



**6** Pope sidesteps Rohingya crisis in Myanmar address



**9** Chinese general kills self after facing graft probe



**23** Russia loses contact with satellite after launch from new spaceport



**16** Pistons snap Celtics home winning streak



## MPs request to meet Amir over tough jail sentences

Opposition lawmakers seek pardon • Speaker says no action until final verdict

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** Opposition lawmakers yesterday decided to request a meeting with HH the Amir to discuss the shocking jail terms passed against 67 opposition figures and appeal to him to issue a general pardon for all the convicts. The decision came following an urgent meeting attended by 16 MPs, as Assembly speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said that no action will be taken against the three convicted lawmakers until a final ruling by the court of cassation.

The harsh sentences by the appeals court on Monday sent shockwaves in political and legal circles amid calls for a comprehensive solution to the lingering political crisis in the country. The court overturned acquittals by the criminal court and passed jail terms on 67 people, including three current lawmakers, several ex-MPs and many activists for storming the National Assembly building in Nov 2011 during protests against the former prime minister.

Former MP and prominent opposition leader Musallam Al-Barrak, who left jail in April following a two-year imprisonment, was handed a fresh nine-year term. Two MPs, Waleed Al-Tabtabaei and Jamaan Al-Harbash, were handed seven years each and MP Mohammad Al-Mutair got one year.

Defense lawyers yesterday filed petitions challenging the rulings, while the public prosecution also demanded stiffer penalties

for some defendants. The opposition lawmakers have decided to hold another meeting next week. MP Mohammad Al-Dallal, who hosted yesterday's meeting, said the jail terms against leading opposition figures constituted a shock, adding that lawmakers in the meeting expressed their respect for the verdicts but stressed they were harsh. He said the lawmakers formed two teams - first to study options how to deal with the issue, and the second to follow up with the convicts and their families.

MP Mohammad Hayef said the verdicts were shocking and are likely to return the political crisis to square one, adding that those who supported the rulings represent only themselves and do not want the wheel of development to progress. He said the ruling takes the country back to the period before the opposition ended its boycott of elections, "as if we are at the beginning of the political crisis".

Hayef called on the judiciary to keep itself away from political disputes and not to issue verdicts in political issues. He said that the judiciary should not enter this dark tunnel, stressing that entering the Assembly building is not a criminal offense. He said that the entire issue is a political one and the issue should have been resolved politically. Hayef criticized the interior minister for immediately forming a 40-member team from the ministry to arrest those convicted, saying he "remained asleep" after the verdicts against



**KUWAIT:** MP Mohammad Al-Dallal (left) hosts a meeting of 16 opposition lawmakers yesterday. — Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

a pro-Iran cell.

Meanwhile, under 30 of those convicted have been arrested or gave themselves up to the police. They could be freed when the court of cassation starts looking into the case. Ghanem said that the Assembly will

take no action against the three MPs until after the final verdict, adding that the lawmakers enjoy parliamentary immunity before the verdict but lose it after jail terms are passed. He said that no Assembly sessions will be held before the formation of the new

government, adding that on some previous occasions, the formation of the Cabinet took longer. Opposition MP Abdulkarim Al-Kandari said yesterday that if the process of forming the new Cabinet will take longer, he will file to grill the prime minister.

### News in brief

#### Senior Saudi prince Miteb freed

**DUBAI:** Senior Saudi Prince Miteb bin Abdullah, a former National Guard head once seen as a contender to the throne, has been freed after more than three weeks in detention, according to Twitter messages by royal family members yesterday. "Almighty, thanks be to you..." wrote Abeer bint Khaled bin Abdullah in a posting on her Twitter account. Posting an apparent file photo of Prince Miteb, she added: "May God give you long life, long life full of health, and keep you for us." Writing on his Twitter account, Moaid Mahjoob, who identifies himself as director of external relations for Princess Jawahar Al-Saud, said Prince Miteb "had been released and that he was at his home in Riyadh". Another royal family member, Princess Nouf bint Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Saud, also posted a similar message on Twitter, writing over a photo of Prince Miteb: "May you be safe for us, Abu Abdullah."

#### UAE: Qatar behind complaint

**ABU DHABI:** The United Arab Emirates yesterday accused Gulf rival Qatar of being behind a call for the International Criminal Court to investigate allegations of war crimes by the UAE in Yemen. A group calling itself the Arab Organization for Human Rights in the UK said on Monday it was taking the UAE to the ICC over "indiscriminate attacks on civilians" in Yemen. UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash accused Qatar of being responsible. "The Arab Organization for Human Rights with its address in Qatar has filed a media complaint against the UAE to the International Criminal Court," Gargash wrote on his Twitter account. "People with knowledge are aware that this move aims to create noise, which is Qatar's favorite game," he said.

#### Egypt police kill 11 'terrorists'

**CAIRO:** Egyptian security forces killed 11 suspected "terrorist elements" during a raid on a hideout for militants in Ismailiya province providing support for militants in the northern Sinai, the interior ministry said yesterday. Police were pursuing leaders of "terrorist groups in North Sinai that aimed to carry out a series of hostile operations targeting important and vital buildings and Christian churches," a ministry statement said. Security forces were able to identify "a group of these elements and the hideouts they were using to hide, train, and store means of logistic support ahead of smuggling them to terrorist groups in North Sinai".

### Ivanka, feted in India, calls for closing gender gap in business

**HYDERABAD, India:** Ivanka Trump urged India yesterday to close its yawning gender gap in the job market, telling a business summit in her biggest foreign mission yet that this would bring huge economic benefits. US President Donald Trump's eldest daughter urged India to seize the untapped potential in women in a speech before Prime Minister Narendra

Modi and business leaders in Hyderabad. India is one of the world's fastest growing major economies but also has one of the lowest rates of female employment, a trend that has worsened over the last decade.

The World Bank has warned that the country must reverse a trend of falling women's participation in jobs if it is to achieve its ambition of double-digit growth. "Just consider, if India closes the labour force gender gap by half, your economy could grow by over \$150 billion dollars in the next three years," Trump told the Global Entrepreneurship Summit. "I encourage everyone here today to come together, to learn from each other, and to find new ways to lift the barriers in our societies so that women are free to innovate."

Continued on Page 11



**HYDERABAD:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and advisor to the US president Ivanka Trump inaugurate the Global Entrepreneurship Summit yesterday. — AFP

### Israeli chess players could make history at Saudi tournament

**JERUSALEM:** Israeli chess players could make history by participating in a tournament in Saudi Arabia after the international chess governing body yesterday said it was pushing to allow it to happen. A spokesman for the Israel Chess Federation told AFP seven players had filed requests for visas to participate in the games to be held in Riyadh on Dec 26-30 as part of the world rapid and

blitz chess championships. Israel and Saudi Arabia have no official relations. The presence of Israelis there would be highly unusual, and comes as officials from the Jewish state increasingly hint at covert ties with the Sunni-ruled kingdom. Israel and Saudi Arabia share a common fear of Iran's attempts to increase its influence in the region.

Georgios Makropoulos, deputy president of the World Chess Federation (FIDE), said that the papers of the seven Israeli chess players - five men and two women - had been handed to the Saudi organizers "and the visa status is currently pending". "We are making a huge effort to assure that all players get their visas," Makropoulos said in a statement. The Israeli chess federation said it "supports FIDE's policy to hold the tournament in Saudi alongside FIDE's commitment to ensure the participation of Israelis would not be subject to limitations,"

spokesman Lior Aizenberg told AFP. "We expect the Saudis, aided by FIDE, to approve our requests for visas to play," he said.

Aizenberg noted the Israeli chess federation chairman Zvika Barkai had discussed the issue of the Saudi visas with Makropoulos as well as with FIDE President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, who recently visited Israel. A spokesman for the Israeli foreign ministry said he didn't believe there would be a problem for the Israelis to participate in the Riyadh games if the visas were granted. Israeli athletes often face difficulties when competing around the Middle East due to hostility toward their country. In a recent incident, an Iranian wrestler was lauded by his government after he intentionally lost an international bout at a tournament in Poland over the weekend to avoid having to face an Israeli opponent. — AFP

### Saudi 'Matchstick' TV host takes over state broadcaster

**RIYADH:** With a furrowed brow and wagging finger, Dawood Shirian for years skewered top officials on Saudi television, but now the firebrand host is taking over the country's state broadcaster. Deploying a pull-no-punches style rarely tolerated in Saudi Arabia's tightly controlled media landscape, Shirian spent nearly six years as the host of "Al-Thamina" (Eight O'Clock) on satellite broadcaster MBC.

Shirian - nicknamed "matchstick" for his combustible personality - was allowed to champion issues that are a potential lightning rod for public discontent, from joblessness to extremism. His career took on a new trajectory on Monday with his appointment as the head of the Saudi Broadcasting Corporation, as his legions of admir-

ers called for his return to Al-Thamina. His intentions as the new chief are unclear. But if his past is any indication, Shirian may be about to shake up the country's traditionally sedate state television and radio channels.

The primetime show garnered an avid following with its host's hard-hitting style of demanding accountability from officials, often berating them and sometimes chivvying them into action. In a recent episode, Shirian, 63, fumed over rising unemployment among Saudi engineers, airing testimonies from some with the highest grades forced to work as waiters, car washers and fish sellers. "Does the job market have no place for Saudi engineers?" Shirian asked angrily, waving print-outs from a government jobs website. "Where are the authorities?" he demanded.

Within minutes, the hashtag "Saudi engineers treated unfairly" started gaining traction on social media. Behind the scenes, the show's producers were inundated with hundreds of WhatsApp messages pouring in from people venting fury. A labor ministry official, caught like a deer in the headlights, sought to explain on the show that policy reforms were in the works to



**RIYADH:** A picture taken on Oct 24, 2017 shows MBC TV personality Dawood Shirian during an interview at MBC headquarters. — AFP

create jobs. "When?" Shirian interjected with a scowl. "The people are getting angry." MBC said Al-Thamina, which enjoys a mass following in Saudi Arabia - consistently registering top ratings typically seen by lifestyle

Continued on Page 11



## Local

# Amir to patronize Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Informatics Awards ceremony today

## Leadership's support great incentive: Official

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is set to patronize today the 17th edition of the Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Awards ceremony. The event will be held at 10:30 am at Bayan Palace.

His Highness the Amir's unconditional support towards Sheikh Salem Al-Ali's Informatics Award is a great incentive for the organizers of the events and participants, said an official yesterday. Speaking to the press, Chairperson of the Award's Board of Trustees Sheikha Aydah Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah said that the 17th edition of the award adds to the success of the prestigious event. The award had put Kuwait on the map of informatics both on the regional and international levels, said Sheikha Aydah, affirming that the event had contributed to good reputation of Sheikh Salem Al-Ali.

In regards to today's ceremony, Sheikha Aydah said that awards would be handed to local, regional, and international government and private entities, which took part in this year's event, adding that the Informatics Award will continue for years to come as a Kuwaiti contribution to the world of technology.

### Students' elections

In other news, His Highness the Amir received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace on yesterday. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah met with the chairman and members of Kuwait University's National Union of Kuwaiti Students, fresh off their victory in the university's union elections.

His Highness the Crown Prince urged the students to remain diligent in pursuit of academic glory, saying that education and knowledge are the cornerstones of a developed nation. He assured them of the Kuwaiti leadership's relentless support, wishing the students every success in their academic careers. The encounter was attended by the head of protocols at His Highness the Crown Prince's Diwan Sheikh

Mubarak Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah and the Diwan's undersecretary for local affairs Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince also met with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad, as well as Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Mohammad Al-Faris.



## Crown Prince hails youth as 'nation's future'

### Premier meets diplomats

Separately, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received the newly appointed Ambassadors of Vietnam, Oman, Britain and North Ireland, as well as Egypt. The meetings were attended by the Head of His Highness the Prime Minister's Diwan Sheikha Etimad Khaled Al-Sabah. His Highness the Prime Minister also received head of the Public Anti-Corruption Authority Abdurrahman Al-Nimash, who presented to him a copy of the authority's biannual report for 2016-2017.

In other news, His Highness the Amir sent a cable of condolences to Saudi King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, expressing deepest sympathy over the passing away of Princess Madawi bint Abdulaziz Al-Saud. His Highness the Crown Prince and His Highness the Prime Minister also sent similar cables.



