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## CONSTITUTIONAL COURT DECLARES VOTES 'LEGAL', REPLACES ONE MP

### PREMIER DEMANDS EXPLANATION TO HIS GRILLING



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday attended and patronized teachers' honoring ceremony for the year 2016-2017 on the occasion of World Teachers' Day. — KUNA (See Page 2)

KUWAIT: The Constitutional Court yesterday rejected all petitions challenging last year's parliamentary polls and the current National Assembly, saying the process was conducted within the framework of the constitution. The ruling means the National Assembly will stay. The court accepted only one petition out of 52 it received by scrapping the membership of MP Marzouk Al-Khalifa and declaring that candidate Farraj Al-Arbeed has won the seat.

The court found that there was a mathematical error in counting the votes in the Fourth Constituency. Arbeed was placed in the 11th place behind Khalifa by the election authorities. But when the votes were recounted by the court, it was found he came in the 9th place, followed by MP Saad Al-Shuwaier in the 10th and Khalifa in the 11th. Only 10 MPs are elected from each constituency.

Former candidates had challenged that the whole election process was flawed because the Amiri decree dissolving the previous Assembly in October was not in line with the constitution. They also challenged that an Amiri decree inviting voters for the November election was also unconstitutional. But the court, presided by head of the Higher Judiciary Council Yousef Al-Matawa, said that all the decrees were constitutional and the election process was legal, thus throwing out petitions to dissolve the Assembly and call for fresh election.

Assembly Speaker Marzouk Al-Ghanem welcomed the verdict and said it will lay the ground for political stability in the country. He said that one of the two grillings against the prime minister in which Khalifa was one of the three grillers will remain intact since two other grillers remain. Khalifa's name will be deleted, he said. Ghanem also said that Arbeed will take the oath to become a member in the Assembly during next Tuesday's regular session.

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Min 25°  
Max 41°  
High Tide  
07:12 & 17:23  
Low Tide  
00:07 & 12:10

## News

in brief

### Village bans women from using phones

NEW DELHI: An Indian village has banned women from using mobile phones in public in an attempt to restrict their contacts with men and plans hefty fines for violators, police said yesterday. Village elders ruled that women found using a mobile phone outside their homes would be fined 21,000 rupees (\$325) - a sum it would take most rural Indians several months to earn. The ruling was issued on Tuesday in Madora, a mainly Muslim village in the conservative northern state of Uttar Pradesh. "We have received reports about the Khap ordering the ban on women using mobile phones," local police chief Arun Kumar Singh said, referring to the informal village councils known as khap panchayats in India.

### Dozens trapped; coal mine explosion kills 21

TEHRAN: A large explosion struck a coal mine in northern Iran yesterday, trapping dozens of miners and killing at least 21, state media reported. Ambulances, helicopters and other rescue vehicles raced to the scene in Iran's northern Golestan province as authorities worked to determine the scale of the emergency. The IRNA news agency quoted Golestan provincial emergency management department head Sadeq Ali Moghadam as saying that 40 to 50 people are believed to be trapped in the mine outside of the town of Azadshahr. Pir Hossein Kollivand, who runs Iran's emergency department, later said that as many as 80 miners could be trapped in two sections of the mine. The different figures could not immediately be reconciled.

### Thousands rally for Palestinian prisoners

RAMALLAH: Several thousand Palestinians rallied in a West Bank square yesterday in solidarity with hundreds of hunger-striking Palestinian prisoners held by Israel. Speakers called for a new campaign of civil disobedience against Israeli rule. The prisoners launched the open-ended protest, now in its 17th day, to press for better conditions, including family visits. The International Committee of the Red Cross issued a rare statement yesterday, urging Israeli authorities to stop what it called the "systematic suspension" of family visits for the hunger strikers. In the West Bank city of Ramallah, protesters gathered in Nelson Mandela Square. They waved Palestinian flags and posters of Marwan Barghouti, the leader of the strike, bearing his quote: "Our chains will be broken before we are." Addressing the crowd, Barghouti's wife delivered a speech on her husband's behalf, calling for "the largest campaign of civil disobedience" against 50 years of Israeli rule. Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem in the 1967 war. Palestinians hope to establish a state in these lands.

## TRUMP TO RELAUNCH MIDEAST PEACE TALKS

### 'WE WILL GET IT DONE'



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump greets Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas at the White House in Washington, DC yesterday. — AFP

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump committed the United States yesterday to helping Israel and the Palestinians reach peace, telling visiting Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas: "We will get it done." Trump spoke after welcoming Abbas to the White House for a meeting aimed at relaunching talks that have failed repeatedly to resolve the decades-old conflict. "I've always heard that perhaps the toughest deal to make is the deal between the Israelis and the Palestinians," Trump said. "Let's see if we can prove them wrong."

"We will get it done," he said. Speaking through a translator, Abbas echoed Trump's upbeat tone, saying, "We believe that we can ... be true partners to you to bring about a historic peace under your stewardship." Barely two and a half months after having received Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the US president greeted Abbas on the White House lawn, before ushering him into the

Oval Office for their talks. The long-shot effort to bring peace-which has eluded US presidents since the 1970s-got off to a rocky start early in Trump's administration.

Trump renounced support for a Palestinian state and vowed to move the US embassy to Jerusalem, breaking two tenets of American policy held for decades. Vice President Mike Pence on Tuesday said Trump is still "giving serious consideration into moving the American embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem." That move would likely spark Palestinian fury and is privately seen by many in the Israel and US security establishments as needlessly inflammatory. At the same time, Trump has urged Israel to hold back on settlement building in the West Bank, a longstanding concern of Palestinians and much of the world. Pence said Trump is "personally committed to resolving the Israeli and Palestinian conflict" and "valuable progress" is being made.

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## SWIM BODY MONITORING VP ROLE IN FIFA'S BRIBERY CASE

### 'CO-CONSPIRATOR 3' LINKED TO KUWAIT

LAUSANNE: World swimming body FINA has pledged to "take all measures deemed necessary" after its vice president was implicated in a FIFA bribery case in an American court. "FINA is aware of the media reports concerning the allegations against its first vice president, Husain Al-Musallam," the governing body said yesterday in a statement to The Associated Press. Still, the FINA ethics panel is not formally studying the case of the Kuwaiti official, whose senior vice presidency is due for renewal in July.

Al-Musallam could be identified in a Department of Justice document and Brooklyn federal court transcript last week in the guilty plea of a FIFA audit committee member. The official, Richard Lai from Guam, said in court he was paid hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes through the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA). This was to help advance the interests of a Kuwaiti "faction" and recruit other Asian soccer leaders he understood would be offered bribes, he said.

The case documents described "Co-conspirator 3" as a "high-ranking" official at the Kuwait-based OCA and an official with Kuwait's soccer federation. Al-Musallam has been OCA director general since 2005 and a vice chairman for international relations with the Kuwait soccer body. "Even though this case is not directly related to FINA, we will of course monitor the situation and take all measures deemed necessary following the conclusion of the various investigations," the swimming body said.

The IOC and FIFA ethics panels also have jurisdiction over Al-Musallam's case. He is a member of the IOC's Olympic Solidarity commission, which has a budget of more than \$480 million to distribute among national Olympic bodies and teams in the four-year period leading to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. That panel is chaired by Al-Musallam's long-time boss, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah of Kuwait, the OCA president

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DUBAI: Solar panels power an Emirates National Oil Company gas station, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The government-owned oil company said the country's first solar-powered gas station in Dubai, on the city's main Sheikh Zayed Road thoroughfare, is covered with solar panels that can generate up to 120 kilowatt hours. — AP

## UAE BUILDING UP REGIONAL ARMY IN TROUBLED YEMEN

MUKALLA: Since a Yemeni force trained and funded by the United Arab Emirates recaptured the southern port of Mukalla from Al-Qaeda fighters a year ago, the Gulf state's efforts to consolidate progress risks being compromised by traditional rivalries. Divisions within Yemen's heavily tribal society as well as secessionist sentiment among troops and leaders in the

once-independent south make building a truly national army an almost impossible task for the UAE right now.

They could also suck the UAE deeper into the Yemen quagmire. UAE officers say the situation has made it difficult for them to push north and add to their territorial gains.

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KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and other officials pose for a group photo with the honored teachers. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos

# AMIR ATTENDS TEACHERS' HONORING CEREMONY

## HIS HIGHNESS' TRIBUTE ULTIMATE HONOR: MINISTER

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah attended and patronized yesterday the teachers' honoring ceremony for the year 2016-2017 on the occasion of World Teachers' Day. His Highness the Amir arrived to the ceremony held at the Public Authority For Applied Education and Training (PAAET), and was received by the Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Mohammad Abdullatif Al-Fares as well as a number of officials.

His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Speaker of the National Assembly Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Sheikh Faisal Al-Saud Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

The ceremony was also attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of



Students perform on stage during the ceremony.

Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, senior state officials, as well as senior army, police and National Guard leaders, along with Kuwait Fire Service Directorate.

### Tremendous honor

The attendance of His Highness the Amir in the ceremony was a tremendous honor, Fares said in a statements, adding that "teaching represents the crux of educational activity in the country." Moreover, he noted that the ceremony was a "message of appreciation to all teachers," adding that the Ministry of Education believes that teachers are the catalysts set

the education process in motion. "The teachers honored today are those who helped instill the virtues of education in the minds of our youth," Fares said.

Meanwhile, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education Dr Haythem Al-Athari said that the ceremony "honored the commitment and dedication of teachers." On His Highness the Amir's attendance, he said it was an honor and a testament to how grateful His Highness the Amir is of the contributions made by teachers.

Similarly, the Ministry of Education's Assistant Undersecretary for Public



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and other officials react during the ceremony.

Education Fatma Al-Kanderi said that national support of teachers has always been accustomed, congratulating all teachers that were honored in the ceremony.

### Teachers' development

Meanwhile, an official affirmed that His Highness the Amir's honoring of teachers, in addition to his special interests in their professional development would highly boost educators' status in Kuwait. His Highness' honoring is also a tremendous accolade for all teachers and will provide them with the strength and determination to exert further efforts in order to enhance

the education process in the country and produce highly efficient graduates, said Mutee'a Al-Ajmi, Chairman of Kuwait Teachers Association (KTA). He noted that His Highness' sponsorship of the event has expressional and tremendous meanings in showing appreciation, keen interest, and high place for educators.

His Highness' support will push teachers and members of the educational system in Kuwait to bear their responsibilities in making a promising future and building capable generations that realize and value their own responsibilities in boosting the education march in the country.—KUNA



Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Fares welcomes His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to the venue.



A gift is presented to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



Teacher Najat Al-Shemmari poses with Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Fares after her honoring.

# CROWN PRINCE MEETS SENIOR OFFICIALS

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace yesterday His Highness the Prime Minister

Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh

Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Sheikh Nawaf also received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.

Furthermore, His Highness the Crown Prince received First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA



KUWAIT: His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah.



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.



# MUWAIZRI THREATENS TO FILE MORE GRILLING MOTIONS SOON

'WE WOULD GRILL 15 MINISTERS A WEEK IF WE HAVE TO'

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri, who already has filed an interpellation against Housing Minister Yasser Abul, said that he plans to file another grilling motion today against another minister, and a further one the following week or the week. He did not mention the minister he plans to grill next, but media reports hinted yesterday that it could be Minister of Oil, Minister of Electricity and Water Essam Al-Marzouq. "We have no other tool but to get those people to the podium," he underlined, referring to the ministers.

Speaking during an open forum at the diwaniya of the Municipal Council's former deputy chairman Jassar Al-Jassar, Muwaizri said that he would never back off even if he had to grill 15 ministers a week. "This is lawmakers' right to exercise and does not mean creating tensions," he stressed, noting that if he fails to provide enough documents to prove that his motions are worthy, then voters themselves would be the ones who would hold him accountable and decide whether he should remain in parliament or not. "We have tried warning members of the executive authority and warned them to stop corruption, and now we arrived to interpellation and want to handle things without showing off," he explained.

Further, Muwaizri said that the Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh had expressed concern over Kuwait's long-term sustainability, saying that such a statement matches those made by a former US ambassador to Kuwait who predicted that

the country would not last past 2020. "Well, it will not as long as conflicts remain amongst influential people," he stressed, pointing out that corruption was prevailing everywhere.

Muwaizri added that the executive authority had failed on social, political and financial



MP Shuaib Al-Muwaizri

levels. In addition, he indicated that over 20,000 citizens remain lined up in the unemployment line. He also noted that he learned how things worked within the housing ministry thanks to his time as minister of housing affairs a few years ago, which lasted for four months only before he resigned from office.

#### Airport project

Undersecretary of the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) Awatef Al-Ghunaim said that the ministry was currently preparing a huge ceremony to be held on the occasion of laying the cornerstone for new airport's project. The ceremony is scheduled to be held on May 9, 2017, and to be attended by His

Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. Speaking during a press conference, Ghunaim added that road 75 projects were currently in progress and that they were expected to be concluded within the coming five years.

Meanwhile, Assistant Undersecretary for Roads Engineering Ahmad Al-Hassan said that a total of KD 1 billion had been spent on road projects over the past five years, and that this figure was expected to reach KD 1.5 billion by the end of the fiscal year 2017-2018. He added that spending on MPW projects, namely roads projects, had increased by 90-98 percent over the past few years, which indicates the state's keenness on executing infrastructure projects in various areas.

Further, Hassan said that the Finance Ministry allocated KD 458 million for the roads' sector this year, but there is still need for more as KD 352 million were already spent during the previous fiscal year 2016-2017; that is 98 percent of the budget.

Responding to a question about developing the fourth ring road, Hassan said that a consultancy agreement would be signed soon to set temporary solutions on developing the road to be executed until the project is finally finished. He added that it is difficult to set a date for solving traffic problems in Kuwait though the projects executed by MPW would greatly contribute to limiting its effects.

#### EPA board

A decree was recently published in the state's official gazette Kuwait Al-Youm that

includes representatives of the ministries of defense, education and higher education in board of directors of the Environment Public Authority (EPA). The representatives are required to be assistant undersecretaries who are promoted by their respective ministries to join the board.

#### MSAL expat staff

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs Hind Al-Sabeeh announced that the total number of non-Kuwaiti employees at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor (MSAL) reached 893 including 608 subcontracted staff members, 57 in medical and assisting medical jobs, 36 in law-related jobs, 43 in finance and accounting, eight as engineers, eight in teaching position, four translators, 67 in social care, 372 as nurses, seven in computer-related jobs and six in varied positions. She added that their annual salaries are KD 856,415.

Speaking in response to a parliamentary inquiry, Sabeeh added that the total number of non-Kuwaiti employees working for limited monthly payment was 103 including drivers, porters, office boys, couriers, electricity and maintenance technicians and barbers receiving the total of KD 287,242 as annual salaries.

Sabeeh added that non-Kuwaiti employees working in assisting jobs reached 182, receiving the total of KD 641,580 as annual salaries. Furthermore, she indicated that only 25 non-Kuwaiti employees worked for the Public Authority for Manpower, while 52 non-Kuwaiti employees worked for the Public Authority for the Disabled.

#### SCRIBBLER'S NOTEBOOK

### FULL THROTTLE



By Jamie Etheridge

etheridge@kuwaittimes.com

**T**his week I went to the traffic department in Jabriya to renew my driver's license. As everyone knows, obtaining and renewing a driver's license in Kuwait has become very difficult and there are a lot of rules that limit who can have a driver's license now. Expat women who don't work and are under their sponsorship of their husband can't have driver's licenses, for example, a huge problem for moms who need to take their kids back and forth to school.

The limitations are a reaction to the excessive traffic and though I find them harsh and unfair in some cases, I can also empathize with everyone's desire to reduce the numbers of cars on the road. Spend even 10 minutes in traffic (more like 45 minutes during rush hour on an average day) and you will see only one part of the Interior Ministry's dilemma.

I was more than a little apprehensive about renewing mine. The queues when I arrived at the traffic department around 4:15pm were already several rows deep, with at least a few hundred people waiting to apply. Some were there to renew but many more were applying for new licenses, the majority it seemed for construction workers, drivers and other blue collar workers.

Thankfully the queue for renewal was relatively short. But even in that time, I could see the pressure the staff at the traffic department were under. From the moment they unlock the doors until they shut down at 8 pm, they are slammed with people queuing and waiting to complete their paperwork.

The staff are overwhelmed. They work full throttle for four straight hours. One of the officers told me that just for renewals they handle 200 cases a day. That's 2.4 cases per minute in an eight hour day. Even if that's an overstatement you can clearly see from the waiting lines of people it's not an exaggeration by much.

It's easy to criticize the government, the Interior Ministry and the employees of the traffic department for all the problems we face on Kuwait's highways and for the long waits and queues everyone has to suffer. I have seen enough YouTube videos mocking government employees and in many cases these are true.

But I can tell you things are different at the traffic department. Everyone I saw yesterday was doing their job.

Not one of the people I met was rude or ignoring their work to chat on their mobile or scroll through Instagram. In fact, they were all polite - and not just with me but with everyone. They were organized and efficient. Two of the ladies handling the process were taking their tea while typing, and the manager was actually helping them while retrieving licenses printed and ready to hand over.

The truth is that the staff are simply overwhelmed and the system itself is overwhelmed. And I think it's important to point out the difference and to thank those who are doing their best.

So I want to thank the Interior Ministry and the Traffic Department staff, in particular, for their hard work and for doing their best.

## MP CRITICIZES GOVT FOR NOT CONDEMNING CITIZEN'S MURDER

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** MP Mohammad Hayef strongly criticized the government's attitude towards the assassination of Kuwaiti businessman Mohammad Al-Shalahi in Turkey, noting that neither the foreign ministry nor the cabinet issued an official condemnation for the murder.

Further, Hayef said that he contacted the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, and asked him to have the cabinet issue a statement. Despite the minister's assurance to him that a statement would be issued, nothing was done so far, Hayef said.

"What happened is an international crime and the cabinet still takes it lightly," he added, pointing out that such an attitude "might force us to take our own protection with us." He also slammed the fact that the cabinet's weekly meeting report condemned an attack that happened the Cuba last week yet fell short to express regret to the death of a Kuwaiti citizen. Shalahi was shot dead last Saturday in an armed attack on his car as he was in the company of his



MP Mohammad Hayef

Iranian business partner Saeed Karimian in Turkey.

#### Lease contracts

The Finance Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for State Property Affairs Adel Al-Menaie announced approving setting the duration of lease contracts by which private schools utilize state-owned buildings to 20 years, provided that proper regular maintenance is done and a report about the building's safety is submitted every five years.

#### Transport rules

During the 19th meeting of the GCC Customs Union held recently in Bahrain, GCC Custom directors approved a number of recommendations concerning the movement of trucks amongst the Gulf Cooperation Council member states to be effective by July 1st, 2017. Informed sources said that special lanes would be allocated at all land border exits for unloaded trucks, trucks loaded with goods that could be quickly damaged and trucks moving from one GCC state to another.

## ONLY FEW 'CHEM' FISH PERISHED: PAAAFR

**KUWAIT:** The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) said yesterday that "only a group of 'chem' fish have recently perished" in territorial waters. All fish in the local markets are safe' and only a group of 'chem' fish have been affected by the recent fish deaths, said PAAAFR's General Director Faisal Al-Hasawi.

PAAAFR has formed a panel to determine the cause of the fish deaths at sea, he said, adding that a team of comprising members of state authorities has surveyed Kuwait Bay to examine these cases, indicating that it was the first time that deep-sea fish perished. He was alluding to 'chem,' as the Kuwaiti natives call it. Kuwaitis do not commonly eat the

fish, which looks similar in appearance to but not to be confused with the catfish.

With an experience of examining the fish deaths phenomena in 2001 and 2003, PAAAFR has set up an operation room and central laboratories to examine samples of the dead fish. Yousef Al-Najm, PAAAFR's Deputy General Director for Fish Resources' Affairs, said PAAAFR has patrolled the waters round the clock to keep close follow-up on the phenomenon.

Up to 99 percent of the perished fish are 'chems,' he said affirming that "this phenomenon is receding." The dead fish are being cleaned up so that other fish would not feed on them and cause expansion of the phenomenon. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources' workers inspect territorial waters. —KUNA

## EARLY VENTRICULAR ARTERY ANEURYSM TESTS AT ADAN HOSPITAL

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** A program for early testing for aneurysm of the ventricular artery was opened at the blood vessels laboratory of Adan Hospital, Head of the surgery department Dr Aous Al-Ozairi announced yesterday. The program is a step forward in efforts to control this disease which hits senior citizens who smoke and those with heart and hypertension diseases, Dr Ozairi said, adding that it helps with early detection of the disease and treatment to limit potential damage. Dr Ozairi further indicated that the program follows international recommendations for the discovery and treatment of this disease for men and women who are over 65 years of age. Cases will be received at a special clinic for this purpose and lab test appointments will be made for patients, he added.

Furthermore, Dr Ozairi said that cases which meet the conditions will be transferred to Adan Hospital from other hospitals and health centers in Ahmadi Health Zone. This can help prevent complications such as the rupture of the aorta (the main artery in the body), which leads to death in most cases. "We advise the elderly who smoke and suffer from heart conditions to undergo early tests for this disease," Dr Ozairi added.



Dr Aous Al-Ozairi

## MAN ARRESTED FOR PROCESSING ILLEGAL RESIDENCY TRANSACTIONS

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Detectives arrested an Arab man who took bribes from expatriates as he offered to transfer their residencies from family visas (article 22) to work visas (article 18), the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Information Department said yesterday.

After verifying information received about his activities, detectives moved in and arrested the suspect inside a company. He confessed to asking for KD 250 to process the illegal transaction. The case was sent to the public prosecution.

#### Hotel warned

Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) warned a hotel for violation of security and safety measures. The hotel's officials were given a 72-hour ultimatum to meet the required preventive measures, otherwise the hotel will be closed. Separately, emergency teams of the Jahra municipality branch carried out a campaign recently, which resulted in issuing 18 citations and warnings in industrial Jahra, Erhaiya and Naseem.



KUWAIT: Pictures released by Kuwait Municipality yesterday for a campaign carried out recently by Jahra's branch.



#### Letters to Badriya

Dear Badriya,

Thank you for your column in general which I read frequently, but specifically your column on Conscripts caught my attention. It would be interesting to know the answers to the many good questions that you raise.

I am one who completed the service back in 1985, batch 14 of the Military College to be precise. In those days, they had divided the conscripts into two categories - graduates and non-graduates. I had graduated from a US university so I was put into the graduate category. I wonder if they will do the same this time... so I am not sure how the age limit of 18 will be implemented.

Even though the age for recruitment was 18 years of age, there were many, myself included, that were actually not called for service until we were close to 30 years old. There were a number of reasons for that, which included a backlog of recruiting the recruits. In other words, there were only two batches a year of say 100 people or so a year per batch. So they could not get all the people born in any given year enrolled in one specific year. So the remaining people carried over to the next year and so on and so forth. Moreover, conscripts had the option to defer entering the army due to their pursuing continued higher education... so in fact, many were chasing masters degrees etc hoping to reach the age of 30 so that they would not be recruited (age 30 was the final age one could be recruited). After reaching that age, or if you were exempt for health reasons or an only male child, I believe one paid a fee / fine of KD 500 and that was it.

In my specific situation, I was working for NBK in New York, having just moved there six or seven months prior...then all of a sudden had to return to Kuwait to complete the service because I was already at the age of 29 and getting close to being exempt. That upset my career without a doubt but I was ready and did return to Kuwait to complete my obligations to my country - but this was certainly one major point which you raised. It was not easy for me. Just moved there, found a flat, furnished it, getting into the work rhythm and bingo, go home to join the army.... Again having to find a place to live, furniture and the rest. By the time I was out, somebody had taken my job of course and I sat around NBK, Kuwait, trying to fit in somewhere (I am leaving out a lot of details). So clearly - yes, it had upset my life and my career.

Not only that, but we were expected to return for updated military training every year for one month for the next ten years as reservists. The invasion and liberation interrupted those 10 consecutive years after my initial training but I had to keep going until I was 40. Which again was ok with me, but after liberation, I found myself working for a foreign company, namely Smith Barney (Citigroup) in Bahrain. I had to use my annual leave for many years to return to Kuwait (find a place to live, cost of air tickets, rent a car plus other expenses etc...) for my one month refresher course. Luckily I had understanding bosses.

Notwithstanding, I am one who believes in serving one's country as I did, and to this day, proud of it. And I would be proud to have my sons serve their country as I am sure they would be. However, you touched on a key point - many key points in fact - but one which I experienced firsthand and it would be interesting to see how the system would address this very important and crucial issue. What I went through was not a pleasant experience with regards to uprooting my life and serving... and again, having to do the same almost every year thereafter for 10 years.

I hope the authorities would consider this extensively and find a solution to assist the next generation. It is not an easy situation as there are so many variables to consider, but maybe it has to be limited to ages 18 to 22 for example. I don't have the answer but there are many models of conscripted service in the world which I am sure we can learn from.

Thank you again for your article. Keep writing. The topics you address are very interesting.

Kind regards  
Osama Talat Al-Ghoussein



In Brief

AMIR EXPRESSES SORROW TO UAE

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday addressed a cable of condolences to the UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan on martyrdom of a UAE soldier while serving in the "operation hope restoration to support the legitimacy" in Yemen. Their Highnesses the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, respectively Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, sent identical cables to the UAE president. — KUNA



AMIR CONGRATULATES NEW MP

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday addressed a cable of congratulations to Farraj Al-Arbeed for winning a seat in the National Assembly. His Highness the Amir, in the cable, wished the new member of parliament success in the service of the dear homeland. His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sent an identical cable to Arbeed. — KUNA



SABEEH MEETS LEBANESE MINISTER

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Sabeeh held talks Tuesday with the visiting Lebanese Minister of Women's Affairs Jean Ogassapian on cooperation in social domain. Sabeeh, also Minister of State for Economic Affairs, said in a statement that Kuwait and Lebanon were drafting a memorandum of understanding over women affairs, as well as exchange of expertise. Ogassapian said his visit aimed at benefiting from Kuwait's expertise in women affairs, following the establishment of a women affairs portfolio in the Lebanese cabinet. — KUNA



Photo

of the day



**KUWAIT:** An archive photo showing a panoramic view of the Green Island; an artificial island and one of Kuwait City's most popular recreational facilities. — KUNA photo

KUWAIT URGES UN FOR MORE ACTION ON POWS, ARCHIVE



**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with UN Special Representative to Iraq Yan Kobish. — KUNA

**KUWAIT:** The State of Kuwait urged anew the United Nations yesterday to carry on with efforts to try and locate Kuwaiti POWs and the national archive in Iraq. The call was made by the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah during a meeting with the UN Special Representative to Iraq Yan Kobish, currently on an official visit to the country. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled urged the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq to pursue efforts for trying

to locate Kuwaiti POWs and missing citizens, national properties and the archive. "These issues are of great official and humanitarian significance," he said. The talks between the two sides also dealt with topics related to the UN mission for aiding Iraq. The meeting was attended by Assistant Foreign Minister for his bureau's affairs, Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, and other ranking officials of the department of external affairs. — KUNA

KUWAIT OPENS 4TH SCHOOL FOR IRAQIS

KUWAIT OFFERS TREATMENT FOR 208 WOUNDED IN MOSUL

**IRBIL:** Kuwait yesterday inaugurated the fourth 'Kuwait School' in Al-Kharez shantytown southeast of Irbil, as part of ongoing support for Iraqis relocated from the embattled city of Mosul. Kuwait's General Consul in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kandari said that the new school, financed by Kuwait Red Crescent Society, was part of the Kuwaiti philanthropic campaign 'Kuwait on your side.' Such humanitarian aid is provided to the Iraqis accord-

ing to guidelines by His Highness the Amir. The school will accommodate 1,500 students.

Separately, Kuwait has provided treatment for around 208 wounded person in governorate of Mosul due to the ongoing military operations in the governorate. Kandari said that Kuwait Relief Society, acting as a body that distributes donations on behalf of Kuwait, has contracted with a private hospital and paid for the treat-

ment due to the inability of some government hospitals to deal with the large number of injured people.

The aid provided by Kuwait will continue for the displaced people in Iraq to cover all the needs specially the medical needs, he said. Head of the hospital Dr Shawan Qader thanked Kuwait for this gracious gesture to offer treatment for the Iraqi people. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's General Consul in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kandari inaugurates the fourth 'Kuwait School' in Al-Kharez shantytown southeast of Irbil.



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's General Consul in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kandari speaks with students.



**KUWAIT:** Delegations from Gulf correctional institutions pose for a group photo during their visit to a rehabilitation center. — KUNA

KUWAIT ADHERES TO HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS: OFFICIAL

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait is eager to adhere to international conventions on human rights, particularly dealing with prisoners, an official at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said yesterday. Director General of the MoI's General Administration of Correctional Institutions Major General Adel Al-Ibrahim made the remarks in a statement issued by the MoI after a visit by delegations from Gulf correctional institutions to a rehabilitation center. He noted that the correctional institutions' primary goal is to re-assimilate prisoners into

society, adding that there has been greater quality in social and healthcare services, as prisoners in Kuwait have been guaranteed full-fledged rights. Moreover, the statement pointed out that the delegations were acquainted with various social reform programs, all of which prove Kuwait's commitment to human rights. The statement also noted that the Gulf delegations thanked Kuwait for the hospitality, remarking that services provided to prisoners in the country are top notch. — KUNA



**IRBIL:** Kuwait's General Consul in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kandari poses with children during the opening ceremony of the fourth 'Kuwait School' in Al-Kharez shantytown southeast of Irbil. — KUNA



# St.: A solo photography exhibition on street life in England

Story and photographs by Athoob Al-Shuaibi

**KUWAIT:** Only a few days to go until my first solo photo exhibition on the life in the United Kingdom. From the moment I decided to make this dream a reality, my pulse has beat at 180 bmps. Time has flown and now I am in a race against all the last minute details and crises that need solving. Only yesterday, I found out that one of the three walls in the exhibition space cannot have frames hung on it. How am I supposed to solve this problem? Thirty picture frames cannot be parked onto two walls entirely! Breathe. Just breathe. A gentle little voice whispers in my ears: "Enjoy the process." That is the voice of passion.

As a journalist for Kuwait Times that covers culture and society, I am impressed by the



Athoob Al-Shuaibi

can do the job under the deadline and with high quality is harder than it should be.

The virtues of social media in facilitating the announcement of events are undeniable. Still, it is inadvisable to rely completely on it and better to send personal invitations via WhatsApp, or by mail, (if there's some money left). Attach a sitemap to make it easier for your guests and save them the hassle of asking about the location. Eventually, you will dis-



cover that some friends and colleagues want to assist. It is nice to stop a little to cherish the moments that people around you are showing support. Only one annoying friend will never leave you throughout that period. His name is tension. Some music and good sleep can keep him off from time to time.

When I decided to study for a Master's of Visual Communication and Documentary Photography, my husband asked me why. The work field will not bring you money and it is hard to find a line of work that suits you after graduation. I told him immediately that I am doing it for myself and the love of documentary photography. Commercial photography and staged photography was never my thing. It was after I was entrusted with the photographic legacy of my mother when she died away from me. She loved taking photos of us, smiling, dressing up, happy. But that is not everything. Something is missing here. I real-



ized that in documentary, pictures do not preserve our history. They shape it and our memories of it. For this reason, the big picture of our history is not necessarily a resemblance of what really happened in the past.

And so I am opening up my past, or at least

a piece of it, for public viewing. This Saturday and Sunday at the Visual Therapy Gallery in the Print Room warehouse in Industrial Shuwaikh. The opening is on Saturday from 6 pm to 9 pm, and the event runs through Sunday from 12 noon to 8 pm.



During my studies in the UK, I focused on street photography but until now I never had the courage to show my work to the world.



tenacity of the rising art scene in Kuwait and by the growing spread of culture, artistic events, social gatherings and lectures, collective and personal exhibitions - including many that are not supported by official bodies. I admire the courage and dedication of those who dare to show their work, to make their passions come alive. And I am inspired by them to do the same for myself. To accomplish something that has meaning and interest for me personally.

During my studies in the UK, I focused on street photography but until now I never had

the courage to show my work to the world.

Having decided to finally take the leap, I started planning the exhibition. There are now available dozens of exhibition galleries and locations in Kuwait for photographers, artists and other creative people. Some will rent space out, others prefer a percentage of any sales. Most want to know who you are, what you are about and to see samples of your work.

For me, the real challenge was the printing of my photographs. There are many amazing print shops but finding one that is affordable,

## GCC CAUTIONS AGAINST UNCONTROLLED NUCLEAR PROGRAMS

**VIENNA:** The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states have warned of looming risks and humanitarian effects of uncontrolled military nuclear programs in the Middle East region. The warning was made by Kuwait's Permanent Delegate at the UN in Vienna Ambassador Sadeq Marafi on behalf of the GCC countries during the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). He said that the possession and development of nuclear weapons could not create regional and international peace and security, emphasizing that the only way to avoid nuclear risks is to get rid of them.

The credibility of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is

based on three pillars: Disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses, he pointed out. He voiced concern over failure to develop UN nuclear disarmament mechanisms, mainly the NPT, calling for concrete measures in this regard. The aims and goals of the NPT cannot be fully achieved unless non-parties, particularly Israel, join the treaty, he said.

In this context, he called on North Korea to fully comply with obligations enshrined in relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, and to fully cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by implementing the NPT Safeguards Agreement. He emphasized that it is up to every country to determine its own choices and to take its own decisions in the field of peaceful nuclear uses. The

Kuwaiti diplomat reiterated the GCC's support for the crucial role played by the IAEA in the promoting of international cooperation in the domain of peaceful nuclear uses in a safe manner. A nuclear and WMDs-free Middle East is the only way to ensure regional security and stability, he indicated. He concluded by saying that Palestine's joining of the NPT and even its bid to sign the NPT Safeguards Agreement reflected all Arab countries' commitment to, and eagerness on, international security and peace.

The Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) hold its first session from 2 to 12 May 2017 at the Vienna International Centre. This

will be the first of three planned sessions that will be held prior to the 2020 Review Conference. The Preparatory Committee, open to all States parties to the Treaty, is responsible for addressing substantive and procedural issues related to the Treaty and the forthcoming Review Conference.

The NPT entered into force in 1970 and was extended indefinitely in 1995. The Treaty is regarded as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. It was designed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, to further the goals of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament, and to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. — KUNA

## KISR WORKING WITH IAEA TO IMPROVE NUCLEAR SECURITY

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) maintains close coordination with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to ensure nuclear safety and security in Kuwait and the other member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a Kuwaiti official said.

"The issue of nuclear security is of vital importance for the Gulf region and the world at large given the current security challenges," said Kuwait-IAEA liaison officer Dr Nader Al-Awadhi during a meeting with representatives of the UN nuclear watchdog on Tuesday. The meeting that opened aims to approve the blueprint of Kuwait's national integrated nuclear security plan 2017-20 and make sure that it is in keeping with the international standards. "The world faces mounting challenges that pose grave risks to international peace and security and require effective and concerted actions," Dr Awadhi stressed. "One of these threats is the terrorists' possible access to nuclear weapons that could result in devastating consequences to humanity and environment. "Therefore, Kuwait put nuclear security on top of its priorities and attached great importance to cooperation in this regard with the IAEA and neighboring countries," he pointed out.

On the current meeting, Dr Awadhi said it aims to ensure that Kuwait national nuclear security plan meet the urgent and future needs of the country with emphasis on capacity building. The meeting will help approve the technical advice to be offered by the



A picture from the IAEA delegation's meeting with KISR.

IAEA experts regarding the final form of the plan so as to put it into force, he went on.

Dr Awadhi noted that Kuwait and the IAEA have had fruitful cooperation in such areas as capacity building, prevention of smuggling of or illegal trading in radioactive materials, and observing and responding to any radiological emergencies. He added that KISR worked out a strategy for nuclear security including a legal framework, training of national personnel, improving the nuclear research infrastructure and combating the illegitimate trade in radioactive materials. Meanwhile, IAEA representative Heba Najm said

the meeting will be followed by a panel discussion and a two-day workshop. She noted that Kuwait approved its first national plan for nuclear security in 2010 that was upgraded in 2013 and will be upgraded again during this meeting given the new security situations in the region. Separately, the IAEA delegation met yesterday with Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Mekrad, General Director of the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) to discuss issues pertaining with supporting Kuwait's nuclear security plans including requirements of state departments to handle nuclear and radioactive energy. — KUNA



KUWAIT: The IAEA delegation meets with Lieutenant General Khaled Al-Mekrad, General Director of the Kuwait Fire Service Directorate.

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Crime

Report

PASSENGER ARRESTED FOR IDENTITY THEFT

**KUWAIT:** A GCC national entered Kuwait on April 23 using his relative's ID, but was discovered by an officer at the passports counter while he was trying to leave the country on Monday. The man said that he used the ID in order to enter Kuwait and take advantage of free medical attention at public hospitals, adding that the ID's owner does not know about the case. The passport officer noticed that the man pictured on the ID looked different to the passenger, so he sent him to the security supervisor. The suspect was eventually arrested on charges with forgery.

No injuries in fire

Fire engulfed part of a government building under construction in Saad Al-Abdullah, before firemen were able to put it out. Fire men who responded to the call succeeded in containing the flames and limiting it to one area before putting the fire out. No injuries were reported in the incident. Meanwhile, an investigation went underway to determine the cause of fire.

Search for shoplifter

Detectives are working on identifying and arresting a face-veiled woman who stole money from a store after distracting the employee there. The store's Kuwaiti owner told officers at Meidan Hawally police station that the woman flirted with the employee then took the money and left, as cameras recorded her action. She stole KD 334 in cash in total.

Physical assault

An Egyptian man insisted on filing physical assault charges against a Kuwaiti citizen, who in turn insisted to file a case against him for 'snooping' on his family. Police ended up pressing charges against the citizen after investigations revealed that the Egyptian man not actually snooping, but in fact was waiting for his friend who lives in the same building.

—Translated from the Arabic press

Housing



MARINE CATASTROPHE

By Waleed Al-Ghanim

**A** sad marine catastrophe, created by man, happened as we see thousands of fish dying on Kuwait beaches every day, revealing to us how bad Kuwait's marine environment is, and stand witness to the negligence of concerned authorities of their real role and national duty. The strange thing in this marine catastrophe is the fact that governmental authorities are exchanging responsibility for these fish deaths. The Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) says it has nothing to do with the problem. And when you ask the Environment Public Authority (EPA), it tells you to go ask the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) about its sewage dumping. Meanwhile, MPW says ask the Ministry of Electricity and Water about its power plants and water desalination stations.

So, most state officials are worried the most about avoiding responsibility, instead of facing the real catastrophe. Their main concern is to accuse other parties and not rescue the country's wealth, and their activities were directed at keeping their jobs, not caring for Kuwait's wealth. We know for sure that if each official carried out his duty correctly and made worth of the salary he receives from the state, we would not have reached this point and this tragic stage, starting with the fish death catastrophe, all the way to the mass government escape from facing this problem, except for the few honest ones.

The true expiration Kuwait is suffering from is not of fishes and other marine animals, but rather in the consciences and trust. The corruption Kuwait is suffering from is not in the sea, rather in establishments and ministries. If solving the fish death catastrophe is not done directly by holding those who failed to do their jobs at PAAAFR, EPA, MPW and other state departments, then this will result in the continuation of marine and land pollution over and over again.

The environment laws are not implemented and decisions are not applied. Meanwhile, grave violations are being dropped and covered up, officials are being appointed through 'wasta' (connections) and blackmail, and huge budgets are being spent without return. Also, employees who are not being held accountable, there is absence of the role of the government and parliament who are busy with settling political scores. Therefore, who is facing the country's issues and who is caring for the interests of the country and the people? We ask concerned authorities in the state to deal with this catastrophe effectively in order to guarantee that it will not be repeated, and help protect Kuwait's wealth and marine environment. —Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Anbaa

FOUR-LEGGED BIRDS

By Saad Al-Mo'tesh

**I** have to admit that I had been plagued with something I cannot get rid of despite knowing why. This is a confession that needs some explanation with a hope to find some of you who can advise me on how to get rid of it. Thanks be to Almighty Allah that it is a man-made plight. This plight lies in people who wrongly believe that I write about them in my articles or on social media. They believe I care about them. Well, they have to understand that they are not the ones referred to because 'there is more than one bird in my trap!'

Therefore, those misled by thoughts or suspicions and believe that they are the ones I mean in my writings have to know that I never pay attention to minor things, much less about insignificant

people. I do not even notice their presence or existence. So, if they are spreading rumors that what I write is about them, let them know that they will never get such an honor and the ones I refer to know for sure what I mean.

So, I do beg the attention of those poor 'birds' who are trying to make it seem like they are more important than their feeble sounds: rest assured because you are the least of my worries and concerns. They have never been a dream I tried to interpret because my

dreams are much larger than them. May almighty keep true birds singing and rid us of those who mistakenly believe they are birds while they actually walk on four legs.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

This plight lies in people who wrongly believe that I write about



KIB STRATEGIC SPONSOR OF 9TH KUWAIT WASTE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION AS PART OF ITS ENVIRONMENT-FOCUSED SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY EFFORTS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait International Bank (KIB) recently offered its strategic sponsorship of the ninth Kuwait Waste Management Conference and Exhibition which inaugurated in the presence of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, Director General of the Environment Public Authority and Chairman of the Board, and the participation of a number of prominent

regional and global organizations with a special interest in environmentally-sound waste management.

The conference was comprised of a series of workshops showcasing a range of solutions specific to the treatment and recycling of various types of wastage. Additionally, the conference sought to highlight the importance of social responsibility and the

role of institutions and local companies in supporting the advancement of technology in the field of waste management.

Within this context, Nawaf Najia, Manager of the Corporate Communications Unit at KIB, said: "Our participation in this conference comes as a continuation of our efforts to highlight key environmental issues facing society; waste management

and recycling continue to be at the forefront of these issues. This conference in particular seeks to address this issue in a practical and advanced manner, by highlighting the latest scientific methods and tools used in the management and recycling of waste, which otherwise would pose a risk to the health of the Kuwaiti community."

As part of its comprehensive social

responsibility program, KIB is always keen on organizing and sponsoring various community and environmental initiatives that serve the community. The bank focuses its efforts on promoting environmental awareness and encouraging national conservation efforts, working towards preserving Kuwait's environment and keeping it pollution-free.



**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) participated in the annual career fair of the Arab Open University (AOU), organized recently under the patronage of AOU Rector Dr Moudhi Al-Humoud.



**KUWAIT:** AUB's booth at the Eskan Global Real Estate Exhibition.

AHLI UNITED BANK SPONSORS ESKAN GLOBAL REAL ESTATE EXHIBITION

**KUWAIT:** Ahli United Bank (AUB) has announced its sponsorship of the activities of Eskan Global Real Estate Exhibition in Mishref which concludes on Saturday. Commenting on this sponsorship, Ahli United Bank issued a press release stating that its participation sought to introduce to Eskan Global visitors the most prominent products and financial solutions offered by the Bank to meet the high demand on owning real estate through sharia compatible financing programs. Ahli United

Bank has a strong reputation in offering real estate financing services through a package of benefits and facilities for clients characterized by attractive terms and conditions.

Ahli United Bank added: "Our participation in these real estate events, which are of interest to a large group of Kuwaitis, provides us with direct communication with those visitors interested in real estate investment. This helps develop the local banking industry to meet the needs of the Kuwaiti market characterized

by its dynamism and activity. Of course, Ahli United Bank aims at not only supporting the real estate sector in Kuwait but also supporting the full spectrum of economic activity in the country.

Ahli United Bank offers real estate financing solutions that conform to and comply with Islamic sharia principles through an integrated team of specialists offering a package of facilities and advantages aimed to meet the expectations of various customer groups.





Trump hosts Abbas, plays peacemaker

ISRAEL AIRSTRIKES RAISE STAKES IN FACE-OFF WITH HEZBOLLAH

**PRAISE ALLAH! ISLAM GOES EVANGELICAL IN NIGERIA**

LAGOS: Sunday morning is usually the preserve of Christian pastors in the Nigerian megacity of Lagos but a new form of worship is emerging to challenge the monopoly. "Praise Allah!" shouts the imam of the Nasrul-lahi-li Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT) before thousands of his faithful, gathered under tents on the outskirts of the city. Pacing up and down through the crowd, he punctuates his message with vigorous "Allahs" in the trademark bombastic style of Nigeria's evangelical preachers.

Entranced, men and women sitting on multi-colored prayer mats, raise their hands to the heavens. NASFAT is one of a growing number of groups practicing "charismatic Islam" in response to the massive success of pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria, said Ebenezer Obadare, a sociology professor at the University of Kansas. It has introduced "new modalities of prayer, modes of proselytising, and repertoires of devotion that closely approximate forms normally exclusively associated with Pentecostal Christianity," he said.

NASFAT's mission statement is "to develop an enlightened Muslim society nurtured by a true understanding of Islam for the spiritual upliftment and welfare of mankind". Along with traditional Friday prayers, it holds a special session every Sunday morning. "The aim is to maximize favorably the leisure time that exists among Muslims who laze away on Sunday mornings," NASFAT explains on its website. Unofficially, it also stops them from being invited to Sunday services at neighboring churches-even if the movement doesn't admit it.

**Wave of conversions**

"Friends invited me for the Sunday prayers," said Sheriff Yussuf, a well-dressed man in long white robes who joined the movement in 1998. "At the beginning I was very sceptical but then I thought, 'let me try, I'm not doing anything on Sundays.' "It creates an attraction to Islam, to start pulling Muslims out of the churches." NASFAT and other charismatic Islam groups born in its wake have been embraced by the Yoruba community, which is traditionally based in the southwest and one of the few ethnic groups in Nigeria not to be attached to a particular religion.

In fact throughout southwestern Nigeria, a single family can celebrate Muslim festivals such as Eid as well as Christian ones such as Christmas. It's not uncommon to



ASEESE: Faithful walk past the main gate after the Sunday worship at the Nasrul-lahi-li Fathi Society of Nigeria (NASFAT), in Aseese, Ogun State. Sunday morning is usually the preserve of Christian pastors in the Nigerian megacity of Lagos but a new form of worship is emerging to challenge the monopoly. — AFP

hear a Muslim release an enthusiastic "amen" or listen to the latest hit gospel song in a taxi decorated with quotes from the Koran. But the siren song of charismatic Christian churches in Lagos-financial prosperity, miraculous healing, eternal fertility and a faithful soulmate-is just too strong for many to resist and conversion to Christianity is very common. So instead of fighting the evangelicals, a handful of wealthy bankers from Ibadan, 130 kilometers northeast of Lagos, decided it would be better learn from their competitors.

"We were gathering on Sunday to talk about the Quran, this is how it started," said Musediq Kosemoni, who was one of the seven founder members of NASFAT in 1995. "In three, four weeks, we started seeing an increasing number.

It wasn't a planned thing, no-one can explain." NASFAT now boasts hundreds of thousands of faithful, with branches not only in Nigeria but also in England, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands. The movement, which encourages both Islamic and "western" education, first targeted the young, educated Yoruba upper class.

But it is now becoming popular among all levels of society and even has its own university. "They're unique. They want to get every Muslim, men and women, educated, to enlighten them in order to take them out of poverty," said Lateef Adetona, head of the religious studies department at Lagos State University. "They think that the Salafists-a more conservative school-are discouraging people to turn to Islam." NASFAT hasn't gained traction in the Hausa-

speaking community in northern Nigeria, which represents the majority of Muslims in the country and dismisses the southwest school.

However, NASFAT says that despite their different approaches, they share the common goal of drawing people to Islam. "We are going against the ones who give Islam a bad name," said chief missionary Abdullahi Gbade Akinbode, arguing that NASFAT offers a better alternative than the hardline sectarian view of Islam espoused by Boko Haram jihadists. "We organize summits against radicalization, against Boko Haram, to educate our people," said Akinbode. The missionary discreetly passes a copy of the NASFAT prayer book. On the cover, the group's slogan reads: "There is no help except from Allah." — AFP

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# PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT STOPS FUNDING GAZA ELECTRICITY

## ABBAS TO 'DRY UP' HAMAS FINANCIAL RESOURCES

**RAMALLAH:** The West Bank-based government of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will stop paying for electricity in the power-starved Gaza Strip and "dry up" the flow of funds to the territory's Hamas rulers, a senior official said yesterday. Hamas accused the Abbas government of irresponsible behavior and warned that the announced cuts would be disastrous for Gaza's 2 million residents. Abbas and Hamas have led rival governments since the Islamic militant group seized Gaza in 2007, driving out forces loyal to the Western-backed Palestinian president.

After several failed reconciliation attempts, Abbas recently said he would pressure Hamas financially to force it to cede ground. The Palestinian leader yesterday met with President Donald Trump to discuss ways of restarting long-stalled Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Steps against Hamas could bolster Abbas' claims that he speaks for all Palestinians. In the West Bank, a senior

official said the Abbas government would stop paying for the electricity Israel sends to Gaza, worth at least \$11 million a month.

Hussein Al-Sheikh, head of the Civil Affairs Department, said Hamas profits because it collects electricity payments from Gaza residents. "We are not going to continue financing the Hamas coup in Gaza," he told the Voice of Palestine radio station. Al-Sheikh said the aim was to "dry up Hamas' financial resources." He said efforts would be made not to harm services to Gaza residents, but did not explain how that would be possible. Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum accused Abbas of siding with Israel in trying to punish Hamas.

"Today, Abbas put himself in a confrontation with the Palestinian people," Barhoum said. "Its consequences will be catastrophic and disastrous, not only for Hamas, as they think, but for all Gazans." Gaza residents have been enduring worsening power cuts - a result of border blockades by Israel and



**GAZA:** Palestinian fishermen sail in the waters of the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Gaza City yesterday after Israel eased restrictions on Gaza fishermen, allowing them to travel up to nine nautical miles off the coast of the blockaded territory instead of the previous six, Palestinian officials said. — AFP

Egypt that were triggered by the Hamas takeover. Residents currently live with rolling blackouts - six hours on, 12 hours off - that have further crippled an economy devastated by conflict. Israel supplies electricity from 10 power lines that cover about 30 percent of Gaza's needs.

Israel deducts the money from the taxes and customs it collects on behalf of the Abbas government. Egypt provides some electricity, but supplies are less reliable. Israel last week announced the Abbas government's intention to stop paying for Gaza electricity. Al-Sheikh's comments marked the first official Palestinian confirmation. Ahmed Majdalani, an Abbas aide, said that as a next step, the West Bank government would sharply reduce the amount of medicine it ships to Gaza every month. Majdalani alleged that Hamas is "selling the medicine and collecting the money." He said that only "necessary medicine" would be sent directly to Gaza hospitals. — AP



**MOSUL:** A food salesman rides a cart inside western Mosul. — AP

## 5 YEARS, BILLIONS OF DOLLARS NEEDED TO REBUILD MOSUL

**MOSUL:** Mosul's wrecked roads, bridges and broader economy will take at least five years to repair and need billions of dollars of development that Iraq's government will struggle to afford, officials returning to the battle-scarred city said. The airport, railway station and university were all destroyed in the long fight to dislodge Islamic State militants from their main Iraqi stronghold.

Iraqi government forces backed by a US-led coalition have now retaken the eastern half of the city - letting regional councilors return for the first time in 2-1/2 years to survey the damage. "After Mosul is fully liberated, we need a working plan to restore things to the way they were before 2014 when Islamic State took over," Noureldin Qablan, deputy chairman of the council covering the surrounding Nineveh province, told Reuters. He sat back in his office in the heart of Mosul, the province's regional capital, an unremarkable building apart from its new concrete fortifications and the teams of armed guards surrounding it.

A gun lay on his desk, next to his phone and piles of paperwork. Outside, bustling markets have sprung back into life on the eastern banks of the Tigris river. Over on the other side of the river, Islamic State fighters are holed in, defending the densely-populated Old City with snipers and suicide bombers. At the heart of their territory sits the medieval Grand Al-Nuri Mosque and its famous leaning minaret, where Islamic State leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi declared his caliphate in July 2014. Experts fear the fragile brick structure could still succumb to the fighting raging around it. Iraq's army has said it expects to expel Islamic State from the rest of the city by May.

