



**22** \$10,000 in sight for bitcoin as it rockets to new record high



**30** UK's Prince Harry to marry US actress Meghan Markle



**32** From Palestinian refugee camp to London, Paris, Dubai boutiques



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# Appeals court jails 67 over storming Assembly in 2011

3 sitting Islamist MPs convicted • Barrak handed 9 years behind bars

## MoI mulls online iqama renewal; reduction of health fees urged

KUWAIT: Residency Affairs Department Director General Maj Gen Talal Maarafi said the department is discussing a plan to renew residencies online, and is studying offers from various companies for this purpose, Al-Rai reported yesterday. He said another plan aims to allow issuance of work permits to those on family visas who reach 21 years of age, according to certain conditions.

Maarafi said expats' residency permits will be renewed online through the interior ministry website, and a search for an alternative to the iqama sticker is underway. He said this will be the qualitative move the ministry is looking for. He added the residency renewal project will enhance performance and ease matters for companies and encourage economic movement, besides saving time and effort.

Maarafi also spoke about a plan that allows the Manpower Public Authority to issue work permits to those who reach 21 years of age and hold family visas. This is for both the wife and children, provided the marriage is still valid.

Continued on Page 11

By B Izzak and Agencies

KUWAIT: In one of the toughest rulings in Kuwait's judicial history, the appeals court yesterday handed 67 opposition activists - including three sitting lawmakers and several ex-MPs - harsh jail terms for storming the National Assembly building six years ago. Among the main sentences, the court handed prominent opposition leader and former MP Musallam Al-Barrak nine years in jail. Barrak was released from prison in April after serving a two-year sentence for insulting HH the Amir at a public rally.

It also sentenced three serving lawmakers to jail - Waleed Al-Tabtabaei and Jamaan Al-Harbash to seven years in jail each and Mohammad Al-Mutair to one year in prison. All of them are prominent Islamists. There were brief but defiant comments from the three lawmakers who received the jail terms. The court also sentenced leading former opposition MPs Faisal Al-Mislem, Khaled Al-Tahous, Mubarak Al-Waalan, Salem Al-Namlan and Fahd Al-Khanna to seven years in prison. All the jail terms are effective immediately.

The court overturned a ruling by the criminal court a couple of years ago that acquitted all the 70 defendants, saying that the opposition activists did not intend to storm the parliament building and had no bad intentions. But the appeals court saw sufficient evidence to condemn 67 of the defendants, acquitting two and dropping charges against former MP Falah Al-Sawwagh, who died last year.

The storming of parliament took place on Nov 16, 2011 at the height of anti-government street demonstrations led by Islamists, nationalist and liberal opposition groups to protest corruption allegations against former prime minister Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad



Musallam Al-Barrak



Waleed Al-Tabtabaei



Jamaan Al-Harbash



Mohammad Al-Mutair

Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, who was forced to step down two weeks after the incident.

During the trial, the defendants did not deny that they entered the Assembly building after a noisy demonstration outside the building on Gulf Street, but insisted that they fled a police crackdown and wanted to avoid clashes with the security forces. The criminal court accepted their explanations and acquitted them, but the appeals court convicted them of several charges brought by the public prosecution. The ruling is not final, as it can be challenged before the court of cassation, whose rulings are final. Defense lawyers said they will start filing challenges against the judgments from today.

Security forces immediately began rounding up the convicts, and according to unconfirmed reports, at least nine people have already been arrested. Lawyer Mohammed Al-Humaidi, who represents seven defendants other than Barrak, confirmed that police had begun arresting some of the defendants, who also include secular nationalists. Lama Al-Fadala, a sister of one of the

defendants, said the sentence came as a shock. "The defendants weren't given an opportunity to defend themselves in front of court, which is worrying," she said.

But several other convicts decided to surrender voluntarily. One of them is MP Harbash, who wrote on his Twitter account that he was on his way to give himself up, saying that he is proud that he is going to jail "not as a thief or after receiving a bribe, but for performing his duty as an elected MP". Harbash's eldest son, Abdullah, was given a similar jail term, along with a number of opposition youth leaders like Tareq Al-Mutairi. They were convicted of using force and violence against Assembly guards, entering a building with the intent to commit a crime and taking part in a gathering inside the Assembly.

In addition, Barrak and another convict were accused of instigating police to refuse orders. Although, Harbash decided to surrender, it was not immediately known whether the three convicted lawmakers lose their parliamentary immunity or not.

Continued on Page 11

## Meredith to buy Time for \$2.8bn in deal backed by Koch brothers

WASHINGTON: Time Inc is selling for \$2.8 billion to media conglomerate Meredith Corporation, which is backed by the billionaire Koch brothers, who are known for supporting conservative causes. Time, which also publishes its eponymous magazine, Fortune, and Sports Illustrated, began looking for a buyer late last year before giving up several months later, while welcoming options. Meredith had expressed interest in buying Time earlier this year then walked away because it could not secure the necessary financing.

Time revealed in October an aggressive plan to boost revenue that included focusing less on magazine journalism and more on digital activities. Time Inc was spun off from media and entertainment giant Time Warner, which was seeking to shed its journalism



THE HAGUE: A man holds up an old Time magazine as he takes part in a protest on Nov 22, 2017. — AFP

assets. Meredith's offer is for \$18.50 per Time share, up about 10 percent from the shares' closing price of \$16.90 on Friday. Share prices rose over the past week on speculation over the purchase.

Continued on Page 11

## Duterte assures Filipino Muslims he will correct 'historical injustice'

SULTAN KUDARAT, Philippines: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte vowed to correct "historical injustice" in a speech to Filipino Muslim rebels yesterday as his government seeks to reignite a stalled peace process in the nation's troubled south. He made the remarks at a mammoth gathering hosted by the country's main Muslim guerrilla group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), but which has also brought together Christians, rival Muslim factions and tribal groups from the southern region of Mindanao.

Since the 1970s, Muslims have been waging a rebellion seeking autonomy or independence in the southern areas of the mainly Catholic Philippines that they regard as their ancestral homeland. The conflict has claimed more than 120,000 lives and left large areas



SULTAN KUDARAT: Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte (left) speaks with MILF vice chairman Ghadzali Jaffar (center) as Chairman Al-Haji Murad applauds yesterday. — AFP

of Mindanao in poverty. Duterte, who boasts of having Muslim ancestry, warned that the region could see worse violence if the issue is not resolved. "What is at stake here is the preservation of the Filipino republic and to

correct historical injustice," he said. Duterte said that during the decades when the Philippines was under Spanish and then American colonial rule, the Christian majority

Continued on Page 11

## South Africa's new export is Miss Universe

LAS VEGAS: Beauties from across the globe converged in Las Vegas Sunday, where Miss South Africa was crowned Miss Universe. Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, 22, edged out her rivals from Colombia and Jamaica to take the crown. Nel-Peters, a graduate in business management, said her disabled half-sister has been among her great inspirations. In the pageant's 66th year, nearly 100 women from around the world - including first-timers from Cambodia, Laos and Nepal - took part. The runner-up was actress Laura Gonzalez of Colombia, who was followed by second runner-up Davina Bennett of Jamaica.

The current Miss Universe, Iris Mittenaeer from France, crowned her successor to a host of squeals and cheers. American comic turned TV host Steve Harvey hosted the event for the third time, making several jokes at his own expense. Grammy-winning singer Fergie and pop star Rachel Platten provided the musical entertainment for Sunday's show. In the "Final Word" portion of the competition, Nel-Peters said — AFP (See Page 31)



LAS VEGAS: Miss South Africa 2017 Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters is named the 2017 Miss Universe. — AFP

## 'Complicit' named word of the year by Dictionary.com

NEW YORK: Russian election influence, the ever-widening sexual harassment scandal, mass shootings and the opioid epidemic helped elevate the word "complicit" as Dictionary.com's word of the year for 2017. Look-ups of the word increased nearly 300 percent over last year as "complicit" hit just about every hot button from politics to natural disasters, lexicographer Jane Solomon told AP ahead of yesterday's formal announcement of the site's pick.

"This year a conversation that keeps on surfacing is what exactly it means to be complicit," she said. "Complicit has sprung up in conversations about those who speak out against powerful figures in institutions, and those who stay silent." The first of three major spikes for the word struck March 12. That was the day after "Saturday Night Live" aired a sketch starring Scarlett Johansson as Ivanka Trump in a glittery gold dress peddling a fragrance called "Complicit" because: "She's beautiful, she's powerful, she's complicit."

The bump was followed by another April 5, also related to Ivanka, Solomon said. It was the day after



This undated screenshot shows the word "complicit" on the Dictionary.com website. — AP

she appeared on "CBS This Morning" and told Gayle King, among other things: "I don't know what it means to be complicit." It was unclear at the time whether Ivanka was deflecting or whether the summa cum laude graduate of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business - with a degree in economics - didn't really know.

Another major spike occurred Oct 24, the day Arizona Republican Jeff Flake announced from the Senate floor that he would not seek re-election, harshly criticizing President Donald Trump and urging other members of the party not to stand silently with the president.

Continued on Page 11



## Local

## Amir receives Anti-Corruption Authority's biannual report



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives the Public Anti-Corruption Authority's first biannual report for 2016-2017 from the authority's head Adviser Abdurrahman Al-Nimash. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Head of the Public Anti-Corruption Authority Adviser Abdurrahman Al-Nimash hands over a copy of the first biannual report for 2016-2017 to His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Al-Shahed newspaper's editor-in-chief Sheikh Sabah Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah.

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan Palace Head of the Public Anti-Corruption Authority Adviser Abdurrahman Al-Nimash. The latter handed His Highness the Amir the

Authority's first biannual report for 2016-2017. Nimash later met with His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and handed him a copy of the report. Separately, His Highness the Amir met with Al-Shahed

newspaper's editor-in-chief Sheikh Sabah Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, who presented to him a study on the assessment of the performance of 10 major Arab political, economic, military and media institutions and figures for 2016. Meanwhile, His

Highness the Crown Prince received Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Mohammad Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, as well as National Security Apparatus Chief Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah. —KUNA

## Speaker, Premier meet Finland, Jordan chief auditors



**KUWAIT:** Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem meets with Auditor General of the National Audit Office of Finland Tytti Yli-Vilkari and Jordan's Audit Bureau President Abed Kharabsheh. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with President of the Jordanian Audit Bureau Abed Kharabsheh and Auditor General of the National Audit Office of Finland Tytti Yli-Vilkari.

**KUWAIT:** The visiting Auditor General of the National Audit Office of Finland Tytti Yli-Vilkari and Jordan's Audit Bureau President Abed

Kharabsheh met yesterday with Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem as well as His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber

Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Acting Chairman of Kuwait's State Audit Bureau (SAB) Adel Al-Sarawi attended the meetings. —KUNA

## Kuwaiti Cabinet openly deplores Egypt's Sinai attack

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwaiti Cabinet yesterday vehemently condemned a recent bomb attack on a mosque in Egypt's North Sinai Governorate, which left hundreds of worshippers dead or injured. The cabinet said in a press statement following its weekly meeting held at Bayan Palace that this "bloody massacre, which targets safe places of worship and shed the blood of innocents, aims at undermining Egypt's security and stability." It said that the attack, however, would boost Egypt's resolve to fight terrorism, affirming that this heinous crime contradicts all heavenly religions and human principles.

Furthermore, it reiterated that the State of Kuwait stands side by side with Egypt, and supports its measures to safeguard its security and stability and to fight terrorism. Offering heartfelt condolences to the Egyptian government and people and the families of the victims, the cabinet reaffirmed its unshakable and principled position rejecting all forms and manifestations of terrorism.

At the onset of the meeting, the cabinet voiced pleasure at the recovery of His Highness the Amir from his recent illness, wishing His Highness the Amir good health. The ministers also congratulated



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the cabinet's meeting yesterday. —KUNA

lated His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince on the occasion of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) birthday, wishing progress and prosperity to the entire Muslim world.

Then, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Mohammad Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah briefed the cabinet on the outcomes of the first meeting of the Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC), recently held in Riyadh, which stressed staunch response to terrorism.

The cabinet also approved a revised law on Kuwait Municipality, which aims at redressing the Municipal Council's legal status, and sent to His

Highness the Amir before taking it to the National Assembly.

Furthermore, it asked the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources to work with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Environment Public Authority and Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research to work out a scientific study purposed to preserve and increase fish stock in the country.

Finally, the Kuwaiti cabinet congratulated UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the people of UAE on the occasion of the Union Day, hailing eye-catching achievements in all fields and sectors in this Gulf country. —KUNA

## African women's forum wins Kuwait's Al-Sumait Prize

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's Al-Sumait Prize for African Development has granted the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) its '2017 Al-Sumait Prize' for its contributions to education in the mammoth continent. FAWE has made profound contributions in the field of education in Africa, Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, who is also the chairman of the Al-Sumait Prize for African Development, told the press.

He hailed the prize, christened after one of Kuwait's leading philanthropists the late Dr Abdulrahman Al-Sumait, as a humanitarian initiative and brainchild of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. He revealed that the award is an annual monetary sum worth \$1 million to recognize outstanding research and development in Africa, saying that FAWE deserved the award for its efforts to grant African women access to education.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister also touted FAWE as a colossal organization that has joined forces with 14 African education ministries all in an effort to support women's education in a continent where patriarchal values remain deeply ingrained. Meanwhile, the Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences Dr Adnan Shihab-Eldin said that the Al-Sumait Prize for African Development's board of trustees reads like a who's who of notable personalities. He pointed out that all individuals or organizations who have contributed to the progress of education in Africa are eligible for the prestigious award. —KUNA

## Professor lectures on water resources in Kuwait University



**KUWAIT:** Kuwait University's civil engineering professor Dr Abdullah Al-Sumai'e is honored at the conclusion of the lecture.

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait University's (KU) civil engineering professor Dr Abdullah Al-Sumai'e recently lectured on 'Managing and Planning Water Resources in the State of Kuwait.' The lecture came as part of activities of the cultural week organized by the Higher Institute of Energy in collaboration with KU's media and public relations office in the period of November 22-28. The lecture included an introduction about water resources in general and in Kuwait in particular, in addition to the mechanism followed in managing those resources in Kuwait.

Sumai'e stressed the need to find other low-cost alternatives to provide water, bearing in mind that Kuwait lacks rivers and lakes and severely suffers from fresh water scarcity with limited rainfall. "This worsens the problem of freshwater in Kuwait despite the presence of a huge reservoir of underground water, which is relatively high in salinity," he explained. Furthermore, he pointed out that the cost of desalinating sea water is high, which calls for strategic long-term plans to secure Kuwait's needs of freshwater taking into consideration the high per capita consumption of water in Kuwait of 550 liters.

In addition, Sumai'e reviewed Kuwait's water projects such as Al-Zour North water plant which is designed to increase desalination productivity and storing water in underground reservoirs to be used in case desalination plants malfunctioned for any reason.

## Kuwait delivers aid to earthquake victims

**IRBIL:** Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) delivered humanitarian aid to those affected by the earthquake in Halabja and Sulaymaniah in Iraq's Kurdistan region yesterday. Since the earthquake that struck northern Iraq on November 12, Kuwait has been closely monitoring the affected area and will continue to provide humanitarian aid to those in need, Kuwait Consul General in Irbil Omar Al-Kandari said. Kuwait began delivering aid to northern Iraq last week, distributing thousands of food and health care baskets, he added. According to a statement by the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, the earthquake left eight dead and 425 others injured. —KUNA



## Local

# Authority eyes \$50 billion foreign investments by 2030

## MGRP paid KD 3 billion in allowances since 2001

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Director of the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority (KDIPA) Sheikh Meshaal Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is keen on preparing and issuing a developed guide for foreign investors to act as a platform to demonstrate projects and investment opportunities available in Kuwait and attracting international companies to invest in the Kuwaiti market. Informed sources noted that the plan targets attracting \$50 billion in view of the 2030 sustainable development vision and plan.

The source added that KDIPA aims at setting rules and regulations for foreign companies wishing to establish local firms, in addition to receiving interested companies' applications and referring them to relevant bodies to be approved.

The sources highlighted that international companies like General Electric, Chevron, Hyundai and others had a long history of relations with Kuwait and that they had developed and trained technicians to help achieve the 2035 economic vision. Sheikh Meshaal said KDIPA has set short- and long-term plans to attract foreign, international and Arab companies to invest in Kuwait through development projects in nine different fields, including energy, oil, health, education, services, recreation, tourism and transport.



### Oil prices unchanged through December

25th of every month unless that day falls on a day off or weekend, such as the case in November. The payment is then usually done on the next working day.

The sources said a delay in some cases may result from failure to update information or the occurrence of a change in a citizen's status, which calls for checking with the program before the 10th of every month. In addition, the sources said the private sector only pays 44 percent of its citizen employees' salaries, while the program pays the remaining 56 percent,

#### Island protection

Kuwait Municipality's organization sector yesterday approved the defense ministry's request to allocate the Ras Al-Qayd location to protect Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port and Boubyan Island. Informed sources said the defense ministry had requested allocating the 100 x 500 m area for security purposes to protect the island as per Kuwait's fourth structural plan for 2040.

#### No delays

Informed sources at the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) denied delaying the payment of national labor support allowances to citizens working in the private sector. The sources stressed that salaries are usually deposited at commercial banks on the



with a monthly cost of KD 29 million. Finally, the sources said that the program has paid KD 3 billion to over 60,619 citizens since its inception in 2001.

#### Oil prices

Well-informed sources at the finance ministry's subsidies committee stressed that the prices of oil products would remain unchanged through December.

#### Sentence upheld

The court of cassation yesterday upheld an appeal court's verdict sentencing a citizen to 10 years in jail for deliberately running over an Egyptian and killing him during a fight two years ago. According to the police report, a fight had started with the suspect was at a mall in Hawally before two expatriates followed him out to resume the fight. The suspect then ran over the two men and a citizen, killing one of the expats and injuring the other two.

## Kuwaiti-Sino construction deals surge to \$8.2bn: Envoy

**KUWAIT:** The collective value of construction projects involving Kuwait and China this year has hit \$8.2 billion (KD 2.4 billion), the most lucrative deal Beijing has forged with a Gulf country, China's Ambassador to Kuwait said yesterday.

Speaking at a seminar over Kuwait's ties with the world's most populous nation, Wang Di revealed that trade between Kuwait and Beijing is worth \$3.8 billion (KD 1.2 billion), while China has hitherto imported 5.12 metric tons of crude oil from Kuwait. He added that the year 2017 marked an epoch in relations between his country and Kuwait, where both nations' respective leaders have shown a mutual desire to expand bilateral ties between "two trusted partners."

The Chinese envoy cited numerous development projects Kuwait and China have undertaken, putting both nations directly on the path to prosperity and growth. Meanwhile, addressing the seminar, KUNA's Deputy Director General for the Editorial Sector and Editor-in-Chief Saad Al-Ali said that Kuwait and the Gulf region's ties with



**KUWAIT:** China's Ambassador to Kuwait Wang Di speaks during the seminar. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

China have progressed smoothly in recent years, especially at political and economic levels. He also stressed the need for greater interaction between China and the Gulf region, where dialogue channels need to be reassessed to allow both sides to reach out to one another.

On Sino-Kuwaiti relations, the Secretary General of the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development Dr Khaled Mahdi said it dates back 46 years, as Kuwait was the first Arab nation to establish diplomatic ties with Beijing. He pinpointed Kuwaiti loans worth \$825 million given to China in 1982, which set in motion a string of 32 development projects in Beijing, as a testament to the all-encompassing relationship shared between the two countries. — KUNA

## Rain falls as 'Wasm' season continues

**KUWAIT:** Rain hit Kuwait yesterday as the country goes through the 'Wasm' season: a meteorological period that extends from mid-October to

early December and is characterized by occasional showers and notable drop in temperatures. Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) and the Ministry of Interior released separate statements yesterday urging the public to stay cautious during the rain, and call 112 in case of emergency. The 'Wasm' season is followed by the 'Marbaaniya' (forty days of cold): a season characterized by frigid weather conditions and limited rain. —Photo by Joseph Shagra



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## Local

# Kuwaiti students win 'Best Company of the Year' Award at Regional INJAZ Al-Arab Competition

INJAZ-Kuwait was represented by 'Agrivage,' 'Youth Creations' at the event



The 'Agrivage' team which was named as 'Best Student Company of the Year' in the region.



KUWAIT: Omar Kutayba Alghanim, INJAZ Kuwait's Chairman and CEO of Alghanim Industries, among students of 'Agrivage' and 'Youth Creations.'

**KUWAIT:** Alghanim Industries, one of the largest privately owned companies in the region, recently hosted the winners of the Regional INJAZ Al-Arab Competition. The students met with Chairman of INJAZ-Kuwait and CEO of Alghanim Industries, Omar Kutayba Alghanim who thanked the students for their efforts and awarded them with gifts of appreciation from X-cite by Alghanim Electronics. The students also enjoyed a tour of the company's four-floor open office in Al Hamra Tower.

The competition was held on 20 and 21 November 2017 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Cairo, Egypt. It included the winning teams from the national competitions in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. A total of 17 teams from 10 countries, including Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Egypt Palestine, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Lebanon and Oman competed for the title of "Best Company of the Year" Award.

## Incredible achievement

Speaking to the participants, Chairman of INJAZ-Kuwait and CEO of Alghanim Industries, Omar Kutayba Alghanim said: "We are so proud of you and your incredible achievement in winning this year's regional competition. We're a merchant culture with a long heritage, and it truly is fitting that our students represent that legacy on the regional stage. Your talents, passion and drive to cre-

ate a brighter future for yourselves and your country will inspire others to do the same."

He added, "As an organization, we strive to empower and enable our youth to take the first step towards owning their future and their economic success. We consider this to be our national responsibility, and a priority in our mission to support the future of Kuwait. Today, I only have one request - create your companies. Don't be afraid to fail, because most success stories had a few failures in their past. Be brave and live up to the legacy of this great country in this fast-changing world. The largest hotel company in the world, doesn't own any rooms. The largest media company doesn't create content, and the largest taxi company - doesn't own a single car. We hope and aspire to see one of your businesses join those amazing companies. Congratulations to you and to Kuwait on this huge achievement."

The two companies that represented Kuwait, having

both won the national competition in Kuwait earlier this year, were 'Agrivage,' under the high school category, and "Youth Creations" in the university category. 'Agrivage' went on to win the most coveted award in the regional competition in Egypt, which was the "Best Company of the Year" award. On the other hand, "Youth Creations" was nominated for the "Best Social Impact" award during the competition.

## Highest honor

Commenting on this achievement, CEO of INJAZ-Kuwait, Laila Al-Mutairi said: "Our happiness for this huge win is indescribable. The company 'Agrivage' earned the competition's highest honor: 'Best Company of the Year' for the region.

We are extremely proud of their exceptional performance and the results delivered throughout the competition. Our youth today have established themselves and their businesses in a leading position to compete, both locally and regionally."



## Competition held in Cairo, Egypt

## CBK organizes open day for My First Account's customers at Infunity

**KUWAIT:** The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) announced the organization of an Open Day for My First Account's customers at Infunity - 360 Mall on Thursday November 30, 2017 from 11:00 am until 5:00 pm.

The organization of this Open Day comes within the events and activities the Bank endeavors to arrange for My First Account's customers frequently and which suit their ages and aim at enhancing communication at all times between this customer segment and the bank.

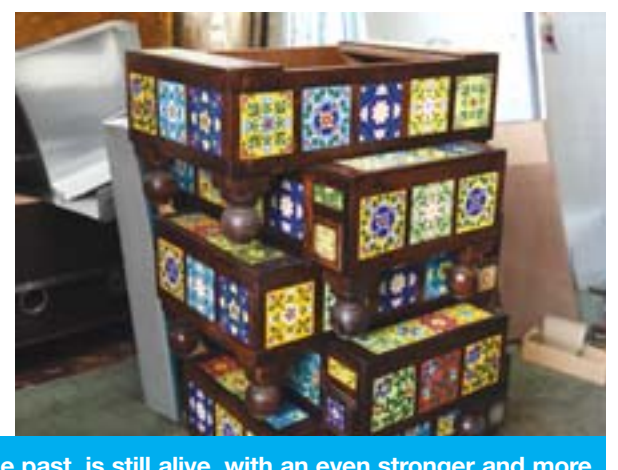
Infunity is one of the largest indoor kids oriented entertainment centers in Kuwait that is equipped with several games and offers numerous activities such as climbing, bumping cars, roller coaster and many other electronic games. Apart from the diverse activities that will be arranged during the Open Day, My First Account's customers can enjoy the interesting magic show. The



Bank shall further distribute gifts to My First Account's customers while enjoying the Open Day activities at Infunity.

As such, My First Account's customers should present their MFA cards at the entrance to enjoy all rides and attractions for free. While urging its First Account Customers to visit 360 Mall and enjoy this Open Day diverse activities, CBK emphasizes its continued efforts to arrange such activities for My First Account's customers highlighting the fact that MFA is a saving account especially designated for children aged from 0 to 14 years old. The Account contributes in a perfect way for parents who want to secure a better future for their children and saving money for them from an early age.

## Brazier: Kuwait's hottest winter item



KUWAIT: The brazier; one of the most recognized household items in the past, is still alive, with an even stronger and more apparent presence, especially in winter. Be it in backyards or desert camps, braziers are seen as the water coolers of social gatherings in cold Kuwait, where people could enjoy a nice chat while sipping on their favorite hot beverages. —KUNA

## Morooj joins Horeca 2018 as golden sponsors

**KUWAIT:** Preparations for the 2018 Horeca Kuwait exhibition are steadily progressing and attracting more companies to take part in it as an event providing a golden opportunity to exchange expertise that meet the local market's needs and demands future expansion plans. Leaders Group, the event's organizer, announced that Al-Morooj Hotel and Restaurants Company will take part in the 2018 Horeca Kuwait exhibition as a golden sponsor.

In this regard, Morooj Deputy Director Wael Mohammed Al-Farhan stressed strong belief in Horeca's significance as the best forum to display and market the company's products in the presence of the best Kuwaiti and international experts in hospitality and food industries. He also highlighted the need to develop Kuwait's hotel and hospitality sectors as both give long-lasting impressions in the minds of visitors, adding that this helps promote Kuwait worldwide.

Farhan added that Al-Morooj Hotels and Restaurants company was founded in 1998 as a subsidiary of Al-Morooj General Trading Company was founded in 1982. He added that Al-Morooj specializes in supplying quality international kitchen brands ranging from small kitchenware to heavy duty kitchen equipment, service tables, uniforms, food products and special beverages.

Further, Farhan noted that, thanks to its customer-delight and quality services, Al-Morooj's activities cover GCC states and some Arab countries in addition to the Kuwaiti market. He added that Al-Morooj also has always had as its top priority the full satisfaction of its customers, whose trust is also its greatest bond achieved after years of hard work and excellent services for both local and international customers. He added that Kuwait's market still has a long way to cover towards reaching self-satisfaction levels. "Our restaurants and hotel services only cover 59 percent of those in Kuwait and 68 percent in GCC hotels," he underlined. The 2018 Horeca Kuwait exhibition is organized by Leaders Group in collaboration with Hospitality Services Company at the Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref from January 15-17, 2018.



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Bahrain's top cleric's health deteriorates

## Bali volcano alert ‘raised to the highest level’



ISLAMABAD: Pakistani activists from the Tehreek-i-Labaik Yah Rasool Allah Pakistan (TLYRAP) religious group offer prayers beside a pile of empty tear gas canisters and rubble bullets fired by police at the end of a protest in Islamabad yesterday. —AFP

# Pakistan bows to Islamists’ demands

## Pakistan law minister resigns • 7 killed in clashes

**ISLAMABAD:** A hardline Pakistani Islamist group called off nationwide protests yesterday after the government met its demand that a government minister accused of blasphemy resign, following weekend clashes with police that paralyzed major cities. The cleric-politician leading the nearly three-week blockade of the capital, Islamabad, thanked the army chief for helping resolve the stand-off, raising questions about the military’s role.

The new ultra-religious political party Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan was protesting against a small change in wording to an electoral law changing a religious oath to a simple declaration, which it said amounted to blasphemy. The government climbdown will be seen as an embarrassment for the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party ahead of elections likely in mid-2018, and underlines the power of religious groups in the nuclear-armed nation of 207 million. Seven people were killed and nearly 200 wounded after a police bid to disperse protesters in Islamabad failed on Saturday, spurring demonstrators wielding sticks and iron rods to block key roads and motorways in other cities.

“Our main demand has been accepted,” Ejaz Ashrafi, spokesman for Tahreek-e-Labaik said,

adding that part of the agreement was to free dozens of party workers arrested during the weekend crackdown. “Our workers’ release is in process. Once that is done, we will leave.” At nightfall yesterday, the protesters were still in place. Law minister Zahid Hamid handed in his resignation to Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi “to take the country out of a crisis-like situation”, state-run news channel PTV said yesterday. Government spokesmen did not respond to requests from Reuters for comment.

The government called in the military to tackle the protests after a police operation failed, but there was no sign of troops around protest camps on Sunday. The military said the army chief in one telephone call had advised Abbasi to resolve the protests peacefully. Tehreek-e-Labaik leader

Khadim Hussain Rizvi yesterday described the army’s role in ending the standoff. “The honorable chief of army staff, General Qamar Javed Bajwa, sent his special envoys to us. We said we do not want to talk to the government; they are our murderers,” Rizvi said.

“So the general took personal interest and sent his team, saying ‘we will become the guarantors, and have your demands fulfilled’. So we said, ‘All right. That is what we want.’” For more than two weeks, Tehreek-e-Labaik activists have blocked the main road into the capital, Islamabad, in a protest that blamed law minister Hamid for changing the wording in an electoral oath. The party says the words “I believe”, used to replace the clause “I solemnly swear” in a proclamation of Mohammad as the religion’s last prophet, amount to blasphemy. The government

blamed the change on a clerical error and swiftly restored the original format.

Insulting Islam’s prophet is punishable by death under Pakistani law, and blasphemy accusations stir such emotions that they are difficult to defend against. Even a rumor of blasphemy can spark mob violence, as in the case of a university student beaten to death in April. Labaik, one of two new ultra-religious political movements to reach prominence in recent months, has made defending the blasphemy laws a campaign centerpiece with some success. The party won a surprisingly strong 6 percent and 7.6 percent share of votes in two recent by-elections.

Islamist parties are unlikely to win a majority in the elections expected next August, but could play a major role. Giving in to the group’s demands had hit the government’s reputation and credibility, said political analyst Hasan Askari. “These protests will have emboldened this group, and they are going to assert themselves and put up candidates wherever they can in the next general election, or at least they will oppose the PML-N,” he added. The opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party accused the government of bungling the efforts to remove the protesters and called for early elections. —Reuters



### Islamists call off nationwide protests over blasphemy claim

## India clears beggars off the streets ahead of Ivanka Trump’s visit

**HYDERABAD:** Indian authorities have cleared beggars off the streets and brought in 10,000 extra security forces for Ivanka Trump’s biggest foreign mission since her father became president. President Donald Trump’s eldest daughter is to be the key speaker today at the opening of a three-day Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Hyderabad alongside India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The southern city is home to the India operations of Google, Facebook and Amazon.

The 36-year-old, who is an official White House advisor, will seek to press women’s empowerment in business. She will also underline the growing friendship between the United States and India—so the host country is taking no chances. Trump will be greeted in Hyderabad by Modi who will host a gala dinner at the Falaknuma Palace, a luxury hotel once owned by one of the nizams who ruled the city before India’s independence. Authorities have spruced up an open-air market around Charminar, a 16th century mosque that is one of the city’s icons. Media reports have suggested that Trump could visit the market.

Police have cleared hundreds of beggars off the streets, saying they cause nuisance and obstruct traffic. More than 10,000 security personnel including anti-terrorist forces and dog squads will be deployed, and Trump will travel around Hyderabad in her own special bullet proof vehicle with US Secret Service taking care of close security. The visit has been clouded by US media reports questioning Trump’s



HYDERABAD: Photo shows Indian beggars who were brought to a shelter after being caught begging on the street in Hyderabad. —AFP

clothing line and its supply chain as well as a snub by Rex Tillerson, the US secretary of state, who has reportedly refused to send senior staff with Trump to India.

“They won’t send someone senior because they don’t want to bolster Ivanka,” CNN quoted a senior State Department official as saying. But US business leaders will be in the Trump delegation joining more than 1,200 entrepreneurs from 150 countries at the meeting. “Entrepreneurship... is a key priority for this administration. The US recognizes innovation and entrepreneurship as essential tools for job creation, economic growth, and stability...” Trump said ahead of the visit. “Globally, between 2014 and 2016, entrepreneurship activ-

ity among women increased by 10 percent. One study estimates that closing the gender entrepreneurship gap worldwide could grow our global GDP by as much as two percent.”

Trump’s Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative, or We-Fi, aims to boost access to business capital for women in the developing world. According to Trump, women-owned businesses in the developing world suffer an annual credit deficit of \$300 billion, either by being unable to borrow or receiving only high-cost, short-term credit. The We-Fi was first proposed at the G20 summit in Hamburg this year and is supported by Germany, Russia, China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and other countries. —AFP

## Fake coastguards and taxi cabs fuel Libya slave trade

**YAOUNDE:** When uniformed men boarded the overloaded rubber dingy carrying Christelle Timdi and her boyfriend to a new life in Europe she thought the Italian coastguard had come to rescue them. But the men took out guns and began to shoot. “Many people fell in the sea,” the 32-year-old Cameroonian said as she described seeing her boyfriend, Douglas, falling in the water and disappearing into the darkness. The gunmen took Timdi and her fellow passengers back to Libya where they were locked up, raped, beaten and forced to make calls to their families back home for ransom payments to secure their freedom.

Timdi, who flew back to Cameroon last week, told her story as international outcry escalated over a video which appeared to show African migrants being traded as slaves in Libya. Libya’s UN-backed government has said it is investigating and has promised to bring the perpetrators to justice. Timdi said she had not seen the footage broadcast by CNN, but had witnessed the trade in humans while in Libya. “I saw it with my own eyes,” she said, describing how she had seen a Senegalese man buying an African migrant. Libya is the main jumping off point for migrants trying to reach Europe by boat. Timdi said many traffickers posed as marine guards, police officers and taxi drivers to ensnare victims.

**Raped and beaten**

There were around 130 other migrants on her boat when the gunmen opened fire in the middle of the night, Timdi said. After being taken back to Libya they were locked in an abandoned factory building where men would grab and rape the girls and women – and sometimes even the men. “We tried to hide the younger girls among us,” Timdi said, describing the terrifying moments when the guards would scour the room with torches, searching for their next victims.

“I was heavily pregnant – that’s why I wasn’t raped. And it’s all done in front of others – they say it’s so that you know what will happen to you if you don’t pay up.” Timdi said the facilities used by traffickers appeared to be well organized and guarded, adding that most people inside wore fake police or military uniforms. “The place was surrounded by army-style vehicles with guns ready to fire, so we didn’t dare try and escape.” Timdi’s family paid 1 million CFA francs (\$1,800), frantically collected from relatives and friends, to free her. But she said ransoms were no guarantee of safety. —Reuters



## Indian Catholics hurt at missing out on Pope's tour

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## International

# Clock ticks down to snap Irish poll nobody wants

## Senior MPs in rival parties strike more conciliatory tone

**DUBLIN:** Ireland's prime minister and opposition leader resume efforts yesterday to resolve a political crisis that could result in a snap election with implications for a Brexit summit next month. Prime Minister Leo Varadkar and the head of the main opposition party propping up his minority government are locked in a domestic political dispute that has cast a shadow over the summit on Britain's plans to leave the European Union. Ireland will play a major role at the gathering, telling EU leaders whether Ireland believes sufficient progress has been made on the future border between EU-member Ireland and Britain's province of Northern Ireland.

The border is one of three issues Brussels wants broadly resolved before it decides whether to move the talks on to a second phase about trade, as Britain wants. The crisis is over Deputy Prime Minister Frances Fitzgerald's handling of a legal case involving a police whistleblower: Fianna Fail leader Micheal Martin plans to move a motion of no confidence in her today. Varadkar has said that if the motion is not withdrawn, he would be forced to hold an election before Christmas, a prospect EU officials say would complicate the EU summit on Dec. 14-15 on Brexit.

Local media reported yesterday that the leaders were looking at whether passing the issue to an ongoing judge-led tribunal, restructuring the justice department and an apology from Fitzgerald could break the deadlock. Sources in Fianna Fail and Varadkar's Fine Gael, speaking to Reuters on condition of anonymity, said a compromise allowing Martin to withdraw Tuesday's motion remained very difficult meaning

Fitzgerald's resignation may be the only way out. "Nobody in their right mind wants an election the week before Christmas and we are working hard at a compromise... but it has to be inevitable that Frances Fitzgerald goes," senior Fianna Fail MP Thomas Byrne told the Newstalk radio station.

However his colleague, finance spokesman Michael McGrath, was less definitive when asked if Fitzgerald would have to quit. Foreign minister Simon Coveney of Fine Gael also struck a more conciliatory tone, accepting his opponents had genuine concerns. Varadkar has said there is no question of Fitzgerald being asked to step down and she was quoted by the Sunday Independent newspaper as saying she will "not bow to summary justice."

### Irish crisis checks sterling impact on Brexit talks

would impact the talks steadied sterling yesterday, after it posted its biggest weekly rise in more than a month.

"The next couple of months are crucial for the future of Ireland, and provoking an election right now would be utterly irresponsible," said Kevin O'Rourke, Professor of Economic History at Oxford University, who has written extensively on Ireland's role in the Brexit talks. "The parties can help by agreeing publicly, right now, that the Irish government's position on the Brexit negotiations won't change, no matter what the outcome of the election.

But an election will mean that our political class will be

#### Weaker Brexit hand

Coveney also reiterated yesterday that enough progress has not been made on the border issue and that he had the full backing of the EU's chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier. Concerns over how the Irish political crisis



**BRUSSELS:** Republic of Ireland's Foreign Minister Simon Coveney (center) arrives for an EU Eastern Partnership summit with six eastern partner countries at the European Council in Brussels. —AFP

distracted at just the wrong time." Ireland's main parties broadly back Varadkar's position on Brexit and an opinion poll on Saturday suggested an election would lead to little change with another minority administration the most likely outcome. "What's clear to me is that the country

would not be in any different position after an election than it is today expect our hand at the negotiating table with Michel Barnier would be weakened," Social Protection Minister Regina Doherty told national broadcaster RTE.—Reuters

#### News in brief

##### IS desert hideouts

**BAGHDAD:** Iraqi forces said yesterday they face a tough battle against the Islamic State group in deep gorges and other natural hideouts in the western desert along the Syrian border, their last bastion in Iraq. "Our units have cleared 50 percent of the total area of the desert of around 29,000 square kilometers. The first phase is over," General Yahya Rassoud, spokesman of the Joint Operations Command said. "Now our units will proceed to clearing the rest of the desert zones, including Wadi (valley) Hauran," he said. "The valley is deep and reaches Syrian territory. The mission is to destroy all the hideouts in the desert and valleys to secure western Iraq's border with Syria" before soldiers are posted along the frontier, he said. Wadi Hauran, with 200-metre-deep (650-foot-deep) gorges, is the longest valley in Iraq, stretching 350 kilometers from the Saudi border to the Euphrates River, also reaching the frontier with Jordan.