**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. — KUNA



**His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with the newly appointed Ambassador of Oman.**



**His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with members of Kuwait University's National Union of Kuwaiti Students.**

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Local



KUWAIT: Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub visited Kuwait Times yesterday and discussed matters of mutual concern with Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan. — Photo by Joseph Shagra

### Minister tackles cooperation with British envoy

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah discussed yesterday with British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport ways of bolstering cooperation. Minister Jarrah affirmed on the strong relations between the two countries, stressing importance on con-

tinuing such cooperation, particularly in the security field, the Public Relations and Media office of the Interior ministry said in a press release. The statement added the two sides also delved into issues of mutual concern and ways to develop and boost bilateral relations.

Meanwhile, Chief of the General Staff of Kuwait's armed forces Lieutenant General Mohammed Al-Khadher met separately with French and Italian military personnel, discussing with them ways to bolster defensive cooperation. The army's public relations department said Lieutenant General Khadher and the foreign military officials also touched on issues of mutual concerns. Kuwaiti and foreign military staff attended the meetings. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah meets with British Ambassador to Kuwait Michael Davenport. — KUNA



Chief of the General Staff of Kuwait's armed forces Lieutenant General Mohammed Al-Khadher meets with French and Italian military personnel.

### 403 liquor bottles found in Salwa brewery

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Hawally police busted an underground liquor brewery in Salwa and arrested a Nepalese national who ran the place. A total of 403 bottles of homebrewed liquor and 97 filled drums were found inside the place. The suspect was taken to the relevant authorities for legal action.

#### Fake companies busted

Residency affairs department detectives discovered 22 fake and closed companies sponsoring 104 workers without

actually practicing any business activity. The companies' offices were raided and security restrictions were imposed, banning them from issuing any more visas pending taking further legal proceedings, the Interior Ministry's relations and security media department said.

#### Airport Road accident

A citizen was rushed to hospital with serious injuries after he lost control over his sports car and collided into a construction crane along Airport Road.

#### Illegal camps removed

As part of Kuwait Municipality's ongoing campaign to protect the environment and wildlife, Farwaniya municipality inspection teams inspected camps in Sulaibiya to remove violations, said the team leader Ahmed Al-Sheriekah, noting that eight illegal camps were removed.



# EPA to recognize companies for protecting environment

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: In its fifth meeting in 2017 headed by Chairman Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, the Environment Public Authority's (EPA) board of directors made a number of decisions pertaining with the fees collected for the services it provides. The meeting also discussed various environmental issues, such as issuing clearance certificates to companies showing that they have not been involved in any sort of environmental violations.

#### Inaccurate information

Recent State Audit Bureau reports showed that the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's (MoCI) supplies department has failed to monitor inventories of stored supply goods. The report elaborated that the department has not conducted quarterly inventories of supply goods' warehouses, which resulted in inaccurate information about the actual stocks stored there. It also showed that the department did not take any measures when such differences were discovered and demanded to hold the concerned centers' managers accountable.

#### Safety condition

Kuwait Municipality Director Ahmad Al-Manfouhi stressed that Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) had no right to request writing off safety condition violations committed by companies it

has business deals with. In a letter he sent to KOC's CEO about the violations committed by company contractors, Manfouhi said the municipality had requested the Fatwa and Legislation Department's legal advice on its right to hold those contractors accountable, and whether KOC had any right to request otherwise. He added that the fatwa department stressed that the municipality was legally entitled to take standard legal measures against violators of safety conditions and denied KOC's right to demand writing off or undoing those measures.

#### Media street

Kuwait Municipality also approved the Information Ministry's request to change the activity description of three land plots that remain unused on the media and press street in Ardiya so that they can be distributed to new dailies and satellite TV channels. A letter addressing the Municipal Council's Secretary General conditioned that the ministry will supervise distributing the land plots and the construction style so that they match adjacent buildings. The conditions also include that the state should not have previously allocated any land plots to beneficiaries. Notably, the Municipal Council had issued a decision in 2010 to allocate a media street in Ardiya of a total area of 33,000 sq m, which would be equally distributed over 11 land plots to be handed over to

the Ministry of Information, who then distributes them to new dailies.

#### Security approvals

Education Minister Dr Mohammed Al-Fares said accepting bedoons at Kuwait University is conditioned by getting the needed security approvals from the central apparatus for illegal residents. Fares added that the university has already started taking measures to accept bedoons. Fares stressed that the Arab Open University (AOU) is accredited by the private universities council and that its degrees are approved by the ministry of higher education and are fit for employment in Kuwait. Yet, Fares said that using an AOU degree to pursue postgraduate studies depends on the institute applied for inside or outside Kuwait, as some of them have some restrictions on them.

#### New department

The Civil Service Commission (CSC) approved the foundation of a new department at the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) to handle the airport project under the name of 'Airport 2 Project Department,' which will be disbanded once the project is concluded. The CSC also agreed to adjust MPW's structural organization and merge construction maintenance departments in all six governorates into three - one for the central zone, one for the northern zone and one for the southern zone.

### Kuwait gains observer status at IOM

GENEVA: The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) executive council

unanimously agreed yesterday to officially grant Kuwait observer status. Addressing the 108th session of the IOM council, which kicked off yesterday and will continue into the next month, IOM's Director General William Lacy Swing heaped praise on Kuwait for the country's humanitarian endeavors. Meanwhile, in a speech of his own, Kuwait's permanent delegate to the UN Jamal Al-Ghunaim said that joining the IOM as an observer state "was a testament

to Kuwait's close rapport with IOM."

The Kuwaiti envoy pointed out that his country's newly obtained status in the IOM would allow it to make greater contributions towards humanitarian causes. He stressed that a shared penchant for altruism has brought Kuwait and IOM closer together and that the country will remain as committed as ever to humanitarian programs and activities. — KUNA

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## Local

## Photo of the Day



KUWAIT: The Boubyan Bridge; a 1.5 km long causeway that links Kuwait's largest island with the mainland. —KUNA

# NBK Capital presents developments in regional markets to KU students

## Spreading the investing culture in an innovative manner

**KUWAIT:** NBK Capital held a lecture for students of the Kuwait University (KU) College of Business Administration - Finance and Financial Institutions Department, introducing students to investing in equity markets. The lecture explored the concept of risk and return, recent developments in regional markets, in particular the upgrade of Kuwait Boursa to an Emerging Market by FTSE, as well as best practices in company analysis, valuation, and investment decisions.

Presented by the division of Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Asset Management at NBK Capital, headed by Dr Husayn Shahrur, and with the participation of Talal Al-Khamis and Eithar Al-Rushaid, the lecture comes as part of NBK Capital's commitment to corporate social responsibility. NBK Capital strives to expand and build a strong relationship with the Kuwaiti society and is committed to contributing towards the development of education, as an essential part of the progress and prosperity of the country.

Commenting on the lecture, NBK Capital - MENA Asset Management Managing Director, Dr Husayn Shahrur, said: "We strongly believe in the positive impact of actively engaging in our communities and giving back through innovative intellectual initiatives."

He added: "Kuwait University is a leading academic pillar in our community and at NBK Capital we seek to share our experience and knowledge with its students, providing them with practical and real-life experiences to support their academic learning in the field of finance and invest-



ments, in addition to spreading the investing culture in an innovative and practical manner."

Dr Shahrur emphasized the importance of collaboration with educational institutions and highlighted NBK Capital's endeavors in supporting and encouraging the youth community as part of its active social initiatives and corporate responsibility.



The professors of the Finance and Financial Institutions Department and participating students valued the initiative organized by NBK Capital, highlighting the importance of the practical application of the students' education to better understand the dynamics of the local, regional, and global economy.

The lecture is an important milestone of NBK Capital's

corporate social responsibility and is complemented by many business, financial, and social initiatives that support the development of the local community. These initiatives reflect the company's investment in the development of human capital, in line with the company's policies, and the company's strong belief in the positive impact of these initiatives in serving the community and its youth.

## EQUATE highlights Gulf's role as a key contributor to petrochemical industry

**DUBAI:** EQUATE Group, a global producer of petrochemicals, sponsored the 12th annual Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA) Forum to support the pioneering role of the Arabian Gulf's industrial sector. The forum includes the participation of industrial leaders and professionals from across the globe.

EQUATE's President and CEO, Dr Ramesh Ramachandran, said, "During 2016, the Arabian Gulf's combined petrochemical and chemical capacities exceeded 142 million tons with sales surpassing USD 76 billion and exporting more than 70 million tons. Clearly, these figures show the region's impact on the global industrial sector with petrochemicals being the Arabian Gulf's second main source of income."

Ramachandran noted, "The rising global demand for petrochemicals reinforces the fact that our industry is key for countries to grow and increase their gross domestic product (GDP). Every key component of GDP growth such as foods, clothing, packaging and transportation is served and supported by our industry. On the other hand,

there are also headwinds for the Gulf. The region's producers clearly see the challenges posed by protectionism as well as new capacities resulting from shale gas. EQUATE's growth strategy has enabled us to overcome this challenge and be the first Middle East-based petrochemical producer to build a world class facility in the US Gulf Coast. Diversifying our asset base is an important component for us to sustain our growth. Overall, we have to maintain our progress to serve our customers who are also growing. Naturally, markets influence strategy and supply should follow the markets."

"As a global enterprise, EQUATE launched its 2025 Sustainability Strategy that is linked to the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS). We firmly believe that sustainability is a key component for growth through creating added value by focusing on the key pillars of education, community, economy, environment, health and safety," added Ramachandran.

As part of its participation in the event for the 12th consecutive year, EQUATE sponsored a professor and students from the College of Engineering and Petroleum at Kuwait University to attend the forum and interact with other delegates. The initiative is part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the university for partnership and collaboration in industrial and academic fields.

The 12th Annual GPCA Forum was held in Dubai, UAE, during November 27 to 29, 2017. The forum gathered over 2,000 top executives from petrochemical and chemical companies as well as government bodies and other entities from around the globe to discuss various topics.





Local

# Bukhamseen Holding, CEO awarded during Arab Best Award ceremony

Company chosen best Arab firm; CEO among top 100 in Arab world



The two awards given to Bukhamseen Holding Group and its CEO Emad Bukhamseen.



MARRAKESH: Bukhamseen Holding Group's CEO Emad Bukhamseen (third from left) stands among the awarded officials during the Arab Best Award ceremony.

News in brief

Saudi King shares Amir's letter to Cabinet

RIYADH: Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz yesterday discussed with lawmakers the contents of a letter he received from His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. Presiding over the Saudi Cabinet's weekly meeting, King Salman and the executive body reviewed the recently-concluded meeting of defense ministers of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition, where more than 40 Islamic nations vowed to work as a cohesive unit to fight terrorism. The Saudi Cabinet also touched on a spate of significant meetings that had taken place, including a gathering of Syrian opposition groups in Riyadh and the 33rd session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (COMCEC) in Istanbul. Meanwhile, the Saudi ministers condemned in equal measure a string of "terrorist attacks" targeting Egypt, Iraq, and Nigeria, all of which left scores of people dead or wounded. —KUNA

Banks on holiday tomorrow

KUWAIT: Chairman of the Union of Kuwaiti Banks Dr Hamad Al-Hasawi said yesterday that all local banks would stop operating tomorrow in observance of a religious holiday marking the birth of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). Banks will resume work next Sunday as approved by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK), he added. The Banks Union congratulated the political leadership and the Kuwaiti people on the advent of this occasion. — KUNA

Chemical weapons prevention

BRUSSELS: Kuwait has participated in the Conference of the States Parties of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), held in The Hague, Netherlands, late Monday. During the meeting, Morocco was elected president of the current session. OPCW is the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which started its work in 1997. OPCW includes 192 member-states, aiming to achieve a world with no chemical weapons. The organization believes that preventing the use of chemistry in warfare will protect global security. — KUNA

Kuwait committed to UNIDO plans

VIENNA: Public Authority for Industry Acting Director-General Abdulkarim Abdulkarim said on Monday his attendance of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) General Conference aids Kuwait in its steps towards sustainable development. He added that Kuwait's attendance of the conference, themed 'Building global partnerships: Enhancing growth and inclusiveness,' was to express its full ongoing commitment to the UN agency. Kuwait regards UNIDO's plans to achieve sustainable development goals a critical issue in tackling poverty, discrimination and marginalization, he said. The Kuwaiti delegation has planned several meetings with UNIDO officials, namely the newly-elected Director-General Li Yong and others in the research division. Along with the conference, the Kuwaitis will also be attending several workshops and seminars related to empowering women in leadership positions and the "fourth industrial revolution," he added. They also plan to attend a session dedicated to an Arab initiative on food safety and trade facilitation. The five-day conference, attended by 168 member countries, wrapped up its initial activities with the election of China's Li Yong for a second four-year term as director-general. — KUNA



Bukhamseen Holding Group's CEO Emad Bukhamseen speaks to the press after receiving his award.