### 'Not getting support'

The 34 Nineveh councilors, who have been meeting in other cities during the occupation, have already started drawing up plans to

rebuild Mosul, though they are still were not sure where the money will come from, said Qablan. For the first six months, local authorities would focus on restoring security, water, electricity and fuel, and on the return of those displaced by the war.

Under the plan, there would then be a two-year period of reconstruction and the initiation of a reconciliation process followed by 30 months focused on attracting investment and developing the economy. Some of the early repair work could cost as little as \$5,000 a house, Qablan said.

But even that would strain budgets that he said were under-funded by the central government in Baghdad. "Honestly, we are not getting enough support. What has been allocated to Nineveh in 2017 was 52 billion Iraqi dinars (\$44.5 million) which is a very small sum for a province this size," Qablan said. "In 2013 we were allocated 738 billion dinars, yet after all this destruction we get just 52. It is very hard to reach our goals with this sum, so we are counting on foreign grants." Council officials are in talks with the United Nations, international aid groups and friendly states, he said. Italy was already helping rebuild a hospital.

Outside on the eastern side of the river, foreign investment was already flowing back in, in the form of market stalls heaving with Turkish and Iranian fruit and vegetables, replacing the less plentiful Syrian produce that had dominated under Islamic State. Tobacco shops, banned by the ultra-hardline Sunni Muslim group, have reopened. Dozens of men sipped coffee or tea inside The Golden Cafe, looking at their phones and surfing the web - activities that Islamic State had limited to monitored internet centers. "We are happy and comfortable. Life is good," said one customer Emad, smoking hookah outside. "I feel out of this world." — Reuters

## VOTERS DISILLUSIONED AHEAD OF ALGERIA POLL

**ALGIERS:** In Sidi Mhamed, a drab satellite town southwest of Algiers, residents are struggling to make ends meet, stay safe and secure a better future for their children. Few have any hope that today's legislative election will improve their lives. The sense of disillusionment with the political process is palpable. A few party billboards and some scraps of graffiti on apartment block walls are the only reminder that a nationwide election is just days away.

Hlima, in her sixties, said she would not vote "for MPs with a mind-boggling salary who do nothing but raise and lower their hands to vote and don't care about the people." She used to live in the upscale Algiers neighborhood of Hydra but was relocated to the dormitory town when the state decided to re-develop the land her home was on. She and her husband live in one of around 3,000 apartments in the town which sprang up six years ago on fields 18 kilometers southwest of Algiers. Their two sons decided to stay with an aunt in the capital. The couple's early years in Sidi Mhamed were marked by violence as rival gangs fought for control of the new neighborhood. "Even the security forces couldn't put an end to the battles," she said. Algeria used its oil wealth to ramp up public salaries and subsidies and avoid an all-out revolt. But towns like Sidi Mhamed, built from scratch with few cultural facilities or social spaces, remain marginalized.

### 'Prices have soared'

Today, Sidi Mhamed's appearance has improved: apartment block walls are painted

in pastel shades, benches have been installed and shrubs and flowers grow among the buildings. There is even a fish pond tended by a resident in his 70s. But while calm prevails, residents are still on their guard. The gangland battles of a few years ago are hard to forget. Many living in the satellite town only go home at night to sleep. Many young people in Sidi Mhamed have abandoned their education and dream of living abroad-but without money or university degrees, have little chance of doing so.

"A worker can no longer finish the month without going into debt. Prices have soared. This vote is a non-event," said Saïda, in her forties, who like most women in the town wore a hijab. Many residents have no idea who is running for election, which parties they represent or what they are proposing to do in office. Some say they see little point in voting for members of parliament in a system where the real power lies elsewhere.

"I only vote in the presidential elections," said Rym, 50, who has a retired husband and two unemployed sons. "The president has the power to change things, but an MP doesn't." Rachid, a 75-year-old retiree with a newspaper in his hand, criticized the "alienation and depoliticisation of society." "Before, people were not educated, but they were politicized," he said. "Today, young people have university degrees but are unable to analyse or reason." Ahmed, a former teacher who is also retired, says he is "confused by the logic of those who want things to change but who stay at home." "Miracles don't exist," he said. "You have to fight and vote to make things move." — AFP

# ISRAEL AIRSTRIKES RAISE STAKES IN FACE-OFF WITH HEZBOLLAH

## ISRAEL ALSO SEEKS TO AVOID ANGERING RUSSIA

**JERUSALEM:** Two Israeli air strikes against Hezbollah targets in Syria in recent weeks seem to mark a more openly assertive stance towards the group after years of shadow boxing, requiring careful calibration to avoid escalation into a war that neither wants. For most of the six-year-long conflict in Syria, Israel has stuck determinedly to the sidelines, not wanting to get sucked into the chaos unfolding to its northeast. While it is suspected of carrying out occasional attacks against minor targets, it has tended not to confirm or deny involvement.

But it is determined to stop Lebanon's Hezbollah, with which it fought a 2006 war, and which it sees as the top strategic threat on its borders, from using its role in the Syrian war to gain weapons and experience that could ultimately endanger Israel. Since early in the conflict, the Shiite movement's energies have been focused on propping up President Bashar Al-Assad in alliance with Iran and Russia, throwing thousands of its fighters into battle against Syrian rebels.

But although this strategy makes the prospect of a new war with Israel unwelcome to Hezbollah, it has not altered its view of the country as its foremost enemy, or stopped it strengthening its position for any new conflict. In the past six weeks, two Israeli attacks appear to have marked a shift, underscoring Israel's intent to squeeze Hezbollah and coming as the Trump administration carried out its own missile strikes in Syria. In both cases, Israeli officials have also been less guarded about acknowledging who was behind the attacks.

On March 17, Israel struck a site near Palmyra, prompting Syria's army to retaliate with Russian-supplied anti-aircraft missiles and on April 27, it hit an arms depot in Damascus where Hezbollah was suspected of storing weapons supplied by Iran. "The incident in Syria corresponds completely with Israel's policy to act to prevent Iran's smuggling of advanced weapons via Syria to Hezbollah," Intelligence Minister Israel Katz said of the strike last week, but without explicitly confirming Israel carried it out.

Hezbollah has also bared its teeth, conducting a media tour along the Lebanon-Israel border that was widely interpreted as a message that it was unafraid of a new war, and hinting that any coming conflict might involve attacks on Israeli settlements. A larger strike by Israel, or one that misses its target with unintended consequences, might provoke an escalation, further destabilizing Syria and sucking Israel into an already complex conflict. It's an outcome that neither Israel nor Hezbollah wants, but in a war that has already produced many unpredictable outcomes, it is not out of the question either.

### Rules of the game

Hezbollah is an Iranian-backed movement that was formed to combat Israel's 1982-2000 occupation of Lebanon. Its battlefield prowess, extensive social works among Lebanese Shiites and its alliance with powerful regional states have helped it secure a dominant role in the country's politics. Since the 2006 war with Israel, which killed more than 1,300 people, displaced a million in Lebanon and up to 500,000 in Israel, both sides have engaged in brinkmanship but avoided renewed conflict. Both say they do not want another war, but don't shy away from saying they are ready for one if it does end up happening. Last month, Hezbollah took Lebanese journalists on a tour of the southern frontier with Israel, allowing pictures to be taken of soldiers posing with weapons and staring across the border. Israel runs patrols along the same frontier, sends up drones and is constantly bolstering its defenses. In March, Israeli minister Naftali Bennett, a hardliner, threatened to send Lebanon back to the Middle Ages if Hezbollah provoked another war.

An official in the military alliance that backs Assad said Israel's recent air strikes had hit Hezbollah targets but played down the damage done. As for retaliation, they drew a distinction between Israel striking Hezbollah units deployed to fight on behalf of Assad in Syria and those at home in Lebanon. "If Israel hits a Hezbollah convoy in Syria, Hezbollah will decide if it will respond or not according to the circumstances in Syria because, despite everything, Syria is a sovereign state and Hezbollah cannot respond in a way that embarrasses the regime," the official told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

"If Israel strikes Hezbollah in Lebanon, definitely it will respond. If Hezbollah responds, what is the size of its response that Israel can accept? This could mean an escalation to war. So Israel avoids hitting Hezbollah convoys or rockets inside Lebanon and prefers to strike it inside Syria." That analysis fits with how Israel broadly sees the situation, too. Keeping any fallout from the war in Syria away from its territorial interests is one thing. But going after Hezbollah in Lebanon would be the trigger for renewed conflict. "A clash with Hezbollah is always an active possibility," said one



**LATRUN:** Two Israeli soldiers salute as they observe two minutes of silence as an air raid sirens sounds, in Latrun, Israel. Israelis came to a two-minute standstill to remember fallen soldiers and victims of terror as the country marked Memorial Day, one of the most somber days on its calendar. — AP

Israeli diplomat. While the enmity is fierce on either side, past experience seems to have made both Hezbollah and Israel sharp analysts of one another's positions and pressure points. "Sometimes there is a measured response which maintains the balance of deterrence and the rules of the game and sometimes there is a response which opens the door to escalation," said the official from the alliance backing Assad. "Right now, the desire of both sides is to not get dragged into a war or to open a new front, either in Golan or the south. But at any moment events can develop and things can escalate into war without either side wanting it."

### Russia-Israel Axis

Russia - an ally of Hezbollah in the Syrian conflict but which has also coordinated closely with Israel - has also taken note of Israel's actions. For the past two years, Israel and Russia have coordinated closely on Syria, with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu meeting face-to-face with Russian President Vladimir Putin and often speaking by phone to ensure there are no misunderstandings and that the risk of aerial confrontations is minimized. For the most part, the system has worked, even if it requires Israel to be delicate in balancing ties with the United States and Russia at

the same time. But the most recent incidents appear to have angered Moscow.

After the March strike, Russia summoned Israel's ambassador for consultations, and after the Damascus airport attack the foreign ministry issued a statement calling it unacceptable and urging Israel to exercise restraint. "We consider that all countries should avoid any actions that lead to higher tensions in such a troubled region and call for Syrian sovereignty to be respected," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters. A new war between Israel and Hezbollah could distract the Shiite movement from its central role in the Syrian conflict, thereby undermining a military campaign in which Russia has staked great resources and prestige.

Israeli analysts think Netanyahu's government must exercise caution. "Israel still has to walk on eggshells and attack only if the destruction of the target is vital and pertains directly to Israeli security," military specialist Alex Fishman wrote in Yedioth Achronoth newspaper last week. Israeli ministers, several of whom have a Russian background, also appear determined to avoid provoking Moscow. "We'll do nothing fast and loose when it comes to the Russians," said the Israeli diplomat. "We'll be super-careful in Syria." — Reuters

# IRANIANS MUST GIVE ROUHANI '2ND TERM'

**TEHRAN:** Iran's president must get a second term to secure the economic benefits that he promised would result from a diplomatic thaw with the West, Vice President Masoumeh Ebtekar said ahead of a May 19 election.

Hassan Rouhani's headline challengers for the presidency, some of whom are close to supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, say he traded away too much in a 2015 deal with world powers that limited Iran's nuclear work but failed to deliver sufficient rewards. In a rare interview with a trio of foreign reporters at an EU-Iran business forum on Sunday, Ebtekar, one of Iran's 12 vice presidents, said voters should not give up on Rouhani.

"He needs more time ... He has to be given a chance to be able to continue his program," said Ebtekar, one of Iran's most prominent women politicians. "Rouhani has done a lot to overcome some of the hurdles that the investors find when they are coming," she said in a nod to concerns over red tape and opaque rules voiced by foreign companies that Iran hopes to attract. As a young woman, Ebtekar was the face of the radical students who occupied the US Embassy and held its staff hostage for 444 days at the time of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Known as "Mary", she spoke in calm, fluent English to the world's media, putting the hostage-takers' side of the incident that remains a painful memory for the United States and is one of the reasons Washington considers the Islamic Republic a pariah state. At 56, she is now firmly in the reformist camp, endorsing Rouhani's vision of a freer society and diplomatic detente after the lifting of sanctions under the deal he engineered. If hardliners describe the nuclear deal as a limited engagement with the West on a single issue, Ebtekar sees it as the beginning of a new era of international engagement to realize what she says are the hopes of Iran's younger generation to end its long isolation.

### High expectations

"There is a lot being done which is creating a lot of hope and optimism but at the same time the expectations for the nuclear deal are still very high," said Ebtekar, her smiling face framed by a traditional black chador over a turquoise scarf. With unilateral US sanctions still in place, Ebtekar said voters understood that it was not Rouhani's fault that the nuclear deal had yet to improve their daily lives.

"They understand that mostly the problem is coming from outside. Our government has done its share ... now it is up to our partners in the deal to do their share as well."

"This opening up will create a better atmosphere, and I hope that they will - particularly countries like the United States - will stand up to their commitments," Ebtekar said. Ayatollah Khamenei's scepticism over Rouhani's detente policy is echoed by his strongest challenger, Ebrahim Raisi, a hardline cleric seen as a possible future supreme leader, who says Iran has no need of foreign help. Ebtekar, however, said the election is Rouhani's to lose, pointing to parliamentary polls in which the conservatives lost ground. The alliance of moderates and reformists that helped carry him to power in 2013, she said, "gives him a very strong position."

Ebtekar rejected the view of Western and Gulf Arab states that Iran is an aggressor in the Middle East, saying it has peaceful intentions but also had the right to defend itself from foreign threats. Iran's backing of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, the militant Lebanese group Hezbollah and alleged support for Yemen's Houthi fighters has put it at odds with the United States and regional rival Saudi Arabia. "We are looking forward to play our role to promote peace and also security in the region," Ebtekar said. "But it's natural for the people living in this region to defend themselves, it's very natural for Lebanon to defend itself, Syria, the Palestinians. So defense is another issue." — Reuters





Kristie King walks through her Amarillo, Texas, neighborhood after she had been terminated from her security contractor job in Iraq. —AP

# US FIRM IN IRAQ IGNORES SECURITY RISKS FOR F-16S

AMERICAN COMPANY TURNED A BLIND EYE TO VIOLATIONS

WASHINGTON: An American company that was paid nearly \$700 million to secure an Iraqi base for F-16 fighter jets turned a blind eye to alcohol smuggling, theft, security violations, and allegations of sex trafficking - then terminated investigators who uncovered wrongdoing, an Associated Press investigation has found. Documents and interviews with two former internal investigators and a half-dozen former or current Sallyport Global staff describe schemes at Iraq's Balad Air Base that were major contract violations at best and, if proven, illegal.

The fired investigators, Robert Cole and Kristie King, said they uncovered evidence that Sallyport employees were involved in human trafficking for prostitution. Staff on base routinely flew smuggled alcohol onto the base in such high volumes that a plane once seasawed on the tarmac under the weight. Rogue militia stole enormous generators using flatbed trucks and a 60-foot crane, driving right past Sallyport security guards. The trouble stretches to headquarters in Reston, Virginia, say the investigators and other ex employees interviewed by AP.

They say what they uncovered was not revealed to the US government, which was footing the \$686 million contracting bill, until early this year - after an auditor started asking questions. The investigators were fired abruptly on March 12 - just two months ago - and immediately flown out of Iraq. They say they had been looking into timesheet fraud allegations and were set to interview company managers, whom they considered suspects. "I feel like they got us out so quickly because they feel like we knew too much," King said in an interview. "When we finally got the idea that they were hiding all of the stuff from the US government, it was mind-blowing."

In a statement to the AP, Sallyport said it follows all contracting rules at the base, home to a squadron of F-16s that are indispensable to the operations of the US-led coalition against the Islamic State group. "Sallyport has a strong record of providing security and life support services in challenging war zones like Iraq and plays a major but unheralded role in the war against ISIS," Chief Operating Officer Matt Stuckart wrote. "The company takes any suggestion of wrongdoing at Balad very seriously." In one allegation, informants told the

investigators that "flight line" staff, who directed airplanes on the runways and handled cargo, were showing up drunk. At one point they passed around a bowl of gummy bears soaked in vodka. Alcohol on base was restricted, but the booze was everywhere, smuggled in by plane, several former employees told The AP. According to investigative documents and witnesses, empty suitcases were loaded onto Baghdad-bound roundtrip flights. The bags returned packed with alcohol-filled plastic water bottles that skirted security - a significant

violation. Americans have been there off and on since 2003. The base was evacuated in June 2014, when IS began over-running Iraqi territory. When the Americans returned, Sallyport's job was to keep Balad safe for the F-16s - and their Iraqi pilots. The contract required investigations into potential crimes and contract violations. That was the job of Cole and King.

On July 13, 2015, four F-16s landed at the base, the first of a planned 36 from the US. Trouble came within 24 hours, when a long skid mark appeared on the

but Cole later saw the man walking around freely. Security breaches continued. On Nov 15, 2016, just before 2 a.m., militia drove three flatbeds onto the base, one equipped with a crane. After lifting three enormous generators onto the trucks, the militia drove away unchallenged. Cole's reports noted lax protection for the F-16s.

Despite requirements to report major security breaches, the US government was not informed until early this year of the truck skidding near a jet or the armored-SUV theft, according to Cole



Photo shows one of four new US-made F-16 fighter jets outside a hardened hangar upon its arrival to Balad air base, north of Baghdad, Iraq. —AP

risk in a war zone. Stuckart said Sallyport stood by its security procedures and got "high marks" from the US Air Force.

But Steve Anderson, who worked on flight logistics, says he was told by managers to sign off on manifests he knew had been falsified to hide alcohol and guns. The planes were so heavy that one tipped over nose-first while parked, "like a seesaw," he recalled. When he raised concerns, it was suggested he find a new job, said Anderson, whose position was soon eliminated.

Balad is controlled by the Iraqi gov-

ernment. Stuckart said Sallyport stood by its security procedures and got "high marks" from the US Air Force. But Steve Anderson, who worked on flight logistics, says he was told by managers to sign off on manifests he knew had been falsified to hide alcohol and guns. The planes were so heavy that one tipped over nose-first while parked, "like a seesaw," he recalled. When he raised concerns, it was suggested he find a new job, said Anderson, whose position was soon eliminated.

Balad is controlled by the Iraqi gov-

ernment. Both spoke only on condition of anonymity because they did not want to jeopardize their current jobs. As Cole and King sought to get to the bottom of the alcohol smuggling, they stumbled across a prostitution ring in Baghdad whose customers included Sallyport employees, informants said. They learned that four Ethiopians who had previously worked as prostitutes at the hotel had moved to Balad and were doing the same while moonlighting as Sallyport housekeepers. —AP

## US NUKE LAB FOCUSES ON NATIONAL SECURITY

ALBUQUERQUE: Scientists and researchers at the federal government's largest national laboratory are pushing ahead with work related to national security and the proliferation of nuclear weapons as new managers take over New Mexico-based Sandia National Laboratories for the first time in decades, officials said yesterday. Director Stephen Younger discussed the lab's future during a news conference that marked the start of a new contract with National Technology and Engineering Solutions of Sandia, a subsidiary of Honeywell International.

The US Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration announced the \$2.6 billion management contract in December. Officials have spent the last few months working on a smooth transition for the lab's thousands of employees and operations. The bulk of work at Sandia centers on the research, development and maintenance of nuclear weapons, but scientists there also have worked on energy and climate projects.

Younger, who has a background in nuclear weapons, called Sandia's employees the "superheroes of technology." "Sandia defends the world and provides the opportunity for millions, if not billions, of people to lead peaceful and productive lives," he said. Younger said his team has

centuries of combined experience when it comes to national security issues and while the core mission of Sandia will not change, Honeywell, Northrup Grumman and other partners will be looking for ways to do more work and do it faster.

The new lab leadership acknowledged current global conflicts, including nuclear threats by North Korea. "The government understands the importance of these institutions, and the institutions understand they have to be accountable for the money and the information they're providing. It's a different world today," Younger said. Lockheed Martin had operated Sandia, located in Albuquerque, for the past two decades and was among bidders that lost out to the Honeywell team.

With an annual budget of close to \$3 billion, Sandia is one of the Albuquerque area's largest employers with more than 10,500 workers. Most are based in Albuquerque, but Sandia also operates sites at Lawrence Livermore lab in California and testing facilities in Nevada and Hawaii. Its Albuquerque campus spans more than 21 square miles. A recent report by a coalition of local governments found that Sandia's partnership with private organizations through a science and technology park has generated more than \$315 million in economic impact across the state over two years. —AFP

## TRUMP PLAYS PEACEMAKER, HOSTS ABBAS AT WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump played peacemaker at the White House yesterday, meeting with Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas as part of an effort to end the long-running Palestinian-Israeli conflict. After hosting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in February, the self-styled deal-maker-in-chief hosted Abbas for the first time since coming to office. "The President's ultimate goal is to establish peace in the region," said White House press secretary Sean Spicer. That long-shot effort-which has eluded US presidents since the 1970s-got off to a rocky

start early in Trump's administration. Trump renounced US support for a Palestinian state and vowed to move the US embassy to Jerusalem, breaking two tenets of US policy held for decades. Vice President Mike Pence on Tuesday said Trump is still "giving serious consideration into moving the American embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem." That move would likely spark Palestinian fury and is privately

seen by many in the Israel and US security establishments as needlessly inflammatory. At the same time, Trump has urged Israel to hold back on settlement building in the West Bank, a longstanding concern of Palestinians and much of the world. Pence said Trump is "personally committed to resolving the Israeli and Palestinian conflict" and "valuable progress" is being made. "Momentum is building and goodwill is growing," he said at an Israeli independence day event at the White House. Abbas makes the trip to Washington while politically unpopular back home, with polls sug-

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WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump meets with Palestinian Authority President Mahmud Abbas in the Oval Office of the White House yesterday. —AFP

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## NEW YORK TIMES SWINGS TO PROFIT

NEW YORK: The New York Times said yesterday it added more than 300,000 digital subscribers in the first quarter, helping the media group swing to profit. Net profit for the prestigious US newspaper group was \$13.2 million, compared with a loss of \$8.3 million in the same period a year ago. Total revenues rose 5.1 percent to \$399 million, led by gains in digital subscriptions and online advertising. "These results show the current strength and future potential of our digital strategy not just to reach a large audience, but also to deliver substantial revenue," said

Mark Thompson, president and chief executive officer of the New York Times Company.

"We added an astonishing 308,000 net digital news subscriptions, making the first quarter the single best quarter for subscriber growth in our history." Overall circulation revenue rose 11 percent from a year ago to \$242 million. Of that \$76 million came from digital-only subscriptions, amounting to a 40 percent jump from a year ago. The number of digital-only subscriptions topped 2.2 million at the end of the quarter, a 62 percent jump from a year ago. —AFP



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## FAR-RIGHT PLOT, SCANDALS ROCKING GERMAN MILITARY

**BERLIN:** The bizarre case of a racist soldier allegedly plotting an attack while posing as a Syrian refugee and several abuse scandals have sparked a war of words between Germany's defense minister and the military. It is a dangerous

political battle for Ursula von der Leyen, the first woman in charge of the Bundeswehr, who is often mentioned as a potential successor to Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The mother-of-seven has sternly crit-

icized military "attitude and leadership problems", highlighted by the case of the soldier and by recent sexual abuse and hazing scandals. This in turn has made her a target of chastened rank-and-file soldiers who charge she is tarring them all while dodging personal responsibility after more than three years on the job.

The escalating conflict started with the arrest last week of a soldier identified only as 28-year-old army lieutenant Franco A., stationed at a Franco-German base near Strasbourg. He came to the notice of the authorities after Austrian police caught him with a loaded handgun at Vienna airport in February. The subsequent investigation found that, amid Germany's 2015 mass influx of refugees, he had created a fake identity as a Damascus fruit seller called "David Benjamin". Incredibly, the light-haired German who speaks no Arabic managed to gain political asylum, a spot in a refugee shelter, and monthly state payments for his fictitious alter ego.

### 'Dark places'

Prosecutors charge that A. harbored far-right views and, with at least one co-conspirator, plotted an attack with the apparent aim of discrediting foreigners. Media reports say he kept "death lists" with the names of top

politicians, including former president Joachim Gauck, some cabinet ministers and left-leaning, anti-fascist MPs.

It has since emerged that the lieutenant had expressed right-wing extremist views back in a master's study he submitted in 2014, in which he theorised about the end of Western civilisation through immigration. However, the offensive paper was buried, without disciplinary action—something the minister blamed on a "misunderstood esprit de corps" and superior officers who "looked the other way".

Yesterday, the minister—who has cancelled a scheduled US trip to deal with the widening scandal—was travelling to A.'s base, where an initial probe has found a rifle with a swastika carved into it. Von der Leyen has also pointed to other recent scandals—about humiliating and sadistic initiation rituals, and female soldiers being forced to pole-dance.

Indicating she means business, the minister last month sacked the chief training officer, Major General Walter Spindler, for failing to deal with the problems quickly enough. Today she was set to hold a crisis meeting with 100 leading military personnel, after vowing to "shine a light in the dark places" and predicting that "it'll be difficult, it'll be painful, it won't be pretty". There could indeed be more nasty

surprises—the military intelligence service is investigating around 280 cases of suspected far-right sympathizers in the forces.

### 'Danger zone'

Von der Leyen has weathered several scandals in what is considered a tricky cabinet post, most centered on military equipment problems like ageing transport planes and assault rifles that don't shoot straight. Spiegel Online said that, while earlier problems started before she took the post, she is now "facing criticism like she rarely has before".

Her comments offended many soldiers who already feel they get insufficient appreciation for missions from Afghanistan to Mali in a country which, with its guilt over the Nazi era, still shows little love for the military. Having drawn heavy fire, the minister stressed that the vast majority of soldiers perform "impeccable, outstanding service".

Business daily Handelsblatt noted the seriousness of the affair by pointing out that "ministers usually only cancel foreign trips if they face the threat of a putsch at home". It said von der Leyen had entered "the danger zone", adding: "This doesn't bring her any closer to her big goal of one day succeeding Merkel." —AFP



**ILLKIRCH-GRAFFENSTADEN:** German Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen (L) flanked by Inspector Heer General Joerg Vollmeier (R) and Commander of the 291st Jagerbataillon Marc Ulrich Cropp (C) visits military facilities of the 291st Jagerbataillon. —AFP

## PARADISE LOST: IDYLIC FRENCH VILLAGES TURN TO FAR RIGHT

### THE QUIET REBELLION UNDER WAY IN RURAL AREAS

**PUGET-THENIERS:** Halfway between mountains and the Mediterranean, the southern French village of Puget-Theniers is old, idyllic and a picture of the quiet rebellion under way in rural areas. In the first round of France's presidential election, residents here, an hour's drive from the city of Nice, voted overwhelmingly to cast the country's rulers to the wolves.

Thirty-seven percent of 1,300 ballots on April 23 were for far-right leader Marine Le Pen and another 18 percent for Communist-backed firebrand Jean-Luc Melenchon. A collec-

screwed us over for 40 years," gripes one retired man in his 70s wearing a cap and clutching a glass. They plan to vote for Le Pen in the runoff vote against pro-European centrist Emmanuel Macron on Sunday.

"The village is like all rural areas in France, it's doing badly," said mayor Robert Velay, standing in bright sunshine outside the town hall with the foothills of the Alps behind him. Farms and farming jobs disappeared years ago, while local shops have shut as people travel to supermarkets down the road towards Nice or order online.

has emerged more strongly than ever in this year's election.

It also fits another major fracture between the east and the south of France where support for Le Pen is strongest, and the rest of the country. Few here see election frontrunner Macron as the solution with his calls for high-tech innovation, openness and fibre-optic connections for every village. His campaign headquarters in Paris, full of 20-somethings in trainers rushing to meetings with their laptops, is a far cry from the sleepy cobbled streets of Puget-Theniers.

better when she arrived with her three children in the 1980s. "If I was arriving now, I wouldn't stay," she said.

### Economics and migration

Support for Le Pen and her National Front (FN) party, founded in 1972, has always been strong in the south of France due to a mix of factors. Herve Le Bras, a leading French demographer, has popularised a socio-economic explanation of the vote here and in the FN's newer stronghold in the rustbelt of northeast France.

His colour-coded maps showing the hotspots of unemployment, low education achievement or poverty mirror the zones of highest FN support to a striking degree. The only place the correlation fails is in large cities, where deprived areas do not vote for Le Pen, which he puts down to their "contact with the world." But there is also history and the impact of migration.

The FN has long defended the country's colonial past and so-called "pieds noirs" ("black feet"), the white migrants who settled in French-run Algeria. When Paris granted the north African country independence in 1962, hundreds of thousands were forced to cross the Mediterranean, with many choosing to settle in the south. Waves of Arab migration followed them, initially as Algerians came to work in French factories during the labor shortages of the 1960s.

Far-right expert Jean-Yves Camus says this created a toxic combination—resentful pieds noirs living alongside the people they blame for their misfortune. Other specialists, like veteran sociologist Jean Viard, say southern natives have also seen their identities challenged by new arrivals from northern France and an explosion in tourism. But neither immigration, nor insecurity—the two themes of Le Pen's pitch to voters—appear to be problems for the residents of Puget-Theniers.

Many people leave their doors open, but mayor Velay recalls that several youngsters "went into town" and were beaten up by "maghrebins"—people of north African descent. Martine Tescher, who runs an art gallery in the village, puts the FN vote down to fear, particularly after two years of Islamist-inspired attacks in France. "When you switch on the radio or television, there's never anything positive. It keeps people in a sort of climate of permanent terror," she says. —AFP



**PUGET-THENIERS:** A picture taken on April 28, 2017 shows a general view of the village of Puget-Theniers, 75 km from Nice, southern France. —AFP

tion of other "anti-system" candidates from Trotskyists to a man who believes the European Union is a CIA-backed conspiracy won another 10 percent. "We're fed up with our leaders favoring financial groups, insurance companies and bankers," said Leo Vellutini, a 56-year-old having an afternoon drink with locals in the pretty square at the centre of the village.

He says the Le Pen vote has "spiced up our drinks together". While not everyone agrees, no one at the table has anything good to say about France's political leaders. "They've

The loss-making local abattoir is mired in red tape, he says. "There are more people who own washing machines now, but do we live better?" he wonders aloud. "I think we need to look back at what worked well in the past"

### Nostalgia and sadness

This sense of bitterness about the present and nostalgia for the past is found across rural France and expressed in the support for so-called "anti-system" candidates. Puget-Theniers illustrates this faultline between urban and rural areas that

The nearby waters of the fast-flowing river Var provided the last economic boom for locals when they were used by the village's leather and shoemaking industry more than a century ago. Little wonder then that Le Pen's championing of "the forgotten people"—those bypassed by the huge economic and technological change of recent times—finds fertile ground. "Le Pen supporters want another sort of France, a France from the past," Sylvie Poitte, a 70-year-old from the village who once ran local hair salons, told AFP. But she admits too that life was

## BOKO HARAM LEADER INJURED IN AIR STRIKE

**KANO:** Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau has been injured and one of his deputies killed in an air strike in northeast Nigeria, civilian and security sources told AFP yesterday. Two Nigerian Air Force jets bombarded fighters who had gathered for prayers in Balla village, some 40 kilometers from Damboa, on the edge of the Sambisa Forest, last Friday.

"Shekau was wounded in the bombings and is believed to be receiving treatment near the Nigerian border with Cameroon around Kolofata," said one source with contacts within Boko Haram. "His deputy, Abba Mustapha, alias Malam Abba, was killed in the attack along with another key lieutenant, Abubakar Gashua, alias Abu Aisha," he added. Babakura Kolo, a member of the civilian militia in the Borno state capital, Maiduguri, gave a similar account, saying "Shekau was injured and a number of commanders were killed."

"Among them is his deputy called Malam Abba. They suffered heavy casualties because the bombings targeted a large gathering of his followers attending Friday prayers." There was no immediate comment from the Nigerian military when contacted by AFP. The authorities have previously claimed to have killed Shekau on at least three occasions. In an

emailed statement on Tuesday night, the air force said it had bombed "a gathering of Boko Haram terrorists" last Friday "in a village 3.42 km northeast of Mangosum". The "air interdiction mission" in the remote region involved three jets. "Battle damage assessment conducted after the strike showed that several leaders of the Boko Haram terrorist organization and their followers were killed during the attacks," it added.

### Reprisals

A senior military officer in Maiduguri confirmed the air force bombed Boko Haram positions "in the Damboa area on Friday where they hit the targets with precision." "We got intel (intelligence) that the terrorists were gathering at the location and we acted on the report," he added, requesting anonymity as he was not authorised to speak about the operation.

He said he was unable to comment on Shekau but the source with contacts in Boko Haram said Mustapha was preaching when the first jet bombed the mosque at about 1:00 pm (1200 GMT). Moments later a second jet targeted worshippers as they fled. "Shekau was just leaving a house nearby for the mosque when the first jet struck. He was injured in the second strike," said the source, describing the

casualties as "huge." "They spent the rest of Friday and the whole of Saturday burying the dead," he said, without specifying numbers. Shekau had been bed-ridden for days with malaria before the attack, he added. Local people in the Konduga area said Boko Haram fighters went on the rampage following the air strike. "They came by the river hurling insults at us, accusing us of providing information about their locations and movements to the military," said fisherman Ibrahim Bawa.

"They said we were responsible for the attack on their mosque which killed many of their people. They were very angry," added another fisherman, Usman Sallau. The jihadists rounded up six fishermen and slit their throats. Others escaped by swimming across the river, he said. Boko Haram has killed over 20,000 people since it took up arms against the Nigerian government in 2009 to establish a hardline Islamist state.

The insurgency has decimated northeast Borno state with the violence displacing 2.6 million from their homes and causing a hunger crisis. After years of suffering humiliating losses to Boko Haram, the Nigerian military has reclaimed swathes of territory back from the jihadists. Yet despite claims that Boko Haram is a spent force, the Islamists still launch attacks. —AFP



**LONDON:** Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond (L) and Britain's Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union (Brexit Minister) David Davis pose for photographers before a press conference. —AFP

## WHO'S WHO AND WHAT'S AT STAKE IN 'BREXIT ELECTION'

**LONDON:** In a distinctly British moment of electoral democracy and royal ceremony, Prime Minister Theresa May will signal the official start of Britain's election campaign with a visit to Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace.

The visit marks the dissolution of Parliament, which means Britain no longer has any elected lawmakers, though the government continues to function. All 650 seats in the House of Commons are up for grabs in the June 8 election. May's decision to call the snap poll after less than a year in office caught most in Parliament—and the country—by surprise.

### Why now?

Britain's last election was in May 2015, and the next was not scheduled until 2020. But the country has gone through a tumultuous two years. June's vote to leave the European Union was followed by the resignation of Prime Minister David Cameron, who had urged the country to remain in the bloc. May, a member of Cameron's Cabinet, was selected as prime minister after an internal Conservative Party leadership contest. That has left her vulnerable to accusations that she lacks a personal mandate to govern. But a more crucial factor in the election's timing is Brexit.

Britain has triggered a two-year exit process that will see its EU membership end in March 2019. May says an election now can give the Conservatives a bigger majority, strengthening the government's hand in Brexit negotiations. It also avoids an election soon after the UK leaves the bloc, potentially a period of instability. May was also likely tempted by opinion polls that give her Conservatives a big lead over the main opposition Labour Party. She hopes to do significantly better than the 330 seats the party now holds, while Labour wants to better its current 229.

### What are the big issues?

This is being called the "Brexit election," and Britain's EU exit dominates the agenda. May's oft-repeated message is that the country needs "strong and stable leadership" in the uncertain time ahead. May's Conservatives paint the opposition parties—chiefly Labour, the Scottish National Party and the Liberal Democrats—as weak, irresolute or out to divide the country.

The left-of-center Labour Party wants remind voters that there are other important issues at stake, attacking Conservative cuts to welfare and promising more funding for schools and the overburdened National Health Service. Labour also says it will push for compromise with the EU to avoid an economically damaging "hard Brexit." The pro-EU

Liberal Democrats, who currently have just eight seats, are targeting unhappy "remain" voters and promising a new referendum on a final deal between Britain and the bloc. In Scotland, the SNP is pushing for an independence referendum. Meanwhile UKIP, the Euroskeptic right-wing party that was instrumental in securing an EU membership referendum, is trying to prove it is still relevant now that its main goal has been achieved—and its sole MP has quit.

### Who are the key players?

May, 60, is widely regarded as a firm and steady leader but can appear stiff and unspontaneous. Opponents accuse her of running a tightly controlled campaign that minimizes her exposure to undecided voters, and have criticized her refusal to take part in televised leaders' debates. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn is a 67-year-old socialist who is adored by his supporters but loathed by many of his own lawmakers, who think his hard-left policies are leading Labour toward electoral oblivion.

Supporters say his anti-elitist rhetoric can connect with voters disillusioned with the political mainstream. Liberal Democrat leader Tim Farron feels his centrist party is on the upswing. But the committed Christian has been dogged by questions from journalists about his attitude to homosexuality after failing to deny he considered gay sex a sin. He later clarified he does not think it's a sin. Recently elected UKIP leader Paul Nuttall is far less well known than his predecessor, Nigel Farage, and is struggling to make a national impact.

### Is it a close contest?

Opinion polls suggest the Conservatives have a lead of as much as 20 points over Labour. Bookmakers agree, giving odds of 1-20 or 1-25 of the Conservatives winning the most seats. Pollsters' reputations took a battering after they failed to foresee Conservative victory in the 2015 election and gave mixed signals about last year's referendum. But even allowing for uncertainty and margins of error, the race does not appear to be close. Still, election day is five weeks away, and a lot can happen in that time. "I think given the way politics has gone in the last couple of years it would be a brave pundit who predicted a no-surprises election campaign," said Rob Ford, a professor of political science at the University of Manchester. "There are lots of things that could shift in the campaign, volatile elements. ... There are new factors, new leaders, this huge divisive new issue (Brexit) layered on top of all the old issues." —AP



## AUSTRALIA TO REVIEW MILLIONAIRE MIGRANTS AS VISA LAWS TIGHTENS

**SYDNEY:** Australia will this year review visa rules for wealthy would-be migrants, mostly Chinese, a government official said yesterday, as the country tightens requirements for granting residency rights. He did not elaborate on the changes under review but hinted at the need to be proficient in English. The announcement comes only days after Australia axed a temporary work visa popular with foreigners, replacing it with a tougher program, and raised

the bar for attaining citizenship.

Nearly 90 percent of applicants for the Significant Investor Visas are Chinese who need to bring in a minimum A\$5 million (\$3.75 million) to become eligible for Australian residency. "The program has to be designed to meet the Australian economy's needs. You will have the opportunity to directly have a say in the review and your feedback will be considered by the department," Assistant Immigration

Minister Alex Hawke said at a Chinese in Australia seminar in Sydney.

"...The expectation from the Australian community is that migrants have competent English," he said. "I don't think that is unfair." Australia has seen the rise of nationalist, anti-immigration politics with far-right wing parties such as One Nation garnering strong public support, while the popularity of Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's ruling centre-right government

has been languishing. Many Chinese millionaires seek to move to Australia for a better lifestyle, although some may also seek to avoid a sweeping corruption crackdown in China that is prompting many wealthy Chinese to move their money. Australia tightened SIV rules in 2015 requiring applicants to invest in small-cap and venture capital funds while barring them from direct property investment - a move that many immigration lawyers say

has led to fading appeal for the visa.

Hawke emphasized the government was committed to the program, responding to a question about rumors in China that Australia was looking to scrap the visa. Immigration is a sensitive issue in Australia which maintains a strict policy of not allowing asylum seekers who try to reach the country by boat to settle there, instead detaining them in controversial camps on Nauru and in Papua New Guinea. — Reuters



**AHMADABAD:** Indians burn an effigy of Pakistan and shout anti-Pakistan slogans during a protest in Ahmedabad, India, yesterday. Two Indian soldiers were killed and their bodies mutilated Monday in an ambush by Pakistani soldiers along the highly militarized de facto border that divides the disputed region of Kashmir between the nuclear-armed rivals, the Indian army said. But Pakistan denied any such attack, calling the Indian claims false. — AP

## MYANMAR POLICE HUNT SCAVENGERS WHO FOUND MASSIVE JADE BOULDER

**YANGON:** Police are hunting five gem scavengers who discovered a huge jade boulder at a mine in northern Myanmar after a senior regulatory official accused them of leading an attempt to steal it. The prospectors found the 8.7 ton block of the precious stone last week in a mine at Hpakant in Kachin State, where they normally work at night picking through the scraps left by the owners. They later returned with around 10,000 other people and tried to move the huge rock to a nearby school compound but were stopped by the company that owns the site, Taut Pa Kyal.

"When the workers found the jade stone, many people came to that area... many illegal workers and many rich men who wanted to buy the stone," said local aid worker Dashi Naw Lahn. "The company called the army to keep control of the situation." Local MP Tin Soe said Taut Pa Kyal paid the men who found the stone between 30-40 million kyat (\$22,000-30,000) each and all of the other workers in the crowd another 10,000 kyat to disperse.

In total the company said it paid out over

100 million kyat, according to Tin Hoe. But the deputy director of the state-backed regulator Myanmar Gems Enterprise, Nay Tun, has since filed charges against the five men for attempted aggravated theft of the enormous boulder. "We are trying to arrest them," police officer Khin Oo from the Lone Khin police station in Hpakant told AFP on Wednesday. "We still don't know where they are."

Myanmar is the source of nearly all of the world's finest jadeite, a beautiful green stone highly prized in neighboring China where it is known as the "stone of heaven". In October workers in Hpakant-the heart of Myanmar's jade-producing region-found a 174-tonne piece of jade worth about \$5 million. But the secretive trade is poorly regulated and enormously dangerous. Hundreds of poor itinerant miners die every year in landslides as they scour for pieces of jade left behind by the industrial diggers that have carved up the landscape. The industry is overseen by the Myanmar Gems Enterprise, run by former military men, which both regulates the sector and makes money from the mines. — AFP



**SYDNEY:** People leave the Fairfax offices. — AP

## FAIRFAX MEDIA CUTS STAFF AFTER NZ MERGER TOSSED

**SYDNEY:** Struggling Australian publishing giant Fairfax Media said yesterday it would axe around a quarter of its newsroom staff in Australia, prompting journalists at two of the company's major newspapers to strike. Fairfax's announcement that it would slash 125 editorial jobs at its Australian newspapers came just hours after the company's New Zealand operation lost out on a proposed merger with another New Zealand publisher. The companies had hoped the merger would save money and stave off job cuts.

Fairfax, which has seen a decline in its advertising revenue and circulation numbers, is attempting to cut costs by 30 million Australian dollars (\$22 million). The company had axed 120 jobs from its Australian newsrooms a year ago in an earlier cost-cutting measure. In response to the latest cuts, workers at The Sydney Morning Herald and Melbourne paper The Age, voted to go on a one-week strike. Sean Nicholls, a journalist at the Herald, blasted the job cuts as short-sighted and a threat to media diversity. If the Herald and Age shut down, Nicholls said, Sydney and Melbourne would be left with just one daily newspaper each, both run by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp.

"This threatens the very existence of the newspapers, let alone the future quality of our newspapers," Nicholls told reporters. "We acknowledge that the media in Australia, like everywhere else in the world, is in a very difficult position. But just cutting jobs again and again and again is not the way to do it."

Fairfax Media, which owns Fairfax New

Zealand, had hoped to ward off even deeper job losses by merging its New Zealand operation with NZME, which publishes New Zealand's largest daily newspaper. But yesterday, New Zealand's Commerce Commission rejected the proposal, saying the benefits of saving money and extending the life of some newspapers did not outweigh the harm it would cause to democracy. The commission said the combined company would have controlled nearly 90 percent of the daily newspaper market and a majority of traffic to online New Zealand news.

"This merger would concentrate media ownership and influence to an unprecedented extent for a well-established modern liberal democracy," Commission Chairman Mark Berry said in a statement. He said the merger would have reduced the quality of news and the diversity of voices. He said competition between news outlets resulted in better content.

Both Fairfax and NZME said they were disappointed by the commission's decision. Fairfax said it would need to cut costs and consolidate some of its publications, while NZME said it was considering its options. NZME shares were down 11 percent after the announcement. E tu, the union representing journalists, said it welcomed the commission's decision. Senior Industrial Officer Paul Tolich said the union agrees with the commission that media monopolies are unacceptable. He said the union favors imposing a special tax on companies like Google and Facebook, which take a majority of the online advertising revenue without producing any news content. — AP

## IS-CLAIMED BLAST TARGETS NATO CONVOY IN KABUL

EXPLOSION CAME DURING MORNING RUSH HOUR

**KABUL:** A powerful blast targeting an armored NATO convoy in Kabul killed at least eight people and wounded 28 yesterday, including three coalition troops, officials said in an attack claimed by the Islamic State group. The explosion, which came during morning rush hour on a busy road near the US embassy and NATO headquarters, killed "mostly" civilians, an interior ministry spokesman told AFP without giving a breakdown.

Three coalition service members received "non-life threatening wounds" but are in stable condition, a spokesman for US Forces-Afghanistan said, without confirming their nationalities. The attack, claimed by IS via its Amaq propaganda agency, comes three weeks after the US dropped its largest non-nuclear bomb on the jihadist group's hideouts in eastern Afghanistan, triggering global shockwaves.

Monday's blast also comes days after the Taliban launched their "spring offensive," heralding a surge in fighting as the US seeks to craft a new Afghan strategy and NATO mulls boosting troop levels to break the "stalemate" against the resurgent militants. The attack, which IS said was a suicide car bomb and NATO said was an improvised explosive device (IED), damaged two of the convoy's heavily armored vehicles and left a small crater in the road. MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) vehicles, which are designed to withstand large explosions, are routinely used by international forces moving around Kabul.

At least three civilian cars were also damaged, with one ablaze, while windows were shattered up to several hundred metres away. Firefighters and ambulances rushed stunned survivors to hospital as President Ashraf Ghani slammed the blast as a "criminal act". NATO commander in Afghanistan General John Nicholson has said the US decision to drop the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast in Nangarhar province last month was a "very clear message" to IS: "If they come to Afghanistan they will be destroyed."

Some observers have condemned the move against a group that is not considered as big a threat to Afghanistan as the Taliban. Others suggested it would boost the Taliban, who have been in a turf war with IS in Nangarhar. The weapon, dubbed the "Mother of All Bombs", killed at least 95 jihadists, according to the Afghan defense ministry, but fighting in the area has continued. Last week, two US troops were killed in an operation against IS near where the bomb was dropped. The Pentagon has said it is investigating if they were killed by friendly fire.



**KABUL:** An Afghan victim injured in a suicide attack lies in a ward at the Wazir Akbar Khan hospital. — AFP

### Grinding conflict

Pentagon chief Jim Mattis warned of "another tough year" for both foreign troops and local forces in Afghanistan when he visited Kabul last month, though he would not be drawn on calls by Nicholson for a "few thousand" more troops against the Taliban insurgents. But NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg told a German newspaper Sunday that the 28-nation alliance was considering boosting its troop strength once more given the "challenging" security situation.

The US has around 8,400 troops in the country with about another 5,000 from NATO allies. Most are taking part in NATO's train, assist and advise mission, though some are also carrying out counter-terror missions targeting IS and Al-Qaeda. First emerging in 2015, IS's local affiliate in Afghanistan overran large parts of Nangarhar and Kunar provinces, near the Pakistan border, but their part in the Afghan conflict had been largely overshadowed by the operations against the Taliban. Captain Bill Salvin, spokesman for US Forces-Afghanistan, said the local IS presence

peaked at between 2,500 to 3,000 but that defections and recent battlefield losses had reduced their number to a maximum of 800. "We have a very good chance of destroying them in 2017," Salvin told AFP recently. Embattled Afghan forces meanwhile have been straining to beat back the Taliban insurgents since US-led NATO troops ended their combat mission in December 2014.

A report by US watchdog SIGAR said they suffered "shockingly high" casualties in the first three months of 2017. Afghan analyst Ahmad Muradi told AFP Wednesday that whether attacks are carried out by IS or the Taliban, "the result is the same: it makes the government and its international supporters tired, and security forces too stretched out, fighting several enemies on several fronts at the same time". With more than one third of Afghanistan outside of government control, civilians continue to bear the heaviest brunt of the fighting, with thousands killed and wounded each year and children paying an increasingly disproportionate price, according to UN figures. — AFP

## JOURNALISTS 'SUFFOCATING' IN MAGUFULI'S TANZANIA

**DAR ES SALAAM:** Press freedom in Tanzania is being squeezed under President John Magufuli, leaving journalists fearful. France-based watchdog Reporters Without Borders (known by its French acronym, RSF) ranked Tanzania 83rd out of 180 countries in its latest annual press freedom report. The East African country was down a dozen places from the previous year, representing the second-largest decline in the world, after Nicaragua.

Magufuli, nicknamed "tingatinga"-meaning "bulldozer" in Swahili-was elected in October 2015. His talent for publicity-grabbing stunts that bolster his reputation as a no-nonsense, corruption-busting man of the people, have made him wildly popular among some. But his intolerance of criticism, impulsiveness and disregard for due process worry others who see a wide authoritarian streak at the core of his populism. Magufuli "tolerates no criticism of himself or his program," RSF said in a commentary published with the report last month. Tanzanian journalists have watched with concern as their situation has worsened under Magufuli. "Press freedom is being seriously limited," said Jenerali Ulimwengu, a veteran journalist, legal expert and former diplomat. "We are facing many challenges."

Ulimwengu said Tanzania's Media Services Act of 2016 in particular "restricts people from practising independent journalism" by granting the government "extensive powers to control the freedom of the press." "We complained under previous regimes, but today we are really starting to suffocate," said a reporter at the Swahili language daily Mwananchi, on condition of anonymity.

### 'What can my pen change?'

"We cannot even denounce abuses by a member of the president's entourage, because then the president feels personally targeted," the journalist added, citing the case of Maxence Melo, founder of the whistle-blowing Tanzanian website JamiForums. Melo was arrested late last year and faces prosecution for not disclosing his sources for stories that revealed alleged corruption in private companies with links to government.

RSF said last year that since Magufuli's inauguration, several radio stations have been suspended and at least a dozen people are being prosecuted for critical comments made on social

media. In August 2016, advocacy organization the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said Magufuli's government "has taken a series of steps to restrict Tanzania's media environment." Journalists in Tanzania have responded to the deteriorating situation with weary resignation and self-censorship.

"What can my pen change in a country where even MPs are arrested for criticizing the infallible president?" asked a journalist working for the private daily The Guardian, who also did not want to be named. "Self-censorship is becoming widespread," the reporter added. In March, a group of Tanzanian organizations led by the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC) began a year-long campaign of seminars and discussions

to push for respect for freedom of expression and the review of new laws, including the Media Services Act, which they say is too restrictive and needs to be reformed.

Magufuli, however, shows no sign of backing down. In January, he criticized two unnamed Tanzanian publications, accusing them of "jeopardizing national peace" and "incitement". He compared the newspapers to media houses in neighboring Rwanda that called for the wiping out of ethnic Tutsis ahead of the 1994 genocide. "This will not happen under my watch," he said, in words reminiscent of Rwanda's own strongman leader, President Paul Kagame, who is known for restricting basic freedoms while pushing for economic growth. — AFP

## 4 HARD LINE HINDU MILITIA ACCUSED OF KILLING MUSLIM

**NEW DELHI:** Indian police have detained four members of a hardline Hindu militia founded by the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh on suspicion of killing a Muslim man who had helped an interfaith couple elope, an investigating official said yesterday.

A 60-year-old farmer was killed on Tuesday by a mob that included members of the Hindu Yuva Vahini, or Hindu Youth Force, set up by Yogi Adityanath, a priest recently named by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to lead India's most populous state. Adityanath, backed by his volunteer force, spearheaded the campaign of Modi's Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) in this year's Uttar Pradesh state polls, helping to secure a landslide victory in the northern state.

Since his appointment, units of the Hindu Yuva Vahini have ramped up their anti-Muslim rhetoric and launched a campaign against so-called "Love Jihad" - what they regard as an Islamist strategy to convert Hindu women through seduction and marriage.

