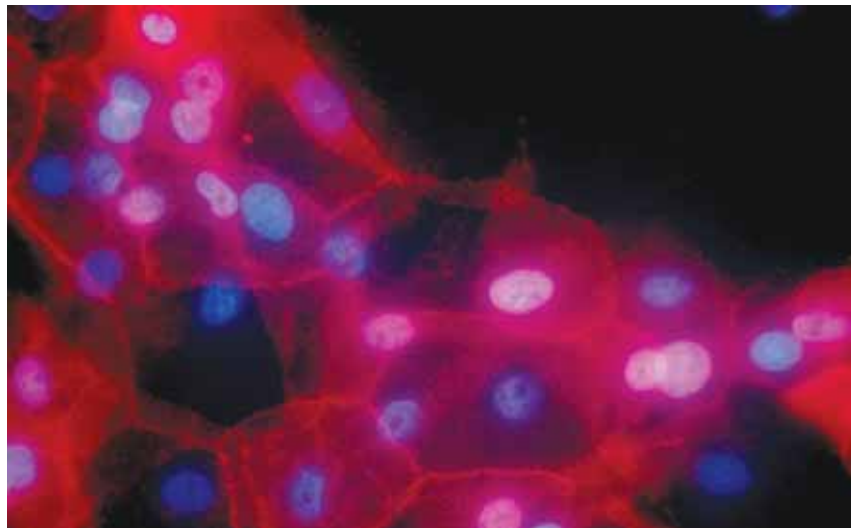
Thursday's report is an estimate, based on a math model, that is sure to be hotly debated by scientists who say those unavoidable mistakes of nature play a much smaller role. But whatever the ultimate number, the research offers a peek at how cancer may begin. And it should help with the “why me” question from people who have “done everything we know can be done to prevent cancer but they still get it,” said Hopkins' Dr Bert Vogelstein, a pioneer in cancer genetics who co-authored the study. “They need to understand that these cancers would have occurred no matter what they did.”

## What causes mutations?

You might inherit some mutations, like flaws in BRCA genes that are infamous for causing aggressive breast and ovarian cancers in certain families. More commonly, damage is caused by what scientists call environmental factors - the assault on DNA from the world around us and how we live our lives. There's a long list of risks: Cigarette smoke, UV light from the sun, other forms of radiation, certain hormones or viruses, an unhealthy diet, obesity and lack of exercise. Then there are those random copy errors in cells - what Vogelstein calls our baseline rate of genetic mutations that will occur no matter how healthy we live. One way to think of it: If we all have some mutations lurking in our cells anyway, that's yet another reason to avoid known risks that could push us over the edge.

## How cells make typos

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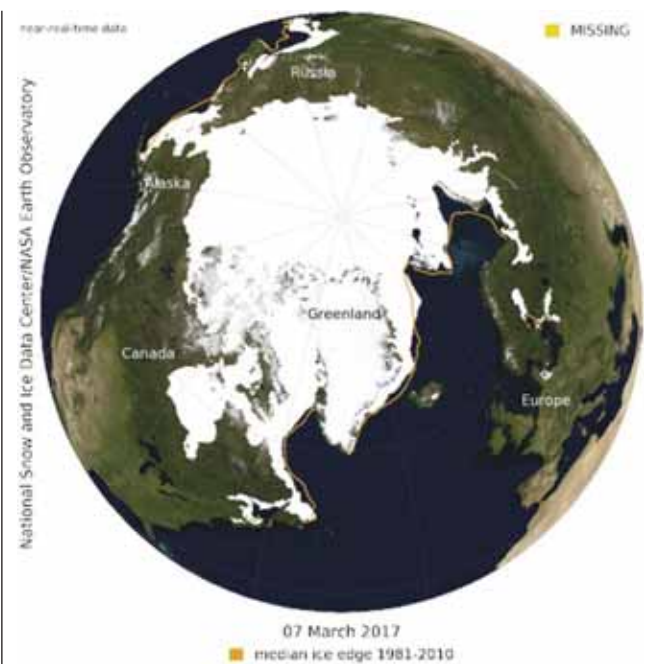
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“In general, it's getting worse,” Diana Umpierre, president of the International Dark-Sky Association, said of light pollution in her home state of Florida. And things are moving in the wrong direction, she said. “We are predicted to have 15 million more residents in the next 50 years” with all the extra

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## Not taken lightly

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This puts the Arctic in a “deep hole” as the crucial spring and summer melt season starts and more regions will likely be ice-free, said Mark Serreze, director of the National Snow and Ice Data Center in Colorado, which released the findings Wednesday. “It's a key part of the Earth's climate system and we're losing it,” he said. “We're losing the ice in all seasons now.”

At the other end of the world, Antarctica, where sea ice reaches its lowest point of the year in March, also hit a record low mark. Antarctic sea ice varies widely unlike Arctic sea ice, which has steadily decreased. The ice data center measures how wide sea ice extends based on satellite imagery. It's harder to measure the thickness and overall volume, but data from the University of Washington show that as of late last month ice volume levels were down 42 percent from 1979, said polar science center chief Axel Schweiger.

Several scientists called the sea ice loss disturbing. “It's evidence that the climate at the top of the world continues to change faster than anywhere else on Earth with impacts to us that are still frankly unknown,” Pennsylvania State University meteorology professor and retired admiral David W Tittley, said in an email. Scientists blame a combination of natural random weather and man-made global warming from the burning of coal, oil and gas. The winter of 2016-2017 was unusually toasty and the Arctic saw three “extreme heat waves,” Serreze said.

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# UNAVOIDABLE TYPOS IN DNA HELP FUEL CANCER

GENE MUTATIONS CAUSE CANCER BUT WHAT CAUSES MUTATIONS?

**WASHINGTON:** Cancer patients often wonder “why me?” Does their tumor run in the family? Did they try hard enough to avoid risks like smoking, too much sun or a bad diet? Lifestyle and heredity get the most blame but new research suggests random chance plays a bigger role than people realize: Healthy cells naturally make mistakes when they multiply, unavoidable typos in DNA that can leave new cells carrying cancer-prone genetic mutations.

How big? About two-thirds of the mutations that occur in various forms of cancer are due to those random copying errors, researchers at Johns Hopkins University reported Thursday in the journal *Science*. Whoa: That doesn't mean most cases of cancer are due solely to “bad luck.” It takes multiple muta-

tions to turn cells into tumors - and a lot of cancer is preventable, the Hopkins team stressed, if people take proven protective steps.

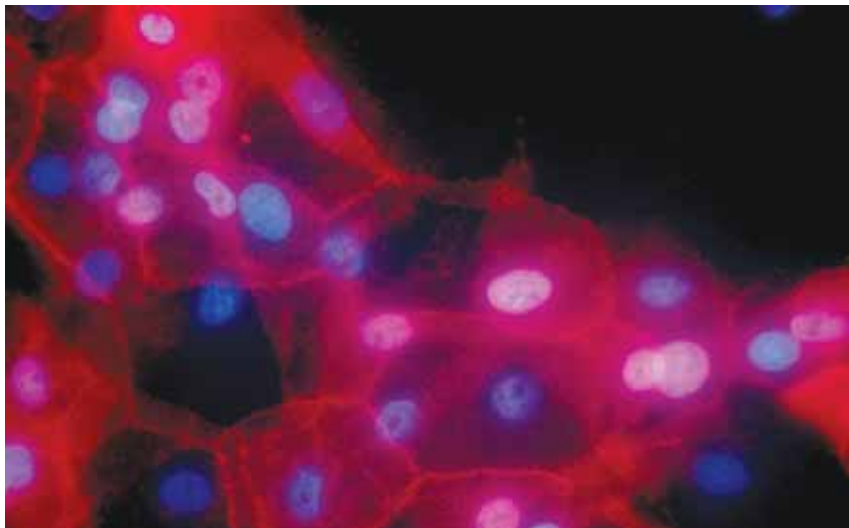
Thursday's report is an estimate, based on a math model, that is sure to be hotly debated by scientists who say those unavoidable mistakes of nature play a much smaller role. But whatever the ultimate number, the research offers a peek at how cancer may begin. And it should help with the “why me” question from people who have “done everything we know can be done to prevent cancer but they still get it,” said Hopkins' Dr Bert Vogelstein, a pioneer in cancer genetics who co-authored the study. “They need to understand that these cancers would have occurred no matter what they did.”

## What causes mutations?

You might inherit some mutations, like flaws in BRCA genes that are infamous for causing aggressive breast and ovarian cancers in certain families. More commonly, damage is caused by what scientists call environmental factors - the assault on DNA from the world around us and how we live our lives. There's a long list of risks: Cigarette smoke, UV light from the sun, other forms of radiation, certain hormones or viruses, an unhealthy diet, obesity and lack of exercise. Then there are those random copy errors in cells - what Vogelstein calls our baseline rate of genetic mutations that will occur no matter how healthy we live. One way to think of it: If we all have some mutations lurking in our cells anyway, that's yet another reason to avoid known risks that could push us over the edge.

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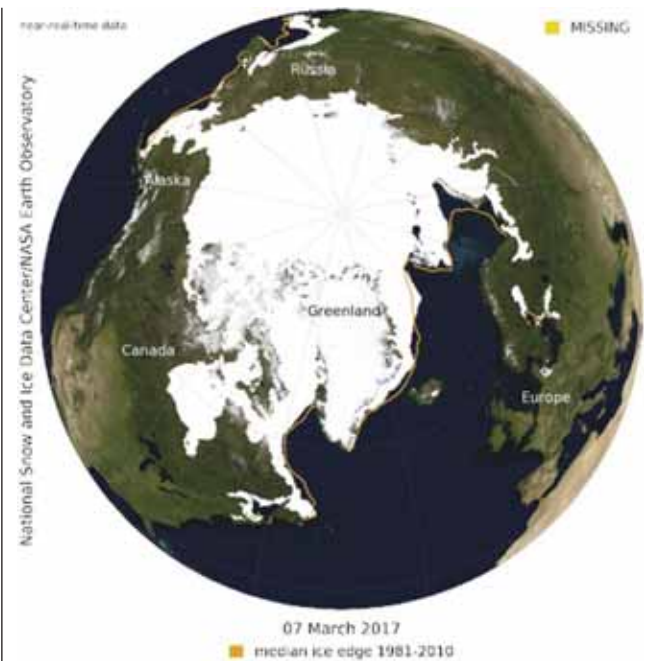
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# PAINFUL CHOICES AWAIT IF OBAMACARE GOES

**ROGERSVILLE:** Maribeth Coote says she hates Obamacare, but it's the only health coverage option she can afford in this remote, hardscrabble corner of southwestern Pennsylvania. The government should "just back off and let me figure it out, and get out of the whole industry" of health care, the 52-year-old Chicago transplant to the tiny town of Rogersville said as she cleaned up her woodworking shed from recent flooding. Donna Himelrick is uninsured and priced out of the market, despite being the mayor of Hundred, a small town 20 miles south in neighboring West Virginia.

"I make too much for Medicaid and not enough that we can afford insurance. It's a difficult situation," Himelrick, 62, said at a clinic in nearby Burton, where she pays for medical treatment in cash, according to what she can afford. Like millions in Appalachia, both women voted for Donald Trump in last November's election seeking to upend the political system. The Affordable Care Act, they insist, is not the answer to their health woes. But both would face dramatic changes to their health care — probably for the worse, at least at first-if Obamacare is replaced by the plan being hashed out by Republican lawmakers in Washington, a cultural and political world away.