MARRAKESH: Bukhamseen Holding Group was awarded as the best Arab company and its CEO Emad Bukhamseen was also awarded amongst the top 100 Arab CEOs this year during the Arab Best Award ceremony held in Marrakesh on Monday with the participation of Arab industrial, services and financial establishments' directors and CEOs. Speaking on the occasion, Bukhamseen stressed that the award was the result of the administration pattern used by the group according to modern managerial principles based on planning, directing and teamwork spirit. Bukhamseen added that the group's sectors function according to a comprehensive vision focusing on human resources as the base of any corporate success. He

“ Human resources is base of corporate success ”

also pointed out that the group exerts a lot of efforts to develop human resources and attract new competent staff. "The group has over 25,000 employees and is working on recruiting more youth in various branches to provide more job opportunities to national workers as instructed by His Highness the Amir, who has called for supporting the youth," he said. The award's secretary general Abdullah Abdul Kareem said selecting the Arab Best Award winners is subject to qualitative and quantitative elements of assessment of success, competence, achievements, development of work systems, staff efficiency and managerial patterns. "All these elements were found in the group, and this made the award's experts committee choose it as the best Arab company and its CEO as the best Arab CEO," he said. Notably, the award was launched in 2016, giving three awards for leadership, business and to celebrities with the aim of rewarding excellence and creativity in the Arab world and encouraging competence amongst various companies, establishments and NGOs, with the ultimate goal of achieving development. — KUNA



Bukhamseen Holding Group's CEO Emad Bukhamseen receives his award.





Flurry of activity hints at N Korea missile test

## Australia police foil New Year's Eve 'terror plot'



**NAYPYIDAW:** Pope Francis (2nd left) meets Myanmar's civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi in Naypyidaw. Pope Francis held talks with Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi yesterday - a key moment of a tour aimed at alleviating religious and ethnic hatreds that have driven huge numbers of Muslim Rohingya from the country. — AFP

# Pope sidesteps Rohingya crisis in Myanmar

## Pontiff meets Suu Kyi, army chief during visit

**NAYPYIDAW, Myanmar:** Pope Francis called for respect for rights and justice in a keenly-watched address in Myanmar yesterday, but refrained from any mention of the Rohingya or the alleged ethnic cleansing that has driven huge numbers of the Muslim minority from the country. Sharing a stage with Myanmar's leader Aung San Suu Kyi in the capital Naypyidaw, he did not address the Rohingya crisis head-on but instead tip-toed around the unfolding humanitarian emergency.

Peace can only be achieved through "justice and a respect for human rights", he said in a broadly-framed speech that also called for "respect for each ethnic group and its identity". The word "Rohingya", an incendiary term in a mainly Buddhist country where the Muslim minority are denied citizenship and branded illegal "Bengali" immigrants, was entirely absent from his speech. Francis has repeatedly defended the group, some 620,000 of whom have fled from Myanmar's Rakhine state to Bangladesh since August.

Rights groups had urged him to tackle

Myanmar about its treatment of the minority during his four-day visit, but the local Catholic Church had cautioned him against straying into the Rohingya issue. Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, has been ostracized by a global rights community that once adored her but is now outraged at her tepid response to the plight of the Rohingya. She spoke of the challenges her country faces as it creeps out of the shadow of five decades of military rule, but also did not reference the Rohingya.

The government aimed to build the nation by "protecting rights, fostering tolerance, ensuring security for all", she said in a short speech, that gave a nod to global concern over the "situation in the Rakhine." The pope's peace mission is studded with pitfalls in Myanmar, where a monk-led Buddhist nationalist movement has fostered widespread loathing for the Rohingya. In recognition of those tensions his public speech was "very carefully worded",

Myanmar-based political analyst Richard Horsey told AFP, speculating "he is likely to have been more forthright in private meetings with Myanmar's leaders." But the pontiff's



### The Lady also did not refer to prosecuted Muslim minority

words were of little comfort to Rohingya stuck in dire conditions in Bangladesh. "We are very much disappointed that he did not mention the Rohingya crisis," said Rohingya activist Mohammad Zubair from Kutupalong refugee

camp, speaking of a religious leader who previously "even held prayers for the Rohingya". Late on Monday the 80-year-old pontiff received a "courtesy visit" from Myanmar's powerful army chief - whose troops, according to the UN and US, have waged a campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya in Rakhine.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing has firmly denied allegations of widespread brutality by his forces, despite the flight of hundreds of thousands who have recounted widespread cases of rape, murder and arson. His office said the general told the pope there was "no discrimination" in Myanmar, and he praised his military for maintaining "the peace and stability of the country".

The Lady, as she is fondly known in Myanmar, finally came to power after elections in 2015 but has fallen from grace internationally for not doing more to stand up to the army in defence of the Rohingya - whose

name she will not publicly utter. Rights groups have clamored for Suu Kyi to be stripped of her peace prize. Oxford, the English city she once called home, on Monday removed her Freedom of the City award for "inaction" in the face of oppression of the Rohingya.

Just days before the papal visit, Myanmar and Bangladesh signed a deal to start repatriating Rohingya refugees within two months. But details of the agreement - including the use of temporary shelters for returnees, many of whose homes have been burned to the ground - raise questions for Rohingya fearful of returning without guarantees of basic rights. So far, the pontiff has received a warm welcome in Myanmar, whose Catholic community numbers just over one percent of the country's 51 million people. But some 200,000 Catholics are pouring into the commercial capital Yangon from all corners of the country ahead of a huge, open-air mass in Yangon today morning. Francis will travel on to Bangladesh tomorrow. — AFP

## Insurgency, attacks put Sinai strategy in spotlight

**CAIRO:** Egypt's years-long military campaign against a jihadist insurgency in the north of the Sinai Peninsula is under increasing scrutiny following a devastating mosque attack last week. More than 300 people were killed in Friday's bomb and gun assault - the deadliest in the country's recent history - highlighting the insurgents' ability to carry out spectacular attacks despite the deployment of tens of thousands of troops. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi vowed to respond with "brutal force", and the army announced it had destroyed several of the vehicles used in the attack and killed their occupants.

But for some analysts, the army's muscular reprisals are not enough. "I think (the Sinai) needs (a) smarter military presence," said Zack Gold, an analyst at the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center. "The job of the military is not to protect the military," he said. "The job of the military is to protect the population and to secure the territory". He said currently soldiers were usually confined to checkpoints on the region's roads instead of securing the population centers, where the insurgency has crippled the economy.

### 'Easier to recruit'

Timothy Kaldas, a non-resident fellow at the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, said multiple foreign diplomats had told him that when they urge Egyptian officials to change tactics, "they get a lot of pushback". "They are basically told 'not to interfere in Egypt's affairs,'" he said. He said discussion of security

strategy took place within a "small circle" and that the public was "not allowed to participate in that conversation to discuss what is problematic and what could be better". Egypt's Western allies acknowledge the army has made some headway in containing the insurgency and forcing IS to change its tactics.

Large-scale attacks on the military have grown less frequent, as IS has increasingly turned to a war of attrition involving roadside bombings and sniper attacks, inflicting fewer casualties on the army. The military has also succeeded in hitting some of the group's top commanders, including overall leader Abu Duaa al-Ansari who was killed in an air strike last year. It has largely ended the once-lucrative smuggling trade with the Gaza Strip by destroying tunnels under the border with the Palestinian territory and razing parts of the divided frontier town of Rafah to create a buffer zone.

But the home demolitions have stoked further resentment in a region that has felt marginalized for decades. Kaldas said that situation "makes it easier for ISIS (IS) to recruit, it makes people less interested in supporting the government." IS too has sparked some antagonism with its tactics. The jihadists have alienated the region's largest tribe, the Tarabin, by executing dozens of its members for allegedly cooperating with the army. Some Tarabin have formed militias to fight IS.

Sisi came to power after leading the military overthrow of his Islamist predecessor Mohamed Morsi in 2013 promising to restore security following the chaos of the Arab Spring uprising that toppled longtime dictator Hosni Mubarak. But four years on, the situation in Sinai is far from stable. In November 2014, shortly after Sisi's election as president, Ansar Beit Al-Maqdis, a Sinai-based jihadist group previously linked to Al-Qaeda, swore allegiance to IS. Friday's attack was carried out by some 30 armed men carrying flags similar to the black banner of IS, although the jihadist organization has not formally claimed it. — AFP

## McDonald's, water, electricity: Gazans eye reconciliation

**GAZA:** Hamas is due to hand over power in the Gaza Strip to the Palestinian Authority by Friday as part of a reconciliation deal, raising hopes humanitarian suffering there can be eased. Gazans' demands are mostly simple: water, electricity, the right to travel. The coastal enclave has been blockaded by Israel for a decade, while the only other border-with Egypt-has been largely sealed in recent years. Residents receive only a few hours of electricity per day, and UN officials have said Gaza is becoming rapidly unlivable. Israel says its restrictions are necessary to isolate Islamist movement Hamas, which has ruled the enclave since seizing it in 2007. It has fought three wars with Israel since. Gazans explain why reconciliation matters to them:

### The stranded student

Yahya Al-Majayda, 18, is meant to be studying medicine. He applied for university in Ukraine, was accepted and even received the visa. But with the borders sealed, he is stuck. "My visa has been valid for two months but I haven't been able to travel because of the border. It expires in January. If I don't arrive by that date they won't renew it and I will lose around \$2,000 I spent. My future depends on the opening of the border and the national government taking control in Gaza. "I am very scared reconciliation will fail, my future will be lost completely."

### The child who wants to fly

Hamada Ahmed, 12, a student in a United Nations school in Gaza, doesn't know exactly



**GAZA:** Palestinian children do their home works during a power cut in an impoverished area in Gaza City yesterday. — AFP

what reconciliation is-but he hopes it means he will be able to leave Gaza for the first time. "My dad said if they open the crossings to everyone we will travel. I hope to fly in a plane and eat McDonald's."

### The daughter cut off

Maysaa Al-Shanti, a 45-year-old mother of six, hasn't seen her parents since Hamas took control. They moved to Saudi Arabia decades ago. "I dream of reconciliation and for them to open the crossings so I can travel to see my family in Saudi Arabia. "I haven't seen them in 11 years. My father died without me seeing him. "I don't know when I will see my mother and siblings if they don't succeed with reconciliation."

### The rival bureaucrats

In a strange quirk, there are two civil services in Gaza. When Hamas took over in 2007, the majority of the Fatah-dominated

Palestinian Authority employees were told to stop working. Hamas set up a rival administration, while tens of thousands of PA employees continued to get a salary without working. Leila Saqar was among them. She is hoping to return to her job with the health ministry. "Ten years at home without work has negative psychological and professional effects. "I don't care if my colleagues or the patients I treat are Hamas or Fatah. We are all Palestinians."

"As employees in the PA we will complement the Hamas employees, who have acquired experience during their years of work, dealing with new projects we today must learn about." Mahmoud Al-Faraa, head of public relations with the Hamas media ministry, could be losing his job. A final decision about Hamas employees has been put off until early next year, with a merger possible, but Faraa said he was personally in favor of reconciliation to ease conditions for his family. — AFP



## International

# Flurry of activity hints at North Korean missile test

## Hawaii to resume Cold War-era nuke siren tests

SEOUL: Signs of unusual activity have been detected in North Korea, the South's unification minister said yesterday, following reports that Pyongyang may be preparing for a ballistic missile test. The North has stoked international alarm over its banned nuclear missile program, but it has not staged a missile test since September 15, raising hopes that ramped-up sanctions are having an impact. But South Korea's Yonhap news agency cited a government source as saying that a missile-tracing radar was switched on at an unspecified base on Monday, and there had been a flurry of telecom traffic.