"The case of a Hindu girl eloping with a Muslim boy led to religious tension and members of the Hindu Yuva Vahini declared it was Love Jihad," said Jagdish Sharma, a police officer leading investigations in Bulandshahr dis-

trict, 70 km (40 miles) to the southeast of India's capital New Delhi. "The Muslim farmer was beaten to death in a mango orchard after he refused to share the whereabouts of the couple," said Sharma.

The spokesman of the Hindu Yuva Vahini, PK Mall, denied that any members of Adityanath's youth force had been involved in the attack. "We don't want Muslims to convert Hindu girls but we are not involved in any criminal activity," he told Reuters. "There is a clear conspiracy to insult Yogi Adityanath and our religious group."

Adityanath, who heads a Hindu sect based in eastern Uttar Pradesh, has a history of rabble-rousing street politics, and his sudden rise to political prominence has stoked tensions with Muslims who make up 19 percent of Uttar Pradesh's 220 million people. Since his appointment, members of the Hindu Yuva Vahini have called on police to enforce a ban imposed by Adityanath on illegal slaughterhouses and taken action to halt sales of meat from unlicensed butchers' shops run by Muslims. Adityanath, according to Indian media reports last weekend, urged members of the group "behave with decency". — Reuters



## THAI GIRL LEARNS TO SMILE AFTER TEACHER ASSAULT

**BANGKOK:** There were moments when Narudee Jotsanthia thought she'd never smile again. The Thai schoolgirl says she was left facially disfigured last year after a teacher threw a mug at her head. The attack, which went viral and sparked renewed debate about the country's deeply hierarchical education system, locked one side of her face in a downward droop and left her unable to close her left eye.

"When I saw my face, I just couldn't accept it," the 18-year-old from Thailand's impoverished northeastern Korat province told AFP. "I thought about hurting myself. I really just could not believe it." Narudee had always dreamed of becoming an air hostess, but felt there was little chance an airline

would ever consider hiring her. Yet eight months on she is smiling again thanks to months of costly medical therapy and daily exercises funded by strangers. "I might not be 100 percent normal," she said, a hint of paralysis still visible on her left side. "But I am very satisfied already on what I have achieved so far. At least I can smile again." The attack was one of a number of recent events that have sparked intense public anger over how authority figures treat underlings in a country where questioning your superiors is taboo.

Last year video footage went viral of a student forced to grovel at her teacher's feet following a disagreement over whether she was allergic to egg-tofu soup. A Thai Air Asia

stewardess was also forced to prostrate herself on the floor before a disgruntled passenger, prompting an apology from airline boss Tony Fernandez.

### Military values

Teachers are near sacrosanct in Thai culture, afforded huge respect and deference. But many education reform advocates argue such extreme kowtowing discourages critical thinking in students, pointing out that school standards in the comparatively wealthy nation have been slipping for years. Education for Liberation of Siam, a group advocating schooling reform, said the authorities should do more to "make schools free from violence, change attitude about

punishment and take quick action in cases like these." Yet Thailand's culture of deference has become more intense since the military seized power in 2014. Junta chief Prayut Chan-O-Cha has ordered all school children to recite his "twelve values" daily, which include respecting parents, teachers, elders and "maintaining discipline". So far Narudee's medical treatment has cost as much as three times the annual income her family brings in as cassava farmers in Thailand's impoverished northeast.

The bill has been picked up by the Pavena Foundation, which assists women trying to escape abuse and also helped Narudee find a new school. "It's taken five months, we can see Narudee looking nor-

mal again, she can now shut her mouth and eyes," Pavena Hongsakula, a former politician who founded the foundation, said. The school admits the teacher attacked Narudee but disputes whether the paralysis, which emerged the day after the assault, was caused by the mug. The school director said they paid the family 50,000 baht (\$1,450) compensation and that the teacher was transferred to another school. Police have charged him with assault but the attorney general's office has yet to push ahead with a prosecution. Narudee now wants to focus on chasing her dream of becoming an air hostess. "I don't know if I'm dreaming too high or not," she said, breaking out into a wide grin. — AP

## CHINA CLAMPS DOWN ON ONLINE NEWS WITH NEW SECURITY RULES

**BEIJING:** China is tightening rules for online news as censors try to control a flood of information spread through instant-messaging apps, blogs and other media sources that are proliferating across the country. The rules announced Tuesday will require online publishers to obtain government licenses and block foreign or private companies from investing in online news services or directly disseminating news.

Chinese news outlets will have to undergo a security review before working with foreign companies, according to a statement from the Cyberspace Administration of China, the agency charged with enforcing the rules, which take effect June 1. The move follows a crackdown on dissent under Communist Party leader Xi Jinping that has led to tighter controls on what can be published online.

With the latest rules, the government will require internet companies to censor what their customers see or risk losing their right to distribute news, Chinese media expert Qiao Mu said. "This is aimed at the companies rather than the individual users," he said. "It's not only to ideologically control information, but also to control the source of the information." There are more than 700 million internet users in China. Authorities have long sought to block material considered subversive by erasing objectionable items off news sites and microblogs. Under an elaborate censorship system that's been dubbed the Great Firewall, websites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube are blocked.

### Circumvent the system

Many internet users in China regularly circumvent that system by using virtual private networks, or VPNs. Those offer encrypted connections intended to thwart censorship and allow access to banned sites. The new rules adopt a more proactive approach, dictating restrictions on news site ownership and funding and targeting companies or individuals that violate them. News services

will face penalties such as criminal prosecution if they fail to "persist in ... serving socialism," promote a "benign online culture," and "safeguard the national interest."

Qiao said three of China's biggest internet companies - Baidu, Tencent, and NetEase - could be affected. Each provides access to news: Baidu via its popular search platform, Tencent through the WeChat messaging app and NetEase through its Mobile News app. Numerous smaller news providers that use the larger companies' platforms also would fall under the new rules, Qiao said. Baidu spokeswoman Whitney Yan said the company had no comment. Representatives of Tencent and NetEase did not immediately respond to questions about the new rules.

The rules target Chinese internet services and seem unlikely to affect foreign news organizations and websites based overseas, many of which are already blocked in China. How much information gets filtered out will be determined by how forcefully agencies including the Cybersecurity Administration enforce the new rules, said Zhan Jiang with the Department of International Journalism and Communication at Beijing Foreign Studies University.

The official Xinhua News Agency characterized the rules as a security measure intended in part to protect the privacy of users. But the rules also reveal rising anxiety among the country's rulers over a "digital activism" that is driving change across Chinese society, said Xiao Qiang, director of the China Internet Project at the University of California at Berkeley. Those worries have been heightened, he said, by the sudden rise in popularity of quasi-autonomous services such as WeChat, which has become ubiquitous in some major cities. "There are millions of Chinese netizens capable of circumventing the Great Firewall," Xiao said, adding that has left leaders fearful "of losing control of online media, which plays an essential role of shaping public minds in China today." — AP



**SEIBGJU:** In this April 28, 2017 photo, South Korean residents attend a rally to oppose a plan to deploy an advanced US missile defense system called Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, near the system's site. — AP

## CHINA URGES SIDES IN N KOREA STANDOFF TO 'STOP IRRITATING'

### THE 'ERA OF STRATEGIC PATIENCE' IS OVER

**BEIJING:** China yesterday called on all parties in the Korean standoff to stay calm and "stop irritating each other" a day after North Korea said the United States was pushing the region to the brink of nuclear war. The United States has urged China, reclusive North Korea's lone major ally, to do more to rein in its neighbor's nuclear and missile programs which have prompted an assertive response from the Trump administration, warning that the "era of strategic patience" is over.

The United States has sent a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to Korean waters and a pair of strategic US bombers flew training drills with the South Korean and Japanese air forces in another show of strength this week. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang, asked about the bomber flights, the drills and North Korea's response, stressed that the situation was "highly complex" and sensitive.

"The urgent task is to lower temperatures and resume talks," he told reporters. "We again urge all relevant parties to remain calm and exercise restraint, stop irritating each other, work hard to create an atmosphere for contact and dialogue between all sides, and seek a return to the correct path of dialogue and negotiation as soon as possible." The flight of the two bombers came as US President Donald Trump raised eyebrows when he said he would be "honored" to meet North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in the right circumstances, and as his CIA director landed in South Korea for talks. North Korea said the bombers conducted "a nuclear bomb dropping drill against major objects" in its territory at a time when Trump and "other U.S. warmongers are crying out for making a preemptive nuclear strike" on the North.

### China opposes THAAD

"The reckless military provocation is pushing

the situation on the Korean peninsula closer to the brink of nuclear war," the North's official KCNA news agency said on Tuesday. Tension on the Korean peninsula has been high for weeks, driven by concern that the North might conduct its sixth nuclear test in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions. In a telephone call with his Philippine counterpart Rodrigo Duterte, Chinese President Xi Jinping urged all sides to exercise restraint and return to the correct path of talks as soon as possible, state radio reported.

The US military's THAAD anti-missile defence system has reached initial operational capacity in South Korea, US officials told Reuters, although they cautioned that it would not be fully operational for some months. China has repeatedly expressed its opposition to the system, whose powerful radar it fears could reach inside Chinese territory, just as Trump has praised Chinese President Xi Jinping for his efforts to rein in North Korea.

It was widely feared North Korea could conduct a nuclear test on or around April 15 to celebrate the anniversary of the birth of the North's founding leader, Kim Il Sung, or on April 25, the 85th anniversary of the foundation of its Korean People's Army. The North has conducted such tests or missile launches to mark significant events in the past.

### 'Honored to meet Kim'

Instead, North Korea held a big military parade featuring a display of missiles on April 15 and then a large, live-fire artillery drill 10 days later. Trump drew criticism in Washington on Monday when he said he would be "honored" to meet North Korea's young leader. "If it would be appropriate for me to meet with him, I would absolutely, I would be honored to do it," Trump told Bloomberg News.



**BEIJING:** In this Thursday, April 28, 2016, photo, visitors at a social network company's booth try out booklets which enable people to connect global clients during the Global Mobile Internet Conference. — AP

## POLICE STRUGGLE TO FIND FUGITIVE RED BULL HEIR

**BANGKOK:** Thai police said yesterday they were trying to locate Red Bull heir Worayuth Yoovidhya who reportedly fled to Singapore on his private jet days before a warrant was issued for him over a fatal hit-and-run in 2012. After years of dodging prosecutors, 32-year-old billionaire Worayuth has become a poster child for the impunity enjoyed by elites in starkly unequal Thailand.

Authorities finally issued an arrest warrant for the scion last week after he failed to make a final deadline to meet prosecutors-nearly five years after he sped off after mowing down and killing a policeman with his Ferrari in downtown Bangkok. But Worayuth, known by his nickname "Boss," slipped out of the country just days before the warrant was issued, according to police.

"First we have to locate him and then we have to go from there. If we can't locate him then we can't do the next step," deputy national police spokesman Colonel Krissana Pattanacharoen told AFP. Immigration officers told local media Worayuth left for Singapore on his private jet on April 25. Police are seeking to confirm whether he is still

there. The two countries do not have an extradition treaty.

Krissana said investigators were seeking to have his Thai passport revoked. "We have contacted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to see if it's possible to revoke his passport," he said. Ministry spokeswoman Busadee Santipitak told AFP: "We have not received any formal communication but stand ready to cooperate with law enforcement agencies."

Several charges against Worayuth have expired during the lapse between the car crash and his arrest warrant, a period that saw the heir continue to lead a lavish, jet-setting lifestyle with frequent stops in the kingdom. But he still faces up to 10 years in prison for reckless driving that resulted in death, an offence that will be valid until 2027. Worayuth's billionaire clan has inherited the fortune built up by his grandfather Chaleo Yoovidhya, who co-founded the Red Bull brand with Austrian Dietrich Mateschitz in the 1980s. Chaleo passed away in March 2012, leaving his family some \$2 billion and control of more than 50 percent of the energy drink empire, according to Bloomberg. — AP

## N KOREA MEDIA CONFIRMS ARREST OF US PROFESSOR

**SEOUL:** North Korea yesterday confirmed the arrest of a US professor for trying to "overturn" the regime, as tensions spike between the isolated nuclear-armed nation and Washington. Kim Sang-Duk, or Tony Kim, became the third American held in the North when he was detained at the capital's airport on April 22 as he tried to leave the country, after teaching for several weeks at an elite university.

In the North's first confirmation of the professor's detention, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said he had been held for "committing criminal acts of hostility aimed to overturn the DPRK", using an abbreviation for the country's official name. It added that Kim was "under detention by a relevant law enforcement body which is conducting detailed investigation into his crimes". The confirmation of Kim's detention comes as Pyongyang issues increasingly belligerent rhetoric in a tense stand-off with the administration of new US President Donald Trump over its rogue weapons program. Kim had been teaching accounting at the Pyongyang University of Science and Technology (PUST), which said last month that the professor had been held.

### 'Religiously devoted man'

The school-founded by evangelical Christians from overseas and opened in 2010 — is known to have a number of American faculty members

and pupils are generally children from the country's elite. In a statement in late April the university said the arrest was "not connected in any way with the work of PUST". It added that the Swedish embassy in Pyongyang—which handles issues involving US citizens as Washington has no diplomatic ties with the North—was "actively involved" in talks. Kim is a former professor at

Yanbian University of Science and Technology in China, close to the Korean border. Its website lists his specialty as accounting. South Korea's Yonhap news agency has given Kim's age as 55 and said he had been involved in relief activities for children in rural parts of North Korea. It cited a source familiar with the matter who described Kim as a "religiously devoted man." — AFP



**PYONGYANG:** This image made from May 21, 2014, video shows a building at the Pyongyang University of Science and Technology. — AP





CARACAS: Venezuelan National Guard personnel in riot gear charge on opposition demonstrators during a protest against Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro yesterday. Venezuelais angry opposition rallied yesterday - vowing huge street protests against President Nicolas Maduro's plan to rewrite the constitution and accusing him of dodging elections to cling to power despite deadly unrest. — AFP

## SWIM BODY MONITORING VP ROLE IN FIFA'S...

Continued from Page 1

who is "co-conspirator 2" in the American legal documents. Sheikh Ahmad has denied all wrongdoing, though he resigned from the FIFA Council on Saturday. He also withdrew his candidacy to retain his seat in an election of Asian soccer leaders scheduled next Monday in Manama, Bahrain. The IOC said in a statement Saturday that the

sheikh informed the IOC and FIFA ethics panels of the allegations. Sheikh Ahmad has been an IOC member for 25 years and has led the Asian Olympic body, which was created by his father, since 1991. Since being elected president of the global group of national Olympic committees, known as ANOC, in 2012, Sheikh Ahmad has gained a reputation as the most important powerbroker in Olympic elections and hosting votes, with Al-Musallam as his closest aide.— AP

## CONSTITUTIONAL COURT DECLARES VOTES...

Continued from Page 1

Following the announcement of the verdict, Arbeed visited the National Assembly building and met with the speaker. He said he will carry out his election pledges.

In another development, Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah yesterday sent a letter to MPs Shuaib Al-Muwaizri and Riyadh Al-Adasani asking for more explanation of the grilling they have filed against him. The premier asked two lawmakers to specifically pinpoint the alleged violations he has committed in

order to prepare the answers for their allegations during the debate scheduled to be held on May 10.

The premier insisted that the grilling does not include any specific accusation or issue and accordingly violates the internal charter of the Assembly and is not good for debate. Sheikh Jaber however did not make any reference to the other grilling amid reports that a ministerial committee is studying it to determine if the grilling is constitutional or not. Adasani's response came very quick as the lawmaker said that after all the explanation we have provided, the prime minister comes now to ask for more.

## UAE BUILDING UP REGIONAL ARMY IN TROUBLED...

Continued from Page 1

A southern offensive has slowed down since it crossed the borders of Taiz province, they said. "Taiz is part of the north, and southerners would not fight beyond their borders. Taking them there was a big challenge," one UAE military officer said. The wealthy UAE is a powerful player in the Saudi-led military coalition fighting in a civil war that contains conflicts within conflicts.

The alliance backs President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi's internationally-recognized government, based in Aden, against an Iranian-aligned Houthi rebel movement which holds the capital Sanaa. More than 10,000 people have been killed since March 2015 and the country faces a humanitarian disaster as millions of people go hungry. Hardline anti-Western groups Al-Qaeda and Islamic State have taken advantage of the chaos to press their own plans.

The capture of Mukalla from Al-Qaeda in April last year was a highpoint for the UAE-sponsored force. Lying on the Gulf of Aden, it is the capital of Hadramout province, which contains most of Yemen's oil resources. The port once provided Al-Qaeda with millions of dollars in customs duties before the 30,000-strong force drove them into the nearby mountains. Twelve months on, a semblance of normality has returned to the dusty, crowded streets although destroyed vehicles left by Al-Qaeda fighters still lie on the roadsides and nervous young soldiers man checkpoints that suggest the fragility of their military gains.

### Discipline

The UAE concentrated its efforts on building a Yemeni force since it reduced its own troops' frontline

exposure following a Houthi missile attack which killed scores of UAE and other Gulf soldiers in eastern Marib province in September 2015. "I always knew how to handle weapons, but the UAE army taught us military discipline and gave us jobs," said Ahmed Al-Khashaf, a lanky soldier in ill-fitting fatigues who was guarding the port. Senior UAE military officers say their forces have trained and pay more than 11,000 Yemeni soldiers from Hadramout and 14,000 from Aden and three provinces. Unity is elusive, however. "In Yemen, a Hadrami will fight only with another Hadrami. It is important to keep it in regional blocs when you build battalions," said a senior UAE military official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

But the war effort may now take second place to local fervor to revive a southern state, bolstered by the recapture of Aden from the Houthis by coalition forces in July 2015. The former South Yemen, which had Aden as its capital, united with North Yemen in 1990 after a brief 1986 war. Now local forces appear to be prioritizing the fight on their front door over those in lands they regard as a foreign country. "If there is no peace with the north, we will just split away," Hadramout provincial governor General Ahmad Bin Bourek said at his heavily guarded residence in Mukalla.

In Aden, 480 km to the west of Mukalla, divisions have already started to mount between Hadi and pro-secessionist troops. Street protests have taken place against a decision by Hadi last week to sack Aidaroos Al-Zubaidi, a secessionist and the UAE-backed governor of Aden. The participation of masked fighters kitted out in UAE-issued military gear could render the Gulf state's involvement in Yemen's conflict even more complex.— Reuters

## TRUMP TO RELAUNCH MIDEAST PEACE TALKS

Continued from Page 1

The 82-year-old Abbas made the trip to Washington while politically unpopular back home, with polls suggesting most Palestinians want him to resign. Abbas's term was meant to expire in 2009, but he has remained in office with no elections held. He will be hoping Trump can pressure Israel into concessions he believes are necessary to salvage a two-state solution to one of the world's longest-running conflicts.

Palestinians are watching closely, including the leader of the radical Hamas movement Khaled Meshaal, who called on Trump to break with past approaches to Middle East peace. "This is a historic opportunity to pressure Israel... to find an equitable solution for the Palestinian people," he told CNN. Hamas on Tuesday released a policy document that for the first time indicates a willingness to accept the idea of a Palestinian state within the borders that emerged after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, although it stops short of recognizing Israel. Palestinian officials have

seen their cause overshadowed by worry over global concerns such as the war in Syria and Islamic State group jihadists, and want Trump's White House to bring it back to the forefront.

One of Trump's top advisers, Jason Greenblatt, held wide-ranging talks with both Israelis and Palestinians during a visit in March. Abbas and Trump spoke by phone on March 11, and there are suggestions the US president could visit the Middle East this month. A group of three influential Republican senators have called on Trump to ask Abbas to stop funding Palestinian prisoners and their families. That could pose major domestic political headaches for Abbas, as he battles unpopularity and challenges from rival factions. According to former White House official Dennis Ross, Trump was helping Abbas by extending the White House invite. But mutual distrust between Palestinians and Israelis will be a formidable, if not impossible, barrier for Trump to overcome. "The gap between the parties has probably never been greater," said Ross.—AFP

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**MERKEL-PUTIN MEETING**

**Focus**

**CHINA'S MILITARY PACT WITH NORTH KOREA LOOKS SHAKY**

When North Korea's founder Kim Il-Sung visited Beijing to sign a mutual defense pact with China in 1961, he was comforted by the military protection promised by his fellow communist neighbors. But half a century and a few North Korean nuclear tests later, the agreement is beginning to look like a musty Cold War relic that China would rather forget. Despite their alliance in the 1950 - 1953 Korean War, analysts question whether Beijing would now rush to Pyongyang's defense in a military confrontation with the United States and South Korea.

Chinese leader Mao Zedong once described the neighbors as being as "close as lips and teeth." For his part, Kim told Mao that signing the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance "raised our confidence, and we feel safeguarded," according to a memoir of Mao's diplomatic activities published in 2003. But the two leaders are long dead and China, which is now the world's second largest economy and a pillar of the global order, appears less enthusiastic about protecting its treaty partner in a conflict that estimates suggest could cost hundreds of thousands of lives and lay waste to Seoul.

The current leaders of both nations, Chinese President Xi Jinping and North Korea's Kim Jong-Un, have never even met. The treaty constitutes "a very important part" of Sino-North Korean ties, professor Maochun Miles Yu at the United States Naval Academy said. But, he added, it is by no means clear what China is actually prepared to do for the North if push comes to shove. "It's a mystery."

**Atomic threat**

North Korea's regular missile launches and the prospect of a possible sixth nuclear test are putting Beijing in a tight spot as it already faces US pressure to slash economic ties to punish Pyongyang. "It's hard to say how China would assist North Korea militarily in case of war, since North Korea is developing nuclear weapons, an act that might have already breached the treaty between the two nations," retired Chinese naval colonel Li Jie told the daily South China Morning Post last month. China's nationalistic Global Times newspaper invoked two scenarios, including one in which Beijing would refrain from defending Pyongyang. "If North Korea continues to carry out severe missile tests, and the United States launches a surgical attack on its facilities, Beijing should impose a diplomatic boycott, but there is no necessity of military intervention," said an op-ed published in the Global Times last month.

But the daily said China "should immediately carry out necessary military intervention" if the US and South Korea launch a ground invasion in the North to overthrow the regime. While Beijing's commitment to the pact is in question, it remains sensitive to US military movements in the region. On Tuesday, China demanded that Washington "immediately" suspend the deployment of a missile shield in South Korea hours after officials announced that it was operational. "We will firmly take necessary measures to uphold our interests," foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said.

**'Complicated situation'**

The military pact automatically renews every 20 years, most recently in 2001, meaning it is now valid through 2021. Last year, Xi and Kim exchanged messages to mark the treaty's 55th anniversary. The Chinese president wrote that both sides have cooperated in the "spirit" of the treaty and that their "friendship serves as a precious wealth."

The treaty, Kim responded, "has become a firm legal foundation for constantly consolidating the friendly and cooperative relations that were forged in the bloody struggle for independence against imperialism and for socialism." But in 2013, a Chinese defence ministry spokesman said it would be "unprofessional" to answer a hypothetical question about whether Beijing would militarily back Pyongyang in an attack. Asked on Tuesday whether China was still committed to the pact's terms, foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said: "The principle of (the treaty) is to promote China-DPRK friendly cooperation in various fields and uphold regional security."

He added: "The current situation on the peninsula is highly complicated, delicate and tense. We urge all sides to stay calm and abstain from any action that may aggravate tensions." Young-June Chung, an associate professor at Shanghai's Tongji University, said the pact's "diplomatic status is a little bit obscure" as neither side has acknowledged that it is "invalid." But he added that Beijing "would not sacrifice its relations with the US and South Korea for North Korea." —AFP

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**RELIEF MAP FOR GREEK DEBT? NOT WITHOUT A FIGHT**

By Jeremy Gaunt

Pretty much everyone agrees that Greece needs debt relief; what they don't agree on is what debt relief means. Easing Greece's fiscal path forward is likely to be the next great struggle in the country's agonising, seven-year, three-package bankruptcy saga now that a bailout pact has opened the door a crack to discussions on relief. Only this time it will not just pit Greece against its lenders, but lender against lender as well. Start with the numbers: At the last count, the Greek government owed 314 billion euros (\$343 billion) despite writing off about 100 billion euros owed to private bondholders in 2012.

That's more than the gross domestic product of South Africa. It's also equivalent to around 179 percent of GDP, a ratio which despite improvements in Greece's economic performance goes up every time lenders make a bailout payment to Athens. This is why debt relief is on the agenda-with

Greece perhaps quixotically pushing for something as early as May 22, when the Eurogroup of euro zone finance ministers meets to sign off on Tuesday's staff-level pact on support for Athens.

The battle will be fought on a number of fronts. Firstly, there is the issue of whether the International Monetary Fund will participate financially in the current, third bailout. The IMF says Greece's debt is unsustainable-with or without the reform measures taken-and it doesn't want to keep throwing money at the problem while that is so. Indeed, it is not allowed to by its charter. "For the IMF to be entering into a program with Greece would require that the program can walk on two legs. One leg is the leg of reforms and the other leg is that of debt sustainability," IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde said last month.

The European Union lenders-the European Commission, European Central Bank and European Stability Mechanism-want the IMF involved, primarily because it

brings in an outside enforcer. But the Europeans themselves have so far refused to say what they plan to do, preferring a general pledge to provide debt relief once certain reform criteria are achieved. Germany, for one, does not want to show this year's voters it is doing Greece a favour using German taxpayers' money. That is not enough for the IMF.

**Details, details**

Then there is the question of what kind of debt relief to offer Greece. There is something of an edifice in place here, but so far it is a wall without cement. There is no longer any talk of debt "forgiveness" - simply letting Greece off paying back its debt. The eurozone says there is no provision for that under its rules. But there is less objection to stretching out payments, cutting interest on the EU debt and making repayments flexible enough that they do not amount to more than 15 percent of Greece's GDP annually.

For its part, the IMF cannot legally

change its repayment structure, which in turn slightly undermines its demands of the EU. How far to stretch out payments, where to cut interest rates to, and even what part of the debt is included are all issues to be argued over. One more opportunity for a clash is over just how much of a primary budget surplus-the budget balance excluding debt repayments-Athens has to run for its debt to be sustainable.

The IMF says Greece can hit 2.2 percent in 2018 and aim at 3.5 percent annually in 2019-2021. After that, though, it says it should only be 1.5 percent. Euro-zone lenders, however, want Greece to sustain a 3.5 percent primary surplus target over a slightly longer period to be able to pay the annual interest rates for its debt. After that, it is publicly undecided. Few other European Union countries run surpluses of the size that Greece is being told to reach and sustain. But then, none of them have a debt mountain relative to GDP the size of the South African economy. —Reuters

**POLAR OPPOSITES: ISSUES THAT DIVIDE LE PEN AND MACRON**

By Vincent Drouin

Centrist frontrunner Emmanuel Macron and far-right candidate Marine Le Pen, who go head-to-head Wednesday in a final debate ahead of the May 7 runoff in France's presidential election, are diametrically opposed on issues ranging from immigration to Europe to gay marriage. Here is where they stand on the key questions:

**Europe**

Le Pen has insisted on the need for France to drop the euro single currency and leave Europe's Schengen visa-free travel zone. She says she will hold six months of negotiations on returning powers from Brussels to national capitals after which she will hold a "Frexit" referendum on France's membership of the European Union.

She also opposes the CETA trade deal between the EU and Canada. Macron, a former banker and economy minister, has run an unabashedly pro-European campaign. He wants to bolster the euro-zone by setting up a separate budget for the 19 countries that use the common currency. He also proposes giving the zone its own parliament and finance minister. Macron also wants Europe to strengthen its external borders by setting up a common border force, pool more of its defence forces and impose higher tariffs to protect European industry from unfair competition, particularly from China. He is generally supportive of international trade deals and backs the treaty with Canada.

**Immigration**

Le Pen has vowed a temporary "moratorium" on long-term legal immigration until quotas can be worked out. She wants to reduce net migration-the difference between the number of people arriving and leaving-to just 10,000 and bar illegal immigrants from gaining residency. She would make it harder to qualify for asylum and curtail policies that let migrants bring relatives to France. Foreigners convicted on terror charges or any other crime would be automatically deported, and she would abolish a law that allows children with migrant parents who are born in France to gain French citizenship.

She would also toughen laws on conspicuous religious symbols, extending a ban on Muslim head scarves, Christian crosses, Jewish skullcaps and other symbols to all public places. She would also ban the Islamic burkini swimsuit. Macron has said he would not look to prohibit religious symbols outside of schools, nor ban the burkini. He has championed diversity and vowed to give tax breaks to companies that hire young people from tough predominantly immigrant neighborhoods. He has pledged to speed up the review process for asylum requests to a maximum of six months, including appeals. He has praised German Chancellor Angela Merkel over her generous policy to asylum seekers that has seen more than one million new arrivals since 2015.



This combination of pictures shows French presidential election candidate for the En-Marche movement Emmanuel Macron and French presidential election candidate for the far-right Front National (FN) party Marine Le Pen posing during recent photo sessions in Paris. —AFP

**Labor and retirement**

Both candidates have said they would keep France's official 35-hour work week, adopted by a Socialist government in 2000, but Macron, a liberal, has promised to give companies more freedom to negotiate working time directly with employees. Le Pen wants to lower the retirement age to 60 from 62, the minimum age currently for most people. Macron wants to unify a complex web of retirement rules for various public and private-sector employees, while maintaining the current retirement age.

He also wants to give the self-employed access to unemployment benefits but suspend benefits for qualified workers who refuse two "decent" job offers. To rein in the budget, Macron wants to cut 120,000 civil servant jobs, though hospitals would be spared, while also creating 10,000 police jobs and 4,000 to 5,000 teaching posts. Le Pen advocates more civil servant jobs at the national level and for hospitals, but fewer jobs managed by French regional authorities. She also wants 21,000 more police and customs officials.

**Taxes**

Le Pen would impose a 35-percent tax on goods by companies that move production outside France, and also add a new tax on groups that hire foreign workers, as part of her "national preference" policy. She would cut income taxes by 10 percent for the lowest-earning households, and drop France's plan to withhold income tax from

monthly earnings starting next year-currently the French pay tax on income the year after it is earned. Macron wants a three-year suspension of residents' taxes for 80 percent of French households. He also wants to turn France's so-called "solidarity" wealth tax on people claiming more than 1.3 million euros (\$1.4 million) in assets into a tax on real-estate wealth, which would exclude financial assets. Le Pen has said she would leave the wealth tax untouched.

**Energy, education, family**

Macron has pledged to cut France's reliance on nuclear energy to 50 percent of its total electricity needs by 2025, from about 75 percent now. Le Pen has been a staunch defender of nuclear power, and would halt France's efforts to develop wind power. In education, Le Pen would impose a uniform for all public school students and roll back a controversial reform meant to make French school days shorter. Macron wants to give schools more autonomy in terms of hiring and cut primary school class sizes in half in low-achieving and poor areas. He would also ban the use of cellphones in elementary schools. Le Pen wants to scrap a 2013 gay marriage law and replace it with a new form of civil partnership. She would also restrict medically assisted procreation to couples unable to have children naturally. Macron wants lesbian couples to also have access to fertility treatment. —AFP



**PRINCE PHILIP OPENS  
NEW LORD'S STAND**

**LONDON:** Prince Philip, husband of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II, opened the new Warner Stand at Lord's yesterday following a £25 million (\$32.3 million, 29.6 million euros) reconstruction project. The rebuilding of the 2,656-seater stand is the first phase in a major overhaul of the world-famous London ground that will take place over the next two decades. The stand, which opened in May 1958, is named after former England captain Pelham Warner. "Today is a landmark moment for the club and we are very grateful to His Royal Highness for joining us to celebrate the official opening of the Warner Stand," said Marylebone Cricket Club official Robert Ebdon in a press release. "This truly outstanding facility will be enjoyed by visitors to Lord's for many years to come." — AFP

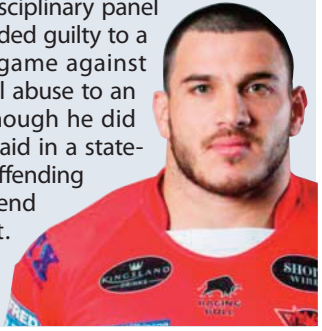


**CUBS REPAIR THEIR WORLD SERIES  
TROPHY AFTER BOSTON DAMAGE**

**CHICAGO:** The first World Series trophy won by the Chicago Cubs since 1908 has been repaired after being damaged last weekend in Boston, the Major League Baseball club said Tuesday. The Cubs ended the longest title drought in North American sports history last year by defeating the Cleveland Indians 4-3 in the best-of-seven championship series. The team's trophy for the achievement was damaged during a benefit concert hosted Saturday by Cubs' president Theo Epstein, the "Hot Stove Cool Music" event. The Cubs played the Boston Red Sox in a three-game series last Friday through Sunday at Fenway Park, the only ballpark to rival in age the Cubs' famed Wrigley Field. Being passed around the crowd at the concert were the Cubs trophy and the trophy won by the Red Sox in 2004 to break that club's 86-year title drought. Epstein was the general manager of the Red Sox squad that ended the drought. A concert video shows Epstein on stage playing guitar while Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder sings and the trophies are being passed around the room. "A handful of (the 30) flags came off the trophy during the event Saturday night," Cubs spokesman Julian Green told the Chicago Tribune. —AFP

**CARNEY GETS 8-MATCH  
BAN FOR RACIAL ABUSE**

**LONDON:** Salford's Australian winger Justin Carney has been banned for eight matches after racially abusing an opponent in an English Challenge Cup match. Carney, 28, was sent off after 26 minutes of Salford's 29-22 win over Toronto Wolfpack last month for directing comments at Ryan Bailey, who is black. He pleaded guilty to a charge of verbal abuse based on race or colour and was hit with an eight-game ban and £300 (\$390, 360 euros) fine following an independent disciplinary panel hearing in Leeds on Tuesday. "Justin has pleaded guilty to a charge of misconduct being that, in the game against Toronto Wolfpack on 23 April he used verbal abuse to an opposition player based on race/color, although he did contest the severity of the charge," Salford said in a statement. "Whilst Justin has admitted using the offending words in an abusive manner, he did not intend his words to be taken in a 'racial' context. "Justin is an indigenous Australian and is proud of his Aboriginal heritage." —AFP



**BOSTON:** Adam Jones #10 of the Baltimore Orioles walks back to the dugout after fouling out during the fourth inning against the Boston Red Sox at Fenway Park. — AFP

**JONES APPLAUDED AS BOSTON BEAT BALTIMORE**

**BOSTON:** Adam Jones received extended applause from Fenway Park fans a night after he was racially taunted, both teams were warned after Boston ace Chris Sale threw behind Manny Machado's legs in the first inning and the Red Sox went on to beat the Baltimore Orioles 5-2 Tuesday night. Machado homered out of Fenway Park for the second straight night.

Before the game Jones received an apology from Red Sox president Sam Kennedy on behalf of the club. Many fans stood during a lengthy round of applause in the first inning, and Sale stepped off the mound to extend the reception. But one batter later the game turned testy when Sale's first pitch to Machado went to the backstop. Emotions have been elevated since Machado injured Red Sox star Dustin Pedroia on a slide April 21 at Baltimore. Pedroia missed the next three games.

Hanley Ramirez homered twice, Mookie Betts hit a two-run double and Sale struck out 11 over eight innings. Sale (2-2) allowed two runs and three hits, and Craig Kimbrel got three straight outs for his AL-leading ninth save in 10 chances. Orioles starter Alec Asher (1-1) gave up

three runs and six hits in six inning.

**ASTROS 8, RANGERS 7**

Marwin Gonzalez hit two home runs, including a go-ahead grand slam in the eighth inning that rallied Houston over Texas. Gonzalez hit a towering fly off Keone Kela (0-1) for his first career slam and a 7-5 lead. Gonzalez stood near the plate, seeing if the ball would be fair, before tossing his bat toward the dugout and beginning his trot. Jose Altuve hit a two-run homer in the fourth and Gonzalez hit a solo homer in the fifth. Delino DeShields, Joey Gallo and Elvis Andrus hit solo homers and Jonathan Lucroy had a two-run shot as the Rangers built a 5-0 lead. Nomar Mazara hit a two-run homer in the ninth off Luke Gregerson. James Hoyt (1-0) pitched two scoreless innings. Will Harris earned his first save. Alex Claudio made his first career start. He pitched in place of Cole Hamels, who was scratched after experiencing tightness in his right oblique while warming up.

**DODGERS 13, GIANTS 5**

Yasiel Puig drove in four runs with two singles and rookie Cody Bellinger added

three more with a bases-clearing triple as Los Angeles rallied to beat San Francisco. The Dodgers managed 11 hits, including a homer by Franklin Gutierrez, and the Giants helped Los Angeles with nine walks. Despite throwing 82 pitches the first three innings, Alex Wood (2-0) made it through the fifth to earn the victory. Matt Moore (1-4) took the loss, lasting just 3 1/3 innings. Moore was charged with nine runs and six hits with five walks.

**DIAMONDBACKS 6, NATIONALS 3**

Jake Lamb and Chris Herrmann homered off Tanner Roark, and Arizona bounced back from an early deficit to beat high-scoring Washington. Erratic starter Taijuan Walker and four relievers combined to blank the potent Washington offense over the final six innings after the Nationals bolted to a 3-1 lead. TJ McFarland (1-0) got four straight outs, JJ Hoover and Jorge De La Rosa each pitched an inning and Fernando Rodney worked a perfect ninth for his seventh save. Roark (3-1) struck out eight over six innings for the Nationals.

**CUBS 8, PHILLIES 3**

Javier Baez came within a double of the cycle with four hits and three RBIs, Kyle Schwarber broke out of a slump with a three-run homer and Chicago beat Philadelphia. Baez hit his second homer in two days and tied his career high for hits, and Kris Bryant homered and tripled for the Cubs, who won for the second time in six games. Jon Lester (1-1) pitched long enough to earn his first victory of the season. Phillies starter Jeremy Hellekson (4-1) allowed six runs and eight hits in four innings.

**WHITE SOX 6, ROYALS 0**

Jose Quintana gave up four singles over eight innings and Chicago beat Kansas City. Quintana (2-4) walked two, struck out seven and allowed only one runner to reach second base. The Royals lost for the 10th time in 11 games. Starter Danny Duffy (2-2) allowed six runs, 10 hits and two walks over five innings.

**TIGERS 5, INDIANS 2**

Miguel Cabrera hit his 450th homer in his

first game off the disabled list and Detroit beat Cleveland. Corey Kluber (3-2) gave up five runs and seven hits with a walk in three innings. He struck out four before being removed with discomfort in his lower back. Cabrera missed the minimum of 10 days with a strained right groin. On a cold, damp night, he left the game for a defensive replacement after seven innings. Justin Verlander (2-2) won for the first time since opening day. Francisco Rodriguez pitched the ninth for his seventh save.

**CARDINALS 2, BREWERS 1**

Carlos Martinez pitched effectively into the eighth inning and St. Louis once again beat Wily Peralta. Martinez (1-3), making his sixth start of the season, retired the first 12 batters. Trevor Rosenthal pitched a perfect ninth for his third save in three chances. Peralta (4-2) fell to 0-9 in his last 11 starts against the Cardinals.

**BRAVES 9, METS 7**

RA Dickey's floaters were more effective than Matt Harvey's fastballs for the second time in a week, Ender Inciarte drove in three runs with three hits and Atlanta beat New York. New York's Jay Bruce drove in six runs with two homers, including a grand slam off Matt Wisler in the ninth. Dickey (3-2) struggled to control his knuckleball but allowed only three runs and four hits in six innings. He had four walks. He also started in a 7-5 win over Harvey and the Mets in New York on Thursday. Harvey (2-2) gave up six runs for the second straight start. Harvey allowed eight hits with three walks in 5 1/3 innings. Jim Johnson struck out Neil Walker for his fifth save.

**PIRATES 12, REDS 3**

Josh Harrison hit a three-run homer - his third in two games - and right-hander Tyler Glasnow singled home two runs during a six-run rally that helped Pittsburgh to its first victory of the season over Cincinnati. Glasnow (1-1) steadied himself after a rough first inning, highlighted by Joey Votto's three-run homer, to get his first career win. He also singled up the middle off Scott Feldman (1-3) to put the Pirates ahead to stay in the fourth. Harrison followed Glasnow's first hit of the season with his

third homer in five at-bats for a 7-3 lead. The six-run inning was the biggest allowed by the Reds this season.

**TWINS 9, ATHLETICS 1**

Ervin Santana struck out seven in six shutout innings and Brian Dozier hit two of Minnesota's six home runs. Santana (5-0) lowered his ERA to 0.66 for the season and has allowed one run or fewer and gone at least six innings in all six of his starts. Fernando Valenzuela is the only pitcher to do it more when he went seven straight to start the 1981 season. Sonny Gray (0-1) made his season debut for the Athletics, giving up four runs on five hits and striking out four in six innings.

**RAYS 3, MARLINS 1**

Edinson Volquez struck out nine but allowed a career-high eight walks, and Tampa Bay took advantage of his historically uneven performance to beat Miami. Logan Morrison hit his sixth home run and was one of only five batters to put the ball in play against Volquez (0-4). The Rays managed three runs off the right-hander before he left the game with a thumb blister after 4 1/3 innings. Volquez became the first starter to walk at least eight batters and strike out at least nine while pitching less than five innings since 1900, the Marlins said, citing information from the Elias Sports Bureau. Alex Cobb (2-2) pitched six scoreless innings for his first win since the first week of the season. Alex Colome earned his seventh save.

**PADRES 6, ROCKIES 2**

Yangervis Solarte and Ryan Schimpf hit back-to-back home runs off Tyler Chatwood in the sixth inning and San Diego beat Colorado to spoil Bud Black's return to Petco Park. Black managed the Padres from 2007 until he was fired on June 15, 2015. The Rockies came in leading the NL West by a half game over Arizona. Chatwood (2-4) held the Padres hitless through five innings before they jumped on him. Trevor Cahill (2-2), who grew up in Vista in northern San Diego County, won his second straight home game. — AP

**MLB results/standings**

San Diego 6, Colorado 2; LA Angels 6, Seattle 4 (11 innings); LA Dodgers 13, San Francisco 5; Chicago White Sox 6, Kansas City 0; St. Louis 2, Milwaukee 1; Minnesota 9, Oakland 1; Houston 8, Texas 7; Chicago Cubs 8, Philadelphia 3; Atlanta 9, NY Mets 7; Boston 5, Baltimore 2; Detroit 5, Cleveland 2; Pittsburgh 12, Cincinnati 3; Tampa Bay 3, Miami 1; Arizona 6, Washington 3; NY Yankees 11, Toronto 5.

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division			
W	L	PCT	GB	Washington	17	9	.654
NY Yankees	16	9	.640	Philadelphia	12	13	.480
Baltimore	16	9	.640	Miami	11	14	.440
Boston	14	12	.538	Atlanta	11	14	.440
Tampa Bay	14	14	.500	NY Mets	11	15	.423
Toronto	9	18	.333	8			
Central Division				Central Division			
Chicago White Sox	14	11	.560	Chicago Cubs	14	12	.538
Minnesota	13	11	.542	Milwaukee	14	14	.500
Detroit	14	12	.538	St. Louis	13	13	.500
Cleveland	14	12	.538	Pittsburgh	12	14	.462
Kansas City	8	17	.320	Cincinnati	12	14	.462
Western Division				Western Division			
Houston	18	9	.667	Arizona	17	11	.607
LA Angels	15	13	.536	Colorado	16	11	.593
Oakland	11	15	.423	LA Dodgers	15	13	.536
Texas	11	16	.407	San Diego	12	16	.429
Seattle	11	16	.407	San Francisco	10	18	.357



# BOSTON SPORTS STRUGGLE WITH PERCEPTION BUILT ON RACISM

**BOSTON:** When Red Sox fans hurled the N-word toward Orioles outfielder Adam Jones in Fenway Park, it was a reminder of Boston's racial legacy - particularly around its sports teams. Boston's reputation as a racist sports town developed through decades of barriers broken and maintained, intertwined with broader struggles for progress along with today's climate of racial tension that sports can't avoid. Despite its teams and the city making strides on race, Boston still has perceptions of racism to overcome.

"Boston has a reputation, partially left over from a long time ago, that there is more racism within Boston sports," said Richard Lapchick, director of the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida. "The type of incident that happened ... is something I would've expected to read about in Boston 25 years ago." Jones was given an extended ovation on Tuesday night as he stepped to the plate for his first at-bat, a moment sharply different from what he described Monday night, saying he heard fans call him the N-word and had peanuts thrown in his direction in the dugout, hitting a nearby police officer.

Fenway security said 34 people were ejected, but only one for using foul language toward a player and it was unclear whether that was toward Jones. Police said the peanut-thrower was thrown out by stadium security before police could identify him. The All-Star said he felt "it was just the right time" to speak out after experiencing previous racial heckling at Fenway over 12 seasons, though he said it was more a sign of larger racial issues than an indictment of Boston or its fans. Several black ballplayers Tuesday said Jones was just describing what they regularly experience.

## HISTORY OF INTOLERANCE

The Celtics and the Bruins were pioneers in professional basketball and hockey during the 1950s. But the Red Sox were the last Major League Baseball team to field a black player. Pumpsie Green debuted at Fenway in 1959 - more

than a decade after Jackie Robinson played for the Dodgers, and even after Willie O'Ree took the ice for Boston in the all-white National Hockey League.

The Red Sox ballpark and offices are located on Yawkey Way, named for fran-



**Tom Yawkey, at the time the owner of the Boston Red Sox, sits in his Fenway Park office in Boston in August 1955.**

chise owner Tom Yawkey who presided over the team at the time. The Red Sox passed on Robinson in 1945 and also passed on a chance to sign future Hall of Famer Willie Mays. The Celtics were the first team to draft a black player, the first to field an all-black starting five and the first to hire a black head coach.

Bill Russell was among the league's first black players and champions, but wasn't embraced by fans during his career and was embittered by his experience in Boston for years, though he is now a beloved figure in the city. In the 1980s, the rivalry between the white Celtics Larry Bird and the African-American Lakers star Magic Johnson epitomized the NBA's racial divide. Earlier this season, Celtics forward Jae Crowder, who is black, said he felt "disrespected" by fans openly coveting white potential free agent Gordon Hayward, rekindling the debate.

In 2012, some fans upset with the

Washington Capitals bouncing the Boston Bruins from the NHL playoffs lobbed racial insults on Twitter toward Joel Ward, a Canadian who is black. And in an episode of Saturday Night Live before the New England Patriots played in the Super Bowl this year, comedian Michael Che called Boston "the most racist city I've ever been to." Boston fans pride themselves on rabidly supporting one of America's greatest sports cities. While the Sox-Orioles rivalry shouldn't automatically result in racism, "for some white Americans, that's often where they go if they're angry," said University of Hartford sociologist Woody Doane.

"Pulling a racial epithet out of our back pocket is something a lot of us still do," said Doane, who studies sports, society and whiteness. Boston's racial history - including fights over segregated housing, schools and politics - has spilled into sports as some working class residents experience a "white crisis," said University of Connecticut sociologist Matthew Hughey.

"They can't live up to the levels of superiority they're told they're supposed to naturally have, so they turn to symbolic things or people to build a sense of identity and to take out a sense of frustration," Hughey said. "Sports can be that sense of identity." Ballparks can also be an environment where some people feel more comfortable expressing offensive views while others feel uncomfortable or unwelcome.

## 'IT'S A WHITE SPACE'

More black and Latino fans have begun attending games at Fenway, but they remain largely in the minority, said Doane, who has regularly attended Red Sox games since 1963. "It's a white space," Doane said. "If you are a person of color there, you would definitely feel in the minority." The situation is not much different for players on the field. Lapchick's 2017 report card on Major League Baseball showed only 7.7 percent of players are African-Americans - the lowest figure in the years since the institute has tracked the data. Black players have long commented on the



**In this April 1959 file photo, Boston Red Sox's Pumpsie Green poses for a photo. The Celtics and the Bruins were pioneers in professional basketball and hockey during the 1950s. —AP photos**

atmosphere at Fenway, saying they expect racial taunts.

On Tuesday, Yankees pitcher CC Sabathia said: "You get called names, N-word, all kinds of stuff when you go to Boston." "We know," he said. "There's 62 of us and we all know: When you go to Boston, expect it." Both the city and its sports franchises have changed in recent years. Last season, the Patriots started a black quarterback for the first time. The Red Sox have several African-American players in their starting lineup. And Celtics guard Isaiah Thomas is currently leading his team in the NBA playoffs.

Red Sox President Sam Kennedy said his ownership group made it a mission in 2002 to "acknowledge the shameful past of the Boston Red Sox" and its reputation as an unfriendly environment. "We've worked really hard to change that. We want to open up Fenway Park to everyone," Kennedy said. "Everyone should feel comfortable at Fenway Park. No matter your race, religion, political beliefs, your sexuality - you are wel-

comed at Fenway."

Boston's neighborhoods have diversified and its racial boundaries have become less rigid. The city's population is now a quarter black, up from roughly 16 percent in 1970 and 3 percent in 1940. Since 2000, at least half of Boston's population has been made up of minorities. Kennedy, Mayor Marty Walsh and Gov. Charlie Baker were all swift Tuesday to condemn the fan behavior. While Kennedy called the conduct the acts of "an ignorant few," city councilor Ayanna Pressley said in a statement that the incident "lays bare the racism that many residents of our city grapple with on a regular basis."

It may also be a sign of the times, said Lapchick. "This is one more alarm bell that racism is alive and well in the United States," he said. "To think it doesn't take place in sports, or in any other aspect of our society would be naive on the part of the public. But it puts it in our face more when something like that happens in a ballpark." — AP

# ZEKE AND DAK ON TOP AGAIN IN NFL PLAYER MERCHANDISING

**DALLAS:** Here's more proof that the 2016 season was a superb one for rookies: Ezekiel Elliott and Dak Prescott topped NFL player merchandise and products sales. The Dallas Cowboys running back who led the league in rushing and the quarterback who was the Offensive Rookie of the Year represent the first time two rookies led the list compiled by the NFL Players Association. The list is based on total sales of officially licensed NFL player merchandise, tracking year-end results from March 1, 2016, through Feb. 28, 2017.

"It's pretty humbling," Elliott said. "When you're a rookie, you're just looking to put your head down, help the team and learn the ropes. To accomplish this level of success off the field shows just how passionate football fans are in Dallas, in Ohio, my home state of Missouri, and all around the world. And to be up there with Dak and Dez (Bryant), alongside great players like Tom Brady and Odell Beckham, is very special to me."

Super Bowl MVP Brady was third on the list after holding the top spot for much of the measuring period. He was followed by yet another Cowboy, receiver Bryant, and Giants wideout Beckham Jr. Brady vinyl figures were the most popular among those items, and he also led in plush dolls, player-identified kids T-shirts and jerseys. Another rookie, Eagles quarterback Carson Wentz was seventh overall but tops in bobblehead sales.

## FAN BASE

Among the product categories are men's, women's and youth game jerseys and T-shirts; wall decals; figurines; toys; matted and framed photos; vinyl collectibles; bobbleheads; ugly sweaters; plush dolls; drinkware; socks; mobile gaming; virtual goods; holiday ornaments and novelties. NFL Players Inc. said licensees

generated retail sales exceeding \$1.6 billion during the year.

"It is pretty impressive on both of their parts and the parts of their fan base," said Steven Scebelo, vice president, licensing and business development for NFL Players Inc. "I was surprised because in the third (business) quarter, Tom Brady was in first place, and after that quarter closed he went on to win the Super Bowl and Super Bowl MVP. I kind of expected when we ran the numbers, he would be No. 1. So when it was Zeke and Dak, that was just a testament to what they were able to do on the field and their fan base did off the field."

Scebelo credits some of Elliott's popularity to the strong devotion of Ohio State fans to their players when they head to the pros. He also notes that, unlike in past decades when team allegiance was often a deciding factor, many consumer decisions are driven by something else when it comes to the NFL.

"If you look at younger fans and the way they follow the game now and how they engage fantasy football," Scebelo said, "even those who are not fans of the Cowboys are more prone to buy something of a player who is on their fantasy team. They have more allegiance to those players who are becoming stars, not necessarily to players from specific teams."