Local clinics are a lifeline for many in this economically stagnant, overwhelmingly white region. Ambulance coverage is spotty, and rough roads with rougher weather can leave insular communities even more isolated in emergencies. Now that Trump is president, the reforms installed by his predecessor Barack Obama are under threat, potentially spelling disaster for several community health centers in Pennsylvania and neighboring West Virginia. "There are a lot of things that need to be straightened out" with health care, but shuttering local clinics "would be a concern to me," Himelrick conceded. Lawmakers should "tread lightly."



**LOS ANGELES:** Hundreds of people march through downtown Los Angeles protesting US President Donald Trump's plan to dismantle the Affordable Care Act, his predecessor's signature health care law. — AP

## Safety nets

The Cornerstone Care CHC in Rogersville, which treats Coote, and several other facilities serve an area where coal mines have recently closed, pushing up unemployment, and where health facilities can be 20 miles or more apart. "We are the safety net for this community," Janice Morris, chief executive of the Clay-Battelle CHC in Blacksburg, West Virginia, said in an interview.

Under Obamacare, several states have expanded Medicaid, the federal health program for the poor and disabled, to include residents whose income is at or below 138 percent of the poverty level. But with some 670,000 people in Pennsylvania and 175,000 in West Virginia eligible for Medicaid through the expansion, a rollback of the program as proposed in the Republican plan would "have a terrible impact there," Senator Bob Casey, a

Democrat from Pennsylvania, told AFP back in Washington. At Clay-Battelle clinic, nearly half of the patients are either on Medicaid or Medicare, the coverage program for the elderly.

Many of the clinic's 300 to 400 weekly patients pay on a scale according to their financial ability—a system known as "the slide." The clinic covers the slack through Medicaid and commercial insurance reimbursements, federal and state funding, and grants. Obamacare has helped Clay-Battelle and Cornerstone lower the rate of uninsured who get treatment there. The resulting increase in reimbursements have translated into expanding staff and hours of operation. That could crumble if Obamacare disappears. "A lot of people don't recognize that the health coverage they have was made possible through the Affordable Care Act," Morris said.

## 'Getting whipsawed'

Don Humbertson, 64, says he owes his life to Clay-Battelle doctors who discovered he had lung cancer. The retired concrete worker is insured through his wife's bus-driver job, but he has grown to appreciate how Obamacare has given those in need a chance. "Obamacare when it first came out, I was totally against it," said Humbertson, who has had difficulty breathing and speaking since part of his right lung was removed. "But I've seen how it was helping some people." Instead of pulling it out by its roots, he said, Republicans and Democrats should come together and fix the current law. That is not what's happening. Republican leaders are keen to keep popular provisions that bar companies from refusing to insure people because of pre-existing conditions.

But in a bid to provide more free-market choice and competition, they want to slash the amount of subsidies that would be provided for Americans to buy health care, potentially putting insurance out of reach for millions. The bill is hanging by a thread, with the House of Representatives likely to vote on the measure. "We feel like we're just getting whipsawed around," Cornerstone Care chief executive Richard Rinehart said. "We're in the trenches, we're dealing with these health issues that are real."

Cornerstone operates another clinic in the larger town of Waynesburg, where coal silos, conveyors and green buildings of the shuttered Emerald Mine stand as ghostly reminders of better days. In Trump country, many health workers are aware of the irony of a Republican law appearing likely to hurt health centers' ability to care for the very people who voted the president into office. "I see it very personally," Morris said. "Many of our staff people are Trump supporters." But health outcomes of Americans are "at risk" because of the Republican plan, he added. —AFP

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times  
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF





Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem  
استشاري أطفال  
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



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





KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (23/03/2017 TO 29/03/2017)

**SHARQIA-1**  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 1:15 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 1:30 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 3:30 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 5:15 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 7:15 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 9:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 12:05 AM

**SHARQIA-2**  
COLLIDE 11:30 AM  
LIFE 1:30 PM  
LIFE 3:45 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 2:00 PM  
COLLIDE 6:00 PM  
COLLIDE 8:00 PM  
COLLIDE 10:00 PM  
COLLIDE 12:05 AM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 10:00 PM  
COLLIDE 1:00 AM

**SHARQIA-3**  
SLEEPLESS 11:45 AM  
POWER RANGERS 1:45 PM  
POWER RANGERS 4:15 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 4:15 PM  
POWER RANGERS 7:15 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 7:15 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 10:15 PM  
LIFE 10:15 PM  
SLEEPLESS 1:15 AM  
LIFE 12:30 AM

**MUHALAB-1**  
SLEEPLESS 11:30 AM  
POWER RANGERS 1:30 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 4:00 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 4:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 7:00 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 7:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 10:00 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 10:00 PM  
SLEEPLESS 1:00 AM

**MUHALAB-2**  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 12:30 PM  
LIFE 2:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 5:00 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 7:15 PM  
LIFE 9:45 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 9:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 12:30 AM  
**MUHALAB-3**  
COLLIDE 11:45 AM  
COLLIDE 2:00 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 4:00 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 1:45 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 5:45 PM  
COLLIDE 7:30 PM  
COLLIDE 9:30 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 9:45 PM  
COLLIDE 12:30 AM

**FANAR-1**  
POWER RANGERS 11:30 AM  
POWER RANGERS 2:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 4:30 PM  
POWER RANGERS 7:00 PM  
LIFE 9:30 PM  
POWER RANGERS 11:45 PM

**FANAR-2**  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 1:15 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 1:45 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 3:45 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 3:45 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 6:45 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 9:45 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 9:45 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 12:45 AM

**FANAR-3**  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 11:45 AM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 2:15 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 4:00 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 5:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 8:15 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 10:30 PM

AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 12:45 AM  
**FANAR-4**  
COLLIDE 11:30 AM  
COLLIDE 1:30 PM  
COLLIDE 3:45 PM  
LIFE 5:45 PM  
COLLIDE 8:00 PM  
COLLIDE 10:00 PM  
COLLIDE 12:15 AM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 10:00 PM  
COLLIDE 1:00 AM

**FANAR-5**  
LIFE 12:15 PM  
LIFE 2:30 PM  
LIFE 4:45 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 7:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 9:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 11:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 12:45 AM

**MARINA-1**  
POWER RANGERS 12:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 2:30 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 1:30 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 3:15 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 5:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 6:45 PM  
POWER RANGERS 9:15 PM  
POWER RANGERS 11:45 PM

**MARINA-2**  
COLLIDE 11:45 AM  
COLLIDE 1:45 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 3:45 PM  
COLLIDE 6:15 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 8:15 PM  
COLLIDE 10:45 PM  
COLLIDE 12:45 AM

**MARINA-3**  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 1:00 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 3:15 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 5:30 PM  
LIFE 7:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 10:00 PM  
LIFE 12:15 AM

**AVENUES-1**  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 1:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 3:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 5:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 7:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 9:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 11:00 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 1:00 AM

**AVENUES-2**  
POWER RANGERS-2D-4DX 12:00 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND -3D-4DX 2:30 PM  
POWER RANGERS-2D-4DX 5:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS-2D-4DX 7:30 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND -3D-4DX 10:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS-2D-4DX 12:30 AM

**AVENUES-3**  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 1:30 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 4:00 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 4:00 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 7:00 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 7:00 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 10:00 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 10:00 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 12:45 AM

**360°- 1**  
POWER RANGERS 12:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 2:30 PM  
POWER RANGERS 5:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 7:30 PM  
Premier Show "Smurfs: The Lost Village" 7:30 PM

POWER RANGERS 10:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 12:30 AM

**360°- 2**  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 11:45 AM

AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 1:30 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 3:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 6:00 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 8:15 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 10:30 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 12:45 AM

**360°- 3**  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 11:30 AM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 1:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 3:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 5:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 7:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 9:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 11:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 1:15 AM

**AL-KOUT.1**  
POWER RANGERS 12:30 PM  
POWER RANGERS 3:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 5:30 PM  
COLLIDE 8:00 PM  
COLLIDE 10:00 PM  
COLLIDE 12:05 AM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 10:00 PM  
COLLIDE 1:00 AM

**AL-KOUT.2**  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 12:15 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 2:30 PM  
SLEEPLESS 4:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 6:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 9:00 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 11:30 PM

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POWER RANGERS 11:30 AM  
POWER RANGERS 2:00 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 1:30 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 4:30 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 4:30 PM  
POWER RANGERS 7:15 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 9:45 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 9:45 PM  
POWER RANGERS 12:45 AM

**AL-KOUT.4**  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 1:00 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 1:30 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 3:00 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 4:45 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 6:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 8:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 10:30 PM  
THE WINDMILL MASSACRE 12:30 AM

**BAIRAQ-1**  
POWER RANGERS 12:00 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 2:30 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 4:15 PM  
POWER RANGERS 6:00 PM  
POWER RANGERS 8:30 PM  
POWER RANGERS 11:30 PM

**BAIRAQ-2**  
LIFE 11:45 AM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 2:00 PM  
LIFE 4:30 PM  
KONG: SKULL ISLAND 6:45 PM  
LIFE 9:30 PM  
LIFE 12:05 AM

**BAIRAQ-3**  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 1:00 PM  
BARBIE VIDEO GAME HERO 1:30 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 3:30 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 5:45 PM  
AKHER DEEK FE MASR -Arabic 8:00 PM  
COLLIDE 10:15 PM  
COLLIDE 12:15 AM

**PLAZA**  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 3:30 PM  
ORU MEXICAN APARATHA 3:30 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 6:30 PM  
ORU MEXICAN APARATHA 6:30 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 9:45 PM  
KATAMARAYUDU - Telugu 9:30 PM

FOR SALE

BMW 2003 Model registered till March 2018, lady driven excellent condition, done 134,000 km, blue color. Call: 66711141. (C 5288) 25-3-2017

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Shaik Mushtaaq s/o Shaik Yousuf holder of Indian Passport No. G3955355 Civil ID No. 276030802124 has changed my name to Shaik Mukthar Ahmed

EMERGENCY



PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr: 04:27  
Shorook 05:47  
Duhr: 11:54  
Asr: 15:23  
Maghrib: 18:02  
Isha: 19:19

herein after in all my dealings and documents. (C 5289) 22-3-2017

ACCOMMODATION

Partition for rent shuon, Hawally, Tunist st. Only for Filipino. Ph: 55195488. (C 5287)

Accommodation available for a Catholic bachelor at Abbassiya near Unique store No. 2, opp Best Bakers from 1st of April 2017. Contact: 66110593 or 24313908. (C 5286) 19-3-2017

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988



Hospitals

Sabah Hospital 24812000

Amiri Hospital 22450005

Maternity Hospital 24843100

Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital 25312700

Chest Hospital 24849400

Farwaniya Hospital 24892010

Adan Hospital 23940620

Ibn Sina Hospital 24840300

Al-Razi Hospital 24846000

Physiotherapy Hospital 24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center 25716707