##### Qaeda suspects killed

**ADEN:** Ten suspected Al-Qaeda members in southern Yemen were killed in drone strikes over the weekend, government officials said yesterday, as raids targeting the radical group intensify. The United States is the only force known to operate armed drones over war-torn Yemen, where thousands have died in the conflict and millions now face famine. Fadl Tissi, Han Tissi and Sultan Amri-three Yemenis "known for their ties to Al-Qaeda"—were killed when their car was hit in a drone attack on Qaifa in the central Baida province late Sunday, a local government official said. Another drone attack at around midnight Saturday targeted three vehicles on the road from the southern province of Shabwa to Baida, killing seven suspected jihadists, an official said on condition of anonymity. Washington considers the Yemen-based Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula to be the radical group's most dangerous branch.

##### Sudan clashes kill 10

**KHARTOUM:** Ten members of Sudan's controversial counter-insurgency unit have been killed in clashes with fighters loyal to a powerful militia leader in war-torn Darfur, the official SUNA news agency reported yesterday. Clashes between troops from the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and fighters loyal to Musa Hilal erupted when a unit of RSF was ambushed near the hometown of Hilal in the state of North Darfur. "An RSF commander and nine other members were martyred when they were ambushed near Mustariaha," SUNA reported. Mustariaha is the hometown and bastion of Hilal, whose fighters have reportedly clashed with RSF troops in Darfur several times in recent months. The RSF commander and nine others were "ambushed by outlaws" when they had gone to check another ambush in the same area, the report said, referring to Hilal's fighters as outlaws.

##### Massage chain assault

**WASHINGTON:** More than 180 women have reported being sexually assaulted when they were customers of Massage Envy, the largest chain of massage spas in the United States, according to a BuzzFeed News investigation. The report published over the weekend comes amid a wave of sexual assault complaints against high-profile American men, which has compelled some companies to revisit their policies against workplace sexual misconduct. BuzzFeed found that more than 180 spa customers had filed lawsuits, police reports or state board complaints of alleged sexual assault against spa franchises, employees or the national company. Dozens of women have alleged digital and oral penetration during massages, according to the report, with over 100 saying massage therapists had "groped their genitals, groped their breasts, or committed other explicit violations."

## ‘Ashamed’ Senator Franken tries to salvage his career

**MINNESOTA:** US Senator Al Franken, trying to salvage his political career amid accusations of groping or inappropriately touching women, said on Sunday he does not plan to resign but called himself "embarrassed and ashamed." Franken, a Democrat and former comedian who has represented Minnesota in the Senate since 2009, said in a round of media interviews - his first since the allegations surfaced on Nov 16 - that he looked forward to returning to his job.

"I'm embarrassed and ashamed. I've let a lot of people down and I'm hoping I can make it up to them and gradually regain their trust," Franken told the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Franken resisted comparisons between his behavior and that of Roy Moore, the Republican nominee for a US Senate seat from Alabama who has been accused of improper conduct involving teenage girls decades ago.

"I'm going to take responsibility. I'm going to be held accountable through the ethics committee," said Franken, whose behavior is being investigated by the Senate ethics panel. "And I'm going to hopefully be a voice in this that is helpful... Again, I respect women. What kills me about this is it gives people a reason to believe I don't respect women." Franken told Minneapolis television station WCCO in another interview that his predicament was "a bitter irony" because he has championed women's issues and has employed them in both his campaign and Senate offices.

"I've put them (women) in the highest jobs in my office," he said. In a separate interview with Minnesota Public Radio, Franken, one of the leading liberal voices in the Senate, said he has no plans to quit. When asked if he had considered resigning, Franken said: "No, no. The ethics committee is looking into this and I will cooperate fully with it." Pressed about stepping aside and allowing a woman to take his seat, Franken told Minnesota Public Radio, "I'm committed to working as hard as I can here in the Senate for the people of Minnesota."

Franken's office had previously issued statements in which he either apologized or said he could not remember behaving in the manner the women have described.

## Chechen leader ‘ready to die for president Putin’

**MOSCOW:** Ramzan Kadyrov, head of Russia's Chechnya, said he was ready to die for Vladimir Putin and stand down, if ordered, ahead of a federal presidential election next year which has triggered personnel reshuffles that have put some politicians on edge. Kadyrov, 41, spoke during an interview broadcast on state TV late on Sunday that showcased what the unpredictable former warlord regards as his main achievements and, to a stirring soundtrack, showed him boxing, riding a horse, and giving his views on everything from polygamy to gay marriage.

His comments looked like a tactic, one he has used before, to secure the Kremlin's public approval, something he didn't have to wait long for. "Kadyrov has repeatedly said that he is, speaking figuratively, quite a consistent and committed member of Putin's circle of adherents and intends to continue working where and how the president of the country

orders him," Dmitry Peskov, a Kremlin spokesman, told reporters yesterday. "He didn't say anything different and that's what we're going on. Ramzan continues to remain the current head of the republic."

Who rules the majority Muslim region is important for the Kremlin as Chechnya fought two wars against Moscow after the 1991 Soviet collapse, but now, in return for generous subsidies and a wide degree of autonomy, pledges absolute loyalty. Kadyrov, who has ruled Chechnya for the past decade during which rights groups have accused him of abuses, is seen by Moscow as the guarantor of that pact and was groomed by the Kremlin for his role after his father's 2004 murder.

#### ‘Putin's foot soldier’

His comments about possibly quitting came when asked by his state TV interviewer what he made of the prospect of having to leave office "at some point." Kadyrov said it was "his dream" to one day step down from what he described as a very difficult job. He said that, if asked, he could propose several candidates to take over. "Once there was a need for people like me to fight, to put things in order. Now we have order and prosperity ... and the time has come for changes," said Kadyrov. Kadyrov, who calls himself "Putin's foot soldier," has



**WASHINGTON:** File photo shows US Senator Al Franken (D-MN) listening during a Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. —AP

He has not denied any of the allegations. Franken was first accused of sexual misconduct by radio broadcaster Leann Tweeden. She said Franken had forcibly kissed her during a 2006 USO war zone tour, and a photo showed him with his hands over her chest while she was sleeping. Four days later, a woman named Lindsay Menz told CNN that Franken had touched her buttocks while the two were being photographed in 2010 at the Minnesota State Fair.

Franken has apologized to Tweeden, and has said he does not remember the incident with Menz. Last week, two other women told the Huffington Post Franken had touched their buttocks in separate incidents. The article did not provide the names of those two accusers. "I don't remember these photographs, I don't," Franken told the Star Tribune. "This is not something I would intentionally do." "I have been reflecting on this," Franken told Minnesota Public Radio of the allegations. "I want to be a better man." Franken is among a long list of celebrities and politicians who have been accused of sexual misconduct. The recent wave of accusations, some of them dating back decades, began in October.—Reuters

## FBI leaves targets of Russian hackers in the dark

**WASHINGTON:** The hackers' targets: The former head of cybersecurity for the US Air Force. An ex-director at the National Security Council. A former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency. All were caught up in a Russian government-aligned cyberespionage campaign. None was warned by the FBI. The bureau repeatedly failed to alert targets of the Russian hacking group known as Fancy Bear despite knowing for more than a year that their personal emails were in the Kremlin's sights, an Associated Press investigation has found.

"No one's ever said to me, 'Hey Joe, you've been targeted by this Russian group,'" said former Navy intelligence officer Joe Mazzafrro, whose inbox the hackers tried to compromise in 2015. "That our own security services have not gone out and alerted me, that's what I find the most disconcerting as a national security professional." The FBI declined to discuss its investigation into Fancy Bear's spying campaign, but did provide a statement that said in part: "The FBI routinely notifies individuals and organizations of potential threat information."

Three people familiar with the matter - including a current and a former government official - said the FBI has known the details of Fancy Bear's attempts to break into Gmail inboxes for more than a year. A senior FBI official, who was not authorized to publicly discuss the hacking operation because of its sensitivity, said the bureau had been overwhelmed by an "almost insurmountable problem." The AP conducted its own investigation into Fancy Bear, dedicating two months and a small team of reporters to go through a list of 19,000 phishing links provided by the cybersecurity firm Secureworks.

The list showed how Fancy Bear worked in close alignment with Kremlin interests to steal tens of thousands of emails from the Democratic Party, the AP reported this month. But it wasn't just Democrats the hackers were after. The AP identified more than 500 US-based targets in the data, reached out to more than 190 of them and interviewed nearly 80 people, including current or former military personnel, Democratic operatives, diplomats or ex-intelligence workers such as Mazzafrro.

Many were long-retired, but about one-third were still in government or held security clearances at the time of the hacking attempts. Only two told the AP they learned of the hacking attempts from the FBI. —AP



**Chechnya's regional leader Ramzan Kadyrov**

made similar statements before which have come to nothing.

Nor is his position under threat. He was re-elected last year for a five-year term after Putin gave his personal blessing for him to carry in on the job, while warning him that Russian law must be strictly enforced in Chechnya. Kadyrov's statement, like those before it, looked instead like a symbolic

show of loyalty to curry favor with Putin who the Chechen leader said in the same interview he saw "rarely" and only when summoned. Putin, 65, is widely expected to run for a fourth term and has started clearing out the old Russian political elite to bring in younger people, a process that has seen some regional leaders pressured to stand down.—Reuters



International

# Thousands stranded; Bali volcano alert ‘raised to the highest level’

## Disaster agency warns of imminent risk of major eruption

**DENPASAR:** Indonesia raised its warning for Bali's Mount Agung volcano to the top level four alert yesterday, closed the holiday island's airport and told residents around the mountain to immediately evacuate, warning of an "imminent" risk of a larger eruption. Bali's airport was closed for 24 hours from yesterday morning, disrupting 445 flights and some 59,000 passengers, due to the eruption and the presence of volcanic ash from Agung, but local officials said the closure could be extended.

Video footage shared by the disaster agency showed cold lava flows (lahar) at a number of locations on the mountainside. Lahar carrying mud and large boulders can destroy houses, bridges and roads in its path. "Plumes of smoke are occasionally accompanied by explosive eruptions and the sound of weak blasts that can be heard up to 12 km from the peak," the Disaster Mitigation Agency (BNPB) said in a statement after raising the alert level from three to four. "The potential for a larger eruption is imminent," it said, referring to the visible glow of magma at Agung's peak overnight.

Residents were warned to "immediately evacuate" a danger zone that circles Agung in a radius of 8-10 km (5-6 miles), Sutopo, a BNPB spokesman, said there had been no casualties so far and 40,000 people had left the area, but tens of thousands still needed to move and warned authorities would move them by force if necessary. Agung rises majestically over eastern Bali to a height of just over 3,000 metres (9,800 feet). Eastern Bali is relatively undeveloped, with traditional rice paddies dotting the landscape and the occasional budget resort, unlike the heavily populated southern tourist hub of Kuta-Seminyak-Nusa Dua.

Agung's last eruption in 1963 left more than 1,000 people dead and razed several villages. Analysis suggested the

threat should not be as great this time because "energy at Mount Agung's magma chamber is not as big" and with the ash column only around a quarter as high so far as the 20 km (12 miles) reached in 1963, said Sutopo. "I'm not worried (but) my friends in Russia are a little bit," said a Russian tourist, who only wanted to be identified as Dmitry, at an observation post in Rendang in Bali's east. Bali, famous for its surf, beaches and temples, attracted nearly 5 million visitors last year, and its international airport serves as a transport hub for the chain of islands in Indonesia's eastern archipelago. Tourism business has slumped in Bali since September when Agung's volcanic tremors began to increase.



### Evacuations ordered, lahar flows detected

#### Travelers stranded

According to the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre in nearby Darwin, Australia, there is "ash confirmed on the ground at Denpasar Airport" as well as ash at FL300 (which refers to flight level at 30,000 feet) in the vicinity of the volcano.

Bali's I Gusti Ngurah Rai airport, which is about 60 km from the volcano, will be closed for 24 hours, according to its operator. A total of 445 flights - 196 international and 249 domestic - and 59,000 passengers had been affected. Ten alternative airports have been prepared for airlines to divert inbound flights, including in neighboring provinces.

The airport operator said it was providing buses to take travelers to ferry ports for alternative travel arrangements. Bali airport's official website showed flights operated by Singapore Airlines, Sriwijaya, Garuda Indonesia, Malaysia Airlines and Jetstar had been cancelled. Television footage showed hundreds of holidaymakers camped inside the airport terminal, some sleeping on their bags, others using mobile telephones. "We have been here (in Bali) for three days we are about to leave today, but just found out our



**KARANGASEM:** Balinese Hindus take part in a ceremony, where they pray near Mount Agung in hope of preventing a volcanic eruption, in Muntig village of the Kubu sub-district on Indonesia's resort island of Bali. —AFP

flights have been cancelled. We have got no information because the gates, the check-ins have been closed indefinitely," said Carlo Oben from Los Angeles.

#### Airline risk from ash

Cover-More, Australia's biggest travel insurer, said on its website customers would only be covered if they had bought policies before the volcano alert was first issue on Sept 18. Indonesia's hotel and restaurant association said stranded tourists at member hotels would get one night's free stay. A transport ministry spokesman said the main air-

port on the neighboring island of Lombok had reopened after "no volcanic ash was detected". Airlines avoid flying when volcanic ash is present because it can cause significant damage to aircraft engines, leading to possible engine failure, and can clog fuel and cooling systems and hamper pilot visibility.

In June 1982, a British Airways 747 suffered severe damage and had all four engines flame out after encountering ash from Mount Galunggung in Indonesia. It descended to 12,000 feet before being able to restart some engines and make an emergency landing in Jakarta. —Reuters

## Risky stalemate as science battles human fears at Japan nuke plant

**ONAHAMA:** More than six years after a tsunami overwhelmed the Fukushima nuclear power plant, Japan has yet to reach consensus on what to do with a million tons of radioactive water, stored on site in around 900 large and densely packed tanks that could spill should another major earthquake or tsunami strike. The stalemate is rooted in a fundamental conflict between science and human nature. Experts advising the government have urged a gradual release to the nearby Pacific Ocean.

Treatment has removed all the radioactive elements except tritium, which they say is safe in small amounts. Conversely, if the tanks break, their contents could slosh out in an uncontrolled way. Local fishermen are balking. The water, no matter how clean, has a dirty image for consumers, they say. Despite repeated tests showing most types of fish caught off Fukushima are safe to eat, diners remain hesitant. The fishermen fear any release would sound the death knell for their nascent and still fragile recovery. "People would shun Fukushima fish again as soon as the water is released," said Fumio Haga, a drag-net fisherman from Iwaki, a city about 50 kilometers (30 miles) down the coast from the nuclear plant.

And so the tanks remain. Fall is high season for saury and flounder, among Fukushima's signature fish. It was once a busy time of year when coastal fishermen were out every morning. Then came March 11, 2011. A 9 magnitude offshore earthquake triggered a tsunami that killed more than 18,000 people along Japan's northeast coast. The quake and massive flooding knocked out power for the cooling systems at the Fukushima nuclear plant. Three of the six reactors had partial meltdowns. Radiation spewed into the air, and highly contaminated water ran into the Pacific.

Today, only about half of the region's 1,000 fishermen go out, and just twice a week because of reduced demand. They participate in a fish testing program. Lab technicians mince fish samples at Onahama port in Iwaki, pack them in a cup for inspection and record details such as who caught the fish and where. Packaged fish sold at supermarkets carry official "safe" stickers. Only three kinds of fish passed the test when the experiment began in mid-2012.



**FUKUSHIMA:** Tanks are seen at Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant in Okuma. — AP

15 months after the tsunami. Over time, that number has increased to about 100. The fish meet what is believed to be the world's most stringent requirement: less than half the radioactive cesium level allowed under Japan's national standard and one-twelfth of the US or EU limit, said Yoshiharu Nemoto, a senior researcher at the Onahama testing station. That message isn't reaching consumers.

A survey by Japan's Consumer Agency in October found that nearly half of Japanese weren't aware of the tests, and that consumers are more likely to focus on alarming information about possible health impacts in extreme cases, rather than facts about radiation and safety standards. Fewer Japanese consumers shun fish and other foods from Fukushima than before, but one in five still do, according to the survey. The coastal catch of 2,000 tons last year was 8 percent of pre-disaster levels. The deep-sea catch was half of what it used to be, though scientists say there is no contamination risk that far out. Naoya

Sekiya, a University of Tokyo expert on disaster information and social psychology, said that the water from the nuclear plant shouldn't be released until people are well-informed about the basic facts and psychologically ready. "A release only based on scientific safety, without addressing the public's concerns, cannot be tolerated in a democratic society," he said. "A release when people are unprepared would only make things worse." He and consumer advocacy group representative Kikuko Tatsumi sit on a government expert panel that has been wrestling with the social impact of a release and what to do with the water for more than a year, with no sign of resolution.

Tatsumi said the stalemate may be further fueling public misconception: Many people believe the water is stored because it's not safe to release, and they think Fukushima fish is not available because it's not safe to eat. The amount of radioactive water at Fukushima is still growing, by 150 tons a day. —AP

## Xi orders China's 'toilet revolution' to march on

**BEIJING:** China's president has ordered the country to march on in its "revolution" to clean up notoriously dirty and foul-smelling public bathrooms in a bid to improve quality of life and boost tourism. The so-dubbed "toilet revolution" was launched in 2015 as part of efforts to make restrooms-often squat toilets with no paper-more tourist-friendly.

President Xi Jinping said the toilet problem "is not a small thing" and cleaning up is necessary to create a "civilized" urban and rural environment, China's state news agency Xinhua reported yesterday. The country expects to have added or upgraded more than 70,000 toilets by the end of this year. Another 64,000 will be built or enhanced between 2018 and 2020, the National Tourism Administration has said in an action plan. According to

Xinhua, since taking office in 2012, Xi has made a point on rural tours to ask villagers whether they did their business in flushable toilets or pits dug into the ground.

"In rural areas, some toilets were little more than makeshift shelters surrounded by bunches of corn stalks, and some were open pits next to pigsties," the agency said. "Local authorities are now more aware of the important role toilets play, believing better toilets are not only beneficial for tourism, but can also... enhance the overall level of civilization of society." China's infamous "squatty potties" arouse fear in some would-be tourists, with several tourism blog posts dedicated to the subject. While studies have indicated that squatting may have health benefits over sitting, the position is still hard to accept for those accustomed to porcelain thrones.

Public bathrooms in China have also been known to be bereft of toilet paper thanks to enterprising crooks sneaking out entire rolls for their personal use. Facial recognition is now employed in some places to limit individual toilet paper portions. Internet commenters applauded the restroom remodeling movement on



**BEIJING:** Photo shows the first public toilet equipped with Wi-Fi, a bank ATM machine and chargers for mobile phones and electric vehicles in Beijing. —AFP

Chinese microblogging site Weibo yesterday. "Support the toilet revolution," one user wrote. "Seriously, whether it's in a

city or the countryside, when nature calls, it's always a hassle to find a decent bathroom." —AFP

### News in brief

#### 12 missing; ships collide

**BEIJING:** Chinese authorities searched yesterday for 12 crew members who disappeared after two cargo ships collided before dawn off the coast of southern Guangdong province, according to state media. A ship carrying 5,000 tons of sand sank after the collision, the Guangzhou maritime search and rescue centre said. But the second ship carrying over 5,000 tons of steel managed to make it to shore, the state-run China National Radio reported. Two crew members from the sunken ship and eleven sailors from the steel ship have been rescued, the Guangzhou center said. The collision occurred at about 3:00 am on Monday near the Pearl River estuary. Some 30 rescue ships, one helicopter and other ships that happened to be nearby were participating in search efforts. Authorities have launched an investigation into the cause of the accident, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

#### China offers billions

**BUDAPEST:** Chinese Premier Li Keqiang made clear yesterday that China would keep pouring billions of euros into central and eastern Europe despite EU concerns, as he attended a regional summit in Hungary. Li said that China's Development Bank would make available the equivalent of two billion euros (\$2.4 billion) to a new interbank association between the region and China to be inaugurated later in the day. In addition a second stage of an investment fund has been launched, capitalized with \$1 billion, "most of which will be channeled to CEE countries," he said in Budapest. The sixth annual gathering of the Central and Eastern European Countries group (CEEC) brings Li together with counterparts from 16 nations that have already benefitted from vast amounts of Chinese investment. This has raised worries in Brussels and in western Europe about growing Chinese influence in these countries, many of which are members of the European Union or are hoping to become so.

#### Cuba's municipal elections

**HAVANA:** Cubans choose municipal councilors Sunday in island-wide local elections that are the first step in a Communist Party-supervised process meant to culminate next year with the election of a successor to President Raul Castro. Castro, 86, cast his ballot at a voting station in western Havana, where he stopped to talk to neighbors and students who were guarding ballot boxes, images aired on Cuban television showed. No opposition candidates are competing in the elections for the more than 12,500 council seats. Instead, voters will choose from among 30,000 candidates selected by acclamation in neighborhood assemblies. More than eight million people are eligible to cast ballots, but voting is voluntary. Ballots are secret. More than 82 percent turned out, as of two hours before polls closing, the head of the national elections board said.

#### Gulen's 'money man'

**ANKARA:** Turkish spies working in Sudan have repatriated a businessman accused of links to Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen after he was caught in a joint operation, state media reported yesterday. Memduh Cizmaz is accused of giving millions to the movement run by US-based Gulen, who Ankara claims ordered the July 15, 2016 attempt to end President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's rule. Cizmaz was captured in a joint operation involving Sudanese intelligence after the Turkish National Intelligence Organisation (MIT) located him two months earlier, security sources told Anadolu news agency. Cizmaz, with business interests in petrol stations and brick factories, was returned to Turkey early on Monday, the agency said. He had gone to Sudan in January 2016 but sources told Anadolu he continued to send millions of dollars to the movement.



## Speaker's arrest puts Indonesia parliament in graft spotlight

Implicated in five corruption scandals since the 1990s but never convicted, the speaker of Indonesia's parliament Setya Novanto is a political survivor. Last week Novanto was detained by anti-corruption investigators over the biggest graft scandal to hit Indonesia's legislature. The 62-year-old political powerbroker was defiant, denying any wrongdoing and urging parliament and the political party he leads not to unseat him. His lawyer, Fredrich Yunadi, expressed confidence that Novanto would be cleared. "In every court we always win," Yunadi told Reuters.

But the latest allegations against Novanto have reinforced the perception among Indonesians that their parliament, long regarded as riddled with entrenched corruption, is a failing institution. Politicians and analysts say that is unlikely to change, whatever the outcome of the case. "Before Setya Novanto, there were many, many MPs who were put in jail and it didn't have an effect," said Eva Sundari, a member of parliament from the PDI-P party, which sits in the ruling coalition alongside Novanto's Golkar.

A Corruption Eradication Commission, known by its Indonesian initials KPK, was established in 2002 after the demise of authoritarian president Suharto. Fiercely independent and able to wiretap suspects without a warrant, it has been a thorn in the side of the country's establishment. But Bob Lowry, an Indonesia analyst at the Australian Institute of International Affairs, said that - the KPK aside - there has never been a systemic approach to tackling corruption that he says runs through all layers of government and politics. "You are not dealing with individuals, you are dealing with an entire structure and culture," he said.

### A bagman, a suicide and a luxury watch

Novanto is accused of orchestrating a scheme to plunder \$173 million, or almost 40 percent of the entire budget for the project, from a government contract to introduce a national electronic identity card. Novanto denies any wrongdoing, writing a letter to other parliament leaders after he was detained asking them to "give me an opportunity to prove that I wasn't involved".

According to an indictment filed against Novanto's alleged bagman, businessman Andi Agustinus, they stood to be personally enriched to the tune of \$42 million. Agustinus has not yet commented on the allegations or entered any plea. He is due to appear in court this week to answer the charges. The rest of the money was funnelled to as many as 60 lawmakers, as well as officials, party chiefs, parliamentary staffers and tenderers, according to the KPK, which alleges some of the cash was brazenly divided up in parliamentary meeting rooms.

In August a witness in the probe, a US-based consultant to a company that won a contract to supply biometric technology for the identity cards - ironically aimed, in part, at curbing graft - shot himself after a stand-off with police in Los Angeles. Before his death, Johannes Marliem told KPK officers about meeting Novanto at his Jakarta home in 2011, according to a declaration to a court in Minnesota by a Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent, at which the parliament speaker negotiated a "discount" under which he and Agustinus would get a 40 percent share of a contract worth more than \$50 million.

Marliem is also alleged to have said he had brought Novanto a \$135,000 Richard Mille watch and showed the agent a photo of Novanto wearing it. A consummate political operator, Novanto is a key link between parliament and the government of President Joko Widodo, who is expected to seek re-election in 2019, said Hugo Brennan, Asia analyst at risk consultancy Verisk Maplecroft. He gained a measure of international prominence in September 2015 when Donald Trump, then a US presidential candidate, hailed him as "an amazing man" at a news conference in Trump Tower in New York.

Two months later he resigned from the speaker's post after a recording of a meeting emerged in which he was alleged to have attempted to extort \$4 billion of shares from the US mining giant Freeport McMoRan. The case got blanket media coverage and hearings were televised live. Within a year, however, Novanto was speaker again after the Constitutional Court ruled the recording inadmissible.

### Money politics

Novanto's detention last week came after months of declining to answer summonses for questioning by the KPK. The allegations have once more gripped Indonesia, with newspaper front pages splashing the story and memes mocking Novanto trending on social media. Indonesia was ranked last year at 90 out of 176 countries on Transparency International's corruption perception index. The watchdog has singled out parliament as Indonesia's most corrupt institution, and in July called on President Widodo to protect the KPK against attempts by the legislature to weaken the commission's powers.

Critics inside and outside the parliament say the root problem is money politics, which is underpinned by an open-ticket electoral system and campaign financing laws. These laws allow only tiny amounts of public funding, and do not require public disclosure of individual donors, which some lawmakers say perpetuates a system of funding from illicit sources and financial patronage for favors. The open-ticket voting system encourages candidates to spread largesse to voters and community leaders and then recoup the expenditure if they reach parliament, says the PDI-P's Sundari. —Reuters



## Lawless land of cryptocurrency fundraising

From raising \$30 million in 30 seconds to being endorsed by Paris Hilton or vanishing into thin air: anything is possible in the risky new world of cryptocurrency fundraising, but regulators are lurking. Bypassing oversight of any kind, Initial Coin Offerings (ICOs) have sprung from nowhere to become a hugely popular way for start-ups to raise funds online, offering self-created digital "tokens" or coins to any willing buyer. ICOs herald "the democratization of investment", said Nil Besombes, a French blogger specialized in digital currencies.

But in the lawless Wild West of ICOs, the risks are legion and Besombes himself admits to losing "the equivalent of 1,800 euros" when he fell for a slick online sales pitch - only for the company to disappear without a trace. "It's like gambling," he told AFP. While the term ICO may suggest a link with conventional Initial Public Offerings (IPOs), there is no flotation on the stock market and the ICO investor typically holds no ownership stake in the company which would entitle them to a slice of profits distributed as dividends.

ICOs are thus essentially a form of crowdfunding where participants are betting that the value of their "tokens" will go up and that they will eventually be able to trade them for established cryptocurrencies like bitcoin and Ethereum, which can in turn be exchanged for traditional currencies. ICOs have exploded this year with investors pouring \$3.6 billion into 228 projects, according to data from Coinschedule. In 2016, that figure stood at just \$96 million for 46 ICOs.

By June of this year, the money raised through ICOs surpassed that of early stage venture capital investments, the traditional way for young companies to raise funds from wealthy investors. The ICO craze has drawn the attention of regulators around the world, who have warned

of the risks of fraud, the volatility of virtual currencies and the lack of clarity on what a "token" represents. "A lot of ICOs see values plummet by 80 or 90 percent but they can rebound strongly once the project begins to deliver results," said Tristan Colombet, head of the French auction platform Domraider, itself funded by an ICO.

The "tokens" offered by his company are currently worth just a third of what they were at the launch, to the dismay of investors. Colombet says things will pick up "in

“ ICOs herald the democratization of investment ”

early 2018" when his system to track auctions online and in the auctioneering room in real time is fully implemented, using the same "blockchain" technology that underpins bitcoin and many of the tech start-ups in the ICO universe.

### Celebs and 'digital gold'

The gold rush fever surrounding ICOs is partly down to the soaring success of bitcoin, which first hit parity with the US dollar in 2011, two years after it was created. Since then, the world's best-known virtual currency has enjoyed a meteoric rise, defying predictions of a crash. It has now

surpassed \$9,500. Many ICO investors are lured by the possibility of stumbling upon the next "digital gold". Firms issuing ICOs have raised their visibility by enlisting celebrities like LA socialite Paris Hilton, hip-hop producer DJ Khaled and US boxer Floyd Mayweather to tout their digital tokens on social media.

The endorsements prompted the US Securities and Exchange Commission to warn this month that celebrities "often do not have sufficient expertise" to judge such investments, and that they must disclose if they are receiving compensation for promoting ICOs.

### Scrambling to respond

The proliferation of ICOs has forced regulators around the world to take notice, their responses ranging from a crackdown to a wait-and-see approach. China and South Korea have banned ICOs outright, while European supervisory bodies have voiced strong concerns. The UK's financial regulator cautioned against the "very high-risk, speculative investments", while Germany's powerful Bundesbank central bank warned that the ICO trend was "attracting fraudsters".

The European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) said investors risked having no legal recourse in case of a dispute, as ICOs tend to fall "outside of the scope of EU laws and regulations". Canadian and Russian regulators however have chosen another path by creating so-called "regulatory sandboxes", a framework that allows ICO firms to experiment for a certain time without falling foul of securities laws.

"We welcome this type of innovation," said Louis Morisset, president of the Canadian Securities Administrators, while stressing that ICO issuers should "understand what obligations may apply". —AFP

## US police aid immigration officials in crackdown

Dozens of police departments in the United States have been granted new powers, or are seeking them, to check the immigration status of people they arrest, aiding President Donald Trump's broad crackdown on people living in the country illegally. Since Trump took office in January, 29 departments have joined a special program under which they are deputized to perform some tasks of immigration agents, doubling its size in 10 months, according to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency. And the administration hopes that is just the beginning.

Documents obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request show that the administration has also had contact with scores of additional jurisdictions about the program, and 38 of those told Reuters in interviews they have submitted applications for the program or are potentially interested in joining.

The program, known as 287(g), deputizes local officers trained by ICE to use federal records to vet arrestees they suspect of being in the country illegally and then turn them over to federal agents if they are. The Department of Homeland Security has said in the past that police forces taking part in the program have flagged tens of thousands of people for deportation. The broad expansion of the program comes as Trump seeks to accelerate arrests and deportations of people living in the United States illegally. The large number of departments expressing interest in the program has not been previously reported.

Most of the police departments that have joined, or are seeking to join, the program have relatively small populations, typically fewer than 100,000 residents,

with small immigrant populations. In contrast, the roughly three dozen so-called "sanctuary cities" that have limited their cooperation on immigration enforcement have a median population of half a million people and larger foreign-born populations, according to a Reuters analysis.

Under President Barack Obama, the 287(g) program was downsized and its funding reduced amid concerns that some participating police departments were overzealous in their targeting of Latinos. Critics also said it eroded trust of police in immigrant communities. By the end of fiscal year 2016 only 32 agreements were left in place, down from a peak in 2010 when some 70 jurisdictions were participating. Today, 60 departments in 18 states participate.

Three-quarters of the agencies that have already signed 287(g) agreements or are interested in doing so are in counties that voted for Trump in 2016, according to a Reuters analysis of electoral data. ICE would not confirm which jurisdictions had shown interest until they had signed agreements. An ICE official, who asked not to be named, said interest increased after Trump took office and signed an executive order that included expanding support for the program.

### Town vs city

The township of Bensalem, Pennsylvania, just half an hour up the road from Philadelphia, is one of those hoping to join the 287(g) program. Fred Harran, director of public safety in the city of 60,000, says that any immigrant in the country illegally who commits a crime, even a misdemeanor like shoplifting or possession of a small amount of drugs, should be considered for deportation, and he welcomes help from ICE. "If deporting you out of this country when you commit a crime is a tool at my disposal, you are darn right I am going to use it," Harran said.

In neighboring Philadelphia, police commissioner Richard Ross Jr. favors a different approach. Like many police chiefs in large cities with significant immigrant populations, he wants immigrant residents to feel comfortable cooperating with authorities to solve crimes. While Philadelphia and other big cities say they will turn over seri-

ous criminals to ICE, they do not believe local police should be doing the work of federal immigration agents.

"There's no way in the world that you would want to come forward as a source of information if you believe you are in jeopardy of being deported," Ross testified at a court hearing in October. Philadelphia is suing the Trump administration over its threats to cut federal funding to sanctuary cities.

In Bensalem, Harran says he first reached out to ICE about joining 287(g) during Obama's presidency. But in 2012, Obama ended the part of the program he had hoped to join. It had allowed local officers out on patrol to question and arrest people suspected of violating immigration laws. Obama left in place the part of the program Trump has now expanded. In a February memo, then-Homeland Security Secretary John Kelly said ICE would consider bringing back the discontinued part of the program. An ICE official familiar with the program said he was "unaware of any plans right now" to revive it.

### Money-making opportunity?

Once a jurisdiction is approved for the 287(g) program, it designates local personnel to be trained at a federal facility. Local jurisdictions pay for travel, housing, and expenses for officers during training. ICE pays to install its databases and other technology in local offices for certified officers to use. Cities not participating in the program can still approach ICE if they have suspicions about arrestees, but the process can be time consuming and cumbersome.

Participating jurisdictions also, as part of their agreement with ICE, have the option of signing separate contracts to house immigrant detainees for a fee. "It's an opportunity to make money for a county that is facing economic hardship," said Chris Kleinberg, the sheriff of Dakota County, Nebraska. He said it has applied to be part of the program. Of the 98 jurisdictions that have existing agreements or are interested in getting them, at least 27 already house people for ICE, according to ICE data through April 2017. Some police departments, however, have backed down from their support of 287(g) in the face of

political pressure. Orange County, the only place participating in program in California, will end its agreement on Jan. 1 following the passage of a statewide 'sanctuary bill,' which prevents police from inquiring about people's immigration status throughout California, said Ray Grangoff from the sheriff's department.

### Concerns about program

ICE says the 287(g) program increases the number of immigrants it is able to deport. A 2010 report from the DHS inspector general said the program accounted for "a significant portion of nationwide ICE removal activity." In fiscal year 2008 for example, 287(g) officers identified 33,831 immigrants for deportation, or 9.5 percent of all removals during that period, the report said.

Detractors question the program's value. A 2011 study of seven 287(g) jurisdictions by the Washington-based nonpartisan think tank Migration Policy Institute found the program did not target the most serious criminals and led to an increase in immigrants' mistrust of local authorities. The study found that in the first 10 months of fiscal year 2010, half of the immigrants flagged to ICE in the 287(g) jurisdictions had committed misdemeanors, including immigration violations that are often civil not criminal offenses.

"Many of the immigrants who are arrested in traffic stops or for loitering are not the real threats to public safety," said Chris Rickard from the American Civil Liberties Union. In November, the ACLU identified 14 jails and counties applying for the program as having had problems in the past, including poor detention conditions or accusations of racial bias.

One such place is Alamance County, North Carolina, which had its 287(g) program terminated in 2012. The Justice Department sued Sheriff Terry Johnson that year over allegations his office discriminated against Latinos at traffic stops and checkpoints. At trial, the department presented evidence that officers used derogatory terms like "wetback" and "taco eater," which the sheriff's office denied. —Reuters





A man pushes a baby stroller as he jogs through the landscape slightly covered in snow during a sunny morning with temperatures around the freezing point near the village of Andechs in southern Germany yesterday. — AFP

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"I have children and grandchildren to answer to, and so, Mr President, I will not be complicit," Flake said.

Solomon noted that neither she nor Dictionary.com can know what sends people to dictionaries or dictionary sites to look up "complicit" or any other word. She and other lexicographers who study look-up behavior believe it's likely a combination of people who may not know a definition, are digging deeper or are seeking inspiration or emotional reinforcement of some sort.

As for “complicit,” she said several other major events contributed to interest in the word. They include the rise of the opioid epidemic and how it came to pass, along with the spread of sexual harassment and assault allegations against an ever-growing list of powerful men, including film mogul Harvey Weinstein. The scandal that started in Hollywood and quickly spread across industries has led to a mountain of questions over who knew what, who might have contributed and what it means to stay silent.

While Solomon shared percentage increases for “complicit,” the company would not disclose the number of look-ups, calling that data proprietary. The site chooses its word of the year by heading straight for data first, scouring look-ups by day, month and year to date and how they correspond to noteworthy

events, Solomon said. This year, a lot of high-volume trends unsurprisingly corresponded to politics. But the site also looks at lower-volume trends to see what other words resonated.

Among them:

• **INTERSEX:** It trended on Dictionary.com in January thanks to model Hanne Gaby Odiele speaking up about being intersex to break taboos. As a noun it means “an individual having reproductive organs or external sexual characteristics of both male and female”. Dictionary.com traces its origins back to 1915, as the back formation of “intersexual”.

- **SHRINKAGE:** While the word has been around since 1790, a specific definition tied to a famous 1994 episode of "Seinfeld" led to a word look-up revival in February. That's when a house in The Hamptons where the episode was filmed went on the market. For the record: The Jason Alexander character George Costanza emerges with "shrinkage" from a pool and said "shrinkage" is noted by Jerry's girlfriend.

- **TARNATION:** It had a good ride on Dictionary.com in the first few months of the year due to a round of social media fun with the “What in tarnation” meme that had animals and various objects wearing cowboy hats.

• **HOROLOGIST:** As in master clockmaker, like the one featured in the podcast “S-Town”, the highly anticipated “This American Life” follow-up to the popular “Serial” podcast. All seven episodes of murder intrigue were released at once in March. Horologist, used in the radio story, trended around that time.

• **TOTALITY:** There were look-up spikes in August. Thank you, solar eclipse and your narrow band of totality, meaning the strip of land where the sun was completely obscured by the moon. — AP

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As for a divorced woman, Maarafi said she will not be allowed to transfer her residency to a work permit and will be deported if her residency is not renewed.

Separately, the head of the parliamentary health

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The boards of both companies have approved the transaction, which is due to be finalized in the first semester of 2018, Meredith said in a statement. The all-cash transaction includes about \$1.7 billion for the company assets plus more than \$1 billion in debt. Among the funds financing the purchase are \$650 million from Koch Equity Development, a fund belonging to Charles and David Koch. The companies said the Koch unit will not have a seat on Meredith's board and will have no influence on Meredith's editorial or managerial operations.

The Koch brothers are two of the world's richest men through their ownership of Koch Industries, a sprawling industrial empire that manufactures such products as Brawny paper towels, Dixie Cups and Lycra. The Kochs, known for their advocacy of conservative policies and influence on

committee MP Humoud Al-Khudayer said the committee will study proposals to reduce health fees for expats. He said some of those who submitted the proposals find the fees for some services too high, and may be disproportionate with their salaries. He said the committee discussed proposals related to health insurance for citizens and listened to comments of employers related to the issue, as well as the beneficiary groups, and the possibility of adding other groups. He said proposals of citizens' interests will be a top priority and there will be special meetings to discuss them.

some quarters of the Republican Party, had previously expressed interest in buying media properties such as the Los Angeles Times and the Chicago Tribune in 2013.