One player to look for as a merchandising gold mine next season could be Marshawn Lynch. The running back known as "Beast Mode" sat out 2016 in a short retirement, and was dealt by Seattle to Oakland last month. He was top 10 on the sales charts while with the Seahawks, and with the national popularity of the Raiders, Lynch easily could be up there again if he follows through on his return. "It is all the attributes of a player that drive (sales)," Scebelo said. "People identify with the number, the signature, the nickname." — AP



**ST LOUIS:** St. Louis Blues right wing Vladimir Tarasenko (91), of Russia, skates in front of Nashville Predators goalie Pekka Rinne, of Finland, left, after Tarasenko scored the winning goal during the third period in Game 2 of an NHL hockey second-round playoff series Friday, April 28, 2017. — AP

# PREDATORS BEAT BLUES WHILE RANGERS CUT OTTAWA'S LEAD

**NASHVILLE:** James Neal scored the game-winning goal with 6:57 left, and the Nashville Predators beat the St. Louis Blues 2-1 Tuesday night to take a 3-1 lead in their Western Conference semifinal. Pekka Rinne outduelled St. Louis' Jake Allen with 32 saves, and the Predators are a victory away from reaching the Western Conference final for the first time in franchise history. Ryan Ellis scored at 5:09 of the third to break up a scoreless game. Neal then scored with 6:57 left to crank up the Nashville celebration as the Predators won their eighth straight playoff game at home. Joel Edmundson scored with 3:49 left as St. Louis avoided the shutout. Blues coach Mike Yeo pulled Allen late, but they couldn't beat Rinne again. Allen finished with 23 saves as the Blues lost consecutive road games for the first time since Feb. 28 and March 3. Game 5 is Friday night in St. Louis.

## RANGERS 4, SENATORS 1

Mats Zuccarello had a goal and an assist to lead New York over Ottawa, cutting the Rangers' deficit to 2-1 in the Eastern Conference semifinal series. Michael Grabner, Rick Nash and Oscar Lindberg also scored, and Henrik Lundqvist stopped 26 shots for the Rangers. New York has won three straight playoff games at Madison Square Garden after losing six straight on home ice, including Game 3 of the first round against Montreal. Jean-Gabriel Pageau, who had four goals in Ottawa's 6-5 double-overtime win in Game 2, scored again for the Senators, and Craig Anderson finished with 26 saves. Game 4 is night. — AP

# PETERSON SCOFFS AT TALK THAT HE'S PAST HIS PRIME

**METAIRIE:** Adrian Peterson scoffs at the notion that a decade in the NFL and a pair of knee injuries have somehow left him a worn down, less effective version of his former dominant self. "It's kind of crazy to hear people even comment on how many years I have left and compare me to other running backs when I'm just my own individual," Peterson, who signed with New Orleans Saints last week, said while on a conference call hosted by his new club Tuesday.

"There's a different mindset, work ethic, body type," Peterson continued. "This is one thing that I really just dislike about the NFL and kind of how a lot of people try to put guys in a box - especially running backs after that 30 (years old) mark. ... They make it seem like guys are going downhill and that's not necessarily the case - and so in my mind, I feel like I have a lot of years left." The Saints are hoping the 32-year-old Peterson, who missed most of last season because of a meniscal tear, has at least one good year left. The Saints signed him to a two-year, \$7 million contract for which only the first year is guaranteed.

Having only played for the Minnesota Vikings - the Saints' Week 1 opponent this September during his 10-year career, Peterson has posted seven 1,000-yard seasons and once eclipsed 2,000 yards. His best season, in

2012, came after his first major knee injury, a tear of his anterior cruciate ligament.

## INJURY AND LEGAL TROUBLE

After sticking with Peterson through his first knee injury and legal trouble in 2014 related to physical punishment of his then-4-year-old son, the Vikings decided this offseason to decline a costly option on Peterson's contract that would have eaten up about \$18 million in salary cap space in 2017. That allowed the star running back to walk in free agency.

Peterson said he had productive meetings with New England and Seattle and had penciled in meetings with other teams after the draft, but decided he would be happiest in New Orleans - even though the Saints, led by quarterback Drew Brees, boasted the NFL's top passing offense last season and also have incumbent starting running back Mark Ingram on the roster. "Ultimately, what it came down to for me was the comfort level I had when I visited here in New Orleans - just the feel that I had for the city and the organization," Peterson said. "I could have easily said, 'You know what? I'll wait 'till the draft and take these other couple visits.' ... I could've went that route, but ultimately, in my heart, in my soul, in my spirit, playing for the Saints is what felt right." — AP



**ARLINGTON:** In this Nov. 24, 2016, file photo, Dallas Cowboys' Dak Prescott (4) and Ezekiel Elliott (21) lead the team out of the tunnel during introductions before an NFL football game against the Washington Redskins. — AP



## PAKISTAN BOARD CLAIMS \$60M FROM INDIA IN LOST REVENUES

**KARACHI:** The Pakistan Cricket Board yesterday sent a legal notice to its Indian counterpart for failing to honor an agreement to play a bilateral series, saying this had cost them \$60 million. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in 2014 under which they were due to play six series-four to be hosted by Pakistan between 2015 and 2023. But New Delhi denied clearance for the series

following strained diplomatic relations between India and Pakistan owing to ceasefire violations in the disputed Himalayan state of Kashmir. PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan said legal measures were being sought as Pakistan was suffering lost revenues.

"We have initiated the legal process by sending BCCI a Notice of Dispute under the Dispute Resolution Committee Terms of reference of the International Cricket Council," Khan told AFP. "PCB has claimed the losses

and damage suffered by it, which comes to around 60 million dollars, as a result of BCCI's breaches of the agreement." Under the agreement India were due to take on Pakistan in November-December 2015, but they refused to play in the neutral venues of United Arab Emirates or Sri Lanka.

Pakistan is due to tour India in November-December of this year but that is also highly unlikely as New Delhi continues a boycott of bilateral series which started in the wake of

the 2008 Mumbai attacks. The attacks, blamed on militants from Pakistan, left 166 people dead including foreign tourists and brought the two nations close to another war.

Pakistan did tour India for a short limited-over series in December 2012 but the arch-rivals have not played a full bilateral series since 2007. The government of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also refused visas to Pakistan's junior hockey team,

wrestling team and squash players in the last 12 months. Khan said if the BCCI did not reply in seven days the matter would be taken to the International Cricket Council's Dispute Committee. Cricket matches between Pakistan and India attract millions of viewers around the world and generate huge revenues. Despite the bilateral boycott the teams have faced each other in ICC events and are due to meet in a Champions Trophy match in Birmingham on June 4 this year. —AFP

## PUMAS MUST RESTORE IMAGE AGAINST ENGLAND: PICHOT

**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentina must beat England in next month's two-test home series to restore the image formed at the 2015 World Cup and erase the memory of a poor 2016 season, former Pumas captain Agustin Pichot told Reuters. Pichot, World Rugby's vice-president, also said in an interview in Buenos Aires he would like to bring the 2017 World Cup to Argentina and that his country would make an exciting destination for a British and Irish Lions tour.

The June test series may not be against England's best, who have contributed 16 players to tour New Zealand with the Lions at the same time, but Pichot said the Pumas can still expect a very strong side under Eddie Jones. "We need to win," said Pichot. "After last year our image wasn't great, so now we need to win and playing locally against England it's a must. "Eddie Jones is doing very good work. He is bringing a lot of young players, so that could be very dangerous for Argentina. Even against a non-Lions England team it's going to be very tough."

Pichot took Argentina to the top runs of the game with his leadership of the bronze medal-winning Pumas at the 2007 World Cup in France. He helped them find a place in the southern hemisphere's Rugby Championship, and he watched proudly as they reached the semi-finals again in England two years ago. But 2016 was a year of transition, with more disappointments than success. It left Argentina with barely two wins in nine tests and a slump to ninth in the rankings before next week's 2019 World Cup draw in Japan, where Pichot was headed yesterday.

### 'NEW PROFESSIONALISM'

He said Argentina made no excuses for ending up in the third tier of seeds for the draw and landing in a pool that will include two top-eight teams - with the risk of missing out on the quarter-finals - but there were mitigating factors. "After that (2015) World Cup, which was a great achievement,

with the (introduction of the) Super Rugby team, there were many things that changed the reality of Argentine rugby," Pichot said. "The difficulties of the Rugby Championship, plus Super Rugby, plus the November tour was very hard on the players and the results were not those expected," he said, considering that Argentina have a pool of around 45 players from which to pick a team for the Jaguares franchise and the Pumas.

"You have to go through this process (of change), the professionalism that is new in Argentina, to get better. You have to take into consideration that Argentina's professional rugby started in 2016. "The difficulty is that in Super Rugby and the Sevens series, two cross-regional and even inter-hemisphere competitions, you have to travel (huge distances) to play against professional teams."

Dealing with such demands on players is a key issue Pichot and World Rugby president Bill Beaumont have at the top of their priorities in improving the game. "Player safety is a very important subject on the agenda, or maybe the most important ... regarding concussion, regarding travel," Pichot said. "Unfortunately there are some things on the calendar that you can't change. We discuss these issues with the players. We have a very good relationship with the International Players' Association. The players want to play, the clubs want to make money, the international game wants to carry on. We need to work harder to see when we give the players the necessary rest so they can perform better."

A longer term goal of Pichot's is to bring the World Cup to Argentina, with 2027 the first realistic target. "We are a long way towards the goal of at least having Argentina considered for a Rugby World Cup, (but) we really want that, the country needs that and I think we have a great country to host it, hopefully we can have the right bid with the government's support," he said. — Reuters



**BRIDGETOWN:** Kraigg Brathwaite (L) of West Indies hits 4 during the 4th day of the 2nd Test match between West Indies and Pakistan at Kensington Oval.—AFP

## WINDIES RESPOND AFTER ALI TON, MISBAH OUT FOR 99

**BRIDGETOWN:** Misbah-ul-Haq missed a Test century by one run for the second consecutive match but Azhar Ali completed three figures as Pakistan took a first innings lead of 81, totalling 393 in reply to the West Indies' 312 on the third day of the second Test at Kensington Oval in Barbados on Tuesday. Mohammad Abbas then removed Kieran Powell to a catch at the wicket in the 14 overs the home side faced in their second innings before the close of play. They will resume on the fourth morning at 40 for one, still needing 41 more runs to erase the first innings deficit with opener Kraigg Brathwaite and Shimron Hetmyer at the wicket.

Deprived of the landmark when stranded on 99 not out in the first innings of the first Test in Jamaica, the Pakistan captain appeared destined to accomplish the feat on this occasion, only to be dismissed in a bizarre manner, triggering a mini collapse in which three wickets fell for 13 runs just before tea.

Having survived an optimistic appeal for LBW against his West Indian counterpart Jason Holder the ball before, Misbah attempted to pull out of the way of the next delivery which lifted sharply and came off the glove for Shai Hope to gleefully hold the catch at second slip. His typically phlegmatic, unflustered innings lasted almost five hours in which he faced 201 balls, striking two sixes and nine fours. It was also the first time he was dismissed in the series after two unbeaten innings in Kingston.

His surprise demise broke a brisk 57-run partnership with Asad Shafiq after earlier adding 98 with Ali, the opening batsman reaching a painstaking 13th Test century in mid-afternoon before he was caught at the wicket off Devindra Bishoo for 105, the leg-spinner's third success of the innings. Ali's marathon effort occupied seven-and-a-half hours during which he faced 278 deliveries, stroking just nine boundaries in an innings characterized by considerable discipline and patience.

### BOWLING PITCH

Buoyed by Misbah's departure, West Indies enjoyed further success just before tea when wicketkeeper-batsman Sarfraz Ahmed became fast bowler Shannon Gabriel's second wicket, edging an attempted drive to Powell at first slip. Off the very last ball of the afternoon session, Shafiq was ruled leg-before to the miserly Holder, although Pakistan's tail wagged to the tune of another 64 runs after tea, Yasir Shah being last out to Gabriel, who led the home side's bowling effort with four for 81 off 32 overs.

Those eventful sessions after lunch were in direct opposition to the tedium of the morning, where 54 runs came off 26 overs as Ali and Misbah batted with almost exaggerated care on a pitch showing increasing signs of wear and offering disconcertingly variable bounce. "This pitch is very difficult to bat on and it was important that we did the hard work to get a first innings lead," said Pakistan coach Mickey Arthur in putting his side's very deliberate batting approach into context. "We need our spinners to hit their lines and lengths on the fourth day because it will be extremely tough to chase any sort of decent target in the fourth innings here." —AFP

### SCOREBOARD

**BRIDGETOWN, Barbados:** Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the second Test between the West Indies and Pakistan at Kensington Oval in Barbados yesterday:

West Indies 1st Innings - 312		West Indies 2nd Innings	
<b>Pakistan 1st Innings</b> (overnight 172 for 3)			
A. Ali c wkpr Dowrich b Bishoo	105	K. Brathwaite not out	8
A. Shehzad c Hope b Bishoo	70	K. Powell c wkpr Ahmed b Abbas	6
B. Azam c and b Gabriel	0	S. Hetmyer not out	22
Y. Khan c Gabriel b Bishoo	0	Extras (b-4)	4
Misbah ul Haq c Hope b Holder	99	Total (1 wkt, 14 overs)	40
A. Shafiq lbw Holder	15	Fall of wicket: 1-8 (Powell)	
S. Ahmed c Powell b Gabriel	9	To bat: S. Hope, V. Singh, R. Chase, S. Dowrich, J. Holder,	
S. Khan c Chase b Gabriel	16	D. Bishoo, A. Joseph, S. Gabriel	
M. Amir c Hope b Holder	10	Bowling: M. Amir 4-2-7-0, M. Abbas 5-1-14-1, Y. Shah 3-1-	
Y. Shah c wkpr Dowrich b Gabriel	24	6-0, S. Khan 2-0-9-0.	
M. Abbas not out	1		
Extras (b-16, lb-16, nb-12)	44		
Total (all out, 140 overs)	393		
Fall of wickets: 1-155 (Shehzad), 2-156 (Azam), 3-161 (Younis), 4-259			



**PRAGUE:** This file photo taken on April 28, 2017 shows a man and a woman playing a footballpool match. —AFP

## WORLD'S FIRST 'FOOTBALLPOOL' LEAGUE KICKS OFF IN PRAGUE

**PRAGUE:** A dark-haired girl kicks a white football gently towards a black eight ball, then wrings her hands in despair as she fails to sink it in the corner pocket for a win. Katerina Ziegelova, a 26-year-old clerk, is one of the pioneers of footballpool, the latest addition to the hybrid sports family. The Czech footballpool league has just kicked off in Prague, after the sport made its debut world championships in the Czech capital in February.

A combination of football and pool, the sport uses inflatable footballs-white, solids and stripes like in pool-and a playground with six corner and side pockets, proportionately larger than the regular pool table. No cues are needed as the players kick the white ball, walking on the pitch. "I'm not much of a football fan but I like pool, and this combination is very interesting," says Ziegelova, who has teamed up with her boyfriend Lukas.

Clad in black-and-yellow shirts complete with numbers and names, they lost their opening league tie against a team led by Jiri Novotny, who has organized the competition together with a friend. Novotny is no stranger to ball games, having scored 20 goals in 89 matches for the Czech Republic national football team, according to the Czech Football Association website. "I saw a video on Youtube where two Americans played the game in a garden, drinking beer and doing a barbecue," the wily 28-year-old futsal defender told AFP. "So we designed the table, set up a footballpool association and started calling it a sport," he said, adding this was the first such competition in the world. Footballpool pits two teams with two players against each other, with each player taking on each opponent in two matches.

This was the formula used at the first world championships at a shopping mall in Prague. "We had 70 teams from countries including Algeria, Kyrgyzstan, Brazil, Afghanistan, Germany, Slovakia," says Novotny, adding that a Czech-Slovak team won. Prague is also scheduled to host the next worlds in February 2018.

Shopping malls are a typical venue for the sport as Novotny said he leased the legless footballpool "tables" to companies like bowling alleys which then charge clients a fee to play. "This is really a game for anyone-at the tournaments we have organized, we had children, pensioners, women, men," said Novotny. The footballpool association currently has 15 playgrounds across the Czech Republic. In May, it expects to install another twenty.

### BIG NAMES

Novotny has managed to lure some big football names, including former Hearts and West Brom striker Roman Bednar and ex-Dortmund and Liverpool midfielder Patrik Berger to the sport. "It's not just kicking the ball, I like sports that require some thinking and precision, like this one," Bednar told AFP. "I must say I fell in love. It's not a bad sport at all, and it's for everyone who likes new things." Among active players, Czech striker Jan Chramosta, a former under-21 international currently plying trade with the top-flight side Mlada Boleslav, is equally excited.

"It's fun. You can make various bets and spice up the experience a bit," he said, adding he had already taken on a few of his teammates. "It's a lot about technique, about the way you kick the ball, about tricks and rotation. Not that I'm an expert there," he chuckled. —AFP

## JOHN COATES' IOC VP TITLE ON LINE IN VOTE

**SYDNEY:** The International Olympic Committee could lose one of its most influential officials when vice president John Coates faces the first challenge in almost three decades to his leadership in Australia. Coates, who has been president of the Australian Olympic Committee for 27 years and who heads the IOC's coordination commission for the 2020 Tokyo Games, is up for

wisdom will hold us in good stead."

Australia has twice hosted the Summer Games - in 1956 in Melbourne and at Sydney in 2000, which then-IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch called "the best Olympic Games ever." But Coates' leadership has been questioned in recent weeks amid accusations of bullying within the organization. His long-time media director, Mike



**John Coates**

Tancred, stood down from his duties pending an investigation. Tancred has denied the bullying allegations made by former AOC chief executive Fiona de Jong, but said last week he would step aside until the matter was resolved. To add to the controversy, Coates has feuded over the past year with Australian Sports Commission chairman John Wylie over government fund-

ing. In February, Coates was quoted by Fairfax Media as using a crude vulgarity to refer to Wylie after refusing to shake hands at a track and field meet. The Coates-Roche vote has divided high-profile former athletes and officials. Among those, beach volleyball gold medalist Natalie Cook has gone on record as supporting Coates, while 1983 America's Cup-winning yachtsman John Bertrand, now head of Swimming Australia, said Roche deserved a shot at the presidency. In her published campaign platform, Roche said she will forgo Coates' yearly remuneration of 750,000 Australian dollars (\$565,000) and will propose a 100,000 Australian dollars (\$75,000) salary package for the president - which she would waive for the entirety of her term - to illustrate her commitment to the funding of athletes. —AP



## KING: RAPTORS COACH SAYS TEAM CAN'T WATCH LEBRON

**CLEVELAND:** LeBron James dazzled with soaring dunks, outside shots and even a beer chaser in Game 1. And he did it all - 35 points, 10 rebounds, four assists and an amusing sideline exchange with the "beer lady" - at the expense of the Raptors, who may have been guilty of admiring the latest royal performance by Cleveland's hoops king. Toronto coach Dwane Casey has seen this happen before - with Michael Jordan.

A day after the Raptors fell into a familiar postseason hole with a 116-105 loss in the opener of the Eastern Conference semifinals, Casey was asked Tuesday if his players might be awed by James, the Jordan of this generation on a mission to make his seventh straight NBA Finals. As an assistant coach with Seattle, Casey recalled urging his players not to bow to His Airness.

"We used to have to tell Gary Payton and those guys, 'Hey, he puts his pants on one leg (at a time),' Casey said before the Raptors practiced inside an empty and quiet Quicken Loans Arena in anticipation of Game 2 on Wednesday. "I think that's natural. It's human nature to watch a Michael Jordan or a Karl Malone, spectate until they hit you in the mouth. "When a guy hits you in the mouth a few times - now what are you going to do? That's the mentality we have to have, they punched us."

### 'HIT A LOT HARDER'

The Cavs landed a vicious uppercut in Game 1, knocking back the Raptors, who lost

their 10th straight series opener and are again facing an uphill postseason climb. But Toronto has shown it can take a big shot and deliver one. A year ago, the Raptors were blown out in the first two games of the Eastern Conference finals by Cleveland before winning two straight at home. And while they were eventually eliminated in six games, the Raptors don't feel nearly as groggy as they did in 2016.

"The way we lost last year, it hit a lot harder," said All-Star forward DeMar DeRozan, who scored 19 points while fighting off continuous traps in the opener. "This time around, we have kind of that confidence and understanding of how to get back on our feet. We've been here before and we know what it takes, especially after Game 1, being down with our foot in a hole, so we've got to go out there and leave it out there." It starts with figuring out a way to slow down James. Best of luck.

James nearly averaged a triple-double in the opening round against Indiana, and then reminded the Raptors that it's his crown and he's not giving it up easily. The 32-year-old, with no visible signs of decline in his game, set the tone early on Monday by grabbing a pass off the backboard from Kyrie Irving - "I told him to throw it to the sky" - and dunking it left-handed. Later, he playfully grabbed a beer bottle from a courtside server and considered taking a swig before handing it back. It was all so sensational, so amusing. To everyone, that is, but the Raptors. — AP

## CURRY, WARRIORS ROLL PAST JAZZ IN GAME 1

**OAKLAND:** Stephen Curry pulled off a razzle-dazzle spin move right around big Rudy Gobert at the perimeter, went in for a layup and raised his hands, begging the sellout crowd to do its thing. The Golden State Warriors sure did theirs, using that up-tempo, pass-happy style to run right by the Utah Jazz in Game 1 of the Western Conference semifinals.

Curry scored 22 points in three quarters of work and the top-seeded Warriors warmed up in a hurry after a weeklong layoff between playoff games, beating the Jazz 106-94 on Tuesday night. "I'll keep enjoying it. I feel like I have one of the better seats in the house and I'm not even paying for it," fill-in Warriors head coach Mike Brown said when asked about Curry's slick moves.

Draymond Green scored Golden State's first six points of the fourth quarter and wound up with 17 points, eight rebounds, six assists and two more blocks to bring his remarkable five-game playoff swat total to 19. Kevin Durant added 17 points on an uncharacteristically cold shooting night at 7 for 17 and had five rebounds and five assists. He missed the middle two games against Portland because of a strained left calf then returned for 20 minutes in Game 4. Zaza Pachulia scored 10 points in 14 minutes.

Gobert had 13 points, eight rebounds, two blocks and a flagrant 1 foul on Green in the fourth for the Jazz, who just finished off the Clippers in a seven-game series Sunday while the Warriors waited after eliminating Portland in a sweep April 24. "We picked up right where we left off," Curry said. "We weren't clicking making shots early on but our defense really gave us an opportunity to find that flow, and that's what you need in the playoffs."

### WE BELIEVE

Game 2 in the best-of-seven series is



**OAKLAND:** Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) shoots next to Utah Jazz center Rudy Gobert (27) during the first half of an NBA basketball game. — AP

## UTAH'S BORING? JAZZ FANS OFFER NIGHTLIFE CHOICES TO WARRIORS

**SALT LAKE CITY:** Salt Lake City leaders and tourism officials playfully jabbed back at Golden State Warriors players who bemoaned the lack of nightlife in Utah, hoping to combat the predominantly Mormon state's reputation as a boring place where it's tough to get a drink. The tourism agency in the state capital launched a new website and video Monday titled, "There's nothing to do in Salt Lake" that features people enjoying drinks and food at popular breweries, bars, restaurants and sporting venues. The words "no fun" and "no drinking" sarcastically flash across images in the video.

Scott Beck, president of Visit Salt Lake, sent a letter to the Warriors to accompany the video, saying the city can't wait to host the 2015 NBA champions as they face the Utah Jazz in the Western Conference semifinals this weekend. "In case you do stumble across something to do while here in Salt Lake, all of our bartenders and servers are on notice to keep you up late!" Beck wrote.

Salt Lake City Mayor Jackie Biskupski

tweeted at the Warriors Monday that they seem "concerned about where to cry in your beer. Plenty of places. 1st drink's on me." The campaign comes after some of the Warriors players talked about wishing they were playing the Clippers instead of the Jazz, mostly for the chance to have some time off in Los Angeles rather than Salt Lake City. Andre Iguodala told ESPN that Utah can "lull you to sleep" and make you think, "Man, let's just get out of here." Matt Barnes said declaratively: "There's no nightlife in Utah."

Jazz forward Joe Ingles, an Australian who has played in Utah for the last three seasons, jokingly suggested that Warriors players rent a jet to fly to LA or use his car to drive to Las Vegas. Tourism officials are used to dealing with the perception that Utah is a dull, quiet state where the only thing to do is ski, hike or visit family-friendly entertainment options tailored for kids. The reputation is based largely on the influence of the Mormon church, which teaches its members to abstain from drinking alcohol. — AP



**BOSTON:** Isaiah Thomas #4 of the Boston Celtics signals to the crowd during overtime of the Celtics 129-119 win over the Washington Wizards in Game Two of the Eastern Conference Semifinals at TD Garden. — AP

## THOMAS SCORES MARVELOUS 53 AS CELTICS BEAT WIZARDS IN OT

**BOSTON:** It was his sister's birthday. She would have been 23. Isaiah Thomas spent four or five hours in the dentist's chair having work done on the tooth that was knocked out in Game 1, a day after he was in oral surgery for six hours having it repositioned in his mouth. His mouth was swollen, and he could barely talk. Still, he never considered not playing Tuesday night.

"The least I can do is go out there and play for her," Thomas said after scoring 53 points - the second-highest total in Celtics playoff history - to lead Boston to a 129-119 overtime victory over the Washington Wizards. "I knew once game-time came, my guys would get me going, get me the energy to go out and win a game," Thomas said, ducking his face into his hands as he mentioned his sister, Chyna, who died in a car crash on the eve of the playoffs. "There was no way I was sitting out."

Fiddling with his new mouth guard throughout the game, Thomas scored 20 points in the fourth quarter and nine in overtime to help the Celtics take a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference semifinals. The 53 points were the most in an NBA playoff game since Allen Iverson scored 55 in 2003, and just one shy of John Havlicek's franchise postseason record of 54.

"It's nice to be in Celtics history with all the great players," Thomas said. "But until you win a championship, you can't consider yourself a great player. That's what it's all about." John Wall scored 40 points with 13 assists for Washington, which will host Games 3 and 4 on Thursday and Sunday. "Two teams played their hearts out. Two

great players played well," Wizards coach Scott Brooks said. "Asked if he had ever been in a one-on-one scoring battle like that against another point guard, Wall shook his head: "Nah," he said. "Nope. Nope. Nope."

Thomas attended his sister's funeral on Saturday and returned to Boston early Sunday morning - just hours before the Celtics won 123-111 and the diminutive point guard lost a tooth. Team doctors jammed it back in, but Thomas spent large parts of the next two days in oral surgery. "What else is there to say?" Celtics coach Brad Stevens asked. "There was a point today where he was not feeling good at all. He's had a tough day and I thought he was going to really have to gut this one out. Not only guts it out, he ends up with 50. Pretty impressive." Al Horford scored 15 points with 12 rebounds for Boston, and Avery Bradley and Jae Crowder scored 14 apiece. Marcin Gortat had 14 points and 10 rebounds and Markieff Morris scored 16 for the Wizards, but both fouled out in overtime.

### WALKING WOUNDED

One game after the Wizards scored the first 16 points of the game, they erupted for 42 points in the first quarter and opened a 13-point lead. Wall had 19 in the first to 15 for Thomas, but Boston erased the deficit in the second quarter and took a brief lead with just over a minute left before the half. Otto Porter Jr. hit a 3-pointer to give the Wizards a 114-112 lead with 33 seconds left in the fourth. Thomas made two free throws to tie it, then both Wall and Bradley Beal missed short jumpers that

could have won it in regulation.

The game was only about a minute old when Morris threw Horford into the crowd under the Celtics basket. Late in the first, Wall had to shake it off after landing on a prone Kelly Olynyk. Bradley sustained a hip pointer in a collision with 1:11 to play in the first half. And seconds later, Porter landed hard on his right wrist and elbow, but remained in the game.

Thomas banged his face on the court in the third and spent the next few minutes adjusting his teeth. Midway through the third, Porter and Thomas appeared to bang heads, and Porter headed to the locker room gushing blood from the nose. Thomas and Morris got into it, drawing double technicals; Thomas appeared to be having words with someone on the Wizards bench, and Morris tried to push him away.

### TIP-INS

**Wizards:** Wall's 19 first-quarter points matched a career playoff high, as did his six first-quarter assists. ... Gortat fouled out going for a rebound on Boston's first possession of overtime. ... Wall's 40 points in a playoff loss was the second-most in franchise history to Gilbert Arenas, who scored 44 against the Cavaliers in 2006, according to ESPN.

**Celtics:** Thomas had 15 points in the first quarter, followed by five in the second. ... Boston shot 61 percent in the first half, but also had 10 turnovers. ... New England Patriots coach Bill Belichick was at the game. So was actor David Spade. ... Terry Rozier had a career playoff high with 12 points. — AP

## THREE-RING CIRCUS: IN THE NBA 3-POINTERS HOTTER THAN EVER

**LOS ANGELES:** Let's be clear: in the NBA, the 2-pointer is not obsolete. Yet. Houston's record setting barrage of 3-pointers in its win over San Antonio in Game 1 of their Western Conference semifinal series provided the latest reminder of how the long ball's value is continuing to skyrocket. There were more 3-pointers made this season than ever before, the fifth straight year that the NBA saw that record get toppled. Now meet a new trend: More 3s being taken than 2s in a game. And that one isn't exactly as rare as a unicorn sighting anymore.

"We just take what they give us," Rockets coach Mike D'Antoni insisted. It's not that simple. Houston took an NBA playoff record 50 3-point attempts on Monday, compared with 37 tries from 2-point range. Before this season, no NBA team ever had that sort of discrepancy - at least 13 more 3s than 2s - in a game, regular-season or playoffs. That was then. It's happened 10 times this season, the Rockets posting nine of those. Houston is 7-2 in such games; Boston did it once in a win as well. "This is the game now," Cleveland's LeBron James said. "It's been this way for a while."

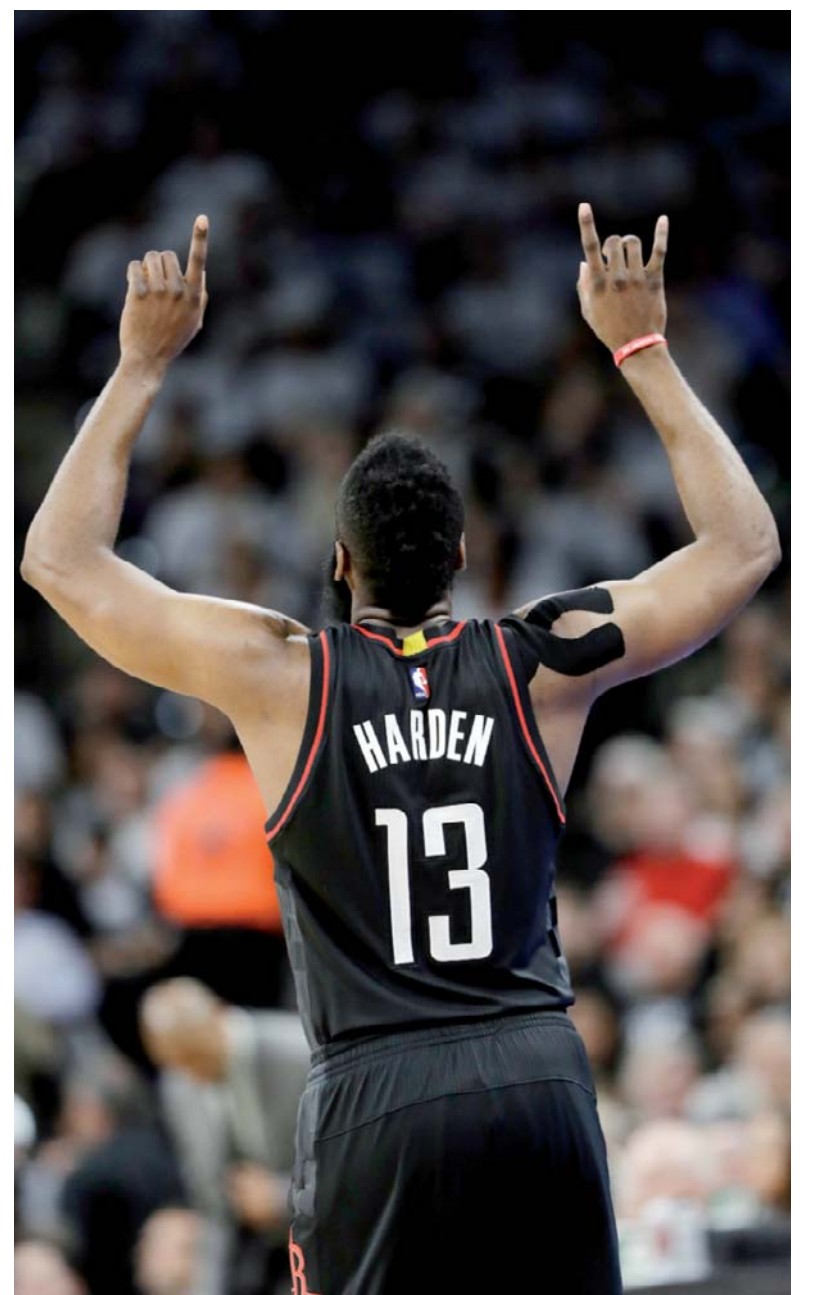
### NO END IN SIGHT

The four teams with the most 3-pointers in the NBA this season - Houston, Cleveland, Boston and Golden State - are all still in these playoffs. And there were more 3s made in the first round than ever before, 846. Back in 2012, in the exact same number of first-round games as what was played this year, teams made a combined 496 3s. That's a 71 percent increase, in just five years.

There's no end in sight, either. When the Cavs got sharpshooter Kyle Korver earlier this season, James - who was part of the last playoff game in which the winning team made no 3-pointers, during Miami's 2012 title run - gave him this advice: "Shoot the ball every time you get it. Shoot the ball. As soon as it touch your hands, shoot it. We don't care." Clearly, that's the thinking just about everywhere these days. "The league is changing," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said. "Believe me, you've got to change or get stuck in the mud. ... I think the days of the 24-point quarters, the 25-point quarters are kind of sliding away."

In the first 37 seasons of the NBA having a 3-point shot, there were 31 instances of teams taking more from behind that arc in a game than from 2-point range. The oddity isn't so odd anymore. It's happened 33 times already this season, and counting. "We won't hesitate on shooting them," said D'Antoni, whose Rockets smashed the NBA records with 1,181 made 3s and 3,306 attempts during the regular season. "We won't miss five in a row and go, 'You know what, we're going to turn one down to drive it. No. If they're open, they shoot it. If they're not, we drive it.'"

Sure enough. On Monday, the Rockets scored 126 points, zero coming on field goals from the space between the lane and the 3-point line. They made 40 baskets - 22 were 3-pointers, 13 were dunks or layups, four were shots inside the lane from 6 feet or closer, and the other was a 14-footer from just inside the foul line. It's not just Houston that's 3-happy. It's everyone. Boston, in its storied history, had one playoff game where they made 16 or more 3s before this season - and the Celtics went into Tuesday with three already in these playoffs. "Their 3-point shooting is a problem," Washington coach Scott Brooks said. "They're one of the best 3-point shooting teams in the league ... we have to make sure we are ready to guard the 3-point line." — AP



**SAN ANTONIO:** Houston Rockets guard James Harden (13) reacts after he scores against the San Antonio Spurs during the first half in a second-round NBA playoff series. — AP



## PAS CONGRATULATES KUWAIT SHOOTING

By Abellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Shooting Sport Club received a letter from Public Authority for Sport (PAS), congratulating them on the ruling of the court of Arbitration for sports (CAS), which annulled every decision taken by International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) against Kuwait.

In his letter, Director General of PAS Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah said, he, on behalf of all board members and employees congratulate KSSC on the occasion of this ruling. He said the ruling is due to the efforts of Eng Duai Khalaf Al-Otaibi and KSSC board members and the hard work that resulted in removing the injustice that was inflicted on Kuwait shoot-



Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah

ing. Sheikh Ahmad Al-Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber wished that the joy be universal with the lifting of suspension on all sports federations.

## LIVERPOOL ARE HUNGRY FOR CHAMPS LEAGUE: MIGNOLET

**LONDON:** Liverpool must maintain their focus and get results in their three remaining Premier League games as they fight for a top four finish to play in the Champions League next season, goalkeeper Simon Mignolet has said. Liverpool's 1-0 win over Watford on Monday helped them pull three points clear of fourth-placed Manchester City and four clear of fifth-placed Manchester United, both of whom have a game in hand.

The race for a top four spot will go down to the wire and Mignolet is wary of getting complacent after three wins in their last five league games. "We have to keep going how we are. We are in good shape but things can still change. We have to keep our focus, keep our feet on the floor and keep grinding out results," Mignolet told British media. "Everybody is very hungry to play in the Champions League. It's where you want to play. But we're not there yet and there's still a lot of hard work ahead of us."

Five of Liverpool's six league losses this season have been against teams outside the

top six and they host ninth-placed Southampton, travel to 15th-placed West Ham and end the season at relegation-threatened Middlesbrough. "I think we've played a lot of good football this season," Mignolet said. "But sometimes you have to learn how to play against these sorts of teams. We accepted that a lot had to change in that type of game. I think we've shown we have learned a lot. To win at places like West Brom, Stoke and Watford shows we can do this. We have three more games like this to play. We have to keep that balance and grind those results out."

### LIVERPOOL TO RENAME STAND AFTER DALGLISH

Meanwhile, Anfield's Centenary Stand is to be renamed in honor of Liverpool legend Kenny Dalglish, the club announced yesterday. Dalglish, 66, won eight league titles, three European Cups, two FA Cups and five League Cups during a glittering 13-year stint as a player and two managerial tenures. The Kenny Dalglish Stand will be officially opened in a ceremony later this year. "It is testament to Liverpool's history and status that we are not lacking in truly great individuals, whose names could easily grace a stand at Anfield," said principal owner John W Henry in a press release. "But in Kenny Dalglish we have a person who carries such immense significance to the fabric of this club, so it feels somewhat incumbent on us to recognise this in a manner that is befitting to the man. "His name is synonymous with our club, with our home and the city of Liverpool. Now it will be as visible as it is palpable."

As well as his role in Liverpool's golden era in the 1970s and 1980s, Dalglish also received plaudits for supporting victims' families after 96 fans died in the 1989 Hillsborough stadium disaster. Anfield has two sets of gates dedicated to former managers-the (Bill) Shankly Gates and (Bob) Paisley Gates-but none of its stands currently carries the name of an individual.

"We recognize this won't sit comfortably with Kenny's default position of humility and self-deprecation, but as we approach the club's 125th anniversary year now is the right time in the club's illustrious history to leave this legacy," said chairman Tom Werner. "For decades he has served the club and the city with the steadfast attitude that the collective always comes ahead of the individual." The Centenary Stand sits across the pitch from Anfield's giant Main Stand, which was reopened last year after work to increase its capacity by 8,500 seats. — Agencies



Simon Mignolet

## FRENCH COPS ARREST 11 OVER BASTIA VIOLENCE

**BASTIA:** French police arrested 11 men yesterday over the crowd trouble which forced the Ligue 1 match between Bastia and Lyon to be abandoned at half time. Five people were already facing prosecution after a group of hardcore fans at the turbulent Corsican club invaded the pitch at their home ground on April 16 to attack the Lyon players. "We do not blame them for the violence, but we believe that these people entered the pitch and pursued the Lyon players," Bastia prosecutor Nicolas Bessone told AFP after the latest wave of

arrests. The 11 face up to a year in prison if found guilty of encroaching onto the pitch. Five others will go before a court on May 15 over the incidents, when Bastia fans invaded the pitch before the game and at half time. Two Lyon players, Anthony Lopes and Mathieu Gorgelin, filed police complaints after being attacked and the match was called off at half time. French football authorities are due to decide on disciplinary measures against the club-already bottom of Ligue 1 and facing relegation today. — AFP

## NASTASE BARRED FROM ROYAL BOX

**LONDON:** Ilie Nastase will be barred from Wimbledon's Royal Box this year following the former world number one's behavior at last month's Fed Cup tie against Great Britain. Romania team captain Nastase was ejected from his team's match in Constanta after a series of foul-mouthed rants. The 70-year-old was overheard making an apparently racist comment about Serena Williams' unborn baby when he said: "Let's see what colour it has. Chocolate with milk?"

Nastase also asked British captain Anne Keothavong for her hotel room number, verbally abused umpire Jaume Campistol and referee Andreas Egli before swearing at Keothavong and the British player Johanna Konta as he was sent from the court. The two-time Grand Slam champion was escorted from the venue by security staff and banned for the rest of the tie.

He defied that by briefly returning the following day, however, and had pointedly refused to apologise in the immediate aftermath, saying he had no regrets. Nastase, who twice finished as runner-up at

Wimbledon in the 1970s, is awaiting sanction by the International Tennis Federation after being hit with a provisional suspension. Although the eccentric Nastase has been a regular alongside celebrities and sporting greats in the prestigious Royal Box in previous years, the All England Club indicated last week that it wouldn't invite him this year and their chairman Philip Brook has now made that official. "What he did, we have to say his actions were not very good. We condemn them," Brook told reporters at Wimbledon yesterday. "In terms of an invitation to the Royal Box he is not going to receive one. I can confirm that."

Although the ITF ban doesn't cover Grand Slams, Wimbledon officials said he could be "turned away" if he tried to buy a ticket while still under investigation. "At the moment he is under a temporary suspension by the ITF. We would support that," All England Club chief executive Richard Lewis said. "He is under investigation. We will see what their conclusions are. We will wait for the outcome." — AFP



MADRID: Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo runs for the ball during the UEFA Champions League semifinal first leg football match Real Madrid CF vs Club Atletico de Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium. — AFP

## HARD WORK IS THE KEY TO RONALDO'S RECORD FEATS

**MADRID:** Cristiano Ronaldo is human after all, or so he claims, despite sealing another "special" Champions League night with a hat-trick to put Real Madrid on the verge of the final once more. Ronaldo's treble sealed a commanding 3-0 semi-final, first leg lead over Atletico Madrid and extended his advantage as the top scorer of all-time between the two sides with 21 in Madrid derbies. "With a combination of dedication and hard work, things come naturally," said Ronaldo yesterday. "I am happy, lucky and human." Ronaldo's second hat-trick of the season against Atletico took his tally a stunning eight Champions League goals in his last three outings having hit five as Real saw off Bayern Munich 6-3 in the quarter-finals. "It was a game full of emotions. The team was phenomenal and to score three goals made it a special night," he added.

The front pages of Madrid sports dailies Marca and AS agreed. "A colossal Cristiano KOs Atletico with three goals," said Marca. "Real Madrid played great, but it was he who applied the finishing touch three times over," read AS' editorial. Contrary to previous years, Ronaldo, 32, is in the best form of the campaign at the business end of the season having been consistently rested against weaker opposition by

Coach Zinedine Zidane to reserve his best for the big occasion. "I don't know whether it's all down to him being rested," said Zidane. "Goalscoring is something he has over others, that is what makes him unique."

### EUROPEAN PEDIGREE

Ronaldo has now scored three more Champions League goals than Atletico have in their history with 103. That stat sums up the difference in European pedigree between Madrid's two major clubs. For all the great work done to revive a sleeping giant in Atletico by Diego Simeone over the past five-and-a-half years, ending their hex against Real in the Champions League continues to allude them.

The past three seasons have seen Atletico fall by the narrowest of margins due to late goals and via a penalty shootout in last year's final. Most worryingly for Simeone, this was not the same hard luck story. Atletico were well beaten, failing to even register a single shot on target. "A disappointing Atletico didn't wake up from their nightmare of the past few years," concluded Marca. Atletico do have one final, unlikely shot at redemption in next Wednesday's second leg (May 10).

Despite their disappointment and despair, a

special atmosphere is assured as it will be their final European game after 50 years at the Vicente Calderon. "It seems impossible, but it is football and football has these unexpected things that make it marvelous," said Simeone. "Until the last drip of hope is gone, we will give it everything we have. "Being Atletico Madrid we might just be capable of it."

It is more likely being Atletico will mean missing out to Real once more. Anything but a miracle will leave Atletico headed for what could be a turbulent summer on and off the field. Doubts remain over whether their new 67,000 Wanda Metropolitano stadium will be ready in time for the start of next season as planned. As things stand, Simeone can't strengthen his squad due to one-year transfer ban.

And they risk losing their prized asset with a host of clubs, including Real and Manchester United willing to meet Antoine Griezmann's 100 million euro (\$109 million) buyout clause. Not that Ronaldo or Real will care. Their quest for history looks set for a Cardiff final on June 3 where they could become the first side to retain the trophy in the Champions League era. "We have a small advantage, we are a step away from Cardiff and hopefully we can finish it off," added Ronaldo. — AFP

## WIMBLEDON KEEPS SHARAPOVA GUESSING ON WILDCARD ENTRY

**LONDON:** Former champion Maria Sharapova's hopes of playing at this year's Wimbledon championships could hinge on a June 20 meeting of tournament organizers unless the Russian hits form in forthcoming events in Madrid and Rome. Sharapova, who returned last week after a 15-month ban for an anti-doping violation, could still climb high enough in the WTA rankings to earn a spot in the main draw or Wimbledon's qualifying tournament at Roehampton the week before. Failing that the 2004 champion's participation would be at the mercy of the Wimbledon wildcard committee.

"We have a long-standing tried and tested process (for awarding wildcards) in the week before qualifying and this year is no different," All England Club chairman Philip Brook said at a news conference yesterday. "First we will see if Maria applies for a wildcard and if so we will consider her case alongside everyone else's. "It will be a decision for the group on the day."

Sharapova reached the semi-finals in Stuttgart last week as a wildcard entrant, playing her first tournament since her ban for taking the prohibited substance Meldonium at the 2016 Australian Open. Her world ranking rose to 262. The cut-off date to get back under the top 100, which usually ensures direct entry into the main draw, is May 22, the day after the conclusion of the Rome tournament in which Sharapova has been handed another wildcard.

If she falls short of the main draw, Sharapova could still climb high enough up the rankings to make Wimbledon's qualifying event. The cut-off date for that is June 5, in the middle of the French Open. A strong performance from the former world number one in Rome, and in Madrid the week before where she has also been handed a wildcard, would spare the All England Club a tough decision as she could return to Wimbledon on merit.

### PLAYERS UPSET

Her return has riled several players, including former world number one Caroline Wozniacki and former Wimbledon runner-up Eugenie Bouchard, both of whom have criticized tournament organizers for handing five-times grand slam champion Sharapova wildcards into their events.

Reigning men's Wimbledon champion Andy Murray has also questioned whether Sharapova should receive special treatment and on Tuesday said he believed tournament chiefs would be "hoping they don't have to make the decision". While it pains to say any application by

Sharapova for wildcard would be treated like any other, Brook hinted that reputation could influence the wildcard sub-committee which includes himself, Wimbledon tournament referee Andrew Jarrett and former British number one Tim Henman.

"We will also consider what might add interest to the tournament. So, if someone had a very strong playing record here at Wimbledon, that would be a factor in our consideration as well," Brook said. Sharapova's case could also be strengthened if she played at any of the grass-court events in Nottingham, Birmingham or Eastbourne in the lead-up to Wimbledon. "We do appreciate players who play in grasscourt tour-

naments in the build-up to Wimbledon and success in those, for a number of years now, had been rewarded (with wildcards)."

Wimbledon will be without 23-times grand slam singles winner Serena Williams who is pregnant while former world number one Victoria Azarenka is also yet to return after becoming a mother. The 30-year-old Sharapova failed an anti-doping test for the heart drug Meldonium after failing to realize it had been added to the WADA banned list at the end of 2015. Sharapova is also waiting to hear if she will be handed a wildcard for the French Open, a tournament she has won twice. That announcement will be made on May 16. — Reuters



STUTTGART: Russia's Maria Sharapova returns to France's Kristina Mladenovic during their semifinal match at the WTA Porsche Tennis Grand Prix. — AFP



# Sports

Thomas scores 53  
as Celtics beat  
Wizards in OT



Hard work is the  
key to Ronaldo's  
record feats



THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2017

BOSTON SPORTS STRUGGLE WITH PERCEPTION BUILT ON RACISM

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MONACO: Juventus' goalkeeper from Italy Gianluigi Buffon eyes the ball during the UEFA Champions League semi-final first leg football match Monaco vs Juventus at the Stade Louis II stadium yesterday. — AFP

## IMPERIOUS JUVENTUS, HIGUAIN HURT MONACO



MONACO: Monaco's French forward Kylian Mbappe heads the ball during the UEFA Champions League semi-final first leg football match Monaco vs Juventus at the Stade Louis II stadium yesterday. — AFP

MONACO: Gonzalo Higuain scored both goals as an imperious Juventus beat Monaco 2-0 in their Champions League semi-final first leg yesterday to take a huge step towards next month's final in Cardiff. Both of Higuain's goals came from Dani Alves assists, with the Argentine hitman rounding off a breathtaking team move to open the scoring just before the half-hour mark and converting the second from close range after the break.

While the second leg in Turin next Tuesday will be no formality, Juventus have never lost a two-legged European tie to French opposition and so impressive were they at the Stade Louis II that it is hard to imagine Monaco recovering. Higuain, who now has 31 goals this season, received applause from all around the ground as he came off to be replaced by Juan Cuadrado late on after a clinical display that showed just why Juve paid 90 million euros (\$98m) to sign him from Napoli last year.

In contrast Monaco, having won their previous 13 matches at the Stade Louis II and been so thrilling going forward all campaign, could not find a way through the brilliant away defense. They will now need something very special next week if they are to make it to a first Champions League final since 2004. Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri raised eyebrows with his team selection as he ditched his favored back four, bringing Andrea Barzagli into a three-man defense in an attempt to thwart Monaco's prolific attack. The tactic worked, although the absence of the marauding left-back Benjamin Mendy from the home side also played into their hands.

**Brilliant Buffon**

Monaco did grow into the game after a slow start and teen

sensation Kylian Mbappe was first to test Gianluigi Buffon with a header from Nabil Dirar's ball that the veteran goalkeeper held easily. In the 16th minute the same trio were involved again, Dirar surging down the right and delivering a teasing ball to the near post that Mbappe diverted towards goal, with Buffon saving superbly. Buffon, playing his 149th European game at the age of 39, started his career before Mbappe was born. But he remains one of the world's best and shortly after he was there to turn the ball behind after Radamel Falcao met another Dirar delivery with a terrific leap.

Juve are a slick side, sound defensively but with an awesome attacking arsenal of their own and it was they who opened the scoring on 29 minutes in stunning fashion. Paulo Dybala was involved initially before Dani Alves, now nearly 34, surged into the box, holding off Kamil Glik and cutting the ball back for Higuain to sweep home. Higuain bounded over the advertising hoardings and across the running track to celebrate with the away support, before Juve retreated to ensure they held their lead into the break. Although Monaco had glimpses of goal after the restart, with Falcao firing straight at Buffon, they were also their own worst enemies.

When Thomas Lemar lost possession in his own half and went down hoping for a free-kick, referee Mateu Lahoz let play continue and Marchisio ran in on goal only to see Danijel Subasic save his shot. But when Tiemoué Bakayoko was hustled off the ball by Dybala, Juventus seized their chance. Alves delivered a hanging ball from wide on the right and Higuain escaped the attentions of Glik to apply a first-time finish. Buffon then intervened to stop Monaco getting a goal back, producing a majestic save in the last minute to tip over Valere Germain's header from a Joao Moutinho free-kick. — AFP

## RUTHLESS TRAORE SPARKS AJAX ROUT OF LYON 4-1

AMSTERDAM: Bertrand Traore scored two goals and created another as a rampant Ajax beat Lyon 4-1 in the first leg of their Europa League semifinal yesterday. Burkina Faso forward Traore, who is on loan to Ajax from Chelsea, had been in doubt before kickoff with a groin injury. But the 21-year-old showed no ill effects as the four-time European Cup winner made the most of its first European semifinal since 1997.