Unification minister Cho Myoung-Gyon confirmed there had been "noteworthy activity in the North recently", but said the Seoul government had to "wait and see whether it leads to an actual missile test or provocation".

Aside from the recent movements, Pyongyang has also been conducting various engine tests and fuel tests even during the testing lull. Cho told foreign correspondents. Japan's Kyodo news agency also quoted sources as saying the Tokyo government was on alert after detecting radio signals suggesting North Korea might be preparing for a missile launch.

"North Korea might launch a missile within the next few days," one of the sources was quoted as saying. However, the Japanese sources also said that as satellite images have not shown any missile or moveable launch pad, the signals might only be related to winter training for the North Korean military. North Korea's leader Kim Jong-Un visited a new catfish farm northeast of Pyongyang, its state media said yesterday, in the latest of a series of economic outings that have coincided with a lull in weapons testing.

In September the North conducted its sixth and most powerful nuclear test and staged an intermediate-range missile launch over Japan. Cho said the frequency of North Korean activity tends to decline noticeably during the winter. "If it launched a provocation, North Korea has to put its military on alert, but most of its troops are needed

for manual labor for preparation of winter," he said. Other reasons behind the lull could be that Pyongyang simply needs more time to advance its missile program such as perfecting its re-entry technology. Cho said, or the North Korean leader could be focusing on boosting the economy.

While North Korea has tested an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) that apparently brings much of the US mainland into range, questions remain about whether it has mastered the re-entry technology to bring a warhead back through the Earth's atmosphere. Another factor could be that the North could be restraining itself due to a flurry of joint military exercises between Seoul and Washington mobilizing various US strategic assets, the minister said.

But tensions are expected to spike again as the United States and South Korea kick off a large-scale air force drill on Monday in a new show of force against the North.

The five-day exercise, Vigilant Ace, involves 12,000 US personnel and an unspecified number of South Korean service members flying more than 230 aircraft including F-22 stealth fighters and other cutting-edge weapons at US and South Korean military bases. Pyongyang routinely condemns such exercises, labeling them preparation for war. The US last week unveiled fresh sanctions that target North Korean shipping, raising pressure on Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear program. Pyongyang condemned the move as a "serious provocation" and warned that sanctions would never succeed.

## Japan on alert for possible N Korea missile launch



Meanwhile, Hawaii this week will resume monthly statewide testing of its Cold War-era nuclear attack warning sirens for the first time in about 30 years, in preparation for a potential missile launch from North Korea, emergency management officials said. Wailing air-raid sirens will be sounded for about 60 seconds from more than 400 locations across the central Pacific islands starting at 11:45 am on Friday, in a test that will be repeated on the first business day of each month thereafter.

### Cold War-era siren

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PANMUNJOM: North Korean soldiers stare at South Korean soldiers at the truce village of Panmunjom in the Demilitarized zone (DMZ) during a visit by Seoul's defense chief Song Young-Moo following a dramatic defection by a North Korean soldier through the DMZ two weeks ago. —AFP

A formal announcement and demonstration of the system was planned by Governor David Ige and other officials at the headquarters of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency. Monthly tests of the nuclear attack siren are being reintroduced in Hawaii in conjunction with public service announcements urging residents of the islands to "get inside, stay inside and stay tuned" if they should hear the warning.

"Emergency preparedness is knowing what to expect and what to do for all hazards," state Emergency Management chief Vern Miyagi said in one video message posted online. He did not mention North Korea specifically.

But the nuclear attack sirens, discontinued since the 1980s when the Cold War drew to a close, are being reactivated in light of recent test launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles from North Korea deemed capable of reaching the state, agency spokeswoman Arlina Agbayani said. A single 150-kiloton weapon detonated over Pearl Harbor on the main island of Oahu would be expected to kill 18,000 people outright and leave 50,000 to 120,000 others injured across a blast zone several miles wide, agency spokesman Richard Rapoza said, citing projections based on assessments of North Korea's nuclear weapons technology.—Agencies

## Pakistan blasphemy law hands Islamists dangerous weapon

ISLAMABAD: An obscure Islamist group in Pakistan has brought down a federal minister and dealt the government a stinging blow with the help of a blasphemy law that authorities have long used as a tool of repression against minorities and dissidents. Law minister Zahid Hamid resigned Monday, caving to a key demand from Islamist protesters who virtually paralyzed the capital for weeks over a hastily abandoned amendment to the oath sworn by election candidates. Hamid's surrender marked a disturbing new precedent in the country's political landscape, after the fringe Tehreek-i-Labaik Ya Rasool Allah Pakistan (TLY) tied the amendment fiasco to blasphemy charges.

Blasphemy is a profoundly sensitive issue in the Islamic republic and can rouse even moderates whose religion emphasizes devotion to the Prophet. At its most extreme, even unproven allegations have sparked mob lynchings and vigilante murders. But it is also enshrined in the country's legal code, where it carries the death penalty, with analysts warning the charge is unanswerable. "You're looking at a law that can't be defined... anything can be blasphemy, so it's very broad," said Pakistani lawyer Yasser Latif Hamdani.

Activists have long called for reform, saying the legislation is too often abused to settle personal scores and target the religious minorities. In recent months some have cautioned it is also becoming a way to stifle digital dissent, with authorities rounding up bloggers and sending out nationwide text messages warning against dubious postings on social media. Now analysts fear Hamid's capitulation has proven the statutes can serve as an all-powerful political weapon, allowing even a marginal group to deliver a humiliating blow to the country's rulers.

The amendment at the centre of the row altered the oath's reference to Prophet Mohammed. The government said the change was inadvertent and quickly reversed course but the protesters were not appeased. "The optimist would argue that this could be a one-off. But it isn't," Zeeshan Salahuddin of the Center for Research and Security Studies, a think tank in Islamabad said. "This is the net result of four decades of slow poisoning with intolerance, political indifference, and the state's inability to truly understand the public's concerns."



ISLAMABAD: A Pakistani commuter rides past by a burnt police van after a protest of Tehreek-i-Labaik Yah Rasool Allah Pakistan (TLYRAP) religious group in Islamabad yesterday. — AFP

### A history of violence

The country's first blasphemy law was originally passed down from Pakistan's former colonial masters and largely aimed at keeping the peace between different religious communities on the subcontinent. But the framework was given a shot in the arm during the rule of former hardline Islamist dictator Zia-ul-Haq in the mid-80s. His regime passed a series of new statutes that included a provision for capital punishment in cases of insulting the Prophet Mohammed. "The true tragedy is that the law never actually takes course, as the accused is often publicly lynched or beaten," explains Salahuddin. Hamid is not the first politician to face consequences over blasphemy.

In 2011, Salman Taseer—a liberal governor who called for reformation of the laws—was gunned down by his own bodyguard in broad daylight in the heart of Islamabad. A lone vigilante killed Taseer, whereas Hamid's downfall came when the government—already wounded by the ousting of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif earlier in the year over graft claims—was forced to turn to Pakistan's

most powerful institution, the army, to extricate itself from what had become an explosive situation. Taseer's son Shahbaz, himself held captive by the Taliban for five years until he was freed last year, tweeted a viral video Monday in which Hamid attempted to defend his reverence for the Prophet.

"I understand how scared this man is for his life but I'm so proud to be my father's son after seeing these cowards," he wrote. For decades leaders have forged political alliances and courted religious hardliners on the fringe for electoral support. But analysts have warned the government's credibility has been eroded by the TLY victory, leaving a vacuum which could also fuel the rise of right-wing religious parties in elections due in 2018. "There's been a generational gestation period for this shift. Political parties are becoming increasingly beholden to right-wing extremist groups with whom they've had political alliances," said Shuja Nawaz, a fellow at the Atlantic Council. "When push comes to shove, people are willing to make deals with them." —AFP

## The victims of 'peacekeeper massacre'

BOALI: A stunned crowd looks on as crates bearing macabre labels such as "mixed bones" and "Body 1" are unloaded from a UN truck in Boali, victims of a massacre by peacekeepers from Congo. "This is like a knife in our hearts," breathes Robert Konomo, 60, who lost his two younger brothers in one of the greatest blunders by peacekeeping soldiers in Africa. Last week, the United Nations returned the remains of 13 women and men to their families in Boali, a town some 100 kilometers north of Central African Republic's capital Bangui.

But more than three years later, how the slaughter unfolded remains unclear, and justice remains an empty word. A sober black

monument carved with the victims' names has been put up at the local cemetery, where relatives gathered last Tuesday for a ceremony where the bones were handed over, to be laid in their final resting place. About a dozen civilians were reported missing in the Boali region in March 2014 following a clash between, on one side, "anti-balaka" militiamen mainly drawn from Christian communities, and on the other, Congolese soldiers serving in MISCA—a multinational African force that had been deployed to the strife-torn country.

### Mass grave

MISCA handed over to the UN mission MINUSCA in September 2014. But by then, Human Rights Watch was already investigating the African-led force and accusing Congolese troops of bloody reprisals after one of their number was killed by the anti-balaka. "Peacekeeping soldiers are there to protect the civilian population, not to make them suffer new atrocities," HRW's emergencies director, Peter Bouckaert, said at the time. Searches

for the bodies of those who disappeared came up with nothing until 2016, when a mass grave was unearthed close to a one-time MISCA base in Boali.

The remains of 12 men and women were exhumed and once again, HRW charged that Congolese peacekeepers were to blame for their deaths. "I'm happy, but I'm not satisfied," said Konomo, dressed in his finest robes to honor the reconstituted skeletons of his brothers laid out on rough-hewn wooden tables ahead of burial. "I hope that justice will be done," he added firmly. Delivering justice is the goal of a medical and legal investigation into the incident since the Republic of Congo set up a probe under international pressure. A Special Criminal Court established to try crimes committed in the troubled CAR since 2003 - when onetime military chief Francois Bozize seized power in a coup—has placed Boali prosecutor Roger Poussinga in charge of the legal inquiry.

A specialist team financed by the United States was formed to identify and reassemble the bones. Three-quarters of the



BOALI: Boxes containing the remains of victims of the Boali massacre are pictured in Boali, Central African Republic. —AFP

researchers were students in forensic medicine at Columbia University in New York and the others were doctors of forensic anthropology from Argentina. "It's the first time that a (foreign) forensic assessment has been carried out" in CAR, said a science officer of the UN's police (UNPOL) delegated to provide technical assistance to the experts. —AFP

### News in brief

#### Saudi Arabia executes 7

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia yesterday executed six Yemenis convicted of murder and robbery and a Saudi man for smuggling drugs, the interior ministry said. The Yemenis were convicted of forming a gang that killed two men and a woman in three separate attacks on homes in the southern province of Assir, it said in a statement cited by the SPA news agency. In each attack, they also stole cash and other items, the statement added. They were executed at Abha in the southwest of the Gulf kingdom. The seventh convict, a Saudi, was executed in the northern city of Tabuk after being convicted of smuggling pills, the ministry said. Saudi Arabia, where executions are carried out in public by the sword, has one of the world's highest execution rates.

#### 'Honor killing' in Pakistan

KARACHI: Pakistani police have exhumed the bodies of a couple believed to have been murdered and hastily buried by their families after they eloped, in the country's latest "honor killing" case. Authorities in the port city of Karachi have arrested at least nine people connected to the double homicide, including the father of the male victim, but admitted that several family members sought in the case were still on the run. The couple were reported missing when the owner of the house they rented in western Karachi entered the property after they gone missing for three days and discovered bloodstains around the home. "The autopsy report says that the couple were killed by strangulation," Dr Rohina Hasan of the government-run Abbasi Shaheed Hospital said yesterday. Police believe the couple were murdered by family members, including male relatives of both victims, after they eloped without their consent. Authorities later began rounding up relatives of the missing pair, who confirmed they had been killed by their families and buried in unmarked graves at a cemetery.