Their involvement in the Time deal “underscores a strong belief in Meredith’s strength as a business operator, its strategies, and its ability to unlock significant value from the Time acquisition,” according to the companies’ statement announcing the deal. Meredith said it expected the deal to close in the first three months of 2018.

When combined, the Meredith and Time brands will have a readership of 135 million people and paid circulation of nearly 60 million. The deal also will expand Meredith's reach with internet-savvy millennials, creating a digital media business with 170 million monthly unique visitors in the United States and more than 10 billion annual video views.

"We are creating a premier media company serving nearly 200 million American consumers across industry-leading digital, television, print, video, mobile and social platforms positioned for growth," said Meredith Corporation chairman and CEO Stephen Lynch. The transaction will create a company with a combined revenues of \$4.8 billion for 2016, including \$2.7 billion of total advertising revenues with nearly \$700 million of digital advertising revenues. — Agencies

law to implement the pact has not managed to get through Congress.

The immediate objective of yesterday's rally was to build support for the proposed law. Duterte said he would work for the law's passage, even calling Congress to a special session where Muslim leaders could explain their plans to the legislators. Such an agreement must be "inclusive" and acceptable to all groups in Mindanao, he added. Speaking at the event, MILF chairman Murad Ebrahim recalled that many of those attending had fought in the Muslim guerrilla wars in decades past.

But he said they are now pushing for the autonomy law, stating "it presents us the rare opportunity to be part of the noble endeavor of peace-making". Hundreds of thousands of people attended the gathering at the main MILF base where a festive mood prevailed despite the history of conflict. The MILF previously said half a million had registered to attend. — AFP

secularists may seem like a strange combination to be lumped together. But in Kuwait, both sides rallied together in Nov 2011, when protesters angry about corruption allegations stormed the parliament. The protesters briefly entered the parliament chamber amid attempts by opposition lawmakers to bring the prime minister for questioning over claims that government officials transferred state funds to accounts outside the country.

"I think a lot of Kuwaitis will be concerned that this will just feed into instability," said Kristin Diwan, a senior resident scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington. Diwan, whose institute is predominantly funded through a government-subsidized think tank in the United Arab Emirates, called the arrests "concerning." She contrasted that against a recent call by HH the Amir for unity. "That question will be raised now whether that unity can be achieved at a time where we have the jailing of a large number of opposition and youth activists," Diwan said.



Kuwait Times

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# Shibutanis cruise at Skate America for second Grand Prix victory

## Miyahara back on top with Skate America win

**LAKE PLACID:** The Shib Sibs say they're right on track for the Pyeongchang Olympics. First, a stop in Japan for a teaser showdown with the world's best. American ice dancers Maia and Alex Shibutani skated into next month's Grand Prix Final with ease Sunday, winning Skate America for their second victory in the series with a program that could earn them gold in South Korea.

The two-time U.S. champions were a hit with fans and judges all weekend, twizzling and spinning their way to wins in the short and free dance programs. The

siblings won the free skate Sunday with 115.07 points and finished at 194.25 overall. They also won the Grand Prix event in Russia this year.

"This was the week that we wanted to have at this particular point in the season," 26-year-old Alex Shibutani said. The Shibutanis took bronze at last season's Final, and they'll try to do better against a strong field in Japan. Their top competition includes Vancouver winners and Sochi silver medalists Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir from Canada, and France's Gabriella Papadakis and Guillaume Cizeron - each of those duos also won two Grand Prix stops. Two other American couples, Madison Chock and Evan Bates, and Madison Hubbell and Zachary Donahue, have qualified. The Shibutanis are still looking for ways to sharpen their routine ahead of Pyeongchang.

"We know that this program still has room to grow," 23-year-old Maia Shibutani said. Italy's Anna Cappellini and Luca Lanotte also qualified for the Final

with a score of 181.63. The duo was upset with the judges' scores on the short program Saturday and then struggled in the free dance, with Cappellini's skate blade getting caught on Lanotte's pants during a lift. Lanotte said he let the short-program scores throw him off during the free dance.

Russia's Victoria Sinitsina and Nikita Katsalapov were third at 176.53. Canada's Piper Gilles and Paul Poirier were fourth at 166.54, and Kaitlin Hawayek and Jean-Luc Baker of the U.S. next at 163.53. The other American pair, Rachel and Michael Parsons, was ninth out of nine teams. Japan's Satoko Miyahara won the ladies competition, finally recapturing her top form following a lingering hip injury to cement herself as an Olympic favorite.

Miyahara won the free skate with a score of 143.31, edging Japan's Kaori Sakamoto with a few impressive combinations, including a triple lutz-double toe loop-double loop.

A three-time national champion, Miyahara skipped Four Continents and worlds this year because of her hip and finished fifth at the Grand Prix event in Japan. She said she's feeling better daily, and it showed in her programs this weekend. Sakamoto had a score of 210.59, scoring especially well on her jumps, including a double axel-triple toe loop-double toe loop combination in the free skate. Bradie Tennell emerged as a potential U.S. champion at her Grand Prix debut. The 19-year old finished third at 204.10 with a season-best 137.09 in the free skate. Tennell shot her hands in the air when she finished her program, then smiled and



**LAKE PLACID:** Maia Shibutani and Alex Shibutani of the United States compete in the Ice Dance Free Dance during day three of 2017 Bridgestone Skate America at Herb Brooks Arena in Lake Placid, New York. —AFP

covered her face.

"It was kind of just exactly what I'd been practicing," Tennell said. "I was just really happy I was able to put it out there and feel like I did my job."

Reigning Skate America champ Ashley Wagner halted her free skate and withdrew because of an infection on her right ankle. The 26-year-old American didn't appear to be injured, but stopped during a spin section. She said after she was in "nauseating" pain.

"It's not a quick-fix kind of a situation," Wagner said while choking up. "My main goal is to be national

champion and to go to the Olympics, and that's something that I absolutely can do with the right amount of training." US skater Karen Chen finished eighth after a season-best score in the free skate. She had to ice her right knee Saturday after a fall in the short program and said she powered through a few big bruises to skate Sunday. Russia's Polina Tsurksaya and Serafima Sakhanovich were fourth and fifth, respectively, and Canada's Gabrielle Daleman finished sixth. Daleman was third after the short program and was disgruntled by her scores in the free skate. —AP

## Sport begins new chapter with hardline approach to doping

**LOS ANGELES:** Over half of the 377 weightlifters at the world championships that begin today in the United States will be drug tested as the sport begins a new chapter to try to retain its Olympic status after decisions taken by the governing IWF. By the time of the last lift on Dec. 5 at the worlds in Anaheim, California, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) will have begun deliberations on whether weightlifting should feature at the Paris 2024 Games.

"We accept that in the past the incidence of doping in weightlifting has been too high," says Hungarian Tamas Ajan, president of the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) since 2000 and secretary general for 24 years before that.

Ajan, 78, was speaking in Anaheim at the weekend, where the IWF adopted a hardline approach to doping at an executive board meeting. It will target "less than a dozen high-risk countries where there is an entrenched culture of doping that goes beyond weightlifting". The countries involved were not named.

Of the 49 weightlifting positives in the re-testing of samples from the 2008 and 2012 Olympics - more than any other sport - 43 were from nations formerly part of the Soviet Union.

Russia was banned from the Rio 2016 Games for repeated offences that "brought weightlifting into disrepute" and is also among the nine nations excluded from the world championships for having three or more of those 49 positives. Russian Weightlifting Federation president Maxim Agapitov said at the European Junior Championships in Albania on Oct 22: "We are building a new future, but I accept we have to take responsibility for so many positives in the past. It is in the past but it so happens that we must answer for it."

China is also banned from the world championships in Anaheim and, like Russia, has been accused of state-sponsored doping. When the IPFW said it was imposing a one-year ban on Chinese lifters from mid-October, the Chinese Weightlifting Association (CWA) issued a statement expressing "regret" at the decision. "China has been firmly against doping and has a zero-tolerance approach to this particular problem," Xinhua reported the CWA as saying in a statement on Oct.

1. Doping allegations against China and Russia are under investigation by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). However, Russia, like the Chinese, has always denied any involvement in state-sponsored doping.

### NEW RULES

Under new rules approved by the IWF on Saturday, countries will face bans of up to four years "if they do not fulfil their anti-doping responsibilities", which would keep them out of the Olympics. A new Olympic qualifying system will also require athletes to compete more often than some do now.

Kazakh Ilya Ilyin, stripped of his gold medals from Beijing and London after testing positive, was absent from international competition for more than two years between those two Games. There will be more out-of-competition testing, and a more detailed record of athletes' coaching and support personnel.

The IWF's anti-doping programme will be handed over to an Independent Testing Authority. "Today marks the start of a new chapter for international weightlifting," said Ajan. "The Olympic Movement can trust that we are doing, and will continue to do, everything in our power to address the incidence of doping in our sport."

A Clean Sport Commission set up by the IWF, including two German scientists, an American lawyer, and the president of the German Weightlifting Federation among its seven members, made the recommendations adopted this weekend, and will monitor progress over the next four years. In June the IOC asked for an IWF report by December on how the governing body plans to deal with doping. Unless it is deemed "satisfactory" at an IOC meeting in Lausanne on Dec. 5-6, weightlifting will lose its Olympic status after Tokyo 2020.

Because of the bans, and North Korea's decision not to enter, 13 of 15 current world champions will not compete in Anaheim, leaving Tunisia, Mongolia and New Zealand, who have no pedigree in the sport at this level, to contend for medals. The U.S. hope to win their first men's world championships medals in 20 years. The host nation's best chance of success is in the 69kg category with teenager Clarence 'CJ' Cummings, who has won four world titles at youth and junior level. — Reuters



**KFH's participation in the conference**

## KFH participates in Kuwait Int'l Arabian Horse Festival

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) participated in the Kuwait International Arabian Horse Festival organized by Bait Al Arab Kuwait Stud Show Arena as part of its continuing efforts to support the major events and forums held in Kuwait, especially sport-related events.

The festival attracts huge number of visitors from the GCC and other Arab Countries.

Moreover, it includes two competitions: the first one is the Egyptian Horses championship Kuwait that took place on November 17-18, while the second from November 30th to December 2nd.

KFH was praised in recognition of its main sponsorship and keenness to participate in the national events and celebrations while sponsoring and supporting sport and the youth as part of its social responsibility.



## Jansrud wins season-opening World Cup super-G

**LAKE LOUISE:** Reigning Olympic champion Kjetil Jansrud got his World Cup speed season off to a flying start Sunday by capturing the Lake Louise super-G.

The 32-year-old Norwegian veteran completed the season-opening super-G in a time of one minute, 30.76 seconds to finish 0.28 sec-

onds ahead of runner-up Max Franz of Austria.

"Winning the race proves that you are on the right track, so I'm very happy with my win today in Lake Louise," said Jansrud. Jansrud had to battle through changing visibility and intermittent snowfall to earn his 20th career World Cup victory. It was also his third win at Lake Louise, a place where he has enjoyed past success by winning the double (downhill and super-G) in the Canadian Rockies in 2014.

Franz was second in a time of 1:31.04 while his Austrian compatriot Hannes Reichelt placed third in 1:31.08. It was a superb day for the Norwegians who claimed three of the top six spots. Norway's Aleksander Aamodt Kilde finished fourth in 1:31.17 and teammate Aksel Lund Svindal rounded out the top five finishing 0.52 behind Jansrud. Svindal is skiing strong again after coming off an injury filled season last year.

His rehabilitated knee held up throughout both season-opening speed races as he also finished third in Saturday's downhill. Swiss Beat Feuz won Saturday's downhill, finishing ahead of Austria's Matthias Mayer and Svindal.

It was an emotion-filled week of racing for the skiers as the Lake Louise event took place just two weeks after the tragic death of French athlete David Poisson, who was killed in nearby Nakiska ski resort while training for this event.

Poisson, a downhill bronze medallist at the 2013 World Championships, died after he lost a ski, went through the safety netting and struck a tree. The 35-year-old Poisson was travelling at more than 100 kilometres per hour (62 miles per hour) when he lost his balance on a curve. The racers honoured Poisson's memory by wearing bibs with his name and heart-shaped stickers bearing his initials on their helmets.—AFP



**LAKE LOUISE:** Norway's Kjetil Jansrud celebrates his victory following the men's World Cup downhill ski race in Lake Louise, Alberta, Sunday. — AP



Sports

# Australia coast to 10-wicket victory in Ashes series opener

## Warner, Bancroft pile on Gabba misery for England

**BRISBANE:** A record-breaking opening partnership between David Warner and Cameron Bancroft cemented a crushing 10-wicket victory for Australia yesterday, leaving England with pressing issues to resolve to salvage the Ashes series. Warner and newcomer Bancroft got the required runs in a 173-run opening stand to smash an 87-year-old record for the all-time highest unbeaten opening partnership in a successful Test chase. Warner finished unbeaten on 87 off 119 balls with Bancroft hitting the winning boundary to remain 82 not out from 182 deliveries. It was the seventh time Australia had vanquished England by 10 wickets in the Ashes and leaves the home side unbeaten at their Gabba fortress in 29 years. “The first Test of an Ashes is very important, there was a bit of pressure but I’m really pleased with how we played,” Australian skipper Steve Smith said.

“The way we pulled it back to win from the position we were in, it’s extremely pleasing. I’m proud of the way the boys fought.”

The Australians only needed 56 runs on the final morning go one up after England imploded on Sunday’s fourth day, leaving captain Joe Root with issues to resolve ahead of Saturday’s first-ever Ashes day-night second Test in Adelaide.

“I think the most important thing is we stay strong and tight as a group of players and that we continue to keep doing the hard work that we have done throughout the whole trip,” Root said. “For three days, we played some excellent cricket. Unfortunately, when we got into good positions, we didn’t quite capitalise on it.”

Much of the post-match reaction centred on Bancroft allegedly being headbutted by England wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow in a late-night altercation in Perth last month, which only came to light on Sunday. Both parties worked to play it down Monday with Bancroft saying it was a “weird” and “random” greeting instead of a traditional hand-shake, while Bairstow said there was nothing malicious about it and “no animosity” between the pair.



BRISBANE: Australia's Cameron Bancroft ducks under a bouncer during an Ashes cricket Test between England and Australia in Brisbane, Australia, yesterday.— AP

It was Warner’s 25th Test fifty and ninth in the Ashes, while Bancroft posted his first half-century in only his second Test innings.

“Great to get a win with the guys. I know everyone’s really excited and hopefully we can carry this momentum forward,” Bancroft said. Warner said it was heartening to get the win without losing a wicket.

“That’s what we cherish, coming out being disciplined to try and get the job done as best as possible,” he said. England’s doleful defeat was played to the background sounds of the travelling Barmy Army supporters singing ‘We’ll Take the (Ashes) Urn Home’ in the sparsely-populated ground. It was an attritional battle between the traditional rivals over the first three days of the Test, raising England’s hopes of a first win at the Gabba in just over three decades. But man-of-the-match Smith’s Test-

defining unbeaten 141 over eight-and-a-half hours gave Australia a 26-run innings lead and Josh Hazlewood’s two late wickets on Saturday swung the momentum firmly Australia’s way.

England were subsequently knocked over for 195 off 71.4 overs, losing their last six wickets for 82, to set Australia an unthreatening target to chase down in the remaining four sessions of play. England have now not won in Brisbane in 31 years, a stretch of eight Ashes Tests. Looking ahead to Adelaide, Smith said: “This team has the potential to do some really good things. “The Adelaide wicket might bring some of the bowlers into the game a little bit but, having said that, it’s probably one of the quickest wickets in the country at night,” he added.

“We saw how effective our bowlers could be when this wicket quickened up a little bit, so that’s exciting.” —AFP



SCOREBOARD	
Scoreboard at close of play on the fifth day in the first Test between Australia and England yesterday in Brisbane, Australia.	
<b>England 1st innings 302</b> (J. Vince 83, D. Malan 56, M. Stoneman 53)	
<b>Australia 1st innings 328</b> (S. Smith 141no, S. Marsh 51)	
<b>England 2nd innings 195</b> (J. Root 51)	
<b>Australia 2nd innings</b> (Overnight: 114-0; Target: 170 runs)	
C. Bancroft not out	82
D. Warner not out	87
Extras (lb-2 nb-1 w-1)	4
Total (for no loss, 50 overs)	173
Fall of wickets:	
Did not bat: S. Smith, U. Khawaja, P. Handscomb, S. Marsh, T. Paine, M. Starc, P. Cummins, N. Lyon, J. Hazlewood	
Bowling: J. Anderson 11-2-27-0(nb-1); S. Broad 10-2-20-0; M. Ali 4-0-23-0; C. Woakes 11-1-46-0; J. Ball 8-1-38-0(w-1); J. Root 6-1-17-0.	
Result: Australia won by 10 wickets	

## Bancroft, Bairstow play down ‘headbutt’ incident

**BRISBANE:** Australian batsman Cameron Bancroft said England wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow had head-butted him by way of a friendly greeting in a Perth bar last month as both men played down the incident yesterday. With his captain Steve Smith sat beside him laughing, Bancroft recalled the meeting that prompted sensational reports in the Australian media on the eve of the home side’s victory in the first Ashes test at the Gabba.

“I got into a very amicable conversation with Jonny, he just greeted me with a headbutt,” Bancroft told a news conference. “I was expecting a hand-shake. It wasn’t the greeting I’d expected. We continued on having a very good conversation.

“At the time he said sorry. For me personally it was just really weird. It was so random and I didn’t really expect it. “A handshake or hug would have been something more I would have expected. I just took it as, ‘he says hello to people very differently to others.’” Bairstow said the incident had been “blown completely out of proportion”. “We were just in the bar having a good laugh. Cameron and I enjoyed the evening and continued to do so. There was no intent or malice,” the 28-year-old told reporters after England’s 10-wicket defeat.

“Hopefully now we can sweep this under the table and continue what will be an exciting, fantastic series.” England coach Trevor Bayliss said the players had not been under curfew in Perth and Bairstow had not breached the code of conduct so would not be disciplined.

“As he said, there was absolutely no malice in it,” Bayliss added. “I think there was some contact but obviously not a headbutt. Yes, it is a distraction. “That’s the disappointing thing, that’s what we’ve got to be better at. We can’t put ourselves in these situations no matter how small.”

### BOYISH BEHAVIOUR

England captain Joe Root agreed and said the Australian players had brought up the incident on the field during the Test. “It’s obviously disappointing that we’ve given them a good opportunity to bring something up,” Root said.

“We’ve got to be careful not to make a big deal for something that wasn’t there. I think it was just a bit of joshing around, boyish behaviour.”

Smith said he had tried to use the incident to unsettle Bairstow, who made 42 in his second innings before hitting the ball straight to Peter Handscomb. “I was trying to get at Jonny ... He got out at third man, it was a pretty ordinary shot,” Smith added.

“We were just trying to get into his head and I think it worked.” Root was keen to quash comparisons with an incident during the 2013 Ashes series in England when the Yorkshireman was punched in a bar by David Warner, resulting in the now Australian vice-captain being stood down for two Tests. “I could see why people would see that on the surface,” he said. “There’s two very different incidences and we have got to be very careful that we don’t fall into that trap ... They were very different.” — Reuters

## Ashwin takes 300th wicket as India thrash S Lanka

**NAGPUR:** India crushed Sri Lanka by an innings and 239 runs yesterday, equaling India’s biggest ever test victory and handing the tourists their biggest ever test defeat. Spinner Ravichandran Ashwin took eight wickets in the match to take his career test tally to 300 wickets. His final wicket saw him overtake Dennis Lillee’s title of quickest to reach 300. Ashwin reached 300 in his 54th test, two matches fewer than the legendary Australian paceman.

Ashwin took 4-63 in Sri Lanka’s second innings after also bagging four wickets in the first innings to take his career tally to exactly 300. Sri Lanka’s Dinesh Chandimal scored a counter-attacking 14th test half-century as the rest of the team folded. “We were completely outplayed in this match. We won the toss but failed to score enough runs. On this pitch, playing against India, you need minimum 350 runs on this pitch,” he said.

Ashwin reached the 300-wicket milestone in his 54th Test appearance, two matches less than the previous record holder, former Australian paceman Lillee. Ravindra Jadeja (2-28), Umesh Yadav (2-30) and Ishant Sharma (2-43) all captured two wickets each as Sri Lanka collapsed to 166 all out in their second innings just after lunch on the fourth day.

Riding on Virat Kohli’s fifth Test double hundred, India had scored 610-6 declared in their first innings in reply to Sri Lanka’s poor effort of 205. Trailing by 405 runs on the first innings, the visitors resumed on 21-1 and lost seven wickets in the extended morning session.

Dimuth Karunaratne and Lahiru Thirimanne added 13 to the overnight total before Karunaratne departed for 18, caught by Murali Vijay at forward short leg off Jadeja. Thirimanne followed soon after for 23, caught at backward point off Yadav, then Angelo Mathews went for 10, holing out at mid-off off Jadeja as the wickets began to tumble rapidly. Niroshan Dickwella was caught in the slips off Sharma for four then Dasun Shanka fell to Ashwin for 17.

Ashwin struck twice more after the umpires agreed to extend the session in the possibility of getting a result. He trapped Dilruwan Perera leg before wicket for



NAGPUR: India's Ravichandran Ashwin, without cap, holds a stump as he leaves the ground after India won the second Test cricket match against Sri Lanka in Nagpur, India. — AP

SCOREBOARD	
Scoreboard at close of play on the fourth day in the second Test between India and Sri Lanka yesterday in Nagpur, India.	
<b>Sri Lanka 1st innings 205</b> (D. Chandimal 57, D. Karunaratne 51; R. Ashwin 4-67)	Rangana Herath c Rahane b R. Ashwin 0
<b>India 1st innings 610 for 6 decl</b> (V. Kohli 213, C. Pujara 143, M. Vijay 128, R. Sharma 102no)	Suranga Lakmal not out 31
<b>Sri Lanka 2nd innings</b> (Overnight: 21-1)	Lahiru Gamage b R. Ashwin 0
Sadoera Samarawickrama b I. Sharma 0	Extras (lb-2) 2
Dimuth Karunaratne c Vijay b Jadeja 18	Total (all out, 49.3 overs) 166
Lahiru Thirimanne c Jadeja b U. Yadav 23	Fall of wickets: 1-0 S. Samarawickrama, 2-34 D. Karunaratne, 3-48 L. Thirimanne, 4-68 A. Mathews, 5-75 N. Dickwella, 6-102 D. Shanaka, 7-107 D. Perera, 8-107 R. Herath, 9-165 D. Chandimal, 10-166 L. Gamage
Angelo Mathews c Ro. Sharma b Jadeja 10	Bowling: I. Sharma 12-4-43-2; R. Ashwin 17.3-4-63-4; R. Jadeja 11-5-28-2; U. Yadav 9-2-30-2.
Dinesh Chandimal c R. Ashwin b U. Yadav 61	Result: India won by an innings and 239 runs
Niroshan Dickwella c Kohli b I. Sharma 4	
Dasun Shanaka c Rahul b R. Ashwin 17	
Dilruwan Perera lbw b R. Ashwin 0	

a golden duck then had Rangana Herath caught at slip without scoring.

Chandimal’s resistance finally gave way after lunch when he fell to Yadav then Ashwin bowled Lahiru Garnaga for a duck to claim his 300th test victim and end the match. “The pitch was very good to bat on and there wasn’t much in it. I just batted the way I wanted

to, rotating strike and keeping the scoreboard ticking,” said Kohli. “Murali Vijay and Cheteshwar Pujara batted well too. Rohit Sharma made a statement with his century. The bowlers are doing very well. We believe we are preparing for the South Africa tour,” he added. The first Test in Kolkata was drawn. The third Test begins in Delhi on Saturday. — AP

squad that hammered the visitors in the second Test. The return of batsman Shikhar Dhawan, who opted out of the second Test due to personal reasons, is the only change. The squad for the South Africa tour is to be named before the game starts. Kohli will be replaced as captain by batsman Rohit Sharma for the three-match one day series after the Tests. Sharma, who hit 102 not out in the Nagpur Test, is expected to remain captain for the T20 games too, as Kohli rests and prepares for the South Africa tour.

Allrounder Hardik Pandya and fast bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who pulled out of the second and third Sri Lanka Test to get married, return to the 15-man squad. Uncapped fast bowler Siddarth Kaul and young batsmen Shreyas Iyer, who has represented India in three T20 games, are also part of the one-day team. Senior spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja continue to stay out of India’s limited-overs plans despite their superb run in the five-day format. Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal remain the team’s three spinners in the 50-over matches against Sri Lanka.— AFP



Virat Kohli





# Carson Wentz leads NFL-leading Eagles past Chicago Bears, 31-3

## Broncos lose 7 games in a row for the first time in 50 years

**PHILADELPHIA:** Carson Wentz tossed three touchdown passes and the NFL-leading Philadelphia Eagles beat the Chicago Bears 31-3 Sunday for their ninth straight win. The Eagles (10-1) reduced their magic number to clinch the NFC East to one with their fourth consecutive win by at least 23 points and third in a row by exactly 28. Philadelphia would secure its first division title since 2013 if the Cowboys (5-6) lose or tie Washington on Thursday night. Wentz had 227 yards passing, LeGarrette Blount ran for 97 yards and Zach Ertz caught 10 passes for 103 yards and one TD. The defense dominated rookie quarterback Mitchell Trubisky and the inept Bears (3-8), holding them to zero first downs in the first half and 140 total yards in the game. The Bears won the turnover battle (3-2), but couldn't do anything with excellent field position.

### RAIDERS 21, BRONCOS 14

Derek Carr threw two touchdown passes after losing starting receiver Michael Crabtree to an ejection for his role in a brawl, and the Raiders spoiled Paxton Lynch's first start of the season. The story coming into the game was about the upheaval for the two teams after Denver (3-8) fired offensive coordinator Mike McCoy and made another quarterback change and Oakland (5-6) fired defensive coordinator Ken Norton Jr . But the fight between Crabtree and cornerback Aqib Talib that led to three ejections ended up overshadowing the recent disarray even as the Raiders recorded their long-awaited first interception of the season in their first game under defensive play-caller John Pagano. The Broncos lost seven games in a row for the first time in 50 years. The fight was a continuation of a dispute that started last season when Talib ripped Crabtree's chain off during the season finale. Crabtree missed the first game between the teams this year, but wasted little time seeking revenge. Oakland guard Gabe Jackson pushed an official while trying to join in and got ejected for his actions, along with Crabtree and Talib.

### STEELERS 31, PACKERS 28

Chris Boswell kicked a career-long 53-yard field goal as time expired to give Pittsburgh the victory over Green Bay. The Steelers (9-2) won their sixth straight thanks in large part to wide receiver Antonio Brown. Brown caught 10 passes for 169 yards and two scores and also made a pair of catches on the deciding drive, including a 23-yard grab on the sideline that put the Steelers into Green Bay territory. Brown added a 14-yard reception on the next play. Two snaps, later Boswell drilled the winner and his teammates mobbed him at midfield. Ben Roethlisberger threw for 351 yards with four touchdowns and two interceptions. Le'Veon Bell ran for 95 yards and added another 88 yards receiving. Brett Hundley completed 17 of 26 for 245 yards and three touchdowns for Green Bay (5-6) in his best start since taking over for injured Aaron Rodgers. Jamaal Williams ran for 66 yards, including a 4-yard leap into the end zone with 2:02 that tied it at 28. The teams traded punts before Pittsburgh took over at its 30 with 17 seconds to go. It was just enough time for Roethlisberger and Brown to push the Steelers within the fringe of Boswell's range as Pittsburgh kept pace with New England for the AFC's best record.

### PATRIOTS 35, DOLPHINS 17

Tom Brady tossed four touchdown passes - including two to Rob Gronkowski - and the Patriots pushed through injuries and a mistake-filled game. New England (9-2) posted its seventh consecutive victory and third straight win over Miami. The Dolphins (4-7) have lost five straight for their longest slide since 2011. It was Brady's 28th career game with four or more touchdowns passes, ranking third all-time. His 26 touchdowns passes are the most in a season after turning 40 years old. Rex Burkhead also scored two TDs and Dion Lewis had 15 carries for 112 yards for New England, marking his first career 100-yard game. The Dolphins played without quarterback Jay Cutler, who practiced Friday, but remained in the concussion protocol. Matt Moore struggled to find a rhythm in his second start of the season. Nate Ebner left with a knee injury after his

fake punt run in the first quarter. Trevor Reilly left with a head injury after a collision. DL Trey Flowers (ribs) and LB Marquis Flowers left in the third quarter after a collision., and OL LaAdrian Waddle left in the fourth quarter with an ankle injury. LB Kyle Van Noy (leg) was able to walk off the field on his own after being shaken up in the fourth.

### FALCONS 34, BUCCANEERS 20

Julio Jones hauled in 12 passes for 253 yards and two touchdowns in one of the best games of his career. Rekindling memories of the Super Bowl, the Falcons (7-4) nearly squandered a big lead to a team playing its third game without injured quarterback Jameis Winston. The Buccaneers (4-7) rebounded from a 27-6 deficit behind backup Ryan Fitzpatrick and drove deep into Atlanta territory after forcing a fumble at the other end of the field. But Keanu Neal battled down Fitzpatrick's pass on fourth-and-1 at the Atlanta 18 with just over seven minutes remaining, and the Falcons drove for a clinching touchdown on Tevin Coleman's 14-yard run with just under two minutes to go. Jones, who had only one touchdown catch through the first 10 games, doubled that total in the first half. He hauled in a 51-yard scoring pass from fellow receiver Mohamed Sanu and went 25 yards for a TD on a throw from Matt Ryan, finishing off the play with a spectacular dive for the pylon. Jones now has three games in his brilliant career with at least 250 yards receiving. He had a career-high 300 yards vs. Carolina last season and 259 at Green Bay in 2014. No other player in NFL history has more than one game with 250 yards receiving.

### BENGALS 30, BROWNS 16

Rookie Joe Mixon ran for a career-high 114 yards in the Bengals' best offensive showing since the last time they faced Cleveland. The result sent the Browns into December still winless for the second year in a row. The Bengals (5-6) won back-to-back games for the second time this season. They hadn't scored so many points since they won 31-7 at Cleveland on Oct 1. Mixon also had an 11-yard touchdown that put it away in the fourth quarter. The Bengals came into the game with the worst rushing offense in the NFL, making it to 100 yards only once before. At 0-11, the Browns are starting to run out of chances for that breakthrough win. Last year, they waited until their 15th game to get their only victory and avoid the second 0-16 season in NFL history.

### RAMS 26, SAINTS 20

Jared Goff passed for 354 yards and hit Sammy Watkins and rookie Josh Reynolds for touchdowns, and the Rams snapped the Saints' eight-game winning streak in a meeting of NFC division leaders. NFL scoring leader Greg Zuerlein kicked four field goals for the Rams (8-3), who earned their fifth victory in six games. For the first time since 2006, this revitalized franchise is guaranteed not to finish the regular season with a losing record. Los Angeles turned in a gritty defensive effort against the high-scoring Saints (8-3), holding Drew Brees to 246 yards passing - just 96 in the first three quarters - and sacking him three times. Alvin Kamara made an early 74-yard touchdown run and a late TD reception for the Saints, who finally lost for the first time since Sept 17. One week after rallying from 15 points down late in the fourth quarter to beat Washington in overtime, the Saints fell behind on the opening drive and never caught up.

### CARDINALS 27, JAGUARS 24

Phil Dawson kicked a career-long 57-yard field goal with 1 second to play, snapping the Jaguars' four-game winning streak and dropping them into a tie with Tennessee for the AFC South lead. The 42-year-old kicker, who had uncharacteristically missed six field goals this season, also was good from 34 and 42 yards as the Cardinals (5-6) beat a team with a winning record for the first time this season. Jacksonville (7-4) trailed most of the game, but took a 17-16 lead when ex-Cardinal Calais Campbell returned Blaine Gabbert's fumble 10 yards for a touchdown with 12:10 to play. Gabbert, though, brought Arizona back, heaving a 52-yard TD pass to Jaron Brown. Gabbert's 2-point con-



GLENDALE: Jacksonville Jaguars quarterback Blake Bortles (5) fumbles the football as Arizona Cardinals inside linebacker Haason Reddick makes the hit during the second half of an NFL football game. — AP

version pass to Larry Fitzgerald had Arizona up 24-17. Corey Grant's 68-yard return of the ensuing kickoff led to Blake Bortles' second rushing touchdown of the day, from 17 yards, and it was tied at 24 with 7:26 left. Gabbert threw two sideline completions, the second one to D.J. Foster with 6 seconds to go - Foster made a lunging tippy-toe catch that had to be reviewed - to get close enough for the winning field goal. It was a bit of redemption for Gabbert, drafted in the first round by Jacksonville in 2011 but traded away for a sixth-round pick after a disappointing stay.

### SEAHAWKS 24, 49ERS 13

Russell Wilson threw for two touchdowns to give him 150 career TDs passing and also ran for a short score. Wilson connected on a 17-yard touchdown pass to Nick Vannett in the third quarter, and a 1-yarder early in the fourth to Jimmy Graham, whose 16 TD receptions passed Jerryman Stevens for most by a Seattle tight end. Jimmy Garoppolo made his 49ers debut with 1:07 remaining after starting quarterback C.J. Beathard went down on a hit by Michael Bennett as he threw a pass. Garoppolo - acquired from New England at the trade deadline last month and hoped by the 49ers (1-10) to stay on the shelf a little longer - immediately scrambled to gain 4 yards and found Louis Murphy for a 10-yard touchdown as time expired. Wilson completed 20 of 34 passes for 228 yards and moved past Joe Flacco to become the winningest quarterback in his first six seasons with 63 victories. The Seahawks (7-4) won their ninth straight in the series in a streak that began with the NFC title game in January 2014 at Seattle.

### BILLS 16, CHIEFS 10

Tyrod Taylor threw for 183 yards and a touchdown in his return to the starting lineup, Tre'Davious White intercepted Alex Smith with just over a minute remaining to clinch it. Zay Jones had the touchdown reception and Stephen Hauschka kicked three field goals for the Bills (6-5), but the story was their defense - or the Chiefs' complete lack of offense. Kansas City (6-5) managed only 236 yards while losing for the fifth time in six games. It was an especially gratifying win for Bills coach Sean McDermott, who

### PANTHERS 35, JETS 27

Luke Kuechly returned a fumble 34 yards for a touchdown and Kaelin Clay had a 60-yard punt return for a score, capping a stunning swing in the fourth quarter that lifted the Panthers. It was the fourth straight victory for the Panthers (8-3), who were trying to keep pace with the first-place Saints in the NFC South. The teams meet next Sunday at New Orleans. This one turned in a span of 2 minutes, 11 seconds on mistakes by the Jets (4-7) - and the Panthers taking advantage. First, Kuechly scooped up a fumble by Josh McCown, who was sacked by Wes Horton and had the ball knocked out of his hand as he was about to throw, and rumbled to the end zone for a touchdown. Cam Newton then hurdled over linebacker Jordan Jenkins for the 2-point conversion to give the Panthers a 26-20 lead with 12:05 left. Then Clay fielded Lachlan Edwards' kick and spun out of a tackle attempt and sped into the end zone.

### TITANS 20, COLTS 16

The Titans got their first win in 10 tries at Lucas Oil Stadium when DeMarco Murray scored on a 1-yard touchdown run with 5:59 left. The Titans (7-4) pulled off their first series sweep since 2002. And they did it by rallying from a 10-point third-quarter deficit again - just as they had six weeks earlier against the Colts. Indy (3-8) has lost three straight home games and five of its last six overall. It is one loss away from having the first losing year in coach Chuck Pagano's six seasons. Tennessee won despite making only one first down during a 30-minute stretch and playing in chilly conditions after Colts officials opened the roof and the window in the north end zone. — AP



PITTSBURGH: Pittsburgh Steelers inside linebacker Ryan Shazier (50) tackles Green Bay Packers running back Jamaal Williams (30) during the first half of an NFL football game in Pittsburgh. —AP

## NFL results/standings

Pittsburgh 31, Green Bay 28; LA Rams 26, New Orleans 20; Arizona 27, Jacksonville 24; Oakland 21, Denver 14; Seattle 24, San Francisco 13; Buffalo 16, Kansas City 10; Tennessee 20, Indianapolis 16; Cincinnati 30, Cleveland 16; Atlanta 34, Tampa Bay 20; New England 35, Miami 17; Philadelphia 31, Chicago 3; Carolina 35, NY Jets 27.

American Football Conference						
AFC EAST						
	W	L	T	OTL	PF	PA
New England	9	2	0	0	325	220
Buffalo	6	5	0	0	224	260
NY Jets	4	7	0	0	228	257
Miami	4	7	0	0	174	289
AFC North						
Pittsburgh	9	2	0	1	258	193
Baltimore	5	5	0	1	213	171
Cincinnati	5	6	0	1	199	215
Cleveland	0	11	0	1	166	289
AFC South						
Tennessee	7	4	0	0	242	269
Jacksonville	7	4	0	1	269	168
Houston	4	6	0	0	267	262
Indianapolis	3	8	0	1	195	300
AFC West						
Kansas City	6	5	0	1	272	236
LA Chargers	5	6	0	1	249	202
Oakland	5	6	0	0	225	261
Denver	3	8	0	0	197	280

National Football Conference						
NFC East						
Philadelphia	10	1	0	0	351	191
Dallas	5	6	0	0	248	270
Washington	5	6	0	1	258	276
NY Giants	2	9	0	0	172	267
NFC North						
Minnesota	9	2	0	0	271	195
Detroit	6	5	0	0	294	264
Green Bay	5	6	0	0	232	261
Chicago	3	8	0	0	177	252
NFC South						
New Orleans	8	3	0	0	322	222
Carolina	8	3	0	0	248	207
Atlanta	4	4	0	0	265	230
Tampa Bay	7	7	0	0	223	262
NFC West						
LA Rams	8	3	0	0	329	206
Seattle	7	4	0	0	266	212
Arizona	5	6	0	0	203	278
San Francisco	1	10	0	2	187	284



Sports

# Barcelona salvages late draw to keep its lead over Valencia

## Las Palmas hold Real Sociedad to a 2-2 draw

**MADRID:** After being denied a legitimate goal, Lionel Messi made sure nobody would keep Barcelona from mounting a comeback against Valencia. Messi was deprived of a goal after a mistake by officials in the first half of the high-profile game between the Spanish league leaders on Sunday. But the Barcelona star made a perfect pass for Jordi Alba's 82nd-minute equalizer to keep the Catalan club four points ahead of Valencia at the top of the Spanish league.

Rodrigo had put the hosts ahead from close range in the 60th in front of a raucous crowd at the Mestalla Stadium. Messi was sure he had opened the scoring in the 30th when Valencia goalkeeper Neto was unable to control the playmaker's shot and let the ball slip between his legs, but the linesman did not see it cross the goal line.

"It was a clear mistake, I could see from midfield that it was a goal," Alba said. "We saw it on television during halftime. It was not a foul or something like that, which can be a matter of interpretation. They have to see this."