Rawda 22517733

Adaliya 22517144

Khaldiya 24848075

Kaifan 24849807

Shamiya 24848913

Shuwaikh 24814507

Abdullah Salem 22549134

Nuzha 22526804

Industrial Shuwaikh 24814764

Qadsiya 22515088

Dasmah 22532265

Bneid Al-Gar 22531908

Shaab 22518752

Qibla 22459381



SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 2017



DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Saturday 25/3/2017				Departure Flights on Saturday 25/3/2017			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
KLM	413	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:25	KAC	502	Beirut	19:30
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	FDB	057	Dubai	19:50
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	KAC	104	London	19:50
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	KNE	381	Taif	19:55
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	KAC	166	Rome	19:55
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	MSR	618	Alexandria	20:05
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	OMA	647	Muscat	20:10
DLH	635	Doha	01:55	JZR	189	Dubai	20:15
MSC	511	Alexandria	02:00	QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	562	Amman	20:40
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:05	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	KAC	616	Bahrain	20:50
KAC	412	Bangkok	02:50	KAC	786	Jeddah	21:15
KAC	364	Colombo	06:05	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
KAC	384	Delhi	06:05	MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:20	ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	06:25	UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
BAW	157	London	06:40	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	07:00	KAC	676	Dubai	21:45
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
KAC	204	Lahore	07:15	KAC	174	Munich	22:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	07:35	JZR	125	Bahrain	22:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KLM	415	Amsterdam	22:10
KAC	302	Mumbai	08:20	NIA	151	Cairo	22:10
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:15
KAC	382	Delhi	08:45	FDB	8053	Dubai	22:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KNE	533	Jeddah	22:45
KAC	352	Kochi	09:10	JZR	241	Amman	22:45
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	1544	Cairo	22:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	164	Paris	22:55
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:00
AVV	653	Sohag	10:10	JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40				
KAC	774	Riyadh	11:05	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:15	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
FDK	801	Damascus	11:45	PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
KAC	286	Dhaka	12:25	FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	BBC	044	Dhaka	01:30
JZR	239	Amman	12:45	KLM	413	Amsterdam	01:50
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	THY	773	Istanbul	02:25
IAW	157	Al Najaf	13:25	SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:35	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:55
KAC	564	Amman	13:40	MSC	512	Alexandria	03:05
KAC	788	Jeddah	13:45	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
KNE	231	Riyadh	13:55	PGT	859	Istanbul	03:35
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00	KAC	103	London	03:40
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
FDB	059	Dubai	14:20	KKK	6505	Istanbul	03:55
KAC	692	Muscat	14:30	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:40	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
KAC	542	Cairo	14:45	MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
KAC	618	Doha	15:00	QTR	1077	Doha	04:40
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05	QTR	1087	Doha	05:50
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:15	FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
OMA	645	Muscat	15:35	CLX	853	Hong Kong	06:50
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:50	KAC	153	Istanbul	06:50
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:50	KAC	165	Rome	06:55
KAC	154	Istanbul	15:55	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
SAW	705	Damascus	16:00	RJA	643	Amman	07:05
SVA	504	Madinah	16:00	JZR	238	Amman	07:10
KNE	531	Jeddah	16:05	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
JZR	535	Cairo	16:10	KAC	541	Cairo	07:15
QTR	1072	Doha	16:10	KAC	163	Paris	07:25
JZR	787	Riyadh	16:25	KAC	773	Riyadh	07:30
FDB	051	Dubai	16:25	KAC	787	Jeddah	07:45
KAC	662	Abu Dhabi	16:35	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
RJA	640	Amman	16:55	JZR	778	Jeddah	07:55
KAC	118	New York	17:00	KAC	563	Amman	08:00
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	BAW	156	London	08:40
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30	KAC	173	Munich	08:50
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:45	FDB	054	Dubai	08:55
JZR	325	Al Najaf	17:50	KAC	691	Muscat	09:00
NIA	251	Alexandria	17:55	KAC	117	New York	09:00
SVA	500	Jeddah	18:00	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
UAE	875	Dubai	18:00	JZR	534	Cairo	09:15
FDB	063	Dubai	18:10	KAC	101	London	09:35
JZR	177	Dubai	18:20	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
IRA	669	Mashhad	18:55	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
KAC	512	Mashhad	19:20	KAC	411	Bangkok	10:30
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:25	FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30	QTR	1071	Doha	10:40
				SVA	513	Riyadh	11:00



WORDSEARCH PUZZLE

Shakespeare: Macbeth

Find and circle all of the words relating to Macbeth that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a quotation from Macbeth.

Note: MACBETH and LADY MACBETH are hidden separately and do not overlap.

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

ANGUS APPARITIONS BANQUO BIRNAM WOOD BLOOD CAITHNESS CAPTAIN CASTLE CAULDRON CAWDOR COLMEKILL CONSCIENCE CUMBERLAND  
DAGGER DOCTOR DONALBAIN DUNCAN DUNSINANE FLEANCE GENTLEWOMAN GLAMIS GUILT HEATH HECATE INVERNESS  
IRELAND LADY MACBETH LADY MACDUFF LENNOX MACBETH MADNESS MALCOLM MENTEITH MURDERERS NORWAY PORTER PROPHECY QUEEN  
REGICIDE ROSS SCONE SCOTLAND SEYTON SIWARD SLEEPWALKING SOLILOQUY THANE WEIRD SISTERS

Yesterday's Solution

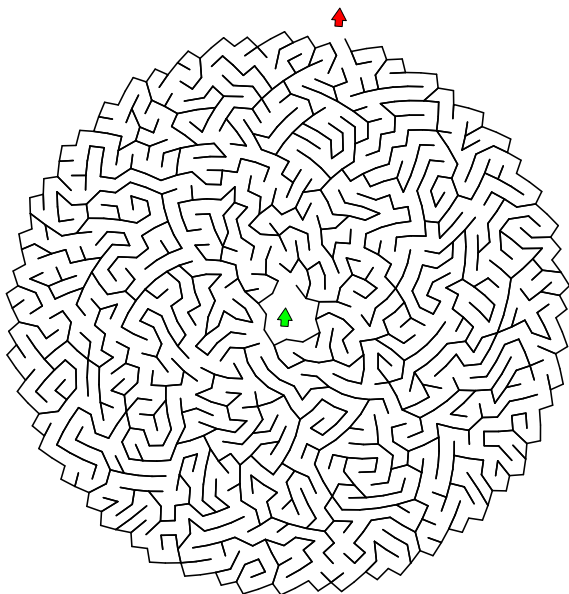
Shakespeare: Hamlet

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

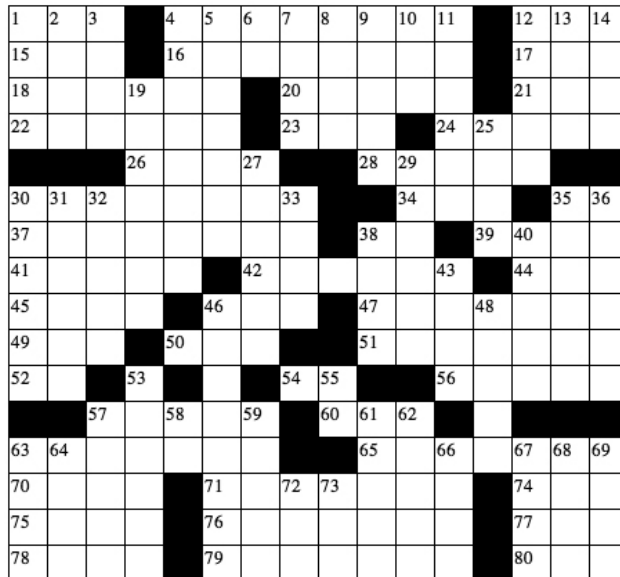
AMBASSADORS FRANCISCO MARCELLUS REGICIDE  
BARNARDO GERTRUDE MELANCHOLY REVENGE  
CASTLE GHOST MESSENGER REYNALDO  
CHALICE GRAVEDIGGERS MURDER ROSENCRANTZ  
CLAUDIUS GUILDENSTERN OPHELIA SKULL  
CORNELIUS HAMLET OSRIC SWORD  
DEATH HAUTBOYS POISON THE PLAYERS  
DENMARK HORATIO POLONIUS TRAGEDY  
DUEL KING PRIEST VOLTEMAND  
EL SINORE LAERTES PRINCE WINE  
FORTINBRAS MADNESS QUEEN YORICK

Hidden sentence: THE PLAY'S THE THING WHEREIN I'LL CATCH THE CONSCIENCE OF THE KING

CHALLENGING MAZE



CROSSWORD 1558



ACROSS

- A hormone produced by the anterior pituitary gland.
- The character flaw or error of a tragic hero that leads to his downfall.
- (prefix) Opposite or opposing or neutralizing.
- An adherent of any branch of Taoism.
- Any of various widely distributed beetles.
- Any of several small ungulate mammals of Africa and Asia with rodent-like incisors and feet with hooflike toes.
- First in order of birth.
- A naturally occurring glyceride of oleic acid that is found in fats and oils.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- A flourish added after or under your signature (originally to protect against forgery).
- Type genus of the family Myacidae.
- Moth having nonfunctional mouthparts as adults.
- Being or occurring in fact or actuality.
- The 11 southern states that seceded from the United States in 1861.
- In the direction against a stream's current.
- United States liquid unit equal to 4 quarts or 3.785 liters.
- The dialect of Sotho spoken by the Tswana people in Botswana.
- Affectedly dainty or refined.
- A purgative made from the leaves of aloe.
- A native of ancient Troy.
- An ugly evil-looking old woman.
- A colorless odorless gaseous element that give a red glow in a vacuum tube.
- A Native American who lived in what is now southern Colorado and Utah and northern Arizona and New Mexico and who built cliff dwellings.
- A United States liquid unit equal to 8 fluid ounces.
- A unit of heat equal to the amount of heat required to raise one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit at one atmosphere pressure.
- German engineer and automobile manufacturer who produced the first high-speed internal combustion engine (1834-1900).
- A radioactive transuranic element produced by bombarding plutonium with neutrons.
- An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
- A piece of land cleared of trees and usually enclosed.
- A nurse who has enough training to be licensed by a state to provide routine care for the sick.
- A short introductory essay preceding the text of a book.
- Bearing or marked with a label or tag.
- A jaunty rhythm in music.
- Genus of widely distributed agarics that have white spores and are poisonous with few exceptions.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- Type genus of the Amiidae.
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- Characteristic of a mob.
- The basic unit of money in China.
- Genus of beetles whose grubs feed mainly on roots of plants.
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.

DOWN

- Any maneuver made as part of progress toward a goal.
- The basic unit of money in Western Samoa.
- A blind god.
- A planet (usually Venus) seen at sunset in the western sky.
- Any of various plants of the genus Althaea.
- Informal terms for a mother.
- (physics and chemistry) The smallest component of an element having the chemical properties of the element.
- Have confidence or faith in.
- A step in walking or running.
- Being one more than two.
- An accessory or adjoining anatomical parts or appendages (especially of the embryo).
- A condensed but memorable saying embodying some important fact of experience that is taken as true by many people.
- Kamarupan languages spoken in northeastern India and western Burma.
- A male monarch or emperor (especially of Russia prior to 1917).
- Made of earth (or baked clay).
- Having the deep slightly brownish color of gold.
- Soviet physicist who worked on low temperature physics (1908-1968).
- Large herbivorous tropical American arboreal lizards with a spiny crest along the back.
- A king of the Myrmidons and father of Achilles.
- The quantity a scoop will hold.
- A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
- Any of several herbs of the genus Dipsacus native to the Old World having flower heads surrounded by spiny bracts.
- Encircle or bind.
- (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
- A very large person.
- Marked by or showing unaffected simplicity and lack of guile or worldly experience.
- A language spoken by the Atakapa people of the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
- A facial expression characterized by turning up the corners of the mouth.
- A woman's dress style that imitates the caftan cloaks worn by men in the Near East.
- A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
- Type genus of the Meliaceae.
- A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
- A republic on the southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula on the Indian Ocean.
- A folded part (as a fold of skin or muscle).
- Relating to or accompanying birth.
- Tall New Zealand timber tree.
- A small cake leavened with yeast.
- A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
- Very dark black.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- A rapid bustling commotion.
- Game in which matchsticks are arranged in rows and players alternately remove one or more of them.

Yesterday's Solution

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

Daily SuDoku

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

Yesterday's Solution

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



## SQUASH

## DAVID EAGER TO FOLLOW IN BILLIE JEAN'S FOOTSTEPS

**KINGSTON UPON HULL:** Nicol David, the squash great whose nine-year stint as world number one may never be surpassed, wants to follow the example of women's sports pioneer Billie Jean King when her playing days are done.