In between his strikes, Traore lined up 19-year-old Denmark striker Kasper Dolberg to score Ajax's second in the 34th minute and Amin Younes added the hosts' third in the 49th minute, but Mathieu Valbuena's away goal for Lyon in the 66th will give his team at least a faint hope of advancing from next week's second leg in France. Playing in the Amsterdam Arena for the first time since an announcement that the stadium will be renamed in honor of Ajax's greatest player, Johan Cruyff, the Amsterdam team put in a performance that would have made him proud. It also showed that this young Ajax team could be strong enough to win its first continental title since 1995.

Poor finishing and good goalkeeping combined to keep the score respectable for Lyon in a match featuring relentless attacking by both teams. Even the small group of French fans applauded Ajax players as they performed a lap of honor after the final whistle. Ajax coach Peter Bosz called it a "bizarre" match that could have ended 7-3 or 8-4. Despite a tough first 20 minutes, he was pleased that Ajax's trademark attacking

style had paid off. "We want to win and we want to do that in an attractive way," he said. "Attack is the best form of defense."

Manchester United plays Celta Vigo in Spain today in the other semifinal, first leg. After a scrappy opening in which Lyon gave Ajax little time or space on the ball, Traore put Ajax ahead in the 25th minute, leaping between a crowd of defenders to send a glancing header into the far corner from a free kick by Hakim Ziyech. Ziyech was also the provider for Traore's second in the 71st minute. Traore created Ajax's second goal nine minutes after his first, powerfully heading a poor clearance by Lyon goalkeeper Anthony Lopes into the path of Dolberg, who calmly fired a low volley past the goalkeeper.

Ajax should have been further ahead at the break. Left winger Younes popped up on the right just before half time and broke through the Lyon defense, but Lopes made amends for his earlier mistake by saving well. The closest Lyon came in the first half was in the 10th minute when Lucas Tousart cut back the ball for Maxwell Cornet. But his side-foot shot from close range was saved by Andre Onana, one of several good saves by the Ajax goalkeeper. Lyon top scorer Alexandre Lacazette had recovered sufficiently from a right hamstring injury to start on the bench and coach Bruno Genesio risked bringing him on midway through the second half in an attempt to get his team back into the match. — AP



AMSTERDAM: Ajax forward Bertrand Traore (center) reacts after fourth goal during UEFA Europa League semi-final, first leg, Ajax Amsterdam v Olympique Lyonnais (OM) yesterday. — AFP





Niger gold seekers dig deep for bullion dreams

BARNIER SAYS 'NO PUNISHMENT' IN BREXIT FINANCIAL DEMANDS



CUPERTINO: An aerial view of the new Apple headquarters in Cupertino, California. — AFP

APPLE'S DILEMMA: WHAT TO DO WITH \$256BN CASH PILE

TECH GIANT RESISTS THE IDEA OF BRINGING CASH HOME

WASHINGTON: It is a sign of Apple's success but also a thorny problem: its cash stockpile has hit a staggering \$256.8 billion, sparking debate on what to do with such massive reserves. Apple's quarterly report Tuesday showed its cash holdings—the vast majority held overseas—jumped to a sum that tops the entire economic output of Chile.

The tech giant has resisted the idea of bringing the cash home, because of disincentives in the US tax code—it allows multinational firms to defer profits while they are held overseas but taxes income at up to 35 percent when repatriated. Proposals by President Donald Trump and lawmakers could lower the tax rate for repatriated earnings, an incentive for Apple and others to put the money to work in the United States.

While any company would gladly be in Apple's shoes with its cash hoard, "there's something not quite healthy about it," said Roger Kay, analyst with Endpoint Technologies Associates. "Normally, you would expect cash to fund investment opportunities, but obviously Apple doesn't have any use for that much cash." Apple has become the most valuable and profitable company of the current era. But the unique challenges it faces because

its earnings come mostly from the iPhone, which faces increasingly tough competition in a saturated smartphone market.

Long-term strategy

Apple faces periodic pressure to return more cash to shareholders with higher dividends and more share buybacks, and has already spent some \$200 billion doing this. Patrick Moorhead of Moor Insights & Strategy argued that returning all the cash to shareholders "doesn't help further anyone's strategic interests" and that Apple needs to find ways to diversify its business. One way to do this would be "going vertical," or acquiring a chipmaker such as AMD to supply all Apple devices, Moorhead said.

Netflix, he said, could complement Apple's business by offering content for Apple's ecosystem of devices. Moorhead said that if Apple—which has a permit to test its self-driving car system—is serious about autonomous vehicles "it would need to buy a car company" such as Tesla to ensure "the Apple experience."

Bob O'Donnell of Technalysis Research said Apple has a staggering amount of cash and "could make enormous entries and completely rewrite industries" with it. "The challenge is cul-

turally and organizationally, how do you integrate something that big," O'Donnell said. He said Apple has always sought to minutely manage details of its operations, "so making an enormous purchase goes against their culture."

The tax conundrum

Apple's situation has highlighted the growing stockpiles of cash held overseas by US multinationals, now estimated to be between \$2.5 trillion and \$3 trillion. Lisa De Simone, a Stanford University professor who specializes in international taxation, said the current code creates "incentives for companies to shift as much of their profits as they can offshore." But De Simone said a temporary tax "holiday" as Washington tried in 2004 would only increase the incentives.

"Companies like Apple have only increased their income shifting in expectation they could get another holiday later on," she said, arguing for a permanent tax change. Georgetown University finance professor Lee Pinkowitz said companies with cash overseas are essentially holding the funds hostage to US policymakers. "The government already revealed in 2004 they were willing to negotiate with the hostage takers," he said. "What



CALIFORNIA: This file photo shows Apple CEO Tim Cook speaking during a product launch event at Apple headquarters in Cupertino, California. — AFP

you would expect is that more hostages will be taken." The Trump administration is seeking to encourage firms to bring those earnings

home for investment and job creation in the United States. But Pinkowitz said a major stimulus from repatriated assets is unlikely. With Apple, much of the funds are held nominally by its Irish subsidiary but are invested in US assets. "Apple has almost \$50 billion in US Treasury and agency securities, so technically that \$50 billion is already here. It just hasn't been taxed."

Made in USA?

Could Apple use some of the cash to bring large-scale manufacturing back to the United States? Jan Dawson of Jackdaw Research said this is unlikely because of Apple's manufacturing and supply process. "We simply don't have the work force to support this scale of manufacturing," he said. "No tax break is going to offset that entirely."

But Kay said he sees potential for Apple to bring factories home if the conditions are right. "I could see a happy solution where contract manufacturers and Apple partner and train American workers to be as efficient as the Chinese," he said. "It would take quite a bit to make it come true but it could bring down the myth that Chinese workers are more efficient."—AFP

INDIAN VILLAGERS SEE NO SHINE IN GOLD RUSH

SONAKHAN, India: The village of Sonakhan in the eastern Indian state of Chhattisgarh hardly looks like the site of a gold rush. There are no gun-toting ruffians, nor squalid camps of desperate fortune seekers. The dusty village with its distinct reddish soil, is a collection of modest brick homes and small patches of cultivated land amid scraggly forest. But the village, a two-hour drive from the capital Raipur, could soon be enveloped by India's first private gold mine.

Residents of Sonakhan - 'sona' is gold in Hindi - sift for flecks of gold on the banks of the river Jonk during the monsoon rains. They voice fears the mine will up-end their lives. "When they dig for the mine, they will cut down trees and damage the forest. They will make the water dirty. Where will we go?" said Rajesh Singh, who cultivates a small plot of land. "This land is sacred for us. We do not want to give it up to a big company that will destroy our homes and our livelihoods."

Who asked the locals?

Vedanta, a unit of London-listed Vedanta Resources, last year won India's first auction of a gold mine, as the country opened up the sector to private companies. The Baghmara mine has potential reserves of about 2.7 tonnes of gold, and

officials have said mining will begin in two years. Vedanta said at the time that the mining block, measuring 6.08 sq km, required extensive exploration.

Residents of Sonakhan said they first heard of the auction in the national newspapers. There were no visits by government officials to brief them, nor village council meetings to discuss the impact of the mine, they said. Vedanta Resources did not respond to a request for comment.

Activists say mining activity will affect at least 24 villages in a range of 40-50 km. "These people have been living here for generations, earning a living from the land and the forests," said Devendra Baghel, an activist with Dalit Adivasi Manch, which lobbies for the rights of indigenous and lower-caste communities. "Now they have to deal with a mine in their backyard. Their way of life will end," he said.

Flashpoint

Villagers have held rallies and made representations to state officials. They plan to keep protesting until they get more details on the mine's environmental impact, and assurances they will not be displaced. Officials say their concern is misplaced - and premature. "Vedanta is still surveying the land for gold. If they find gold worth digging for, then we will proceed," said

Bhupendra Kumar Chandrakar, a deputy director in the mines department.

"They have to first see if it is viable; then we will see about the land and other details," he said. The Baghmara mine is the latest flashpoint in the resource-rich state, with past protests over coal and iron ore mines, and power plants that officials say are key to development. Among India's least developed states, Chhattisgarh accounts for about 16 percent of the total value of minerals produced in the country. Gold could be its next big money spinner.

India is one of the world's biggest gold importers behind China. Gold is a mainstay of the country's culture, and India buys about 800 tons of the yellow metal from abroad for weddings, festivals, religious offerings and as an investment.

Threatened forests

The race for resources in Chhattisgarh has pitted some of its most vulnerable people against officials keen to tap its valuable resources to spur economic growth and generate jobs. There are 25 conflicts around coal and iron ore mines, power projects and steel plants in the state, affecting nearly 70,000 people, according to research firm Land Conflict Watch.

Indigenous people and lower-caste Dalits, who make up more than 40 percent

of the state's population, face displacement and loss of livelihood as forests are cleared for industry. "We would rather they give us our community forest rights, so we can be certain we won't lose our access to the forests," said Hemalata Yadav, the Sonakhan village chief. "For us, that is more precious than any gold mine."

The Forest Rights Act of 2006, giving traditional forest dwellers access to forest products, has been poorly implemented, with Chhattisgarh among laggards in granting rights, according to research by the Rights and Resources Initiative, which advocates for indigenous and local communities. Sonakhan has a legacy of protest.

A landlord, Veer Narayan Singh, was executed for leading a revolt against British rule in 1857. The state has also witnessed a Maoist rebellion for more than three decades, with rebels accusing the government of plundering resources while ignoring the needs of villagers. Villagers caught in the cross-fire between the rebels and security forces say they only want to hold on to their land.

"It's not that we don't want jobs and development, but this is our land. We should get to decide," said Singh in Sonakhan. "We don't see any benefit from the mine. They can take all the gold they want as long as they leave us our land."—Reuters

KIPCO ANNOUNCES NET PROFIT OF KD 5.07M

KUWAIT: KIPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - has announced a net profit of KD 5.07 million (US\$ 16.6 million), or 1.11 fils per share (US\$ 0.4 cents), for the first three months of 2017, compared to KD 13.5 million (US\$ 44.3 million), or 7.45 fils per share (US\$ 2.4 cents), reported for the same period last year. KIPCO's consolidated assets remained at the KD 10 billion (US\$ 33 billion) reported at year-end 2016.



Masaud Hayat

Mr Masaud Hayat, KIPCO's Chief Executive Officer - Banking, said that the company was faring well given the challenging external circumstances, "At our recent Shafafiyah Investors' Forum, we stated that 2017 would be difficult. Thanks to years of internal streamlining and prudent risk management, our core businesses have been able to face continuing external challenges such as the global economic slowdown, regional tensions and currency fluctuations. We will continue to build our internal capabilities, and we remain confident that our core operations will grow stronger despite these conditions."



# MADE-IN-CHINA PASSENGER JET SET TO TAKE WING

## PASSENGER PLANE TO MEET DOMESTIC TRAVEL DEMAND

**SHANGHAI:** China is expected this week to conduct the maiden test flight of a home-grown passenger jet built to meet soaring domestic travel demand and challenge the dominance of Boeing and Airbus. The C919, built by state-owned aerospace manufacturer Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China (COMAC), was set to take wing over Shanghai tomorrow, the company said yesterday, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

"If weather conditions are not suitable, the maiden flight will be rescheduled," COMAC said, adding that engineers had completed some 118 tests. The narrow-body jet represents nearly a decade of effort in a state-mandated drive to reduce dependence on European consortium Airbus and US aerospace giant Boeing. "The first flight itself is not a huge deal. (But) of course, it's going to be a hugely symbolic moment in the evolution of China's aviation industry," said Greg Waldron, Asia managing editor at industry publication Flightglobal.

The C919 is the country's first big passenger plane and the latest sign of growing Chinese ambition and technical skill, coming one week after China launched its first domestically made aircraft carrier and docked a cargo spacecraft with an orbiting space lab. The C919 can seat 168 passengers and has a range of 5,555 kilometers.

**Long way to go**  
China is a huge battleground for Boeing and Airbus, with its travelers taking to the skies in ever-growing numbers. The Chinese travel market is expected to surpass the United States by 2024, according to the International Air Transport Association. Airbus has estimated Chinese airlines will need nearly 6,000 new planes over the next two decades, while Boeing foresees 6,800 aircraft. Both put the combined price tags for those planes at around \$1 trillion.

But aviation analysts said Shanghai-based COMAC has a long journey ahead before it can challenge the lock on the market by Boeing and Airbus. "This is an important milestone for China with this new aircraft. But for it to move to the next stage, which is to sell this product, is not going to be so easy," said Shukor Yusof, an analyst with Malaysia-based aviation consultancy Endau Analytics. But COMAC may be able to rely on purchases by fast-growing Chinese airlines.

It had already received 570 orders by the end of last year, almost all from domestic airlines. Waldron agreed it would take time but said that over the next century China would become a world aviation player. "You are going to have three big companies. You will have Boeing, you will have Airbus, and you will have COMAC," he said. China has dreamed of building its own civil aircraft since the 1970s, when it began work

on the narrow-body Y-10, which was eventually deemed unviable and never entered service. COMAC's first regional jet, the 90-seat ARJ 21, entered service in 2016, several years late.

**Long-haul ambition**

The ARJ 21 is currently restricted to flying domestic routes as it still lacks the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certification that would allow it to fly US skies. China also has been in talks with the FAA to obtain certification for the C919, without result. The C919's first test flight had been due to take place in 2016 but was delayed. Besides the C919, China is also working with Russia to develop a long-haul wide-bodied jet called the C929. Although the C919 is made in China, foreign firms are playing key roles by supplying systems as well as the engines, which are made by CFM International, a joint venture between General Electric of the US and France's Safran.

During a visit to COMAC in 2014, President Xi Jinping expressed concern that not having a home-grown plane left China at the mercy of foreign industrial groups. China last August launched a new multi-billion dollar jet-engine conglomerate with nearly 100,000 employees, with the hope of powering its own planes with self-made engines. After the C919's first flight, it will need to pass tests to obtain Chinese airworthiness certification before it can be sold.—AFP

# GLOBAL EQUITIES RECORD MIXED PERFORMANCE

### NBK'S GLOBAL MARKETS REVIEW

**KUWAIT:** Global equities had mixed performance in the month of April. The MSCI All Country Index was up 1.4 percent. For sub-indices, the MSCI Emerging Market Index was the largest gainer followed by the Euro-zone and Nikkei. The FTSE 100 and Shanghai Composite were the largest losers, each shedding in excess of 1.0 percent. US equities were up, with the S&P 500 posting a gain of 0.9 percent. During the month, Trump completed his first 100 days in office with continued attacks on the political norms mixed with successes and failures in terms of campaign promises.

Across the Atlantic, UK's May called for snap elections and the French completed their first round of voting narrowing the race to two candidates, the far right and center left. Commodities also had mixed performances with Gold up 1.5 percent and Brent down 2.1 percent. In the US, the preliminary reading for the Q1 GDP Index is positive at 2.2 percent. On an annualized basis, the reading is 0.7 percent, which is below the consensus of 1.2 percent. The Unemployment Rate for April improved, decreasing by 0.2 percent to 4.5 percent.

Markit US Manufacturing and Services PMI are preliminarily both down for the month of April, although still above 50 at 52.8 and 52.5, respectively. The Consumer Price Index for the month of March, on a year on year basis, is at 2.4 percent slightly lower than the previous month reading of 2.7 percent. Initial jobless claims for the first three weeks came in at 257K compared to the previous reading of 243K. Durable Goods Orders for March was at 0.7 percent lifted mainly by transportation, specifically aviation. Housing Starts came in for March slightly lower than the previous month at 1.215 million while New Home Sales and Existing Home Sales both came in slightly higher than the previous month, increasing 4.4 percent and 5.8 per-

cent. Unemployment Rate In the UK, the Markit Manufacturing and Services PMI for March were both above 50 indicating growth. The Manufacturing PMI was flat compared to the previous month while the Services PMI was slightly higher at 55 compared to 53.3. GDP on a preliminary basis increased by 0.3

56.2 compared to 56.0. The Consumer Price Index's preliminary reading for April is up 1.9 percent year on year, while Consumer Confidence is unchanged at -3.6.

European equities closed up for the month by 1.6 percent, as measured by the Stoxx Europe 600. Japan's imports and exports have

percent, respectively, resulting in a Trade Balance surplus of CNY 164.34B versus the previous month's deficit of CNY 60.4B. The Consumer Price Index for March was slightly down at -0.3 percent compared to -0.2 percent. The non-manufacturing PMI for April was 54, slightly below March's 55.1 while the Caixin Manufacturing PMI for March also came in above 50 at 51.2.

The MSCI Emerging Market Index was positive for the month of April gaining 2.0 percent, while Chinese equities, as measured by the Shanghai Stock Exchange Composite, closed down 2.1 percent. The GCC equity markets were for the most part negative for the month of April with MSCI GCC Index posting a loss of 1.2 percent. Abu Dhabi's market was the largest gainer increasing 1.8 percent while Saudi Arabia was flat with a minimal gain of 0.2 percent. In terms of losses, Egypt was the largest at -4.3 percent, followed by Qatar at -3.1 percent, followed by Dubai at -1.9 percent, and followed by Bahrain and Kuwait at -1.5 percent and -1.2 percent, respectively. Oman's market was also negative, but shed less than 1.0 percent.

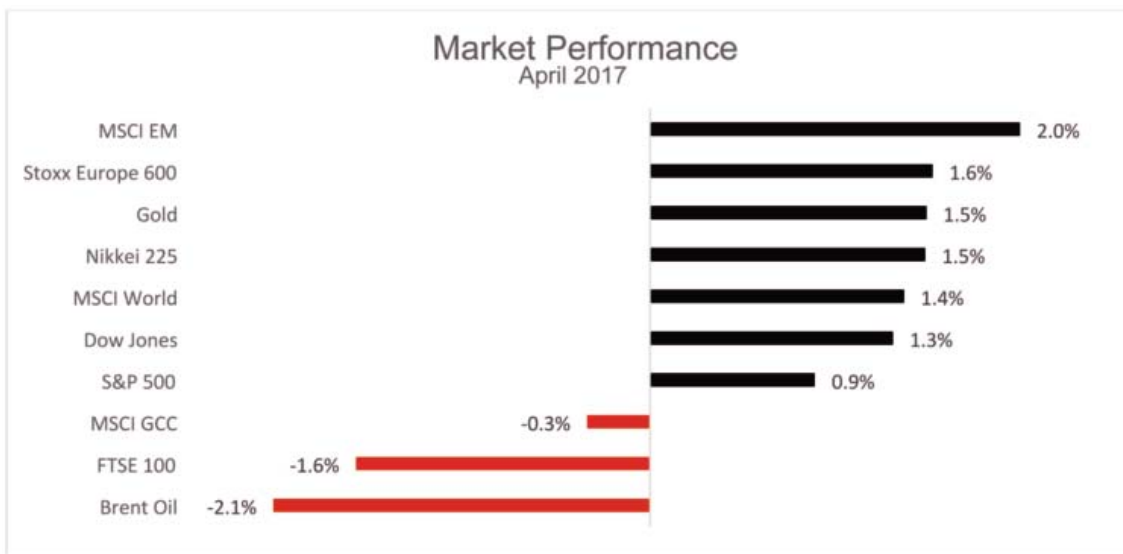
## NBK • CAPITAL

percent quarter on quarter and 2.1 percent year on year. Consumer Confidence for April was slightly lower than March at -7 versus -6. Retail Sales in March decreased by 1.8 percent month on month whereas the Consumer Price Index in March increased by 0.4 percent from February.

UK equities ended the month down 1.6 percent, as measured by the FTSE 100. Within the Euro-zone, Markit Manufacturing and Services PMI, on a preliminary basis, indicate continued growth through the month of April. The Markit Manufacturing PMI is estimated at 56.8 compared to 56.2, while the Markit Services PMI is estimated at

both increased in March on a year on year basis by 15.8 percent and 12.0 percent, respectively. The Nikkei Manufacturing PMI for April was flat at 52.7 when compared to March's reading of 52.8 yet still above 50 indicating continued growth. Housing Starts in March grew 0.2 percent on year on year basis. The National Consumer Price Index also grew 0.2 percent in March on a year on year basis.

Japanese equities were up in April, as measured by the Nikkei 225, increasing 1.5 percent. China in March reported increased imports and exports. On a year on year basis, imports and exports increased by 20.3 percent and 16.4



### National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report At 02:00 PM Previous Day

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Dow Jones	20,913.46	20,949.89	36.43	▲	0.17
NASDAQ	6,091.60	6,095.37	3.77	▲	0.06
SBP 500	2,388.33	2,391.17	2.84	▲	0.12
Financial Times	7,250.05	7,229.05	-21.00	▼	-0.29
DAX	12,507.90	12,493.20	-14.70	▼	-0.12
CAC 40	5,304.15	5,291.18	-12.97	▼	-0.24
Swiss	8,868.56	8,878.96	10.40	▲	0.12
Nikkei 225	19,310.52	19,445.70	135.18	▲	0.70
Topix	1,539.77	1,550.30	10.53	▲	0.68
Hang Seng	24,615.13	24,696.13	81.00	▲	0.33
Straits Times	3,211.11	3,237.81	26.70	▲	0.83

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait	6,759.40	6,798.73	39.33	▲	0.58
Saudi Arabia	7,012.81	6,974.22	-38.59	▼	-0.55
Dubai	3,436.63	3,419.06	-17.57	▼	-0.51
Abu Dhabi	4,552.88	4,581.26	28.38	▲	0.62
Bahrain	1,338.43	1,330.90	-7.52	▼	-0.56
Qatar	9,992.84	9,955.40	-37.44	▼	-0.37
Oman	5,510.04	5,492.42	-17.62	▼	-0.32
Lebanon	1,163.85	1,168.00	4.15	▲	0.36
Jordan	2,151.65	2,157.67	6.02	▲	0.28
Egypt	12,530.32	12,591.56	61.24	▲	0.49
Morocco	11,825.66	11,878.90	53.24	▲	0.45
Tunisia	5,665.08	5,656.26	-8.82	▼	-0.16

Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.2106	3.2696	2.9969	2.5302	3.2395	366.78	4.3752
Saudi Riyal	0.08190		0.2678	0.2454	0.2072	0.2653	30.04	0.3583
US Dollar	0.30585	3.7346		0.9166	0.7739	0.9908	112.18	1.3382
Euro	0.33368	4.0744	1.0910		0.8443	1.0811	122.44	1.4602
Sterling Pound	0.39522	4.8259	1.2922	1.1844		1.2806	145.01	1.7296
Swiss Franc	0.30869	3.7693	1.0093	0.9250	0.7809		113.28	1.3506
Japanese Yen	0.00273	0.0333	0.0089	0.0082	0.0069	0.0088		0.0119
Australian Dollar	0.22856	2.7909	0.7473	0.6848	0.5782	0.7404	83.83	

Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30585	3.7346	0.3740	3.6271	0.3832	3.6570	18.0300
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2696		12.2106	1.2229	11.8591	1.2527	11.9568	58.9505
Saudi Riyal	0.2678	0.08190		0.1002	0.9712	0.1026	0.9792	4.8278
Bahraini Dinar	2.6736	0.81772	9.9848		9.6974	1.0244	9.7773	48.2047
Qatari Riyal	0.2757	0.08432	1.0296	0.1031		0.1056	1.0082	4.9709
Omani Riyal	2.6099	0.79825	9.7471	0.9762	9.4665		9.5446	47.0573
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08363	1.0212	0.1023	0.9918	0.1048		4.9303
Egyptian Pound	0.0555	0.01696	0.2071	0.0207	0.2012	0.0213	0.2028	

Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.00	1.38	1.63	1.88	2.19
US Dollar	0.94	0.99	1.17	1.42	1.77
Euro	-0.40	-0.40	-0.36	-0.26	-0.14
Sterling Pound	0.24	0.25	0.32	0.47	0.68
Swiss Franc	-0.81	-0.78	-0.73	-0.66	-0.49
Australian Dollar	1.56	1.62	1.60	1.59	1.61
Japanese Yen	-0.03	-0.02	0.00	0.02	0.13

Country	2-Year	5-Year	10-Year	30-Year
United States	1.27	1.82	2.30	2.98
Europe	-0.76	-0.38	0.32	1.11
United Kingdom	0.06	0.49	1.08	1.72

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil	48.24	48.23	-0.01	▼	-0.02
Brent	48.62	48.26	-0.36	▼	-0.74
West Texas	47.70	47.60	-0.10	▼	-0.21
Gold	1256.79	1253.58	-3.21	▼	-0.26
Silver	16.80	16.79	-0.01	▼	-0.06

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.721
Indian Rupees	4.759
Pakistani Rupees	2.909
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.003
Nepali Rupees	2.979
Singapore Dollar	219.610
Hongkong Dollar	39.219
Bangladesh Taka	3.725
Philippine Peso	6.111
Thai Baht	8.878

#### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	81.428
Qatari Riyal	83.867
Omani Riyal	793.009
Bahraini Dinar	810.810
UAE Dirham	83.136

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.600
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	16.770
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.226
Tunisian Dinar	128.760
Jordanian Dinar	430.390
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.034
Syrian Lira	2.176
Morocco Dirham	31.233

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	305.150
Euro	334.600
Sterling Pound	395.320

Canadian dollar	222.900
Turkish Lira	86.880
Swiss Franc	309.170
Australian Dollar	229.780
US Dollar Buying	303.950

#### GOLD

20 Gram	255.770
10 Gram	130.810
5 Gram	66.250

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.800
Canadian Dolla	226.525
Sterling Pound	392.135
Euro	328.485
Swiss Frank	305.110
Bahrain Dinar	808.430
UAE Dirhams	83.380
Qatari Riyals	84.605
Saudi Riyals	82.175
Jordanian Dinar	429.815
Egyptian Pound	16.978
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.005
Indian Rupees	4.728
Pakistani Rupees	2.907
Bangladesh Taka	3.742
Philippines Peso	6.121
Cyprus pound	168.208
Japanese Yen	3.795
Syrian Pound	2.420

Nepalese Rupees	3.950
Malaysian Ringgit	70.185
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	44.745
Thai Bhat	9.860
Turkish Lira	84.130

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.387136	0.397136
Czech Korune	0.004386	0.016386
Danish Krone	0.040776	0.045776
Euro	0.327886	0.336886
Norwegian Krone	0.031479	0.036679
Romanian Leu	0.084569	0.084569
Slovakia	0.009134	0.019134
Swedish Krona	0.030613	0.035613
Swiss Franc	0.301122	0.312122
Turkish Lira	0.081186	0.091486
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.220703	0.232703
New Zealand Dollar	0.205654	0.215154
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.216805	0.225805
Georgina Lari	0.137823	0.137823
US Dollars	0.301050	0.305450
US Dollars Mint	0.301550	0.305450
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003420	0.004004
Chinese Yuan	0.042816	0.046316

Hong Kong Dollar	0.037259	0.040009
Indian Rupee	0.004198	0.004886
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002640	0.002820



# GERMAN UNEMPLOYMENT HOLDS AT HISTORIC LOWS

**FRANKFURT AM MAIN:** A slight decrease in people registered as unemployed in Germany kept the figure at historic lows in April, official data showed yesterday, as good times persist for Europe's largest economy. The out of work figure adjusted for seasonal effects held steady at 5.8 percent this month, with 15,000 fewer on registries at the Federal Labor Agency (BA). It was steady at its lowest level since reunification

in 1990 and in line with analysts' forecasts. In unadjusted terms, more closely watched in Germany, the number of unemployed fell by 93,000 to 2.56 million people. "The number of people out of work fell significantly again with the continuing spring pick-up" in the economy, BA chief Detlef Scheele said in a statement. Germany's economy has entered a virtuous cycle in recent months, with higher consumer

spending powering growth and encouraging companies to hire more workers-which in turn feeds into more spending. A "solid as a rock" labor market "will remain an important driver for the entire economy," predicted ING Diba bank economist Carsten Brzeski. But he pointed to "ample room for improvement" in several areas, including high numbers of long-term unemployed people and

some 40 percent of workers in part-time jobs, especially women. "Making work models more flexible has proven itself," countered economist Joerg Zeuner of public investment bank KfW. "The labor market should continue to be the growth motor and advertisement for the German economy" if unions strike fair wage deals that will allow employers keep hiring, he added. —AFP

## SIX NEW PROJECTS AWAIT AL-MAZAYA HOLDING IN KUWAIT, DUBAI AND OMAN

**KUWAIT:** Al-Mazaya Holding has announced its financial statements for Q1 2017, declaring KWD 1.91 million in net profits, a growth of 2.65 percent from KWD 1.86 million for the same period in 2016. Earnings per share reached 3.07 fils against 3.00 fils for the same period last year. Commenting on the financial statements, Al-Mazaya Group CEO Engineer Ibrahim Al-Soqabi said, following the company's board meeting on 03rd of May that Al-Mazaya Holding has continued to boost its operating performance for the first quarter of 2017.

This growth is attributed to well-integrated annual plans, smart objectives, robust fiscal policy and a strict timeframe that boosted the company's total operating revenues to KWD 15.10 million by the end of the first quarter of the year. He added that the increasing revenues are also attributable to well thought-out marketing campaigns and sales revenues presents amounting to KWD 13.18 million over the past period. Rental revenues increased by 6.71 percent to KWD 1.87 million, from KWD 1.76 million same period last year. Gross profits also increased by 19.47 percent to KWD 3.79 million by the end of Q1 2017 against 3.18 million for the same period in 2016.

The company has continued to achieve high occupancy rates in its income-generating projects, including Sky Gardens at Dubai International Financial Centre, Al-Mazaya Towers in the capital city of Kuwait

pletion of concrete works for the second phase of Q-Line Residential Project in Dubai, which consists of two residential buildings (R010, R085) and 253 flats. Design work for the Q-Zone Residential Project (MU5/6, MU7) in Dubai, comprising of 500 flats, is also being completed. Initial concept design of the company's new project, Al-Mazaya Downtown through Gensler, a top international consultancy, is being completed.

The project's final design works and architectural licenses have been assigned to a leading local consultancy house in Kuwait, in preparation for obtaining construction licenses from government departments concerned. Completing the ground-work and foundation of a spacious underground car park sprawling beneath the entire space of the residential building of Al Mazaya Residence, a residential and commercial development, strategically located in the Al-Seeb Province in the heart of Muscat, which consists of 120 apartments, 28 shops.

The company recently launched the project with a large-scale marketing campaign in Oman. On the first day of the campaign, 10 percent of the project's units were sold. More than 95 percent completion rate of Al-Mazaya Health Centre in Sabah Al-Salim, which has already been rented to one of Kuwait's renowned doctors. Record number of sales and delivery of (R064) in less than 17 months as part of the first phase of the Q-Line project, which consists of 121 flats in Dubai Land.

The project's profits have been listed in the Q1 Financial Results. Completed the execution of the Ritim Istanbul project, which consists of 6 residential towers and a mall. Up to 80 percent of the residential units have been sold, with the mall's occupancy rate reaching 50 percent so far. The company has completed the construction works of the final phase of Q-Point Residential Project in Dubai Land.

The project targets the middle-income demographic and the delivery of units is ongoing amidst intensive marketing campaigns. There is a 67 percent occupancy rate at the company's commercial tower in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The development, owned by one of the company's subsidiaries the Saudi capital, delivered rental returns that have been added to Q1 financial results. An occupancy rate of 85 percent at Mazaya Logistics in the Bahrain Investment Wharf, which consists of industrial parks that cater to the logistics and investment sectors alike. The returns have been added to the Q1 financial results.

The company boosted rental revenues of existing, fully occupied projects by renewing contracts at a higher rate to match current market prices and the premium post-sale services provided by the company, which resulted in increasing operating revenues during the first quarter of the year. The company recently participated in a financial conference organized by KFH Capital in order to keep channels of communications with shareholders and investors. The company also briefed them on its projects and financial results in line with the company's policy of transparency.

Al-Soqabi concluded by adding that the company is currently considering the possibility of launching a number of investment opportunities available in the markets, particularly in GCC states, where the company holds maximum credibility, thanks to its long experience therein. He added that the company is closely following up on the ongoing developments in the global financial markets and their impact on the realty market, in line with its plans for global expansion, which are based on development of strategic partnerships. Al-Mazaya also plans to work with leading investors to secure the highest possible returns for the greater good of the company and its shareholders.



Ibrahim Al-Soqabi

and its developments in a number of the region's countries, including Saudi Arabia and Dubai. Significantly large sales have been secured in a number of projects, including apartments in the first phase of Q-Line Project, the Q-Point Project in Dubai and at the Ritim Istanbul project in Turkey.

### Financial Statements

Al-Soqabi noted that the company has maintained a balanced growth in its operating performance and net profits as part of a well-calculated strategy based on smart objectives. The company's total assets reached KWD254.66 million by the end of Q1 against KWD242.07 million same period last year, a growth of 5.20 percent. Total shareholders' equity amounted to KWD 115.05 million by Q1 2017 from KWD111.46 million in 2016, with a growth of 2.83 percent. In addition to that, with deferred liabilities turned into sales revenues after the handover of completed residential units with clients paying advance in installments.

### First Quarter Milestones

Al-Mazaya Holding and Boubyan Bank have signed a partnership agreement whereby the Kuwaiti bank will provide credit facilities of up to KWD70,000 for property ownership solutions in Oman, Dubai and Turkey. Under the agreement, the bank will provide debt-free insurance with no salary transfer required, which means that credit is available for all, including those who do not have accounts at Boubyan.

The company started the execution of six new projects in 2017, including the com-



**NIAMEY:** This file photo shows a man looking at his hand as hundreds of people search gold in Kafa-Koira, south of Niamey. —AFP

# NIGER GOLD SEEKERS DIG DEEP FOR BULLION DREAMS

## SIMILARITY MIXES UP GOLD WITH PYRITE

**NIAMEY:** Arriving on motorcycles and donkeys, in cars, or even on foot, hundreds of people have flocked to a site in southern Niger hoping to strike gold. The news spread like wildfire: gold had apparently been discovered deep in Kafa-Koira, just south of the country's capital Niamey. "I came to try my luck," Kadri Issia says, with a pickaxe slung over his shoulder. He comes from Dan-Zama, some 10 kilometers north of the site.

Not far from an airport, a dried-up stream bed surrounded by thorny shrubs is teeming with fortune seekers. They use a run-down track winding through heavily-populated neighborhoods to reach the spot. In only two days, the normally empty site became a buzzing scene with street vendors selling food, fresh water, bags, ropes and digging tools to throngs of people. Minibuses and "Kabou-Kabou" motorcycle taxis shuttle people in from the centre of town. Policemen were even dispatched to secure the site. "I woke up Monday morning to discover crowds of people around my house," local resident Issaka Abdou said.

women use pickaxes, crowbars, buckets and machetes to chip away at the banks of the dry stream bed around a hundred meters long. They work under a scorching sun and the threat of landslides in search of gold deposits. Some dig with bare hands, others are equipped with metal detectors. Zakari Issa was one of the first to arrive. "I have been digging for two days but still haven't seen any gold," says the 42-year-old, with a strained look as he hollers up from a hole around two meters deep.

Nearby, Hassana, a young mother, sifts tiny ochre stones using a plate. "These sacks might contain gold. We will take them home to sift carefully," says the father of Ali, a teenager who watches over reserves of water and little bags of sand from a freshly-dug hole. At the other end of the site, two large men hit rocks with a crowbar. "If we find gold, I will buy myself a motorcycle," says a third man, handing out tea and cigarettes.

### Gold, or pyrite?

"I found some!" a 50-year-old suddenly shouts out and quickly slips a tiny piece of yellow-colored stone into his pocket. It might be gold, or it might be iron pyrite, commonly

known as fool's gold, a geologist tells AFP. Novices often get the minerals mixed up because of their similarity. Believing in their luck, many people continue to haul sacks of gravel into town in small trucks. A few days later, hundreds of gold seekers turned their efforts to nearby hills where a gold nugget was said to have been found, a motorcycle driver said.

Artisanal gold mining sites are common in Niger, where gold is extracted on an industrial scale in western parts of the country near Burkina Faso. Thousands of people from Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal have been scouring mining sites in the region since the 1990s. In February, the government shut down another site in the desert in the northeastern Djado region which was discovered in 2014 and drew more than 20,000 people from Niger, Chad, Libya and Sudan, according to local officials.

Authorities said they closed the Djado site for security reasons, citing terrorism and armed robbery on the frontier between Chad and Libya. The government promised to reopen it but also granted an exploration license for the site to the government-owned mining company. —AFP

### Hot sun, landslide threat

More than 1,000 mostly young men and

**Al Jawhara**

Double Your Chances to Win

250,000 125,000 5,000

Double your chances to win with NBK Al-Jawhara account. Maintain your balance and gain more chances of winning! Terms and conditions apply.



## NBK AL-JAWHARA ACCOUNT HOLDER WINS KD 125,000 MONTHLY DRAW

**KUWAIT:** NBK Al-Jawhara account holder Bader Naser Al-Muaili has won the KD 125,000 monthly Al-Jawhara Account draw. NBK announced the winner live on Marina FM during the 'Dewaniya' show 25 April 2017 and in the presence of Commerce and Industry representative Abdulaaziz Ashkanani. Winner Al-Muaili was contacted live on air to receive the exciting news. "NBK helps our customers' dreams come true with mega prizes like the Al-Jawhara Account draws," said Homoud Al-Nasrallah, Assistant Area Manager, Consumer Banking Group at National Bank of Kuwait. "Anyone can open an Al-Jawhara Account and earn chances to win as much as KD 250,000!"

Al-Jawhara account holders are automatically entered into draws for the KD 5,000 weekly, KD 125,000 monthly and KD 250,000 quarterly grand prizes. Every KD 50 deposited into your Al-Jawhara account gives you a chance to be the next lucky winner. Customers must have a minimum opening balance of KD 400 and a maximum of up to KD 500,000. If no withdrawal or transfers occur in the account during the required period, customers will get an additional 1 extra chance for each KD 50 held in the account.

"I am delighted and surprised at winning the Al-Jawhara Account monthly prize of KD 125,000," said Al-Muaili. "But I'm not surprised at the great customer care by NBK. National Bank of Kuwait always puts its customers first and rewards their loyalty and confidence." The National Bank of Kuwait offers a variety of cash prizes and rewards as part of its long term focus on building lasting relationships with customers.

## ZERO-PROFIT RATE FOR 5 YEARS ON LAND CRUISER, CAMRY FOR KFH CUSTOMERS

**KUWAIT:** Group Deputy General Manager Products at Kuwait Finance House (KFH) Mohammed Ghandour said that the bank had launched a campaign on Toyota Land Cruiser 2016-2017 and Toyota Camry 2017 with unprecedented privileges to customers. This campaign offers customers zero-profit rate for 5 years and 5 years unlimited mileage warranty, indicating the campaign witnessed huge customers' turnout and remarkable success.

He added in a press release that KFH is keen on constantly offering new benefits and privileges to its customers, while solidifying ties with one of the high-profile car dealerships; Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons. This campaign was launched as part of KFH strategy to support customers and to reiterate the bank's prestigious status in the local market, especially in the car financing field.

It also reflects KFH unremitting efforts in revitalizing the market and



Mohammed Ghandour

strengthening relationships with car dealerships for the best interest of customers. Ghandour affirmed KFH endeavors to diversify offers and widen customers' choices by providing them with different car makes to encompass Sedan, SUVs etc. to meet different customers segments.

## BURGAN BANK TO ANNOUNCE WINNER OF IT'S AL-THURAYA SALARY ACCOUNT MONTHLY DRAW

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank will soon be announcing the lucky winner of its Al-Thuraya salary account. The winner will be granted a Nissan Patrol SUV. The draw rewards new and existing customers who transfer their salary to Burgan bank a chance to win a Nissan Patrol SUV every month.

The draw is part of Burgan Bank's approach of rewarding loyal customers with higher chances of winning while encouraging new customers to benefit from the bank's unique offerings. With the monthly draw, every KD 10 available in the account provides the customer a chance to win.

The Al-Thuraya account's features range from the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and any other major currencies, access to account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards and much more. The account has been further developed in response to offering more benefits and increasing chances to win.





# CONSUMER DEMAND FEARS KNOCK STOCKS

**LONDON:** Falls in iPhone and US car sales helped beat European stock markets back from 20-month highs yesterday while the dollar inched up as investors priced in a greater chance of further tightening of US monetary policy next month. Falls in the price of copper and iron ore fed in to a broadly flatter global mood and Wall Street was set to open lower, adding to a run of steady losses since the settling of nerves over French elections a week ago. The surprise fall in Apple's iPhone sales in the first quarter and drops in units sold by Ford and General Motors added to nerves about the durability of US growth

after a batch of shakier economic data last month. "These numbers point to US consumers becoming more cautious and do seem like a source of some of the weakness today," said Andy Sullivan, a portfolio manager with GL Asset Management UK in London. "Autos, tech and basic resources are leading Europe lower." By 1134 GMT, the STOXX 600 index of leading European shares was down 0.15 percent. France's CAC 40 and Germany's DAX fell 0.25 and 0.1 percent respectively while the resource-heavy FTSE 100 dipped 0.3 percent. After a mixed Asian session, with

a number of major markets closed, the MSCI global share index was marginally lower on the day. US futures dipped by 0.1-0.2 percent. Since December, the US Federal Reserve has finally begun to deliver on long-disappointed expectations of a steady rise in borrowing costs and an increase in official rates in June is now 65 percent priced in by markets, according to Reuters data. But economic numbers in the past month have been less convincing, and the latest gains for global share prices look as much the product of an improving recovery in Europe as the US-

based optimism that dominated the end of last year. That raises the question, ahead of the Fed's May policy decision later, of how much the world's largest economy is capable of stomaching tighter monetary conditions without a boost from tax cuts or new public spending. Satoshi Okagawa, senior global markets analyst for Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation in Singapore, said the weak US auto sales could make market participants wary of actively buying the dollar against the yen for now. "Concerns about geopolitical risks such

as North Korea had weighed on the dollar against the yen recently ... But the focus is shifting to whether the (strength) of US economic fundamentals is for real," he said. "There is more data coming up including the jobs data, so those need to be watched closely," he added, referring to the US nonfarm payrolls report due on Friday. The dollar index, which tracks the greenback against a basket of trade-weighted peers, rose 0.1 percent to 99.069. It gained around 0.2 percent against the yen and the euro on the day but remained below highs hit over the past week. —Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report						
Wednesday 03 May 2017						
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low	
Price Index	▲ 39.33	6,798.73	6,759.40	6,823.73	6,755.02	
Weighted Index	▲ 0.70	405.72	405.02	407.88	404.13	
KSX 15	▲ 2.54	915.72	913.18	918.46	910.04	
Trades						
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last Change
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	61	▲ 0.0
IPG	400	400	9,746	3,898	3	▲ 10.0
NAPESCO	1,480	1,440	3,619	5,296	6	▲ 20.0
ENERGYH	44.5	41.5	135,404	5,926	13	▲ 2.0
GPI	45.0	44.0	1,769,090	78,628	68	▲ -1.0
ABAR	89	89	11,000	979	7	▲ 0.0
Oil & Gas			1,928,829	94,727	97	▲ 10.24
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	305	▲ 0.0
BPCC	580	580	3	2	1	▲ 10.0
ALKOUT	680	680	100,000	68,000	1	▲ -20.0
ALQURAIN	335	330	32,225	10,769	9	▲ -0.0
Basic Materials			132,228	78,771	11	▲ -4.20
KCEM	520	485	5,012	2,431	4	▲ 15.0
CABLE	440	440	42,101	18,524	11	▲ 0.0
SHIP	230	226	2,520	570	2	▲ 2.0
PCEM	970	960	49,202	47,234	4	▲ 10.0
PAPER	325	300	9,805	2,929	4	▲ -0.0
MRC	76	76	30	2	1	▲ 5.0
ACICO	290	290	2,359	684	1	▲ 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	208	▲ -0.0
KBMMK	136	136	295	40	1	▲ -10.0
NICBM	214	204	3,010	614	2	▲ -0.0
EQUIPMENT	63	59	4,174,402	255,187	84	▲ 2.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	84	▲ -0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	95	▲ -0.0
SALBOOKH	64	63	170,080	10,885	6	▲ 1.0
AGLTY	630	620	288,269	181,365	24	▲ 0.0
EDU	300	300	28,100	8,430	1	▲ 30.0
CLEANING	50	49.0	798,636	39,525	20	▲ -0.0
KGL	66	64	184,900	12,081	10	▲ 2.0
KPCP	170	154	59	10	5	▲ -10.0
HUMANSOFT	3,940	3,780	275,032	1,061,624	19	▲ 0.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	140	▲ -0.0
GFC	63	59	59,300	3,577	7	▲ -3.0
MAYADEEN	27.5	27.0	4,252,748	115,966	63	▲ 0.5
CGC	570	560	11,364	6,365	7	▲ 10.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	96	▲ -0.0
UPAC	710	710	5	4	1	▲ 50.0
ALAFCCO	280	255	1,103,721	285,513	42	▲ 11.0
MUBARRAD	79	79	10	1	1	▲ 2.0
LOGISTICS	70	69	53,004	3,707	3	▲ 0.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	92	▲ -0.0
GCEM	79	77	1,556,381	119,842	24	▲ 1.0
QIC	87	86	80,000	6,880	4	▲ -2.0
FCEM	84	84	230,000	19,320	2	▲ 1.0
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	100	▲ -0.0
SPEC	87	87	144,550	12,576	14	▲ 0.0
Industrials			13,524,695	2,215,887	367	▲ 11.26
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	188	▲ -0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	40	▲ -0.0
PAPCO	110	110	20	2	1	▲ 8.0
CATTL	208	204	16,245	3,315	10	▲ 20.0
DANAH	87	84	2,592,910	220,468	92	▲ -2.0
FOOD	2,500	2,500	10	25	1	▲ 100.0
Consumer Goods			2,608,185	223,810	104	▲ 22.27
MHC	335	330	24,001	7,920	2	▲ 25
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	1,100	▲ -0.0
YIACO	210	200	17,932	3,621	10	▲ 10
Health Care			41,933	11,542	12	▲ 64.31
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	1,320	▲ -0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	250	▲ -0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	67	▲ -0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	22.5	▲ -0
EYAS	420	420	10	4	1	▲ 20
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	192	▲ -0
QULAFJEL	128	124	220,256	27,557	24	▲ 2
MUNTAZHAT	81	81	71,500	5,792	3	▲ -0
JAZEERA	530	495	68,729	34,355	17	▲ -20
SOOR	126	124	47,989	6,016	23	▲ 2
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	124	▲ -0
ALRAI	144	140	578,234	82,288	30	▲ -1
ZMAH	59	57	161,017	9,338	16	▲ -6
Mezzan	1,000	1,000	11,786	11,786	2	▲ 10
Consumer Services			1,159,521	177,136	116	▲ -0.32
ZAIN	440	425	4,791,149	2,060,969	97	▲ -5
OOREDOO	1,240	1,200	7,329	8,929	6	▲ 1,240
HITSTELEC	45.5	44.0	737,606	32,897	40	▲ -0.0
VIVA	870	840	128,424	109,853	50	▲ 30
Telecommunications			5,664,508	2,212,648	193	▲ 12.15
NBK	680	670	949,256	645,033	26	▲ -0
GBK	248	244	251,662	62,169	12	▲ -4
CBK	385	370	2,159	801	4	▲ 385
ABK	310	300	21,000	6,500	4	▲ 300
ALMUTAHED	425	420	1,605	682	2	▲ -20
KIB	250	248	1,311,453	325,637	26	▲ 20
BURG	340	320	2,611,134	865,315	59	▲ 35
KFIN	500	495	825,835	410,963	39	▲ -5
BOUBYAN	405	400	950,448	380,248	35	▲ -5
AUB	218	214	2,578,500	552,047	42	▲ -214
ITHMR	49.0	48.0	7,096,206	343,518	123	▲ 1
WARBANK	250	246	278,877	69,064	77	▲ -0
Banks			16,876,135	3,661,977	449	▲ -1.55
KINS	238	238	5,000	1,190	1	▲ -0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	550	▲ -0.0
AINS	495	495	15	7	1	▲ 495
WINS	91	91	50	5	1	▲ 91
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	194	▲ -0.0
FTI	60	60	218,254	13,095	9	▲ 60
WETHAQ	54	53	6,250	333	6	▲ 5.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	355	▲ -0.0
Insurance			229,569	14,630	18	▲ 1054.24



TOKYO: A worker carries a cardboard box in front of an electronic stock indicator of a securities firm in Tokyo. —AP

## CHINA'S HNA GROUP NOW BIGGEST SHAREHOLDER IN DEUTSCHE BANK

**SHANGHAI:** Chinese conglomerate HNA Group has become the largest shareholder in Germany's biggest lender Deutsche Bank after raising its stake to nearly 10 percent, according to a regulatory filing. HNA Group, an aviation and shipping group, leapfrogged US management giant BlackRock after its holding in Deutsche Bank reached 9.92 percent, worth 3.4 billion euros (\$3.7 billion), according to the US public filing this week. BlackRock held a stake of 5.88 percent in the European banking giant as of April. HNA has been on a buying spree of overseas assets from hotels to airlines even though the Chinese government has curbed acquisitions in foreign assets over concerns about the weakening yuan. Deutsche was hit with heavy fines last year, as well as battling headwinds from low interest rates, tougher banking regulation and a massive restructuring plan that will see the bank withdraw from some business areas. The bank suffered a 1.4-billion-euro loss in 2016, but

it reported strong first quarter results last week. But HNA invested in the firm as it believes the shares of the bank are "substantially undervalued and is an attractive investment", according to the filing. HNA just last month agreed to buy an \$8 billion stake in Rio de Janeiro's airport from the corruption-tainted Brazilian firm Odebrecht. It also announced in October that it would acquire a 25 percent stake in international hotel operator Hilton Worldwide Holdings, not long after announcing it would buy the aircraft leasing business of US-based CIT Group Inc. for \$10 billion. The company purchased Brazil's third largest airline Azul in August last year, a deal that followed a July announcement that it had made a successful \$1.5 billion offer for Swiss airline catering company Gategroup. In May last year, the company bought a 13 percent stake in Virgin Australia airline and also acquired a share of Portuguese national airline TAP.—AFP

## TORONTO HOUSE PRICES, NEW LISTINGS SURGE BUT SALES DIP

**OTTAWA:** Toronto home prices and new listings surged in April from a year earlier while sales fell, the Toronto Real Estate Board said yesterday, suggesting the market may be starting to rebalance after new housing rules were put in place amid fears of a bubble in Canada's largest city. The industry group said the average home price rose 31.7 percent in April from a year earlier, while new listings rose 33.6 percent and sales dipped 3.2 percent. Toronto is the capital of the province of Ontario, which introduced a 15 percent tax on property purchases by foreign buyers as part of 16 measures designed to cool Toronto's red-hot housing market. While the real estate group said it was too early to say whether the surge in new listings was in response to the new rules or simply sellers responding to the recent surge in prices, the market will rebalance if the trend continues. "It was encouraging to see a very strong year-over-year increase in new listings. If new listings growth continues to outpace sales growth moving forward, we will start to see more balanced

market conditions," said Jason Mercer, TREB's director of market analysis. "It will likely take a number of months to unwind the substantial pent-up demand that has built over the past two years. Expect annual rates of price growth to remain well above the rate of inflation as we move through the spring and summer months," he added. Economists have said the foreign buyers tax should cool demand, even though there is little data showing that foreign buyers are a large part of the market, because it shows the government is determined to slow the market. The Toronto Real Estate Board said its data showed foreign buyers were not a major factor in the "Greater Golden Horseshoe" area surrounding Toronto. It said 2.3 percent of buyers between 2008 and 2017 had a mailing address outside of Canada. The share was 2.2 percent in 2016 and 2.6 percent for the January through April period in 2017. A survey of its members in the fall of 2016 showed 4.9 percent of deals between the fall of 2015 and the fall of 2016 were done by foreign buyers, the group said.—Reuters

## BNP PARIBAS GETS OFF TO A GOOD START IN 2017

**PARIS:** French bank BNP Paribas said yesterday it got off to a good start in 2017, with the strength of the financial markets enabling it to notch up "solid" results in the first quarter. It said in a statement its net profit rose by 4.4 percent to 1.89 billion euros (\$2.0 billion) in the period from January to March, beating analysts' expectations of a figure of around 1.6 billion euros. Revenues advanced by 4.2 percent to 11.3 billion euros, also outpacing expectations. "BNP Paribas delivered a very good performance this quarter," said chief executive Jean-Laurent Bonnafant. "The revenues of the operating divisions were significantly higher thanks to good business growth." The bank attributed that

growth to the strength of the financial markets. "Domestic markets reported sustained business activity... with good growth in loans to individual and corporate clients." The bank also reported "strong growth" in deposits and increased assets under management. "Costs were well under control and the cost of risk was down. The group's balance sheet is rock-solid," with the core Tier 1 capital ratio—a key gauge of financial strength—rising to 11.6 percent, BNP Paribas said. Investors appeared to welcome the results, with BNP Paribas shares showing a gain of 0.4 percent on the Paris stock exchange yesterday, while the blue-chip CAC40 index was showing a loss of 0.3 percent.—AFP



## ETIHAD AIRWAYS STATEMENT ON ALITALIA'S APPLICATION FOR ADMINISTRATION

**E**tihad Airways said yesterday it was disappointed that despite its significant investments in Alitalia, the Italian airline had today entered extraordinary administration. James Hogan, President and Chief Executive Officer of Etihad Aviation Group, said, "We have done all we could to support Alitalia, as a minority shareholder, but it is clear this business requires fundamental and far-reaching restructuring to survive and grow in

future. Without the support of all stakeholders for that restructuring, we are not prepared to continue to invest. We therefore support the necessary decision of the Alitalia Board to apply for extraordinary administration.