#### Bizarre sorcery ritual

JAKARTA: Seven Indonesians were hospitalized after rinsing their hands in acid, police said yesterday as they hunted for the self-styled sorcerer who promised the men it would make them invincible. The bizarre ritual last week left the men, residents of the Rawa Kopi village just outside the capital Jakarta, with serious burns on their hands, authorities said. A mystery man named Didi, who moved into the village several months ago, claimed he was a master of traditional magic-known as Debus—which is supposed to protect a person from physical injury. The self-proclaimed magician offered free lessons and promised to make the unlucky men invincible. "These men were trying to become invincible with a man who claimed to be a 'guru,'" local police chief Harry Kurniawan said yesterday. To test that promise, Didi suggested that the men rinse their hands in a chemical that police believe was acid.

#### Explosion near Tel Aviv

JERUSALEM: A large explosion and fire in a building near Tel Aviv killed three people, Israeli police said yesterday, adding that they were still investigating the cause. The explosion, which occurred in a hardware store in Jaffa late on Monday, caused adjacent structures to collapse. Two men were pronounced dead at the scene, while a third died later of his injuries, police said. Another four people were still being treated for their injuries, medics said. A police spokeswoman said the three men killed had provisionally been identified as a Jaffa resident, a man from the Israeli Arab town of Taibe and a Palestinian from the occupied West Bank.



## International

# Macron's trip to Africa gets off to hostile start

## Burkina grenade attack greets Macron's Africa tour

**OUAGADOUGOU:** Three civilians were wounded in Burkina Faso on Monday after a grenade was thrown at French troops shortly before President Emmanuel Macron touched down for the start of his first Africa tour. The French president is embarking on a three-day trip of western Africa aimed at boosting France's regional influence, stemming the continent's migrant exodus and bolstering the fight against violent Islamist militancy in the Sahel.

The visit was marred by an attempted attack on French troops in the capital Ouagadougou just hours before Macron's arrival. "Two hooded individuals on a motorcycle threw a grenade towards a French army vehicle" as it made its way to a barracks housing French special forces, a security source told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Three residents were wounded, one seriously, in the attack which took place at 8:00 pm, the source added. "The attackers' target was the French army vehicle, which was not hit," the source said. An AFP reporter at the scene of the attack witnessed a small hole in the tarmac where the grenade detonated and a damaged civilian vehicle. Macron flew into Ouagadougou three hours later for a trip that will take in Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast-two former French colonies that deposited strongmen leaders in recent years-as well as to Ghana. His advisors say his primary message will be to stress a partnership of equals with Africa, based on education and entrepreneurship.

### Security concerns

But regional security concerns will also dominate.

European leaders are desperate to find ways to stem the flow of African migrants across the Mediterranean without leaving them to the mercy of traffickers in transit countries like Libya, where they face torture, rape, and as a CNN report showed recently-being sold into slavery.

And Macron will also be seeking international backing for a new, five-nation African counter-terrorism force, which France hopes to see eventually take over the fight against jihadist groups in the Sahel region. Ouagadougou has suffered two recent terror attacks carried out by Islamist militants-a shooting spree in January 2016 that left 20 dead and a similar assault by gunmen in August that killed 19. French special forces have been present in the country since 2010 to help regional governments tackle jihadist violence in the Sahel, particularly in neighboring Mali.

Shortly after meeting his Burkinese counterpart Roch Marc Christian Kabore, Macron told reporters his trip hailed "a new stage for our relationship with your country and the whole continent". He praised his host country for shaking off the 27-year authoritarian rule of former President Blaise Compaore in a 2014 popular uprising in which large numbers of youths participated. Burkina "is an emblem of the democratic aspirations of Africa's youth", he said. "I wanted to pay tribute to all this by making Ouagadougou the first step of my African tour," he added.

After talks with Kabore, Macron will deliver a speech to 800 students at the University of Ouagadougou followed by an "unfiltered" question and answer session with his



**OUAGADOUGOU:** Demonstrators set up burning barricade along the road next to the university where the French President addresses students yesterday in Ouagadougou. —AFP

young audience. Today he will visit a giant solar power plant in Burkina Faso, the largest in West Africa, before departing for the Ivorian capital Abidjan where the fifth Europe-Africa summit will bring together more than 80

leaders from the two continents. He will also inaugurate the city's colossal metro project, funded by a 1.4-billion-euro (\$1.6-billion) French loan before heading to Ghana, a former British colony. —AFP



## President seeks to boost France's regional influence

### News in brief

#### Runaway train kills 2

**BRUSSELS:** Two Belgian railway workers were killed and several passengers injured Monday after a train being recovered from a previous accident rolled away and hit people repairing the track then collided with another passenger train, emergency services said. The train was initially involved in a collision on Monday morning with a car at Morlanwelz, at a crossing near the industrial town of Charleroi in southern Belgium, causing the vehicle burst into flames and damaging the first carriage of the train, they said. The line was closed for the rest of the day while engineers tried to clear the line, but as the train was being towed on Monday night, it became detached and hit a group of workers who were repairing the tracks following the earlier fire. Two railway workers from the group were killed and two were seriously injured, police and firefighters said.

#### Bomb-making equipments

**ATHENS:** Greek police found bomb-making equipment and detonators in raids in Athens yesterday and were questioning nine people over suspected links to a banned militant group in Turkey ahead of an expected visit by Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan next week. Eight men and a woman thought to hold Turkish citizenship were being detained after morning raids at three different addresses in central Athens. Earlier, police officials told Reuters the individuals were being quizzed for alleged links to the leftist militant DHKP/C, an outlawed group blamed for a string of attacks and suicide bombings in Turkey since 1990. The police found materials available commercially and which could potentially be used in making explosives were found, they said in a statement. They also retrieved digital material and travel documents. Witnesses saw police experts in hazmat suits and holding suitcases entering one address in Athens. Tests on an unknown substance found in jars were expected to be concluded within the day.

#### Ireland crisis deepens

**DUBLIN:** Ireland was on the verge of a snap election after the opposition party propping up the minority government said the deputy prime minister's refusal to quit would force the country to the polls next month. The political crisis that deepened dramatically late on Monday has left the country's two main parties with less than 24 hours to head off a general election in a dispute that cast a shadow over a key Brexit summit next month. Ireland will play a major role at the meeting, telling EU leaders whether it believes sufficient progress has been made on the future of the border between EU-member Ireland and the British province of Northern Ireland. The pressure on Deputy Prime Minister Frances Fitzgerald of Varadkar's Fine Gael party mounted on Monday following the release of fresh documents about her disputed handling of a police whistleblower who alleged corruption in the force. Fianna Fail, whose backing Varadkar requires from the opposition benches to keep his government functioning, has said it will move a motion of no confidence in Fitzgerald unless she quits.

#### Turkey issues warrants

**ANKARA:** Turkey yesterday issued arrest warrants for two men accused of handing Washington fabricated reports and stealing documents in a case against a top Turkish banker suspected of violating US sanctions on Iran, local media reported. Former main opposition Republican People's Party MP Aykan Erdemir and certified bank auditor Osman Zeki Canitez are accused of giving "fake reports" for use as evidence by US authorities investigating gold trader Reza Zarrab and Mehmet Hakan Atilla, the deputy chief executive of Turkish lender Halkbank, Dogan news agency reported. The men are being investigated over whether they "destroyed paperwork relating to state security" and stole documents with the intention of using them abroad, according to a statement from the Istanbul public prosecutor, quoted by Dogan.

## Merkel 'horrified' by knife attack on pro-refugee mayor

**BERLIN:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel yesterday condemned a near fatal knife attack against a town mayor, apparently motivated by the local leader's pro-refugee stance and which left him with a six-inch neck wound. Andreas Hollstein, 54, mayor of the western town of Altena, was stabbed Monday evening at a kebab shop by a man who had loudly criticized his liberal refugee policy. Hollstein said that without two shop employees who rushed to help him, he would "probably not be here today".

With a large bandage on his neck and a wavering voice, Hollstein told reporters that the 56-year-old male assailant had asked him if he was the mayor before pulling the knife and then said: "You let me die of thirst and take in 200 refugees in Altena." Merkel, who has faced a strong backlash over her welcoming stance toward refugees, was "horrified" by the attack on Hollstein and "very relieved that he was already able to return to his family," her spokesman Steffen Seibert tweeted. "Thanks also to those who helped him." Hollstein, a member of Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU), said that he believed "a coarsening of the public debate about refugees" had led to the assault.

"I even received emails today approving of the attack—that says something about the state of our country," he said, adding that he and his family had received repeated threats in recent years. Hollstein said the attacker appeared to be under the influence of alcohol but was by no means incapacitated, noting it had taken three men to overpower him. The assailant was arrested at the scene while Hollstein was taken to a local hospital and, after treatment, released hours later, police said in a statement, referring to an "apparent xenophobic motive".

### 'Like a good mayor should'

The snack shop owner, Demir Abdullah, who came to Hollstein's aid along with his son, who was also injured in the attack, confirmed the assailant had specifically targeted Hollstein. "He asked 'are you the mayor?'... then he reached for his knife and stabbed him in the neck," Abdullah told German television. The town of about 17,000 people was well known for taking in a larger share of asylum seekers than required amid the mass influx that has brought more than one million migrants and refugees to Germany since 2015.

Hollstein, whose town won a national award in May for its work with refugees, said Altena had welcomed about



**ALTENA, Germany:** The mayor of the western town of Altena, Andreas Hollstein (GDU), 57, gives a press conference at the town hall in Altena, after he was attacked with a 30-centimetre-long knife. —AFP

450 people and said he had no plans to reverse his stance. "I'm going to continue to work for refugees, for those who are already here and for those who are still arriving, for the weak and the strong in our society, like a good mayor should," he said. Justice Minister Heiko Maas tweeted that "we must never accept that people are attacked because they help others," adding that there was no space "for hate and violence" in Germany. The assault revived memories of a knife attack on Cologne's mayor Henriette Reker in October 2015 by a right-wing extremist who was angered at her welcoming stance toward refugees.

The brutal attack came at the height of the influx to Germany, where sentiment is still deeply divided on the country's humanitarian responsibilities and its ability to integrate newcomers. While most mainstream parties back the principle of Germany taking in people fleeing war-zones such as Syria, the backlash led the far-right Alternative for Germany party to win its first seats in parliament in September's general election. Although Merkel won a fourth term in the poll, the AfD's presence has severely complicated her efforts to cobble together a ruling coalition. The AfD scored nearly 12 percent of the vote in Altena's electoral district, just below the 13 percent it drew nationally. —AFP

## US president faces fraught end to a tempestuous year

**WASHINGTON:** President Donald Trump returned to work at a festively decorated White House this week, facing a formidable to-do list that will decide whether his Christmas is filled with political misery or cheer. After spending much of November in East Asia and Florida, Trump returned to marbled corridors bedecked with garlands and graced by ballerinas but also chilled by the prospect of a daunting few weeks ahead.

December sees deadlines that, if missed, could see the US government hurtle towards a shutdown and even a technical default in the new year. The debt ceiling and government budget were on the agenda when Trump met congressional leaders from both parties yesterday. The meeting comes against the backdrop of a fiercely contested December 12 election in Alabama, which will be a bell-weather for Trump's support and could tilt control of the Senate away from Republicans. Republican officials admit that controversies may split right wing voters, handing an unlikely victory to Democrats in that deeply Republican state. Trump has thrown his weight behind party candidate Roy Moore, who has refused to withdraw despite facing a string of allegations that he molested or sexually assaulted teenage girls when he was in his 30s. The White House says Trump will not campaign with Moore, but he has questioned the allegations and urged voters to oppose Democrat Doug Jones. But some Republicans plan to vote for a "write-in candidate" whose name is not on the ballot.

### Death or taxes

Even before that Trump's first task will be to pass tax cuts, which Republicans see as absolutely vital to keep voters and donors happy. "It will be the biggest tax reduction in the history of our country," Trump said, expressing confidence Monday. "It will bring jobs, it will bring a lot of income coming into the country, buying product, et cetera." With the party in control of the White House and both chambers of Congress, the task should be straightforward. But little is straightforward in Washington these days.