La Liga has been loudly criticized for not having video review assistance. It is expected to have a system in place next season. Barcelona reached 35 points from 13 matches, eight points ahead of Atletico Madrid and Real Madrid, which both won on Saturday.

Valencia had won nine straight in all competitions, with its last setback a 1-1 draw at city rival Levante in September. It was an even match at the packed Mestalla, with Barcelona playing better in the first half and the hosts threatening the most in the second.

"After the goal we had opportunities to put the game

away, but in the end I think it was a fair result," Rodrigo said. Valencia went ahead after Jose Gaya made a run through the left side of the area and sent a low cross toward the center of the area for Rodrigo. He beat goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen to the ball and tapped it into the goal despite being closely marked by a defender. Alba equalized with a left-footed shot into the far corner after Messi's well-placed pass over the Valencia defenders.

### RALLYING VICTORY

Fifth-place Sevilla came back from two goals down to defeat sixth-place Villarreal 3-2 for its third win in its last four league games. The hosts went ahead with goals by Cedric Bakambu in the first half and Carlos Bacca early in the second, but Sevilla rallied with two quick

goals by Clement Lenglet and Franco Vazquez, and Ever Banega netted the winner by converting a 78th-minute penalty kick.

Villarreal defender Victor Ruiz was sent off after receiving a second yellow card for the foul that prompted the penalty. It was Sevilla's first game since the announcement that coach Eduardo "Toto" Berizzo has been diagnosed with a malignant prostate tumor. The team's players entered the field carrying messages of support for the Argentine coach, who has been working normally and was on the bench at Ceramica Stadium.

### LOSING STREAK OVER

Las Palmas held Real Sociedad to a 2-2 draw to end its eight-match losing streak in the league. Las Palmas hadn't earned points since a 1-0 win at Athletic Bilbao



VALENCIA: Barcelona's Lionel Messi, right, vies for the ball with Valencia's Carlos Soler, during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Valencia and FC Barcelona at the Mestalla stadium in Valencia. — AP

in September. Its only win in its last 10 matches came at Deportivo La Coruna in the Copa del Rey last month.

Seventh-place Sociedad had won three of its last four games in all competitions, including two straight at home. Las Palmas is second-to-last in the 20-team standings with seven points, one more than last place Alaves.

### DISAPPOINTING DRAW

Deportivo La Coruna and Athletic Bilbao played to a

2-2 draw that kept both teams near the bottom. Athletic, winless in five matches, was ahead twice but couldn't hold on to victory at Riazor Stadium in La Coruna. Athletic twice hit the post, including with a close-range shot by Inaki Williams when the score was 2-2. Athletic is sitting 15th in the standings with 13 points from 13 matches. It hasn't won in the league since a 1-0 result against Sevilla last month. Deportivo, coming off two straight losses, is in 17th place with 12 points. — AP

## Brazil's scouts search for future Neymars

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** At a trial for youngsters at Rio de Janeiro's Vasco de Gama football club, Vanessa Dias pushed through the bushes to glimpse her 12-year-old son Caua, nervously hoping that he'd just taken his first step to the big time. About 200 other children aged nine to 17 were taking part in the trial on a basic football pitch in northern Rio under the watch of scouts from the club, one of Brazil's biggest.

Parents weren't allowed in, but some climbed a hill through undergrowth to try to see the field anyway. "I'm ready to make any sacrifice. I'm unemployed and sometimes I don't have enough to pay for transport, but I always get by with a loan here and there," Dias, 33, said. Her son actually supports Vasco's big rivals Flamengo, but he's trying to play a bigger game now than mere fandom: getting a shot at becoming a future star himself. Becoming the next Neymar is the dream of many in a country mad about football and with no shortage of talented youngsters from poor backgrounds hungry for a chance.

But there's nothing easy about getting there. Vasco's head scout Uerner Leonardo Passos said even in this first set of trials, "only 10 percent of the boys will pass before going to a new series of tests at the club headquarters."

Trials last three days and take place every month, divided into age groups where children get an opportunity to show off their skills in 20-minute games.

Ronaldo Faria, a Vasco scout, has a good idea of what he's looking for: his brother is World Cup winner Romario, the club's biggest ever find. "The secret of Brazilian football is the favelas, with kids playing on the streets and on rough pitches," he said, referring to the hard-scrabble, often violent neighborhoods where many Brazilians grow up with little more than dreams of getting out.

Vasco puts a big emphasis on scouring those favelas for talent. "Our scouts often go to the favelas and they keep a network of contacts who will tell them if there's a kid



RIO DE JANEIRO: Children play football during a trial known as "Peneira" in Portuguese, under the watch of scouts from one of Brazil's biggest clubs, Vasco da Gama, in northern Rio de Janeiro. — AFP

showing potential," said Luiz Rangel, from Vasco's talent spotting department.

Jacy Oliveira, who lives in Rio's Piedade neighborhood, brought four local boys along to the trial. "Many good players don't even get a chance for a trial because they don't have the money for transport," said Oliveira, who uses his own money in the hope of finding a new talent to boost his own scouting career. "For now, I've had nothing but expenses but I'm sure that I'll come across a shining star," he said. Among the boys playing that day, just one really stood out for Ronaldo Faria—a nine-year-old called Felipe who dribbled past older and bigger opponents with ease. His twin brother Fernando, however, looked so nervous that he was having trouble performing at all. "Don't be

afraid," one of the trial organizers told him. "Just be normal, play as if you were in the street with your brother."

### 'PRE-PROGRAMMED'

What scouts want to see are players with talent but able to play in a team without too much individualism. They have another problem, though, and that's the lack of freedom in children already trying to copy adult systems. "The children are pre-programmed, there are fewer and fewer who play in a spontaneous way," Luiz Rangel said. "What we're looking for is a series of characteristics: ease with the ball, field position, the way they communicate with the other players on the team. Everything has an influence." — AFP

## Egyptian star Salah maintains goal streak

**PARIS:** Egypt sharpshooter Mohamed Salah continued a hot scoring streak by putting Liverpool ahead in a 1-1 English Premier League draw with Chelsea at the weekend. The 25-year-old, who spent two unsuccessful years at Chelsea before his career took off in Italy at AS Roma, has scored six goals in his last five matches. Salah is among 30 nominees for the CAF African Footballer of the Year award and one of five BBC African Footballer of the Year finalists.

### ENGLAND

#### MOHAMED SALAH (Liverpool)

The winger haunted former club Chelsea with a goal in a 1-1 draw at Anfield. Since joining Liverpool in the close season from Roma, Salah has maintained fine form and struck after 65 minutes against Chelsea. Finishing from close-range after poor defending, Salah scored his 15th goal for the Reds this season.

#### MOHAMED DIAME (Newcastle)

The Senegal midfielder was back in the starting line-up against Watford, but could not stop his side slipping to a dismal 3-0 defeat. Diame played for 69 minutes at St James' Park before being taken off with Newcastle three goals down.

### SPAIN

#### CEDRIC BAKAMBU (Villarreal)

Bakambu continued excellent form with his 12th goal of the season by firing Villarreal into a first-half lead against Sevilla. The Democratic Republic of Congo striker is now La Liga's second top scorer behind Lionel Messi, but his opener counted for little as Sevilla roared back from two goals down to win 3-2.

#### THOMAS PARTEY (Atletico Madrid)

The Ghanaian showed the importance of his versatility for Atletico by lining up at right-back as Diego Simeone's men registered a fourth consecutive clean sheet as they thrashed Levante 5-0.

### ITALY

#### KHOUMA BABACAR (Fiorentina)

Senegal striker Babacar's last-gasp penalty grabbed a 1-1 draw for Fiorentina against Lazio in Rome. The controversial penalty call was awarded in the 93rd minute using VAR (video assistant referee) with Babacar making no mistake from the spot. — AFP

## PSG wins 2-1 at Monaco to move nine points clear

**PARIS:** Kylian Mbappe had a return to Monaco to forget, despite his Paris Saint-Germain team winning 2-1 Sunday in the principality to boost its title hopes. Edinson Cavani scored in the 19th minute and Neymar added a second-half penalty before Monaco pulled one back 10 minutes from time.

PSG moved nine points clear at the top of the league after its win over the defending champion. Monaco slipped to third, below Lyon on goal difference after Bruno Genesio's side won 5-0 at Nice.

"We are happy to have got the three points tonight and a more substantial gap above the teams chasing us," PSG coach Unai Emery said. "The teams behind us are strong, but we have confidence in what we can do." If there is one thing to improve, it's our finishing. But the team is doing well, it's very satisfying to see that we are keeping

up our level of play."

Mbappe joined PSG from Monaco in the offseason in a deal worth 180 million euros (\$216 million). The 18-year-old forward missed several clear opportunities to score on his return to the Stade Louis II and was also at fault in Monaco's goal, deflecting Joao Moutinho's free kick into the back of the net.

Several other PSG players missed good chances as well, including Julian Draxler, who fired wide of an empty goal from close range early on. PSG took the lead when Adrien Rabiot gathered a loose ball and picked out Draxler, who rolled across for Cavani to fire into the roof of the net.

It was Cavani's 16th goal of the season and the Uruguay forward is now just four behind Zlatan Ibrahimovic's PSG record of 156 goals overall. PSG doubled its advantage seven minutes after the break when Monaco defender Almamy Toure fouled Neymar and the Brazil international converted the resulting penalty, sending Danijel Subasic the wrong way. PSG should have put the match out of reach before Moutinho's free kick set up a nervy finale for the capital side.

It was a third successive 5-0 win away from home for Lyon. It is undefeated in 12 games and has also beaten its club record by going 651 minutes without conceding a goal in all competitions. Memphis Depay



MONACO: Paris Saint-Germain's French forward Kylian Mbappe (C) vies for the ball with Monaco's Croatian goalkeeper Danijel Subasic (down C) during the French L1 football match between Monaco and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) at the Louis II stadium, in Monaco. — AFP

scored twice against Nice while Maxwel Cornet and Mariano also netted in an impressive first half for Lyon. Teenager Myziane Maolida added the fifth late on.

Lyon took the lead in the fifth minute when Cornet raced down the right flank before setting up Depay for the opener.

Cornet got on the score sheet himself in the 20th, dribbling past Nampalys Mendy and Marlon before beating Walter Benitez with a right-footed shot.

Mariano started and finished a counter-attack in the 27th before Depay doubled his tally 11 minutes later. — AP

Live			Matches on TV
			(Local Timings)
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE			
Leicester City v Tottenham Hotspur	beIN SPORTS HD 1	22:45	
Brighton & Hove Albion v Crystal Palace	beIN SPORTS HD 7	22:45	
West Bromwich Albion v Newcastle United	beIN SPORTS HD 8	23:00	
Watford v Manchester United	beIN SPORTS HD 2	23:00	
FRENCH LEAGUE			
Strasbourg v Caen	beIN SPORTS HD 6	21:00	
Amiens v Dijon	beIN SPORTS HD 4	21:00	
Girondins de Bordeaux v Saint Etienne	beIN SPORTS HD 6	23:00	



**12** Shibutanis cruise at Skate America for second Grand Prix victory



**13** Australia coast to 10-wicket victory in Ashes series opener



**15** Brazil's scouts search for future Neymars



CHICAGO: Jerian Grant #2 of the Chicago Bulls shoots the ball against the Miami Heat at the United Center in Chicago, Illinois. — AFP

## Dragic leads Heat past Bulls, 100-93

### Carroll's 24 points lead Nets over struggling Grizzlies

**CHICAGO:** Goran Dragic and the Miami Heat followed the lowest-scoring first quarter in team history with the highest-scoring one of the season to beat the Chicago Bulls. After scoring seven points in the first quarter, Miami had 38 in the second to take a 45-42 lead en route to a 100-93 victory Sunday.

Dragic scored 24 points, Wayne Ellington had 19 points and five 3-pointers off the bench and the Heat's four reserves outscored their five starters. James Johnson added 15 points, seven rebounds and six assists, and fellow reserves Tyler Johnson and Kelly Olynyk scored 10 points apiece as the Heat bench produced 54 points to extend the team's winning streak to three.

Jerian Grant led Chicago with a career-high 24 points. Denzel Valentine had 14 points and career highs of 13 rebounds and seven assists. "They (the bench) inspired the whole team," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said. "We were looking for some kind of energy, some kind of separation. We understand that it was going to

be a 48-minute game and they played some inspiring basketball, not only in the fourth quarter but in that second quarter. That's what really changed the momentum and brought us back into it."

Ellington ignited the Heat after the 2-for-19 first-quarter from the field, scoring 10 points and hitting three 3-pointers as Miami shot 68.4 percent in the second quarter. The Heat started slow again in the third quarter, prompting Spoelstra to leave his second- and third-leading scorers, Dion Waiters (four points) and Hassan Whiteside (11 points, nine rebounds), on the bench under the stretch as the Heat pulled away after Chicago cut Miami's lead to 83-81

with five minutes, 40 seconds to play.

"I don't think we look at it like Dion or Whiteside or Dragic," James Johnson said. "We have a lot of weapons on this team. We have a lot of guys who could do it. We're all trying to play our roles and master that."

Justin Holliday added 15 points for the Bulls, who lost their fifth in a row following an 0-4 West Coast trip.

**Timberwolves 119, Suns 108**

Karl-Anthony Towns had 32 points and 12 rebounds, and Jimmy Butler chipped in with 25 points as the Minnesota Timberwolves held on for a 119-108 win against the Phoenix Suns on Sunday. Towns recorded his league-leading 16th double-double, and Andrew

Wiggins scored 21 points with a season-high four 3-pointers for Minnesota, which survived another strong shooting night from an opponent. Phoenix shot 50.6 percent from the field and was 13 of 26 from 3-point range despite playing without leading scorer Devin Booker. Taj Gibson had 16 points and a season-high 14 rebounds for the Timberwolves, who had lost three of their previous four games. Minnesota is off to its best start since 2005-06 when it also started 12-8.

**Nets 98, Grizzlies 88**

DeMarre Carroll scored 24 points and Trevor Booker had 16 points and 11 rebounds as Brooklyn beat Memphis. Marc Gasol and Tyreke Evans had 18 points each to pace the Grizzlies. Gasol scored only two points in the second half. Memphis, playing its sixth straight game without injured starting point guard Mike Conley, was outscored 32-18 in the third quarter. The Grizzlies lost for the 11th time in 13 games. — Agencies

## AC Milan turn to Gattuso to bring back glory days

**MILAN:** Fallen Italian giants AC Milan named combative former player Gennaro Gattuso as their new boss yesterday after sacking Vincenzo Montella, the Chinese-owned club said yesterday. The seven-time European champions released Montella after a goalless draw against Torino on Sunday left them seventh in Serie A and have turned to 39-year-old Gattuso, a member of one of their most successful sides but has little coaching pedigree.

Gattuso made a total of 468 appearances for AC Milan between 1999 and 2012, winning a reputation as a rugged defensive midfielder and earning the nick-

name "Rino", on account of his verbal raging and ram-paging playing style. He won the Serie A title twice and helped Milan to Champions League glory on two occasions. Gattuso was such an integral part of Marcello Lippi's line-up when Italy clinched the 2006 World Cup in Germany that he was named in FIFA's team of the tournament.

AC Milan have not finished higher than sixth in any of the last four seasons in Serie A but new Chinese owner Li Yonghong funded a 230-million-euro (\$270 million) signing spree in the summer.

Leonardo Bonucci arrived from Juventus for 38 million euros in an eye-catching move, while Portuguese player Andre Silva came for a similar sum from FC Porto and Hakan Calhanoglu was signed from Bayer Leverkusen. But even with those reinforcements, Montella failed to put the club that was once the jewel in former Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi's business empire in contention for a Champions League place. He leaves after 17 months at the San Siro.

There will be heavy pressure on Gattuso, who has

always had a controversial edge—he once slapped the then Ajax striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic with the back of his hand. On another occasion that his temper spilled over, he infamously grabbed Tottenham assistant coach Joe Jordan-greying and 26 years Gattuso's senior — by the throat before head-butting him, picking up a heavy UEFA ban. Gattuso spent a season at Walter Smith's Rangers before joining AC Milan and won the Scottish double alongside English midfielder Paul Gascoigne. Since retiring as a player he has been working within the AC Milan structure as youth team coach after a stuttering coaching career elsewhere, with short stints at Sion in Switzerland, at Palermo and Pisa in Italy and at Greek minnows OFI Crete.

With Juventus dominating Italian football and Barcelona and Real Madrid dominant in Europe, Gattuso faces a huge task to restore Milan to their former heights. He was a key cog in a team featuring Paolo Maldini, Andrea Pirlo and Filippo Inzaghi which won the 2003 Champions League by beating Juventus on penalties.—AFP



Vincenzo Montella



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2017

**18** Listed companies in Kuwait continue to post solid profits**21** Turkish Airlines on board with UFW treaty**22** Bubble or breakthrough? Bitcoin keeps CBs on edge

A shale gas producing unit in the US.

# US shale renews challenge to OPEC

## More drilling rigs improve outlook for 2018

**LONDON:** US shale producers have started adding more drilling rigs in response to rising oil prices and improving confidence about the outlook for 2018. Experience shows changes in the number of rigs drilling for oil in the United States tends to follow changes in WTI prices with a lag of about 16 to 20 weeks. The active rig count peaked in mid-August and then declined through September and October, in response to the earlier peak and fall in prices between February and mid-June.

But WTI prices hit a recent low around June 21 and have been on an upward trend for 22 weeks so it was expected the rig count would start to rise.

Right on time, the rig count has climbed from a low of 729 on Nov. 3 to 747 on Nov. 22, according to oilfield services company Baker Hughes. Shale firms are adding rigs in response to a big increase in spot prices, which is improving their short-term cash flow, and a brightening outlook, which should make production more profitable over the next year.

Front-month WTI futures prices have climbed by more than \$16 per barrel or almost 40 percent since their trough in late June. Front-month prices are now above their previous peak in February and at the highest level in almost 31 months.

The WTI calendar strip for 2018, the benchmark against which shale producers execute hedges for next year, has climbed by more than \$11 per barrel to the highest level since the start of 2017.

The strip is now trading above \$56 per barrel, high enough for most shale firms to ensure basic profitability in 2018. The renewed rise in the US rig count underscores the delicate balance Saudi Arabia, Russia and other OPEC and non-OPEC oil exporters must strike this week at their meeting in Vienna. Saudi Arabia and its allies have indicated they want to prolong their output cuts to reduce OECD commercial crude and products inventories nearer to their five-year average.



## Crude prices likely to rise further in 2018

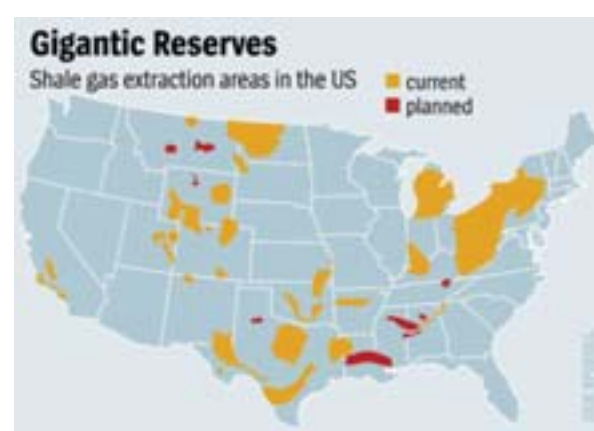
### Rebalancing

Saudi Arabia's oil minister has said the rebalancing

process is still unfinished and he wants a further decline in stocks. But the kingdom is also anxious to avert a spike in prices that would encourage a resumption of the shale drilling frenzy in late 2016/17.

For their part, shale company executives have promised they will be more disciplined in future and will prioritize increasing profits over production. Beneath the cautious rhetoric, most companies are targeting increases in both profitability and production in 2018. For all the talk about restraint, the US shale sector is already adding more drilling rigs in response to the rise in prices. In the oil market, as in most other circumstances, what matters is what people do, not what they say. Talk about restraint is contradicted by actions that point to growth.

If OPEC continues its output restraint and reduces stocks, crude prices are likely to rise further in 2018, which



will spur more drilling. Given the strong growth in oil consumption, there is room for both shale producers and OPEC to increase production in 2018.

But OPEC must be careful not to tighten the market too much or it risks slowing demand growth and revitalizing shale, putting the organization's rebalancing strategy back to square one. —Reuters

## American Airlines head takes the long view

**FORT WORTH, Texas:** Confidence abounds at the headquarters of American Airlines, the world's biggest carrier, where the CEO recently declared that his company would never lose money again.

And why not? US airlines are enjoying a golden age. Strong travel demand, cheaper jet fuel and fewer competitors are combining to push profits sky-high.

The No 2 man at American, Robert Isom, spent years trying to make more flights arrive on time. Since being promoted to president in August 2016, Isom's portfolio has expanded to oversee the rollout of new products including Basic Economy, a bare-bones seat that,

American hopes, will seem so unattractive to passengers that they will pay more for a better one. Isom recently sat down with The Associated Press, armed with a sheaf of notes that he checked frequently. Like his boss, CEO Doug Parker, Isom said American will make money even during downturns. And he said the future is so bright that employees will be able to "sign up for American for life." The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**Q:** Investors and analysts are suddenly very concerned with short-term increases in costs. Are they too worried?

**A:** I think that we are so short-term focused and have been in the airline business, and probably rightfully so. As we take a look at the future at American Airlines, thinking about where we should be on average, we have talked about producing returns of \$5 billion a year. That's how we are setting up this airline. Some years we may fall short; other years we think that we will exceed (\$5 billion).

**Q:** You are taking the long view?

**A:** It was only five, six years ago when the way you looked at potential investments was you had to have a payback in a year. But the way that we're looking at the world today is one where it is long-term ... it's five years and

more. In terms of making the massive investment in fleet, making the massive investments in terms of product, but also ... what we're committing to our folks in the future. We are going to provide steady careers that people can depend on and have a view that when they sign up for American Airlines they can sign up for American for life.

**Q:** In the short term, how is travel demand holding up?

**A:** It's still looking really good. Based on what we've seen in October and early parts of November ... we're pleased with how the fourth quarter is shaping up.

**Q:** What are the risks?

**A:** There is always the economic risk just generally. Obviously we always have an eye on fuel prices and then ultimately demand and capacity are the biggies.

**Q:** If oil goes back to \$100 a barrel, can you raise fares and fees quickly enough to cover your costs?

**A:** As (CEO) Doug (Parker) has said, we do think that we're going to make money in the upcycles and the downcycles as well. Ultimately that does mean having a business that is capable of recouping its costs.

**Q:** Will you keep competing on price

against discount airlines like Spirit?

**A:** We're going to be incredibly competitive especially when it comes to defending our hubs and gateways. We serve the full spectrum of customers' needs - those that are the most-frequent flyers and those that are really leisure-oriented. That's a philosophy that we had in the past (when Scott Kirby, now at United, was American's president), and we'll continue to have as long as I'm going to be at American Airlines.

**Q:** How is Basic Economy doing?

**A:** We've had Basic Economy out since the beginning of the year but really only since the end of the summer in full force. We've seen about 50 percent of the customers that are presented with the Basic opportunity fare are choosing to buy up. That's really good news for us.

**Q:** What about Premium Economy, the upgrade you're offering on some international flights?

**A:** It's still not on that many of our aircraft (about 30), but over the course of the next year we will be up to 104 aircraft and I think it's going to be a real force in 2018. When customers do buy up, they're buying up to the tune of \$400 over what they would have purchased in an economy fare. More or less a dou-



Robert Isom

bling. We have talked about Basic and Premium being worth about \$1 billion overall. The larger share of that is in Basic Economy.

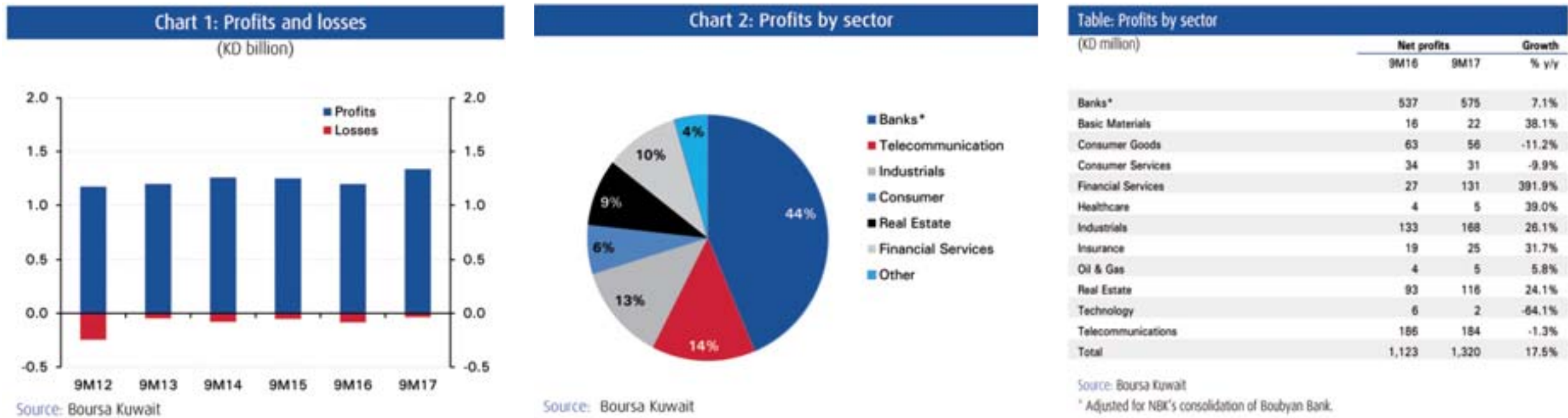
**Q:** American has made some progress in on-time performance. How important is that?

**A:** The great thing about reliability is it shows up everywhere. It shows up in terms of customer satisfaction, it shows up in revenue. Higher completion factor (fewer canceled flights) means you get to keep more of the revenue that you had hoped for. Operational reliability has an impact everywhere - the cost side and the revenue side and certainly producing margin. —AP



# Listed companies in Kuwait continue to post solid profits

## Softness in business activity impacts revenues



KUWAIT: Listed Kuwaiti companies continued to post a notable rise in profits for the first nine months of 2017, though softness in business activity has affected revenue growth. The financial sector was the main contributor to the solid growth, with investment income benefiting from the stock market rally. Although results in other sectors continued to reflect a more lackluster operating environment, moderation in the consumer sector was visible in company results.

Earnings of listed corporates were up 18 percent y/y during the first nine months of the year. The aggregate profits of 148 reporting companies, out of 153 Kuwaiti companies listed on Boursa Kuwait, rose to KD 1.34 billion. There was also a significant drop in aggregate losses, which shrank by 50 percent y/y to KD 43 million; still, the number of loss-making companies was steady at 37.

The financial services sector benefited from the stock market rally this year. Boursa Kuwait's weighted index

was up 9 percent during 3Q17, as the market benefited from the Zain acquisition by Omantel and the upgrade

of Kuwait's market to emerging by FTSE. Non-bank financial service companies with large exposures to the local market made strong gains on their investment portfolios. Total profits for this sector quadrupled to KD 131 million in 3Q17, up from KD 26 million in 3Q16. The strong results of the sector were broad-based. The number of loss-making companies dropped notably compared to 3Q16 with 54 percent of reporting companies seeing an

improvement in earnings.

Banks were the second largest contributor to profit growth in 3Q17. Profits for the sector rose a good 7 percent to KD 595 million. Most banks contributed to the growth, with only one bank seeing declines in earnings. While growth came primarily from investment gains, net interest income also supported the sector's profitability.

Industrial companies were another main contributor to profit growth. The sector's profits were up 26 percent in 3Q17. Gains from the sector were concentrat-

ed in two main companies, with others posting mixed to flat results.

Real estate companies have also done well, benefiting from the pickup in activity in the sector in 2017. The real estate market witnessed a slow and orderly correction in activity and prices in tandem with the declining oil prices between 4Q15 and 4Q16. Since then, the pickup in the sector's activity and stabilization in real estate prices help push profits of real estate companies up 24 percent y/y in 3Q17.

The consumer sector was a clear exception to the positive outcome, with results still reflecting a moderating operating environment. Although profits for the consumer sector were down 11 percent y/y, only a third of the companies saw declines in earnings. This is in line with the slight improvement that was witnessed in consumer sector data recently. In fact, consumer spending, imports of consumer goods, consumer confidence and household debt have all improved somewhat in 3Q17.

## Uzbekistan opens the door, a crack

TASHKENT/ALMATY: Sensing change in his native Uzbekistan, Hikmat Abdurahmonov plans to build a 10-storey office block and open a consultancy firm oriented towards foreign trade. In neighbouring Kazakhstan, banker Umut Shayakhmetova is considering an Uzbek subsidiary.

"There is hope in the air," she says. Their plans, commonplace in many countries, are striking because Uzbekistan, as Shayakhmetova puts it, is "starting from zero". Until the death last year of former president Islam Karimov, it was one of the world's most isolated states. Karimov, who came to power in communist times, kept an iron grip on the economy and politics and mistrusted both Russia and the West. Since then, foreign delegations have been beating a path to the capital Tashkent, drawn by the potential of the Central Asian country's oil and gas and vast cotton crop as well as areas such as car and food production, machinery and chemicals. They also have political concerns: Uzbeks from a long-oppressed Muslim population have been arrested for attacks on civilians in New York, Istanbul, Stockholm and St Petersburg this year that killed at least 65 people and wounded many

more. Karimov's successor, his longtime prime minister Shaykat Mirziyoyev, has maintained the top-down political system while starting tentative reforms to an economy that had failed to create jobs, fuelling discontent. In August, the country said it would abolish, in 2019, the exit visa system that prevented Uzbeks leaving without official permission, easing the path of millions of migrant workers whose remittances, mostly from Russia, are a vital source of income.

A month later it stopped sending students, teachers and medical workers to harvest cotton after a global boycott campaign, and scrapped most of the capital controls that had bolstered state reserves but stifled trade and investment.

For Abdurahmonov, 36, who has run property, trade, finance and other businesses and lived in the United States, Britain, China and Singapore, the currency reform means he can focus on making money instead of tracking it down in an opaque system.

"I think you can feel it in the air how the atmosphere is really changing," he said in an interview at his three-storey, loft-style office building on the eastern outskirts of Tashkent. "People are planning new businesses, you can see a lot of start-ups coming (to us)."

### 'Serious'

While Abdurahmonov's company leases out office space, arranges foreign trade deals and provides other services for local entrepreneurs, Shayakhmetova is chief executive of Halyk Bank,

Kazakhstan's biggest lender by assets. "I have had meetings with high-level officials and I have the impression they are serious (about reforms)," she said in the Kazakh capital Almaty. "We are studying the market and talking to the regulator to see what their plans are."

Shayakhmetova said the bank, which has assets of \$26 billion and units in Russia, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan, could set up a subsidiary in Tashkent in a year and a half.

The World Bank named Uzbekistan one of its top 10 improvers this year for ease of doing business, citing reforms in starting a business, construction permits, protection for minority investors, tax payments and electricity supplies. Ranked 74 out of 190 countries, it was slightly ahead of China and Ukraine but well below Russia, which is 35th.

"Our next target is quite ambitious - we want to be in the top 20 by 2025," Azim Akhmedkhodjaev, head of the state investments committee, said, citing a draft "Investment Code" to replace more than a hundred separate laws and regulations.

The country has not tackled the more complex and potentially painful restructuring of large state enterprises, however, or joined the World Trade Organization, and is among states perceived as most corrupt, according to watchdog Transparency International, which ranks it 156 of 176.

Ordinary Uzbeks have yet to feel the full benefits of the foreign exchange liberalisation, still unable to buy foreign currency in cash except on the illegal black market. —AFP

## Iraq invites foreign bids for oil, gas blocks in new areas

BAGHDAD: Iraq yesterday invited foreign companies to bid for contracts to explore and develop oil and natural gas reserves in nine new blocks as the OPEC nation seeks to boost its output capacity.

"We invite all international companies to participate," Oil Minister Jabar Al-Luaibi told a news conference in Baghdad. "This

new exploration bidding round aims to maximize reserves."

Five blocks are located at border areas with Iran, three with Kuwait and one is off-shore in Gulf waters, a presentation by oil ministry officials at the conference showed. Luaibi said the areas had previously been "neglected" because they were the site of conflicts between Iraq and its neighbors in the 1980s and 1990s. The bidding terms will be finalized by the end of May and the ceremony to open the bids will be held on June 21, 2018, the presentation said.

The foreign companies' opinions will be taken into consideration when formulating the new contracts, Luaibi said. The terms will be different from previous service contracts, which Baghdad is moving away from because they remunerate companies regardless of oil prices fluctuations. —Reuters

## Euro rally, German politics bolster bloc's bond markets

LONDON: Eurozone bond yields nudged down yesterday, with southern Europe leading the way thanks to strength in the euro and reduced political uncertainty in the region after Germany moved a step closer to resolving the country's political impasse. Leaders of German Chancellor

Angela Merkel's conservative party agreed on Sunday to pursue a "grand coalition" with the Social Democrats to break the political deadlock in Europe's biggest economy.

This together with strong economic data last week lifted the euro to two-month highs at \$1.1948 early yesterday. The backdrop was favorable for regional debt markets, where strength in the currency dampens inflation and is seen encouraging the European Central Bank to maintain its ultra-loose monetary policy stance for a longer period. —Reuters

## EXCHANGE RATES

### Al-Muzaini Exchange Co.

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.691
Indian Rupees	4.660
Pakistani Rupees	2.887
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.968
Nepali Rupees	2.914
Singapore Dollar	224.220
Hongkong Dollar	38.748
Bangladesh Taka	3.637
Philippine Peso	5.958
Thai Baht	9.251

#### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.774
Qatari Riyal	83.194
Omani Riyal	786.642
Bahraini Dinar	804.300
UAE Dirham	82.468

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	19.700
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.123
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.216
Tunisian Dinar	122.300
Jordanian Dinar	427.120
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.018
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.583

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.700
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Euro	357.490
Sterling Pound	402.890
Canadian dollar	237.600
Turkish lira	77.520
Swiss Franc	306.840
Australian Dollar	230.510
US Dollar Buying	301.500

#### GOLD

20 Gram	249.070
10 Gram	127.450
5 Gram	64.570

### Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd

#### Rate for Transfer

US Dollar	302.000
Canadian Dollar	238.315
Sterling Pound	404.200
Euro	361.675
Swiss Franc	297.460
Bahrain Dinar	801.535
UAE Dirhams	82.615
Qatari Riyals	83.440
Saudi Riyals	81.390
Jordanian Dinar	427.230
Egyptian Pound	17.132
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.965
Indian Rupees	4.669
Pakistani Rupees	2.862
Bangladesh Taka	3.663
Philippines Peso	5.957
Cyprus pound	17.970

#### Selling Rate

Japanese Yen	3.705
Syrian Pound	1.590
Nepalese Rupees	2.926
Malaysian Ringgit	74.385
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.200
Thai Bhat	10.230
Turkish Lira	77.050

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY WLL

#### CURRENCY

	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.398155	0.405655
Czech Korune	0.006171	0.018171
Danish Krone	0.044420	0.049420
Euro	0.355623	0.363123
Georgian Lari	0.134665	0.134666
Norwegian Krone	0.033192	0.038392
Romanian Leu	0.064677	0.081527
Russian ruble	0.005179	0.005179
Slovakia	0.009004	0.019004
Swedish Krona	0.032479	0.037479
Swiss Franc	0.302593	0.313593

Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.222461	0.234461
New Zealand Dollar	0.202289	0.211789

America		
Canadian Dollar	0.232707	0.241707
US Dollars	0.298250	0.302670
US Dollars Mint	0.299750	0.302670

#### Asia

Bangladesh Taka	0.003293	0.003877
Chinese Yuan	0.044413	0.047913
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036772	0.039522
Indian Rupee	0.004102	0.004743
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002633	0.002813
Korean Won	0.000269	0.000284
Malaysian Ringgit	0.069484	0.075484
Nepalese Rupee	0.003017	0.003187
Pakistan Rupee	0.002643	0.002933
Philippine Peso	0.005818	0.006118
Singapore Dollar	0.219409	0.229409
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001698	0.002278
Taiwan	0.009989	0.010169
Thai Baht	0.008913	0.009463

#### Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.794996	0.803496
Egyptian Pound	0.014484	0.020202
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000185	0.000245
Jordanian Dinar	0.421835	0.430835
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000155	0.000255
Moroccan Dirhams	0.023488	0.047488
Omani Riyal	0.779006	0.784686
Qatar Riyal	0.078758	0.083698
Saudi Riyal	0.079540	0.080840
Syrian Pound	0.001281	0.001501
Tunisian Dinar	0.117872	0.125872
Turkish Lira	0.072146	0.082446
UAE Dirhams	0.080893	0.082593
Yemeni Riyal	0.000983	0.001063



## Business

# China, wary of risks, may keep GDP target in 2018

## Policymakers ratchet up efforts to tackle debt buildup

**BEIJING:** China's leaders are likely to maintain this year's growth target of "around 6.5 percent" in 2018, even as they ratchet up efforts to prevent a destabilizing build-up of debt in the world's second-largest economy, according to policy sources.

Policymakers will be under pressure to balance efforts to tackle debt with the need to keep growth on a steady path, they said. Investor concerns over a crackdown on debt was highlighted last week when a sell-off in bonds spread to the stock market. Top policymakers are expected to gather in December for the annual Central Economic Work Conference, which investors watch closely for policy priorities for the year ahead, amid a crackdown on riskier banking and investment activities.

"Next year's growth target could be similar to this year's," said a source who is close to policy discussions within the government. "It's OK as long as we are able to secure growth of 6.5 percent."

President Xi Jinping said at the Communist Party Congress in October that China must defuse "major risks" in the economy, and fight poverty and pollution. But he is also committed to meeting a goal set by the previous administration of doubling gross domestic product in the decade to 2020, to turn China into a "modestly prosperous" nation. That means that growth needs to be around 6.5 percent in each of the next three years. The urgency to address debt and property risks was highlighted by a warning on the sidelines of the congress from the central bank chief, Zhou Xiaochuan, of the risk of a "Minsky moment" - a reference to a sudden collapse in asset prices after long periods of growth fuelled by debt.

"Growth cannot be too low as we still need to build a modestly prosperous society as outlined at the party congress," said a second source. Both sources, who

requested anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter, are involved in internal policy discussions and offer advice to Chinese policymakers but are not part of the final decision-making process.

China's State Council Information Office, the government's public relations arm, has not yet responded to a request for comment sent by Reuters on Friday. Having targeted financial sector debt this year, the government is likely to focus more on corporate debt next year to tackle bad loans that are weighing down state-sector businesses, the policy sources said.

The central bank has issued sweeping guidelines to tighten rules on the country's \$15 trillion asset management sector and online micro-lenders, in the latest steps Beijing has taken to address systemic risks in the large shadow banking sector. Fears of a crackdown on debt has rattled markets, with pressure on bond yields spilling over into the stock market last week, with shares experiencing their biggest selloff in months on Thursday.

"The market feels great pains once you tighten a bit, the bond market has been falling sharply. This may trigger systemic risks if we cannot handle well," said one of the sources.