"We are disappointed that despite Etihad's significant investments in Alitalia, alongside those of the other shareholders, the airline was unable to proceed in its current form." "The initial strategy developed by Alitalia at

the time of Etihad's investment and implemented from 2015 delivered significant improvements. However, new marketplace challenges, including greater low cost carrier competition and the impacts of terrorist events on tourism demand, meant further, deeper change was required.

"As a supportive investor, we have delivered on our commitments since taking our minority share. Our investment, alongside the

other shareholders, has helped to protect thousands of jobs over the last three years. We would like to thank the other shareholders, and the Italian Government, for their commitment as we have worked together since we took our shareholding. "Italy remains an important market for us and we will continue to work with Alitalia as a commercial partner alongside our own presence in Italy." Etihad Airways and Alitalia signed a transaction

implementation agreement in August 2014, which resulted in a €1,722 million investment by Etihad and other Italian shareholders to restructure the Italian airline. The airline said all guests with Etihad bookings on Alitalia, or vice versa, should proceed with their travel plans as normal, as it is expected that Alitalia will proceed with flight operations. Etihad will communicate promptly and directly with its affected guests if that situation changes.

## OOREDOO OFFERS SHAMEL PLANS FOR 50 PERCENT OFF

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo, Kuwait's fastest network, announced an exclusive offer that gives customers all the benefits of Shamel plans for half the price when they commit for a period of 24 months. The plans

Exceptional discounts on Shamel with unlimited calls

Ooredoo

50% OFF

include unlimited local calls, unlimited internet and free roaming packs that range from 12 to 24. The discounted plans range between KD 10 to KD 45 per month.

The offer stems from Ooredoo's core values of caring, connecting and challenging, as the company aims to enrich customers' lives through telecommunication technology. Ooredoo's plans aim to complement the lifestyle of customers based on their usage and needs. The plans are also available for customers who commit for 12 months with a 25 percent discount.

The plans additionally include a number of Shamel's exclusive features, such as Ooredoo subscribers can now enjoy the privilege of freezing their contract for up to 3 months a year when they travel, without worrying about paying bills for months that they don't use. Additionally, Ooredoo now allows customers to transfer contracts to other customers even during the contract period, with no penalties or extra fees. All Shamel subscribers in the plans included in the offer can enjoy unlimited calls, and customers with plans that have limited internet can enjoy data rollover, to ensure that they are making full use of their internet package.

## X-CITE LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN WITH AMAZING DAILY DEALS

**KUWAIT:** X-cite by Alghanim Electronics, the largest electronics retailer in Kuwait, is proud to announce its biggest campaign of the year, offering amazing savings and unbeatable prices that customers won't find anywhere else. Loyal to its tradition of giving back to its esteemed customers by launching the most gratifying promotions.

This time X-cite is offering direct rewards to all customers with unbeatable offers unseen in Kuwait by offering discounts on a wide range of electronics and home appliances from the world's most beloved brands, in addition to daily killer deals with crazy discounts up to 70 percent off.

The main challenge will be keeping track of the incredible offers available throughout X-cite's 18 showrooms and online store. Customers who don't want to miss those deals should follow their website [xcite.com](http://xcite.com) and social media channels where the daily deals will be announced; @xcitealghanim on Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat and Facebook: XcitebyAlghanim.

This exceptional campaign will run until May 25, so customers are highly encouraged to use this window of opportunity by fulfilling their electronic needs while benefiting from outstanding savings and exclusive deals.

## AIRBNB, SAN FRANCISCO REACH DEAL ON RENTAL REGISTRATIONS

**SAN FRANCISCO:** San Francisco and Airbnb reached a deal Monday in a lawsuit stemming from San Francisco's efforts to try to prevent the short-term rental website from including housing units that violate city rules restricting who can list properties and for how long. Critics complain Airbnb's business model encourages landlords to take already scarce rentals off the market. Supporters say they couldn't live in San Francisco without the extra money made in rentals.

City officials responded by allowing owners and tenants to rent out their places for short periods, but under strict conditions aimed at protecting the city's housing supply.

And they required residents to register their units to help officials monitor their compliance. Monday's settlement came in a lawsuit filed by Airbnb that sought to block a city ordinance that threatened the company with fines up to \$1,000 for every booking it completed for a unit not registered with the city.

Under the deal, residents will have to provide their registration number in order to list a rental on the website. The company will provide a monthly list of all San Francisco listings to the city, so officials can verify that units are registered. Airbnb will deactivate listings that the city says are invalid. "This settlement protects our neighborhoods and will help prevent our precious housing stock from being illegally turned into hotels at the expense of evicted or displaced tenants," City Attorney Dennis Herrera said.

Airbnb said in a statement that the agreement "puts in place the systems and tools needed to help ensure our community is able to continue to share their homes." Airbnb - the world's largest short-stay online rental company - is based in San Francisco. The city requires residents who list units on the site to limit the length of stays to less than 30 nights at a time. Residents can rent out their units when not present there for a maximum of 90 nights in a year. — AP



**BRUSSELS:** European Union chief Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier speaks during a media conference at EU headquarters in Brussels yesterday. — AP

## BARNIER SAYS 'NO PUNISHMENT' IN BREXIT FINANCIAL DEMANDS

**BRUSSELS:** EU Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier denied Thursday that the bloc's financial demands from Britain for leaving were "punishment" but warned against the "illusion" that Brexit would be painless. Barnier, who was unveiling his negotiating plans for two years of talks with Britain, also urged London to start talks as soon as possible and said that "the clock is ticking." "There is no punishment, there is no Brexit bill, the financial settlement is only about settling the accounts," Barnier told a news conference.

He was speaking after London rejected a report that Brussels could seek 100 billion euros from London as the price of meeting

financial commitments from its four-decade membership. Barnier, a former European Commissioner and French government minister, said there was no set sum but that it would be calculated using a "methodology". But amid a row with London over reports of a disastrous dinner between

British Prime Minister Theresa May, European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker and Barnier last week, Barnier said London should not believe Brexit would be easy. "Some have created the illusion that Brexit will have no material impact on our lives or that negotiations can be concluded quickly," he said. — AFP



## TAMDEEN GROUP SIGNS WITH MOURATOGLLOU TENNIS ACADEMY

**KUWAIT:** Tamdeen Group, Kuwait's leading mixed-use property developer, which is developing the upcoming, state-of-the-art Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex, has signed on the France-based Mouratoglou Tennis Academy to establish a world-class tennis coaching facility in the country. The academy is one of the most sought-after and successful tennis academies in the world, rated according to the caliber of its alumni of distinguished tennis players.

In the presence of Sheikh Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, President of Kuwait Tennis Federation and Mohammed Jassim Khalid Al-Marzouq, Chairman of Tamdeen Group, the agreement was signed between Patrick Mouratoglou, Founder & President, Mouratoglou Tennis Academy and Ahmed Sarawi, CEO, Tamdeen Shopping Centers Co.

Sheikh Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah said: "There is tremendous sporting talent in Kuwait whose potential is yet to be fully harnessed. It is my firm belief that our partnership with the Mouratoglou Tennis Academy will herald a new wave of tennis players from Kuwait and the wider region as we nurture home-grown talent to take their place on the global tennis stage."

The academy partnership, along with the Kuwait Tennis Federation (KTF), will see Patrick Mouratoglou spearhead the program. The Kuwait academy, scheduled to open in 2019, will be his first international facility outside of France. The



tennis complex is an integral part of Tamdeen Group's expansion project, which will feature several new to the market retail brands and a signature five-star hotel. There will be a seamless relationship between the mall, the tennis facility and the hotel. Mohammed Jassim Khalid Al-Marzouq said: "Tennis is a sport which Kuwait excels in and by developing world class tennis facilities, including our partnership with Mouratoglou Tennis Academy, we are committing to the development of the sport in the country. This is indeed a momentous occasion for all Kuwaitis as it paves the way for our country to become one of the most sought-after destinations for tennis."

Under Mouratoglou's guidance who has been Serena Williams' coach since 2012, the academy will bring highly experienced coaches, nutrition

experts and top facilities to the region. He has enabled players, including Serena, to win 10 grand slam titles, 2 Olympic golds, 3 WTA Tour championships and 14 premier titles.

At Mouratoglou Tennis Academy's original outpost in France, over 7,500 matches are played by students annually. Last year it enrolled 145 students across 35 nationalities who not only received intense training but also a rigorous academic education. The academy is also a world leader in organizing tennis camps. In 2016, over 2,800 young players from 45 different nationalities trained at the academy. Students from the academy also get the opportunity to become professional players and, or graduate from an American University.

Patrick Mouratoglou remarked: "The facilities and playing conditions at Kuwait's Sheikh Jaber Al-Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah International Tennis Complex will be on par with the best in the world and will merit coaching of the highest standards. I believe that our partnership with Tamdeen Group and the Kuwait Tennis Federation will give rise to a new breed of tennis champions from the region and I look forward to eventually seeing them play in the grand slams."

The partnership between Tamdeen Group and Mouratoglou Tennis Academy in addition to the support and collaboration granted by the Kuwait Tennis Federation will help cement Kuwait's position in the global sporting arena and contribute to a diversified economy.

## KUWAIT INVESTMENT COMPANY HOLDS 57TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Investment Company held its 57th ordinary general assembly yesterday at its premises, which was attended by 83.7 percent of the shareholders. During the assembly cash dividends of 7 percent of the nominal value of the shares was approved, which equals 7 fils per share. The agenda of the meeting was also approved. Bader Al-Subaiee, Chief Executive Officer, Kuwait Investment Co. reviewed the most important event for the Company and the markets in general that took place during the past fiscal year.

"The rapid global transformations in 2016 were opposite to all expectations, which forced



us to put different scenarios to overcome the almost daily market volatility. Our main policy was based on dividing risks through verifying the investment geographically in the GCC and the Middle East markets, in addition to planning entering new European markets. This resulted in achieving good profits at the end of the year," stressed Al-Subaiee during the press conference that followed the general meeting.

The Company achieved KD 4 million (USD 14 million) net profit in 2016 at a profit of 7 fils per share comparing to KD 1.51 million at a profit of 2.75 fils per share for the previous year. "The managed assets by the Company by the end of 2016 reached KD 2.1 billion, while the owned assets reached KD 267 million, and the property rights made KD 125 million," he added. According to Al-Subaiee, the Moody's Analytics changed the rating of the Kuwait Investment Co. from negative future view into stable and keeping its credit rating on Ba2.

"This assures the investors and shareholders



that the credit position of the Company is strong and reflects the successful strategy with a profitable model of work. We are reviewing this strategy to keep pace with economic changes in the region in order to open new portfolios, through investing in fixed-income financial instruments, in addition to expanding with real estate portfolios and entering project with stable income," he explained.

The Company is re-expanding in real-estate investments. "We look for new investments in Europe, and particularly in the real estate sector in Germany. We aim to grab investment chances that serve the strategy of the Company and the interest of the shareholders. The future strategy of the company aims to expand its investments in the region to benefit from the improvement of the markets and to bring the profits to the previous levels.

### Stable profitability

"The Company is back to its stable profitability and cash dividends after a phase of oscillation of its financial results to overcome the economic challenges in general, and the investment companies sector in particular. The Company's performance has improved and the losses have

decreased," stated Al-Subaiee.

The Company's share profit reached 2.5 times of the profit in 2015. "Local portfolios managed by the Company achieved returns of 5.7 percent, while all the weigh indicators were negative. Furthermore the performance of the international investment portfolios of the Company also increased by 6.07 percent comparing to Morgan Stanley Capital International World Index, which concluded the year with an increase of 5.32 percent. The real estate portfolios of the Company have increased by 8.43 percent, which means that our distributing of assets is very good. These results indicate that the performance will improve in 2017," he pointed out.

Regarding the investment sector in Kuwait Al-Subaiee said that the obstacles are still there due to the slowly growing economy. "The government should adopt the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), which was proposed by the Union of Investment Companies last year. This should be a successful solution to overcome the investment sector crisis. Also the role of the private sector in the development projects should be increased to limit the depending on the government, and to give an opportunity for this sector to buy the public companies," he concluded.



## JAZEERA AIRWAYS RECEIVES BEST 'ON TIME PERFORMANCE IN 2016'

**KUWAIT:** Jazeera Airways, the first private airline in Kuwait and the Middle East, was recently ranked #1 in the region and #2 on a grand global scale for their 2016 performance on overall punctuality. The airline topped with an average On-Time performance (OTP) of 92.6 percent, in the annual OAG Punctuality League - the industry's most comprehensive annual ranking of on-time performance (OTP) for the world's airlines and airports.

The accreditation was judged based on On-Time percentage of flights that depart or arrive within 15 minutes of airline schedule, by the international leader in air travel intelligence. The OAG Punctuality League is derived from the most comprehensive airline schedules database in the world and is the most transparent global benchmark for the world's airlines and airports. OAG leverages the world's largest network of air travel data to provide accurate, timely, actionable digital information and applications to the world's airlines, airports, government agencies and travel-related service companies.

"We are extremely proud of this achievement as being recognized among the best in class on a

global scale and as an unchallenged regional leader is testament to our commitment to maximum customer satisfaction and operational excellence. Our legacy is a journey of strategic turning points and noteworthy recognitions thanks to our dynamic and customer-centric workforce", said Mr Rohit Ramachandran, Chief Executive Officer at Jazeera Airways.

"Reaching for an undisputed stance as industry leaders in OTP is a key business objective for Jazeera Airways, as punctuality in travel is vitally important to ensure our customers enjoy a comfortable, reliable and worry-free experience to their destinations. We owe our continuous industry recognition to the excellence and outstanding contribution of our immensely dedicated operational team, who works tirelessly to optimize timely efficiency across the board," added Mr Ramachandran.

Since its inception in 2004, the national airline strengthened its footprint by currently flying to over 15 destinations and continues to serve as a beacon of excellence by initiating products and schemes that suit its traveler's needs.



## MERCEDES-BENZ PRESENTS THE NEW GLA

**KUWAIT:** The new GLA is turning heads across the world, and the Middle East is no exception. The latest model of this exceptional compact SUV sees an upgraded visual accentuation in both interior and exterior design, plus new and updated equipment lines. The new GLA is characterized by its sporty dynamic design idiom, light-footed handling and extensive individualization options.

As the first compact SUV from Mercedes-Benz, it breathed fresh air in its market segment where it has established itself as a major player. "The new facelift gives the GLA a more powerful appearance and off-road prominence. Among our range of compact cars, the GLA's impressive off-road capabilities stand out. It is the ideal companion to those seeking to complement an active lifestyle with a sporty driving style," commented Lennart Mueller-Teut, Head of Marketing and Communications, Mercedes-Benz Cars Middle East.

### Expressive design, technical performance

The GLA's progressive design and striking SUV genes are enhanced by the off-road comfort suspension (with a body of 30 millimeters) that results in higher ground clearance and higher seat position, thereby significantly improving its off-road capabilities. Modified bumpers, additional light-alloy wheels and the new alluring color "canyon beige" characterize the 2017 model at first glance.

### Impressive interior values

The interior of the new GLA, styled with high-quality materials and excellent workmanship, is enhanced by new seat covers, trim parts and chromed control panels. The Luxury Exclusive Package features extraordinary luxury seats with black leather in a buffalo look. The trim parts used here are a choice of trapezium-grain aluminum, light brown satin-finish poplar wood, and high-gloss brown walnut. An especially exclusive offering is the matte black ash wood and AMG trim parts in carbon fiber.

The 360-degree camera, an exclusive offering in this market segment, records the car's direct surroundings, and depicts them either as a full-image or in seven different split-screen views on the media display. Among them is also a virtual top view of the car, produced by data from four cameras: the front, reverse and one for each of the exterior mirrors.

The comprehensive range of standard equipment include the LED High Performance head-

lamps (replacing the current bi-xenon headlamps in the front and rear) that illuminate brilliantly and are characterized by a color temperature similar to daylight, thereby relieving strain on the eyes during journeys at night. In the rear, brake lights and indicators are controlled in three intensities: full brightness by day, a medium level for driving during the night and a lower level when at a standstill.

### Safety first

Safety is a top priority at Mercedes-Benz and the GLA's technical capabilities reassert this commitment. Standard offerings include the "Active Brake Assist," designed to warn drivers of insufficient distance to vehicles ahead, and when necessary, deliver situation-appropriate braking. Furthermore, if the system detects a lack of responsiveness from the driver, it initiates autonomous braking to prevent collision or minimize the consequences. Other standard safety-enhancing offerings include "ATTENTION ASSIST" which is capable of detecting typical signs of drowsiness via steering behavior and warns the driver of an imminent micro sleep.

### More comfort

The engineers at Mercedes-Benz made every effort to enhance the GLA's utility and practicality - this included integrating new features into the rear compartment. With the optional HANDS-FREE ACCESS, exclusive in this market segment, the boot lid can be opened and closed by foot movement, without the need to use hands or exert extra effort - accompanied by a warning signal.

Mercedes-AMG is continuing its model initiative with visual and technical enhancements to the GLA 45 4MATIC. Another distinguishing feature of the new Mercedes-AMG GLA 45 4MATIC is the sharpened front section. The front apron has been given a more dynamic shape, new air intake grilles, a front splitter insert in silver chrome plus flics in high-gloss black.

The twin louver on the AMG Twin Blade radiator grille is now in silver chrome, as are the inserts in the side sill panels. Available as an additional option are the multi-spoke 20-inch light-alloy wheels, which come in two color variants: either painted matte black with high-shine rim flange or painted titanium grey with a high-shine finish.

### Fine interior

The GLA's extensive upgrades extend to the



interior. Upgrades include the generously sized trim, extending over virtually the entire width of the car; its fundamental structure is painted matte with a high-gloss surface that bears AMG lettering. It is available in black/silver in conjunction with the Exclusive package or in black/red with the AMG Exclusive package (offered only in the Levant). The vehicle key and the E-Select lever now bear the AMG emblem as standard.

### 2.0-litre turbo engine

With a maximum output of 280 kW (381 hp) and 475 Nm maximum torque the Mercedes-AMG GLA 45 4MATIC is among the most powerful cars in its segment. A speed of 100 km/h is achieved from standstill in just 4.4 seconds. The extremely agile 2.0-litre four-cylinder turbo engine blends its thrilling performance and exemplary efficiency with another best: the power-to-swept-volume ratio of 141 kW (191 hp) marks a record for a series engine with four cylinders - it raises the AMG engine to the level of thoroughbred super sports cars.

On the road, the turbocharged AMG 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine thrills with rapid responses to accelerator movements, high torque, enormous flexibility and an emotional engine note. The exhaust system features an automatically controlled exhaust flap as standard. The intensity of the engine note changes according to the currently active AMG DYNAMIC SELECT driving mode.

### Shorter ratios

Agile and dynamic power transfer is made possible by the AMG SPEEDSHIFT DCT 7-speed sports transmission. Thanks to the shorter ratios selected in gears three to seven, the driver enjoys an even more appealing acceleration experience in all speed ranges. Together with optimized response and shift times, the closer ratio spread smoothes transitions when up shifting.

## MITEF ANNOUNCES MITEF ARAB STARTUP COMPETITION WINNERS

**KUWAIT:** All eyes were on Bahrain as the MIT Enterprise Forum (MITEF) for the Pan Arab Region announced the deserving winners of the 10th MIT Enterprise Forum Arab Startup Competition in a final award ceremony held at the Kingdom of Bahrain's International Circuit on April 27, 2017. The ceremony welcomed public figures, investors, media personnel and business entrepreneurs from across the globe.

This year's competition was organized in partnership with Community Jameel, a social enterprise organization that operates a wide range of initiatives which promote and contribute towards positive societal change and economic sustainability; Zain Group, a leading telecommunications innovator in eight markets across the Middle East and Africa; and Tamkeen, an organization tasked with developing Bahrain's private sector and positioning it as the key driver of economic development.

Prior to the final award ceremony, the 74 semi-finalists from 11 Arab countries underwent a round of training and presented their work over a three-day period from April 25th to the 27th to a jury that brought together some of the Arab world's key investors and business people. The winners selected by the jury from three tracks: Startups, Social Entrepreneurship and Ideas are:

### Ideas Track:

Winner: Blink App (Egypt) - \$15,000  
1st Runner up: SpicaTech Academy (Lebanon) - \$10,000  
2nd Runner up: Nano Green Hub (Egypt) - \$5,000

### Social Entrepreneurship Track:

Winner: Killim (Egypt) - \$50,000  
1st Runner Up: Mind Rockets (Jordan) - \$10,000  
2nd Runner up: Carpolo (Lebanon) - \$5,000

### Startups Track:

Winner: Money Fellows (Egypt) - \$50,000  
1st Runner up: Trukker (UAE) - \$10,000  
2nd Runner up: Riego (Lebanon) - \$5,000

Aside from the monetary rewards, the talented winners will also benefit from advanced training sessions, personal mentorship and guidance, as well as receiving a great deal of media coverage and excellent networking opportunities. During the ceremony, Hala Fadel, Chair of the board of MITEF Pan Arab said, "It is time to invest more in the infrastructure that helps young people to hone and develop their entrepreneurial ideas, stressing the importance of utilizing technological innovation towards the modernization and development of tools that enable entrepreneurs to create technological solutions. This will in turn contribute to the revitalization of the economy and encourage the inauguration of partnerships that can eventually transform into large institutions that will house impeccable talent and capacities with opportunities to grow and develop."

Fady Jameel, President of Community Jameel International, said: "We believe that investing in entrepreneurs and promoting the development of a strong ecosystem, alongside our partners, contributes to developing a stronger economy and providing opportunity through access of resources. Our collaborations allow us to provide critical support that entrepreneurs need to overcome challenges and succeed in today's market. Our involvement with MITEF Pan Arab has been an honor, and we remain committed to helping the next generation of young entrepreneurs achieve their aspirations." Zain Group CEO-Operations, Scott Gegenheimer said, "As a leading innovative technology company, we are acutely aware of the positive impact innovation can have on improving the quality of life of people everywhere. Identifying and advancing entrepreneurship and the generation of new ideas as early as possible is key to bringing new concepts to commercial reality and is a big part of the reason we support the MITEF Arab Startup Competition."

Gegenheimer added, "We believe the difference between companies and countries that will succeed into the long term, and those that underperform will be their access to and use of technology. Nurturing a culture of innovation is a fundamental requirement for sustainable growth and we extend whole-hearted congratulations to the semi-finalists and winners of this year's Competition. I'm confident that many of these teams will succeed in translating their ideas into successful projects."

Dr. Nasser Qaedi, Planning and Business Development Executive Director in Tamkeen said, "Our support for the competition stems from our belief in its ability to inspire entrepreneurs to challenge themselves and present their ideas in a healthy competitive environment, leading them to further development and expansion. We are also so proud to gather the best entrepreneurs from the Arab region, for them to learn from each other and from the global ecosystem. We insist on technology and innovation as one of the main drivers going forward for entrepreneurship in the Arab region."

This year's edition, which is of special importance as it celebrated the competition's 10th anniversary, registered years of success and excellence while serving generations of young Arabs and their creative entrepreneurial ideas. The competition has become a highly anticipated event that is associated with success. The Arab youth who have taken part over the years have been encouraged to innovate and take charge of their entrepreneurial ideas, receiving significant support and guidance throughout. The result, ten years later, is a renaissance of entrepreneurial initiatives, the proliferation of creative ideas and the adoption of those ideas by the public and private sectors in support of these exceptional young men and women in the Arab world.

## ALL-NEW FORD F-150 RAPTOR FEATURES SIX TERRAIN MODES

**KUWAIT:** Exclusively available now at Alghanim Auto, the all-new Ford F-150 Raptor features six terrain modes designed to handle the most demanding terrains. From off-road rock crawling and desert running to on-road sport mode, Raptor is ready for any type of driving. Here's a breakdown of each mode.

### Normal

For everyday on-road driving duties, normal mode is a perfect balance of excitement, comfort and convenience.

### Sport

Mountain passes are no longer just for Mustang, thanks to Raptor sport mode. For spirited on-road driving, sport mode increases throttle response and provides a sportier steering feel - along with quicker shifting. The transmission holds gears longer to keep you in the power band.

### Weather

When road conditions are less than ideal,

weather mode inspires confidence without compromising driving pleasure. Weather mode automatically engages 4 Auto. AdvanceTrac, throttle response and the shift schedule are optimized for greater confidence in slippery conditions.

### Mud/Sand

For tackling trails and other off-road treks, the mud/sand setting is your best friend. 4 High and the electronic locking differential automatically engage for driving over loose or soft ground, and optimized AdvanceTrac settings help Raptor keep its footing. Steering is set to comfort, which makes it easier to navigate along tight trails and over obstacles.

### Baja

Baja mode is where Raptor eclipses the competition. Designed for high-speed desert running, Baja mode places the vehicle in 4 High, AdvanceTrac is programmed to the least intrusive settings, and the throttle

map is adjusted for more linear power and improved engine response to give the hardcore off-road driver greater control. The transmission has quicker shifts and holds gears longer - keeping the vehicle in its power band.

### Rock Crawl

This setting is for intense off-road driving and rock climbing at low speeds. Rock crawl prompts the driver to place the vehicle in 4 Low, the electronic locking differential is automatically engaged and AdvanceTrac is set to the least intrusive settings for optimum rock-climbing ability. Throttle modulation and transmission response are optimized for greater control. Additionally, the front camera allows the driver to see what's right in front of the truck, and it can be kept on at speeds up to 24 km/h.

Along with the individual AdvanceTrac settings tied to drive modes, Raptor continues the Ford Performance tradition of allowing the driver to program the system's set-



tings to match conditions and skill level. The driver can reduce traction control but keep stability control on with a single press of the

electronic stability control button; or, by holding the button for five seconds, the driver can turn AdvanceTrac settings off.



# CHINA TO LAUNCH OWN ENCYCLOPEDIA TO RIVAL WIKIPEDIA

**SHANGHAI:** China plans to launch its own online encyclopedia next year, hoping to build a "cultural Great Wall" that can rival Wikipedia as a go-to information source for Chinese Internet users who Beijing fears are being corrupted by foreign influences. China is under pressure to write its own encyclopedia so it can guide public thought, according to a statement by the project's executive editor Yang Muzhi published last month on the website of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

He once listed Wikipedia, which is available in China, and Britain's Encyclopedia Britannica as

potential rivals and said the project aims to exceed them, according to an article he wrote late last year. The project, which will be under the guidance of the state-owned China Publishing Group, "must have Chinese characteristics," he wrote, adding it would be a "symbol of the country's cultural and technological development" and increase its soft power and international influence.

Unlike Wikipedia-and its Chinese version Baidu Baike-which are written by volunteers and are in a constant state of revision, the new project, which was approved in 2011, will be entirely written by

professionals. So far over 20,000 scholars and academics have been enlisted to compile the project, which aims to have more than 300,000 entries by its 2018 launch. The new encyclopedia will be based on a previous printed version, published in book form in 1993. A second edition, which can be accessed through a special terminal, was released in 2009. The newest version will be released online before being published in a bound edition. China has over 700 million internet users but a 2015 report by US think tank Freedom House found that the country had the most restrictive online use policies of 65 nations it

studied, ranking below Iran and Syria. It has maintained that its various forms of web censorship-collectively known as "The Great Firewall"-are necessary for protecting its national security.

Sites blocked due to their content or sensitivity, among them Facebook and Twitter, cannot be accessed in China without special software that allows users to bypass the strict controls. Beijing issued a new restriction for online freedoms, requiring Chinese Internet users to provide their real names when accessing online news sources. The new restriction will come into effect on June 1. —AFP

## QUEST DATA PROTECTION, KACE BUSINESS GAINS MOMENTUM

**Dubai:** Quest Software, a global systems management and security software provider, yesterday announced strong industry momentum for its Data Protection and KACE business (DP | KACE). The company unveiled a new solution, Quest VROOM, which combines the business's market-leading virtualization management and data protection software to empower IT and virtual administrators to proactively manage, monitor and protect data and applications across multi-hypervisor and hybrid virtual infrastructures.

The new solution headlines a period of strong momentum for the Quest DP | KACE business. Validating the success of its data protection business and its renewed focus on the channel, Quest has seen a 23% year-over-year growth in global channel bookings for its data protection solutions. Additionally, as customers increasingly move workloads to the cloud, the business has seen 179 percent growth in Azure usage for its Rapid Recovery data protection solution in the past six months.

Reinforcing the value of the Quest KACE solutions, more than seven million endpoints globally are now secured by Quest KACE products. Approximately 2.3 million endpoints have been configured for OS deployment using the KACE Systems Deployment Appliance, in the process assisting organizations with OS migrations and updates to corporate images and saving untold time for administrators.

Likewise, KACE customers have created more than 33 million Service Desk tickets using the KACE Systems Management Appliance, in the process helping organizations streamline IT asset management, secure network-connected devices, and service end-user systems more efficiently.

Together, these data points verify the value of the Quest DP | KACE business delivers in helping customers better manage and protect their evolving hybrid IT environments.

"As organizations deal with an increasingly complex mix of physical, virtual and

cloud-based systems, the need to better manage, monitor, and protect from the data center all the way to the endpoint is paramount," said Matt Vitale, Vice President of North American Sales, Data Protection and KACE. "Our robust portfolio of virtualization management, data protection and endpoint security solutions coupled with our commitment to our channel ecosystem ensures we are well positioned for success."

### Supercharging Virtualization Management

Despite the growing complexity of today's virtual environments, expectations are greater than ever for IT and virtual machine (VM) administrators to deliver high-performance applications with zero downtime, while also keeping expenses at a minimum. Quest VROOM addresses the increasing need for a solution that helps Hyper-V, VMware and cloud IT (Azure and AWS) admin meet these expectations by maximizing resources to accelerate the performance of an entire virtual infrastructure and optimize the application experience for end users, while proactively controlling license and hardware costs.

### Key features and capabilities include:

Improve user experience with end-to-end everything. Gain complete, uninterrupted visibility into VMware and Hyper-V environments with monitoring and management across the entire virtualization infrastructure stack. Organizations can protect and recover full systems, applications and data across physical, virtual and cloud deployments. Cut costs with capacity and resource management. Easily monitor and assess current workload capacity, identify shortfalls, analyze alternative scenarios, and plan for data center growth or additional virtualized workloads. Safely deploy additional virtual machines (VMs) by identifying available slots. Forecast exhaustion of resources in VMs and estimate purchasing requirements by modeling hardware changes.

## FACEBOOK ADDING 3,000 PEOPLE TO SCREEN OUT VIOLENT CONTENT

### FACEBOOK TO BUILD SAFE COMMUNITY

**WASHINGTON:** Facebook said yesterday it is hiring an extra 3,000 staff to root out violent content as the social media giant faces scrutiny for a series of killings and suicides broadcast on its platform. "If we're going to build a safe community, we need to respond quickly," chief executive Mark Zuckerberg said on his Facebook page. "We're working to make these videos easier to report so we can take the right action sooner-whether that's responding quickly when someone needs help or taking a post down."

The 3,000 new recruits, added over the coming year, will increase by two thirds the size of Facebook's community operations team, which currently numbers 4,500. Zuckerberg's announcement came a week after a 20-year-old Thai man broadcast live video on the world's most popular social media platform, showing him killing his baby daughter before committing suicide. The previous week, a US man dubbed the "Facebook Killer" fatally shot himself after three days of a frantic nationwide manhunt.

"We've seen people hurting themselves and others on Facebook-either live or in video posted later," Zuckerberg said. "It's heartbreaking, and I've been reflecting on how we can do better for our community." The additional reviewers will "help us get better at removing things we don't allow on Facebook like hate speech and child exploitation," he said. "And we'll keep working with local community groups and law enforcement who are in the best position to help someone if they need it-either because they're about to harm themselves, or because they're in danger from someone else."

Critics say the social network has been too slow to react to online violence, and questioned whether Facebook Live-a strategic area of development for the company-should be disabled, after several cases in which it was used to broadcast rapes. Zuckerberg said Facebook has been working on better technology that can identify



**SAN FRANCISCO:** In this file photo, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg speaks during the keynote address at the F8 Facebook Developer Conference in San Francisco. — AP

violent or inappropriate content-and that its efforts to screen for acts of violence appeared to be paying off. "Just last week, we got a report that someone on Live was considering suicide,"

he said. "We immediately reached out to law enforcement, and they were able to prevent him from hurting himself. In other cases, we weren't so fortunate." —AFP

# MICROSOFT HELPS CREATE THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

**KUWAIT:** Microsoft Corp. on Tuesday announced a set of educational products and services, inspired by teachers and students, including a new Windows experience-Windows 10 S—along with new experiences in Microsoft Teams for a modern collaborative classroom, new features in Minecraft and mixed reality that spark creativity, a range of Windows 10 S PCs for K 12 classrooms, and the perfect Windows 10 S device for college students-Surface Laptop.

### Windows 10 S

Windows 10 S is a new Windows experience streamlined for security and superior performance. With Windows 10 S, applications that teachers and students download come from the Windows Store where they are first verified for security, and then locally they each run in a safe "container" to ensure that Windows 10 S offers the power of full-featured applications, with experiences like the full version of Office 365, including all of the capabilities of Microsoft Word, Excel, OneNote and PowerPoint, among others.

With Windows 10 S, educators and students will have access to their favorite and most-used applications across STEM, learning tools, secure assessment tools, content publishers, interactive whiteboards and more. Microsoft Edge in Windows 10 S also makes it easier than ever for students to organize research and manage school projects with the new Tab Preview Bar. With the support for Windows Ink in Microsoft Edge, students can make notes directly on a web page and share them with a classmate.

Microsoft Edge is compatible with the sites educators and students frequently use. Microsoft's goal with Windows 10 S is to develop its open, vibrant partner-centric ecosystem. Device partners including Acer, ASUS, Dell, Fujitsu, HP, Samsung and Toshiba offer a range of new Windows 10 PCs for education today, starting at \$189 USD. In the coming months, these partners will also offer a range of Windows 10 S devices, from powerful and affordable Windows Ink and touch PCs to beautiful premium devices.



### Bringing Microsoft Teams to the classroom

Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint Online already allow students to co-author documents in real time. Coming to the Microsoft Store for Education later this year, new classroom experiences in Microsoft Teams take collaboration to a whole new level, and make Teams the digital hub for the classroom where teachers and students come to collaborate and learn. Together with OneNote Class Notebooks and new assignment and quiz experiences, teachers can easily distribute content, grade work and personalize learning, and communicate with students, parents and staff.

Teams also enables teachers to bring in rich and engaging content from the web, guest speakers and solutions from education partners like busuu, Canvas, Flipgrid and Kahoot! Most importantly, Teams helps students develop the communication and collaboration skills they'll need to be successful in the future.

### Code Builder for Minecraft

Teachers in more than 100 countries are using Minecraft: Education Edition to promote creativity and collaboration in the classroom. Minecraft has become a favorite resource with students and with educators who are using it to teach digital citizenship, inspire creative prob-

lem-solving and enable student-centered explorations across the curriculum. Microsoft is broadening the game's appeal further with Code Builder for Minecraft: Education Edition.

This new feature is designed to inspire students to learn the basics and the power of coding by combining the open worlds of Minecraft with popular learn-to-code platforms such as Tynker, ScratchX and a new open source platform from Microsoft called MakeCode. Players can move around, build and create in Minecraft by writing code. A one-year free trial of Minecraft: Education Edition and the Code Builder extension are available today for Windows 10 for schools around the world in the Microsoft Store for Education.

### Free offers for Teachers and Students

To make it easy and affordable to bring Windows 10, Office 365 for Education with Microsoft Teams and Minecraft to the classroom, Microsoft is offering teachers and students the following: New Windows 10 education PCs starting at \$189 USD. Free one-year subscription to Minecraft: Education Edition for new Windows 10 education PCs. Free Windows 10 S for all schools on any current Windows Pro PC. Free Microsoft Office 365 for Education with Microsoft Teams. Free trial of Microsoft Intune for Education.

Windows 10 S, Office 365 for Education with Microsoft Teams, Minecraft: Education Edition and Microsoft Intune for Education offer a complete solution for teachers and students.

### Surface Laptop

To bring the streamlined performance, simplicity and security of Windows 10 to university students, Microsoft is expanding the Surface family of devices with Surface Laptop. Available for preorder today in 20 countries, Surface Laptop is the perfect balance of portability, performance and elegance. Powered by Windows 10 S, Surface Laptop is engineered to start fast and stay fast with a 7th-generation Intel Core processor and up to 14.5 hours of battery life.1

Every detail is crafted to bring new form and function to the classic laptop design, drawing the user in. The vibrant 13.5-inch PixelSense Display is optimized for touch and inking for an immersive experience, and the optically bonded



Corning Gorilla Glass 3 makes it as durable as it is beautiful. The signature keyboard is covered in luxurious Alcantara material and features a quiet and responsive keyset, large precision trackpad, and soft palm rest for a new level of typing comfort. Surface Laptop is available in four rich tone-tone colors: Platinum, Graphite Gold, Burgundy and Cobalt Blue.

Surface Laptop starts at \$999 USD and will be available starting June 15. Customers can preorder Surface Laptop starting today in the US and Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom where available at Microsoft Store, microsoftstore.com and BestBuy.com. Surface Laptop will also be available in Canada and China later this year, and availability in other markets will be announced in the coming months.

### Bringing 3-D to classroom

With 3-D and Windows Mixed Reality, Microsoft is helping empower educators with a whole new set of tools to create curriculums for their students and peers. On Tuesday, Microsoft announced a new feature coming to Windows 10 this fall, called View Mixed Reality. This feature

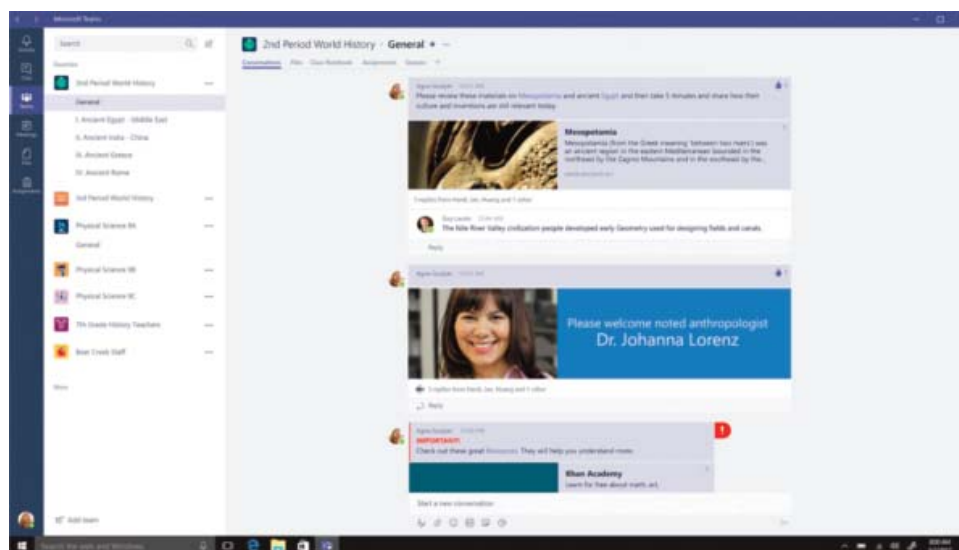
allows you to see 3-D content through your screen into the real world as Mixed Reality, using a simple RGB camera.

Microsoft also announced a new strategic partnership with Pearson, one of the largest education companies in the world, which is working to integrate 3-D and mixed reality into its secondary and university level curriculum. By the 2018 school year, Pearson will offer curriculum in health, commerce, history and STEM on Windows Mixed Reality devices.

### STEM Saturdays at Microsoft Store

Beginning Saturday, May 6, Microsoft Store locations across the US, Canada, Puerto Rico and Australia will host STEM Saturdays throughout May in all full-line locations in addition to the range of free programs year-round that empower students and educators by providing direct access to technology and hands-on learning.

STEM Saturdays brings Microsoft Education's pop-up classrooms to Microsoft Store and gives participants a hands-on experience building a sensor that measures the flexion and extension of a finger to learn about the anatomy of a human hand. Anyone, including teachers, students and parents, can attend STEM Saturdays workshops at a Microsoft Store every Saturday in May.





## TRUMP SCRAMBLING TO HEAD OFF HEALTHCARE DEFEAT

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump and his aides courted moderate Republican lawmakers yesterday on a proposal to overhaul the US healthcare system as the White House struggled to avoid another embarrassing defeat on a top legislative priority. As White House aides prepared for meetings and phone calls to persuade skeptical lawmakers on the healthcare bill, Republican House of Representatives Speaker Paul Ryan backed efforts to incorporate changes to the bill that would address concerns among party moderates over insurance coverage for people with pre-existing medical conditions. Republican moderates who are working on the amendment, Fred Upton, Billy Long and Greg Walden, will meet with Trump at the White House, a White House official said on condition of anonymity. "We're making progress," on the proposed changes, Ryan told the Hugh Hewitt radio show yesterday.

Any changes aimed at assuaging the concerns of moderates, however, could jeopardize the support of conservative members who want to keep the bill's costs down. The difficulty of placating the various Republican factions posed major hurdles for the White House, which is aiming for a vote in the House by the end of this week on the legislation to replace Democratic former President Barack Obama's 2010



US President Donald Trump

Affordable Care Act. Republicans control the White House and both chambers of Congress and the failure of the latest version of a bill to replace Obamacare would hobble Trump as he seeks to move on to other complex legislative initiatives including tax reform.

Trump, who promised during his election campaign to repeal Obamacare on Day One of his tenure, began making calls to lawmakers personally to save the legislation, Politico reported, citing two

unidentified sources. The first attempt at repealing Obama's signature domestic legislation failed in March when conservative Republicans objected that it looked too much like Obama's law. Millions more Americans acquired healthcare coverage under Obamacare, but Republicans have long wanted to overturn the law, viewing it as government overreach and complaining it has driven up healthcare costs.

The revamped healthcare legislation took a hit on Tuesday when Upton said he would not support the measure. He said he opposed an amendment, backed by members of the conservative Freedom Caucus, that allows states to waive pre-existing illnesses as part of essential benefits coverage. "I told leadership I cannot support this bill with this provision in it," Upton told WHTC News radio. "There are a good number of us that have raised real red flags and concerns." Mick Mulvaney, Trump's budget director, told Fox News there could be a breakthrough on the bill.

### Kimmel Care

The Obamacare provisions that force insurers to charge sick and healthy people the same rates have been popular with Americans, and Trump has

promised to retain such protections. The issue received more attention after late night talk show host Jimmy Kimmel tearfully revealed on Monday evening that his newborn son had a congenital heart condition, saying it brought home to him the importance of health coverage for people with such pre-existing illnesses. As of yesterday morning, Kimmel's monologue had been viewed nearly 17 million times on his show's Facebook page and was the No. 1 trending story on YouTube, viewed more than 9.2 million times. It was shared nearly 258,000 times on his personal page.

Obama voiced his support for Kimmel in a post on Twitter: "Well said, Jimmy. That's exactly why we fought so hard for the ACA, and why we need to protect it for kids like Billy," Mulvaney, a former lawmaker and former member of the Freedom Caucus, said the White House understands the sensitivity of the pre-existing conditions issue. Mulvaney told Fox he was moved by the Kimmel clip and added that "everybody agrees with Jimmy Kimmel." Removing sick people from insurance rolls was not the aim of the Republican healthcare bill, he said, but added, "The point is that the state governments know how to treat children like the Kimmel baby better than the federal government does." — Reuters

## STATINS DON'T CAUSE MUSCLE PAIN: STUDY

### CHOLESTEROL-LOWERING DRUGS 'WRONGLY BLAMED'

**PARIS:** Cholesterol-lowering statin drugs may have been wrongly blamed for muscle pain and weakness, said a study yesterday that pointed the finger at a psychological phenomenon called the "nocebo" effect. It happens when people suffer side-effects because they expect to the opposite of the "placebo" effect when a patient gets better on a dummy drug they believe to be the real thing. "Patients can experience very real pain as a result of the nocebo effect and the expectation that drugs will cause harm," said Peter Sever of Imperial College London, the lead author of a study published in The Lancet medical journal. In this case, multiple reports of alleged side-effects from statins appear to have convinced people to experience them and prompted many to stop taking the drug.

A large-scale quitting of statins is estimated to have resulted in "thousands of fatal and disabling heart attacks and strokes, which would otherwise have been avoided," wrote the research team. "Seldom in the history of modern therapeutics have the substantial proven bene-

fits of a treatment been compromised to such an extent by serious misrepresentations of the evidence for its safety." Statins are prescribed to lower cholesterol in people at high risk of heart attack or a stroke. Known side effects include an increased diabetes risk, the study said. But muscle pain and weakness has remained contentious, with some studies finding a link, and others none. The latest study offers an explanation for the apparent contradiction.

### Benefits outweigh risks

Data gathered from about 10,000 people in Britain, Ireland and Scandinavia between 1998 and 2004, showed that patients who did not know they were given a statin in a drug trial did not report significantly more muscle complaints. It is only when they were told they were taking a statin that people started complaining of muscle ailments — 41 percent more compared to those not taking the drug. The muscle symptoms thus appeared "unlikely to be due to the drug itself," Sever said. "Just as the placebo effect can be very strong, so too can the nocebo effect." The

researchers also found no evidence for a heightened risk of erectile dysfunction or sleep disturbance from statin use. "We hope that patients will understand this and be prepared to take the statin," said Sever.

"The problem is that patients and doctors are not prescribing statins or patients are not taking them for fear of side effects. They need to weigh up the benefit of the statins and the risks. The latter are minimal." Amitava Banerjee of University College London, an expert in drug trial analysis, said the study showed that "muscle pain is very common, but far less commonly caused by statins." "If you are at high risk of cardiovascular disease or have had a heart attack or stroke and a statin is recommended, fear of muscle-related side effects alone should not prevent you taking a statin," Banerjee, who was not involved in the study, commented via the Science Media Centre in London. One limitation of the study was that it considered a single statin, atorvastatin. The trial was funded by Pfizer, which markets atorvastatin under the trade name Lipitor. — AFP



LEESBURG: Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue has lunch with students in the cafeteria at Catocctin Elementary School in Leesburg, Va. — AP

## HEY KIDS - GRAINS GO, SALT STAYS IN US SCHOOL MEALS

**LEESBURG:** Schools won't have to cut more salt from meals just yet and some will be able to serve kids fewer whole grains, under changes to federal nutrition standards announced yesterday. The move by US President Donald Trump's Agriculture Department partially rolls back rules championed by former first lady Michelle Obama as part of her healthy eating initiative. Separately, the Food and Drug Administration said it would delay - for one year - Obama administration rules that will require calorie labels on menus and prepared food displays. The rule was scheduled to go into effect later this week.

As his first major action in office, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said the Agriculture Department will delay an upcoming requirement to lower the amount of sodium in meals while continuing to allow waivers for regulations that all grains on the lunch line must be 50 percent whole grain. Schools could also serve 1 percent flavored milk instead of the nonfat now required. "If kids aren't eating the food, and it's ending up in the trash, they aren't getting any nutrition - thus undermining the intent of the program," said Perdue, who traveled to a school in Leesburg, Virginia, to make the announcement.

Health advocates who worked closely with the Obama administration on nutrition issues criticized the two moves, saying that the Trump administration is messing with rules that are popular with the public. The menu labeling law would have required chain restaurants and other establishments that sell prepared foods to post the calorie content of food. The FDA said the delay "allows for further consideration" of ways to reduce costs or make the rules more flexible as supermarkets and pizza delivery companies have lobbied against it.

"The Trump administration is showing in two important ways that it puts business interests before its populist rhetoric on the campaign trail and what mainstream Americans want," said Margo Wootan, a

lobbyist for the Center for Science in the Public Interest. The school meal changes reflect suggestions from the School Nutrition Association, which represents school nutrition directors and companies that sell food to schools. The group often battled with the Obama administration, which phased in the healthier school meal rules starting in 2012.

The Obama administration rules set fat, sugar and sodium limits on foods in the lunch line and beyond. Schools have long been required to follow government nutrition rules if they accept federal reimbursements for free and reduced-price meals for low-income students, but these standards were stricter. Obama pushed the changes as part of her "Let's Move" campaign to combat childhood obesity.

The Trump administration changes leave most of the Obama administration's school meal rules in place, including requirements that students must take fruits and vegetables on the lunch line. Some schools have asked for changes to that policy, saying students often throw them away. But the health advocates who have championed the rules are concerned about the freeze in sodium levels, in particular. School lunches for elementary school students are now required to have less than 1,230 mg of sodium, a change put in place in 2014.

The changes would keep the meals at that level, delaying until at least 2020 a requirement to lower sodium to 935 mg. That requirement was scheduled to begin in the 2017-2018 school year. "By forgoing the next phase of sodium reduction, the Trump administration will be locking in dangerously high sodium levels in school lunch," Wootan said. Before he signed the proclamation, Perdue and Senate Agriculture Chairman Pat Roberts, R Kan., ate chicken nuggets, fruit and salad with children at Catocctin Elementary. Perdue said he doesn't see the changes as a rollback, but "we're just slowing down the process." — AP



JINDO: Jindo dog breeder Lim Tae-Young stands before puppies at his facility on the southern island of Jindo. — AFP

## IT'S A DOG'S LIFE: PURITY THE KEY FOR TREASURED S KOREAN BREED

**JINDO:** Pointy-eared and short-haired, the Jindo dog is a symbol of South Korea, where breeders and authorities keep its bloodline even purer than one of the world's least diverse societies. The medium-sized hunting dog comes from the island of the same name, a remote rural community off the peninsula's south coast. Visitors are greeted by signboards and statues of the eponymous canine, known for its fierce loyalty, and live ones stand guard outside homes or peek out from doghouses.