Although the 33-year-old Malaysian reached the quarter-finals of the British Open on Thursday and may still challenge for titles, she has been inspired by the tennis legend who led the fight for prize money parity and campaigned for women's rights in a wider way. "I really hope I can do something a little like what she has done for her sport," said David, who spent an hour with the American before the Windy City Open squash tournament in Chicago last month. "She is the power of women's sport. Without her pushing the cause women wouldn't be where they are now," she added, acknowledging King's influence beyond sport.

"She has paved the way in all sports at

various levels and in every field to give their best. Billie Jean fought for a lot of other rights as well. She is very motivating."

David follows King's philosophy that women have to prove they are just as good at entertaining as anyone, and need to believe in themselves that they can make this happen by envisioning it, dreaming it and working every day towards that dream.

## 'PUSH FOR RECOGNITION'

"Billie Jean asked me what do you see?"

David said. "How do you see squash progressing in the future? Where will be a good place to start?" David spoke of her conversation with King during a week in which the British Open is offering women equal prize money for the first time in its 88-year history.

"It just shows that there is a push for recognition we deserve and we are going forward in the right direction.

"I am very honoured and grateful that

Doctor (Assem) Allam (the British Open sponsor, who took the tournament to the northern city of Hull, where he is the owner of Premier League football club Hull) is promoting this cause, and gives us more potential to push this cause, men and women together." Whilst David is not in any way attempting to compare herself with the vastly experienced King, 73, she certainly seems well-placed to promote the cause of women's equality in other areas.

Not only has she become one of Asia's most famous sportswomen, she is already well-known for fund-raising campaigning well beyond sport. She has joined campaigns by UNICEF, the United Nations children's charity, and devoted her time and celebrity to raise funds for many causes, including aid for Japanese tsunami and earthquake victims. Whilst campaigning more diligently than any other squash player for improved prize money for women, David

has spoken with corporate executives, promoters, and organisations around the world.

Right now David feels America is not just where equal prize money for women began, it is where squash can accelerate its take-off, as tennis did. "They have more facilities and ground-work with their policies," she said. "If we approach major corporations and they want parity in what they specialise in, it helps." The US Open became the first squash tournament with equal prize money in 2013, after which the Tournament of Champions in New York and the Windy City Open followed suit. Next year parity is likely to be mandatory at all World Series squash tournaments.

"It's a difficult job to manage both men and women together, so it's a matter of formulating what's needed for the women," said David. "But Billie Jean showed that it's all logical. It's nothing new, but everything makes sense. It's true that we deserve what we are trying to do. We can do it." — AFP

## TOP 14 AIMS TO PUT SPARKLE BACK INTO FRENCH CLUB RUGBY

**PARIS:** A botched Parisian club merger, a strike, rape allegations against three Grenoble players and the federation at apparent war with Top 14 officials. It is fair to say that it has not been the best couple of weeks for French club rugby. Fans and players will attempt to put all that aside for the next round of matches this weekend with particular interest in key games for Racing 92 and Stade Français. A mooted merger between the two clubs, winners of the last two Top 14 titles, was promptly booted into touch. Their owners were forced into a swift backtrack after a deluge of criticism from players, fans, rugby officials and even the Paris city administration.

The proposed merger saw the body running professional rugby in France, the LNR, postpone both Racing and Stade Français' matches last week, against Montpellier and Castres.

It was a decision that will no doubt cause a scheduling nightmare with just five weekends of the regular season remaining before play-offs start on May 20, and European action filling in the rest.

The French Rugby Federation (FFR), now headed by former France coach Bernard Laporte, waded into the row on Wednesday by symbolically cancelling the LNR decision.

The action highlighted wider rifts between the LNR and FFR over federal contracts — 11 of the Top 14 clubs have come out against Laporte's proposal to have a 40-player core on central contracts to try to improve the French national team's performance. As it is, Racing and Stade have two mouthwatering games awaiting them, against Clermont (in Lille) and Toulon respectively. "We're not going to hide it, it's been tough, complicated for everyone," said Racing's Argentine lock Manuel Carizza. "But we knew how to separate the paddock from all the off-the-field stuff. Even last week we trained really well. "That's great because it shows that even if we haven't had an outstanding season thus far, there remains a strong bond between the squad, like last season."

## GRENOBLE IN TURMOIL

While Racing have had problems off the pitch, with ex-All Black lock Ali Williams sacked after being caught in possession of cocaine and flagship signing Dan Carter caught drink driving, they pale into insignificance when compared to Grenoble.

With Irish coach Bernard Jackman shown the door last week after a string of poor results, three players-Irish prop Denis Coulson, Kiwi backrower Rory Grice and French hooker Loick Jammes-remained in custody as of Thursday afternoon as French police investigate a rape allegation. Three other players were released the same day after helping police with their enquiries, including twice-capped former Wallaby lock Peter Kimlin. Grenoble, who sit in 13th place three points ahead of rock-bottom Bayonne and 11 behind Stade Français, responded to their off-field crises with an impressive last-gasp draw with Toulon last weekend. — AFP



**DUBLIN:** This file photo taken on February 24 shows England's forwards failing to claim the ball from a line-out during the 6 Nations Rugby union game between Ireland and England at Croke Park stadium, Dublin. — AFP

## RUGBY

## CRUSADERS BEAT FORCE 45-17 IN SUPER RUGBY

**CHRISTCHURCH:** The Christchurch, New Zealand-based Crusaders maintained their unbeaten start to the Super Rugby season when they beat the Perth-based Western Force 45-17 yesterday to open the tournament's fifth round. In contrast to their last three matches in which they came from behind to win - after trailing by 18, 21 and 19 points respectively - the Crusaders led throughout Friday's match to win by seven tries to two.

But after leading 28-17 at halftime, the Crusaders struggled to drive home their advantage in the second half and their winning margin was only inflated by two tries in the last 10 minutes.

The Force, who have been competitive but have won only one of their first four matches, put pressure on the

Crusaders, especially at scrums in the early part of the second half. But they were unable to capitalize on a period of intense pressure early in the second spell and the Crusaders were able to re-establish control and post a convincing victory.

Rain late in the match made ball-handling difficult and the game lost most of its structure after halftime. "We can't make the weather an excuse," Crusaders captain Sam Whitelock said. "We've got to trust our ball skills and make better decisions. They came out and really tested us."

The Crusaders took the lead in the match after only five minutes with a try to former Wallabies winger Digby Ioane, converted by flyhalf Mitchell Hunt. After a penalty by Jono Lance for

the Force, the Crusaders extended their lead with a try to All Blacks flanker Matt Todd after another strong run by Ioane.

Todd then made an uncharacteristic error, throwing a pass which was intercepted by Alex Newsome, who ran more than 50 meters to score for the Force, cutting the lead to 14-10.

Hard-working flanker Scott Barrett scored for the Crusaders to make the lead 21-10 and lock Luke Romano plunged on a loose ball over the Force line for a 28-10 lead. The Force hit back with a try before halftime to Chance Peni. Hooker Codie Taylor opened the second half with a try which put the Crusaders ahead 22-17, and late tries to David Havili and Ben Funnell made the margin convincing. — AP



## MOTOR RACING

## HAMILTON FASTEST IN FIRST PRACTICE SESSIONS FOR AUSTRALIAN GP

**MELBOURNE:** Lewis Hamilton delivered the faster speeds that Formula One rule changes had promised yesterday, going under the racing lap record in the second practice session for the season-opening Australian Grand Prix.

The three-time world champion had the fastest time in morning practice and his afternoon time of 1 minute, 23.620 seconds was quicker than the racing lap mark Michael Schumacher set in winning the 2004 title at the 5.303-kilometer (3.295-mile) Albert Park Circuit.

It was only one-tenth slower than the best ever lap of Albert Park, which Sebastian Vettel set to take pole position in 2011.

"I'm super happy to be back in the car - particularly after a first day like that. It was 99 percent perfect," Hamilton said. "We've shown good form so far on both the long and short runs and we got every lap done that we wanted to."

Ferrari driver Vettel split the Mercedes cars of Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas, who posted the fastest two times in the opening practice earlier yesterday, with his 1:24.167 in the afternoon session.

Kimi Raikkonen's afternoon run meant the Ferraris were second and fourth - a reflection of their positive pre-season testing in Barcelona - and pushed the

Red Bulls of Daniel Ricciardo and Max Verstappen back from third and fourth in the morning session to fifth and sixth in the afternoon.

Vettel was less than one-tenth of a second in front of Bottas, who replaced Nico Rosberg at Mercedes after the reigning world champion retired.

Hamilton, who won back-to-back world championships in 2014 and '15 and narrowly lost to Rosberg last season, completed 22 laps in the morning session and 34 in the afternoon and used three tire compounds across the day. The first practice was almost processional with the Mercedes cars followed by the two Red Bulls and the Ferraris.

Hamilton predicted ahead of the Australian GP that Ferrari would be the team to beat. He said Friday was indicative of how his rivals have improved and said qualifying on Saturday would be the first genuine test. "We knew from FP1 that the Ferraris weren't at their maximum. Of course, in FP2 all of a sudden they were quick," Hamilton said. "We'll see tomorrow how it really stands."

Four-time world champion Vettel completed only 10 laps in the morning session but had 35 in the second session. "We had a mixed day, this morning wasn't so good but then we had a better afternoon," Vettel said. "I think the balance of the car is not yet

where we want it to be, but I'm sure we can take a step forward on that."

Ricciardo and Verstappen, who only ran eight laps in the afternoon, were followed by Carlos Sainz of Toro Rosso, Romain Grosjean - who drove his Haas through the gravel during the second session - and Renault's Nico Hulkenberg.

The new regulations for 2017 allowed for wider tires with more grip and durability, greater aerodynamics, bigger fuel loads and increased downforce and were designed to increase speed. The first two sessions have confirmed that is the case among the top contenders.

Williams rookie Lance Stroll set the first time of the season, the 18-year-old Canadian momentarily on top of the time sheets after his first flying lap in an F1 Grand Prix event. He was 13th in the opening session and dropped to 16th in the second, almost three seconds off the pace. His teammate Felipe Massa was seventh-quickest in the morning but slipped to 14th in the afternoon, reporting mechanical problems as he slid off and stopped on the grass at turn 10. Massa completed six laps in the second session, which was staged in sunny, mild conditions and was only 10 minutes old when Jolyon Palmer spun his Renault rear-first into the barrier. — AP

## GOLF

JORDAN SPIETH GRINDS OUT  
'MUST WIN' OVER IKEDA

**AUSTIN:** With a big lead on the back nine, Jordan Spieth put the ball in water again. Gulp. This time, there was no collapse, just a grind-it-out "must win" to beat Japan's Yuta Ikeda in Thursday's second round at the Dell Technologies Match Play in gusty wind that lived up to the legendary tough conditions of Texas golf.

Spieth beat Ikeda 4-and-2 at the Austin Country Club a day after losing his first-round match by the same score to Japan's Hideto Tanihara.

Thursday's victory, coupled with the draw between Tanihara and Ryan Moore, leaves Spieth needing to beat Moore and for Tanihara to draw or lose to Ikeda if Spieth is to move on to today's knockout rounds.

"I've got to play better than I did the last two days and I know that. I've just got to have complete trust because why not at this point. It's a win or go home situation," Spieth said. Beating Ikeda took some work in conditions that saw gusts top 30 mph, often blowing straight in the golfer's faces.

The pair made the turn with Spieth 2-up before he stuck his tee shot to within 18 inches on the par-3 11th and tapped in for birdie to win the hole. But Spieth hit a wild tee shot on No. 13 that plunked into the Colorado River - much wider than Rae's Creek at Augusta - and he peeled out of the shot in disgust.