**Growth target for 2018 set at 6.5%**

### Treading warily

China's economy grew 6.7 percent last year, a 26-year low, and was targeted to grow around 6.5 percent this year. But it has grown at an annual 6.9 percent in the first three quarters on strong demand for Chinese exports and sustained state spending. That has the economy on track to pick up pace for the first time in seven years, and means 6.5 percent growth over the next few years would be enough to meet the 2020 growth target.

And despite the strong words from Xi and Zhou on



**BUDAPEST:** (Left to right) Chinese Premier Li Keqiang, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban and Bulgarian Premier Boyko Borisov speak during an economic forum attended by 16 central and eastern European leaders yesterday in Budapest. —AFP

debt, the leadership will have to balance reducing debt with meeting that target and keeping financial markets steady, the sources said.

Sheng Songcheng, a central bank adviser, said this month that the push for financial deleveraging had achieved results, and that he expected the effort to be less forceful next year. That has been taken as a signal that the focus will be on reducing non-financial corporate debt, which at 165 percent of gross domestic product is the highest among major economies, according to data from the Bank of International Settlements. At the same time, the sources said the central bank was expected to keep a slight tightening bias in policy settings.

Central bank data showed the weighted average lending rate for non-financial firms, a key indicator of corporate funding costs, edged up 9 basis points in the third quarter to 5.76 percent, following a rise of 14 basis points in the second quarter and a rise of 26 basis points in the first.

The average mortgage lending rate rose 32 basis points in the third quarter to 5.01 percent, after rising by a total of 17 basis points in the first half of the year. "Deleveraging - no matter it's in the financial or corporate sector - will definitely put downward pressure on the economy," one of the policy sources said. —Reuters

## Migrant slavery casts shadow over EU-Africa summit

**ABIDJAN:** A furore over migrant slave markets in Libya casts a shadow over an AU-EU summit this week that aims to promote Africa's long-term economic growth and stability, spurred by European fears of terrorism and mass migration. The two-day African Union and European Union summit opening tomorrow in the Ivory Coast economic capital Abidjan is focused mainly on the need to create jobs for Africa's rapidly growing population.

The summit marks what Europe sees as a potential turning point for broader and deeper ties with a continent it once colonized widely — while China, Japan, India and Gulf Arab states also compete for influence.

However, outrage over the slave trade in Libya looms over the talks in Abidjan, with the scandal having sparked protests in Dakar as well as in Brussels and other European capitals.

AU Commission chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat called for "urgent measures" to stop the abuses of black Africans in Libya, which critics say have been fueled by EU-Libyan cooperation to curb migrant crossings to Europe. "We face an emergency," a grim-faced Faki told reporters in Brussels last week during summit preparations with EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini.

Faki called for coordination with Libya, the AU, EU and United Nations to tackle the problem. Mogherini said the summit of 55 AU and 28 EU leaders could take "joint action" on the migrants even if she stressed its aim is to build a broader partnership.

### 'Unbearable for both sides'

Acknowledging how the slavery revelations were "unbearable for both sides", Mogherini said the Europeans and Africans will push the UN-backed government in Libya to prosecute the slave traders.

They will also press Libya to give UN humanitari-



**ABIDJAN:** People walk past a banner for the 6th EU-Africa Business Forum yesterday, in Abidjan, ahead of the African Union - European Union summit. —AFP

an agencies greater access to migrant detention centres, where she said their work in the last year has improved conditions and led to the voluntary return of some 10,000 migrants to their home countries.

But rights activists have asked why it took so long for African and European leaders to condemn abuses that had been known long before US network CNN aired footage two weeks ago of slave markets near Tripoli.

Libya became a massive transit hub for sub-Saharan Africans setting sail for Europe after the fall of dictator Muammar Gaddafi in 2011 tipped the country into chaos.

The EU has been desperate to stem the migrant influx via Libya and Turkey, the two main routes, as more than 1.5 million migrants have reached Europe since 2015. EU officials said the influx, which sparked political divisions across the EU, and frequent Islamist attacks in Europe have been a wake-up call

to tackle the root causes. The EU has already set up multi-billion euro funds to promote Africa's economic development while deepening counter-terrorism cooperation with African countries where Islamist militant groups are spreading.

"What happens in Africa matters for Europe, and what happens in Europe matters for Africa," European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said before leaving for the summit. "Our partnership is an investment in our shared future," he added in a statement. Ahmed Reda Chami, Morocco's ambassador to the EU who will attend the summit, said Europe had a vested long-term interest in Africa whose population is set to double by 2050 to around 2.4 billion people.

"If there is no economic development, you will have hundreds of millions of young people who have no future, who will (try to) come to Europe to find work," Chami told AFP at his Brussels mission. —AFP

## US new-home sales jumped 6.2% in October

**WASHINGTON:** Americans bought new homes in October at the fastest pace in a decade - a 6.2 percent monthly increase that reflects both the underlying strength of the economy and the worsening shortage of existing homes for sale. The Commerce Department said yesterday that new-home sales last month rose to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$685,000. That marks the third straight monthly gain and the best sales clip since October 2007. Much of the sales growth came from the Northeast and Midwest, with the South and West posting smaller increases.

Many buyers are turning to new construction because there is a shrinking supply of existing homes for sale. But

new construction has been unable to keep up with demand. Potential buyers are searching for homes amid a healthy job market with a 4.1 percent unemployment rate and attractive 30-year mortgage rates that are averaging less than 4 percent. Still, the lack of properties on the market has fueled higher prices, creating affordability pressures. The average sales price of a new home jumped 13.6 percent over the past 12 months to \$400,200.

These price increases are a sign that builders are able to charge more money because of the dearth of inventory. The number of sales listings for existing homes has tumbled 10.4 percent from a year earlier to just 1.8 million, according to the National Association of Realtors. That's the fewest number of homes on the market for any October since the Realtors began tracking the data in 1999.

New construction can only offset some of this supply crunch. There is only 4.9 months' supply of newly-built homes on the market, the lowest reading since July 2016. —AP



**TAMARAC:** In this file photo, Lennar Corporation town homes are under construction at Chelsea Place in Tamarac, Fla. The Commerce Department released new home sales for October. —AP

## Keystone's existing pipeline spills far more than predicted

**NEW YORK:** TransCanada Corp's existing Keystone pipeline has leaked substantially more oil, and more often, in the United States than indicated in risk assessments the company provided to regulators before the project began operating in 2010, according to documents reviewed by Reuters.

The Canadian company is now seeking to expand the pipeline system linking Alberta's oil fields to US refineries with its proposed Keystone XL project, which has US President Donald Trump's backing.

The existing 2,147-mile (3,455 km) Keystone system from Hardisty, Alberta, to the Texas coast has had three significant leaks in the United States since it began operating in 2010, including a 5,000-barrel spill this month in rural South Dakota, and two others, each about 400 barrels, in South Dakota in 2016 and North Dakota in 2011. Before constructing the pipeline, TransCanada provided a spill risk assessment to regulators that estimated the chance of a leak of more than 50 barrels to be "not more than once every seven to 11 years over the entire length of the pipeline in the United States," according to its South Dakota operating permit.

For South Dakota alone, where the line has leaked twice, the estimate was for a "spill no more than once every 41 years." The spill risk analysis was conducted by global risk management company DNV GL. A spokesman for DNV did not respond to a request for comment.

Members of South Dakota's Public Utilities Commission told Reuters last week they could revoke TransCanada's operating permit if an initial probe of last week's spill shows it violated the terms of the license. Those terms include requirements for standards for construction, regular inspections of pipeline infrastructure, and other environmental safeguards.

"They testified that this is going to be a state-of-the-art pipeline," said one of the commissioners, Gary Hanson. "We want to know the pipeline is going to operate in a fashion that is safe and reliable. So far it's not going well." TransCanada shut a section of the line while it cleans up the leak, which occurred near the town of Aberdeen on Nov 16. An official did not respond to a request for comment.

The spill took place days before regulators in neighboring Nebraska approved a route for TransCanada's proposed Keystone XL pipeline through the state, lifting the last major regulatory hurdle for the expansion that has been delayed for years by environmental opposition.

Trump handed TransCanada a presidential permit for Keystone XL in March, reversing former President Barack Obama's decision to reject the line on economic and environmental grounds, saying that it would create jobs and boost national security. TransCanada's spill analysis for Keystone XL, which would cross Montana, South Dakota and Nebraska, estimates 2.2 leaks per decade with half of those at volumes of 3 barrels or less. It estimated that spills exceeding 1,000 barrels would occur at a rate of once per century. —Reuters



# Shares dip as investors await Black Friday updates

LONDON: Global stocks fell modestly yesterday as investors awaited the full return of Wall Street traders to their desks following the Thanksgiving break. Early indications over the success of Black Friday were set to drive trading at the start of a busy week on the economic data front.

In Europe, France's CAC 40 was down 0.3 percent at 5,375 while Germany's DAX fell 0.2 percent to 13,038. Britain's FTSE 100 was 0.1 percent lower at 7,402. US stocks were poised for a flat opening with Dow futures and the broader S&P 500 futures unchanged.

In muted trading on Friday, US stocks set more records following the Thanksgiving Day break, with technology companies leading the way. The focus in the early part of this week is likely to be on Black Friday sales updates. Macy's has already said sales on one of the busiest shopping days of the year were going well.

"A strong showing for online retailers on

Black Friday may have boosted sentiment, with Cyber Monday having the potential to be even better in a sign that the consumer is healthier than other numbers this year have indicated," said Craig Erlam, senior market analyst at OANDA.

The House has passed a 10-year, \$1.4 trillion tax cut that blends a sharp reduction in business tax rates with more modest relief for individuals. The Senate expects to vote on its version this week. Republicans can pass the measure without Democratic votes.

It's a busy week on the data front, with a raft of manufacturing figures due at the end of the week. There's also inflation figures for the eurozone as well as comments from outgoing Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen to digest.

European stocks rose yesterday on hopes that German Chancellor Angela Merkel is close to forming a government, dealers said. London equities gained 0.3

percent on Cyber yesterday that has become increasingly popular in Britain over recent years. Frankfurt and Paris meanwhile each added 0.2 percent in value, setting aside earlier lows on the Shanghai stock market.

"A groggy start has given way to some decent growth this Monday, with European investors seemingly ignoring China's three-month lows to focus on the political progress in Germany," said Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell. A renewed coalition between Merkel's CDU/CSU conservatives and the center-left Social Democrats is "the best option for Germany". CSU head Horst Seehofer said Sunday, raising hopes for an end to the political impasse.

Merkel has been scrambling to avert snap elections after talks to form a new government with the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP) and the left-leaning Greens broke down a week ago.

The Social Democrats had vowed to go

into opposition after a disappointing showing in the September general election, but in a U-turn on Friday SPD chief Martin Schulz said he was ready for talks with Merkel's bloc. "Political optimism is picking up in Germany," added analyst David Madden at CMC Markets.

"The Germany economy has been managing just fine without a functioning government for the past two months, but investors would welcome some political stability."

Back in London, retail shares experienced mixed fortunes despite hopes of a fresh sales boost from yesterday's online price cuts. Clothing-to-food retailer Marks and Spencer won 1.0 percent to 300.80 pence but supermarket giant Tesco was down 0.2 percent at 192.20 pence.

The Shanghai Composite Index fell 0.9 percent to 3,322.23 and Tokyo's Nikkei 225 lost 0.2 percent to 22,495.99. Seoul's Kospi plunged 1.4 percent to 2,507.81 and Hong

Kong's Hang Seng shed 0.6 percent to 29,691.01. India's Sensex lost 0.2 percent to 33,604.68 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 edged up 0.1 percent to 5,988.80. New Zealand gained while benchmarks in Taiwan and Southeast Asia retreated.

Benchmark US crude fell 62 cents to \$58.33 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange while Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 37 cents to \$63.10 in London.

Asian markets fell yesterday on profit-taking after last week's volatility. The region's investors ignored another strong lead from Wall Street, where the S&P 500 and Nasdaq chalked up fresh records on expectations of strong sales on Black Friday and Cyber yesterday-two major post-Thanksgiving shopping days. Shanghai slipped almost one percent, with dealers still on edge after Thursday's sharp losses fuelled by concerns about a crackdown on speculative trading. —Agencies

## Dollar extends 3-wk losing streak as US tax plan eyed

LONDON: The dollar drifted lower against a trade-weighted basket of its rivals yesterday, extending a three-week losing streak, though investors were wary of driving the currency lower before a couple of event risks this week.

Today, the US Senate Banking Committee holds a hearing to confirm the nomination of Jerome Powell to succeed Janet Yellen at the helm of the Federal Reserve while the US Senate resumes deliberations on the tax plan this week after the Thanksgiving break.

"There is some caution after the dollar tumbled last week with the

potential for some news on the US tax front and as Powell gets sworn in but markets are broadly in narrow ranges," said Alvin Tan, an FX strategist at Societe Generale in London. The dollar index edged lower to 92.715, near two-month low of 92.675 touched on Friday. Sterling fetched \$1.3344, holding near Friday's two-month peak of \$1.3360. With major global currencies hemmed in tight trading ranges, the South African rand was the standout performer in London trading.

The currency jumped by as much as 3 percent against the greenback as markets took some relief from Moody's decision to only place South Africa on review for downgrade as an outright cut would have meant the country would have lost its position in some key global bond indexes.

Heavy selling of blue-chip shares dragged China's stock markets sharply lower yesterday as rising bond yields spooked investors. But the fallout seemed to be limited to the mainland with Hong Kong's stocks lagging the drop there and overseas bonds relatively more stable. — Reuters

## Justices ponder need for warrant for cellphone tower data

WASHINGTON: Like almost everyone else in America, thieves tend to carry their cellphones with them to work. When they use their phones on the job, police find it easier to do their jobs. They can get cellphone tower records that help place suspects in the vicinity of crimes, and they do so thousands of times a year.

Activists across the political spectrum, media organizations and technology experts are among those arguing that it is altogether too easy for authorities to learn revealing details of Americans' lives merely by examining records kept by Verizon, T-Mobile and other cellphone service companies.

Tomorrow, the Supreme Court hears its latest case about privacy in the digital age. At issue is whether police generally need a warrant to review the records. Justices on the left and right have recognized that technology has altered privacy concerns.

The court will hear arguments in an appeal by federal prison inmate Timothy Carpenter. He is serving a 116-year sentence after a jury convicted him of armed robberies in the Detroit area and northwestern Ohio. Investigators helped build their case by matching Carpenter's use of his smartphone to cell towers near Radio Shack and T-Mobile stores that

had been robbed. The question is whether prosecutors should have been required to convince a judge that they had good reason, or probable cause, to believe Carpenter was involved in the crime. That's the standard set out in the Constitution's Fourth Amendment, which also prohibits unreasonable searches. Prosecutors obtained the records by meeting a lower standard of proof.

The American Civil Liberties Union, representing Carpenter, said in court papers that the records "make it possible to reconstruct in detail everywhere an individual has traveled over hours, days, weeks or months."

In Carpenter's case, authorities obtained cellphone records for 127 days and could determine when he slept at home and where he attended church on Sunday, said the ACLU's Nathan Freed Wessler.

Courts around the country have wrestled with the issue. The most relevant Supreme Court case is nearly 40 years old, before the dawn of the digital age, and the law on which prosecutors relied to obtain the records dates from 1986, when few people had cellphones. The judge at Carpenter's trial refused to suppress the records, and a federal appeals court agreed. The Trump administration said the lower court decisions should be upheld.

Nineteen states supporting the administration said the records "are an indispensable building block" in many investigations. There is no evidence the records have been used improperly and requiring a warrant for them would result in more crimes going unsolved, the states said.

The administration relied in part on a 1979 Supreme Court decision that treated phone records differently than the conversation in a phone call, for which a warrant generally is required. — AP



WASHINGTON: In this Feb 17, 2016, file photo an iPhone is seen in Washington. The Supreme Court is hearing a case tomorrow about privacy in the digital age that tests whether police generally need a warrant to review cellphone tower records. — AP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Global

Monday 27 November 2017

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing
Price Index	▼ -2.00	6,254.67	6,256.67
Weighted Index	▼ -2.38	396.49	398.88
KSX 15	▼ -9.10	906.11	915.21

Volume	76,641,374
Value (KWD)	16,483,783
Number of Trades	3,653

Security	High	Low	Trades				Change
			Volume	Value (KWD)	Trades	Last	
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	— 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	799	— 0.0
ENERGYH	30.0	27.0	3,200	90	4	30.0	▲ 3.8
GPI	29.3	28.6	1,360,099	39,148	35	28.6	▼ -0.4
ASAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	51	— 0.0
Oil & Gas			1,363,299	39,236	39	933.48	▲ 12.30

KFOUC	275	255	13,739	3,589	9	275	— 0.0
BPCC	639	632	221,700	140,549	19	632	▼ -4.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	590	— 0.0
ALQURAIN	326	321	361,961	117,300	30	322	▲ 2.0
Basic Materials			997,400	261,428	58	1246.02	▲ 0.80

KCEM	440	400	8,000	2,600	2	400	▼ -55.0
CABLE	439	418	651,226	279,888	82	423	▲ 8.0
SHIP	208	206	20	4	1	208	— 0.0
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	960	— 0.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	266	— 0.0
MRC	80	70	5,000	355	3	80	▼ -0.1
AGICO	235	235	30,250	7,109	3	235	▼ -10.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	170	— 0.0
NCBM	195	192	74,238	14,280	4	195	▲ 3.0
EQUIPMENT	36.1	34.1	143,000	5,032	15	34.7	▼ -1.4
NCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	— 0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	— 0.0
SALBOOH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	80	— 0.0
AGLTY	785	767	1,444,635	1,121,850	168	778	▲ 12.0
EDU	307	306	10,100	3,091	3	307	▲ 5.0
CLEANING	53	49.1	61,050	3,001	4	53	▲ 0.6
KGL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	65	— 0.0
KGPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	150	— 0.0
HUMANISOFT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	3,792	— 0.0
NAFAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	649	— 0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	— 0.0
SHOOTING	21.0	18.4	72,015	1,359	11	18.5	▼ -1.4
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	477	— 0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	86	— 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	585	— 0.0
ALAFGO	367	366	3,000	1,113	3	367	▲ 7.0
MUBARRAD	73	73	40,000	2,800	3	73	▲ 0.3
LOGISTICS	54	52	990,719	51,908	54	52	▼ -0.6
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	92	— 0.0
GCEM	80	80	1	0	1	80	▲ 3.0
QIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	82	— 0.0
FCEM	73	70	109,000	7,657	5	73	▼ -1.2
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	— 0.0
SPEC	72	70	150,300	10,642	11	70	▼ -1.9
Industrials			3,795,664	1,512,836	373	1744.80	▼ -2.90

PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	79	— 0.0
CATTL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	235	— 0.0
DANAH	68	65	205,001	13,383	11	68	▲ 0.5
FOOD	1,400	1,400	7,517	10,524	2	1,400	▼ -299.0
Consumer Goods			212,518	23,907	13	872.39	▼ -60.90

ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,100	— 0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	— 0
Health Care			0	0	0	1510.51	— 0.00

KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,300	— 0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	175	— 0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	67	— 0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	27.0	— 0
IFAIR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	299	— 0
OLUFAJEL	111	111	11,018	1,223	12	111	— 0
MUNTAZAHAT	78	75	46,000	3,453	6	75	▲ 3
JAZERA	657	657	7,500	4,908	3	657	— 0
SOOR	114	110	43,931	4,855	22	111	▼ -1
FUTUREXID	100	100	93,227	9,323	8	100	— 0
ALRAI	105	100	19,150	2,004	4	105	▼ -4
Jiyad	64	63	3,310,854	208,451	131	63	— 0
Meezan	781	781	25,000	19,025	1	781	▼ -6
Consumer Services			3,566,680	253,261	187	906.86	▲ 2.50

ZAIN	456	444	6,523,544	2,983,197	406	445	▼ -1
QOREDOO	1,100	1,080	4,399	4,776	7	1,080	▲ 20
AAN	30.4	28.7	52	1	3	29.0	▼ -1
VIVA	738	695	141,228	102,863	37	730	▲ 1
Telecommunications			6,769,223	3,090,837	453	539.40	▼ -0.30

NBK	731	720	4,805,891	3,488,615	373	721	▼ -1
GBK	245	242	774,103	188,868	50	243	▲ 1
CBK	400	400	1,417	567	1	400	— 0
ABK	305	297	1,171	349	2	305	— 0
ALMUTAHED	340	339	169,100	57,492	17	340	— 0
KIB	225	222	655,800	146,998	37	222	▼ -2
BURG	315	305	32,850	28,765	46	308	▼ -2
KFIN	557	543	6,497,982	3,566,166	350	547	▼ -6
BOURBYAN	422	417	307,243	129,216	72	420	— 0
AUB	200	197	812,879	161,485	54	198	▲ 1
ITHARI	30.0	28.7	1,486,677	43,268	46	29.0	▼ -1
WAFBABANK	215	212	529,008	112,908	77	212	▼ -1
Banks			16,126,121	7,827,696	1,125	868.31	▼ -4.0

KINS	274	274	6,157	1,687	2	274	▲ 22
GIN5	750	561	5,190	3,497	5	750	▲ 50.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	400	— 0.0
WINS	58	57	215	12	2	58	▼ -0.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	187	— 0.0
FTI	71	71	10,800	767	1	71	▲ 1.0
WETHAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.9	— 0.0
BKOWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	358	— 0.0
Insurance			22,362	6,963	19	1040.29	▲ 22.60

Security	High	Low	Trades				Change
			Volume	Value (KWD)	Trades	Last	
SOKOUK	50	48.1	119,600	5,855	8	50	▲ 1.0
KRE	56	54	17,300	954	11	56	▼ -0.5
URC	69	69	24,365	1,681	5	69	▲ 0.9
NRE	124	122	443,219	54,509	25	123	— 0.0
SRE	354	340	9,282	3,282	2	354	— 0.0
TAM	400	400	9,995	3,998	1	400	— 0.0
AREEC	169	159	211	34	2	169	▼ -1.0
MASSALEH	39.0	39.0	50	2	1	39.0	— 0.0
ARABREC	30.3	29.6	1,468,050	43,897	54	29.9	▼ -0.3
ERESCO	35.0	34.1	312,005	10,862	7	34.9	▲ 0.1
MABANEE	739	729	21				
PLJAZZAT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	— 0.0
INVESTORS	18.0	17.2	6,765,460	119,240	103	17.3	▼ -0.3
JRC	29.9	28.7	134,101	3,885	21	29.9	▼ -0.1
ALTUARIA	93	90	716,136	65,051	23	90	▼ -1.0
SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	31.0	— 0.0
AAYANRE	80	79	6,000	475	2	80	▲ 1.5
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	75	— 0.0
ALAQARIA	32.0	32.0	1,500	48	1	32.0	▲ 2.0
MAZAYA	108	106	378,700	40,391	30	106	▼ -1.0
TUARA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	58	— 0.0
TAAEER	27.7	26.6	15,100	402	5	27.7	▲ 1.0
ARKAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	— 0.0
ARIGAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	— 0.0
ABYAAAR	21.1	20.8	1,279,300	26,780	36	20.8	▼ -0.2
MUNSHAAT	73	72	406,100	29,560	16	73	▲ 0.1
FIRSTDOUBAI	43.0	39.0	51,313	2,057	11	40.0	▼ -0.1
KBT	46.5	45.5	317,200	14,542	25	45.5	▼ -0.4
BEAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	— 0.0
MENA	18.5	17.9	1,346,310	24,279	61	18.1	— 0.0
ALMUDON	35.0	32.0	110,330	3,536	10	35.0	▲ 2.0
MARAKEZ	34.0	34.0	100	3	1	34.0	— 0.0
REMAI	44.5	41.0	419,200	17,571	19	43.0	▼ -3.0
Mashaeer	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	66	— 0.0
Real Estate			14,571,363	632,329	829	685.68	▲ 0.40

KINV	113	112	523,433	58,643	27	113	▲ 1.0
FACIL	162	162	54,500	8,829	4	162	▼ -1.0
IFA	30.4	29.2	150,336	4,473	19	29.8	▼ -0.1
NINV	103	101	2,277,990	230,818	69	101	— 0.0
KPROJ	292	286	80,999	23,418	21	292	▲ 4.0
COAST	33.4	32.0	2,005,835	66,055	51	32.5	▼ -0.2
SEICH	49.4	48.2	162,432	7,900	9	48.9	▲ 0.7
ARZAN	31.9	31.0	306,000	9,589	9	31.0	— 0.0
MARKAZ	130	130	30	4	1	130	▲ 21.0
KMEFIC	22.5	22.5	2,500	56	1	22.5	▼ -2.5
ALAMAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	49.0	— 0.0
ALOLA	41.0	40.6	218,000	8,900	5	40.6	▼ -0.1
ALMAL	29.9	28.6	642,973	18,685	29	28.9	▲ 0.1
GH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	— 0.0
AAYAN	37.1	36.5	4,343,853	160,299	137	36.5	▼ -0.6
BAYANINV	40.9	38.7	27,001	1,052	8	40.9	▲ 1.8
OSOL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	56	— 0.0
KFIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	45.5	— 0.0
KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	68	— 0.0
NIH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	70	— 0.0
UNICAP	37.3	37.3	40,000	1,492	1	37.3	▼ -0.7
MADAR	25.7	25.6	60,000	1,539	4	25.6	— 0.0
ALDEERA	28.0	28.0	100	3	1	28.0	▼ -1.4
ALSALAM	41.0	40.0	591,450	23,959	27	40.0	— 0.0
EKTTIAB	33.5	31.0	193,150	8,071	20	31.3	▼ -2.1
ALMADINA	39.0	38.0	135,360	5,153	10	38.2	▲ 0.2
NOOR	59	56	3,742,036	213,657	82	57	▲ 0.1
TAMINV	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	305	— 0.0
EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	158	— 0.0
KSHC	31.5	30.5	453,600	14,008	19	31.0	▲ 0.3
ASIVA	40.0	38.0	788,869	30,672	51	39.2	▼ -0.3
ONAHF	37.0	36.9	286,990	10,603	10	36.9	— 0.0
AMVAL	36.0	35.0	2,500	824	4	35.5	▲ 0.9
ALMUTIAZ	162	159	6,144,821	966,814	112</		



## Business

# NBK to attend Kuwait's first forum on 'professional and practical ethics'

## Kuwait Banking Association to host forum

**KUWAIT:** The National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) will participate in the "Kuwait First Forum for Professional and Practical Ethics", which will be held under the patronage of Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khalid Al-Rawdan, on December 4th, at Salwa Al-Sabah Hall, entitled: "Practical and Professional Ethics: Prospects and Challenges." The organization of this forum comes in line with the strategic partnership between Kuwait Banking Association (KBA), Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics (APPE).

The forum will focus on four key aspects: the role of the state in practical and professional ethics and their impact on the development process, successful management

and the role of business owners in enhancing the commitment to practical and professional ethics, drivers to commitment of professional



### KBA, KFAS and APPE in strategic partnership

ethics and their impact on professional performance, and methods and mechanisms to enhance compliance to practical and profes-

sional ethics and future challenges.

Emad Al-Ablani, NBK Group General Manager - Human Resources, will participate in the forum's second session which will be chaired by the Economic Advisor at Al-Diwan Al-Amiri, Dr. Yousef Al-Ibrahim, entitled "Successful Management and the Role of Business Owners in Enhancing Compliance of Practical and Professional Ethics." This theme includes 4 key topics, where Al-Ablani will address the second topic about the commitment to practical and professional ethics in the banking environment and its impact on the success of the Kuwaiti banking sector.

The session will also include the following topics: the impact of the commitment to professional ethics on organizations' competitive conditions, the charters of professional ethics in the Arab banking sectors, and the impact of practical and professional ethics

in attracting and developing family businesses investments, as well as the commitment to practical and professional ethics.

Al-Ablani will address in his speech NBK's pioneering experience in applying the highest international standards and codes related to the ethics of the banking profession and its commitment to raising awareness and professional culture among its employees, especially the newly hired personnel, through its continuous delivery of training and awareness programs. Al-Ablani will also discuss the importance of having confidence, credibility and professional ethics among banking professionals, since the lack of investors' confidence in the banking system may cause the market to lose its credibility and attractiveness. Al-Ablani will also highlight the



Emad Al-Ablani

importance of instilling a culture of positive banking behavior within the sector's participants, urging them to protect customers' rights and spreading awareness and banking culture among them, so that clients would fully understand the consequences of every step taken and clearly know their rights and obligations.

NBK continues to maintain its leading position among Kuwaiti private sector organizations in applying the highest professional and ethical standards among its employees by spreading a banking culture based on positive conduct and equipping them with tools to gain customers' confidence, while adhering to the professional rules and standards set by regulators both locally in Kuwait and internationally in all the other countries where it operates.

## Turkish Airlines on board with UFW

**KUWAIT:** The "United for Wildlife Buckingham Palace Declaration (UFW)" which was on the agenda of the 73rd IATA Annual General Meeting held in Cancun, Mexico last June, has been signed by 41 airline companies so far. The declaration, also signed by institutions such as ACI, AFRAA, AASA and London Heathrow Airport, is aiming to stop the illegal wildlife trade of tusk, rhino horn, tortoise shell etc. as well as increasing passenger, customer, client, and staff awareness about the nature, scale, and consequences of the illegal wildlife trade.

The declaration was approved yesterday by Turkish Airlines at a signing ceremony held at the Turkish Airlines Istanbul Headquarters, attended by Bilal Eksi, Turkish Airlines Deputy Chairman and CEO, and IATA Director General, Alexandre de Juniac.

"With this declaration, we as Turkish Airlines are not only underlining one of the most important environmental issues of our times, trafficking of wildlife, but we are also setting an example of responsibility. Today with this signature we hope that we are contributing to the level of awareness on the issue and smoothing the path for legal enforcement procedures against the traffickers," quoted Bilal Eksi, Turkish Airlines Deputy Chairman and CEO during the signing ceremony.

IATA Director General, Alexandre de Juniac said: "The illegal wildlife trade threatens to extinguish many of the world's most iconic and special creatures.

The global connectivity built by the aviation industry is being exploited by traffickers, but through coordinated action with our



industry partners, and assisting the proper authorities, we can help to end this dreadful trade. We welcome Turkish Airlines' commitment to join this fight, symbolized in its signature to the Buckingham Palace declaration."

Airlines' commitments expression and demonstration of agreement to tackle the illegal wildlife trade are as follows:

- Adopt or encourage the adoption of a zero-tolerance policy regarding illegal wildlife trade.
- Increase passenger, customer, client, and staff awareness about the nature, scale, and consequences of illegal wildlife trade.
- Promote the Declaration and its Commitments across the entire transport sector and encourage all in the sector to sign up to the Declaration.
- Develop mechanisms to enable the transport sector to receive timely information about the transport of suspected illegal wildlife and their products, including methods of transportation, key routes, ports and other locations.
- Enhance data systems, including due diligence and risk assessment, to allow the transport sector and/or enforcement agencies to screen data and/or cargo, to identify potential

shipments of suspected illegal wildlife and their products.

- Identify and promote systems for staff and the public to report suspicions in relation to the transportation of illegal wildlife and their products.

- Improve the training of staff within the transport sector to enable them to detect, identify and report suspected illegal wildlife trade, and acknowledge staff who

champion this cause.

- Develop a secure, harmonized system for passing information about suspected illegal wildlife trade from the transport sector to relevant customs and law enforcement authorities, where permitted by law.

- Notify relevant law enforcement authorities of cargoes suspected of containing illegal wildlife and their products and, where able, refuse to accept or ship such cargoes.



## VIVA announces 'Vanity Number Challenge' big prize winner

**KUWAIT:** VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the "Vanity Number Challenge" draw campaign's big prize winner. Niyaz Mohammed Ramjan, was the lucky winner who won VIVA's premium number 56666665 worth \$100,000.

This interactive and engaging service allowed customers to enjoy answering trivia questions, for a chance to win valuable prizes in the draw, which included iPhone7 daily and \$ 2,500 weekly, in addition to the big prize, throughout the whole campaign.



## Gulf Bank launches 'Spend & Fly to Europe' campaign for cardholders

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank is pleased to announce the launch of its new campaign 'Spend & Fly to Europe', where 25 lucky card customers will get 2 round trip economy class tickets each to any of the 12 destinations in Europe on Emirates Airlines. All Gulf Bank Cardholders will automatically be enrolled in the promotion upon using their debit or credit cards between 15 November, 2017 and 15 January, 2018.

Gulf Bank Cardholders will get one chance to enter the draw for every KD 10 spent locally on their Credit card, and three chances

for every KD 10 spent abroad using their Credit or Debit Cards. The raffle draw is planned to take place on 28 January 2018, in which winners will be announced, each will get 2 round trip economy class tickets on Emirates Airlines to travel London, Paris, Frankfurt, Rome, Milan, Venice, Geneva, Zurich, Amsterdam, Madrid, Barcelona and Istanbul.

Gulf Bank is committed to providing its customers with best financial solutions, products and services, as well as the most exciting offers and promotions.

## Gulf Bank announces winners of Al-Danah daily draws

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Bank held its Al-Danah daily draws on 26 November 2017 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 19 November - 23 November 2017. The Al-Danah daily draws include draws every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

### The winners are:

(Sunday 19/11): Mohammed Ali Yehia Al-Razaa, Bader Issam Ibraheem Al-Turkait (Monday 20 /11): Tasneem Iqbal Mohammed Anwar, Hala Shukri Mahmoud Abuasba

(Tuesday 21/11): Ahmed Khaled Ahmed Al-Jassar, Waleed Najaf Faraj Al-Faraj (Wednesday 22/11): Othman Dawood Sulaiman Al-Qinaei, Nadya Yousef Essa Al-Shamlan (Thursday 23/11): Omar Khaled Amer, Taibah Nader Abdulaziz Al-Nouri

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah 2017 draw lineup includes daily draws (2 winners per working day and each receive KD1,000). Al-Danah's final draw for KD 1 million will be held on 11 January, 2018 whereby the Al-Danah millionaire will be announced.

Gulf Bank encourages you to increase

your chances by depositing more into your Al-Danah account, immediately from any local bank, using the new ePay (Self-Pay) service, which is available on Gulf Bank's Online and Mobile Banking.

### Five reasons why the Al-Danah account is the best:

- 1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million and the largest international bank prize according to Guinness World Records
- 2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD500,000
- 3) Two winners of KD1,000 every working day
- 4) The most chances to win
- 5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from the previous year to the current year

Only Al-Danah makes millionaires.

Al-Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al-Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. Customers require a minimum of KD200 to open an account and the same amount must be maintained as for customers to be eligible for the upcoming Al-Danah draws. If the customer's account balance falls below KD200 at any given time, a KD2 charge will be made on a monthly basis to the account until the minimum balance is met. Customers who open an account and/ or deposit more will enter the daily draw within two days.





Technology

# Bubble or breakthrough? Bitcoin keeps CBs on edge

## \$10,000 in sight for bitcoin as it rockets to new record high

**FRANKFURT:** Central bankers say the success of bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies is just a bubble. But it keeps them awake at night because these private currencies threaten their control of the banking system and money supply, which could undermine the monetary policies they use to manage inflation.

Meanwhile, Bitcoin's vertiginous ascent showed no signs of stopping yesterday, with the cryptocurrency soaring to another record high just a few percent away from \$10,000 after gaining more than a fifth in value over the past three days alone. The digital currency has seen an eye-watering tenfold increase in its value since the start of the year, and has more than doubled in value since the beginning of October. It surged 4.5 percent on the day yesterday to trade at \$9,687 on the Luxembourg-based Bitstamp exchange. Bitcoin's price has been helped in recent months by the announcement that the world's biggest derivatives exchange operator CME Group would start offering bitcoin futures. The company said last week the futures would launch by the end of the year though no precise date had been set.

"\$10k is on the cards and bitcoin seems to be straining at the leash to reach it," said Charles Hayter, founder of cryptocurrency data analysis website Cryptocompare. "Promises of bitcoin futures opening the door to institutional money are supercharging the price." This is why several central banks are advocating regulations to impose control. Others are even looking at whether to introduce their own digital currency and are testing payment platforms.

"The problem with bitcoin is that it could easily blow up and central banks could then be accused of not doing anything," European Central Bank policymaker Ewald Nowotny told Reuters.

"So we're trying to understand whether bank activity in

relation to cryptocurrency trading needs to be better regulated." The global cryptocurrency market is worth \$245 billion which is tiny compared to the trillion dollar plus balance sheets of the Bank of Japan, the US Federal Reserve or the ECB.

These institutions issue yen, US dollars and euros, both by creating physical cash or by crediting banks' accounts, as is the case with their bond-buying programs. Cryptocurrencies, however, are not centralized. They do not pass through regulated banks and traditional payment systems. Instead, they often use blockchain, an online ledger of transactions that is maintained by a network of anonymous computers on the internet.

This has raised concerns about their vulnerability to hackers, as underlined by a score of incidents in recent months, and their use to finance crime.

Cryptocurrencies holders also have a claim on a private, rather than a public entity, which could go bust or stop functioning. For these reasons, and given their low adoption by retailers, central banks have dismissed cryptocurrencies as risky commodities with no bearing on the real economy. "Bitcoin is a sort of tulip," ECB Vice

### Banks mull own digital currencies

President Vitor Constancio said in September, comparing it to the Dutch 17th century trading bubble. "It's an instrument of speculation."

#### Legal tender

China and South Korea, where cryptocurrency speculation is popular, banned fundraising through token launches, whereby a newly cryptocurrency is sold to finance a product development. Russia's central bank said it would block websites selling bitcoin and its rivals while the ECB told European Union lawmakers last year "they should not seek... to promote the use of virtual currencies" because these could "in principle affect the central banks' control



**LONDON:** This file photo taken on November 20, 2017 shows gold plated souvenir Bitcoin coins arranged for a photograph in London. Bitcoin, which this week soared to a new record high of more than \$8,000, is the monetary equivalent of Uber, since it bypasses central bank regulation and could be attractive for financially fragile countries, economists say. —AFP

over the supply of money" and inflation. Yet Japan in April recognized bitcoin as legal tender and approved several companies as operators of cryptocurrency exchanges but required them register with the government.

The ECB, the Bank of Japan and Germany's Bundesbank are already testing blockchain, admitting it may have a future use for the settling of payments.

The BOJ last year set up a section in charge of Fintech to offer guidance to banks seeking new business opportunities, and joined up with the ECB to study distributed ledger technology (DLT) like blockchain. They concluded that blockchain was not mature enough

ronments surrounding us. Technology will function as an extension of ourselves. Every object will become smart and enable us to live smarter lives.

We're seeing this in our cars - the "ultimate mobile device" - which are being fitted out with ultrasonic sensors, technology that makes use of light beams to measure distance between vehicles and gesture recognition. In time, these innovations will make autonomous driving an everyday reality. Well before, we'll get used to cars routinely booking themselves in for a service, informing the garage what needs to be done and scheduling their own software updates.

**Prediction 3:** We'll don AR headsets

It also won't be long until the lines between 'real' reality and augmented reality begin to blur. AR's commercial viability is already evident. For instance, teams of construction workers, architects and engineers are using AR headsets to visualize new builds, coordinate efforts based on a single view of a development and train on-the-job laborers when a technician can't be on site that day.