The administration's chief salesman, Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and top economic aide Gary Cohn—both multimillionaires—have struggled to convince the public that the tax cut will help middle class families, as Trump insists. With the details still being thrashed out, a Harvard-Harris Poll showed a majority of voters opposed, believing it will hurt them financially. —AFP

## Kenyatta sworn in for disputed second term amid protests

**NAIROBI:** Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta was sworn-in for a second five-year term in front of a rapturous crowd yesterday as riot police sealed off an area where the opposition planned a rival gathering and teargassed people trying to reach it. Kenyatta won a repeat presidential election on Oct 26 that was boycotted by opposition leader Raila Odinga, who said it would not be free and fair. The Supreme Court nullified the first presidential election, in August, over irregularities. The extended election season has divided Kenya, a Western ally in a volatile region, and blunted growth in East Africa's richest economy.

Odinga's supporters, many drawn from poorer parts of the country, feel locked out of power and the patronage it brings. Political arguments often have ethnic undercurrents, with Odinga's supporters

pointing out that three of the country's four presidents have come from one ethnic group, although the country has 44 recognized groups. But such arguments seemed far from the happy crowds at the celebration, who cheered wildly as Kenyatta was sworn into office and as he received a 21-gun salute. "I ... do swear ... that I will always truly and diligently serve the people of the Republic of Kenya," Kenyatta said, his hand resting on a Bible.

Before he arrived, a military band in gold and blue uniforms serenaded heads of state from Somalia, Rwanda, Uganda, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Zambia and other nations as they arrived at the stadium where the ceremony took place. More than 60,000 Kenyatta supporters, many clad in the red and yellow Jubilee party colors and carrying Kenyan flags, filled the stadium benches. Thousands of others waited outside. Some, chafing at the restrictions, overwhelmed police and streamed in. Officers were forced to fire teargas to control them.

### Burning tyres

Supporters of Kenyatta - who won with 98 percent of the vote after Odinga's boycott - was the opposition to engage in talks and move on. "I'm sure Uhuru will be able



**NAIROBI:** Supporters of the opposition run away from teargas yesterday during demonstrations at Umoja suburb of capital Nairobi, after police denied permission for main opposition leader to hold a rally concurrently with the inauguration of Kenyan President. —AFP

to bring people together and unite them so we can all work for the country," said Eunice Jerobon, a trader who travelled overnight from the Rift Valley town of Kapsabet for the inauguration, before the disturbance. But Odinga supporters say

such talk of unity is tantamount to surrender. They accuse the ruling party of stealing the election, rampant corruption, directing abuse by the security forces and neglecting vast swathes of the country, including Odinga's heartland in the west. —Reuters



International

# Bali's paradise turns to tourist nightmare as volcano rumbles

## Tourists and authorities feel the heat

**DENPASAR:** Cancelled flights, missed connections and expiring visas have turned Bali into a nightmare for thousands of tourists scrambling to leave, as a volcano on the Indonesian vacation paradise threatens a major eruption. Hundreds of flights have been grounded as the main international airport was shuttered for a second day yesterday, leaving 120,000 stranded visitors in need of shelter—or an exit plan. Hundreds joined the mad rush to board buses headed to an international airport in Indonesia's second-biggest city Surabaya - 13 hours' drive and a ferry ride away—as torrential rains dampened spirits even more in one the world's top tourist draws.

The imminent eruption of Mount Agung may mean more five-star hotel living for some well-heeled visitors who are happy to sit out the minor inconvenience, but Mukesh Kumar Gupta and two-dozen members of his family aren't going to be staying at the Four Seasons. "We are practically helpless—how can we get back to India?" said the Chennai-based member of the heaving 26-member clan. Gupta's family - 23 adults and three kids—arrived in Bali 10 days ago from different Indian cities. They were all supposed to fly back Tuesday but now they say they are stuck, and nearly broke, as chaos ensued at the airport with frustrated travelers and overwhelmed staff.

"The refund money (from the airline) won't be enough to buy us new tickets," another family member, Navin Saraf from Kolkata said at Bali's main airport. "We booked

everything online beforehand, so we don't have much cash right now," he added. Towering columns of thick grey smoke have been rising from Agung since last week, and in the last few days the volcano has begun shooting smoke and ash into the sky, forcing all flights to be grounded until at least Wednesday morning. Ash is dangerous for planes as it makes runways slippery and can be sucked into their engines.

### 'Nobody's fault'

Agung is 75 kilometers from the beach-and-sandal tourist hub of Kuta, but that wasn't making German student Alex Tham feel much better. "We are supposed to go back to Germany via Singapore on (Friday) but the situation seems not good," he said nervously. "Is it dangerous here? Do you think [the volcano] will explode?" The delays weren't putting a smile on Juan Gajun's face either, after he missed a connecting flight Monday. "We have to leave the island and we can't. We were planning to go to Singapore but we have to stay here for I don't know, maybe two or three days more," said the 30-year-old Argentine. Colin Cavy, a French dive master who has been in Indonesia for a couple of months, had other problems. "I've just come to Bali two days ago to leave the country," he said.

"My visa has expired...I need to go to the immigration office." Meanwhile, cash-strapped Gupta and his bulging brood were weighing their options, which he lamented



## Thousands scrambling to leave Bali



**KARANGASEM:** A general view shows Mount Agung erupting on Indonesia's resort island of Bali yesterday. Indonesian authorities extended the closure of the international airport on the resort island of Bali for a second day over fears of a volcanic eruption. —AFP

would not include help from India's consulate in Bali. "No one can beat nature, but at least people can help," said Gupta's relative Abhisek Garg, who lives in Delhi. They might want to call inn operator I Wayan Yastina Joni, who is among the few hoteliers willing to take up an appeal by

Bali's governor and tourism agency to supply free rooms to out-of-luck visitors. "I don't mind giving free accommodation for tourists I already know," said the owner of the Pondok Denayu Homestay. "This is nobody's fault. It's a natural disaster that no one expected." —AFP

## Australia police foil New Year's Eve 'terror plot'

**MELBOURNE:** An Islamic State sympathizer planned to buy a gun and kill as many revelers as possible on New Year's Eve in Melbourne's popular Federation Square, police alleged yesterday after foiling the plot. The 20-year-old, born in Australia to Somali parents, was detained in a raid on a house in the Melbourne suburb of Werribee on Monday. He is expected to be charged over the coming days. Police claim he accessed a guide book online produced by Al-Qaeda on how to commit terror acts and use firearms, but was arrested before he could purchase an automatic rifle.

"What we will be alleging is that he was intending to use a firearm to shoot and kill as many people as he could in the Federation Square area on New Year's Eve," said Victoria Police Deputy Commissioner Shane Patton. "It is a tremendous concern to us that (during) the festive season, when people are out enjoying themselves, that there is a potential plot to commit a terrorist act. That is a huge issue for us but that is why we put the resources in."

He said the arrest meant the threat "has been removed". Federation Square is in the heart of the city, opposite busy Flinders Street train station and St Paul's Cathedral. It is one of the most popular places to see in the New Year and would be packed on December 31. The foiled plot comes a year after police prevented another attack in the same area on Christmas Day, arresting several men who planned to use explosives, knives and guns to target the location.

### 'Quiet guy'

Patton said the man, who lived with his parents, had been on their radar since the beginning of the year, part of a small community of extremists that police have been monitoring. His behavior had gradually escalated over time, but police believe he was acting alone. "The potential of the attack was catastrophic," said Patton, adding that the man was an "Islamic State sympathizer". Asked if he had been inspired by last year's Christmas Day plot, Patton said detectives were still investigating how he became radicalized. "We will be exploring where this person of interest got the idea from," he said.



**MELBOURNE:** File photo shows members of the public attending a vigil in memory of victims who were mown down by a man driving a car, at Federation Square. An Islamic State sympathizer planned to buy a gun and kill as many revelers as possible on New Year's Eve. —AFP

"Certainly, he becomes particularly energized when he sees other activities in the terrorist arena occurring." The man worked part-time at a computer repair business, with police raiding the facility. A person who knows the suspect told the Melbourne Herald Sun: "He is a very quiet guy. This is an absolute shock." Justice Minister Michael Keenan said the fact that the Christmas/New Year period was being targeted again "reminds us of the depravity of terrorists".

"They seek to strike fear in the community when Australians are enjoying time over the Christmas period with their families and friends," he said, adding that

there would be high-profile policing over the holiday period. Australian officials have grown increasingly concerned over the threat of extremist attacks, raising the national terror alert level to "probable" in September 2014. Since then, 74 people have been arrested in 347 counter-terror investigations. Authorities say 14 attacks have now been prevented in the past few years, including an IS-directed attempt to bring down a plane using poisonous gas or a crude bomb disguised as a meat mincer. Despite this, several attacks have taken place, including a cafe siege in Sydney in 2014 where two hostages were killed.—AFP

## Chinese general commits suicide

**BEIJING:** A prominent Chinese general under investigation for corruption has committed suicide, state media said yesterday, the latest development in a sweeping anti-graft campaign that has shaken the armed forces. Zhang Yang, a former member of the powerful Central Military Commission (CMC), was being investigated over links to disgraced generals Guo Boxiong and Xu Caihou, the official Xinhua news agency said.

The investigation into Zhang, 66, had verified that he "gravely violated discipline", was "suspected of giving and taking bribes" and the origin of a huge amount of assets was unclear, Xinhua said, citing the commission. "On the afternoon of Nov 23, Zhang Yang hanged himself at home," the agency said. A suicide by an officer who held such a senior post is rare, though experts have said the frequency of officials from various levels of government taking their own lives may have increased as a result of the intensity of the corruption crackdown since President Xi Jinping took power five years ago.

A commentary carried on both the

Defense Ministry and military's official websites said the CMC decided on Aug. 28 to investigate Zhang, who had "lost his moral bottom line" and used suicide as a means to "escape punishment from the party and country", an "extremely abominable act". "This former general of high position and great power used this shameful way to end his own life," the commentary said. "He would exhort loyalty but be corrupt behind others' backs, a typical 'two-faced person'," it said. Sources had told Reuters that Zhang, who had served as director of the military's Political Work Department, had been subject to an investigation, but the government had not announced it.

Zhang's downfall was foreshadowed in September when he failed to make a list of 303 military delegates to the ruling Communist Party's key five-yearly congress, along with fellow CMC member Fang Fenghui. Both men were replaced at the congress, held last month, as part of a sweeping military leadership reshuffle in which Xi install trusted allies in key positions. China's military, the world's largest and undergoing an ambitious modernization campaign, has been an important focus of Xi's deep-seated fight against corruption.

Serving and retired officers have said graft in the armed forces is so pervasive it could undermine China's ability to



**BEIJING:** File picture shows Zhang Yang (center), the director of the state's Central Military Commission's political department, applauds China's Premier Li Keqiang's speech during the opening session of the National People's Congress in Beijing. — AFP

wage war. Dozens of officers have been investigated and jailed, including Xu and Guo, both former vice chairmen of the commission, which Xi heads. Xu once ran the Political Work Department, which is in charge of imbuing political thought

and makes military personnel decisions, and along with Guo was accused of taking bribes in exchange for promotions. Guo was jailed for life last year. Xu died of cancer in 2015 before he could face trial.—Reuters

### News in brief

#### Taiwanese activist jailed

**BEIJING:** A Chinese court sentenced Taiwanese democracy activist Lee Ming-cheh to five years in prison yesterday on charges of attempting to subvert state power, further souring cross-strait ties. Lee sat nervously as the three-judge panel read the sentence at the Yueyang intermediate people's court in central Hunan province, according to a video posted on the tribunal's social media account. Taiwan and human rights groups immediately denounced the ruling as "unacceptable" and "politically motivated". Lee—an NGO worker who was arrested during a trip to the Chinese mainland in March—is the first Taiwanese person to be convicted in China on the political charge, according to Taiwan's Judicial Reform Foundation. A Chinese co-defendant named Peng Yuhua was sentenced to seven years in prison. The court said both men stated that they would not appeal their sentences. President Xi Jinping, who consolidated power at a Communist Party congress last month, has cracked down on dissent and tightened control on civil society since taking office in 2012.