Instead of seizing the opening for a rally, Ikeda's tee shot splashed as well. They halved the hole and Spieth steadily closed out the match without any mistakes the rest of the way. "We both made a mess of the 13th, but all in all, it was a step in the right direction after yesterday," Spieth said, referring to his opening-round 4-and-2 loss to Tanihara.

As a Texas native, playing in the Lone Star State provides both a comfort zone and an emotional pressure cooker for Spieth. He plays in front of adoring galleries who cheer his big shots and groan over his mistakes. Youngsters plead for autographs or high-fives whenever he's within reaching distance. And the Austin Country Club, where he played several times during his short college career at the University of Texas provides a familiar layout of rolling hills and windy riverside greens.

## 'CHEERS AT EVERY HOLE'

The pressure of his week also comes from what awaits him in two weeks: a return to the Masters, where he won in 2015 but blew a five-shot lead on the back nine last year in an epic collapse as England's Danny Willett won.

Willett, playing in Spieth's home territory, has had a ragged



**AUSTIN:** Jordan Spieth of the USA tees off on the 14th hole of his match during round two of the World Golf Championships-Dell Technologies Match Play at the Austin Country Club on Thursday in Austin, Texas. — AFP

tournament with two losses already. A 6-and-5 loss to Bill Haas yesterday eliminated Willett from playing on the weekend.

Before he'd even teed up in Austin, Spieth said he's ready for this year's Masters and the questions about the collapse to be behind him. Then he opened the match play tournament with the loss to Tanihara.

Needing a win Thursday just to give himself a chance to get to the championship rounds, Spieth was greeted with a large crowd at the first tee and "Hook'em Horns!" cheers at every hole. Spieth was 3-up after eight holes as the wind belted the players on every swing.

A bogey on the par-4 10th allowed Ikeda an opening until Spieth's laser tee shot into the 11th put him back in control. "(Conditions) were about as tough as I think I've ever seen it. I couldn't really fall back on much from school," Spieth said. "In match play, you're not upset with these conditions. One-on-one, I think the tougher conditions are better for us. We've kind of always believed that so I kind of hope tomorrow is more of the same." — AP

JOHNSON STAYS PERFECT,  
MCILROY ELIMINATED

**AUSTIN:** World number one Dustin Johnson continued his perfect record at the WGC-Dell Match Play on Thursday while number two Rory McIlroy was eliminated without even setting foot on the course.

On an extremely windy afternoon at Austin Country Club with gusts of up to 35 miles per hour (56 kph), Johnson coped manfully with the elements to beat German Martin Kaymer 3&2.

"Putting is the hardest part," Johnson told Golf Channel after improving to 2-0-0 overall with his second straight win over a major champion. "It's very breezy and then really gusty at times."

Despite two wins from two matches, Johnson was not guaranteed of advancing out of the group stage. He must win or halve his match against compatriot Jimmy Walker to be certain of advancing to the final 16. The format divides the 64 players into 16 four-man groups, with the winner of each group entering the knockout stage today.

After losing to Dane Soren Kjeldsen on Wednesday, McIlroy got a win on Thursday when his scheduled opponent Gary Woodland withdrew, citing personal family reasons.

Even with that walkover, however, McIlroy still needed Kjeldsen to lose his second match to have any chance of advancing out of the round-robin group stage.

But Kjeldsen duly shut the door on the Northern Irishman, beating Argentine Emiliano Grillo 4&3 on Thursday to improve to 2-0-0.

Kjeldsen said he relished the tough conditions. "I'm brought up in this," he said. "The way I play golf, I like to shape shots, like to change the trajectory. When I saw it being windy today I was really happy."

Swede Alexander Noren is also guaranteed of being part of the sweet 16, after beating Austrian Bernd Wiesberger 3&2.

McIlroy was not the only highly-ranked player eliminated from the final 16 with world number four Hideki Matsuyama also making an early exit after losing to Englishman Ross Fisher 2&1.

The wind caused all sorts of problems and a watery grave for many a ball, even a shank by American Charles Howell, who had no problem assigning the blame to the conditions.

"(It was) difficult enough to cause a shank," he said after escaping with a 1-up win over Spaniard Rafa Cabrera-Bello.

Phil Mickelson, who improved to 2-0-0 thanks to a 5&4 thumping of fellow American Daniel Berger, said it was fortunate that the match play format was being used rather than stroke play, given the conditions.

"Given the severity of the greens and so forth, certainly there are holes we're going to look ridiculous on," he said after chipping clean across a green into a water hazard. "I think it's fun and it's great for match play because you don't worry about the stroke. It's just relative to your opponent." — Reuters



## KIB CONCLUDES SPONSORSHIP OF 8TH KUWAIT OPEN TENNIS TOURNAMENT

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently concluded its sponsorship of the 8th Kuwait Open Tennis Tournament, which took place under the patronage of the President of the Kuwait and Arab Tennis Federations, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The tournament kicked off on March 2nd and took place at Al-Yarmouk Sports Club and the Kuwait Tennis Federation (KTF) courts, featuring around 500 participants of all ages.

The tournament was the largest organized by KTF throughout the entire season, as it included 302 matches overall. The closing game was attended by various sponsors, KTF members, parents of the players, as well as a huge audience of local sports fans. During the closing ceremony, over 50 players from all age groups and winners of the tournament were recognized for their sportsmanship and performance throughout the tournament.

Speaking at the closing ceremony, Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, stated: "The Bank pays special attention to promoting a culture of sports across the community and, for that reason, actively seeks to support community-based sports initiatives and activities. We are proud of KIB's sponsorship of this tournament, as it reflects our ongoing belief in the importance of sports and our role in encouraging regular exercise among people to achieve a healthy lifestyle, enhancing both physical and mental well-being."

Najia also congratulated international tennis player,



Mohammad Al-Ghareeb, who was honored during the closing ceremony for his outstanding athletic performance. He lauded Al-Ghareeb's sportsmanship in boosting Kuwait's standing internationally and successfully representing Kuwait in Davis Cup, The World Cup of Tennis, over the course of 20 years; his performance successfully placing Kuwait amongst international rankings.

KIB considers sports a cornerstone of its social responsibility program and so, the Bank is keen on providing its full support to athletes and local talents within various different sports. The Bank continues to be an adamant supporter of local athletes who have acted as a true inspiration to the community, as well as those who have played a role in strengthening Kuwait's standing, within the region and internationally.

## PLISKOVA EASES THROUGH IN MIAMI

**MIAMI:** Second seed Karolina Pliskova cruised into the third round of the Miami Open, the Czech beating American qualifier Madison Brengle 6-1, 6-3 on Thursday.

While her serve was not at its best, the 25-year-old Pliskova never looked in danger, comfortably dominating while winning 78 percent of return points.

"There were a few tight games but I think I was pretty solid. It went quite easy and I was really happy to spend only an hour out there because it's pretty hot and humid and so I am happy to save some power for the later matches," said Pliskova.

"The serve wasn't really great and hasn't been for the last few weeks but I think my game from the baseline was better, it's improving, my backhand is better, I was feeling pretty good just want to improve the serve a bit now," she added.

Pliskova reached the semi-finals of Indian Wells last week and she said she was keen to avoid a repeat of last year when she made the last four in California but fell at the first hurdle in Miami.

"It's a big tournament and I wanted to make it better this year. I will be ready for the next one," said the Czech, whose twin sister Kristyna is also in the Miami field.

Slovakian fourth seed Dominika Cibulkova needed to dig deep to fight past Paraguayan qualifier Veronica Cepede Royg. The 90-minute encounter was far tougher for Cibulkova than the 6-3 6-2 scoreline suggests and she was relieved with the win. "I just stayed aggressive," she said. "It was my first match here, so it was pretty hot and it wasn't easy conditions. But I made it through. I'd never played her before, so that's always a new experience. I'm glad I got the job done."

Cibulkova faces another tough test, though, against Belgian Kirsten Flipkens, who fought her way past Croatian 29th seed Ana Konjuh 7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (6/8), 6-2.

Agnieszka Radwanska beat China's Wang Qiang 7-6, 6-1 and Caroline Wozniacki comfortably went through 6-1, 6-2 against Varvara Lepchenko.

Sixth-seeded Spaniard Garbine Muguruza was trounced 6-0 in the first set by American opponent Christina McHale and was down 3-2 on McHale's serve in the second when rain began. Play was eventually cancelled for the day and McHale will look to complete the upset today. — AFP

## TENNIS

## TOMIC PULLS OUT AT MIAMI WITH INJURY

**MIAMI:** Bernard Tomic's woes continued Thursday as he pulled out of the Miami Open due to a back injury, the latest setback in a disappointing year for the Australian.

Ranked 17th in the world as recently as November, Tomic has tumbled down the rankings to 44th. Since a third-round Australian Open exit, the 24-year-old has lost four first-round matches to lowly ranked opponents. The most recent setback came at Indian Wells, where he was beaten by 112th-ranked Bjorn Fratangelo of the United States. At Acapulco in February, Tomic retired from his opening match citing "unbearable heat" and the fact that he withdrew from four ATP matches last year has led to some questioning of his attitude.

Tomic was due to face Kazakh qualifier Mikhail Kukushkin at Crandon Park on Thursday but pulled out shortly before the contest was due to begin. Lucky loser Mikhail Youzhny of Russia took Tomic's place in the first-round contest, but was ousted 6-4, 6-1.

US teen Frances Tiafoe downed Russia's Konstantin Kravchuk 7-5, 5-7, 6-1 to book a second-round match against 18-time Grand Slam champion Roger Federer. It will be the 19-year-old American's first match against a top-10 foe. "The guy has about a million Grand Slams and done everything. I can't tell you how excited I am to play," Tiafoe said. "Seeing the draw was partly probably why up a set and 4-1, I started rushing and thinking, 'Oh my god, I'm going to play Roger.' 'He's my idol, everyone's



**KEY BISCAINE:** Milos Raonic, of Canada, prepares to serve during a tennis match against Viktor Troicki, of Serbia, at the Miami Open, yesterday in Key Biscayne, Fla. — AP

idol." World number 41 Marcel Granollers of Spain fell 7-6 (8/6), 4-6, 6-3 to promising 62nd-ranked Croatian Borna Coric in a testing two hours, 51 minutes contest.

Coric tired towards the end and offered some openings to Granollers while missing three match points but was able to recover well to hold on and

set up a meeting with sixth seed Dominic Thiem of Austria.

Russian 19-year-old Andrey Rublev made short work of world number 46 Florian Mayer of Germany, winning 6-1, 6-1 in just 44 minutes. Rublev will now face a tough challenge against 2010 Miami finalist and 10th seed Tomas Berdych. — AFP



# NHL ASKED FOR DECISION ON OLYMPICS BY END OF APRIL

**NEW YORK:** The NHL may be nearing a deadline to decide whether to allow the world's best hockey players to participate in the Winter Olympics next year in South Korea.

"I hope we can find a compromise in the next two or three weeks," International Ice Hockey Federation President Rene Fasel told The Associated Press on Thursday in a telephone interview from Russia. "We need to know by the end of April if they're coming, or not." Fasel said leaders of national teams, including those in Canada and Russia, have recently told him they need to know next month if it is time for them to assemble their Plan B rosters. The IIHF is the game's international governing body and runs hockey tournaments, including those at the Olympics.

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman has made it clear league owners don't want to stop their season for three weeks again and

put their stars at risk of injury without what they consider a tangible return. The reluctance has come up in the past and yet the NHL has participated in every Winter Olympics since 1998. Four years ago, the discussions weren't settled until midsummer 2013 ahead of the Sochi Games.