Of course, VR has strong prospects too. It will undoubtedly transform the entertainment and gaming space in the near term, thanks to the immersive experiences it affords, but smart bets are on AR becoming the de facto way of maximizing human efficiency and leveraging the 'tribal knowledge' of an evolving workforce.

**Prediction 4:** A deeper relationship with customers

Dell Technologies' Digital Transformation Index shows that 45 percent of leaders in mid to large organizations believe they could be obsolete within 5 years and 78 percent see start-ups as a threat to their business. It's never been more important to put the customer experience first.

Over the next year, with predictive analytics, machine learning (ML) and AI at the forefront, companies will better understand and serve customers at, if not before the point of need. Customer service will pivot on perfecting the blend between man and machine. So, rather than offloading customer interactions to first generation chatbots and pre-terminated messages, humans and automated intelligent virtual agents will work together as one team.

**Prediction 5:** Bias check will become the next spell check

Over the next decade, emerging technologies such as VR, AI, will help people find and act on information without interference from emotions or external prejudice, while empowering them to exercise human judgment where appropriate.

In the short-term, we'll see AI applied to hiring and promotion procedures to screen for conscious and unconscious bias. Meanwhile VR will increasingly be used as an interview tool to serve opportunities are awarded on merit alone, e.g. by masking a prospective employee's true identity with an avatar.

By using emerging technologies to these ends, 'bias check' could one day become a routine sanitizer, like 'spell check' - but with society-wide benefits.

**Prediction 6:** Media & Entertainment will break new ground with esports

In 2018, we'll see increasingly vast numbers of players sitting behind screens or wearing VR headsets to battle it out in a high-definition computer-generated universe. As hundreds of millions of players and viewers tune-in, esports will go mainstream.

The esports phenomenon points to a wider trend.

expressed concerns the search engine might discriminate against Russian media.

The Roskomnadzor watchdog said earlier this month it would seek clarification from Alphabet Inc's Google over whether it intentionally placed articles from Russian news websites Sputnik and Russia Today lower in search results. Responding to a question about Sputnik articles at a conference earlier in November, Alphabet Executive Chairman Eric Schmidt said Google was working to give less prominence to "those kinds of websites" as opposed to delisting them.

That prompted complaints from Russian authorities, with Roskomnadzor saying last week it would take action against Google if it discriminated against Russian

to power the world's biggest payment systems.

#### Lukewarm

Commercial banks have so far been lukewarm to existing digital currencies. But with electronic payments already supplanting cash, they're alert to the danger that they would lose business if their clients decided to switch to them. For this reason, Swiss banking giant UBS is leading a consortium of six banks trying to create its own digital cash equivalent of each of the major currencies backed by central banks. This would allow financial markets to make payments and settle transactions more quickly. —Reuters



Namely that even quintessentially 'human' activity like sport has been digitalized. Technology has widened 'sport' to all types. You don't need to have a certain physique or build. If you have quick haptic responses and motor skills, you can play and claim victory.

Additionally traditional sports, like cycling, have upped their game by harvesting data to identify incremental but game-changing

gains. In the future every business will be a technology business, and our leisure time will become a connected experience.

**Prediction 7:** We'll journey toward the "mega-cloud"

Cloud is not a destination. It's an IT model where orchestration, automation and intelligence are embedded deeply into IT Infrastructure. In 2018, businesses are overwhelmingly moving toward a multi-cloud approach, taking advantage of the value of all models from public to private, hosted, managed and SaaS. However, as more applications and workloads move into various clouds, the proliferation of cloud siloes will become an inevitability, thus inhibiting the organization's ability to fully exploit data analytics and AI initiatives. This may also result in applications and data landing in the wrong cloud leading to poor outcomes.

As a next step, we'll see the emergence of the "mega cloud", which will weave together multiple private and public clouds to behave as a coherent, holistic system. The mega cloud will offer a federated, intelligent view of an entire IT environment. To make the mega cloud possible, we will need to create multi-cloud innovations in networking (to move data between clouds), storage (to place data in the right cloud), compute (to utilize the best processing and acceleration for the workloads), orchestration (to link networking, storage and compute together across clouds) and, as a new opportunity, customers will have to incorporate AI and ML to bring automation and insight to a new level from this next generation IT environment.

**Prediction 8:** The year to sweat the small stuff

In this increasingly interconnected world, our reliance on third parties has never been greater. Organizations aren't simple atomic instances; rather, they are highly interconnected systems that exist as part of something even bigger. The ripples of chaos spread farther and faster now that technology connects us in astonishing ways. Consider that one of the most substantial data breaches in history occurred because attackers used credentials to log into a third-party HVAC system.

Due to our increasingly interwoven relationship with machines, small subtle failures can lead to mega failures. Hence, next year will be a year of action for multinational corporations, further inspired by the onslaught of new regulations such as GDPR. Prioritizing the implementation of cybersecurity tools and technologies to effectively protect data and prevent threats will be a growing imperative.

*Note: Mohammed Amin is Senior Vice President, Middle East, Turkey and Africa at Dell EMC*

media. "We'd like to inform you that by speaking about ranking of web-sources, including the websites of Russia Today and Sputnik, Dr. Eric Schmidt was referring to Google's ongoing efforts to improve search quality," Google said in a letter posted on Roskomnadzor's website.

"We don't change our algorithm to re-rank," it added. A Google spokeswoman confirmed the letter had been sent by the company but provided no further comment.

The Russian government funds Sputnik and Russia Today. US intelligence agencies have said both websites spread misinformation and published stories that were negative towards Hillary Clinton during the 2016 US presidential election. —Reuters

## Cyber Monday showdown: Wal-Mart closes in on Amazon in online price war

**NEW YORK:** Wal-Mart Stores Inc is within striking distance of matching Amazon.com Inc's online prices for the first time, a key milestone in its effort to regain the "low price leader" title.

Wal-Mart has aggressively invested in making its prices more competitive against brick-and-mortar rivals since the start of the year. Now, the shrinking gap is also becoming noticeable across a broad range of product categories online, according to a price study conducted for Reuters, as well as interviews with pricing experts, retail consultants, vendors and company sources.

Prices at Walmart.com are now only 0.3 percent more expensive than Amazon on average, according to the study by retail data analytics firm Market Track, which analyzed prices of 213 products in 11 categories over a period of 700 days ending November 7, 2017.

By comparison, Wal-Mart's online prices were 3 percent higher than Amazon's on average in the first 350 days ending November 7, 2016, according to the study. In the popular wearables category, which includes fitness trackers and smart watches, Wal-Mart's prices are 6.4 percent lower than Amazon this year compared to 12.6 percent higher in the same period a year ago. For sports and outdoor products, Wal-Mart is now 1.3 percent lower versus 3.5 percent higher a year ago.

These findings indicate that Wal-Mart has managed to slash prices online across several product categories consistently, rather than with just temporary discounts. Consistent lower pricing is key to boosting sales throughout the year. On Cyber Monday, the busiest day of the year for internet shopping, online deals and temporary promotions will overshadow pricing for both retail giants.

"We are committed to having online prices that meet or beat prices at other top sites," said Wal-Mart spokesman Dan Toporek. He said for some items the retailer now displays two prices online to show shoppers when they can get a lower price by picking up their order in a store, but declined to comment further on the company's pricing strategy.

Amazon spokeswoman Kate Scarpa said nothing has changed in the retailer's approach to delivering low prices to customers. "Amazon's prices are as low or lower than any other retailer and we work hard for customers to ensure that's true every day," she said, declining to comment further on the retailer's pricing strategy.

The consistent price cuts are one of several steps Wal-Mart is taking to boost its e-commerce business, including expanding its online offerings, acquiring smaller online retailers such as Jet.com, and offering free-two day shipping. Burt Flickinger, managing director of retail consultancy Strategic Resources Group, conducted his own internal pricing study for clients in Texas last month. His data shows Wal-Mart is closing the gap with Amazon this year compared with a year ago when prices for a range of goods were between 5-12 percent higher at Wal-Mart.

"What we have started seeing recently is Wal-Mart lowering the gap with Amazon to a point where it is a photo finish," said Flickinger. "Consumers can't tell the difference anymore." —Reuters

## Entering the next era of human machine partnerships

By Mohammed Amin

**KUWAIT:** Our research partners at The Institute for the Future (ITF) recently forecasted that we're entering the next era of human machine partnership, and that between now and 2030 humans and machines will work in closer concert with each other, transforming our lives.

We've worked with machines for centuries, but we're about to enter an entirely new phase - characterized by even greater efficiency, unity and possibility than ever before. Emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and advances in Internet of Things (IoT) and cloud computing - made possible through exponential developments in software, analytics, and processing power - are augmenting and accelerating this direction.

This is evident in our connected cars, homes, business and banking transactions already; even transforming how farmers manage their crops and cattle. Given this dizzying pace of progress, let's take a look at what's coming down the pike next.

**Prediction 1:** AI will do the 'thinking tasks' at speed

Over the next few years, AI will change the way we spend our time acting on data, not just curating it. Businesses will harness AI to do data-driven 'thinking tasks' for them, significantly reducing the time they spend scoping, debating, scenario planning and testing every new innovation. It will mercifully release bottlenecks and liberate people to make more decisions and move faster, in the knowledge that great new ideas won't get stuck in the mire.

Some theorists claim AI will replace jobs, but these new technologies may also create new ones, unleashing new opportunities for humans. For example, we'll see a new type of IT professional focused on AI training and fine-tuning. These practitioners will be responsible for setting the parameters for what should and shouldn't be classified good business outcomes, determining the rules for engagement, framing what constitutes 'reward' and so on. Once this is in place, the technology will be able to recommend positive commercial opportunities at lightning speed.

**Prediction 2:** Embedding the IQ of Things

Starting in 2018, we'll take gargantuan strides in embedding near-instant intelligence in IoT-enhanced cities, organizations, homes, and vehicles. With the cost of processing power decreasing and a connected node approaching \$0, soon we'll have 100 billion connected devices, and after that a trillion. The magnitude of all that data combined, processing power with the power of AI will help machines better orchestrate our physical and human resources. We'll evolve into 'digital conductors' of the technology and envi-

## Google seeks to defuse row with Russia over website rankings

**MOSCOW:** Google does not change its search algorithm to re-rank individual websites, it said in a letter to Russia's communications watchdog, after Moscow



Health

# Big tobacco beats foes in smoke-friendly SE Asia



HANOI: A man uses a bamboo pipe to smoke tobacco at a local coffee shop. — AFP

**MANILA:** A global treaty to fight the health impact of tobacco has suffered substantial setbacks in Southeast Asia, home to some of the world's highest concentrations of smokers, a watchdog group said yesterday. The powerful tobacco lobby last year stopped proposed cigarette tax increases in Malaysia and Indonesia, while Vietnam waived all duties on dried tobacco imports from Cambodia, the Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance said in a report.

"We have found that the tobacco industry does not take a holiday from undermining or thwarting or delaying government efforts to control tobacco use," Mary Assunta Kollandai, senior policy adviser for the alliance, told a news conference. The annual report, released

at a tobacco conference at the Western Pacific office of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Manila, monitors the region's compliance with the 2003 WHO framework convention on tobacco control.

WHO says tobacco use causes lung cancer and heart disease, among other ailments, and kills more than seven million people each year. Indonesia, where 76.2 percent of males aged 15 or older smoke, Vietnam (47.7 percent), and the Philippines (43 percent) have some of the world's highest concentrations of tobacco users, it said. Tobacco use among adult males is also heavy in Cambodia (44.1 percent), Laos (56.6 percent), Malaysia (43 percent) and Thailand (41.4 percent), it said.

While tobacco taxes were the "most cost-

effective way to reduce tobacco use", WHO coordinator for tobacco and economics Jeremias Paul said only a few mostly European countries have imposed the ideal rate-equivalent to 75 percent of the retail price. "One of the reasons why it's underutilized or not being implemented globally is what I term as the scare tactic of the tobacco industry," he told reporters. This includes the argument that higher cigarette taxes would encourage smuggling and lawsuits while reducing state revenues and employment, Paul said. The alliance report also said new rules for "plain packaging" in Malaysia and pictorial health warnings for cigarette packs in Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia, were either stopped or delayed last year. — AFP

## EU deadlock over weedkiller goes to appeal

**BRUSSELS:** The European Union will on Monday attempt to determine the future of glyphosate, a controversial weedkiller hugely relied on by farmers but which critics say causes cancer and whose use has been thrown into doubt. Since its introduction in the United States in 1974 by pesticides and seed maker Monsanto as Roundup, the use of glyphosate has soared across the globe.

It is sprayed on food crops but also used widely outside of agriculture, such as on public lawns and in forestry. The EU's 28 countries, in an appeal committee, will vote on whether to renew the herbicide's licence for five years. But a member state could also table an amendment to reduce the renewal period. Without support from EU heavyweights, a way out of the stalemate could prove difficult. Divisions over the weedkiller within the EU have dragged on since June 2016, when its previous 15-year licence expired and an 18-month extension was granted.

The European Commission had originally recommended approving the herbicide's use for another decade. However, faced with an uproar over the alleged dangers of glyphosate use, experts balked last month at a renewal and the commission then proposed reducing the timeframe from 10 years to five years. But earlier this month the European Commission failed to gain

the majority needed to extend the license until 2022. It said 14 states voted in favor, including Denmark, Britain and the Netherlands but nine were against, including Belgium, France and Italy, and five abstained, including Bulgaria, Poland and Portugal.

### 'Probably carcinogenic'

The commission then passed the decision to the appeal committee. Environmental campaigners Greenpeace and other critics are calling for an outright ban of glyphosate in Europe. "They (the commission) complain there is too much responsibility on their shoulders and that European governments are hiding behind them," Franziska Achterberg, from Greenpeace Europe, told AFP.

"They can't have their cake and eat it. They don't want to be blamed for decisions that are unpopular. But at the same time they're not ready to listen to people's concerns." If no agreement is reached, the decision will be passed back to the commission which will have to make a ruling before the current license expires on December 15. The European Parliament, the EU's only elected body, last month said glyphosate should be renewed only until 2022 and banned thereafter. Activists point to a 2015 study by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer that concluded it was "probably carcinogenic".

But the European Food Safety Authority and the European Chemicals Agency both say glyphosate is unlikely to cause cancer in humans, in line with a 2016 review carried out by WHO experts and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. Monsanto insists glyphosate meets the standards required to renew its European license. — AFP

## Global Medical Center Welcomes Dr. Marzouq Al-Bader

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## What's On

# Al-Marefa hosts championship for students with special needs



Talal Al-Jeri and Fawzi Al-Thunayan from Al-Ahli bank.



Talal Al-Jeri and Majed Al-Saleh from Public Authority of the Disabled.



Under auspices of the Public Authority for the Disabled, Al-Marefa Exemplary Company for Educational Services recently held its sixth athletic championship for students with special needs. The championship, which included various competitions in running, shot put and long jump, was held at the Public Authority for Youth's field in Mangaf with participation of 24 teams from various special needs' schools in Kuwait.

Speaking on a special ceremony held to honor the winners, Al-Jeri Holding Group's Chairman and Managing Director Talal Khalifa Al-Jeri expressed joy and pride in the competitors, and stressed that the group was keen on providing proper psychological, social and cultural care for students with special needs.



## Ahli United Bank organized staff football tournament

For the second consecutive year, Ahli United Bank announced that it had organized the 'Ali Mansour Al-Sarraf' football tournament amongst its employees from various departments and branches. The competition, which ran from the 12th-22nd November 2017, took place at the football pitch located at the

Kuwaiti Lawyers Association. The tournament reflected the Bank's overall commitment to a diversified range of staff sports activities, encouraging a healthy lifestyle and positive competitive environment. Overall, 135 staff participated in this football tournament engendering a great team spirit across the Bank.

Naqeeb Amin AUB's General Manager of Human Resources said, "The competition reflects our belief that our employees' health and safety is of paramount importance to the Bank. We sponsor a diverse range of sports activities, internally and externally, including football, cricket and bowling." Amin added, "The competition is named after 'Ali Mansour Al-Sarraf' a member of staff, in commemoration of his long service at the Bank, which has amounted to 64 years."



## Nespresso reveals limited-edition collection for festive season

Coffee lovers are set to be full of joy this holiday season as Nespresso has revealed its Limited Edition Festive Collection in collaboration with renowned artists Craig and Karl. Spreading the color and fun of the season, the exclusive collection has been inspired by traditional candies that evoke nostalgic childhood memories.

To create the ultimate gift collection, Nespresso has teamed up with design duo Craig and Karl. Craig Redman and Karl Maier are transatlantic-based university friends turned creative collaborators who have a love for simple shapes paired with wildly colorful patterns and a wry sense of humor. The duo have injected their signature colors and patterns into both the Nespresso Limited Edition Variations coffees and a selection of unique accessories that make the perfect gifts for design and coffee aficionados.

Craig and Karl explained: "We were inspired by the Nespresso Variations flavors and the notion they were all based around old-style confectionery. We were also mindful that the design had to feel modern and relevant to now, so in our initial development we honed in on candy cane style stripes, which were prevalent in the past. In it, we saw a classic motif that can evoke nostalgia for the customer, but one that equally feels current owing to its bold and graphic form. We also loved that the stripes once applied to dome-shaped capsules gave them the appearance of candy themselves."

### Nespresso limited edition variations confetto

The holiday period is a time for unique experiences and the range of Nespresso Limited Edition Variations Confetto coffees do not disappoint with their surprising candy flavored aromas combined with the highest quality Pure Arabica. There are three Original Variations to try, each with a Craig and Karl designed capsule.

Each of the Variations have been based on the Nespresso Livanto coffee blend which consists of Pure Arabica from Southern and Central America. It is well balanced with a roasted caramelized note providing roundness and balance in the finished coffees:

Variations Confetto Snowball - a delicious espresso pairing sweet coconut notes with a touch of vanilla. Intensity: 6. Serving size: Espresso (40ml).

Variations Confetto Orangette - the bittersweet flavor of orange peel and a hint of chocolate are vibrant in this flavored espresso. Intensity: 6. Serving size: Espresso (40ml). Variations Confetto Liquorice - a tasty combination of spices and liquorice candy notes. Intensity: 6. Serving size: Espresso (40ml).

### Limited edition accessories

The latest Limited Edition Les Collections range from Nespresso is full of one-of-a-kind gifts, including unique designs by Craig and Karl. Within the range, there is something for everyone, whether they have a



sweet tooth, favour bold graphic design or are a fan of milk based coffee recipes. The range includes:

### Touch Espresso Cups designed by Craig and Karl

Set of two Espresso cups made from a mix of black porcelain and soft-touch silicone featuring colourful Craig and Karl stripes inspired by liquorice candies.

### Touch Lungo Cups designed by Craig and Karl

Set of two Lungo cups made from a mix of black porcelain and soft-touch silicone featuring colourful Craig and Karl stripes inspired by liquorice candies.

### Touch Travel Mug

A sleek and stylish travel mug in a matte black finish. With a generous capacity of 345ml, the Touch Travel Mug will keep your Nespresso coffee perfectly hot (or cold) whilst you are on the move

### Touch Nomad Dispenser

For the travel lover in your life, there is the Touch Nomad Dispenser, which holds 15 Nespresso capsules and is easy to transport when on the go.

### Dark Chocolate Raspberry Squares

Smooth dark chocolate paired with raspberry flavored crispy pieces to create an explosion of flavors. The intensity of the dark chocolate and the finesse of the red berry complement each other and merge with delightful floral aromas.

### Milk Chocolate Crunchy Corn Squares

When crunchy corn is introduced to milk chocolate, a subtle and unexpected match of flavors is created. These treats combine sweetness and roasted accents with a crisp and crunchy texture for a sensory delight that brings out the creaminess of the milk chocolate. Ending on a high note, a pinch of salt enhances this rich palette of flavors. This holiday season, bring joy to every cup with the exclusive Nespresso Festive Collection available at [www.buynespresso.com](http://www.buynespresso.com), Call center (24922600) or at the Nespresso Boutiques from The Avenues Mall and 360 Mall.

## Wendy's Middle East introduces new BBQnator

Wendy's Middle East, operated by Alghanim Industries, one of the largest privately-owned companies in the region, has introduced new specialty items to its menu, including the new BBQnator Beef Sandwich, the BBQnator Junior Beef Sandwich and the BBQnator Chicken Sandwich.

Available in store and for home delivery, Wendy's lovers can get their hands on the new food menu items for a limited time only, ending on January 2, 2018. The range of sandwiches can be upgraded to a meal, which includes fries and a drink. BBQ fans can also upgrade their meal by adding the BBQnator fries, which comes with beef bacon, cheese and BBQ sauce.

Fans of the smoky barbeque flavor can take advantage of this limited time offer and savor the all new BBQnator range of items, now available at all Wendy's restaurants, which are located at Blajat Street, Marina Mall, Fahaheel and The Avenues, or home delivery through Talabat.com.



Wendy's Middle East has consistently made its mark with its 'deliciously different' attitude in the F&B market. Wendy's lettuce and fresh tomatoes are locally sourced and freshly prepared daily in the restaurants. Its burgers are made of 100 percent Halal Australian Angus Beef and are served hot off the grill.



## TV



00:45 The Blood Lands  
02:15 The Rock  
04:35 Batman Unlimited: Mech vs. Mutants  
06:00 Compadres  
07:45 Con Air  
09:40 The Rock  
11:50 6 Ways To Sundown  
13:35 Batman Unlimited: Mech vs. Mutants  
14:55 Avengers Grimm  
16:20 Drop Zone  
18:00 In The Heart Of The Sea  
20:05 Entrapment  
22:00 Green Street 3: Never Back Down  
23:35 Check Point



00:50 Untamed & Uncut  
01:45 Treehouse Masters  
02:40 Preposterous Pets  
03:35 Going Ape  
04:00 Going Ape  
04:25 Monsters Inside Me  
05:15 Mountain Monsters  
06:02 Bahama Blue  
06:49 Untamed & Uncut  
07:36 Escape To Chimp Eden  
08:00 Escape To Chimp Eden  
08:25 Going Ape  
08:50 Going Ape  
09:15 Treehouse Masters  
10:10 Preposterous Pets  
11:05 Bahama Blue  
12:00 Going Ape  
12:28 Going Ape  
12:55 Monsters Inside Me  
13:50 River Monsters  
14:45 Preposterous Pets  
15:40 Bahama Blue  
16:35 Untamed & Uncut  
17:30 Treehouse Masters  
18:25 Glory Hounds  
19:20 Africa's Trees Of Life  
20:15 Preposterous Pets  
21:10 Orangutan Island  
21:38 Orangutan Island  
22:05 Glory Hounds  
23:00 Africa's Trees Of Life  
23:55 Bahama Blue



00:30 Rillington Place  
01:25 SS-GB  
02:25 In Plain Sight  
03:15 Call The Midwife  
04:10 The Coroner  
05:00 Casualty  
06:00 Casualty  
06:50 The Coroner  
07:40 Doctor Who  
08:30 Casualty  
09:25 Casualty  
10:15 The Coroner  
11:05 New Tricks  
12:00 Doctor Who  
12:50 Call The Midwife  
13:45 Casualty  
14:40 The Coroner  
15:30 Doctor Who  
16:20 Call The Midwife  
17:15 New Tricks  
18:15 Holby City  
19:05 The Coroner  
20:00 Sherlock  
21:40 Orphan Black  
22:30 Orphan Black  
23:30 Holby City



00:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
01:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
02:00 It Takes A Killer  
03:00 Jo Frost On Britain's Killer Kids  
04:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
05:00 Crimes That Shook Australia  
06:00 It Takes A Killer  
07:00 Homicide Hunter  
08:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
09:00 It Takes A Killer  
10:00 Homicide Hunter  
11:00 Homicide Hunter  
12:00 Homicide Hunter  
13:00 Homicide Hunter  
15:00 It Takes A Killer  
15:30 It Takes A Killer  
16:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
17:00 The First 48  
18:00 The First 48  
19:00 Nightmare In Suburbia  
20:00 It Takes A Killer  
20:30 It Takes A Killer  
21:00 Homicide Hunter  
22:00 Crimes That Shook Britain  
23:00 The First 48



00:05 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
00:30 Nightcap  
00:55 Teachers  
01:20 Chappelle's Show  
01:45 The Half Hour  
02:10 Broad City  
02:35 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
03:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
03:25 The Half Hour  
03:50 Broad City  
04:15 Kroll Show  
04:40 Key And Peele  
05:05 Important Things With Demetri Martin  
05:30 Disaster Date  
05:55 Ridiculousness Arabia  
06:20 Hungry Investors  
07:05 Frankenfood  
07:30 Frankenfood  
07:55 Impractical Jokers UK  
08:25 Disaster Date  
08:50 Workaholics  
09:15 Kroll Show  
09:40 Key And Peele  
10:05 Important Things With Demetri Martin  
10:30 Hungry Investors  
11:15 Disaster Date  
11:40 Ridiculousness Arabia  
12:05 Impractical Jokers  
12:30 Frankenfood  
12:55 Frankenfood  
13:20 Key And Peele  
13:45 Impractical Jokers UK  
14:15 Disaster Date  
14:40 Workaholics  
15:05 Friends  
15:30 Kroll Show  
15:55 Comedy Central Presents  
Comedy 3alwagef  
16:25 Impractical Jokers  
16:50 Workaholics  
17:15 Impractical Jokers UK  
17:45 Disaster Date  
18:10 Ridiculousness Arabia  
18:35 Frankenfood  
19:25 Impractical Jokers  
19:50 Friends

20:35 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah  
21:30 Idiotsitter  
22:00 Another Period  
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood  
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:30 Risking It All  
01:20 Tethered  
02:10 Kings Of The Wild  
03:00 Dual Survival  
03:50 Now That's Funny  
04:40 How It's Made  
05:05 How It's Made  
05:30 Risking It All  
06:20 Invent It Rich  
07:00 Risking It All  
07:50 Storm Chasers  
08:40 How It's Made  
09:05 How It's Made  
09:30 Invent It Rich  
10:20 Dual Survival  
11:10 Penn & Teller Tell A Lie  
12:00 World's Top 5  
12:50 How It's Made  
13:15 How It's Made  
13:40 Invent It Rich  
14:30 Pick A Puppy  
14:55 Pick A Puppy  
15:20 Storm Chasers  
16:10 Dual Survival  
17:00 React To That  
17:25 React To That  
17:50 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
18:15 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
18:40 Invent It Rich  
19:30 How It's Made  
19:55 How It's Made  
20:20 Now That's Funny  
21:10 React To That  
21:35 React To That  
22:00 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
22:25 Kids Do The Craziest Things  
22:50 Dual Survival  
23:40 Storm Chasers



00:50 Six Degrees Of Murder  
01:45 Murder Calls  
02:40 Obsession: Dark Desires  
03:35 Guilty Rich  
04:30 Six Degrees Of Murder  
05:25 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad  
06:20 I Almost Got Away With It  
07:10 Swamp Murders  
08:00 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad  
08:25 Disappeared  
09:15 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad  
10:10 Swamp Murders  
11:05 The Perfect Murder  
12:00 Shadow Of Doubt  
12:55 Disappeared  
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It  
14:45 Swamp Murders  
15:40 Suspicion  
16:35 Gone  
17:30 Disappeared  
18:25 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad  
18:50 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad  
19:20 I Almost Got Away With It  
19:45 Swamp Murders  
20:15 Suspicion  
21:10 Orphan Black  
22:05 Grave Secrets  
23:00 Guilty Rich  
23:55 American Monster



00:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
00:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
00:35 Binny And The Ghost  
01:00 Hank Zipzer  
01:25 Alex & Co.  
01:45 Disney Mickey Mouse  
01:50 Evermoor Chronicles  
02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
02:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
03:05 Binny And The Ghost  
03:30 Binny And The Ghost  
03:55 Hank Zipzer  
04:15 Disney Mickey Mouse  
04:20 Hank Zipzer  
04:45 Alex & Co.  
05:10 Alex & Co.  
05:35 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
06:00 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
06:25 Binny And The Ghost  
06:45 Disney Mickey Mouse  
06:50 Rolling With The Ronks  
07:00 Jessie  
07:25 Tangled: The Series  
07:50 Tsum Tsum Shorts  
07:55 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
08:20 Elena Of Avalor  
08:45 Bunk'd  
09:10 Stuck In The Middle  
09:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
10:00 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
10:25 Lolirock  
10:50 Lolirock  
11:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
11:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch  
12:05 Hank Zipzer  
12:30 Alex & Co.  
12:55 Alex & Co.  
13:20 Lolirock  
13:45 Lolirock  
14:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
14:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
15:00 The Zhuzhus  
15:15 K.C. Undercover  
15:40 Stuck In The Middle  
16:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
16:30 Elena Of Avalor  
16:35 Bizaardvark  
17:00 Tangled: The Series  
17:25 Descendants Wicked World  
17:30 Bunk'd  
17:55 K.C. Undercover  
18:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
18:45 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
19:10 Star Wars Forces Of Destiny  
19:15 Stuck In The Middle  
19:40 Girl Meets World  
20:05 Disney Mickey Mouse  
20:10 Liv And Maddie  
20:35 Jessie  
21:00 Tangled: The Series  
21:25 K.C. Undercover  
21:50 Hotel Transylvania: The Series  
22:15 Bizaardvark  
22:40 Bunk'd  
23:05 Rolling With The Ronks  
23:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir  
23:45 Lolirock



00:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
00:25 Unbungalievable  
00:35 Loopdidoo  
00:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
01:15 Calimero  
01:30 Art Attack  
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:05 Loopdidoo  
02:20 Henry Hugglemonster  
02:35 Calimero  
02:50 Henry Hugglemonster  
03:05 Art Attack  
03:30 The Hive  
03:40 Loopdidoo  
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster  
04:10 Art Attack  
04:35 Loopdidoo  
04:50 Calimero  
05:05 Art Attack  
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
05:45 Loopdidoo  
06:00 Art Attack  
06:30 Henry Hugglemonster  
06:45 Loopdidoo  
07:00 Henry Hugglemonster  
07:15 Calimero  
07:30 Loopdidoo  
07:45 Henry Hugglemonster  
08:00 P-King Duckling  
08:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
09:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
09:30 Sofia The First  
10:00 Vampirina  
10:30 PJ Masks  
11:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
11:30 Sheriff Callie's Wild West  
12:00 The Lion Guard  
12:30 The Lion Guard  
13:00 Sofia The First  
13:30 Sofia The First  
14:00 PJ Masks  
14:30 PJ Masks  
15:00 P-King Duckling  
15:30 Doc McStuffins  
16:00 Puppy Dog Pals  
16:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
17:00 Sofia The First  
17:30 Vampirina  
18:00 PJ Masks  
18:30 Puppy Dog Pals  
19:00 Sofia The First  
19:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers  
20:00 The Lion Guard  
20:30 P-King Duckling  
21:00 Doc McStuffins  
21:30 PJ Masks  
22:00 Vampirina  
22:30 Sofia The First  
23:00 P-King Duckling  
23:30 Puppy Dog Pals



00:20 Street Outlaws  
01:05 Gold Rush  
01:50 Gold Diggers  
02:35 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune  
03:20 Deadliest Brothers  
04:05 Deadliest Catch  
04:50 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
05:35 How Do They Do It?  
06:00 Gold Diggers  
06:45 Street Outlaws  
07:30 Diesel Brothers  
08:15 Deadliest Catch  
09:00 Container Wars  
09:25 How Do They Do It?  
09:48 How Do They Do It?  
10:10 Gold Rush  
10:55 Gold Diggers  
11:40 Cooper's Treasure: The Hunt For A Secret Fortune  
12:25 How Do They Do It?  
12:48 Baggage Battles  
13:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier  
13:55 Deadliest Catch  
14:40 Gold Diggers  
15:25 Diesel Brothers  
16:10 Street Outlaws  
17:00 How Do They Do It?  
17:25 How Do They Do It?  
17:50 Baggage Battles  
18:20 Container Wars  
18:50 Deadliest Catch  
20:35 How Do They Do It?  
21:00 American Tarzan  
21:50 Bushcraft Build-Off  
22:40 Boy To Man  
23:30 Diesel Brothers



06:00 Disney11  
06:25 Supa Strikas  
06:50 Marvel's Spider-Man  
07:15 Right Now Kapow  
07:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
07:45 Mech-X4  
08:10 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
08:35 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
09:00 Supa Strikas  
09:25 Supa Strikas  
09:50 Walk The Prank  
10:20 Walk The Prank  
10:45 Gravity Falls  
11:10 Gravity Falls  
11:35 Lab Rats  
12:00 Lab Rats  
12:25 Two More Eggs  
12:30 Phineas & Ferb  
12:55 Phineas & Ferb  
13:20 Zeke And Luther  
13:45 Zeke And Luther  
14:10 Disney Mickey Mouse  
14:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything  
14:40 Gravity Falls  
15:05 Lab Rats  
15:30 Milo Murphy's Law  
15:55 Star Wars: The Freemaker Adventures  
16:20 Two More Eggs  
16:25 Walk The Prank  
16:50 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
17:15 Mech-X4  
17:40 Marvel's Spider-Man  
18:05 Supa Strikas  
18:30 Marvel's Ant-Man  
18:35 Disney11  
19:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  
19:25 Right Now Kapow  
19:50 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
19:55 Mech-X4  
20:20 Walk The Prank  
20:45 Star Wars: The Freemaker Adventures  
21:10 Gravity Falls  
21:35 Marvel's Rocket And Groot  
21:40 Disney Mickey Mouse  
21:45 Lab Rats  
22:10 Lab Rats  
22:35 Phineas & Ferb  
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



00:10 Famously Single  
01:00 So Cosmo  
01:55 So Cosmo

02:50 Celebrity Style Story  
03:20 Celebrity Style Story  
03:50 Mariah's World  
04:40 Mariah's World  
05:30 Celebrity Style Story  
06:00 La Clippers Dance Squad  
06:55 El News  
07:10 La Clippers Dance Squad  
08:10 El News: Daily Pop  
09:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
10:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
11:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
12:00 El News  
12:15 WAGs La  
13:10 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
14:05 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry  
15:00 El News  
15:15 El News: Daily Pop  
16:15 The Platinum Life  
17:10 The Platinum Life  
18:05 The Platinum Life  
19:00 El News  
20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians  
22:00 Fashion Police  
23:00 El News  
23:15 Botched



00:00 Restaurant Impossible  
01:00 Mystery Diners  
01:30 Mystery Diners  
02:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
02:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
03:00 Man Fire Food  
03:30 Man Fire Food  
04:00 Chopped  
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games  
06:00 Barefoot Contessa  
06:25 Barefoot Contessa  
06:50 Anna Olson: Fresh  
07:15 The Kitchen  
08:05 The Pioneer Woman  
08:30 The Pioneer Woman  
08:55 Siba's Table  
09:25 Siba's Table  
09:55 Bake With Anna Olson  
10:25 Bake With Anna Olson  
10:55 The Kitchen  
11:45 Cooking For Real  
12:10 The Pioneer Woman  
12:35 The Pioneer Woman  
13:00 Siba's Table  
13:30 Siba's Table  
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
15:00 Chopped  
16:00 The Kitchen  
17:00 Bake With Anna Olson  
17:30 Bake With Anna Olson  
18:00 Chopped  
19:00 Iron Chef America  
20:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
20:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
21:00 Man Fire Food  
21:30 Man Fire Food  
22:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
22:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives  
23:00 Chopped



00:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?  
01:00 Emmerdale  
01:30 Coronation Street  
02:00 Coronation Street  
02:30 The Chase  
03:25 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
04:20 Tracey Ullman's Show  
04:50 Raised By Wolves  
05:15 Murdoch Mysteries  
06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?  
07:05 The Chase  
08:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
09:00 Tracey Ullman's Show  
09:35 Raised By Wolves  
10:00 Murdoch Mysteries  
10:55 Who's Doing The Dishes?  
11:50 The Chase  
12:45 Emmerdale  
13:15 Coronation Street  
13:45 Coronation Street  
14:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?  
15:10 The Chase  
16:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
17:25 Gino's Hidden Italy  
17:50 Murdoch Mysteries  
18:45 Emmerdale  
19:15 Coronation Street  
19:45 Coronation Street  
20:10 The Chase  
21:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!  
22:25 Gino's Hidden Italy  
22:50 Emmerdale  
23:15 Coronation Street  
23:40 Coronation Street



00:00 Engineering Disasters  
01:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
02:00 Engineering An Empire  
03:00 Missing In Alaska  
03:50 Ancient Aliens  
04:40 Hoard Hunters  
05:30 Engineering Disasters  
06:20 America's Book Of Secrets  
07:10 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved  
08:00 Engineering An Empire  
09:00 Missing In Alaska  
10:00 Ancient Aliens  
11:00 Hoard Hunters  
12:00 Engineering Disasters  
13:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
14:00 Engineering An Empire  
15:00 Missing In Alaska  
16:00 Ancient Aliens  
17:00 Hoard Hunters  
18:00 The Universe: Ancient Mysteries Solved  
19:00 America's Book Of Secrets  
20:00 Engineering An Empire  
22:00 Ancient Aliens  
23:00 UFO Files



00:20 Fifth Gear  
01:10 W2T Treasure Hunters  
02:00 Mountain Men  
02:50 Counting Cars  
03:15 American Pickers  
04:05 Mountain Men  
05:00 Swamp People  
06:00 Fifth Gear  
06:50 American Pickers  
07:40 Counting Cars  
08:05 Counting Cars  
08:30 Pawn Stars  
08:55 Pawn Stars  
09:20 Aussie Pickers  
10:10 Ax Men  
11:00 Fifth Gear  
11:50 American Pickers

12:40 Counting Cars  
13:05 Counting Cars  
13:30 Time Team  
14:20 Swamp People  
15:10 Alone  
16:00 American Pickers  
16:50 Counting Cars  
17:15 Counting Cars  
17:40 Swamp People  
18:30 Alone  
19:20 Mountain Men  
20:10 Pawn Stars  
20:35 Pawn Stars  
21:00 Mountain Men  
21:50 Forged: Iron & Fire  
22:15 Milwaukee Blacksmith  
22:40 Time Team  
23:30 Alone



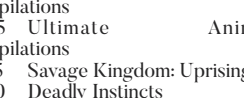
00:15 John Torode's Malaysian Adventure  
00:45 Chasing The Sun  
01:10 Tripping Out With Alie & Georgia  
01:40 Restoration Man  
02:35 Cool Spaces  
03:30 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
03:55 My Dubai  
04:25 Winroads  
04:50 Winroads  
05:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
06:15 Tripping Out With Alie & Georgia  
06:40 Stepping Out  
07:10 Restoration Man  
08:05 Cool Spaces  
09:00 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
09:25 My Dubai  
09:55 Winroads  
10:20 Winroads  
10:50 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
11:45 Tripping Out With Alie & Georgia  
12:10 Stepping Out  
12:40 Restoration Man  
13:35 Cool Spaces  
14:30 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia  
14:55 My Dubai  
15:25 Winroads  
15:50 Winroads  
16:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
17:15 Tripping Out With Alie & Georgia  
17:40 Stepping Out  
18:10 Miguel's Feasts  
18:35 Maximum Foodie  
19:05 Winroads  
19:30 Winroads  
20:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces  
21:00 Tripping Out With Alie & Georgia  
21:30 Stepping Out  
22:00 Miguel's Feasts  
22:25 Maximum Foodie  
22:55 Restoration Man  
23:50 Cool Spaces