#### Alleged Islamists killed

**DHAKA:** Three alleged Islamist extremists were killed yesterday in a raid by Bangladesh police as security was stepped up before Pope Francis's landmark visit to the Muslim-majority nation, officials said. Police said the trio died in suspected suicide blasts after they opened fire and threw bombs at anti-terror officers who cordoned off a house where they were hiding near the Indian border. Rapid Action Battalion police surrounded the home following a tip-off and urged those holed up inside to surrender but they opened fire instead, the force's local commander Mahbulul Alam said. "Moments later there were several loud explosions and the house caught on fire. Later we found three mangled bodies, one of them with a severed head," he said. He said the three were active members of Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) - a homegrown militant group blamed for a string of deadly attacks on foreigners, atheist bloggers, rights activists and religious minorities in recent years.

#### The 'Rohingya island'

**DHAKA:** Bangladesh approved a controversial \$280 million project to transform a desolate island off its southern coast into a temporary camp for 100,000 Rohingya refugees yesterday, despite warnings the site is uninhabitable. The announcement comes just days after Bangladesh signed an agreement to repatriate to Myanmar the Rohingya refugees languishing in overburdened camps along its border. A government economic council chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave the greenlight to the planned redevelopment of Bhashan Char island, a project that has attracted fierce criticism since being first proposed in 2015. Planning Secretary Ziaul Islam said it was hoped the island would be ready from May to accommodate some of the more than 620,000 Rohingya Muslims that have crossed the border in the past three months. "Approximately one lakh (100,000) people will be shifted there for the time being. We hope the project work will be completed by 2018," he told AFP.

#### Shell 'liable for violations'

**LAGOS:** Amnesty International yesterday called for Shell to be prosecuted for allegedly helping Nigeria's military to commit human rights abuses in the oil-rich south in the 1990s. The London-based global rights watchdog said the oil giant should be tried in Nigeria, as well as Britain and Netherlands where it has its head office. Shell's Nigerian subsidiary strongly denied the charges, calling them "false and without merit". Audrey Gaughran, director of global issues and research at Amnesty, said it was "indisputable that Shell played a key role" in events in Ogoniland in the 1990s. "But we now believe that there are grounds for a criminal investigation," she added in a statement after publishing a cache of documents relating to the turbulent period.



## Analysis

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E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net  
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## Calls to end Africa's 'horrific' land deals after firm's fallout

Large-scale land deals by investors in Africa are coming under greater scrutiny after an Indian firm demanded compensation for the cancellation of its lease by Ethiopia, with analysts saying they are hurting local communities and damaging ecosystems. Karuturi Global, one of the largest investors in Ethiopia's commercial farming industry, said the cancellation of its lease for 100,000 hectares in the western Gambella region broke the terms of its agreement with the government.

Ethiopian officials, who have earmarked some 11.5 million hectares of land for overseas firms to invest in agriculture, say Karuturi failed to make adequate progress on the land allotted for growing and exporting sugarcane, rice and palm oil. Critics say neither side addresses the more controversial issue of millions of indigenous people and small farmers being forcefully removed from their ancestral land with little consultation or compensation.

"These large-scale plantations and farms are displacing people who have lived there for generations, without creating jobs for the locals or enhancing food security," said Anuradha Mittal, executive director of California-based advocacy group Oakland Institute, which has studied these deals. "It is a horrific abuse of rights," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation over the phone. Across Africa, more than 117 large-scale land deals totalling about 22 million hectares, an area the size of the US state of Utah, have been recorded in the last 12 years, according to data from the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

Millions of small farmers and herders in Ethiopia have been moved from the land offered to investors and relocated under "villagisation" programs, often with threats and assaults, according to rights groups, including GRAIN and the Oakland Institute. The new villages where they are resettled often lack basic resources including adequate food, agricultural support, and health and education facilities, according to activists.

### Land is cheap

Ethiopian officials have denied people are being displaced, or that villagisation takes place where overseas investments are planned. The program provides better infrastructure for rural populations, they say. "We have never replaced farmers, we have never replaced pastoralists in favor of mechanized farming," said Fitsum Arega, director of the Ethiopian Investment Commission, a government body. "There is lots of vacant land available that is not taken by any farmers. We believe in encouraging private investors with the capacity to develop large amounts of land," he said.

Agribusinesses, investment funds and government agencies piled into developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, when oil prices peaked in 2007-08, leading to a surge in prices of food. Cheap land to grow food crops and bio-fuels to enhance food and energy security has become essential as populations expand. There is plenty of land in Africa, with only 5 percent of an estimated 550 million hectares of arable land in central Africa being cultivated, according to the FAO.

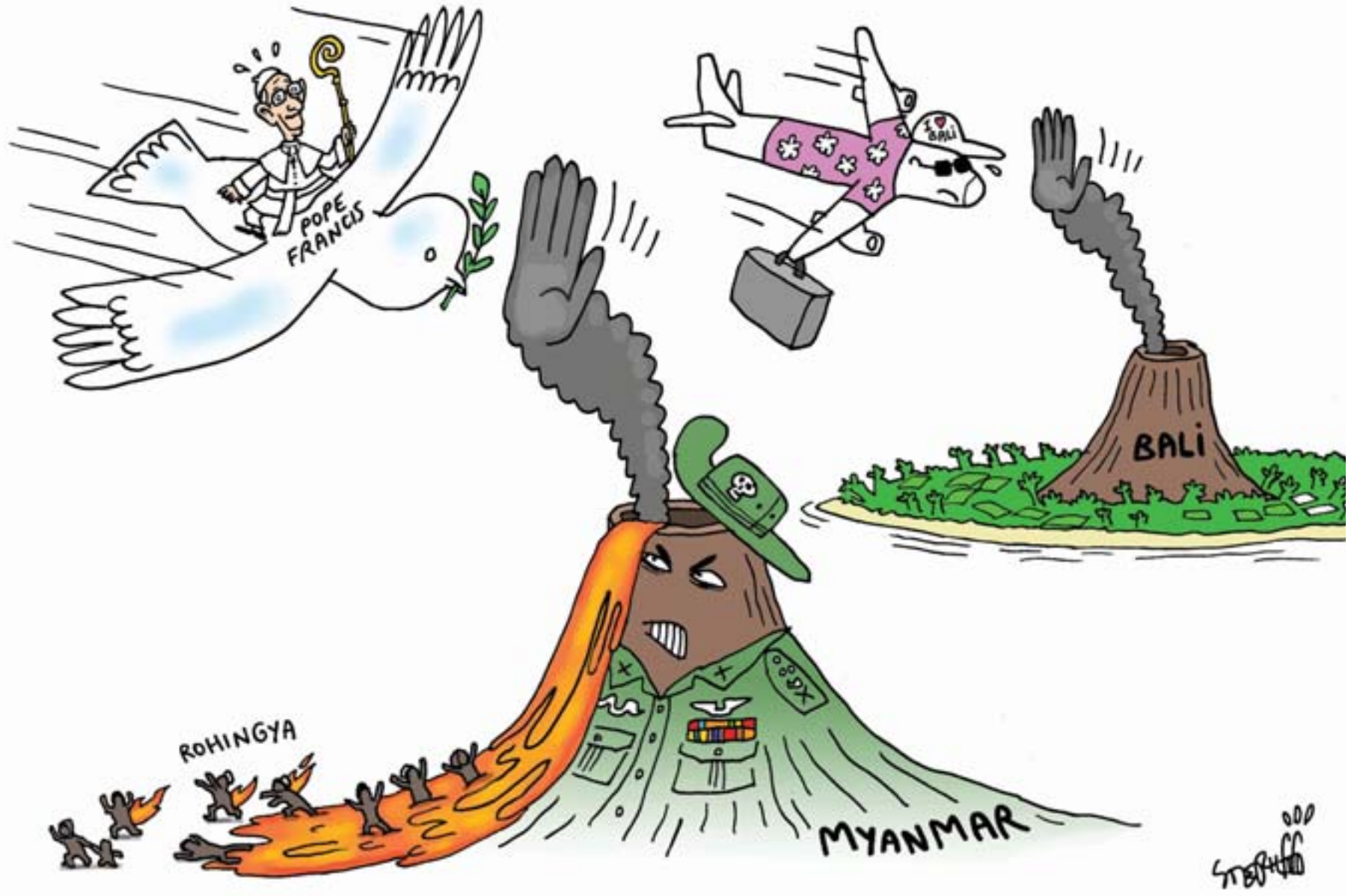
Prices were lower than in other developing countries, the terms were favorable, including no import duties on machinery, and full repatriation of products and profits. But most deals were cloaked in secrecy, and jobs for locals were often only low-paying manual work, activists say. Most deals also encompass fertile lands which are inhabited, rather than marginal or infertile land as promised by officials. "This is the land where indigenous communities have farmed and grazed their animals, and depended on for their livelihoods. This is the land where their ancestors lie," Mittal said. There is "irrefutable evidence that the locals have been forcibly evicted from their homes and lands. They have been intimidated, beaten, and even arrested for demanding their right to their land," she said.

### Local customs

Most of these deals have also failed to achieve the objectives of enhancing food and energy supply and stimulating development in the local communities, activists say. The FAO confirmed these observations in a recent report, saying "there is little or no monitoring of the land use in terms of sustainability and social responsibility of the investors". In Ethiopia, where all land is state-owned, traditional tenure systems exist alongside modern systems. Several regions, including Gambella, where Karuturi had leased land, have no formal tenure and boundaries are agreed by local customs.

In regions where villagization took place, none of the inhabitants had legal titles, said a Human Rights Watch report. The relocations may have "life-threatening consequences", with shifting cultivators - who move from one location to another - made to plant crops in a single location, and pastoralists abandoning their cattle-based livelihoods, it said. Karuturi told Human Rights Watch it did not cause any displacements for the project.

Karuturi's 2010 lease for land in Gambella - a remote region near the Sudan border - was cancelled Dec 2015. The company only developed 1,200 hectares of a total 100,000 hectares in two years. Arega of the Ethiopian Investment Commission said. The company was to get 200,000 hectares eventually. — Reuters



## Border risk awakens ghosts of Troubles

During the worst of the Troubles, this wedge of north Belfast was "Murder Mile", a neighborhood which crystallized the Northern Ireland conflict pitting Catholic nationalists against Protestant loyalists. It is in the heart of the scarred district that Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney sits in a community center, warning in measured terms that the fallout of Britain's leaving the EU is not only about trade and saving the economy.

Brexit is also about keeping the peace, a peace that cannot yet be taken for granted two decades after the Good Friday agreement erased the border between British-ruled Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. "We have tried to not turn this into a unionist versus nationalist issue," Coveney told a small group of international journalists, referring to the factions that ripped the island of Ireland apart for generations and led to more than 3,500 deaths. But Northern Ireland "is not the same as the rest of Britain, and anybody who pretends it is, is misleading people," he said.

It was not supposed to be this way. After Britain voted for Brexit in June 2016, all sides quickly agreed that the reconciliation process was sacrosanct. Key to this was the Irish border, which since the Good Friday accords is largely invisible, identifiable only by a subtle change in traffic signs and the transition between kilometers and miles. But 18 months after the referendum, and just two weeks before a EU summit that could determine the future of Ireland's relations with Britain, Dublin is quietly but firmly putting on the table Brexit's implicit threat to the peace process, through the risk of a return of a so-called hard border. "Nobody should underestimate the strength of feeling in the Irish government on this border issue," Coveney said.

### 'Inconceivable'

Coveney's presence in Belfast was the final act of a 36-

hour media tour discreetly organized by Ireland's foreign ministry. Crisscrossing the frontier, the message of the trip was that reinstating any kind of border would bring unfathomable discord to Europe's western edge. "In my family, we cross the border seven or eight times a day," said John Kelpie, chief executive of the Derry and Strabane District Council, a region in Northern Ireland that hugs the border. "It is absolutely inconceivable that they could continue with a physical impediment to going

"Bloody Sunday" of 1972, when British soldiers shot and killed 14 civilians during a civil rights protest. A majority Catholic city in Northern Ireland, Derry today has a "Peace Ridge" crossing the Foyle river and embraces reconciliation, as difficult as it may be. In the city's Bogside district, a stop is made at the Museum of Free Derry, financed by Ireland, Britain and the EU, which recounts Bloody Sunday in detail. Political murals, freshly repainted, still adorn the neighborhood walls.