This time, however, there seems to be an impasse. After the International Olympic Committee indicated it did not want to cover costs for travel and insurance expenses to get NHL players to South Korea as it did in the past, including about \$14 million for the 2014 Olympics, the IIHF came up with the \$10 million necessary to do it. That, however, does not appear to be enough to appease the NHL. The league seems to want more, including the rights to put Olympic highlights on its TV network, website and social media platforms.

"In the absence of any material change to

the current status quo, NHL players will not be participating in the 2018 Winter Olympics," NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly wrote in an email to AP. Don Fehr, the head of the NHL Players' Association, said all players in the league want to participate. He believes the NHL should choose to take advantage of the chance to market the game in Asia, which will host the next two Winter Olympics.

"Playing in an Olympic games is fundamentally different than playing in other tournaments, other hockey events, because it's an opportunity to play for your country on a global stage with fans watching who never otherwise watch hockey games," Fehr said. "There's a patriotic element, too, which players feel and feel very strongly and it's something we should applaud and be proud of for them. And to take that opportunity away would be most, most unfortunate." The NHL

has acknowledged it isn't excited about the prospects of marketing the sport in South Korea, but it is very interested in being part of the 2022 Olympics in China.

Fasel suggested that might not be an option. "If they don't go to Korea, it will be very difficult for them to go to Beijing," Fasel said. "The IOC will be in a different position and it would be a totally different deal on the table for the NHL. The NHL has more to lose than to win if they don't come to Pyeongchang. If they don't come, they will isolate themselves. The fans will not be happy and the players won't be happy and then I would say, 'Good luck with negotiations to go to China.'" Even if the NHL doesn't set up next season's schedule with an Olympic break, Washington Capitals and Russian superstar Alex Ovechkin has vowed to go to the 2018 Olympics and he may not be the only one to test the league's stance. — AP

# CAPITALS BEAT BLUE JACKETS IN SHOOTOUT

**WASHINGTON:** T.J. Oshie scored the shootout winner as the Washington Capitals overcame a stellar performance from Columbus goaltender Sergei Bobrovsky to beat the Blue Jackets 2-1 in the NHL on Thursday night. Despite 44 saves from Bobrovsky, the Capitals reached 104 points and extended their lead atop the Metropolitan Division and NHL standings. Oshie engendered memories of his Sochi Olympic shootout performance by again beating Bobrovsky, the goalie he scored on four times in six chances that day. Dmitry Orlov finally cracked Bobrovsky early in the third period on Washington's 35th shot of the game. Orlov's goal tied the score after Seth Jones beat Braden Holtby on a wild scramble early in the third for his first goal since Feb. 7. Holtby had 29 saves in regulation and overtime and three more in the shootout to pick up his 38th victory of the season, one shy of Bobrovsky for the league lead.

## SENATORS 2, PENGUINS 1

Kyle Turris and Bobby Ryan scored in the shootout to lift the Ottawa Senators over the Pittsburgh Penguins. Mike Hoffman scored in regulation for the Senators and Mike Condon finished with 34 saves, including two incredible point-blank stops in overtime to keep the game going. Nick Bonino had the goal in regulation for the Penguins and Matt Murray stopped 29 shots. After being outplayed for much of the first two periods, the Senators were much better in the third and tied the score 1-1 on the power play at 9:43 as Hoffman beat Murray over the shoulder with a wrist shot just 14 seconds after Matt Cullen was penalized for holding.

## LIGHTNING 6, BRUINS 3

Nikita Kucherov had his third career hat trick to lead Tampa Bay past the Boston Bruins, snapping the Lightning's three-game losing streak. Jonathan Drouin had a goal and two assists, Brayden Point had a goal and an assist and Anton Stralman also scored to help the Lightning pull three points behind the Bruins for the second wild card in the Eastern Conference. Peter Budaj finished with 28 saves for the Lightning to earn his 29th win of the season. Ondrej Palat had three assists, and Jake Dotchin and Victor Hedman added two each. Riley Nashy had a goal and an assist for Boston, and David Pastrnak and Zdeno Chara also scored. Tuukka Rask stopped 23 shots as Boston, which won seven of the first eight games under interim coach Bruce Cassidy, has now lost four straight and six of 11.



**WASHINGTON:** Lukas Sedlak #45 of the Columbus Blue Jackets checks Marcus Johansson #90 of the Washington Capitals during the second period at Verizon Center on Thursday in Washington, DC. — AFP

## PANTHERS 3, COYOTES 1

Jonathan Marchessault scored two goals and James Reimer made 22 saves to lift the Florida Panthers over the Arizona Coyotes. Shawn Thornton also scored a goal as the Panthers snapped a two-game losing streak. The Panthers are seven points behind the Boston Bruins for the final wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference's Atlantic Division. Tobias Rieder scored for Arizona, and Mike Smith stopped 36 shots. The Coyotes lost for the fourth time in five games.

## HURRICANES 4, CANADIENS 1

Lee Stempniak scored twice and the Carolina Hurricanes defeated the Montreal Canadiens to extend their point streak to nine games and keep their playoff hopes alive. Elias Lindholm and Jeff Skinner also scored for the Hurricanes, while Eddie Lack stopped 21 shots. Carolina, undefeated in regulation time in nine straight games (6-0-3), is five points out of the final wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference with 10 regular-season games left. Alex Galchenyuk scored the lone goal for Montreal. Carey Price stopped 19 of 22 shots.

## MAPLE LEAFS 4, DEVILS 2

Auston Matthews had two assists and William Nylander had a goal and an assist as the Toronto Maple Leafs topped the New Jersey Devils for their seventh win in nine games. Nylander set a franchise rookie mark by extending his points streak to 10 games, while equaling another team record for power-play points with 25. Mitch Marner also

matched a club rookie record for assists with his 40th, setting up James van Riemsdyk's 23rd of the season. Josh Leivo and Connor Brown also scored for the Leafs, and Curtis McElhinney made 30 saves to earn the win. John Moore scored both goals for the Devils, with Keith Kinkaid allowing three goals on 29 shots.

## LUES 4, CANUCKS 1

Magnus Paajarvi scored twice to lead the St. Louis Blues past the Vancouver Canucks. Kyle Brodziak and Alex Pietrangelo also scored for the Blues, who won their fourth straight to give them nine wins in their last 10. Jake Allen made 27 saves for his seventh win in eight starts while allowing just nine goals in the stretch. Henrik Sedin scored for the Canucks, who have lost seven of their last eight to fall to 11-22-3 on the road. Ryan Miller stopped 30 shots. Brodziak snapped an 11-game goal-scoring drought when he roofed a slap shot by Miller late in the second period for his eighth goal of the season to put the Blues up 2-1.

## PREDATORS 3, FLAMES 1

Pekka Rinne made 24 saves to lead the Nashville Predators over the Calgary Flames. Calle Jarnkrok, Colton Sissons and Ryan Ellis scored, and Colin Wilson had two assists for Nashville, which has won five of six. Dougie Hamilton had the lone goal for Calgary. After winning 17 of 21, the Flames have lost two straight.

## FLYERS 3, WILD 1

Matt Read scored the tiebreaking goal in the second period and Steve Mason stopped 24 shots as the Philadelphia Flyers beat the Minnesota Wild. Sean Couturier and Jakub Voracek also scored for the Flyers, who won for the third time in their last eight games (3-5-0). Zach Parise scored for Minnesota and Devin Dubnyk stopped 24 shots for the Wild, who have lost six of their last seven.

## BLACKHAWKS 3, STARS 2, SO

Patrick Kane scored his team-leading 33rd goal in regulation and connected again in the shootout as the Chicago Blackhawks beat the Dallas Stars to open an eight-point lead for first place in the Central Division. Artemi Panarin also scored in the shootout as Chicago rode a 42-save effort by Corey Crawford through overtime to improve to 6-0-1 in its last seven. It was also the Blackhawks' 18th win in their last 22 games. Marian Hossa scored his 24th goal of the season midway through the third period. Crawford was beaten only by Tyler Seguin in the shootout and twice in regulation by Ales Hemsky as he rebounded from giving up four goals on 10 shots to Vancouver on Tuesday night.

## OILERS 7, AVALANCHE 4

Drake Caggiula and Jordan Eberle scored 1:10 apart to break a tie late in the third period as the Edmonton Oilers rallied to beat the Colorado Avalanche. Eberle scored twice in Edmonton's five-goal third period and also added an assist. Zack Kassian and Leon Draisaitl also scored in the rally that moved Edmonton into a tie with Anaheim for second in the Pacific Division with 89 points. Andrej Sekera had a goal and two assists, Milan Lucic also scored and Laurent Brossoit had five saves in relief of Cam Talbot to lead Edmonton to the win. Mikko Rantanen had two goals, J.T. Compher and Rene Bourque had a goal each and Nathan MacKinnon finished with two assists for Colorado.

## KINGS 5, JETS 2

Drew Doughty, Marian Gaborik and Anze Kopitar each scored a power-play goal as the Los Angeles Kings kept their slim playoff hopes alive with a win over the Winnipeg Jets. Ben Bishop made 19 saves and Tanner Pearson and Jake Muzzin also scored for the Kings, who trail Nashville for the second wild card in the Western Conference by eight points with nine games to play. Gaborik put the Kings ahead 2:01 into the third period, and Doughty doubled the lead 1:56 later as Los Angeles emphatically broke out of a 1-for-13 slump with the man advantage. —AP



## INDIA'S MANOHAR TO STAY ON AS ICC CHAIRMAN

**DHARAMSALA:** India's Shashank Manohar has deferred his resignation as the chairman of the International Cricket Council to see through a reform programme, the game's world governing body said yesterday.

Manohar quit earlier this month in the middle of an overhaul of the ICC's governance designed to reduce the power of cricket's most powerful nations—India, Australia and England. He agreed to withdraw his resignation temporarily after the ICC board asked him to see through the restructuring.

"In a significant show of support for Manohar the board asked him to withdraw his resignation or at the very least defer it until the ongoing process relating to governance and financial restructuring are

completed," the ICC said in a statement. Manohar ended his two-year stint as ICC chairman just eight months into the job after the divisions between the powerful Indian board and most of the rest of the game erupted into the open.

India had last month voted against a proposed shake-up of the ICC, fearing a curb of its earnings and clout as a result of the changes to the organisation's financial and governance structure.

Manohar had argued that the reforms would ensure "a more equitable distribution of revenues" and greater equality in the game by attaching the same weight to each member nation's vote in board meetings.

The ICC statement yesterday quoted the 59-year-

old former head of the Indian board as saying it was his duty to ensure a smooth transition.

"I respect the sentiments expressed by the directors and the confidence they have reposed in me," he said. "In the light of this, and although my decision to depart due to personal reasons has not changed, I am willing to continue as chairman."

The Indian cricket board said it had shared its concerns over the new financial model with Manohar prior to his resignation. "It is important that the current issues are resolved to everyone's satisfaction," said Vikram Limaye, an administrative member of the Board of Control for Cricket in India. "We are committed to working with ICC for a satisfactory resolution of these issues." —AFP

## WEST INDIES LOOK TO REVIVE FORTUNES AGAINST PAKISTAN

**BRIDGETOWN:** World champions West Indies will be seeking to erase the recent memory of a pitiful showing in the United Arab Emirates when they commence a T20 International series against Pakistan at Kensington Oval in Barbados tomorrow. With their strife-torn squad obliterated in all three matches at the start of the campaign in the UAE last September, Carlos Brathwaite's team has the opportunity to make an immediate statement on home soil against a Pakistan side that has also been inactive as a national unit since those comprehensive triumphs in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

However, a cloud hangs over the visitors in the aftermath of a corruption scandal that emerged during last month's Pakistan Super League with five players, including regular internationals Sharjeel Khan and Mohammad Irfan, prevented from leaving their homeland as investigations continue into spot-fixing allegations.