00:10 Facing...  
01:00 Live Free Or Die  
02:00 Planes That Changed The World  
03:00 Machine Impossible  
04:00 Facing...  
05:00 Inside The American Mob  
06:00 Bad Trip  
07:00 Bond Stars  
08:00 Hacking The System  
08:30 Hacking The System  
09:00 Building Wild  
10:00 Yukon Gold  
11:00 Cold Water Gold  
12:00 Air Crash Investigation  
13:00 Bad Trip  
14:00 Hacking The System  
14:30 Hacking The System  
15:00 Route Awakening  
15:30 Route Awakening  
16:00 Yukon Gold  
17:00 Cold Water Gold  
18:00 Air Crash Investigation  
19:00 Seconds From Disaster  
20:00 Yukon Gold  
20:50 Cold Water Gold  
21:40 Air Crash Investigation  
22:30 Seconds From Disaster  
23:20 Hacking The System  
23:45 Hacking The System



00:20 Cobra Mafia  
01:00 World's Deadliest Killer Three  
02:00 Soul Of The Cat  
02:50 Monster Fish  
03:45 The Invaders  
04:40 Ultimate Animals  
Compilations  
05:05 Ultimate Animals  
Compilations  
05:35 Soul Of The Cat  
06:30 Monster Fish  
07:25 The Invaders  
08:20 Ultimate Animals  
Compilations  
08:45 Ultimate Animals  
Compilations  
09:15 Savage Kingdom  
10:10 Deadly Instincts  
11:05 Prehistoric Predators  
12:00 Call Of The Baby Beluga  
12:55 Brutal Killers  
13:50 Monster Fish  
14:45 The Invaders  
15:40 Ultimate Animals  
Compilations  
16:05 Ultimate Animals  
Compilations  
16:35 Savage Kingdom: Uprising  
17:30 Deadly Instincts  
18:25 Prehistoric Predators  
19:20 The Invaders  
20:10 Ultimate Animals  
Compilations  
20:35 Ultimate Animals  
Compilations  
21:00 Savage Kingdom: Uprising  
21:50 Deadly Instincts  
22:40 Prehistoric Predators  
23:30 Call Of The Baby Beluga



00:15 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
00:36 Rabbids Invasion  
01:00 Rabbids Invasion  
01:24 Sanjay And Craig  
01:48 Sanjay And Craig  
02:12 Winx Club  
02:36 Winx Club  
03:00 Harvey Beaks  
03:24 Harvey Beaks  
03:48 The Loud House  
04:12 The Loud House  
04:36 Breadwinners  
05:00 Breadwinners  
05:24 Get Blake

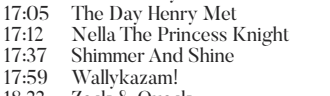


00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
00:36 Rabbids Invasion  
01:00 Rabbids Invasion  
01:24 Sanjay And Craig  
01:48 Sanjay And Craig  
02:12 Winx Club  
02:36 Winx Club  
03:00 Harvey Beaks  
03:24 Harvey Beaks  
03:48 The Loud House  
04:12 The Loud House  
04:36 Breadwinners  
05:00 Breadwinners  
05:24 Get Blake

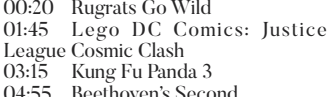
05:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
06:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
07:00 The Loud House  
07:24 Rabbids Invasion  
07:48 Get Blake  
08:12 Harvey Beaks  
08:36 Sanjay And Craig  
09:00 Rank The Prank  
09:24 Harvey Beaks  
09:48 100 Things To Do Before High School  
10:12 Game Shakers  
10:36 Regal Academy  
11:00 Winx Club  
11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants  
11:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
12:12 The Loud House  
12:36 Rabbids Invasion  
13:00 Breadwinners  
13:24 Sanjay And Craig  
13:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
14:12 I Am Frankie  
14:36 100 Things To Do Before High School  
15:00 Hunter Street  
15:24 School Of Rock  
15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants  
16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
16:36 The Loud House  
17:00 Sanjay And Craig  
17:24 I Am Frankie  
17:48 Hunter Street  
18:12 Henry Danger  
18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn  
19:00 School Of Rock  
19:24 Game Shakers  
19:48 The Thundermans  
20:12 SpongeBob SquarePants  
20:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
21:00 The Loud House  
21:24 Sanjay And Craig  
21:48 Rabbids Invasion  
22:12 Breadwinners  
22:36 Harvey Beaks  
23:00 SpongeBob SquarePants  
23:24 SpongeBob SquarePants  
23:48 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles



00:15 Shimmer And Shine  
00:38 Shimmer And Shine  
01:01 Max & Ruby  
01:23 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
01:34 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
01:45 The Day Henry Met  
01:50 The Day Henry Met  
01:55 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
02:18 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
02:40 Zack & Quack  
03:01 Shimmer And Shine  
03:23 Nella The Princess Knight  
03:35 Paw Patrol  
03:58 Little Charmers  
04:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
04:22 Dora The Explorer  
04:44 Max & Ruby  
05:06 The Day Henry Met  
05:12 Nella The Princess Knight  
05:36 Shimmer And Shine  
05:58 Wallykazam!  
06:21 Zack & Quack  
06:32 The Day Henry Met  
06:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
07:00 Rusty Rivets  
07:12 Paw Patrol  
07:25 Paw Patrol  
07:37 Dora The Explorer  
08:00 Nella The Princess Knight  
08:23 Bubble Guppies  
08:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
09:08 Paw Patrol  
09:19 Paw Patrol  
09:30 Shimmer And Shine  
09:53 Nella The Princess Knight  
10:14 The Day Henry Met  
10:20 Paw Patrol  
10:43 Rusty Rivets  
11:06 Wallykazam!  
11:29 Bubble Guppies  
11:52 Team Umizoomi  
12:15 Shimmer And Shine  
12:38 Shimmer And Shine  
13:01 Max & Ruby  
13:23 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
13:34 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
13:45 The Day Henry Met  
13:50 The Day Henry Met  
13:55 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
14:18 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
14:40 Zack & Quack  
15:01 Shimmer And Shine  
15:23 Nella The Princess Knight  
15:35 Paw Patrol  
15:58 Little Charmers  
16:10 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom  
16:21 Dora The Explorer  
16:44 Max & Ruby  
17:05 The Day Henry Met  
17:12 Nella The Princess Knight  
17:37 Shimmer And Shine  
17:59 Wallykazam!  
18:22 Zack & Quack  
18:32 The Day Henry Met  
18:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
19:00 Rusty Rivets  
19:13 Paw Patrol  
19:25 Paw Patrol  
19:37 Dora The Explorer  
20:00 Nella The Princess Knight  
20:23 Bubble Guppies  
20:46 Blaze And The Monster Machines  
21:08 Paw Patrol  
21:19 Paw Patrol  
21:31 Shimmer And Shine  
21:54 Nella The Princess Knight  
22:16 The Day Henry Met  
22:21 Paw Patrol  
22:44 Rusty Rivets  
23:06 Wallykazam!  
23:29 Bubble Guppies  
23:52 Team Umizoomi



01:30 Man To Man  
03:30 Finding Neverland  
05:15 Man About Town  
07:00 Kate & Leopold  
09:00 The Matador  
10:45 Winter's Bone  
12:30 Autumn In New York  
14:15 Man To Man  
16:15 The Assignment  
18:00 You Again  
20:00 We'll Never Have Paris  
21:45 Begin Again  
23:30 The Congress



00:20 Rugrats Go Wild  
01:45 Lego DC Comics: Justice League Cosmic Clash  
03:15 Kung Fu Panda 3  
04:55 Beethoven's Second  
06:25 Rugrats Go Wild  
07:50 The Adventure Club  
09:20 Pirates Who Don't Do Anything  
10:50 Lego DC Comics: Justice League Cosmic Clash  
12:20 Chilly Christmas  
13:50 Minions  
15:25 A Little Game  
17:00 Houlal! On The Trail Of Marsupilami  
18:50 Mousehunt  
20:30 Chilly Christmas  
22:00 Minions  
23:35 Houlal! On The Trail Of Marsupilami



00:05 Stung  
01:35 The Funhouse Massacre

03:15 A Date With Miss Fortune  
05:00 Leap Of Faith  
06:50 Dad's Army  
08:35 After The Ball  
10:20 Can't Buy Me Love  
12:00 Leap Of Faith  
13:50 Dad's Army  
15:35 Fan Girl  
17:10 Fun Size  
18:40 7 Chinese Brothers  
20:00 Without A Paddle: Nature's Calling  
21:35 Scouts Guide To The Zombie Apocalypse  
23:15 The Tiger Hunter



00:00 Taxi Driver  
02:00 When Life Keeps Getting In The Way  
03:30 The Beat Beneath My Feet  
05:10 Before I Disappear  
06:55 Experimenter  
08:40 Suffragette  
10:30 The Beat Beneath My Feet  
12:10 A Country Called Home  
13:50 Infinitely Polar Bear  
15:25 Reds  
18:45 The Best Of Me  
20:45 Blue Sky  
22:30 The Lobster



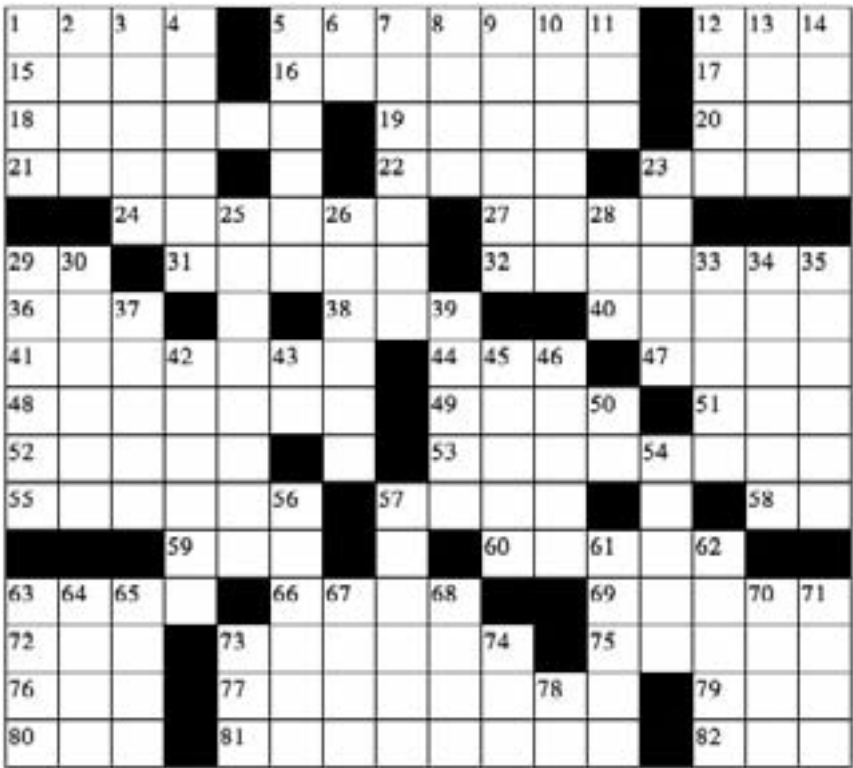
01:40 The Adventures Of Scooter The Penguin  
02:40 Back To The Sea  
04:20 Catcher: Cat City 2  
06:00 American Girl: Grace Stirs Up Success  
07:45 An American Tail: Fievel Goes West  
09:15 Legend Of The Sea  
10:45 The Fairy Tales Tree  
12:05 Back To The Sea  
13:45 Catcher: Cat City 2  
15:25 Bark Ranger  
16:55 Legend Of The Sea  
18:25 Lego DC: Justice League Gotham City Breakout  
19:55 Simba The King Lion  
22:05 Bark Ranger  
23:35 An American Tail: Fievel Goes West



00:00 Wanted  
01:55 Blown Away  
04:05 Miss You Already



CROSSWORD 1771



ACROSS

- 1. Having desirable or positive qualities especially those suitable for a thing specified.
- 5. A Chinese puzzle consisting of a square divided into seven pieces that must be arranged to match particular designs.
- 12. Piece of solid food for dipping in a liquid.
- 15. A unit of area (4840 square yards) used in English-speaking countries.
- 16. Any of a group of proteins found in saliva and pancreatic juice and parts of plants.
- 17. An accountant certified by the state.
- 18. Apathy demonstrated by an absence of emotional reactions.
- 19. Chinese fruit having a thin brittle shell enclosing a sweet jellylike pulp and a single seed.
- 20. A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
- 21. A program under which employees regularly accumulate shares and may ultimately assume control of the company.
- 22. The rate of moving (especially walking or running).
- 24. Judaism) A Jewish festival (traditionally 8 days) celebrating the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.
- 27. (British) Common sense.
- 29. A unit of information equal to 1024 bytes.
- 31. The back side of the neck.
- 32. Covered or protected with or as if with a case.
- 36. A human limb.
- 38. The month following July and preceding September.
- 40. Tropical American plants with basal rosettes of fibrous sword-shaped leaves and flowers in tall spikes.
- 41. Of or relating to Laos or its people.
- 44. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- 47. Very dark black.
- 48. Of or relating to the diaphragm.
- 49. Type genus of the Rutaceae.
- 51. A Kwa language spoken by the Yoruba people in southwestern Nigeria.
- 52. Make amendments to.
- 53. Marked with irregularly shaped spots or blots.
- 55. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
- 58. A Mid-Atlantic state.
- 59. Water frozen in the solid state.
- 60. Affixed or as if affixed with glue or paste.
- 63. The act of scanning.
- 66. Goods or money obtained illegally.
- 69. A region of central Europe rich in deposits of coal and iron ore.
- 72. An accidental happening.
- 75. An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
- 76. The compass point that is one point south of due west.
- 77. A derogatory term for a white person (said to have been used by North American Indians).
- 79. A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
- 80. How long something has existed.
- 81. White Southerner supporting Reconstruction policies after the Civil War usually for self-interest.
- 82. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- 1. An expression of open-mouthed astonishment.
- 2. United States newspaper publisher (1858-1935).

Sunday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a wonderful time to add to a collection or to sell part of a collection. A city library could be having an annual sale and this may give you the opportunity to purchase some old edition for your own private book collection. You draw a sense of security from your friends and social involvement this afternoon. Sharing some fun activity with your friends may put you at your most imaginative, at least when it comes to ideas and thoughts. You could be traveling a short distance to a craft or art show and this will certainly fill your day with good memories that last a lifetime. This is a day full of fun times and opportunities to build firm relationships. Nosy neighbors may give you some frustrating moments this evening—this is short-term—have patience.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Do not try to prove a point today—others hear what you have to say but may not immediately respond the way you want. Clear communication is important to you. You may find yourself listening carefully to what others have to say. Your timing should be perfect and those around you should find you ready for new adventures. Everything conspires to reveal you at your best, particularly in social situations. Emotional security and a sense of belonging and nurturing are the issues felt instinctively now. You want roots and you crave a sense of intimate connection. There is a chance to understand those around you and to have a special time with someone you love. General good feelings make this a happy time.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

A touch of financial genius can result in phenomenally successful investments. One way or another, changes in your financial status are in the offing—taxes, investments, debts or legacies play a part in this. Interaction with other people will be electric, exciting and unpredictable the rest of this year. Charisma is highlighted now—you develop a deeper understanding of many of life's mysteries and taboos. You may discover new facts about your family tree. There is talk of traditions and family. There are old diaries and photos for you to enjoy and organize into a family album. You have a clear vision into your own inner sense of values, how you appreciate and love. This is a good time to examine and think about what is most important to your future.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a good day to get things done, especially around your living area. You have a sense about balance and how to maintain balance in your life. You are successful in whatever task you choose. There may be some repair or yard work you will want to do before the winter begins. You may be close to finishing a remodeling job this weekend. This afternoon is a good time to enjoy the out-of-doors and perhaps, exercise a bit. Perhaps you and the young people in your family, or among your friends, will enjoy one or two of the following: horseback riding, fishing, target shooting, darts, etc. Your personal charisma is highlighted this evening and you and a loved one may enjoy relaxing in a local restaurant. You could be anticipating a child soon.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Obtaining and exchanging information takes on more meaning now. Being more involved with a meaningful group of people like close neighbors or family members satisfies a deep emotional need. Communicating feelings becomes more important now. A new cycle begins for you—signaling a strong interest in relationships, social connections and the arts—on a more intellectual level than in the past. A family debate helps to show off your problem-solving abilities. You are able to see both sides of an issue—the situation may call out for understanding and compromise. Marriage and other close relationships give rise to great expectations now, as a new cycle gets underway in your life. This is a time to enjoy and appreciate your ties to others.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Your imagination may mislead you to the point of motivating you in a wrong direction. Your realistic thinking could be obscured by some supposed spiritual or humanitarian ideal. Given time to think through some particular situation, you may feel you should reverse your path. This will be a time of introspection—you may find yourself eliminating some of the plans and projects yet uncompleted. Writing and making lists of projects and steps to complete a goal will bring about a good focus. List making could also eliminate false starts. This afternoon you may find yourself helping a young person. Whether this is with homework or just listening to them, you express your compassion and willingness to help.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Capital Cities of Europe

Find and circle all of the European capital cities that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.



- |                              |                             |                               |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| AMSTERDAM (Netherlands)      | EDINBURGH (Scotland)        | ROME (Italy)                  |
| ANDORRA LA VELLA (Andorra)   | HELSINKI (Finland)          | SAN MARINO (San Marino)       |
| ANKARA (Turkey)              | KIEV (Ukraine)              | SARAJEVO (Bosnia-Herzegovina) |
| ATHENS (Greece)              | LISBON (Portugal)           | SKOPJE (Macedonia)            |
| BAKU (Azerbaijan)            | LJUBLJANA (Slovenia)        | SOFIA (Bulgaria)              |
| BELFAST (Northern Ireland)   | LONDON (England)            | STOCKHOLM (Sweden)            |
| BELGRADE (Serbia/Montenegro) | LUXEMBOURG (Luxembourg)     | TALLINN (Estonia)             |
| BERLIN (Germany)             | MADRID (Spain)              | TBILISI (Georgia)             |
| BERN (Switzerland)           | MENSA (Belarus)             | TIRANE (Albania)              |
| BRATISLAVA (Slovakia)        | MONACO (Monaco)             | VADUZ (Liechtenstein)         |
| BRUSSELS (Belgium)           | MOSCOW (Russian Federation) | VALLIETTA (Malta)             |
| BUCHAREST (Romania)          | NEOSIA (Cyprus)             | VATICAN CITY (Vatican City)   |
| BUDAPEST (Hungary)           | OSLO (Norway)               | VIENNA (Austria)              |
| CARDIFF (Wales)              | PARIS (France)              | VILNIUS (Lithuania)           |
| CHISTINAU (Moldova)          | PRAGUE (Czech Republic)     | WARSAW (Poland)               |
| COPENHAGEN (Denmark)         | REYKJAVIK (Iceland)         | YEREVAN (Armenia)             |
| DUBLIN (Ireland)             | RIGA (Latvia)               | ZAGREB (Croatia)              |

Libra (September 23-October 22)



Secrets have a short half-life around you—you have them out in a wink of an eye. You are brilliant when it comes to insights into the mind—psychology and motivation. Your intensity is obvious and some may prefer to keep their distance rather than subject themselves to your laser eye. Nothing is passed over without being examined inside and outside. Someone may challenge your ideas or good taste. You always seem appreciative of others and can create a positive outcome to most any difficulty. This is, however, not the best time to shop, choose colors, etc. Charisma, self-transformation, the development of personal power—these things play a bigger role in your life now, more than ever before. Remember that tiny causes can lead to big effects.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Don't be surprised if you are not in top mental gear this day. You may feel more like sharing some time with your loved one, or with close friends. Perhaps this would be a good time to visit the zoo or involve yourself in some fall neighborhood activity where you can feel you are a part of a team or group. Close relationships will certainly take on more emotional depth now. It is possible that you are clinging to some recent happening in the past and need time to work through some feelings. Some honest soul-searching as well as being with those you love and who love you are the best actions to take at this time. There is an opportunity to understand and deepen a friendship this evening. General good feelings and a sense of harmony make this a happy time.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Playing sports boosts your confidence and you look for friends or a team to join today. This could also mean you call up a friend and play tennis or golf. The demand for your skills or talents intensifies and you become aware of new options for pastime pleasure. Your home environment and surroundings receive your attention this evening. A mate or close friend may complain that you do not spend enough time together. You are flattered and can find some time to plan or engage in the interactions required to deepen this relationship. You may teach your mate or friend to honor his or her individualism—perhaps both of you talk about goals each of you have for your own personal achievements. A young person will make you laugh this evening.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

This is not perhaps the best time to make important decisions that affect your living situation or life circumstances. Others may challenge your ideas or authority. This is a much better time to relax and plan for the busy days ahead. Divvy up the chores so that no one person has too many things to do before a special day and of course, do your own share. If you are going away for the winter, there will still be some arrangements to be made. You may be sought after for your guidance regarding travel and preparation considerations this afternoon. You will be able to handle most matters, especially if you have arranged your day so that you do not have a lot of stress. Some pleasant surprises this evening will be the reward for your choices during the day.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

What were normally clear ideas before today may become a bit fuzzy at this time—it may be hard to be logical. This may be a good time for list making. Seeing both sides of an issue and figuring out resolutions to opposing views are the things that take on the most importance in your life as well. You may get insights into your living situation or support system. There are new ideas about your past history and new approaches to established facts. You could receive unexpected help or support from those around you for whatever you want to accomplish. Making a good impression and putting your best foot forward take on greater importance this evening, particularly if you are trying to impress a loved one. Romance takes center stage tonight.

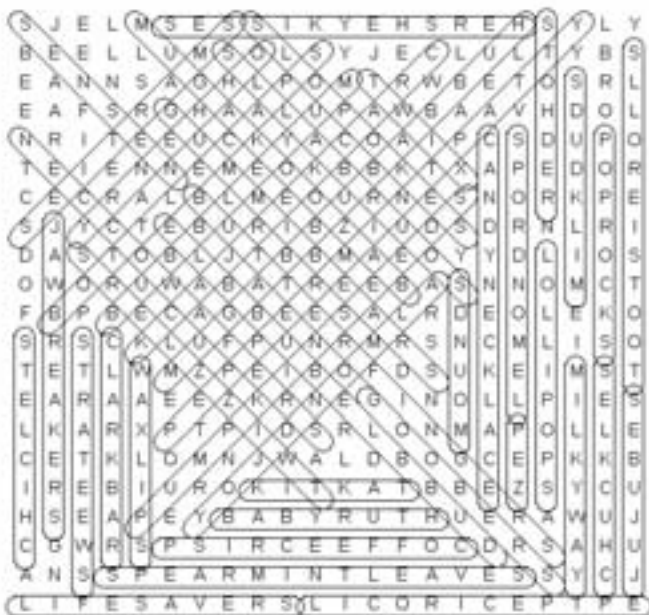


Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You decide to clean and work at polishing floors or some other work that takes high energy and you get much accomplished. It is time to really get down to the business of clearing away the things that no longer serve you. Now there is room for new and better projects. Health, food and physical condition come under scrutiny and you work to give this much attention. You make a big effort to pick out those fat-free foods that will help you feel better; careful, some of them are full of sugar that turns to fat. You can expect a little boost, some sort of extra support or recognition from those around you for whatever you choose to do this day. This evening there is an opportunity to relax with your loved ones. You may be the winner at a card game tonight.

Sunday's Solution

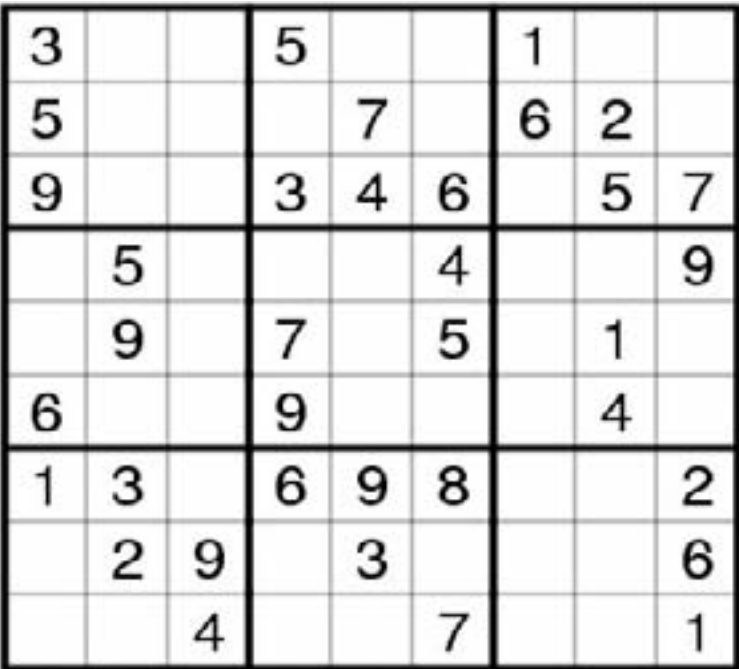
Candy



- |                |                 |                  |                  |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| ALMOND JOY     | CRACKER JACK    | LIFESAVERS       | RED HOTS         |
| BABY RUTH      | DUBBLE BUBBLE   | LOLLIPOPS        | SEN-SEN          |
| BAZOOKA GUM    | GOOBERS         | MILK DUOS        | SLO-POKES        |
| BOTTLECAPS     | GUMMI BEARS     | MILKY WAY        | SMARTIES         |
| BUBBLE YUM     | HERSHEY KISSES  | MOUNDS           | SOUP BALLS       |
| BUTTERFINGERS  | HUBBA BUBBA GUM | NECCO WAFERS     | SPEARMINT LEAVES |
| CANDY NECKLACE | JAW BREAKERS    | OH HENRY         | SWEETARTS        |
| CHOCLETS       | JUJUBES         | PEPPERMINT PATTY | TOOTSIE ROLLS    |
| CHUCKLES       | KIT KAT         | PEZ              | TYNEX            |
| CLARK BAR      | LEMON DROPS     | POP ROCKS        | TWIZZLERS        |
| COFFEE CRISP   | LEMON PIPE      | PUMPKIN SEEDS    | WAX LIPS         |

Hidden sentence: JELLY BELLY JELLY BEANS WERE A FAVORITE CANDY OF PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN

Daily SuDoku



Sunday's Solution





## Lifestyle | Features

## Frescoes and friendship: How a Syrian refugee bridges divides in Milan

He shows off some of Milan's most sumptuous frescoes to tourists, but Syrian Mohamed Hamadi also does more than that—he reaches out to visitors across the cultural divide in a troubled era. Born 69 years ago in Homs, a city now devastated by the conflict in Syria, the bespectacled Muslim guide charms those in the Italian city by drawing on his memories of the religious tolerance taught in his youth.

Those dropping in to admire 16th-century frescoes at the San Maurizio church, dubbed “Milan's Sistine Chapel”, may not be expecting their lessons on Renaissance art to be accompanied by moral musings. Describing his education, Hamadi tells AFP: “The students were Muslims, Christians... we didn't pay any attention to all that.

“Once a week at school there was a lesson on Christian faith, and another on Muslim faith. The Muslim pupils went along to listen, and vice versa,” he says. “Diversity was a richness for the country,” adds the guide, who has made his home in a continent where populism is on the rise and the far-right are making political gains follow-

ing the arrival of hundreds of thousands of migrants.

Hamadi fled Syria in his twenties. A member of the Arab Socialist Party and opposed to the ruling powers at the time, he had already been imprisoned twice, and tortured. He travelled first to Beirut, where he studied law, then on to Kuwait, Spain and finally Italy, working each time in the import-export business. He married a Milanese woman and says he feels first and foremost “a citizen of the world”.

## ‘Open minds’

After Hamadi's wife died and he retired, he dedicated his time to helping Syrian asylum-seekers fleeing the war back home,

who would arrive exhausted and disoriented in Milan, hoping to travel on to Britain or Germany. Two years ago, he joined the Touring Club of Italy, becoming one of around 2,000 volunteers—including 800

alone in Milan—who volunteer at sites such as museums and churches that would remain otherwise closed to the public.

At the San Maurizio, he tells visitors the history of the Benedictine Convent, and explains which religious scenes are depicted in the frescoes, from Noah's Ark to the Last Supper. Visitors are sometimes surprised their guide is Muslim—a reaction he counters with a quick word on religious history.

“The Koran, the Bible, the Torah... they are all linked,” he says, recalling that key

“Diversity was a richness for the country”

## Different strokes: Taiwan's campaign for traditional characters



This picture taken on October 20, 2017 shows Wang Man-lin (L) and her counterpart Wang Chieh-ying displaying Chinese characters during an exhibition in Taipei. — AFP photos

As a growing number of people around the world learn simplified Chinese instead of the more complicated traditional characters, young creatives in Taiwan are fighting to promote what they fear will become a dying art. Introduced by the Chinese Communist Party in the 1950s to boost literacy, the simplified version of the script uses fewer strokes and is now the predominant writing system in the mainland.

Foreigners learning Chinese also tend to be taught the simplified characters, used in official documents by international organizations including the United Nations. Even in Taiwan, where most people still use traditional characters, there is a growing tendency to opt for the more convenient simplified script. And with an increasing number of the island's young people pursuing higher education and careers on the mainland, the influence of the simplified system is expanding.

Creators of a new Taiwanese app game called “Zihun” hope to help stem the tide. Players assume the identities of literary figures from ancient China and compete on speed and accuracy in writing traditional characters. From filling in the blanks to “word solitaire”—using the last word of a phrase to create a new one—or matching simplified characters with their traditional version, players write the answers on their smartphone screens with their fingers or touch pens.

“We see Taiwan as the sole place to pass on traditional Chinese characters,” says Kevin Ruan, chief executive of tech firm Whale Party, which developed the app with Soochow University. “We hope the app reflects the cultural implications of the script.” Predictive and voice activated messaging on smartphones is one of the reasons traditional characters are under threat, he adds, but says the initial reaction to the app has been encouraging — over 5,000 people have downloaded a trial version ahead of the official launch in December.

## Ancient meaning

Traditional Chinese script is a mixture of pictograph characters that represent objects, and ideographs that depict ideas or concepts. Different or the same characters can form a compound word—the word “forest” consists of three “wood” characters, for example. There are rules to the formation of most characters but learning to write them depends heavily on memorization. Critics say the simplified characters lose some of the meaning of the traditional versions.

One commonly cited example is the character “love”, which contains the word “heart” in the traditional form but not in the simplified version. “Traditional characters have allusions and meanings behind them and they reflect the imagination of ancient people. It's a big loss that such elements are taken out,” said Jung Jeng-dau, head of the Chinese-language department at Soochow University in Taipei. The use of simplified or traditional Chinese has also become politically



Steve Tsai, an APP designer of Zihun, introducing his APP during an interview.



A boy stamps a Chinese character during an exhibition in Taipei.

loaded in recent years.

In semi-autonomous Hong Kong, where traditional characters still dominate, some see the promotion of the simplified version as symbolic of an assertive China as it tightens its grip on the city.

There are similar sentiments in Taiwan, which China still sees as part of its territory to be brought back into the fold.

## Easy learning

But for many, the bottom line is pragmatism. Young Taiwanese design duo Wang Man-lin and Wang Chieh-ying hope their latest invention will make traditional characters easier to learn and fun to use. Their craft business “lai zi na li,” which translates as “where is the origin of words?” promotes the complex script and a new set of six stamps, embossed with lines and strokes, can together create all traditional Chinese words. Many customers are Chinese-language teachers or handicraft fans who like using the stamps to write greeting cards or postcards, Wang Man-lin explained.

“Traditional Chinese is considered the most beautiful writing system in the world,” she told AFP. “We want to offer another way to learn it because writing traditional characters by hand is really difficult for non-native people.” The stamp set has been available for online pre-ordering since September and sales are more than 10 times their original estimate, at over Tw\$2 million (\$66,500), said Wang, including orders from China, Malaysia and Canada. — AFP



Syrian born Mohamed Hamadi poses in the church of San Maurizio al Monastero Maggiore, on Nov 15, 2017 in central Milan. — AFP

figures like Adam and Eve, Noah, Moses and Abraham feature in all three tomes, though the details may differ. “Syria has been a land that has hosted many cultures, with occupations by the Phoenicians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Ottomans and even the French,” he says.

Hamadi, who speaks four languages —

Arabic, English, French and Italian says he sees his chats with visitors as a way to “open people's minds”. The man who has worked as city councilor in the past has simple advice on tackling the thorny issue of “integration”. People should “live, talk, eat together, but that does not mean they should forget their roots”, he says. — AFP

## PIXAR'S ‘COCO’ FEASTS ON ‘JUSTICE LEAGUE’ AT BOX OFFICE

Pixar's “Coco” sang its way to the fourth best Thanksgiving weekend ever with an estimated \$71.2 million over the five-day weekend, a total that easily toppled Warner Bros.' “Justice League.” “Coco” rode strong reviews and an A-plus CinemaScore from audiences to the top spot at the domestic box office. According to studio estimates Sunday, it grossed \$49 million from Friday to Sunday. Centered on the Mexican holiday Dia de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead), “Coco” has already set box office records in Mexico, where it has made \$53.4 million in three weeks.

After a disappointing debut last weekend, the much-maligned DC Comics superhero team-up film “Justice League” slid to second with \$40.7 million. In the five-day holiday frame, it earned about \$60 million. “Justice League” is faring better overseas, where it has made more than \$300 million. The two top spots told a familiar tale: Quality is trumping mediocrity at the box office, where Rotten Tomato ratings bear considerable weight and where word-of-mouth spreads lightning quick. “Coco” is Pixar's sixth release to land an A-plus CinemaScore from audiences. The film's Rotten Tomatoes rating, 96 percent fresh, is more than double that of “Justice League” (41 percent).

“In a world where moviegoing and quality seem to be connected, having a brand that has as consistently as Pixar has delivered on very high expectations definitely makes our work a little easier,” said Dave Hollis, distribution chief for the Walt Disney Co., which owns Pixar. “Consumers have really come to expect high quality. This is once again Pixar doing what they do best.” The success of “Coco” came just as reports of sexual misconduct were published regarding Pixar co-founder and Disney Animation Chief Creative Officer John Lasseter. On Tuesday, Lasseter announced that he was taking “a six-month sabbatical.” He acknowledged “missteps” and “unwanted hugs” with employees. Disney has said it supports Lasseter's leave of absence.

Lasseter has been foundational to the rise of Pixar and the revitalization of Disney Animation. “Coco” is the latest in a long line of hits he's overseen. After some early blunders (Disney tried to trademark “Dia de Los Muertos,” sparking a backlash), the studio strove to capture Mexican culture authentically in “Coco,” enlisting cultural consultants for their feedback. The film, directed by Lee Unkrich and co-directed by Adrian Molina, is one of the

largest US productions ever to feature a largely all-Latino cast.

## High Latino turnout

That makes “Coco” an anomaly in the Pixar canon but also in Hollywood. Hispanics made up 23 percent of frequent moviegoers last year, but they're seldom catered to. Disney didn't share ethnic demographics for “Coco” ticket buyers but said signs pointed to a high turnout among Latinos. But “Coco” also performed well elsewhere, like in China where it made \$18.2 million. “Telling great stories that represent the audience is a part of what makes a film successful, especially when you get it right,” said Hollis. Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for comScore, called the film's result a positive story in “a week that was pretty challenging for Pixar.” “The future may lie in content like this, where you're telling stories about real human beings and about diversity,” said Dergarabedian. “The Hispanic audience is key to the success of any given box office year, given the frequency and passion for moviegoing.”

Still, the most profitable movie currently at the box office might be the Lionsgate family release “Wonder,” directed by Stephen Chbosky. Starring Jacob Tremblay and Julia Roberts, the film — which carries a production budget of \$20 million — has made \$69.4 million. It slid just 19 percent in its second week, with \$22.3 million in ticket sales.

A number of specialty releases with Oscar ambitions also hit theaters over the weekend. Of them, Sony Pictures Classics' “Call Me By Your Name” came out with the best per-screen average: \$101,219 in four theaters. Not since “La La Land” has a film so packed theaters in specialty release. The movie, starring Timothee Chalamet and Armie Hammer, is about a young man's coming of age in 1980s Northern Italy. “Darkest Hour,” with Gary Oldman as Winston Churchill, debuted with \$176,000 on four screens. The expanding releases of Greta Gerwig's “Lady Bird” (\$4 million on 791 screens) and Martin McDonough's “Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri” (\$4.4 million on 614 screens) also drew crowded theaters. Less successful was the national rollout of “Roman J. Israel, Esq.” with Denzel Washington. Though it bested the other releases with \$4.5 million on 1,665 screens, it's an atypical downturn for one of the movies' most consistently bankable stars. Not since Washington's 2002 directorial debut, “Antwone Fisher,” has a film starring Washington performed as weakly nationwide. — AP



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Ezra Miller, from left, Ben Affleck and Gal Gadot in a scene from “Justice League.” — AP

## Picasso's etchings sell for 1.9m euros

A series of 100 etchings by Picasso, which depict his personal and political turmoil in the 1930s, has sold for 1.9 million euros (\$2.2 million) in Paris, auctioneers said. The Spanish-born artist took seven years to complete the prints called the “Vollard Suite”, which deal with his erotic obsessions and marital strife as well as the gathering storm clouds of war over Europe.

The hammer came down on the prints late Sunday as part of a weekend of sales in the French capital from the collection of art dealer Henri Petiet. Some 622 lots were sold for 3.3 million euros, which the auction house Ader Nordmann called an “enormous success”. It said the Picasso series was bought by an unnamed American collector.

Civil war erupted in Picasso's homeland as he was working on the series, leaving his alter ego in the drawings—the minotaur—lost and blind by the end. Picasso's technique also developed greatly over the years from his relatively simple early prints of his volup-

tuous mistress Marie-Therese Walter in the arms of a bearded sculptor, to the darker later pictures where she leads a blind, impotent minotaur by night.