But its bucolic appearance belies the rigid canine apartheid it imposes on the animals. Any dog that cannot prove its pedigree, or that fails to come up to standard, is immediately exiled, and any coming onto the island-even a returning Jindo-must have official permission, and be neutered. "We protect the breed by not letting registered dogs off the island and not allowing others in without a government permit," said Cha Jae-Nam, who heads the Jindo Dog Research and Test Centre.

The dogs have been bred for centuries, and Seoul classified them as a National Treasure in 1962. Now Cha's state-run centre spends two billion won (US\$1.75 million) a year on what he calls a "systematic and scientific" preservation of purebred Jindos. "It's not common for people to conduct a paternity test on their newborns, but we do for all puppies at birth," he said. "They are given a birth certificate if they match the DNA of their parents, but if they don't, they must leave the island."

The emphasis echoes widespread notions about racial purity in South Korea, an unusually homogenous society where the population is around 96 percent ethnically Korean, and mixed-race relationships are frowned upon in some quarters. But even unquestionable genetics do not ensure survival for the dogs. When a puppy reaches six months of age, it must undergo a strict assessment of the shape of its ears, legs, tail and head to be microchipped and join the 6,000-odd registered National Treasure status Jindos on the island. Any that fail are removed. The rigorous controls enable Cha to declare confidently: "All Jindo dogs in Jindo county are purebred."

### Animal dignity

Jindos have been adored by South Korean leaders, with Kim Dae-Jung giving a breeding pair to the North during his "Sunshine Policy" of the early 2000s, and others enjoying pampered lives at the Blue House under the country's two most recent presidents Lee Myung-Bak and Park Geun-Hye. But Park came under fire when she was ejected from office by a court order in March and notoriously left her nine dogs behind-bringing more attention to the rules surrounding them.

Critics such as Chae Il-Taek, director of the Korean Animal Welfare Association, say preservation of the breed should not come at the cost of "discrimination that undermines the dignity of the animals." The obsession over the "pure" Jindo bloodline meant some breeders abandon puppies that fail to meet the criteria-which often end

up on meal tables, he said. South Koreans are believed to consume somewhere between 1.5 and 2.5 million dogs every year, according to animal rights groups, although the number is in decline with dwindling demand among the younger generation. "A large number of the dogs kicked out from Jindo are sold off to dog meat farmers," Chae said.

### 'Deformities in humans'

In a fluorescent-lit lab at the test centre, researcher Kim Jong-Seok proudly opens a double-door fridge containing rows of blood vials. Officials say the facility has DNA samples of all Jindo dogs born on the island and Kim, who has studied the breed for two decades, believes the meticulous controls are necessary to keep the Jindos clean and healthy. "The inbreeding of royal families has led to many deformities in humans," Kim said.

"As such, we are preventing various diseases and deformities." The measures are welcomed by Jindo breeders, who can sell purebred puppies for around US\$1,000 each. "Procedures like the screening are inconvenient and tedious at times but we don't complain because it leads to production income," said Lim Tae-Young, who heads an association of some 70 Jindo breeders on the island. "It's not to say the dogs kicked off the island are bad and the ones that remain are good," he said, a handful of playful puppies wagging their tails at his feet. "But here, we only have purebred Jindos." — AFP

## UTAH LAUNCHES A CAMPAIGN TO FIGHT OPIOID ABUSE, OVERDOSES

**SALT LAKE CITY:** Utah pharmacists will start putting red stickers on bottles of opioids that warn patients about the risk of overdose and addiction as part of a new awareness campaign to combat painkiller abuses and deaths. The Utah Department of Health's monthlong campaign kicks off Monday and is meant to encourage dialogue between pharmacists and patients about opioid risks. The rate of prescription opioids dispensed in Utah grew 30 percent from 2002 to 2015, statistics from the department show. Nearly 300 Utah residents died of opioid overdoses in 2015, according to the latest data available from the department.

"Given the high number of deaths associated with prescription opioids, understanding the risks of opioids is vital to patient safety," said Angela Dunn, deputy state epidemiologist for the health department. The new initiative is a collaborative effort by the health department, the Utah Pharmacy Association and the

Utah Department of Commerce. The red stickers - which read "Caution: Opioid. Risk of Overdose and Addiction" - will prompt patients to ask pharmacists questions about their potentially addictive medications, said Greg Jones, chairman of the Utah Pharmacy Licensing Board.

"People underestimate the danger of their medications," Jones said. "People think they'll be fine taking it, and quite often they're not." Pharmacists can discuss with patients proper use, storage and disposal of opioids and provide naloxone, an overdose-reversing drug. The red-sticker campaign is just one of several initiatives the Utah Department of Health has been working on in recent years to reduce opioid overdoses and increase public awareness about the issue. "It will take some time to see results," Dunn said. "But anecdotally, patients are becoming more educated on what an opioid is and the dangers it can possess." — AP



# MOROCCO FIGHTS TO SAVE ITS ICONIC MONKEY

**CHEFCHAOUEN:** "If nothing is done, this species will disappear within 10 years," warns a poster on Ahmed Harrad's ageing 4x4 showing Morocco's famed Barbary macaque monkey. Harrad spends his time crisscrossing northern Morocco to try to convince locals to protect the endangered monkey. The only species of macaque outside Asia, which lives on leaves and fruits and can weigh up to 20 kilograms, was once found throughout North Africa and parts of Europe. But having disappeared from Libya and Tunisia, it is now restricted to mountainous regions of Algeria and Morocco's northern Rif region. Another semi-wild population of about 200 individuals in Gibraltar are the only free-ranging monkeys in Europe.

Today, the only native primate north of the Sahara, apart from humans, is in danger of extinction, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Conservationists blame illegal poaching, tourists who feed the monkeys and overexploitation of the cedar and oak forests that form the species' natural habitat. In response, Morocco has launched a campaign to save the species. "We are working on two areas-monitoring and making a census of the species in the Rif and raising awareness among locals so that they actively help rescue it," Harrad said.

As head of a local association, Barbary Macaque Awareness & Conservation (BMAC),

Harrad has become a tireless advocate for the animal. He says it is often sold to buyers in Europe for between \$110 and \$330 (100 and 300 euros) despite laws forbidding the trade. "A lot of foreigners buy monkeys as pets," he said. Seen as quiet and cute when it is young, the adult monkey can become a burden, Harrad said. "It breaks things, bites, fights with children and climbs the curtains," prompting many owners to abandon their pets, he said.

### 'In ashes of Pompeii'

But that hasn't stopped the tailless monkeys, with their thick grey-and-ginger fur, being highly sought-after by passing travelers throughout the ages. According to National Geographic, skeletal remains of macaques have been discovered "in the ashes of Pompeii, deep within an ancient Egyptian catacomb, and buried beneath an Irish hilltop where the Bronze Age kings of Ulster once held court".

Zouhair Ahmaouch, an official at Morocco's High Commission for Water, Forests and Combating Desertification, said the new conservation plan focused on tackling poaching. But Morocco "can't repatriate monkeys released in Europe, because we don't know whether they came from Gibraltar, Algeria or Morocco", he said. The North African kingdom has never conducted a nationwide census of the macaque, but scientists believe its numbers fall every year.



**AZROU, Morocco:** A Barbary macaque looks on from a tree branch in a forest near the Moroccan town of Azrou, in the Atlas mountain chain. —AFP Photos



**Barbary macaques sit in tree branches in a forest near the Moroccan town of Azrou, in the Atlas mountain chain.**

Based on various studies, they estimate that Morocco is home to between 3,000 and 10,000 macaques today, compared with 17,000 three decades ago. They believe Algeria had around 5,500 Barbary macaques in the late 1980s. The number has since almost halved, according to the IUCN. Algiers has also responded with plans to protect the species. While the macaques are hard to spot in the wilds of Morocco's Rif, some individuals in the forests of the Middle Atlas are tame, attracting tourists who come to feed them.

But Ifrane National Park head Lahcen Oukenou said feeding can cause "health problems such as obesity, which affects their health and especially their reproductive capacity". Anouar Jaoui, director of Talasemtane National Park in northern

Morocco, home to several dozen macaques, said the conservation strategy includes measures to "rehabilitate and rebuild the species' habitat". That requires "reducing the pressure from overexploitation of natural resources", he added. In the forests of the Middle Atlas, authorities are organizing awareness-raising sessions for tourists to discourage them from feeding or approaching the monkeys.

Pupils at local schools are also being educated about the species. Last October, the

Barbary macaque was listed as a species threatened with extinction on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). That makes buying and selling the monkeys illegal except under exceptional circumstances. Ahmaouch welcomed the move. "It will allow Morocco and other countries to unify their efforts to fight against the illegal trade in Barbary macaques," he said. Morocco has a "global responsibility to conserve this heritage". —AFP



**AZROU, Morocco:** A Barbary macaque reaches for a banana in a forest near the Moroccan town of Azrou.

## TRICK OF THE LIGHT: HOW THE HATCHETFISH HIDES

**PARIS:** Hatchetfish, tiny "alien-looking" creatures known for an uncanny ability to hide out in open water, use mirror-like scales to deflect and diffuse light to make themselves invisible to predators, scientists reported yesterday. Like other silvery fish, hatchetfish are known for using their reflective, aluminum-like skin as a mirror to confuse fellow sea creatures in ambient light. But scientists have long wondered how they manage to hide in deeper water, where a mirror would reflect incoming searchlight beams and reveal their position to predator fish. These include eel-like dragonfish, which zap rays of light around in the deep ocean to spot prey.

Now, a research team believes it has shed light on the hatchetfish's bag of tricks. "If you look at silvery fish in blue water you are going to see blue water reflecting in front of the fish and you are also going to see blue water behind it, so the fish is going to disappear," said Alison Sweeney, a researcher at the University of Pennsylvania and lead author of a study published by the Journal of the Royal Society Interface.

"The fish found a way to both simultaneously have this mirror-like property in ambient light, and a stealth technology when it comes to predators looking directly with directed beams," she said. For their study, Sweeney and a team flashed a laser beam

alternatively onto a mirror, dull aluminum, spectralon (a highly reflective material) and hatchetfish skin in the lab. The fish's skin did not reflect the beam straight back, but diffused it in different directions, softening the light, they found.

This effectively reduced the fish's luminosity, which in real life would help keep it hidden from their hungry enemies. "A predator has to be twice as close to a hatchetfish to see it" compared with a mirror, Sweeney said. And that is not the hatchetfish's only optical trick. Some of the incoming predator light is redirected downward, towards the ocean floor, through bioluminescent organs in its stomach, the team found. "You are in big trouble if you get zapped by a search beam so the best option for getting rid of that light is always to dump it downward," where the predator is less likely to look, she said.

Scientists say they believe it is a unique combination of rectangular and elliptical scales—each reflecting light in a different way—that allows hatchetfish to adapt its light response to different conditions. The study is the first to investigate how reflecting rather than absorbing light from search beams allows deep-water creatures to camouflage. Other species in similar conditions hide from the light with transparent bodies, or by changing color to go undetected. — AFP

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The winners pose with Mark Westermayer.



Students participating in the competition.

## KIMMCO ORGANIZES DRAWING COMPETITION

**K**IMMCO, the major provider of insulation solutions in Kuwait, and a company of Alghanim Industries, recently conducted 'Paint the Future-The World you see' drawing competition with school children of Kuwait. The event which was held in Holiday Inn, Salmiya, was attended by over 100 students from 15 different schools. This initiative was part of KIMMCO's 40 years of establishment celebration.

Commenting on the event, Director Marketing from KIMMCO, Mark Westermayer said: "It is encouraging to observe that the young generation is already interested in

green environment. The way they portray the future they would like to see is fascinating. We have been supplying insulation to buildings to save energy for the last four decades and I am happy to see that the new generation has a good understanding about it. Through these events, we like to use creative and innovative tools to think about the environment, raise awareness with regards to energy savings and encourage young talent to express their dreams of a green future."

The completion which was held for two hours was

judged by the renowned Kuwaiti artist, Asad Bunashi. The best drawings were awarded under two categories: the 9-13 years and the 14-16 years. Sheethal S Joseph from Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan School under 9-13 years category and Valence Fernandez from Indian English Academy under 14-16 years category were judged as star artists. The second prize winners for 9-13 years and 14-16 years respectively were Shreya Nath from Delhi Public School, and Jennifer Pinto from Indian English Academy School. KIMMCO distributed 10 consolation prizes to other strong showings, and as

encouragement to the young students - each was given a gift and a certificate.

Students from Al-Salmiya Intermediate Girls School, Al-Ressalah Bilingual School, American Academy for Girls, American Creative Academy, Bent Al-Arab School, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, British School of Kuwait, Delhi Public School, Fajer Al-Sabah school, Indian Community School, Indian English Academy School, Oxford School, Salmiya Indian Model School and The English Academy participated in the competition.

## AJMAN CROWN PRINCE COMMEMORATES GRADUATES OF ABDULAZIZ BIN HUMAID LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

**T**he Abdulaziz Bin Humaid Foundation, which strives to shape a sustainable society driven by innovation leaders, commemorated the graduates of Abdulaziz bin Humaid Leadership Program (ALP), followed by sponsor appreciation of ALP, Paint Run Ajman and Mosaic Market at its first annual ceremony on the May 1, 2017 at the Oberoi Beach Resort Al-Zorah, Ajman. The event, which was held under the patronage and in the presence of HH Sheikh Ammar bin Humaid Al-Nuaimi. Sheikh Ammar stressed that importance of young people taking the lead in both public and private sectors.

The graduation ceremony congratulated the success of 20 male and female participants of the Abdulaziz bin Humaid Leadership Program. His Highness said that the program has achieved great success, providing Emirati and GCC talents the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge and to be successful leaders in the future.

In her speech, Dr Amal Abdullah Al-Qubaisi, Speaker of the Federal National Council, expressed her pride in the Abdulaziz bin Humaid Program which provides the GCC young talents with the leadership skills and experience to be able to serve their nations. The passionate and heartfelt speech inspired the graduates and thanking the sponsors for making these initiatives a success. Dr Qubaisi is famous for making history as the first woman to preside over a parliament in the Arab world.

In his opening speech, Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Humaid Al-Nuaimi, Chairman of Abdulaziz bin Humaid Foundation, extended sincere gratitude and appreciation to His

Highness Sheikh Ammar bin Humaid Al-Nuaimi and Dr Amal Abdullah Al-Qubaisi for honoring the annual ceremony of the foundation. "The annual ceremony is an event in which we reflect on our achievements during the 2016-2017 edition. The Abdulaziz bin Humaid Foundation has taken the responsibility of nurturing and empowering young leaders and providing integrated programs that give the participants a real opportunity to unleash their potential while having a positive and tangible impact on their community," he said. The Chairman expressed satisfaction at the achievements made by the foundation through its community initiatives, such as Mosaic Market and Ajman Paint Run, which gained public recognition and attracted 24,000 visitors from different age groups.

"Today, we witness the graduation of a new group of future leaders, in the fourth edition of Abdulaziz bin Humaid Leadership Program, a program which was designed in accordance with the best international practices in leadership and in collaboration with world's leading training and consultancy firms. The program aims to support and empower the ambitious youth of GCC countries to be leaders who are able to serve their nations," added Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Humaid Al-Nuaimi.

He expressed his delight and gratitude for the support of His Highness Sheikh Humaid bin Rashid Al-Nuaimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Ajman and HH Sheikh Ammar bin Humaid Al-Nuaimi, Crown Prince of Ajman and Chairman of the Executive Council. "Today, we are celebrating a new batch of graduates from our compre-



hensive and integrated program in its 4th edition. This program provided unique training opportunities for all the young participants and real opportunities for participants to learn new skills, broaden their horizons and move forward to become successful leaders in the future," he said.

Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Humaid promised to continue to develop the program to be one of the best and most ambitious leadership programs in the world, contributing to building capacity and nurturing the skills of young leaders. He announced that registration for the fifth round of the

Abdulaziz bin Humaid Leadership Program is now open for the next generation of innovators and leaders (further details are available at [www.abdulazizlp.com](http://www.abdulazizlp.com)).

During the event's conclusion, he extended his heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all participating, supporting and sponsoring entities, especially the Ajman Holding Group - the Strategic sponsor of the leadership program, Ajman Real Estate regulatory agency and Ajman Sewerage Private Company - the Golden Sponsors of the community initiatives.



## IIT-IIM ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SETS SAILS ON ARABIAN GULF WITH A FRATERNITY BOAT TRIP

**I**T-IIM Alumni Association, Kuwait celebrated a grand get together aboard a luxury boat operated by Al-Silsan sailing on the Arabian Gulf waters on Saturday, April 29, 2017. It was a fun-filled session lasting over six hours of the day where young and old, men and women, in the company of their friends and loved ones thoroughly had a great time with lots of fun, frolic and dabbling at various games and activities.

The session started early in the morning. The core team initially in the morning was on the pins and needles. There was a bit of apprehension of the prevailing dull dusty weather conditions threatening to put off the whole boat trip on the line due to poor visibility and safety concerns. Fortunately, as always been the case with any of the previous outdoor occasions of the Alumni association, things always turn brighter with the kind blessings of the Mother Nature. As the lighting conditions improved, the mood of the game too took a turn for better to the amusement of all the members who chose to be out on the sea. The members and their families regaled themselves as the Octas scale trended a dramatic downward improvement with every passing moment as the day progressed and steadily trudged towards a compromising peak position of the hands on the clock lifting the spirits of all.

IIT-IIM Alumni Association President, Peeyush Jain welcomed all those who attended the picnic including the august member couple of our beloved Ambassador Sunil Jain and Madam Dr Gargi Jain and the First

Secretary, Indian Embassy, KrishanKant Pahal and Pahal. Both the couples had a great day mingling with all the fraternity with utmost comfort and all the members spent wonderful moments with them. As the seafarers slowly settled and warmed up with early snacks and tea, while acclimatizing the boat, the boarders and the sea.

The games began with a couple game aptly titled 'my fair lady' where blind folded men on the instructions of their better halves had to do a bit of make up on the photos of their chosen actresses of Bollywood. The best performance was from the guests from Embassy and Pahal, and the most expectantly were the young duo, Prakhar and Calai. Other games included Crush Oreos and Consume Clean for the children of two age groups, were won by Raghav and Kanika. Four corners was the next game. Next followed a contest of Anthakshari between men and

women, which was fiercely contested with keen participation and in the end everyone settled for a tie sans super over. This was followed with all present shaking a leg, some swaying gracefully and others rock and rolled with their rhythmic rhapsody of entertaining energetic steps to the beats and catchy tunes of the desi Punjabi numbers. Every one danced their hearts out enjoying themselves fully in the process.

The beautiful moments of the event were captured through the fabulous lenses of volunteer camera men like Pradeep Chaudhary, Gourav, Prakhar and of course several girls of the houses through their ubiquitous smart phones. Highlight of the day was the Titanic pose photograph of almost all the couples defying age and throwing their inhibitions to the winds, blowing across the sea. The quality and timing of the photos as seen later was nothing short of professional perfection.



## YOUTH IN KUWAIT ARE OVERWHELMINGLY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THEIR FUTURE, 9TH ARAB YOUTH SURVEY REVEALS

**K**uwaiti youth are overwhelmingly positive about their futures and believe their government is putting the right policies in place to address their needs, according to findings from the 9th annual ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey 2017, released yesterday. An overwhelming majority (78 percent) of Kuwait youth said that they believe that the country has been heading in the right direction over the past five years, while 87 percent were confident that the government is developing the right policies focused on the youth.

In the GCC states, 85 percent of young people are confident that their country has been heading in the right direction over the past five years, compared with 52 percent for Arab youth across the region. Three quarters (78 percent) of GCC youth also believe their "best days are ahead of them" compared with 58 percent for Arab youth as a whole; and 82 percent of young people in the GCC believe their economy is on the right track versus just 52 percent on a region-wide basis.

Further, 86 percent of Gulf youth believe their governments are putting the right policies in place that will benefit young people - an opinion held by just 57 percent of young Arabs across the whole Middle East.

Sunil John, Founder and CEO of ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller, said: "For the GCC states, the findings from this year's Survey are encouraging. Not only are young people optimistic about the future, they have confidence that their governments are doing the right things for them. This is not the story in the rest of the region. The positivity and optimism of Gulf youth are a real bright spot in the Middle East today, but one that also highlights a growing trend of a polarization of views, inspiring the main theme of this year's Survey: 'The Middle East - a region divided.'"

Roy Haddad, Director, WPP MENA, said: "The Arab Youth Survey provides a voice to the voiceless, and allows young Arabs to be heard around the world. It allows us to hear what Arab youth think and feel about their past, present and future. As such, it is an invaluable tool for businesses and governments, and civil society in general, who need accurate data and insights about this most important demographic."

Elsewhere in the Survey, findings reveal that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are viewed as the region's top allies, ahead of international powers including the US and Russia. A third of young Arabs surveyed across 16 countries say that KSA and UAE are top allies of their country, with 34 percent saying Saudi Arabia (up from 31 percent in 2016).

The Survey reveals that, in 2017, support for the US has fallen markedly: 17 percent of young Arabs see US as their most important ally, down 8 percentage points from 2016 and, for the first time, more young people see Russia as their top international ally - an increase of 12 percentage points from 2016.

The threat posed by Daesh - viewed last year as the number one issue facing the Middle East - is seen as diminishing, this year tying with unemployment as a top concern for 35 percent of the region's young people. Most young Arabs (61 percent) also believe the terror

group is getting weaker and, across the region, young people think education reform and well-paying jobs are just as important as military action in defeating terror and extremism.

### Other key findings from the ASDA'A Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey 2017:

- Many young Arabs say their education system falls short of preparing students for jobs of the future: The quality of education is a cause of concern for young Arabs, particularly in non-GCC nations. Nearly half the Arab youth say they are not satisfied with the current level of preparation of students for jobs of the future. Of the 51 percent who say they are satisfied the current education system is preparing them for future roles, most are from the GCC nations (80 percent) while those least satisfied hail from North Africa (33 percent) and the Levant and Yemen (34 percent).

- The UAE sprints ahead of the pack as the country in which most young Arabs would like to live and want their countries to emulate: The United Arab Emirates cemented its position as the country most young Arabs would like to live in and would most like their own countries to take after. This year, one in three (35 percent) young Arabs say they would most like to live in the UAE, a significant increase of 13 percentage points from last year. Asked which country they would like their own country to emulate, the UAE again comes on top, with more than a third of young Arabs (36 percent) saying the UAE is their model country, compared with one in four last year.

- Young Arabs say Donald Trump is anti-Muslim and express concern, anger, and fear about his presidency: Attitudes towards the election and presidency of Donald Trump are largely negative, with two thirds of young Arabs (64 percent) either concerned, scared or angry about Trump taking the helm of the world's most powerful country. Furthermore, 70 percent of young Arabs say Trump is anti-Muslim and half (49 percent) agree that Trump's travel ban imposed on Muslim-majority countries would make it easier for extremist groups to radicalize and recruit young Muslims.

- Despite their pride in the Arabic language, most young Arabs say they are using English more than Arabic in their daily lives: While 80 percent of young Arabs agree to the statement 'Arabic is central to my national identity', yet, 60 percent of young Arabs agree that Arabic is losing value and, for the first time, more than half of young Arabs (54 percent) say they are using English more than Arabic in their daily lives (up from 46 percent in 2016).

- Among young Arabs, Facebook is the number one medium for daily news: More than a third (35 percent) of young people in the Arab world say they get their news on Facebook daily, compared with 31 percent for other online news sources, 30 percent for TV news channels, and just 9 percent read newspapers daily. Two-thirds (64 percent) say they use Facebook to share news stories, up from 52 percent in 2016 and 41 percent in 2015.





Executive Director of Hessah Al-Mubarak District, Tawfiq Al-Jarrah, gives his presentation.



KIPCO Vice Chairman (Executive), Faisal Al-Ayyar, and guests at the pavilion opening.

## KIPCO INAUGURATES HESSAH AL-MUBARAK DISTRICT PAVILION

**K**IPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - inaugurated the Hessah Al-Mubarak District Pavilion, the sales center for people who wish to become a part of the 'Center of Vibrant Living'. The event was hosted by KIPCO's Vice Chairman (Executive), Faisal Al-Ayyar, and was attended by senior government officials, representatives of the private sector and investors.

The event featured a presentation by the Executive Director of Hessah Al-Mubarak District, Tawfiq Al-Jarrah, who revealed the components of the master plan development: Residential, offices, services apartments, retail, food and beverage, as well as public spaces and parks. He said that 70 percent of the built up area has been allocated for residential apartment buildings.

The master plan includes six distinct residential zones: The Waterfront Zone (12 plots), The Compounds (12 plots), Central Park (17 plots), Courtyard Residence (6 plots), Midtown Residence (10 plots), and Avenue Residence (4 plots). There are also 10 plots that mark a modern and unique business destination.

Jarrah said: "Hessah Al-Mubarak District is Kuwait's first comprehensive, mixed-used use neighborhood developed by the private sector. As the master developer, KIPCO is the first private sector company to independently lay infrastructure for a project. As part of our pledge to offer our residents and visitors an elevated experience, we have allocated over 50 percent of the master plan area for parks, open areas and amenities. Hessah Al-Mubarak District is the exemplification of Kuwait's drive into the future; a unique, inclusive community that gives back to



A cyr wheel dance performance by Nadia.



A hand pan performance by Daniel 'Danny' Waples.

its hard-working, ambitious populace. We are committed to this vision, which is why - together with our Group companies - we will be developing 40 percent of the district." KIPCO and its group companies will be developing two

high rise towers, 20 low-rise buildings, a serviced apartment building, 10 office buildings, two gyms, as well as seven retails and F&B units. The Hessah Al-Mubarak District Pavilion is located at the development in Daiya, on

Gulf Road opposite Green Island. The pavilion is open to receive visitors who wish to learn more about the district.

## ABK'S SUMMER MADE SWEETER WITH BASKIN ROBBINS

**A**l-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently announced the conclusion of its Baskin Robbins roadshow that kicked off at the bank's Head Office on April 23, 2017. For the third consecutive year, ABK customers and staff were treated to free scoops and cones of Baskin Robbins' ice cream, adding a sweeter flavor to day. The roadshow covered all ABK's branches across Kuwait, finishing off at the bank's Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh Branch.



## AUK BOARD OF TRUSTEES HOLDS ITS 22ND BIANNIUAL MEETING

**F**ounder and Chair of the American University of Kuwait (AUK), Shaikha Dana Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, convened with members of the Board of Trustees and the Academic Affairs Committee during the 22nd Biannual BoT Meeting in April to review reports from the various areas of the University and discuss future plans for AUK. The meeting was the first to be attended by Dr Tim Sullivan in his role as the newly appointed President of AUK, who had previously served AUK as Interim President in 2010 and was a voting Board Member until present.

Shaikha Dana commenced by greeting the attendees to the Spring 2017 meeting of the Board of Trustees and welcoming Dr Tim Sullivan to the Board. "We are very pleased to have him on board as we look forward to putting in place our broader strategic initiatives," she said.

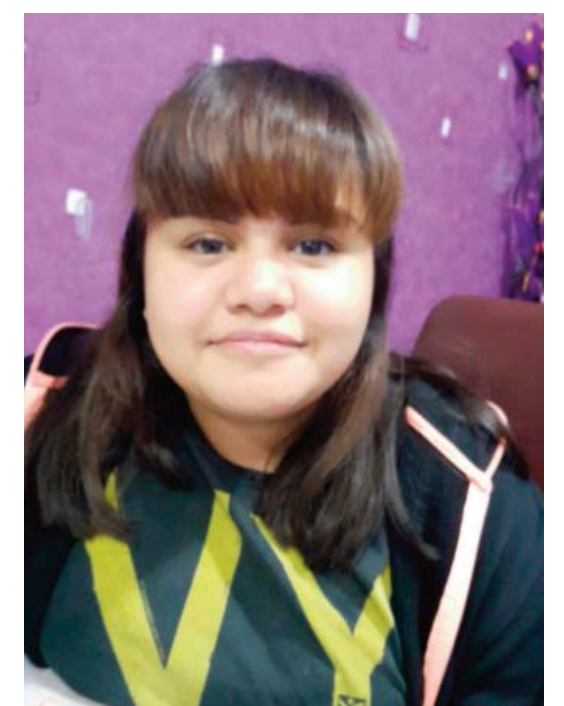
After introductions from Shaikha Dana, the Chair of

the Board of Academic Affairs Committee (BAAC) Dr Thomas Bartlett, presented the BAAC Report, which was then followed by President Tim Sullivan's Report and the Budget Report.

Following the reports presentations, Shaikha Dana announced the completion of the new Student Center and updated the Board on ongoing development and expansion projects, including the obtaining of accreditations and the beginning of construction of a new generic building that is scheduled to be completed in Fall 2019. "While we are focusing on improving our campus, we are also making progress in receiving and seeking accreditation for our programs, in developing our academic areas, and in recruiting faculty" she said, and added "Our mission is to differentiate ourselves and provide our students with broader learning experiences."

The Board of Trustees is AUK's governing body. The Board's terms of reference are outlined in the AUK By-Laws. The self-perpetuating and self-governing Board is currently composed of 8 members, in addition to the University President and the Dartmouth College Relationship Coordinator (Director) as ex-officio member. The Board of Trustees meets twice a year in AUK's Salmiya campus.

The American University of Kuwait's Board of Trustees is comprised of the following: Shaikha Dana Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah (Founder and Chair), Meshal Ali (Co-Founder), Wael Abdul-Ghafoor (Board Member), Faisal Al-Ayyar (Board Member), Samer Khanachet (Board Member), Thomas Bartlett, PhD (Board Member), Walid E Moubarak, PhD (Board Member), Earl (Tim) Sullivan PhD (Board Member), and Dale F Eickelman, PhD (Ex-officio Member).



Happy Birthday to Shereen Nasser Sayed on May 4, 2017. May god bless you with good health. Have a lovely Birthday. Love from dad, mom, siblings Sarah and Ahmed, grandpa Tareq, grandma Jovy, Heba, Sami, family and friends.



**OSN MOVIES**  
**ACTION**

- 00:45 Revenge Of The Green Dragons
- 02:30 Age Of Ice
- 04:00 DCU: Justice League vs Teen Titans
- 05:30 Grosse Pointe Blank
- 07:30 Hard Target 2
- 09:15 Dracula Untold
- 11:00 DCU: Justice League vs Teen Titans
- 12:30 Christmas Twister
- 14:00 Hard Target 2
- 15:45 Dracula Untold
- 17:30 Metro
- 19:15 Double Team
- 21:00 The Tower
- 23:15 Green Street 3: Never Back Down

**ANIMAL PLANET HD**

- 00:50 Big Fish Man
- 01:45 Bondi Vet
- 02:40 Wild Animal Rescue
- 03:35 Tanked
- 04:25 Queens Of The Savannah
- 05:15 Cats 101
- 06:02 Big Fish Man
- 06:49 The Pool Master
- 07:36 Swamp Brothers
- 08:25 Cats 101
- 09:15 The Pool Master
- 10:10 Queens Of The Savannah
- 11:05 Tanked
- 12:00 Cats 101
- 12:55 Bondi Vet
- 13:50 The Pool Master
- 14:45 Big Fish Man
- 15:40 Queens Of The Savannah
- 16:35 Tanked
- 17:30 Big Fish Man
- 18:25 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 19:20 Wild Ones
- 20:15 Tanked
- 21:10 Cats 101
- 22:05 Treetop Cat Rescue
- 23:00 Wild Ones
- 23:55 Untamed China With Nigel Marven

**BBC FIRST**

- 00:35 Doctors
- 01:05 Eastenders
- 01:40 Benidorm
- 02:25 Last Tango In Halifax: Christmas Special

- 03:35 South Park
- 04:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
- 04:25 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
- 05:15 Lip Sync Battle
- 05:40 Ridiculousness
- 06:05 Disaster Date
- 06:30 Lip Sync Battle
- 06:55 Lip Sync Battle
- 07:20 Framework
- 08:15 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
- 09:05 Disaster Date
- 09:30 Disaster Date
- 09:55 Ridiculousness
- 10:20 Key And Peele
- 10:45 Disaster Date
- 11:10 Ridiculousness
- 11:35 Impractical Jokers
- 12:00 Tattoo Disasters
- 12:25 Tattoo Disasters
- 12:50 Idiotsitter
- 13:15 Lip Sync Battle
- 13:40 Impractical Jokers
- 14:05 Disorderly Conduct: Video On Patrol
- 14:55 Ridiculousness
- 15:20 Catch A Contractor
- 16:10 Idiotsitter
- 16:35 Disaster Date
- 17:00 Disaster Date
- 17:25 Ridiculousness
- 17:50 Lip Sync Battle
- 18:15 Key And Peele
- 18:40 Frankentoo
- 19:10 Frankentoo
- 19:35 Impractical Jokers
- 20:00 Disaster Date
- 20:23 Live With Models
- 20:47 Impractical Jokers
- 21:10 Ridiculousness Arabia
- 21:35 Another Period
- 22:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
- 22:30 Key And Peele
- 23:00 The Half Hour
- 23:25 South Park
- 23:50 Broad City

**Discovery Family**

- 00:15 Destroyed In Seconds
- 00:40 Don't Drive Here
- 01:30 Science Of The Movies
- 02:20 Dogs: The Untold Story
- 03:10 Everest: Beyond The Limit
- 04:00 Destroyed In Seconds
- 04:25 Destroyed In Seconds
- 04:50 Don't Drive Here
- 05:40 How It's Made
- 06:05 How It's Made
- 06:30 Strangest Weather On Earth

- 01:25 Hank Zipzer
- 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 Binny And The Ghost
- 03:55 Hank Zipzer
- 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 Binny And The Ghost
- 06:25 Hank Zipzer
- 06:45 The Hive
- 07:00 The 7D
- 07:00 Jessie
- 07:25 Jessie
- 07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 07:55 The Zhuzhus
- 08:20 Elena Of Avalor
- 08:45 Bunk'd
- 09:10 Stuck In The Middle
- 09:35 Bizaardvark
- 10:00 Austin & Ally
- 10:25 Austin & Ally
- 10:50 Good Luck Charlie
- 11:15 Good Luck Charlie
- 11:40 Dog With A Blog
- 12:05 Dog With A Blog
- 12:30 Gravity Falls
- 12:55 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 13:00 Welcome To The Plonks
- 13:15 The Zhuzhus
- 13:40 Hank Zipzer
- 14:05 Star Darlings
- 14:10 Good Luck Charlie
- 14:35 Austin & Ally
- 15:00 Jessie
- 15:25 Binny And The Ghost
- 15:50 Sunny Bunnies
- 15:55 The Zhuzhus
- 16:45 Elena Of Avalor
- 17:10 Liv And Maddie
- 17:35 Descendants Wicked World
- 17:40 Girl Meets World
- 18:05 Stuck In The Middle
- 18:30 Bunk'd
- 18:55 Bizaardvark
- 19:20 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:25 Alex & Co.
- 19:50 Best Friends Whenever
- 20:15 Tsum Tsum Shorts
- 20:20 Binny And The Ghost
- 20:45 Austin & Ally
- 21:10 Jessie
- 21:35 Cracked
- 21:40 Disney The Lodge

- 22:25 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
- 22:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
- 23:00 The Lion Guard
- 23:30 The Lion Guard
- 23:55 PJ Masks

**Discovery Channel**

- 00:30 Fast N' Loud
- 01:20 Street Outlaws
- 02:10 World's Top 5
- 03:00 You Have Been Warned
- 03:50 Deadliest Job Interview
- 04:40 Fast N' Loud
- 05:30 Storage Hunters UK
- 06:00 How Do They Do It?
- 06:30 How Do They Do It?
- 07:00 Gold Divers
- 07:50 Street Outlaws
- 08:40 Fast N' Loud
- 09:30 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
- 10:20 Storage Hunters UK
- 10:45 How Do They Do It?
- 11:10 How Do They Do It?
- 11:35 World's Top 5
- 12:25 You Have Been Warned
- 13:15 Deadliest Job Interview
- 14:05 How Do They Do It?
- 14:30 Storage Hunters UK
- 14:55 Storage Hunters UK
- 15:20 Gold Rush
- 16:10 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
- 17:00 Gold Divers
- 17:50 Fast N' Loud
- 18:40 Street Outlaws
- 19:30 How Do They Do It?
- 19:55 How Do They Do It?
- 20:20 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
- 21:10 Storage Hunters UK
- 21:35 Storage Hunters UK
- 22:00 What On Earth?
- 22:50 Sydney Harbour
- 23:40 Todd Sampson's Body Hack

**Disney XD**

- 00:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA
- 07:00 Gravity Falls
- 07:25 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 07:50 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
- 08:15 Milo Murphy's Law
- 08:25 Danger Mouse
- 08:40 Supa Strikas
- 09:05 Two More Eggs
- 09:10 K.C. Undercover
- 09:35 Counterfeit Cat
- 10:00 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 10:25 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 10:50 Future-Worm!
- 11:20 Pair Of Kings
- 11:45 Pair Of Kings
- 12:10 Danger Mouse
- 12:35 Supa Strikas
- 13:00 Supa Strikas
- 13:30 Gravity Falls
- 13:55 Annedroids
- 14:20 Atomic Puppet
- 14:45 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 15:15 Mighty Med
- 15:40 Disney Cookabout
- 16:05 Lab Rats
- 16:30 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 16:55 Right Now Kapow
- 17:25 K.C. Undercover
- 17:50 Walk The Prank
- 18:15 Mech-X4
- 18:40 Milo Murphy's Law
- 19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 19:10 Phineas And Ferb: Star Wars
- 20:00 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 20:25 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 20:55 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 21:20 Star Wars Freemaker Adventures
- 21:45 Star Wars Rebels
- 22:10 Star Wars Rebels
- 22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
- 22:45 Star Wars Rebels
- 23:10 Star Wars Rebels
- 23:35 Boyster

- 12:00 So Cosmo
- 13:00 El News
- 13:15 Celebrity Style Story
- 13:45 Live From The Red Carpet
- 15:05 Fashion Police
- 16:00 El News
- 16:15 El News: Daily Pop
- 17:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 18:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 19:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 20:00 El News
- 21:00 Fashion Police
- 22:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 23:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

**food network**

- 00:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 01:00 Chopped
- 02:00 The Great Food Truck Race
- 03:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 03:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 04:00 Man Fire Food
- 04:30 Man Fire Food
- 05:00 Chopped
- 06:00 Guy's Grocery Games
- 07:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 07:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
- 08:00 The Kitchen
- 09:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 09:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 10:00 Siba's Table
- 10:30 Siba's Table
- 11:00 Cooking For Real
- 11:30 Cooking For Real
- 12:00 The Kitchen
- 13:00 The Pioneer Woman
- 13:30 The Pioneer Woman
- 14:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 14:30 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
- 15:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 15:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 16:00 Chopped
- 17:00 The Kitchen
- 18:00 Cooking For Real
- 18:30 Cooking For Real
- 19:00 Chopped
- 20:00 Iron Chef America
- 21:00 Tia Mowry At Home
- 21:30 Tia Mowry At Home
- 22:00 Dinner At Tiffani's
- 22:30 Dinner At Tiffani's
- 23:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 23:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives

**itv choice**

- 00:15 Coronation Street
- 00:40 Coronation Street
- 01:10 The Chase
- 02:00 Emmerdale
- 02:30 Coronation Street
- 03:00 Coronation Street
- 03:30 Guess This House
- 04:25 Broadchurch
- 05:20 Broadchurch
- 06:15 Come Date With Me Australia
- 06:45 Come Date With Me Australia
- 07:10 The Chase
- 08:05 Guess This House
- 09:00 Broadchurch
- 10:00 Broadchurch
- 11:00 Come Date With Me Australia
- 11:30 Come Date With Me Australia
- 11:55 The Chase
- 12:50 Guess This House
- 13:45 Emmerdale
- 14:15 Coronation Street
- 14:45 Coronation Street
- 15:15 The Chase
- 16:10 Guess This House
- 17:00 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
- 17:55 5 Star Family Reunion
- 18:50 Come Date With Me Australia
- 19:20 Come Date With Me Australia
- 19:45 Emmerdale
- 20:15 Coronation Street
- 20:45 Coronation Street
- 21:10 Guess This House
- 22:00 Paul O'Grady's Animal Orphans
- 22:55 5 Star Family Reunion
- 23:50 Emmerdale



**MY OLD LADY ON OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL**

- 13:00 Brad Meltzer's Lost History
- 14:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 15:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 16:00 Ancient Aliens
- 17:00 Ancient Top 10
- 18:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 19:00 Brad Meltzer's Lost History
- 20:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 21:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 22:00 Ancient Aliens
- 23:00 Million Dollar Genius

**HISTORY**

- 00:30 American Pickers
- 01:20 Britain's Bloody Crown: War Of The Roses
- 02:10 Big Easy Motors
- 02:35 Big Easy Motors
- 03:00 Forged In Fire
- 03:50 Storage Wars
- 04:15 American Pickers
- 05:05 Pawn Stars
- 06:00 Mountain Men
- 07:00 Ultimate Wheels
- 07:50 Ice Road Truckers
- 08:40 Counting Cars
- 09:05 Counting Cars
- 09:30 Pawn Stars
- 09:55 Pawn Stars
- 10:20 Storage Wars
- 10:45 Storage Wars
- 11:10 American Pickers
- 12:00 Alone
- 12:50 America's 9/11 Flag: Rise From The Ashes
- 13:40 Swamp People
- 14:30 Ax Men
- 15:20 Mountain Men
- 16:10 Ultimate Wheels
- 17:00 Storage Wars
- 17:25 Storage Wars
- 17:50 Pawn Stars
- 18:15 Pawn Stars
- 18:40 Forged In Fire
- 19:30 Big Easy Motors
- 19:55 Big Easy Motors
- 20:20 Mountain Men
- 21:10 American Pickers
- 22:00 Billion Dollar Wreck
- 22:50 Gold Hunters: Legend Of The Superstition...
- 23:40 Time Team

**NAT GEO WILD HD**

- 00:30 Salmon Wars
- 01:20 Little Killers
- 02:10 Wild 24
- 03:00 Black Mamba: Kiss Of Death
- 04:45 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
- 05:40 Unlikely Animal Friends
- 06:35 Black Mamba: Kiss Of Death
- 07:30 Polar Bear Invasion
- 08:25 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
- 09:20 Unlikely Animal Friends
- 10:15 Animals Of The Year
- 11:10 How Human Are You?
- 12:05 World's Weirdest Extreme Body Parts
- 13:00 Alien Crab
- 13:55 Mother Croc
- 14:50 Unlikely Animal Friends: Bark-Tacular
- 15:45 World's Weirdest Animal Faces
- 16:40 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
- 17:35 Strangest Bird Alive
- 18:30 How Human Are You?
- 19:25 Unlikely Animal Friends: Bark-Tacular
- 20:20 World's Weirdest Animal Faces
- 21:10 Dr. Oakley: Yukon Vet
- 22:00 Strangest Bird Alive
- 22:50 How Human Are You?
- 23:40 Unlikely Animal Friends: Bark-Tacular

**OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY**

- 00:45 Cyrus
- 02:30 Absolutely Anything
- 04:00 Road Trip
- 05:45 Cheech & Chong's The Corsican Brothers
- 07:15 After The Ball
- 09:00 Amateur Night
- 10:45 Cheech & Chong's The Corsican Brothers
- 12:15 After The Ball
- 14:00 Amateur Night
- 15:45 Kicking And Screaming
- 17:30 Ride
- 19:15 Junior
- 21:15 Awful Nice
- 23:00 A Fantastic Fear Of Everything

**OSN MOVIES FESTIVAL**

- 00:00 Inherent Vice
- 02:30 Belles Familles
- 04:30 Hoosiers
- 06:30 No God No Master
- 08:15 A Country Called Home
- 09:45 WarGames
- 11:45 My Old Lady
- 13:30 Belles Familles
- 15:30 Neil Young: Heart Of Gold
- 17:15 Wildlife
- 19:00 Before I Disappear
- 20:45 Boyhood
- 23:30 Dope

**OSN MOVIES HD KIDS**

- 00:15 Bee Movie
- 02:00 Ratchet And Clank
- 03:45 Capture The Flag
- 05:30 Robosapien: Rebooted
- 07:00 Pet Pals In Windland
- 08:30 The Tale Of Despereaux
- 10:15 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 11:45 Bee Movie
- 13:30 Ratchet And Clank
- 15:15 Oops Noah Is Gone
- 16:45 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 18:15 The Nutcracker Sweet
- 19:45 The Wild Thornberrys Movie
- 21:15 Oops Noah Is Gone
- 22:45 The Tale Of Despereaux

**OSN MOVIES HD**

- 00:30 Fear And Loathing In Las Vegas
- 02:30 Mad Love
- 04:15 Goosebumps
- 06:00 Steve Jobs
- 08:00 The Bucket List
- 09:45 Con Air
- 11:45 Big
- 13:30 Steve Jobs
- 15:30 One Fine Day
- 17:30 Last Knights
- 19:30 Unstoppable



**HARD TARGET 2 ON OSN MOVIES ACTION**

- 03:20 Silent Witness
- 04:15 Silent Witness
- 05:10 Doctors
- 05:40 Eastenders
- 06:10 Stella
- 07:00 Death In Paradise
- 07:55 Doctors
- 08:25 Eastenders
- 08:55 Dickensian
- 09:45 Stella
- 10:40 Death In Paradise
- 11:35 Doctors
- 12:05 Eastenders
- 12:40 Dickensian
- 13:30 Stella
- 14:25 Death In Paradise
- 15:20 Doctors
- 15:50 Eastenders
- 16:20 Dickensian
- 17:15 Stella
- 18:10 Death In Paradise
- 19:05 Doctors
- 19:35 Eastenders
- 20:05 Dickensian
- 21:00 Holly City
- 22:00 Benidorm
- 22:50 I Want My Wife Back
- 23:20 Big School
- 23:50 Inside No. 9

- 07:20 Mythbusters
- 08:00 Doki
- 08:25 Kids vs Film
- 08:50 Bad Dog
- 09:40 How It's Made
- 10:05 How It's Made
- 10:30 Science Of The Movies
- 11:20 Mythbusters
- 12:10 Bad Dog
- 13:00 Don't Drive Here
- 13:50 How It's Made
- 14:15 How It's Made
- 14:40 Strangest Weather On Earth
- 15:30 Doki
- 15:55 Kids vs Film
- 16:20 Bad Dog
- 17:10 Science Of The Movies
- 18:00 Bad Universe
- 18:50 Raging Nature
- 19:40 Destroyed In Seconds
- 20:05 Destroyed In Seconds
- 20:30 How It's Made
- 20:55 How It's Made
- 21:20 Mythbusters
- 22:10 Bad Universe
- 23:00 Raging Nature
- 23:50 Destroyed In Seconds

- 22:05 Girl Meets World
- 22:30 That's So Raven
- 22:55 Star Darlings
- 23:00 Shake It Up
- 23:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
- 23:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

**Disney Junior**

- 00:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 00:35 The Hive
- 00:45 Loopedidoo
- 01:00 Henry Hugglemonster
- 01:15 Calimero
- 01:30 Art Attack
- 01:55 Zou
- 02:05 Loopedidoo
- 02:20 Henry Hugglemonster
- 02:35 Calimero
- 02:50 Zou
- 03:05 Art Attack
- 03:30 The Hive
- 03:40 Loopedidoo
- 03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
- 04:10 Art Attack
- 04:35 Loopedidoo
- 04:50 Calimero
- 05:05 Art Attack
- 05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:45 Zou
- 06:00 Art Attack
- 06:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 06:45 Loopedidoo
- 07:00 Zou
- 07:15 Calimero
- 07:30 Loopedidoo
- 07:45 Henry Hugglemonster
- 08:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 08:25 Sofia The First
- 08:50 The Lion Guard
- 09:15 PJ Masks
- 09:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 10:05 Goldie & Bear
- 10:35 The Lion Guard
- 11:00 Sofia The First
- 11:30 Doc McStuffins
- 11:55 Miles From Tomorrow
- 12:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 12:50 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 13:15 Gummi Bears
- 13:40 Miles From Tomorrow
- 14:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 14:35 PJ Masks
- 15:00 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 15:30 The Lion Guard
- 16:00 Sofia The First
- 16:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 16:55 Sofia The First
- 17:20 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 17:50 The Adventures Of The Disney Fairies
- 18:15 Sofia The First
- 18:40 Doc McStuffins
- 19:05 PJ Masks
- 19:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 20:05 Sofia The First
- 20:35 Sofia The First
- 21:05 Goldie & Bear
- 21:35 My Friends Tigger & Pooh
- 22:00 Gummi Bears

**ID X**

- 00:40 Your Worst Nightmare
- 01:30 Blood Relatives
- 02:20 The Perfect Murder
- 03:10 Pandora's Box: Unleashing Evil
- 04:00 Your Worst Nightmare
- 04:48 I Almost Got Away With It
- 05:36 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
- 06:24 Swamp Murders
- 07:12 I'd Kill For You
- 08:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 08:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 09:40 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
- 10:30 Swamp Murders
- 11:20 I'd Kill For You
- 12:10 Killer Instinct With Chris Hansen
- 13:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 14:40 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
- 15:05 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
- 15:30 Swamp Murders
- 16:20 I'd Kill For You
- 17:10 Evil Online
- 18:00 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 18:25 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 18:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 19:40 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
- 20:05 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
- 20:30 Swamp Murders
- 21:20 I'd Kill For You
- 22:10 Murder Comes To Town
- 23:00 Murder Chose Me
- 23:50 Murder Book

**Disney Channel HD**

- 00:10 Hank Zipzer
- 00:35 Binny And The Ghost
- 01:00 Binny And The Ghost

**crime & investigation network**

- 00:00 Paranormal State
- 00:30 Paranormal State
- 01:00 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath
- 02:00 Paranormal State
- 02:30 Paranormal State
- 03:00 My Crazy Ex
- 04:00 Paranormal State
- 05:00 Leah Remini: Scientology And The Aftermath
- 06:00 Paranormal State
- 06:30 Paranormal State
- 07:00 I Love You...But I Lied
- 08:00 My Crazy Ex
- 09:00 Evil Up Close
- 10:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
- 11:00 Homicide Hunter
- 12:00 The First 48
- 14:00 My Crazy Ex
- 15:00 Evil Up Close
- 16:00 Homicide Hunter
- 17:00 Fred Dineage: Murder Casebook
- 18:00 The First 48
- 20:00 Evil Up Close
- 21:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
- 22:00 Homicide Hunter

**COMEDY CENTRAL**

- 00:15 Tosh.0
- 00:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
- 01:05 South Park
- 01:30 South Park
- 01:55 South Park
- 02:20 Ugly Americans
- 02:45 The Alternative Comedy Experience
- 03:10 South Park

**EHD**

- 00:00 El News
- 00:15 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 01:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 01:55 Fashion Police
- 02:50 El News
- 03:50 Celebrity Style Story
- 04:20 Celebrity Style Story
- 04:50 Mariah's World
- 06:30 Celebrity Style Story
- 07:00 La Clippers Dance Squad
- 07:55 El News
- 08:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
- 09:10 El News: Daily Pop
- 10:10 So Cosmo
- 11:05 So Cosmo

**H2 HD**

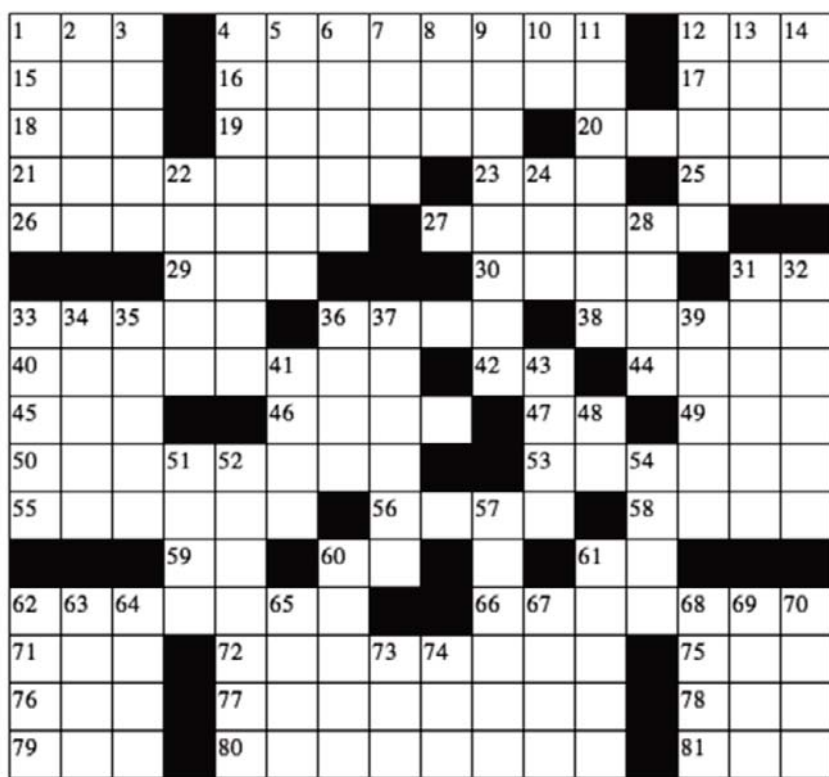
- 00:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved
- 01:00 Brad Meltzer's Lost History
- 02:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 03:00 America's Book Of Secrets
- 03:50 Ancient Aliens







CROSSWORD 1597



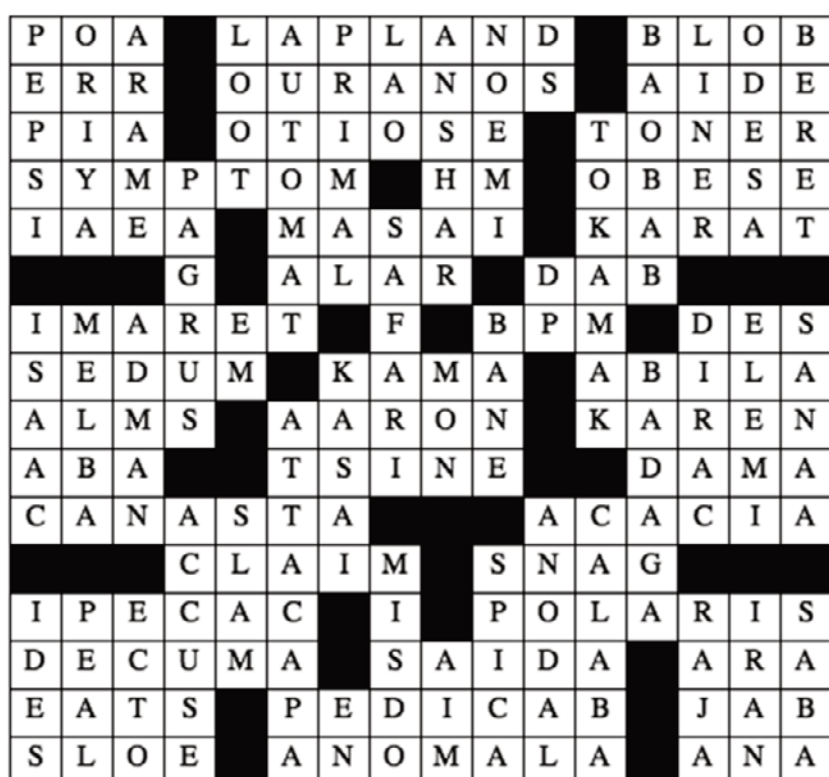
ACROSS

1. A humorous anecdote or remark.
4. Durable fragrant wood.
12. An authoritative direction or instruction to do something.
15. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
16. An orientation that characterizes the thinking of a group or nation.
17. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
18. (British) Your grandmother.
19. A hanging fold of loose skin on an elderly person's neck.
20. 100 ngwee equal 1 kwacha.
21. A small spike (as the inflorescence on grasses and sedges).
23. The capital and largest city of Japan.
25. 10 grams.
26. An implement for practical use (especially in a household).
27. (of soil) Soft and watery.
29. Goddess of criminal rashness and its punishment.
30. Make amends for.
33. A state of peace agreed to between opponents so they can discuss peace terms.
38. A constitutional monarchy on the western part of the islands of Samoa in the South Pacific.
40. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the western Dakotas.
42. A unit of information equal to 1024 bytes.
44. Port city in northwestern Belgium and industrial center.
45. The rate at which energy is drawn from a source that produces a flow of electricity in a circuit.
46. (British) Diesel oil used in cars and lorries with diesel engines (from d(iesel) e(n)gine r(oad) v(ehicle)).
47. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
49. Perennial herb of East India to Polynesia and Australia cultivated for its large edible root yielding Otaheite arrowroot starch.
50. Tall marsh plant with cylindrical seed heads that explode when mature shedding large quantities of down.
53. 1 species.
55. Make attractive or lovable.
56. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
58. A Russian river.
59. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
62. An ambitious and aspiring young person.
66. Pertaining to or resembling amoebae.
71. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
72. Type genus of the Desmodontidae.
75. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
76. A doctor's degree in education.
77. A drug (trade name Atabrine) used to treat certain worm infestations and once used to treat malaria.
78. A white linen liturgical vestment with sleeves.
79. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
80. A great raja.
81. (Irish) Ancient Irish god (probably a god of the sun).