Their absence presents an opportunity, either for players emerging from a period in the wilderness, like opening batsman Ahmed Shehzad and veteran all-rounder Mohammad Hafeez, or newcomers like Shadab Khan and Fakhar Zaman to stake their claims to regular international duty.

Sunday's match is the first of four—a rarity in bilateral T20 International series—with the remaining three at the Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad at the end of the week.

Yet for all the excitement and hype generated by cricket's most abbreviated and lucrative format, it is fair to suggest that both teams will have a greater level of focus and intensity in the three-match One-day International series that follows in Guyana, especially with the West Indies desperate to stay in the hunt for an automatic qualifying spot for the 2019 Cricket World Cup in England.

### HUMILIATION

Trounced 3-0 in their own backyard by the English just two weeks ago, including a 186-run humiliation at Kensington Oval in the final match, the two-time former World Cup winners continue to languish in ninth spot in the rankings on 84 points, five behind the Pakistanis, who will want to ensure they maintain that eighth spot and even improve to advance automatically to the World Cup.

Pakistan have already pipped the West Indies for the last available spot at June's Champions Trophy in England, and although the Caribbean side will still have the chance to get to the World Cup via the qualifying tournament in Bangladesh next year, failing to qualify as one of the top eight teams will be seen as yet another embarrassment for the one-time undisputed kings of the game. In what is believed will be his final series before bowing out of the international game, Misbah ul Haq will then lead Pakistan in three Tests at the conclusion of the ODI duel as the visitors seek to make history by winning a Test series in the Caribbean for the first time.

Pakistan briefly reigned at the top of the Test rankings during the series against the West Indies in the UAE last November, although defeat to Jason Holder's men in the final Test in Sharjah not only halted their quest for a clean sweep of the entire campaign but triggered a decline with the Pakistanis being swept in two Tests in New Zealand and three in Australia. — AFP



**DHARAMSALA:** Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama talks with Australian cricket team captain Steven Smith during an interaction with the team at the Tsuglakhang temple in Dharamsala, India, yesterday. — AP

### CRICKET

## INDIA'S KOHLI IN DOUBT FOR AUSTRALIA SHOWDOWN

**DHARAMSALA:** Injured Indian skipper Virat Kohli said yesterday he would play the fourth Test against Australia only if he was 100 percent fit, keeping up the suspense over his participation in the series decider.

Kohli, who injured his shoulder during the drawn third Test in Ranchi, said he would undergo fitness tests before taking a final call on whether to take the field in the fourth and final Test which begins Saturday.

"Obviously if I am 100 percent fit for the game (that) is the only condition on which I will take the field," Kohli, 28, said at the pre-match press conference in Dharamsala.

"The physio can explain better (the risks of playing despite carrying an injury). I don't know the magnitude of the risk but all I know is the fitness tests, if I go through them I will take the field." On Thursday the Indian team management rushed in uncapped batsman Shreyas Iyer as a cover for Kohli, who has led India to victory in nine of their last 12 Tests at home.

Kohli has had a disappointing series against Australia, managing just 46 runs in the first three Tests of a series between the world's top two sides which is tantalisingly poised at 1-1 as it reaches its climax.

Kohli, who batted in the nets Friday, said the full extent of an injury could only be known in match conditions and that he would strictly follow the advice of the physiotherapist. "Those are the things you need to keep in mind, the physio wants to give it a bit more time till I test myself," said the right-hander.

"And probably we will take a call on it later tonight or tomorrow (Saturday) so I think we will have to give that much time more for me to make that call with the physiotherapist."

### 'RAHANE MORE CHILLED OUT'

Rival captain Steve Smith said India would still be in very good hands if Kohli was forced out of action, with Ajinkya Rahane having proved his credentials as a stand-in during the Ranchi Test.

Kohli was off the field during most of Australia's first innings in Ranchi but he did come out to bat at his usual number four position and took the field during Australia's second innings.

"He (Rahane) is probably a bit more chilled out on the field, probably not as emotional but I think he understands the game really well," said Smith. "I have been fortunate enough to play a fair bit of cricket with Ajinkya and I think he reads and understands the game really well."

Smith and Kohli have been at loggerheads since the Indian skipper accused his opposite number of systematically abusing the Decision Review System (DRS) during the second Test in Bangalore. Kohli, who has been compared in the Australian press to US President Donald Trump, has especially come under scrutiny both over his form and his conduct under pressure.

Smith however sought to put the controversies on the back burner, saying the team was focused on playing good cricket over the next five days.

"As I said, it's an exciting time for this team. For me it's not about worrying about the end or the result," said Smith, as Australia chase their first Test series win in India in 13 years.

"It's about focusing on our process and making sure we do those really well. If we can do again and do it for a little bit longer than we did it in Ranchi or Bangalore, then hopefully the result will take care of itself." — AFP



SOCCER

# SWEDEN VETERAN LARSSON HAS NO PLANS TO RETIRE

**STOCKHOLM:** Sweden stalwart Sebastian Larsson may have missed the autumn internationals due to a knee operation but there is no end in sight for the 31-year-old who is back in the squad aiming to increase his haul of 87 caps. With his contract at English Premier League club Sunderland set to run out in June, and a top flight club having relocated to his Swedish home town of Eskilstuna, talk has been rife that Larsson was set to either move home or quit the game entirely. However, the midfielder has no plans to end his career and is set to continue playing for the foreseeable future. "Honestly, I don't see the end of my career any time soon and I hope to play on for another few years," he told Reuters following a training session in the Swedish capital ahead of the World Cup qualifier against Belarus today.

"I feel motivated and hungry, but where that will be we'll have to wait and see. I'm not too stressed about it.

"You've got to keep your options open. I've loved England throughout my career. The Premier League has been great for me. Obviously, I wouldn't be against playing in England, but you have to keep your options open. "I'll have a look in the summer, see what's available and make a decision from there."

Larsson was his usual industrious self at Euro 2016, appearing in all three group games, but could not prevent Sweden finishing bottom of the section with one point.

But unlike other senior squad members, such as Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Kim Kallstrom and Andreas Isaksson, he chose not to hang up his international boots after Sweden's early exit.

With coach Erik Hamren having been replaced by Jan Andersson, Larsson is adapting to a new way of working but he won't be quitting the national team any time soon.

"I haven't been here long enough to notice any changes yet, as the days go by I'm sure there will be," he said. "Each manager has his own way of doing things, so I'll just have to try to pick it up as I go along."

## FATHER FIGURE

He returns to a team who are third in World Cup qualifying Group A with seven points from four games, three off leaders France and behind second-placed Netherlands on goal difference. After playing Belarus, who are fifth with two points, Sweden face European champions Portugal in a friendly next Tuesday,

Larsson is the second-oldest player in the squad and smiles at the suggestion he is a father figure for the younger players. "I don't see myself as the granddad just yet, so we'll have to see how we go. Obviously, I've got a lot of experience and I have to use that to help the younger lads when that is needed," he said. Having spent the best part of six years at Sunderland, who are again involved in a relegation battle, the international break provides Larsson with a chance to get away from the pressure of their struggle at the bottom of the table. —Reuters



**DALLAS:** Dallas Mavericks guard Seth Curry (30) goes up for a shot between Los Angeles Clippers' DeAndre Jordan (6) and Austin Rivers, right, in the second half of an NBA basketball game in Dallas, Thursday. Curry scored 23 points in the 97-95 Mavericks win. — AP

BASKETBALL

# BARNES' LATE BASKET STEAL PUT MAVS PAST CLIPPERS

**DALLAS:** Mavericks forward Harrison Barnes buried the go-ahead jumper and made a big steal with 3.9 seconds to go to give Dallas a 97-95 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers on Thursday. It was a critical loss for the Clippers, who saw their three-game win streak end and also saw their chances to take over the No. 4 seed in the Western Conference playoff chase diminished. Los Angeles returns home for a Saturday matinee against No. 4 seed Utah, which holds a 1 1/2-game lead over the Clippers. Blake Griffin had a chance to regain the lead in the final seconds, but as he made his move in the paint, Barnes managed to swipe the ball away. The Clippers were afforded one last chance to win with 0.9 seconds to go, but guard J.J. Redick's leaning three-point attempt just missed off the back iron.

## NETS 126, SUNS 98

Brook Lopez scored 12 of his 19 points in the third quarter as Brooklyn rallied from an early 15-point deficit and pulled away for a rout of Phoenix. Lopez saw his string of 20-plus-point games end at six as he sat out the fourth quarter. His showing helped the Nets win consecutive games for the first time since home wins over the Cleveland Cavaliers and Indiana Pacers on March 24 and 26, 2016. Reserve KJ McDaniels added a season-high 16 points and Jeremy Lin added 13 after sitting Tuesday's win over the Detroit Pistons with a sprained right ankle. Trevor Booker contributed 14 while Quincy Acy chipped in 12 as the Nets outscored the Suns 111-68 in the final 38:08 and received a season-high 81 points from reserves.

## RAPTORS 101, HEAT 84

DeMar DeRozan scored 40 points, and the Raptors rallied from an early 15-point deficit to defeat the Heat. DeRozan shot 14-of-25 from the field and made 12 of 13 free throws as Toronto won its fourth straight. In one first-quarter stretch, DeRozan scored 14 consecutive points for a Raptors lineup still without starting point guard Kyle Lowry, who remains sidelined because of an injury to his right wrist. Miami got 16 points and 14 rebounds from Hassan Whiteside.

## SPURS 97, GRIZZLIES 90

LaMarcus Aldridge poured in 23 points and Kawhi Leonard added 19 as San Antonio finally found a way to beat Memphis. With Memphis within 92-87 in the final 30 seconds, the Spurs' Tony Parker hit a ringing three-pointer with the shot clock winding down to give San Antonio a final bit of breathing room. The win was the third straight for the Spurs but just the first in three games this season against Memphis, which always gives San Antonio fits.

## TRAIL BLAZERS 110, KNICKS 95

Damian Lillard and CJ McCollum combined for 50 points as Portland swept past New York at Moda Center. Lillard scored 30 points and McCollum added 20 for the Trail Blazers, who won for the ninth time in 12 outings. Jusuf Nurkic contributed 16 points and 10 rebounds for Portland. Kristaps Porzingis scored 18 points and Courtney Lee chipped in 16 for the Knicks, who have lost seven of their last eight contests. — Reuters

## NBA Results/Standings

Portland 110, NY Knicks 95; Dallas 97, LA Clippers 95; San Antonio 97, Memphis 90; Brooklyn 126, Phoenix 98; Toronto 101, Miami 84.

### Eastern Conference

#### Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	46	26	.639	-
Toronto	43	29	.597	3
NY Knicks	27	45	.375	19
Philadelphia	26	45	.366	19.5
Brooklyn	15	56	.211	30.5

#### Central Division

Cleveland	46	24	.657	-
Milwaukee	36	35	.507	10.5
Indiana	36	35	.507	10.5
Chicago	34	38	.472	13
Detroit	34	38	.472	13

#### Southeast Division

Washington	43	28	.606	-
Atlanta	37	34	.521	6
Miami	35	37	.486	8.5
Charlotte	32	39	.451	11
Orlando	26	46	.361	17.5

### Western Conference

#### Northwest Division

Utah	44	28	.611	-
Oklahoma City	41	30	.577	2.5
Denver	34	37	.479	9.5
Portland	33	38	.465	10.5
Minnesota	28	42	.400	15

#### Pacific Division

Golden State	57	14	.803	-
LA Clippers	43	30	.589	15
Sacramento	27	44	.380	30
Phoenix	22	50	.306	35.5
LA Lakers	20	51	.282	37

#### Southwest Division

San Antonio	55	16	.775	-
Houston	49	22	.690	6
Memphis	40	32	.556	15.5
Dallas	31	40	.437	24



# QATAR COACHES VERBALLY ABUSED MY MOTHER: QUEIROZ

**DOHA:** An angry Carlos Queiroz accused Qatar's coaching staff of verbally abusing his mother following an explosive end to Iran's 1-0 World Cup qualifier win in Doha on Thursday. The Portuguese coach said members of the Qatar bench made rude remarks in Spanish about his mother and accused his opponents of "a lack of ethics" throughout the match. "Two staff insulted me in Spanish, I can't understand it," he said.