The final three prints are portraits of the French art dealer Ambroise Vollard, who commissioned the series in 1930, giving Picasso paintings by Renoir and Cezanne in exchange. With no telephone or online bidding allowed for the Paris sale, “there was an unbelievable atmosphere in the room,” auctioneer David Nordmann said, which led to the “exceptional result”. Only a handful of galleries have a complete collection of the drawings: the Picasso Museum in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the National Gallery in Washington and the British Museum, which acquired its set for one million pounds (1.1 million euros) in 2011. Among the other stellar works in the sale were Renoir's lithography “Pinning the hat”, which went for 43,000 euros—double its estimation—as did Toulouse-Lautrec's “The jockey”, which sold for 40,000 euros. — AFP



## Cameron thinks it's 'silly' people still question why Jack died



The 63-year-old filmmaker insists he made an “artistic choice” to have Leonardo DiCaprio’s character perish in the icy waters while Kate Winslet’s Rose DeWitt Bukater stayed safe on a floating wooden door at the end of the movie, so can’t understand why there are still fans insisting they both could have survived. However, the director finds the outrage flattering because it shows how well-loved the character was. He told America’s Vanity Fair magazine: “The answer is very simple because it says on page 147 [of the script] that Jack dies. Very simple. “Obviously it was an artistic choice, the thing was just big enough to hold her, and not big enough to hold him ... I think it’s all kind of silly, really, that we’re having this discussion 20 years later. “But it does show that the film was effective in making Jack so endearing to the audience that it hurts them to see him die. Had he lived, the ending of the film would have been meaningless ... “The film is about death and separation: he had to die. So whether it was that, or whether a smoke stack fell on him, he was going down. It’s called art, things happen for artistic reasons, not for physics reasons.” And the director admitted he is such a “stickler for physics” that he spent days in the water ensuring the door was “exactly” buoyant enough to support a person’s weight for a long period of time without them getting immersed in the water at all. He added: “I was in the water with the piece of wood putting people on it for about two days getting it exactly buoyant enough so that it would support one person with full free-board, meaning that she wasn’t immersed at all in the 28 degree water so that she could survive the three hours it took until the rescue ship got there. “[Jack] didn’t know that she was gonna get picked up by a lifeboat an hour later; he was dead anyway. And we very, very finely tuned it to be exactly what you see in the movie because I believed at the time, and still do, that that’s what it would have taken for one person to survive.”

## Ora didn't know exhaustion was a 'real thing'

The 27-year-old singer realised she needed to “chill” after being admitted for medical treatment and placed on an IV drip in June 2016 after pushing herself too hard and admitted she had no idea it could be such a serious problem. She told the Daily Star newspaper: “I didn’t know you could be that exhausted until it happens to you, but it’s a real thing. “I was genuinely that exhausted that I ended up in a hospital bed. “I was just like, ‘OK, I think I need to chill.’” At the time, the ‘Anywhere’ hitmaker had shared a picture of herself in hospital connected to the drip and revealed she’d had a “tough” day. She wrote on Twitter at the time: “Today was pretty tough but I’m getting through it. Thank you to all of you for the support! I love you! #exhaustionisreal.” Meanwhile, health-conscious Rita - who is believed to be dating Rolling Stones guitarist Ronnie Wood’s son Tyrone Wood - recently revealed she has frozen her eggs to protect her chances of having a family in the future on the advice of her doctor. She recently explained: “I thought about this when I was in my early 20s, about kids. Maybe that is me being a hypochondriac, but I have always wanted a big family and my doctor asked me, ‘I think you should freeze your eggs when I was in my early 20s’, that is what he said to me ... “He has been my family doctor for a long time and he said you are healthy is now and it would be great, why not put them away and then you never have to worry about it again?”



## Heidi Klum admits her guilty pleasure is sunbathing



The 44-year-old model loves getting the chance to sit out in the sun with no clothes on, but only if she finds a secluded spot where no one can see her. Asked her guilty pleasure by Event magazine, she replied: “Sunbathing naked. If there’s a place on a private island or a beach where there aren’t any people, I like to go skinny-dipping or sunbathe nude.” But the ‘Project Runway’ star - who has children Leni, 13, Henry, 11, Johan, 10, and seven-year-old Lou - with ex-husband Seal - has to face her fears first in order to travel to a sunny destination because she has a phobia of flying. She said: “I’m scared of flying. On the plane I am always bursting into tears, pressing the call button and asking a stewardess to sit next to me, or if there’s no seat there I’ll ask if I can go and sit with them in the kitchen area.” Her confession came after the ‘America’s Got Talent’ judge recently shared a snap on Instagram of herself indulging in her passion of nude sunbathing, captioned: “California dreaming.” Heidi has previously described herself as a “nudist” and declared she plans to continue sunbath topless even when she is 60.



## Kim launching more KKW Beauty cosmetic items

The 37-year-old television personality launched her eponymous make-up brand earlier this year, which saw her release contouring products and nude lipsticks, as well as trio of fragrances, and it is believed the raven-haired star is expanding her line to include highlighters, and more glitter lip glosses. This news comes after make-up artist Huda Kattan shared an image of a box filled with five bottles of a shimmery product in copper, bronze, rose gold, gold and silver shades, as well as five tubes of matching metallic shades with the KKW Beauty logo emblazoned on each product, on her Instagram account. She captioned the post: “OMG literally dying over these!!! Thank you @kimkardashian & @kkwbeauty for sending this to me first the colors are UNREAL! Creating looks all week with these pigments, dying over the loose pigments (sic).” However, the ‘Keeping Up with the Kardashians’ star has remained tight lipped about her future projects, and has yet to confirm or share any details about the potential line. Kim has had a busy few months following the success of her fragrance range, which saw her KKW Fragrances Crystal Gardenia, Crystal Gardenia Citrus and Crystal Gardenia sell out in six days, as she has since been work with the factory to create even more scents.

## Nicole Richie almost set her father on fire



The 36-year-old fashion designer tried to cupping treatment - when alcohol is poured into a cup and are heated before they are applied to the skin and create a vacuum to relieve any tension in the muscles in that area - on her famous dad but it could have gone horribly wrong as she got a “little too close” to burning his skin. Speaking to You magazine about the near miss, she said: “I just got a little too close to his back for a hot second.” And the ‘Great News’ star admitted she often plays pranks on her 68-year-old dad. She said: “I love to play pranks on him all the time.” Though the ‘Hello’ singer and his ex-wife Brenda Harvey - who took Nicole in when she was three and legally adopted her at nine - were not “strict” parents, her dad’s few rules motivated the ‘Candidly Nicole’ star to work hard to earn her own money. She explained: “[They] definitely weren’t strict: I don’t think I had a bedtime. “I remember my father saying to me all the time, ‘Do this or we are taking away your car’. “So in my mind, I was like, ‘I can’t wait to not ask my dad for anything and earn my own money.’ “What drives me now is that I love getting up in the morning, I love to create, and that’s what you should be doing, exercising your brain.” Lionel has not only encouraged Nicole - who has Harlow, nine, and eight-year-old Sparrow with her husband Joel Madden - to be self-sufficient, but also to be “kind”. She said: “My dad is extremely kind, that’s who he is. He is so friendly and he leaves a lasting impression on people. “Walking through the airport, I cannot tell you how many times [airport] staff have said to me, ‘Your dad was here and he’s so nice’ and you can see by the look on their faces that he made them feel good. “I’ve learnt from him to be kind, not just so that people can say you are kind - but really kind. If you can float around the world in life and make people feel good, that’s really cool.”

## Halle Berry and boyfriend enjoy romantic getaway

The 51-year-old actress - who has nine-year-old daughter Nahla with her ex-boyfriend Gabriel Aubry and son Maceo, three, with her former spouse Olivier Martinez - used her trip to the South Pacific island with the British music producer to escape the “bulls\*\*t” of everyday life. Alongside a picture of Halle, which was presumably taken by Alex, sunning herself on decking by the tropical blue sea, she captioned the post: “What I call distancing myself from the bulls\*\*t! (sic)” Alex also shared several videos from their vacation on his Instagram Story, showing the pair going jet-skiing, sunbathing and enjoying local entertainment. The pair also watched the sunset go down and enjoyed dinner by Christmas tree light. The brunette beauty also shared a picture of the mountains from her sunbed. Alongside the stunning photograph, she wrote: “Mornings are amazing... (sic)” Halle and Alex have been sharing pictures from their time together on the app, ever since they made their relationship Instagram official in September. The ‘Kidnap’ star and her beau were said to have been dating a “few months” before going public with their romance, and showed things were getting serious by posting a loved up picture of them embracing on the social media site. At the time, Halle simply captioned the post: “My balance.” The 35-year-old hunk also shared the picture on his account with the same words. He wrote: “My.....balance... (sic)” Commenting on how long the couple have been seeing one another, a source said: “They have been seeing each other for about two months and met through friends in the industry.”



## Teigen shocked by how 'big' she has become



The 31-year-old model - who revealed earlier this month she and husband John Legend are to be parents again - thinks she's gained far more weight than she did when expecting her daughter Luna, 19 months, and wants her fans to be honest as to whether or not it's “normal” to have a larger bump the second time around. Chrissy asked: “Can someone just be honest with me and tell me if it’s normal to get bigger, faster with second baby? because I am getting big, fast, and everyone’s go-to is ‘It’s that second baby!’ but they’re lying. I know it. I can handle the truth just tell me. It’s not normal is it (sic)” The star has had almost 3000 replies to her Tweet from followers, reassuring her she has nothing to worry about. Medical advice states that women undergoing their second pregnancy will often find they grow bigger more quickly. This is because the muscles in the womb and stomach have already been stretched by the first baby bump. The ‘Lip Sync Battle’ star announced the family’s happy news in a sweet video posted on Instagram last week. The clip showed Chrissy pointing at her stomach and asking her daughter: “Luna, what’s in here?” to which the little girl replies, “Baby!” Chrissy had previously revealed she would love to be “pregnant for the rest of her life”. She gushed: “I feel good, I feel good, we’re still trying ... I’m going for I mean hopefully in the next few years because for me I really want to just knock ‘em out. That’s my dream, I want to just be pregnant kind of for the rest of my life. Not for the rest of my life, but the rest of my fertile life. So we’ll see ...” — Bangshowbiz



Lifestyle | Gossip

# Morgan was ‘traumatised’ on a private jet



The 52-year-old presenter judged ‘America’s Got Talent’ alongside Sharon, 65, from 2007 to 2011 and he has now lifted the lid on the “worst experience” he had whilst working with her. Revealing the mid-air incident on UK TV show ‘Loose Women’ yesterday (27.11.17), on which Sharon was also a guest, Piers joked: “Perhaps the worst experience ... I’m still traumatized by this. I was on a private jet from Chicago to LA with all the stars of the show. Sharon has hit the red wine, and I go to sleep. But I was woken up at 2am with a sort of kerfuffle. I look up and all I can see is this blur in front of me and I realise it is Sharon’s br\*\*\*t and I’m being filmed. I’ve never felt so traumatized.” Journalist Piers also revealed the first time he and Sharon met she throttled him and began to “strangle” him to death. He said: “I get a call saying ‘look we’ve had a change of judges, Sharon Osbourne is joining the

show.’ I thought ‘oh that could be awkward’ as I’d written some not entirely complimentary things about Sharon. Anyway we meet for a dinner with NBC and all their executives, Jerry Springer, who was going to be the new host, which was just as well given what happened. Anyway dinner went OK, Ozzy [Osbourne] was there and we were getting on quite well, then I said something a little bit confrontational and then Sharon responded. Sharon had run up behind me ... all the top executives were there. She runs up behind me and begins to strangle me to death. It wasn’t funny. She was literally throttling me. Ozzy was trying to pull her off. Eventually Jerry Springer had to literally pull her off me. I got back to my hotel room and take a sleeping pill to try and get over the whole thing.” Piers later received a phone call from Ozzy who forced his wife to apologize to him.

## Keith Urban spends \$52 million on New York mansion

The 50-year-old country singer has splurged the huge sum on the plush seven-bedroom property, which was once home to Michael Jackson, to enable his 50-year-old significant other to pursue her dream of acting on stage in Broadway. An insider said: “Nicole is keen to do Broadway shows and get into making TV programs and New York is a much better place for them to be than Nashville.” The couple - who have been married for 11 years - are also thought to be relocating from Nashville to New York because to give their daughters Sunday, nine, and six-year-old Faith, an even better education. A friend added to Woman’s Day magazine: “It has some of the top schools in the country and they think their girls would really benefit from moving to the Big Apple now they’re getting a bit older.” The Upper East

Side abode has eight bathrooms and a grand oak staircase which could be an ideal backdrop for family selfie-taking. What’s more, there is a private outdoor area and Keith might have been particularly taken in by the huge kitchen after recently admitting he loves big Thanksgiving meals. He said: “The first Thanksgiving I ever had here, which was 25 years ago, because I’ve been here a long time now. But the first one I ever had, I remember going to this family’s home, they invited me to Thanksgiving, and I couldn’t believe the volume of food. It was insane. I’ve never seen so much food in my life. “Then after the food, there was like 12 desserts. I was like, ‘Why are there so many desserts?’” They said, ‘Well, because every Aunt and every Grandma, everybody brought their thing, their special dessert, and you have to try every one of ‘em.’



## SCOTT DISICK TAKES SON ON A JET-SETTING BOYS TRIP

The ‘Keeping Up With The Kardashians’ star shared photographs on Instagram of himself and his seven-year-old son standing in front of the British Airways Concorde jet at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum in New York on Friday. Scott captioned the picture: “Take off.” Later he posted a photo of himself and Mason standing in front of a luxury helicopter in Miami, captioned: “We got the moves.” The father and son were also spotted walking on the beach together on Sunday, according to E! Online. Scott’s other two children with ex Kourtney Kardashian - Penelope, five, and Reign, two - remained in California with their mother. But just before he left on his trip Scott posted an adorable video on Instagram of him enjoying time with his daughters and sharing a friendly embrace with Kourtney. Scott, 34, is now dating fellow model Sofia Richie, 19, who also spent the holiday back in Los Angeles. She was spotted buying a take away meal by herself on Thanksgiving Day. A source recently said Sofia, daughter of

singer Lionel Richie, has been a great influence on Scott since they began dating a few months ago. The insider said: “She’s been great for him. She’s made a big impact on his life and hasn’t parted at all since they met. They’ve been travelling together to Mexico, New York and Venice and just hanging out. His friends adore her and nobody notices the age difference. She is very mature, she grew up in Hollywood and has always been in older situations. They seem really happy.” — Bangshowbiz

## Sharon Osbourne insists her marriage to Ozzy is ‘for life’

The 65-year-old TV personality married the Black Sabbath rock star back in 1982 and the couple have endured their fair share of trials and tribulations, with their union being most recently rocked in May 2016 when they split following the revelation that Ozzy had been having an affair with celebrity hairstylist Michelle Pugh. The pair later reconciled after Ozzy, 68,



sought help for sex addiction and his substance abuse problems and Sharon insists their relationship is forever because she knows she’s married to someone she loves “more than anybody else”. Speaking on ‘Loose Women’ yesterday, ‘The X Factor’ judge said: “No matter what, I know that I know that I married someone I love more than anybody else in the world and he was for me and I for him. For me it’s for life. I know for people now it’s not the same. I feel badly when I see

couple’s split.” Sharon also used her appearance as a guest panelist on the UK daytime chat show to recall how the ‘Bark at the Moon’ rocker proposed to her. ‘The Talk’ star said: “He went to H. Samuel and he got me a wedding band instead of an engagement ring, he didn’t know, he asked my father for permission and came back to my house and got on one knee.” Ozzy recently admitted he was a “f\*\*\*ing idiot” to cheat on his wife when asked what the secret to their long-lasting marriage is. The singer - who has kids Aimee, 34, Kelly, 33, and Jack, 32 with Sharon.

## Mars wins five prizes at 2017 Soul Train Awards



The ‘Chunky’ singer took home Album of the Year, Video of the Year and Best Dance Performance for ‘24K Magic’, as well as, Best R&B/Soul Male Artist and Song of the Year for ‘That’s What I Like’ at the ceremony held at the Orleans Arena in Las Vegas on Sunday. Sharing his excitement on Twitter, Bruno wrote: “ITS 2AM & IM SINGING AT THE TOP OF MY LUNGS IN MY HOTEL ROOM! THANK U @SoulTrain WIN OR LOSE U CONTINUE TO BRING ME NOTHIN BUT JOY! (sic)” The 23-year-old star was appreciative of his award for Best Video for ‘24K Magic’ because of the effort that was spent on it. He said: “God bless you @SoulTrain !! We worked really hard on this video so this means a lot to me. Sending my love from South America. THANK YOU (sic)” The awards show, which was aired on BET, cele-

brates the outstanding achievements of artists of soul, R&B, gospel, jazz and hip-hop music. Other winners on the night included ‘Un-Break My Heart’ hitmaker Toni Braxton, who was this year’s recipient of the prestigious Don Cornelius Legend Award for her outstanding contribution to R&B. Whilst ‘Love Galore’ hitmaker SZA took home two accolades, for Best New Artist and Best R&B/Soul Female Artist?. Solange Knowles was expected to sweep the board on the night with seven nominations, but only took home, very special gong, the Ashford and Simpson Songwriter’s Award for ‘Cranes In The Sky’ from 2016’s critically-acclaimed ‘A Seat at the Table’. DJ Khaled, Rihanna and Bryson Tiller were received Best Collaboration for ‘Wild Thoughts’ and rising rapper Cardi B’s ‘Bodak Yellow’ nabbed the Rhythm & Bars Award.

## Gwyneth Paltrow enjoys brunch with her fiancé

The 45-year-old actress took to her Instagram account to share a picture of the pair looking happy with broad smiles on their faces while sitting side-by-side at a table, and joked she was having the meal with her “modern family”. She wrote: “Sunday brunch #modernfamily (sic)” Gwyneth and Brad are said to have got engaged earlier this month after dating for three years since she and Chris - who she has kids, Apple, 13, and 11-year-old Moses, with - went their separate ways in 2014. A source recently said: “They both knew it would happen, but it wasn’t a big thing to them because they were both in long marriages before. There wasn’t a rush.” The ‘Iron

Man’ actress recently admitted she has messed up in “so many relationships”, and doesn’t believe anyone is a “successful person” unless they have a “quality” romance. She said: “I’ve f\*\*\*ed up so many relationships. I’m actually a pretty good friend, and a good sister and daughter and mother, but I’m at my potentially most vulnerable and f\*\*\*ed up in the romantic slice of the pie.” “It’s taken me a lot of work to get to the place where I have a good romantic relationship ... I think without relationships of quality, you are not a successful person. So, if you don’t have a good relationship with your partner, your children, your best friends, then it’s really hard to claim success.”



## Kris Jenner has compares daughters’ to a broken tap

The matriarch and manager of the famous family gives an emotional speech in the ‘Keeping Up With The Kardashians’ holiday special, in which she gives thanks for all her grandchildren. Kris tells her family tearfully: “I used to pray that one of you guys would have a baby and now it’s like a faucet that we turned on and won’t turn off. The fact that I have all these grandchildren, it’s been the most amazing journey to watch your kids because it’s truly the meaning of just life.” Kris, 62, is already grandmother to her daughter Kourtney Kardashian’s three kids with ex-partner Scott Disick, Mason, seven, Penelope, five, and two-year-old Reign, her son Rob’s 12-month-old daughter Dream, who he has with former fiancée Blac Chyna, and Kim Kardashian West and Kanye West’s two kids, North, four, and Saint, 23 months. Kim and Kanye are expecting their third child via a surrogate,

while Kylie Jenner and Khloe Kardashian are both reported to be pregnant. But the reports remain unconfirmed. In the scene from ‘A Very Kardashian Holiday’, which is about to air in the US, the family have a big dinner where they all share what they are thankful for. Kim said: “I don’t know if I’m thankful for the calm before the storm next year with the new baby, and I’m thankful that we have family here.” Khloe added: “I think I’m thankful for having so many generations here. It’s so cool.” And Kylie revealed: “I’m thankful for my mom because I don’t know what I would do without you. You’re like my favorite person on the planet. You really are. I hold you in high regards.” The ‘Keeping Up With The Kardashians’ stars have stayed tight-lipped on the subject of Kylie and Khloe’s rumoured pregnancies and 37-year-old Kim recently opted to down a sardine smoothie rather than confirm the news.



Lifestyle | Features



Town Crier Tony Appleton holds a scroll outside Green Park in central London near Buckingham Palace after it was announced that Prince Harry and Meghan Markle to be engaged. — AP/AFP photos



Britain's Prince Harry and his fiancée US actress Meghan Markle pose for a photograph in the Sunken Garden at Kensington Palace following the announcement.



This file photo taken on September 25, 2017 shows Britain's Prince Harry (R) and Meghan Markle (L) attend a Wheelchair Tennis match during the Invictus Games 2017 at Nathan Philips Square on September 25, 2017 in Toronto, Canada.

# When Harry met Meghan: Prince Harry, Meghan Markle engaged, to wed next year

Prince Harry, fifth in line to the British throne, will marry American actress Meghan Markle in the spring, palace officials announced yesterday, confirming months of speculation. Markle, a humanitarian campaigner and lifestyle blogger who succeeded in show business before falling for Harry, will become a senior member of the royal family as the wife of one of the monarchy's most popular figures.

Harry, a bad-boy-made-good by his tireless devotion to wounded veterans and his embrace of a variety of charitable causes, has said for several years that he wants to start a family, and the rumors of his engagement to Markle have been flying for some time. The marriage represents a first-ever blending of Hollywood glamour with the once-stuffy royal family, which has of late seemed less fixed in its ways, and brings a mixed-race American divorcee into a highly visible role. Harry's brother, Prince William, and his pregnant wife Kate welcomed Markle to the royal family.

"We are very excited for Harry and Meghan," they said in a statement. "It has been wonderful getting to know Meghan and to see

how happy she and Harry are together." Harry's father, Prince Charles, told reporters he was "thrilled" with the engagement. "They'll be very happy indeed," he said. The engagement announcement says the couple became engaged in London earlier this month and that Harry has informed his grandmother, Queen Elizabeth II. It says he sought and received the permission of Markle's parents.

**Speculation ends**

The couple plan to live in Nottingham Cottage at Kensington Palace. Markle is also reported to have started the sometimes time-consuming process of moving her dogs from Canada to Britain. She recently left her television show, a development that helped fueled engagement speculation. Congratulations also came in from the queen and her husband, Prince Philip, and from Prime Minister Theresa May. Markle's parents also welcomed the news.

Thomas Markle and Doria Ragland said their daughter Meghan "has always been a kind and loving person. To see her union with Harry, who shares the same qualities, is a source of great joy for us as parents." Markle was raised

in the Los Angeles area. Her father is a Hollywood lighting director, her mother a yoga instructor and psychotherapist. In some ways, Markle - a mixed-race American raised in California, an outspoken full-time actress, and a divorcee - makes a surprising addition to Britain's monarchy.

But the institution has moved on with the times, and the romance between Markle and Harry - who has repeatedly stressed his wish to lead as "normal" a life as he could - has a decidedly unstuffy, modern feel to it. The announcement means another grand royal wedding may be in the offing - the first since William and Kate married in 2011 - though it is possible the couple may choose to have a private ceremony, perhaps in a remote location far from the paparazzi who bedeviled Harry's mother, Princess Diana.

**'Happy and in love'**

Markle, best known for her role as an ambitious paralegal in the hit US legal drama "Suits," surprised many when she shared her feelings for Harry in a September cover story for Vanity Fair. Asked about the media frenzy surrounding



This file photo taken on December 12, 2012 shows Britain's Prince Harry wearing his monocular gun sight as he sits in the front seat of his Apache Helicopter at the British controlled flight-line at Camp Bastion in Afghanistan's Helmand Province.

public with his winning smile, his military career and his devotion to charities aimed at helping disabled veterans and other causes.

The 33-year-old prince recently won praise with his work campaigning for more openness about mental health issues. Speaking candidly about his personal struggle to cope with the loss of his mother when he was only 12, he encouraged others to talk about their own problems rather than keeping them bottled up inside. Markle's Vanity Fair interview broke new ground. It is unusual for a royal love interest to speak so publicly, and candidly, before becoming engaged.

Harry's past reported girlfriends all shied away from the media limelight, and his sister-in-law, formerly known as Kate Middleton, stayed silent until she and Prince William gave a formal televised interview at Buckingham Palace after their engagement became public. It won't be the first time that a British royal has married an American, or a divorcee. In 1936, Edward VIII famously abdicated after he was forced to choose between the monarchy and his relationship with twice-divorced American socialite Wallis Simpson. — AP

## American actress Markle to be a new kind of royal

She is an entertainment figure in her own right, and an outspoken woman comfortable talking about her background and her passions. American actress Meghan Markle will be a new type of royal when she weds Prince Harry in the spring. In some ways, Markle - a mixed-race American raised in California, and a divorcee - makes a surprising addition to Britain's monarchy. But the institution has moved on with the times, and the romance between Markle and Harry has a decidedly unstuffy, modern feel to it.

Markle, best known for her role as an ambitious paralegal in the hit U.S. legal drama "Suits," surprised many when she shared her feelings for Harry in a September cover story for Vanity Fair. Asked about the media frenzy surrounding their courtship, the 36-year-old



Actress Meghan Markle participates in AOL's BUILD Speaker Series to discuss her role on the television show, "Suits", in New York. — AP photos



said: "At the end of the day I think it's really simple ... we're two people who are really happy and in love." Describing Harry as her "boyfriend," Markle said that while she expected that she and Harry would have to "come forward" about their relationship at some point, the two were just a couple enjoying time spent with each other. "Personally, I love a great love story," she said.

It is unusual for a royal love interest to speak so publicly - and candidly - before becoming engaged. Harry's past reported girlfriends all shied away from the media limelight, and his sister-in-law, formerly known as Kate Middleton, stayed silent until she and Prince William gave a formal televised interview at Buckingham Palace after their engagement became public. But then, unlike some other "commoners" romantically linked to Britain's royals, Markle is no stranger to media exposure and the world of show business.

The actress's most successful role is the feisty Rachel Zane in the TV legal show "Suits," now in its seventh season. Her career has also included small parts on TV series including "Fringe," "CSI: Miami," "Knight Rider" and "Castle," as well as movies including "Horrible Bosses." Outside of acting, Markle founded a lifestyle blog called TheTig.com (which closed down in April without explanation), and has lent her celebrity status to humanitarian causes.

**'I've never defined myself'**

She has campaigned with the United Nations on gender equality, written in Time magazine about girls' education and the stig-

ma surrounding menstruation, and has traveled to Rwanda as global ambassador for the charity World Vision Canada. She has described how her mother took her to the slums of Jamaica to witness poverty firsthand, saying experiences like that shaped her social consciousness and charity work. Harry and Markle held hands for their first official appearance together in September in Toronto at the Invictus Games, a sporting event for wounded service personnel that Harry spearheaded.

Both were dressed casually in jeans, smiling and chatting as they arrived for a tennis match. Several days later, Harry was photographed kissing Markle on the cheek as he joined the actress and her mother in a luxury box to watch the event's closing ceremony. Markle said she met Harry through friends in London in July 2016, and that they had been dating quietly for several months before the romance hit the headlines.

Markle was born Aug 4, 1981, to a clinical therapist mother and television lighting director father. She grew up in Los Angeles, and now lives in Toronto. She studied at a girls' Roman Catholic high school before attending Northwestern University in Illinois, where she studied theater and international relations. Markle married film producer Trevor Engelson in 2011, but the pair divorced two years later.

It wouldn't be first time that a British royal has married an American - or a divorcee. In 1936, Edward VIII famously abdicated after he was forced to choose between the monarchy and his relationship with twice-divorced American socialite Wallis Simpson. In her Vanity Fair interview, Markle made clear the world's attention on her romance did not faze her. "I'm still the same person that I am, and I've never defined myself by my relationship," she said. "The people who are close to me anchor me in knowing who I am. The rest is noise." — AP



A Saudi family accompanies their child, who is wearing a Jason Voorhees hockey mask from the Friday the 13th horror film series, as they attend the first ever Comic-Con Arabia event held in the capital Riyadh. — AFP photos



A Saudi youth wearing a colored wig and shutter shades.



A Saudi woman uses her cell phone to take a "selfie" photograph with a cosplayer.



Saudi girls pose for a group picture as one stands behind a frame depicting King Kong.

## Saudi Arabia's first ever Comic-Con



A Saudi woman uses her cell phone to take a "selfie" photograph with a cosplayer dressed as the Beast from Disney's 1977 live-action "Beauty and the Beast" film.



A Saudi cosplayer dresses in a suit and a wolf mask possibly from inspired by the videogame 'Hotline Miami'.



A Saudi child dressed as Simba from Disney's 1994 animated "The Lion King" film.





Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, Miss South Africa 2017 is congratulated by fellow contestants after being crowned Miss Universe at the AXIS at Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino in Las Vegas. — AFP/AP photos



Miss Canada Lauren Howe

# South Africa's newest export is Miss Universe

Beauties from across the globe converged in Las Vegas Sunday, where Miss South Africa was crowned Miss Universe. Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, 22, edged out her rivals from Colombia and Jamaica to take the crown. Nel-Peters, a graduate in business management, said her disabled half-sister has been among her great inspirations. In the pageant's 66th year, nearly 100 women from around the world—including first-timers from Cambodia, Laos and Nepal—took part.

The runner-up was actress Laura Gonzalez of Colombia, who was followed by second runner-up Davina Bennett of Jamaica. The current Miss Universe, Iris Mittenaere from France, crowned her successor to a din of squeals and cheers. American comic turned TV host Steve Harvey hosted the event for the third time, making several jokes at his own expense. In 2015 he famously made a mistake heard round the world when he announced the wrong person as Miss Universe, resulting in an extremely uncomfortable, tense correction and a deluge of internet memes.

Grammy-winning singer Fergie and pop star Rachel Platten provided the musical entertainment for Sunday's show. In the "Final Word" portion of the competition, Nel-Peters said "Miss Universe is a woman who has overcome many fears, and by that she is able to help many women overcome their fears." "She is a woman that nothing is ever too much to ask for," she said. "And I think that is exactly who I am."

## Speaking on harassment

Nel-Peters didn't shy away when asked to comment on sexual harassment just after being crowned. "If women take hands and stand together, we are unbreakable," said the 22-year-old representative from South Africa, "and we can say no to the things that are wrong in the workplace, at home or wherever you might go."

In the U.S. dozens of politicians, Hollywood executives and actors, and media personalities are facing accusations of sexual misconduct, sparked by a wave of allegations against movie mogul Harvey Weinstein. The topic arose during Sunday's competition when a fan-submitted question asked why it's important for men and women to work together to address the issue of sexual misconduct.

Miss Jamaica Davina Bennett said men and



Miss Venezuela Keysi Sayago



Miss Austria Olivia Rogers



Miss Australia Olivia Rogers



Miss Philippines 2017 Rachel Peters



Miss Spain Sofia del Prado

(L-R): Top three finalists Miss South Africa 2017 Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, Miss Colombia 2017 Laura Gonzalez, and Miss Jamaica 2017 Davina Bennett stand on stage.



women should come together to make sure no form of abuse, including sexual harassment, is tolerated. "Sexual harassment is a form of abuse, and no abuse should be tolerated whether in the workplace or in society," Bennett said. Nel-Peters, who recently earned a business management degree, was crowned during the event at The AXIS theater at Planet Hollywood casino-resort on the Las Vegas Strip.

The runner-up was Miss Colombia Laura Gonzalez, while Bennett finished as the second runner-up. Nel-Peters is from the South African coastal community of Sedgfield in the Western Cape province. She helped develop a program to train women in self-defense in various situations after she was robbed at gunpoint a month

after she was crowned as Miss South Africa. She also said she wants to champion other causes during her yearlong reign.

"HIV/AIDS is a very big problem in my country South Africa, so I hope to stand as an advocate for that," she said after the event. She is the second woman from her home country to earn the crown. Ninety-two women from around the world participated in the decades-old competition. This year's edition had the most contestants ever, including the first representatives in its history of Cambodia, Laos and Nepal. Steve Harvey returned as the show's host despite botching the 2015 Miss Universe crowning. On Sunday, he

poked fun at his mistake throughout the night. Three days after people in the U.S. celebrated Thanksgiving, Harvey told the audience he is "grateful for the Oscars," referring to the best-picture flub at this year's Academy Awards. This year's judges included YouTube star Lele Pons, former judge of "America's Next Top Model" Jay Manuel and Wendy Fitzwilliam, the 1998 Miss Universe winner from Trinidad and Tobago. Nel-Peters earned a yearlong salary and a luxury apartment in New York City for the duration of her reign as well as more prizes. Donald Trump formerly co-owned The Miss Universe Organization with NBCUniversal. But the network and the Spanish-language broadcaster Univision quickly cut ties with him in 2015, when he offended Hispanics with anti-immigrant remarks in announcing his bid for the White House. Trump sued both networks, eventually settling and selling off the entire pageant to talent management company WME/IMG. — Agencies



Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters, Miss South Africa 2017 competes in an evening gown of her choice.

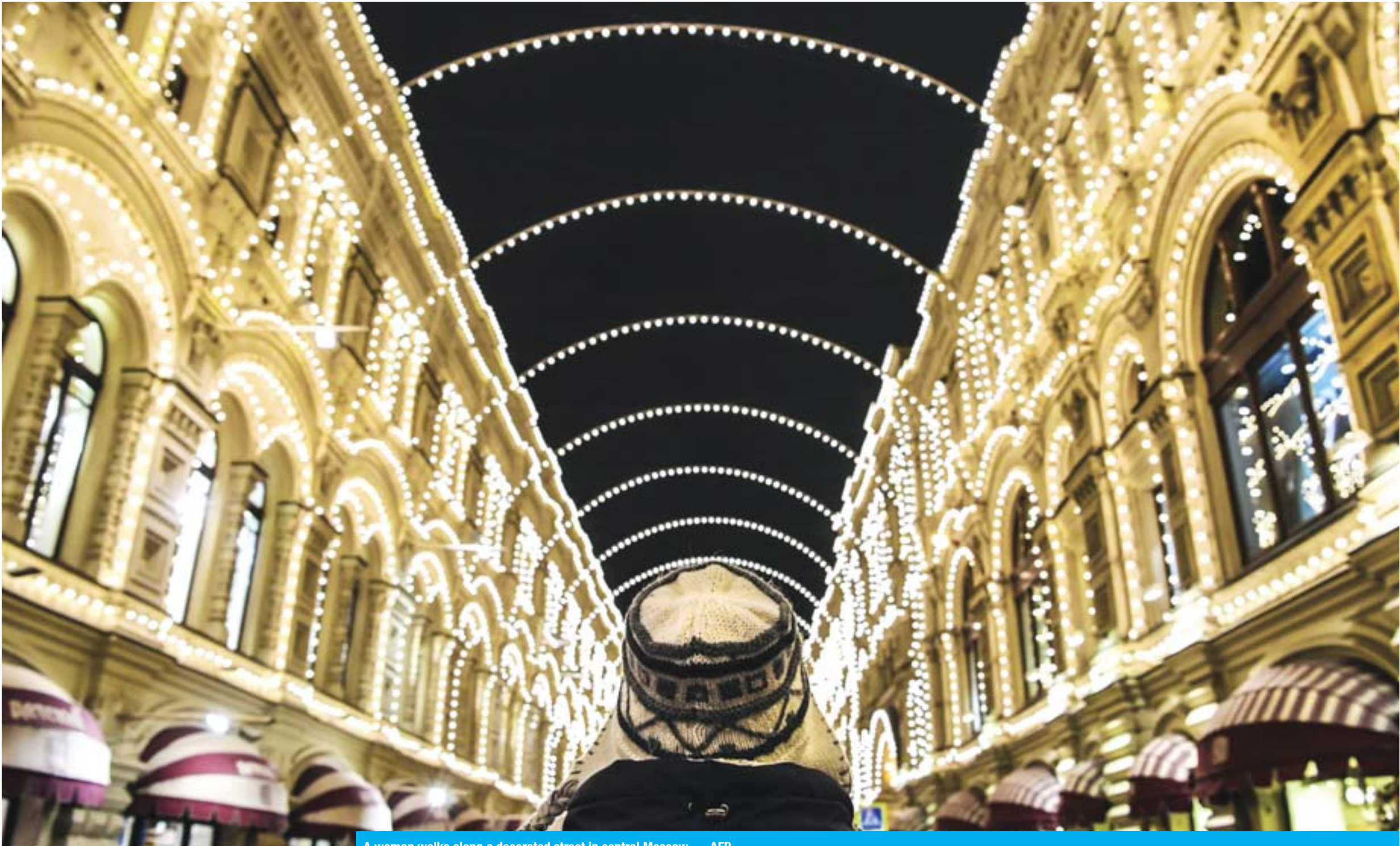


Miss Jamaica 2017 Davina Bennett competes in the evening gown competition.



# Lifestyle

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2017



A woman walks along a decorated street in central Moscow. — AFP

## From Palestinian refugee camp to boutiques in Paris and Dubai

In a small workshop in a Palestinian refugee camp in Jordan, Halima Al-Ankassuri embroiders traditional patterns onto a blue shawl, destined for sale in an upmarket Paris, London or Dubai boutique. The 54-year-old mother of seven describes her work as “modern products with shimmering colors, embroidered with Palestinian and Islamic motifs”. “I’m proud to see Europeans wearing what we produce here and to see top fashion magazines take an interest,” she said referring to the German online edition of Vogue, a large smile on her face, girded with a red veil.

The Jerash camp where she lives, in northern Jordan, was established to host more than 11,000 Palestinians who fled the Gaza Strip during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war—hence its alternative name, Gaza Camp. Half a century on, more than 29,000 refugees live in the camp amid poverty, unemployment and crumbling infrastructure. In 2013, Roberta Ventura, an Italian with a background in investment banking, decided to set up a social project to help women in the camp after visiting it and seeing their intricate skills close up.

SEP Jordan (SEP for social enterprise project) aims to “change lives not only of dozens but over time, hundreds, perhaps thousands of women”, she wrote in a message to AFP. On the workshop’s tables lay traditional keffiyeh checkered headscarves with inscriptions of different colors, along with cashmere shawls and handbags.

“The project started with 10 women and now they are 300,” said the program’s director, Nawal Aradah. “We make products on request:



A Palestinian woman embroiders at a workshop in Jordan's Jerash Palestinian refugee camp, which was established to host more than 11,000 Palestinians who fled the Gaza Strip during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. — AFP photos

shawls, handbags, towels, sheets and all kinds of household decor.” Every two months, 11 to 14 cartons containing 190 to 270 kilograms of goods are sent to stores in Paris, London or

Dubai. They are also sold inside the Palestinian territories—in the Israeli-occupied West Bank city of Bethlehem, said the project’s regional manager, Mahmoud Al-Haj. In a shop inside a

large Amman hotel, prices range from 20 to 300 dinars (\$30 to \$430, 25 to 362 euros), according to Haj, who said “most buyers are foreign tourists”.

### Source of income

For women in the workshop, embroidery is an important source of income. “We all suffer from poverty in this camp,” Ankassuri said. “This work helps us to improve our lives, even if we charge for our products individually at low prices, from 15 to 20 dinars.” Every product she embroiders requires at least a week’s work. She says she has pain in her hands, but enjoys being around other women in the workshop.

Ventura said the women’s “unique talent” is “appreciated around the world”. More than two million Palestinian refugees are registered with the United Nations in Jordan, but about half of the country’s 6.6 million population is of Palestinian origin. Ankassuri and her colleagues learned the art of embroidery from their mothers and grandmothers. Each region of historic Palestine has its own motifs and patterns.

As well as presenting Palestinian history and culture to a new audience, their craftwork “helps promote the cause of our people”, Aradah said proudly. A flag and a map hang on the walls of the workshop, reminding the women of their link with the land of their birth or, for the younger ones, that of their ancestors. “Every woman here has a story,” Aradah said. “This work helps them to send their children to school, change the furniture in their homes and improve their living conditions, especially since many husbands do not work.” Hiba Al-Hudari, who was weaving a blue purse with Islamic inscriptions, said the workshop had become “a second home”. The 37-year-old mother of six said she earns about 150 dinars a month. “With that, I help my husband, who’s a mechanic, provide for our household,” she said. — AFP