DOWN

1. A province in north-central China.
2. Make fit for, or change to suit a new purpose.
3. A spirit believed by Muslims to inhabit the earth and influence mankind by appearing in the form of humans or animals.
4. A step to one side (as in boxing or dancing).
5. Medium-sized penguins occurring in large colonies on the Adelie coast of Antarctica.
6. The post at the top or bottom of a flight of stairs.
7. A person who is not very bright.
8. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
9. Workplace consisting of a long narrow path or shed where rope is made.
10. A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
11. Prairie dogs.
12. Humorously vulgar.
13. The United Nations agency concerned with atomic energy.
14. A small amount of residue.
22. A special way of doing something.
24. A light touch or stroke.
28. Small beads made from polished shells and formerly used as money by native Americans.
31. A member of one of the four divisions of the prehistoric Greeks.
32. A member of an agricultural people in south-eastern India.
34. The first compartment of the stomach of a ruminant.
35. Not fed.
36. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
37. Italian sociologist and economist whose theories influenced the development of fascism in Italy (1848-1923).
39. Wood of any of various maple trees.
41. The sixth month of the civil year.
43. An island in Indonesia east of Java.
48. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
51. An administrator in charge of a division of a university or college.
52. Covered with paving material.
54. (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
57. The French-speaking part of the Canadian Maritime Provinces.
60. (Judaism) A Jewish festival (traditionally 8 days) celebrating the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.
61. A minor Hebrew prophet (8th century BC).
63. In bed.
64. A quantity of no importance.
65. The 2nd letter of the Greek alphabet.
67. Tough Asiatic grass whose culms are used for ropes and baskets.
68. Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
69. An Eskimo hut.
70. Open-heart surgery in which the rib cage is opened and a section of a blood vessel is grafted from the aorta to the coronary artery to bypass the blocked section of the coronary artery and improve the blood supply to the heart.
73. A master's degree in business.
74. Canadian hockey player (born 1948).

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Elevate your intake of foods or supplements in order to stay alert and clear. You will want to feel good about yourself and the way you do things-this addition to your diet will certainly help your feeling of wellbeing. Be wise in your task to eliminate as much unnecessary stress as you can. Delegate some of your workload and say no when you feel there are unreasonable demands on your time. This is the time of the year to get outside and enjoy nature. Create and plan some fun opportunities to do just that-having fun with friends, co-workers, loved ones, etc., can lift everyone's energies. Work, health, diet and the other things that take care of us if we take care of them can provide a lot of satisfaction as a new life phase begins for you.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

As a kind and considerate person, you will probably be helping your mom or sister with a move or some repair or a gardening project soon and you will find boxes and someone from whom you can borrow a truck with which to be helpful with the project. A weekend move or some other project needs preparation and you have begun to list the things you can do to make that move a little easier. Your schedule at work is tedious and the occasional break in your day creates the distraction to which you take pleasure in contributing your energy. You enjoy helping and you have learned to say no when you are not able to help. You are able to help others see guidelines that they may not have considered. Music is for tonight.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

The team spirit is strong this morning but can easily fall apart later in the day when there is a probability of some jealousy. Perhaps it is only competition that becomes a problem. Because you now know to be aware of this difficulty you can change frustrations to a satisfied result. You are in line to lead others, or perhaps you already lead others. You can handle emotional and personal issues-vulnerable areas-where angels fear to tread. You can eliminate most in-house difficulties. Quite a bit of personal research may be required for a class or just for some project you enjoy. You may find that scrolling through the links on a specific subject you will soon be writing down facts and data that complete your research. Rest early-this is a busy day.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Whatever it is you are doing today brings with it the opportunity to improve situations around you. The job of decorating or plotting out a plan which needs equations and percentages results in successful expressions of your abilities. Your profession shines and encourages others to make a positive impression with the talents they can exhibit. Being musically inclined you may enjoy singing on the trip home-your personality is infectious which invites others to jump in and join you in your music. You meet people easily and enjoy hanging out with your friends in the afternoon and sometimes in the evening. Learn from people who share your talents and you will advance in several areas of your life. You enjoy passing on your own experiences as well.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Yours is the most practical of environments. You can manipulate every idea or situation and put it to good use. Other value you for your ability to make non-sense decisions and you may receive compliments along those lines today. Someone will come to you with a just-suppose type of problem. You always seem sensible and will be able to lend good advice. Be careful that you do not become opinionated, however. You are, for the most part, unmoved by tears and feelings. Clear decisions affecting others can be made. You could be a bit restless this afternoon and may enjoy some fun time with friends. Be careful in the choices you make regarding the membership to some new club or group. Exciting new experiences await you.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You have a definite sense of mission today. Above all, you are a progressive and you enjoy putting into practice that which is good for all. Some may find your job most difficult but you tend to enjoy the intricate ways to use your brain. Change and inner growth tends to come through your relationships with both friends and loved ones. Marriage could be very intense and not at all superficial. You may find yourself in a quandary between an environment that is very comfortable and supportive versus a real need to grow and progress. Making these two directions work together may be the big topic today. This evening there is plenty of time to enjoy the company of family. Laughter can be heard where the people gather in your home.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

The aggressiveness you may be feeling this day can be used to push forward with your business plans. When it comes to mental work, you have a perfect gift for research and investigation. You enjoy examining and analyzing, in particular when it comes to psychological and sensitive areas of the mind. Your ability to sift through the dross and come up with what is essential is exceptional. You like to discuss and communicate, again, at a psychological and very personal level. Your mind is often on communication, how your present yourself and come across with others. This afternoon you will be able to spend some relaxing and enjoyable time with loved ones. You may feel unusually affectionate and physical this evening.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Communicating is fun this morning. The mind and all that is mental will be the source of continued change and adjustment. Letters, writing, speaking and all the things that have to do with cognitive work assume great importance. Your mind tends to be full of new and creative ideas and concepts regarding some changes in your work development. The result of your efforts is attention-grabbing and you will find much satisfaction. You may be involved in hours of involved conversation with loved ones over how you will proceed with some changes at home, especially in obtaining a building permit. You have very clear insight, even genius, when it comes to discovering or inventing things. You require no teaching and your timing is perfect.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

This seems to be a very superficial morning. It may not be possible for you to comprehend anything remotely meaningful or moving. There is perhaps a sense of the artificial, repetitive and senseless. You cannot seem to begin a project. Perhaps the out-of-doors is calling. Allow yourself some time to develop a working plan. While contemplating the day, you could come up with new ideas for adventure and relaxation-after the chores. This afternoon you seem better able to contend with any previous sluggishness. You are in a great mood this evening and can appreciate your own better qualities. You may see value in an older person or someone in authority. Everything comes together this evening and you are appreciative of life and love, etc.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may feel that you might lose your mind under the current mental pressure; you will not. You will benefit from logical insights, getting to the heart of things. This is a real time to work on your specific projects and to strengthen your career. After the noon break you may find that you need to perform some research at a library or museum. Fresh insight comes to you through mass-media news reports such as broadcasting, publishing, advertising-giving you a whole new perspective on a particular subject. You enjoy and appreciate your life situation. Your system of values may deepen, providing you with a better sense of discrimination and good taste. Romance is a plus this evening. A good beginning is a lovely dinner designed by you.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Conflicts in the workplace can be settled through your intelligent comprehension and reason can be used in order to find positive results. You sense the needs of your customers and finding what fits their needs makes for successful outcomes. Selling property, collecting money and involving yourself in some supervisory activity are all favored today. Your waking time is filled with the job of fulfilling your life and helping others to fulfill theirs. It is important to you, that you do work or express your talents in ways that are heartwarming as well as financially fulfilling. Tonight you and your loved one may decide to venture a guess as to where or what you will be doing in two years, five years, etc. The future begins to take a positive shape.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You are conservative and security-conscious and may have suggestions about better protecting important documents or valuables. There is a yearning to broaden your horizons. Law, politics, education, travel and religion are some of the areas where you may talk about having further adventures. Everything works together to bring out your unique traits. You may find that someone close to you understands and is supportive of your ideas. There is some indication of restlessness on your part and you may not appreciate someone's unrealistic approach to a situation. This evening you are able to put the finishing touches on some long-awaited creative venture. You would be smart to develop your creations more often and sell them. Horoscopes may 2017

WORD SEARCH

90's Songs 3

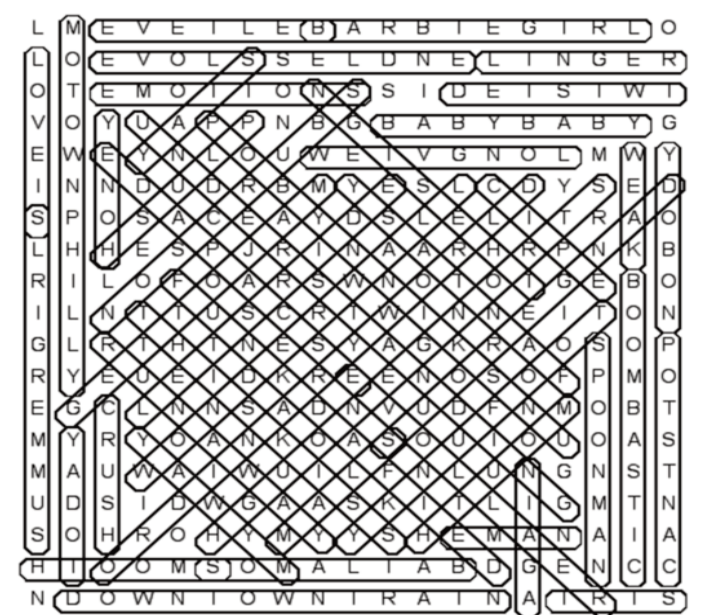
Find and circle all of the 1990's songs that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell an additional song.



- |               |             |            |                |
|---------------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| ANGELS        | HANDS       | LULLABY    | THE POWER      |
| ANOTHER NIGHT | HIGH ENOUGH | MIAMI      | THIS HOUSE     |
| BABY          | HOLD ON     | MY BODY    | TOGETHER AGAIN |
| BLACK         | HOOK        | ONE WEEK   | TOO MUCH       |
| CANDY RAIN    | HYPNOTIZE   | POISON     | TUBTHUMPING    |
| CUPID         | I BELIEVE   | REGULATE   | UNPRETTY       |
| DITTY         | IMPULSIVE   | RELEASE ME | WATERFALLS     |
| DREAMLOVER    | INSENSITIVE | SABOTAGE   | WHAT'S UP      |
| EVERY MORNING | IRONIC      | SHINE      | WHATTA MAN     |
| FLY AWAY      | JEREMY      | SHY GUY    | WILD NIGHT     |
| FORTUNATE     | KISS ME     | SWEET LADY | ZOMBIE         |
| FROZEN        | LAST NIGHT  | TEMPTATION |                |

Yesterday's Solution

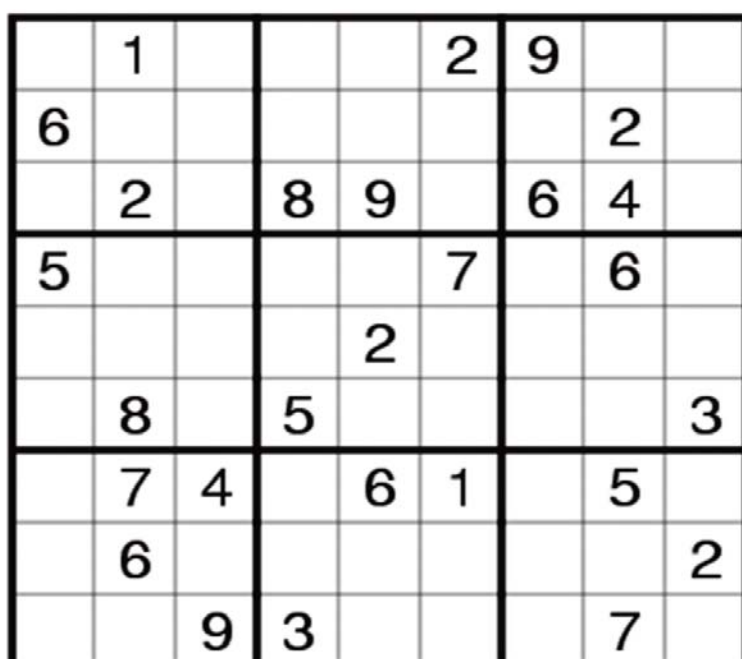
90's Songs 2



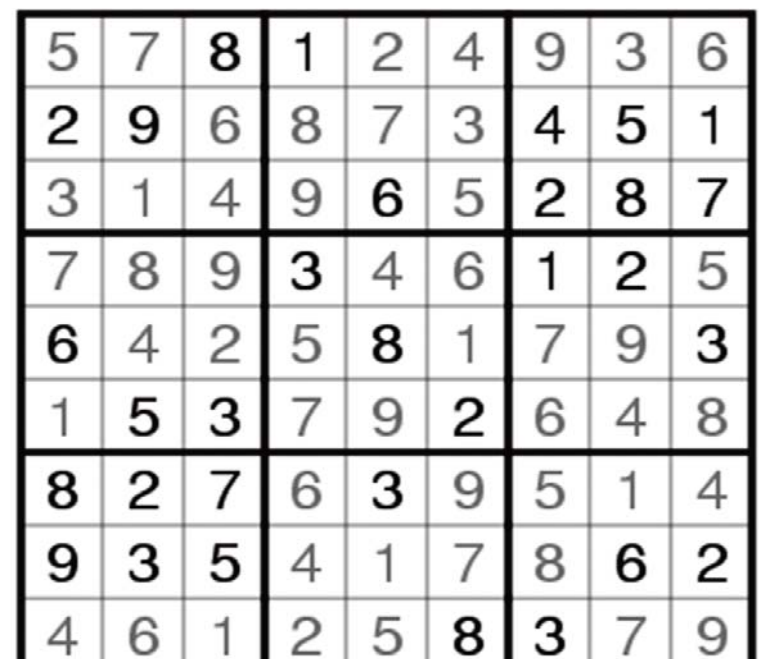
- |                |              |                |               |
|----------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| AGAIN          | EPIC         | MOUTH          | STAY          |
| BABY, BABY     | ESCAPADE     | MY WAY         | STRONG ENOUGH |
| BAILAMOS       | FANTASY      | NAME           | SUMMER GIRLS  |
| BARBIE GIRL    | FUNKDAFIED   | NO SCRUBS      | THE SIGN      |
| BELIEVE        | GETTO JAM    | NOBODY         | THIS KISS     |
| BOOMBASTIC     | HONEY        | ORDINARY WORLD | TODAY         |
| CAN'T STOP     | IRIS         | PUSH           | TOO FUNKY     |
| CRUSH          | LET'S RIDE   | REAL LOVE      | TWISTED       |
| DANGEROUS      | LINGER       | RUNAWAY        | UNDERSTANDING |
| DOWNTOWN TRAIN | LONGVIEW     | SLAM           | UNSKINNY BOP  |
| EMOTIONS       | LOVE IS      | SMOOTH         | WEAK          |
| ENDLESS LOVE   | MOTOWNPHILLY | SPOONMAN       | WONDERWALL    |

The hidden song title is: LOSING MY RELIGION

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





For labor-related inquiries and complaints:  
Call MSAL hotline 128

### 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
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadisiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



### PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khalidiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khalidiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

### INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antigua	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

### STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



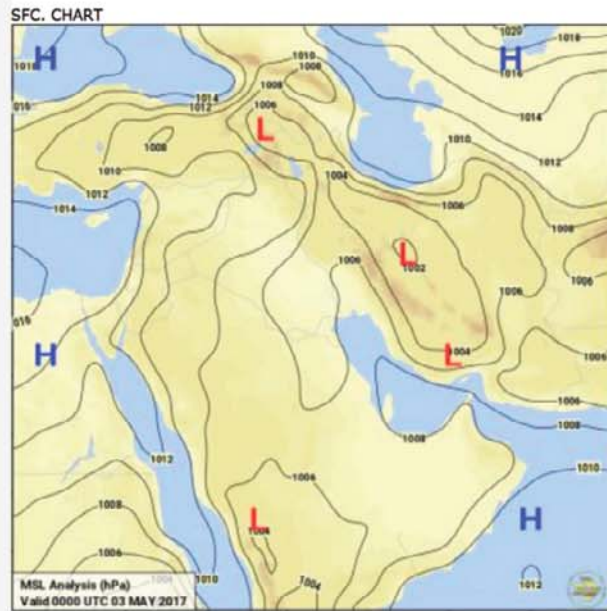
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630  
Fax: (+965) 24348714  
www.met.gov.kw

### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 03/05/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 37 °C

**By Day :** Partly cloudy with light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 10 - 32 km/h with a chance for scattered light rain  
**By Night :** Partly cloudy with light to moderate south easterly changing to north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h



### Four-Day Forecast

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy + scattered rain	partly cloudy+scattered rain	M.sunny	partly cloudy+scattered rain+dust
Min Temp °C	26	26	25	27
Max Temp °C	38	39	37	38
Wind Direction	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	south easterly changing to south westerly	north easterly becoming south easterly	south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 28	15 - 40	08 - 28	25 - 50

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

### Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

### Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	REC	Max °C	EXP
KUWAIT CITY	26		37	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	26		37	
ABDALY	24		38	
BUBYAN	25		28	
JAHRA	27		39	
FAILAKA ISLAND	25		32	
SALMIYAH	25		27	
AHMADI	25		27	
JAL ALIYAH	24		38	
QAROH ISLAND	25		27	
UMM AL-MARADEM	25		27	
NUWAISIB	28		38	
WAFRA	26		39	
SALMY	26		40	
MUTRIBA	25		39	

### Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	40
Min Temp (°C)	26
Max Rel Hum (%)	42
Min Rel Hum (%)	15
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	60 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	05:05
Sunset	18:25

### Prayer Times

Fajr	03:39
Sunrise	05:05
Zuhr	11:45
Asr	15:21
Sunset	18:25
Isha	19:49



## PRIVATE CLINICS

<b>Ophthalmologists</b>	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
<b>Ear, Nose &amp; Throat (ENT)</b>	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
<b>General Practitioners</b>	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
<b>Urologists</b>	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

<b>Plastic Surgeons</b>	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
<b>Family Doctor</b>	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
<b>Psychiatrists</b>	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
<b>Gynaecologists &amp; Obstetricians</b>	
DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
<b>General Surgeons</b>	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
<b>Internists, Chest &amp; Heart</b>	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

<b>Paediatricians</b>	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
<b>Dermatology</b>	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
<b>Dentists</b>	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
<b>Neurologists</b>	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
<b>Gastrologists</b>	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

<b>Endocrinologist</b>	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
<b>Physiotherapists &amp; VD</b>	
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
<b>Rheumatologists:</b>	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
<b>Internist, Chest &amp; Heart</b>	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
<b>Consultant Cardiologist</b>	
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123





In this file photo people watch a performance by the Trenton Circus Squad in Trenton, NJ. — AP

## Circus of life: Dreams take flight amid urban blight

A group of would-be circus performers in New Jersey's capital city are using unicycles, acrobatics and spinning plates to bridge the divide between poverty and privilege. The Trenton Circus Squad brings kids ages 12-17 from both the struggling city and its wealthier suburbs together, using circus skills to give them a sense of belonging and a belief in their own abilities. While teaching young people to be the ring masters of their own lives, the kids also work on balancing on large balls and wood planks, stilt walking, trapeze skills, juggling and slapstick clown routines.

"Because of the high crime, the high unemployment going on here, hope's hard to find in this city," said program director Tom von Oehsen, who trained as a clown with Ringling Bros. in the 1980s. "And these kids bring a lot of hope, and a lot of positive energy to all the different communities in this city." Von Oehsen and Zoe Brookes, the group's executive director, created the circus squad two years ago to try to change perceptions and stereotypes that lead to negative assumptions about teens in inner cities.

Von Oehsen calls it a "game changer" that other cities can embrace to engage inner city youth and keep them off the streets. Brookes says they give the kids "a really safe place to test their limits and help them do things they never thought were possible." "The kids in the program really become role models," Brookes said. "And we bring in people from many other towns really to change their perspective on what

Trenton has to offer, and what the kids in Trenton have to offer the community."

The group, which plans to start a pilot program in Camden this summer, performs at nursing homes, hospitals and community events. Kids from other organizations like Boys and Girls clubs and Scout troops tag along on field trips. While it started as a service project for suburban high school students to fulfill their community service requirement for graduation, the kids kept coming back even after they completed their hours. The squad is free to kids ages 12-17, relying on donations to keep its doors open. It performs six times a year and holds community workshops in an old factory, teaching even younger kids the art of the circus. Children ages 6 and up are welcome to join a free circus workshop led by members of the squad.

Squad members say they enjoy meeting kids from different backgrounds, knowing that they share some of the same concerns. "If I have problems at home or school, I can tell them because they're like family. They won't bring you down about," said Janaeya Brown, 14. "They won't laugh at you. They will help you." Gabbie Cain is a 16-year-old squad member from nearby Princeton. "I feel like I connect on some basis, but I've never been exposed to the living that some people here experience," Cain said. "So, I've learned a lot just by coming here." — AP

## TOUGH COOKIES TO BRAVE THE HEIGHTS AT HONG KONG BUN FESTIVAL



A traditional bun baker holds a stamp which reads (Peace Safe), used to mark buns made during the annual Cheung Chau bun festival in Hong Kong.



A baker stamps buns with Chinese characters which read "Peace Safe" during the annual Cheung Chau bun festival.

Tens of thousands gathered in Hong Kong yesterday for one of its most colorful festivals, a whirlwind of music and costume culminating in a dramatic climb up a precipitous "bun tower". Pipers, drummers and lion dancers accompanied by a cacophony of cymbals filled the streets of the normally sleepy island of Cheung Chau, as part of the annual "bun festival" parade. Young children in intricate outfits posing as deities, local sporting heroes and even politicians gave the impression of floating above the crowds as they were wheeled around on high pedestals.

Along the parade route shoppers bought bags of the sweet buns at the heart of the celebrations. A late-night scramble by agile competitors up an 18-metre (60-foot) tower made from imitation buns was sched-

uled to top off the festivities. The whole event harks back to the 19th century, when Cheung Chau was struggling to combat a plague and pirate raids. The story goes that local fishermen paraded a statue of Taoist sea deity Pak Tai as part of a carnival to drive away the plague and evil spirits. It worked and Pak Tai has been a spiritual hero ever since. The festivities today revolve around Cheung Chau's Pak Tai temple and attract visitors from all over Hong Kong and abroad.

Kwok Yu-chuen runs one of the bakeries that pumps out the famous festival buns and has been working there for 40 years. Made from rice flour and filled with sweet pastes including lotus seed, red bean and sesame, they are embossed with Chinese characters meaning "peace" and "safe" and symbolize health and

prosperity. "Many people hope for peace, safety and good health by eating the buns from Cheung Chau," said Kwok, 53.

"That's why they like to come here to join the celebrations." Real buns are no longer used to create the bun tower. Instead, plastic buns lined a steel frame as part of safety measures brought in after an old-style structure-made from bamboo and real buns-collapsed in 1978 and caused injuries. But competitors each year still scale heady heights, stuffing buns into sacks they are carrying as they climb. Buns from the top of the tower carry the most points and the highest scorer is the winner. — AP



A young girl (top center) dressed as a deity takes part in a parade during the annual Cheung Chau bun festival.



A young girl (center) dressed as a deity takes part in a parade during the annual Cheung Chau bun festival in Hong Kong. — AFP photos

### Review

## Joan Shelley's self-titled album is simply lovely



This cover image released by No Quarter Records shows the self-titled album by Joan Shelley. — AP

"Joan Shelley" reflects the beauty of simplicity. On her self-titled fourth album, Shelley is often accompanied only by acoustic guitar as producer Jeff Tweedy wisely puts the spotlight on her luminous dimming-of-the-day alto. More than ever, the Kentuckian explores the connection between the British folk tradition and Appalachia. This is music found on a pub crawl, or on a porch overlooking the Blue Ridge Mountains. Half of the songs were recorded on the first take, and the result is a relaxed mood throughout.

Shelley's lyrics are occasionally undercut by choppy syntax, but she uses distinctive imagery to describe the tug of love - and the tug of the countryside. Her allusion to a roll in the clover involves a foal, and she sings about the pleasures of planting, fruit and idle time. Graceful melodies adorn the slow, short songs, where subtle variations in tempo and arrangement loom large. Spencer Tweedy's subdued drumming lends a swaying lilt to "Where I'll Find You," but the pace remains leisurely throughout, and even "Go Wild" is a ballad. With a voice like Shelley's, there's no need to rush. — AP

## Permits, please: East Germany alive in Berlin 'Good Bye Lenin!' event

Tucked behind 10-storey tower blocks in the heart of Berlin stands an imposing metal gate marked "Border zone, restricted area", guarded by a stern-looking Stasi officer. "Permits, please," visitors are told, as the gate cracks open to reveal a border post with another officer asking for identity papers—all part of a live event featuring "Good Bye Lenin!", the popular 2003 film set in communist East Germany.

Organizers of the show have brought the defunct state to life in an old post office, and for seven nights at a hefty 30 euros (\$33) per ticket, visitors can taste life in the grim authoritarian state before ending the evening with a screening of the film. Along the corridors decorated with commemorative Communist Party congress metal plates and portraits of former East German leader Erich Honecker, Stasi guards whisper conspiratorially. In a windowless room, a secretary is furiously typing documents, while a fake grocery store sells Eastern products like Bautz'ner mustard or toys featuring the cartoon character Sandman.

And at a restaurant run by East German train caterer Mitropa, the menu has features just three food options—gherkins and two hearty dishes ubiquitous in the former eastern bloc—solyanka, a thick Russian soup, and goulash. They can be washed down with Club Cola—the former German Democratic Republic's answer to Coke—or a luminescent green Gruene Wiese cocktail or Pfeffi schnapps, a pungent peppermint concoction.

There are also rules to be observed in the 2,000 square metres (21,000 square feet) recreating the former police state—film-goers have to turn up in clothes in keeping with East German fashion and no photography is allowed. "It's always great to hear people saying that when they watch a film in the cinema, they feel like they have been transported to another world," event organizer Christopher Zwickler told AFP. "So we thought, how can we take this one step further, so that you have a live cinema experience where the viewer also becomes a leading actor that evening."

### 'Ostalgie'

The beloved comedy-drama "Good Bye Lenin!" tells the story of a young man who desperately recreates life in the GDR for his mother, a staunch believer in the Communist

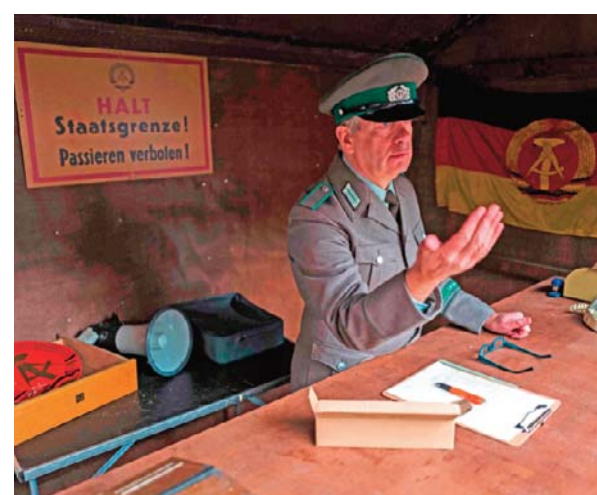
cause, who has just woken up from a coma during which she completely missed the fall of the Berlin Wall. Peter Meyer of East German rock band Die Puhdys, who was invited to Monday's opening screening, noted the "Club Colas, the way in which people were welcomed" were all reminiscent of life in the east. The director of the film, Wolfgang Becker, who was also among invited guests, said the experience was "like being in an Ost-Disneyland."

Florian Balke, who was born in the east and turned up dressed in an 80s style track suit top, acknowledged the apparent enthusiasm among those who have come to relive life in the east.

But he rejected ideas that "Ostalgie" — a word that combines "nostalgia" and the German word for "East" — was anything serious. "Personally I'm glad that the Wall is no longer

there and I wouldn't want to live like it was before," said the 30-year-old who makes his living through advertisements earned through his YouTube channel. "I'm glad to see all this, but I'm happier that I can enjoy this in a free country."

For Zwickler, the event is simply a means to enhance the viewer experience and another way of attracting movie-goers as home theatres increasingly crowd out cinemas. "Maybe it's a vision for cinemas in the future, there are technical advances, 3D is getting better, sound and pictures are getting better and bigger," he said. "But there is another trend where you say we want to immerse people deeper in a film," said Zwickler, whose company plans to organize similar events twice a year. — AFP



An actor dressed as an east German border police officer gestures to guests attending a 'Socialist revival live cinema event' in Berlin, during which the German cult movie 'Goodbye Lenin!' will be shown.



An actress sits in a recreated east German office for a 'Socialist revival live cinema event' in Berlin. — AFP photos





# All we want is glowing skin!

Summer is here! With that being said, its time to start thinking of how you will keep your skin, hair, and nails looking the best during the hot weather. Trips to the pool or beach and spending a lot of time in the sun can do a lot of damage, so its important to take of yourself. I love doing at home treatments, they're so easy to do and also a much cheaper alternative!

Let's start with something we all want during summer....glowing skin! Exfoliating is essential to getting beautiful, glowing skin because it removes dead skin cells and will allow your skin to absorb moisture easier. Grapefruit is one of my favorite ingredients to add to DIY recipes because its so powerful and has an amazing effect on your skin due to the high antioxidants which fight wrinkles, discoloration, and dullness. It can work to exfoliate, detox, and brighten. All you will need for this is one grapefruit and

some sugar. You can also add in any vitamin oil or essential oil if you like. Squeeze the grapefruit juice and add it to the sugar to create your scrub. Focus on the dry, rough areas like your knees and elbows. You can also use this scrub on your face, but don't be too harsh if you have sensitive skin. The acid in the grapefruit will leave your skin extra smooth and baby soft.

One of my favorite things about summer is the combination of blonde hair and a golden tan. However, blonde hair is sometimes hard to manage when you're spending a lot of time at the pool or beach. The chlorine and other chemicals can really damage your hair color and leave your hair weak and dry. I've found this swimming pool hair remedy that works wonders after you've had a long day at the pool. It will keep your blonde hair from turning green or orange. You will need baking soda, lemon juice, and baby

shampoo for this recipe. Mix the ingredients together and shampoo your hair as usual. Cover your hair with a shower cap or bag and leave this treatment in for at least half an hour then rinse away and shampoo as you normally would.

Another favorite thing about summer is experimenting with bright, fun colors on my nails. Nothing says summer more than a beautiful tan and a pop of color on your nails to go with it. The downside is that a lot of times, some nail colors can leave your nails stained and yellow. The great thing is you can remove those stains with this DIY recipe. Mix together baking soda, olive oil, and lemon juice then dip a toothbrush into the mixture and brush and massage your nails to thoroughly remove the stains. Not only will this remove the stains, the olive oil will help to moisturize cuticles, which will make your nails healthier and stronger.

## Music flirts with botany in the exquisite Kerria timepieces by Balmain Watches



The swirling form of a violin scroll planted the seed for the design of the Balmain Kerria, named after a beautiful flowering shrub. Cultivating this dream into reality required expertise, determination and a generous sprinkling of patience and passion. Technically it was by no means a walk in the park. Yet the resultant family of Swiss-made timepieces leaves no shadow of doubt that the investment was worthwhile. Kerria seduces with its elegance, feminine charm and celebration of confidence.

The sophisticated signature of the 22-strong Kerria family is its unique case shape. Harmoniously uniting the case to the strap or bracelet, this flowing form is secured by a central attachment, something of a trademark for Balmain fine watchmaking. On some models the visual finale of the

scroll echoes smooth art nouveau shaping. On others it's a meeting point for a cluster of sparkling diamonds. Diamonds also take a bow to mark the passing of the hours and on some variations to frame the case.

The iconic, botanically-inspired Balmain arabesque decoration takes center stage as a subtle two-tone backcloth that catches the light as the wearer moves and also sometimes as delicate metal relief on the dial. Whether these watches are matchmade with a silk evening dress, or equipping the wrist of a rock chick, they will always look the part. A trio of metals - rose or yellow PVD and silver stainless steel - satisfy a variety of tastes and moods. These are accompanied by a choice of slender black or white crocodile-patterned leather straps. The heart and soul of Kerria is

a Swiss ETA 902.002 quartz movement. Balmain has again found a unique way of saying it with flowers.

### Technical features

- Swiss quartz movement ETA 902.002
- Case in 316L stainless steel or rose or yellow PVD, 29 mm in ? and 5.50 mm thick. Some cases set with 62 Wesselton diamonds 1.00 mm in ? totalling 0.24 ct
- Sapphire crystal
- Choice of dials: black or white MOP set with 4 diamonds, with or without modern Arabesques
- Black or white crocodile-patterned leather straps
- Water resistance: 50m
- Recommended retail price: from 345 to 995 CHF



Some of the fashion is on display during the Costume Institute press preview for "Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. — AFP photos

# New York pays tribute to Japanese fashion icon Kawakubo

Twists, knots, curls and folds: the fantastical, boundary-pushing creations of legendary designer Rei Kawakubo explore the space where fashion ends and art begins. The Japanese designer, who founded the esteemed Comme des Garçons fashion house in 1969, is being honored at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art with an exhibition featuring half a century of her creations. It is the first monographic show at the museum's Costume Institute dedicated to a living designer since Yves Saint Laurent, the French legend who put women in trousers and tuxedo jackets, in 1983.

The exhibition "Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art of the In-Between," which opens today and runs through September 4, displays more than 140 designs spanning the early 1980s to today. A svelte and graceful figure, Kawakubo on Monday was the honored guest and inspiration at the annual fashion gala held at the Met, wearing her signature blunt bangs and displaying her trademark sphinxlike reserve. A woman of few words, the 74-year-old almost never gives interviews, and refuses to discuss the meaning of her work. She continued to keep her own counsel, even in the runup to the momentous exhibition.

Her creations, however, are as audacious as she is demure. The designer's oft-quoted phrase, "for something to be beautiful, it doesn't have to be pretty," sums up her approach. In the guide that accompanies the exhibition, she offers another perspective: "I work around the figure, but I am never limited by what the figure has to be."

"The history of fashion has yielded only a handful of designers who are not only masters at their art but who can also define or redefine the aesthetics of our time. And Rei is one of these," said Andrew Bolton, curator in charge of the Costume Institute. "Season after season, collection after collection, she changes our eye while upending perceived notion of beauty," he added. "If anything her work makes the art versus fashion debate redundant."

### 'Upending beauty'

Comme des Garçons focuses on asymmetry, imbalance and the form and structure of the garment, often relegating the wearer to the background. Sometimes, the silhouette of a woman is altogether altered by a protruding bustle around the posterior, asymmetry or body ligatures. Museum director Thomas Campbell said Kawakubo's creations are very much at home in the Met, one of the largest and most prestigious museums in the world.

"Her creations often look like sculpture, challenging our idea of the place of fashion in contemporary culture," he said. The exhibit explores the art of the "in-between," Kawakubo's desire to find a space between labels and escape fashion conventions, playing with the tension and duality that define a lifetime of work. There are nine areas exploring polar opposite themes in Kawakubo's work, including "Clothes/Not clothes," "Abstraction/Representation" and "Life/Loss."

In "Design/Not Design," the Met has assembled a collection of the sculptural, reinforced shapes somewhat akin to fabric origami. The form-fitting dresses in "Absence/Presence," meanwhile, tightly swaddle the body, with bulging protuberances that appear almost like deformities. At Monday's Met fundraiser, the society world's "party of the year" that gathers famous faces from the world of film, fashion and music, the show-stopping red carpet number worn by pop star Rihanna was a dress by Kawakubo.

The floral, asymmetrical garment was slashed at the thigh and covered in bold colored discs layered like flower petals, paired with gladiator-style stilettos with red straps wrapped around her leg from ankle to thigh. Lady Gaga took to Twitter hailing Rihanna as the "best dressed" of the night who "captured the spirit of the night" and the "emotion of Kawakubo." — AFP



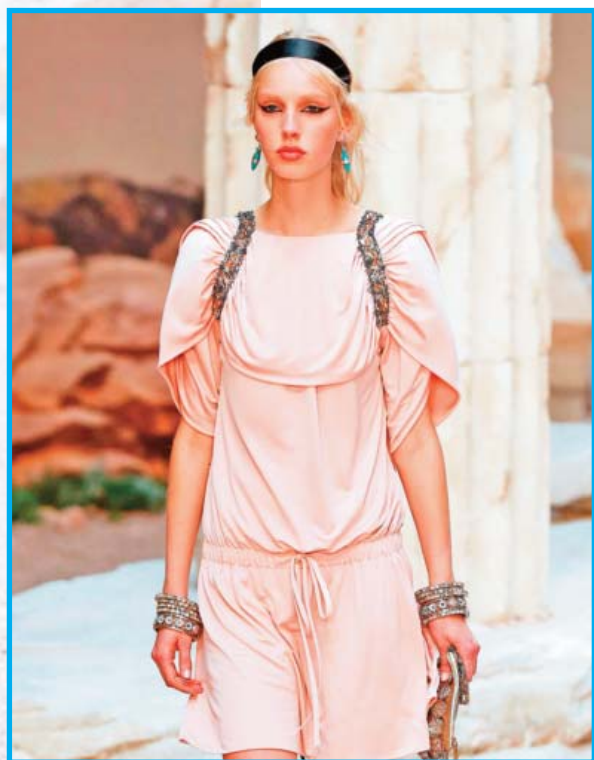




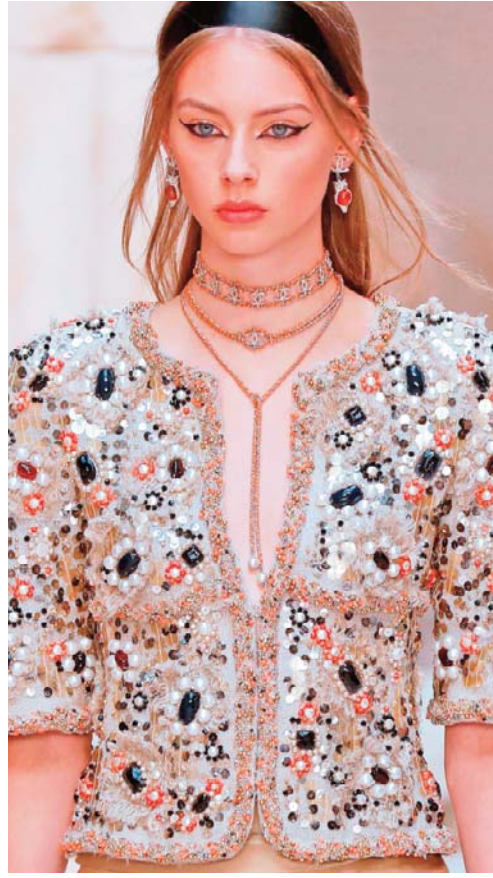
# CHANEL CROISIERE (CRUISE) FASHION SHOW



German fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld acknowledges the audience at the end of his Chanel Croisiere (Cruise) fashion show yesterday at the Grand Palais in Paris. — AFP photos







Models present creations during the Chanel Croisiere (Cruise) fashion show.

## KYLIE JENNER'S STAR-STUDED SELFIE RIVALS ELLEN'S OSCAR PIC

Kylie Jenner's star-studded Instagram picture is coming close to Ellen DeGeneres' all A-list Twitter selfie in social media popularity. Jenner's bathroom mirror shot posted Monday night from the Met Gala in New York included Jenner's sisters Kendall Jenner and Kim Kardashian, as well as Sean "Diddy" Combs, Frank Ocean, ASAP Rocky and Oscar winner Brie Larson. As of yesterday, the picture had more than

3.3 million likes. That compares to the more than 3.4 million retweets DeGeneres got for her selfie featuring Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Lawrence, Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie and Meryl Streep taken at the 2014 Oscars. Jenner's photo was taken in spite of a rumored ban on selfies at the Gala. — AP



This March 2, 2014, file photo, shows Kevin Spacey, from left, Angelina Jolie, Julia Roberts, Brad Pitt, Jennifer Lawrence, Ellen Degeneres and Jared Leto joining other celebrities for a group selfie during the Oscars at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. — AP photos



# Lifestyle

THURSDAY, MAY 4, 2017

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Kylie Jenner's star-studded selfie rivals Ellen's Oscar pic



A man in fancy dress representing new growth with the coming new season at Chalice Well, Glastonbury, England, where Beltane festivities are taking place on May Day, Monday May, 1, 2017. The ancient Celtic festival of Beltane symbolically heralds the first signs of Spring. — AFP

## IN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH AL-HAMRA TOWER: KUWAIT INTERNATIONAL FASHION WEEK KICKS OFF MAY 7

Sponsored by MASERATI, the world leading luxury car brand

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait International Fashion Week, the unique event that puts Kuwait on the map of global fashion, kicks off this week in strategic partnership with Al-Hamra Business

Tower and Maserati. The first show of the event takes place at the 60th floor of Al-Hamra Tower on May 7-11 from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. New surprises for exclusive 2017 designs are expected every day during that period.

Twenty collections for spring and summer of 2017 are expected to be showcased, featuring over 20 international designers from Paris, Lebanon, Morocco, Algeria and Kuwait, and that to meet expectations of those looking for fine Arab and international designs. The Kuwait International Fashion Week is the only Kuwaiti platform that showcases unique and high-end designs. The fashion designs were made specifically to meet the elegant Kuwaiti taste.

Head of the higher organizing committee Rabab Hamadeh says that this pattern in design combines readymade garments and high-end fashion, and focuses on apparel that is designed according to international fashion standards. She added that one of the main goals that the higher committee seeks to achieve through the Kuwait International Fashion Week is to "strengthen Kuwait's role and presence among the fashion capitals of the world, since it has all the capabilities, uniqueness, and historical style of the Kuwaiti woman."

Hamadeh further noted that Kuwait has become home for mega malls that attract a lot of tourists every year. The Kuwait International Fashion Week serves as a marketing platform for tourism and shopping, and for increasing the current capacity of hotels and recreational facilities.

Several leading and important trademarks are participating in the event, including Lancome, Ali Hussein Al-Arbash, Nobel Clinic, Twaaq fragrance, Holiday Inn Down Town, Bon Voyage travel agency, Auguri Center for Marketing & Advertising (the designer of the venue's decorations) and Kuwait Times as the media partner.

The Kuwait International Fashion Week looks to send several important messages, such as removing the stereotype that Arab countries are filled with conflicts, and instead show the world that the Arab World can reflect an image of creativity, art, elegance and beauty.

### SCHEDULE

	SUNDAY 7/5/2017	MONDAY 8/5/2017	TUESDAY 9/5/2017	WEDNESDAY 10/5/2017	THURSDAY 11/5/2017
7:05 PM	Bourjoisie	Firas Bou Hamdan	Fadi Nehleh		
7:40 PM	Nadia Bou-Shahri	Renata Haute Couture	Haya Al-Bghaily		
8:15 PM	Albert Oiknine	Karim Akrouf	Ali Al-Arbash	Showroom 6:00 - 10:00 PM	Showroom 6:00 - 10:00 PM
8:55 PM	Faiza Antri Bouzar	Zeina Slaiby	Meryem Berrada (Mahe-mi)		
9:25 PM	Fatima Zahra Idrissi	Rasha Al-Wazzan	Myriam Bouafi		
9:45 PM	Alaa Najid	Hadi Katra	Dimitri Sidawi		
			Taleb (Tahan Bin Haute Couture)		

Designers Showroom Open Daily from 6:00 PM till 10:00 PM



### Woman forced out of home after finding deadly spiders in bananas

A woman was forced out of her home after she found deadly spiders in her bananas. Gemma Price from County Durham in North East England found hundreds of the potentially harmful insect feasting on her bunch of bananas, which she purchased from supermarket Asda. The 30-year-old mother panicked when they managed to get into her seven-month-old baby boy's cot and after a call to the emergency services she was told to evacuate the property. Gemma had to spend three days away from her home as a team went into to kill them. She told Metro.co.uk: "I bought some loose bananas from Asda, in Stanley, on Monday. Next day I came home from gym and picked one off from the bunch and went upstairs. "As I peeled the banana a white egg sac, which I hadn't noticed before, broke and hundreds of little spiders were crawling on my hands and arms and down my pyjamas. I threw the banana down on the bed and they spread everywhere. "I was

freaking out and screaming and trying to kill as many as I could. Some got into my baby Leo's cot. I quickly picked him up and called 999. "The operator asked if we had been bitten and when I said no, I was told to evacuate the property with my baby immediately and not go to back. My mother lived just across the road, so luckily I had somewhere to go that time of night." Mrs Price was advised by the supermarket to bring the spiders and her fruit to the store to claim a refund. She told the publication: "It was absolutely comical. There was no ways I was going to be walking with potentially venomous spiders in my bag," she said. "I contacted head office the next day but they said there was not much they could do about it. The conversation got heated when he suggested I shake the baby's clothes out."

**Woman carries jar of Marmite and eats like lollipop**  
A Marmite-obsessed woman has admitted she carries a jar in her handbag and licks it off the spoon. Shelley McClellan, 45, is so obsessed with the salty condiment -

with the tagline, 'You either love it or hate it' - that she even eats it as pasta sauce and puts it on cereal and tuna fish. The mum-of-one from Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, East England, grew up in Burton - the home of Marmite - and puts it with everything she eats and has collected more than 200 vintage jars. According to The Sun Online, she said: "I love to eat Marmite on almost everything - I have it in my stew, stocks, spaghetti bolognese. "I go through a large 500 gram jar every week - I either have about an inch thick of it on my bread, or just go straight in with the spoon."

**Raven-carrying Goth subject of comedy tweets**  
A Goth was spotted on the Moscow Metro carrying her pet raven on her knee. The woman and the animal were photographed taking the underground by playwright Max Sparber who took to Twitter to share the odd sighting. He captioned the post on the micro-blogging site: "Sure, you're Goth, but are you dejectedly riding the subway with your raven Goth? (sic)" Many social media users

think she was using the larger-bodied species to ensure she had a seat on the train.

**A cat scares neighbors by appearing to hold a rifle**  
A cat scared neighbors as they thought he was holding a rifle. The furry pet was spotted lounging up in a tree but caused a stir among members of the public as they thought the four-legged animal was armed with a dangerous weapon. And it has been reported onlookers were concerned they alerted the police in Newport, Oregon, of the sighting. Officers arrived to the scene only to discover the cat had a branch shaped like a gun caught between its paws, although they gave the feline a "verbal warning". The police took to Facebook to share the news, they wrote: "Reports of an armed cat this morning were unfounded. The feline was contacted by our canine and was determined to be in possession of a non-lethal branch. "The cat was given a verbal warning for posing with what could be mistaken as an assault rifle while wearing poor camouflage attire. (sic)."

### Bizarre News