Asked to clarify, he said they had made offensive remarks about his mother. "People don't have the right to spend the game insulting and offending other people," said Queiroz. "I have never seen this in my life

before," said the former Real Madrid coach. He added: "One thing I am sure, the coaching staff is not at the level of the Qatar national team. 'The Qatar national team deserves much better.'"

He said Qatar's antics were "embarrassing". Queiroz also accused the opposite bench of trying to influence the referee throughout the game, which saw Iran take a giant step towards qualification for the World Cup in Russia next year while Qatar's hopes virtually vanished. The two benches clashed at the end of the match, confronting each other and Queiroz was booed from the pitch by home fans. That bad-tempered

ending came after tensions had simmered between the coaching staff prior to the crucial qualifier.

Before the match, Qatar's coach Jorge Fossati said he was upset by remarks attributed to Queiroz about the number of foreign-born players in the squad.

The remarks were allegedly made when the teams met in Tehran last September when Iran secured a 2-0 victory with goals in the 94th and 96th minutes.

That match too ended with angry clashes after the final whistle between players and officials. Queiroz however denied making the remarks. In response to the accusations

of abuse, Fossati said he did not believe Queiroz and accused the Portuguese coach of being a "Hollywood artist".

Talking about the remarks over naturalised players, he said Queiroz had accused the media of being "liars".

"If he doesn't take responsibility for what he said (about naturalised players), how can we believe what he says?"

"Mr Queiroz is a good artist," Fossati told reporters. He added that Queiroz had not raised the issue when the pair had met immediately after the final whistle. "He is not the kind of man that I like," added Fossati. — AFP

## RODRIGUEZ AT THE DOUBLE AS BOLIVIA PAY PENALTY

**BARRANQUILLA:** Real Madrid star James Rodriguez bundled in the rebound from a late penalty as Colombia defeated Bolivia 1-0 on Thursday to boost their 2018 World Cup qualification campaign. Rodriguez rammed home his finish at the second attempt after Bolivia goalkeeper Carlos Lampe had saved the playmaker's spotkick on 83 minutes.

The goal gave Colombia a precious three points and moved them up into fourth spot in the South American standings ahead of other matches being played Thursday, with 21 points from 13 games. Until Rodriguez's late winner, it looked as if Bolivia had done enough to earn a point, defending in depth and frustrating the hosts at every turn.

The Colombians almost opened the scoring after eight minutes when Pablo Armero's cross into the area was met by Sampdoria striker Luis Muriel, who clipped his left-foot shot against the bar.

Mateus Uribe rattled Bolivian nerves next after 17 minutes, shooting low after a deft layoff from MacNelly Torres only to see his effort parried and gathered by Lampe.

Colombia were forced into a reshuffle just after the half-hour mark when Muriel limped off with what looked like an injury to his right hamstring.

Rodriguez threatened to open the scoring on 34 minutes but Cristian Coimbra did just enough with his covering tackle to throw the Real Madrid star off balance and his shot went wide. Rodriguez almost created an opening for Juan Cuadrado on the stroke of half-time but his chip into the box was directed just wide by the Juventus winger.

Colombia cranked up the pressure in the second half and carved out a series of good chances in quick succession which began when Carlos Bacca's header was turned around the post by Lampe in the 63rd minute.

Centre-back Yerry Mina crashed a thumping header off the underside of the bar from the ensuing corner and Torres then sent a low shot from just outside the area skidding wide of the post. Bolivia continued to ride their luck and Coimbra was fortunate not to concede a penalty for handball as the minutes wound down. But Bolivia's luck ran out when Coimbra brought down Cuadrado, allowing Rodriguez to score from the spot at the second attempt. —AFP



**BARRANQUILLA:** Bolivia's defenders Ronald Raldes (2nd-R), Mario Cuellar (2nd-L) and Cristian Coimbra (L) vie for the ball with Colombia's midfielder James Rodriguez (R) during their 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifier football match in Barranquilla, on Thursday. — AFP



**GENEVA:** Swiss head coach Vladimir Petkovic, speaks to his players during a training session of Switzerland's squad at the stade de Geneve stadium, in Geneva, Switzerland, yesterday. Switzerland will play Latvia today, for a 2018 World Cup group B qualification soccer match. —AP

### SOCCER

## AS WORLD CUP 2018 HOPE FADES, EURO TURN TO NATIONS LEAGUE

**GENEVA:** For European teams fading out of the 2018 World Cup picture, a new opportunity opens if they lose their qualifying match this weekend.

Meet the Nations League. The complex format created by UEFA to replace most unloved national team friendlies kicks off in 18 months' time.

By tomorrow night, for teams with slim-to-none World Cup hopes, their next meaningful match with qualification at stake might be their Nations League debut.

It offers a second-chance path to major tournaments - the 2020 European Championship for sure and, UEFA intends, the 2022 World Cup - for teams which have not been in a generation, or ever. For teams failing to finish in the top two of a traditional Euro 2020 qualifying group, a subsequent playoff round is based on Nations League standings. It will send at least one of UEFA's lowest-ranked teams to the 24-team tournament. For fans of Norway and Scotland, Armenia and Kazakhstan, it's almost time to learn to love the Nations League:

### WHY CREATE THE NATIONS LEAGUE?

"The friendlies really don't interest anybody, neither the audience at large, neither the journalists nor the players," UEFA's then-president Michel Platini

said in launching the competition in March 2014. Top-ranked teams wanted games against each other, middle-ranked teams wanted winnable competitive games, low-ranked teams wanted hope of playing at tournaments.

Norway helped draft the Nations League plan. Its most recent tournaments were Euro 2020 and the 1998 World Cup, where it played Scotland, also enduring a two-decade tournament drought. Tomorrow, Norway and Scotland are fifth-place teams in World Cup qualifying groups facing another early exit if they lose against second-place opponents, Northern Ireland and Slovenia, respectively. "The whole landscape of football has changed since (1998)," said Scotland federation president Alan McRae, who was at the 1-1 draw with Norway in Bordeaux 19 years ago. "(The Nations League) is very important for the smaller nations."

### WHAT IS THE NATIONS LEAGUE?

A new competition for all 55 UEFA members with three parts. A group stage from September

November 2018; Final Four mini-tournament in June 2019 for high-ranked teams; playoffs in March 2020 to fill the last four Euro 2020 qualifying places. The group stage is the compli-

cated bit. League A has the 12 top-ranked teams playing in three-team groups. Group winners advance to the Final Four at a venue to be decided. That will crown the Nations League champion. League B is another 12-team tier for teams ranked Nos. 13-24. Group winners are promoted to League A in the next Nations League groups two years later. Last-place teams are relegated to League C. League C is for 15 teams ranked Nos. 25-39, also with promotion and relegation. League D is for the 16 lowest-ranked teams, and group winners are promoted.

### WHAT HAPPENS TO EURO 2020 QUALIFYING?

It starts late in March 2019 and group-stage games are completed that year.

The draw - with five groups of five teams and five six-team groups - is influenced by Nations League results. Teams set to play in the Final Four are placed in a five-team Euro 2020 qualifying group. With fewer matches, their schedule is clear for the June 2019 mini-tournament.

The top two teams in each group will fill 20 places at Euro 2020, being played in 13 different countries with no automatic entries for hosts.—AP



# Sports



Tomic pulls out at Miami with injury

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**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentina's forward Lionel Messi (2nd-R) vies for the ball with Chile's midfielder Charles Aranguiz (C) during their 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifier football match at the Monumental stadium in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Thursday. — AFP

## BRAZIL DESTROYS URUGUAY, ARGENTINA SURVIVES

**SAO PAULO:** Brazil was not intimidated by more than 60,000 raucous fans at the Estadio Centenario in Montevideo, beating second-place Uruguay 4-1 in South America's World Cup qualifying group to retain the lead in the standings after 13 matches. Midfielder Paulinho scored a surprising hat trick, with Barcelona star Neymar adding another, to keep their team firmly on course for football's main event in Russia next year.

Brazil is still to lose a point under coach Tite, who took over in September and secured on Thursday his seventh straight win in the South American qualifiers. Now the five-time World Cup champions total 30 points, seven more than Uruguay and 10 above the lowest place that could guarantee a berth in the next World Cup. With five games to play, Brazil could qualify next Tuesday with victory over Paraguay if Ecuador and Chile fail to win their games.

Argentina beat Chile 1-0 thanks to a penalty scored by Lionel Messi and managed to stay in the chase for a spot in the tournament, going third with 22 points. Chile is in sixth, outside the qualification zone. Fourth-place Colombia

also needed a penalty to score a 1-0 home victory against Bolivia. Elsewhere, seventh-place Paraguay beat fifth-place Ecuador 2-1 and bottom team Venezuela drew 2-2 with eighth-place Peru.

### BRAZIL

For the first time since September, a team scored against Brazil. A blunder by defender Marcelo led goalkeeper Alisson to foul striker Edinson Cavani only 7 minutes after kick off. That allowed the Uruguayan to score his ninth goal in South American qualifiers, more than any other player.

It was the first time coach Tite saw his team trail, and that happened against a team that had won all six home games.

Ten minutes later midfielder Paulinho leveled the game with a blast from the edge of the box into goalkeeper Martin Silva's left corner. Scores remained level at halftime, but Brazil's dominance was evident. At 52 minutes, Paulinho scored again to put the visitors in front. The Estadio Centenario went silent.

Uruguay stepped up the pressure to level,

but Brazil was countering dangerously. On 74 minutes, Neymar's genius appeared. After defender Miranda cleared the ball from his box, the Barcelona star beat Uruguayan Coates in a quick race and lobbed Silva to make it 3-1 and score his first goal against Uruguay. By then the Montevideo stadium, which hosted the 1930 World Cup final, sounded more like the Maracana in Rio, with only Brazilian voices being heard.

But that was not all. At 92 minutes, after Brazil wasted a series of other opportunities, Paulinho completed his hat-trick with his chest, after a cross from the right from Dani Alves. "Not in my wildest dreams I expected something like this," the Guangzhou Evergrande midfielder said after the match.

Asked about the historic performance, coach Tite said it was "more than the expected." "I was happy about the 90 minutes ... our capacity to absorb a goal against us and keep

playing based on one idea. Our team is very self-aware that it has to triangulate. We did more than controlling the match, we were dominant," he said in a post-match press con-

ference. Uruguay resented the absence of suspended targetman Luis Suarez, while Brazil missed teenage sensation Gabriel Jesus, who has a broken toe. Brazil will miss defender Dani Alves in the clash against Paraguay on Tuesday in Sao Paulo the match that will likely secure its spot in the next World Cup. Uruguay will travel to face Peru.

### ARGENTINA

Messi's goal at 16 minutes gave Argentina a valuable victory, putting Edgardo Bauza's side once again in the qualification zone. The Chileans complained about the penalty decision, but failed to take advantage of an unimaginative Argentine team that managed to get few opportunities to score at the Monumental de Nunez in Buenos Aires.

The result takes pressure off Argentina, a team whose players have refused to talk to the media because of criticism they have endured over recent games. Bauza had to speak some words, but they were not too encouraging for the team's future. "What matters is that we won," the coach said. —AP