### 'Green and orange'

Further south, Gabriel D'Arcy, a former Irish soldier who once patrolled the flashpoint border, now goes to work in Northern Ireland as chief executive of the cross-border dairy giant LacPatrick. "In 1973, Ireland and the UK both joined the EU and the customs posts disappeared, but unfortunately they were replaced by military posts," D'Arcy said. "A lot of roads were closed, a lot of bridges blown up and of course, both north and south of the border, there was no economy other than an illegal economy."

But during the visit, flags from the Ulster Volunteer Force, a loyalist militia, could be seen flying from the lamp posts opposite the plant. "Word gets out when we have a visit from delegations like yourselves," D'Arcy said. At a dinner in Derry, Denis Bradley, a former priest, brashly said out loud what others had only hinted at. Bradley once held a sensitive role in the peace process, helping oversee reform of Northern Ireland policing.

"Everything that happens in Ireland is Green and Orange," said Bradley, referring to the traditional colors of the nationalists and unionists. No one at the table slowed down Bradley, a guest of Ireland's foreign ministry, as he conveyed his message. "There is never, ever, going to be a border in Ireland again, it is not up for negotiation," he said. "You can put a border wherever you want, but it's not going here." —AFP

## Brexit is also about keeping the peace



back and forth." Reconciliation has worked wonders in this long underdeveloped nook of the Irish island, with multinationals such as DuPont and the computer hard-drive maker Seagate bringing benefits to both sides. But the links are relatively new. One stop on the trip was the modern North West Cancer Centre, part of the main hospital in Derry that treats patients on both sides of the border. Opened in February, the £66 million (\$88 million) facility was paid for by both governments, a rare joint initiative, even since the implementation of the peace deal.

The hospital serves Derry, or Londonderry as it is known to UK loyalists, the city which was the scene of the

## Women get chance to 'one-up' men in US units

The young Army infantry recruits lined up in full combat gear, guns at the ready. At the signal, a soldier in front kicked in the door and they burst into the room, swiveling to check around the walls for threats. "You're dead!" one would-be enemy yelled out from a dark corner, the voice slightly higher than the others echoing through the building. It was 18-year-old Kirsten, training to become one of the Army's first women serving as infantry soldiers. "I want to be one of the females to prove to everybody else that just because you're a female, doesn't mean you can't do the same things as a male," she said, describing her brother - an infantry soldier - as motivation. "I also wanted to one-up him."

Kirsten is among more than 80 women who have gone to recruit training at Fort Benning, Georgia, since a ban on them serving in combat jobs was lifted. Twenty-two have graduated. More than 30 were still in training late last month, working toward graduation. The recruits' last names are being withheld by AP because some women have faced bullying on social media.

Somewhat smaller in stature than some of her male comrades, Kirsten gave up a Division I soccer scholarship to become an infantry soldier. In body armor, helmet and rucksack, she looks like just any other grunt. A bunkmate, Gabriella, says the women push each other. "Today during our ruck march we were, like, directly across from each other and I would constantly look over at her," Gabriella said of Kirsten. "We kinda just kept looking at each other and we're, like, all right, we're both doing it, we're passing these guys and stuff. We

definitely have goals to be better than the guys." The Army's introduction of women into the infantry has moved steadily but cautiously this year. As home to the previously all-male infantry and armor schools, Fort Benning had to make \$35 million in renovations, including female dorm rooms, security cameras, and monitoring stations. Laundry was an early challenge. For years, the men washed clothes any time at night. Now, there are alarms and schedules. A "female" sign goes on the door when needed.

The women also balked at the early plan to put their living quarters on a separate floor from their squadmates. So base leaders now use one of four main sleeping bays to house the women. Cameras keep constant watch on the bay door and the stairs, and there's always a woman at the monitoring station. "There's nothing they dislike more than to be separated," said Col Kelly Kendrick, the brigade commander. He said the women just want to "fit in and do the same as everybody else".

### Challenges

This is the third class of recruits at Benning to include women. When they're not sleeping or washing clothes, they're completely integrated into their units. As sun peeked over the horizon on an October morning, dozens of infantry recruits spread across the Fort Benning field going through their morning PT drills. In the dark mist, it was difficult to tell one from another as they powered through sprints and pushups. On that day, only two of five battalions training were integrated. There still aren't enough women to spread across all the units.

The shortcoming has created challenges. In the last class, only four women graduated, so filling rotations for guard duty all night was a problem. There weren't enough women to cover every hour, so others had to fill in. As women drop out, those remaining are moved to new companies to maintain balance within units, said Lt Col Sam Edwards, commander of 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry regiment. More than 36 percent of Benning's women have left - about twice the rate of men. Injuries



In this Oct 4, 2017 photo, a female US Army recruit practices building clearing tactics with male recruits at Ft Benning, Georgia. —AP

have sidelined other women who plan to restart the training.

Army leaders are closely watching the integration to track injury and performance trends and ensure there are no problems. "It was a boys club for a long time," Kendrick said. "You have to be professional." Recruits seem unfazed. "They don't know any different. They don't notice they're integrated," Edwards said. Most just left high school, where boys and girls mingled all the time. "That's the way it's always been."

### Injuries

Commanders are adjusting to new concentrations of injuries among the women. While male recruits often get ankle sprains and dislocated shoulders, women are prone to stress fractures in their hips. In the latest class, six of the seven injured women in Charlie Company had hip stress fractures. Half of the women, Kendrick said, weigh less than 54 kg, but all the recruits carry the same 31 kg of gear. As a result,

female recruits need different advice, tailored injury prevention training, and iron and calcium supplements.

Across the base, Charlie Company is in a mock village, training for combat in urban environments, just hours after finishing a 19-km march. They kick through doors, scout for enemies and listen as drill sergeants bark out criticism and corrections. Those sergeants say all the recruits ask the same questions. "They want to know how to run faster," said Staff Sgt. Raven Barbieri. "They ask, 'How do I pack my ruck better?'"

She said some women ask how to put their hair up properly. But more often, they seek tips for getting through long marches. Sitting on the bleachers for a quick lunch, Kirsten said her brother showed her how to pack the ruck so it doesn't overly stress her hips or shoulders. He told her: "Always bring extra socks and always bring baby wipes because you're not going to be able to shower." Corbin, 19, shrugged off questions about women in his company. —AP







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Sports

# Wiggins could make Olympic eight, says gold medallist Mark Hunter

‘The rowing machine is just like a watt bike’

LONDON: Former Tour de France champion Bradley Wiggins could fulfil his aim of becoming an Olympic rower after swapping a bike for a boat, according to Beijing gold medallist Mark Hunter. Wiggins, Britain's first Tour de France winner in 2012 who also won five Olympic cycling golds, has taken up rowing after announcing his retirement last year.

The 37-year-old is in training for the British Indoor Rowing Championships on Dec. 9 at the London Olympic velodrome where he will test himself against the country's best oarsmen. With double Olympic gold medallist James Cracknell coaching him, Hunter would not be surprised if Wiggins makes the transition from rowing machine to the water.

“I think it's great for the sport because he is a phenomenal athlete and it's exciting to see what he can do,” Hunter told Reuters at a Sports Analytics Conference hosted by KPMG in London. “The rowing machine is just like a watt bike and he has a big engine and he is super fit so I think he will get some good results and go below six minutes for 2,000 metres.” “On the water? That's a different challenge being able to take that strength and power and the engine he has and put that on a boat. It's a different skill set. “There are moving parts as a rower. You have to work with other people and train day in and day out in a system. That's maybe a culture that he hasn't been in. “I've seen others try and fail. But hats off to Bradley. He wouldn't be doing this

unless he believed he could do it.”

**BEST CHANCE**

Hunter believes the eight-man boat offers Wiggins the best chance of a shot at the 2020 Olympics.

“I think he would be more suited in the sweep side of the sport, the rowing side not the sculling,” said Hunter, who won the lightweight double sculls in Beijing. “Sweep is a lot easier to learn than sculling which is more technical. It's easier learning to use one blade than two. “And the eight is a big boat that can be balanced for you and there are people who can help you. It would be great to see him race at the Henley Regatta and try to win that and work up.”

Hunter has no doubt Wiggins is serious. “Why would he put himself through it?” he said. “I think he's looking for a new challenge. We've seen others go the other way from the boat to the bike like Rebecca Romero. But going from cycling to rowing. This has never been done before.”

Hunter also thinks the relative weakness of the current British squad offers a chance for Wiggins. “It's the perfect window for Bradley because the team is not strong at the moment. Lots of people retired, there are more seats, it's a development phase.”

And in Cracknell, Hunter believes Wiggins has the right mentor. “I think it's great. I know James Cracknell is giving him some coaching and James is crazy as well

“ I think it's great for the sport ”



Bradley Wiggins

so it will be interesting. He's an endurance beast,” Hunter said.

“I think he and Bradley are probably of a similar

mindset. You might not want them in a boat together but James is the ideal guy to give Bradley some insight.” — Reuters

## Formula One's owners have plenty of work to do

ABU DHABI: The Formula One season ended at the weekend with even some drivers stifling a yawn but the sport's new owners remained upbeat about their investment and future prospects. “I feel good about where we're at,” chairman Chase Carey told reporters at the Abu Dhabi circuit ahead of Sunday's dull finale.

“I think we've made headway this year. It's early days so we're not declaring victory. But I feel good about the momentum we've got.” There may be storm clouds brewing and battles to be fought but the flamboyantly moustachioed boss, who replaced former supremo Bernie Ecclestone in January when Liberty Media completed their takeover, sounded optimistic. A new logo presented on Sunday heralds an extensive re-branding of the global series, with a big push into digital platforms, and there is plenty more to come even if details remain scarce. Work on the more complex issues, such as implementing a cost-cap, rebalancing revenues distributed to teams and a rules blueprint for the future, is just getting started. “The initiatives that we have underway—whether it's cost, revenues, engines—the reality is that there is broad-based support for the broad direction of where we're going,” said Carey.

“As you get into the specifics there are always going to be differences, that's just the reality of life. What we need to do is find the right compromises. “Nobody gets everything they want but everybody's better off than they were before.”

“So I think our goal would be to try and find those compromises and I think we honestly believe we're going to get a compromise.” The American and his team—including ex-Mercedes team boss Ross Brawn and former ESPN executive Sean Bratches—have plenty to keep them busy.

Making the racing more exciting and competitive is a priority, with the season fizzling out in the later stages after Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel and eventual champion Lewis Hamilton had looked like battling down to the wire earlier in the year.

Sunday's race under the Abu Dhabi floodlights was so professional that Red Bull's Max Verstappen, one of the most exciting drivers on the grid, did not attempt to hide his boredom. “If I had a pillow in the car I could have fallen asleep,” declared the 20-year-old.

Creating a more level playing field and fairer revenue distribution to teams after current commercial agreements expire in 2020 is high on the list but Liberty can expect stiff resistance with several competing interests at play.

Ferrari, the sport's oldest and most successful team, have already warned they could quit if they do not like what the future holds. “You've got a long list of parties so this is a game of three-dimensional chess in finding the right balance,” said Carey. “What you try to find is compromises that really are at the end of the day in the best interests of the sport and ultimately the fans.” Liberty has ramped up investment in the sport, spending on infrastructure and putting a marketing, research and digital operation in place.

That has led to a drop in earnings which has hit revenue payouts to the 10 teams with payments, at \$273 million in the third quarter, 14 percent lower than the same period last year. That has raised concerns but Carey said it was all part of growing a business. “Realistically, to grow things, usually there's no free lunches,” he said. — Reuters

## IOC bans five Russians, says Rodchenkov credible

BERLIN: Five more Russian competitors from the 2014 Sochi Olympics were banned for life over anti-doping rule violations on Monday with the International Olympic Committee saying Russia's former anti-doping chief-turned-whistleblower was telling the truth.

The banned athletes include Dmitrii Trunenkov and Aleksei Negodailo, both in the gold-medal winning four-man bobsleigh team, plus biathlon relay silver medallists Yana Romanova and Olga Vilukhina, who also won silver in the 7.5 km event.

The latest bans bring the total number of Russian athletes suspended from the Games for life to 19 this month, with the IOC annulling results following widespread doping and tampering with samples of Russian athletes during the Sochi Games.

The IOC also published its reasoning behind the life-time ban of the first Russian to be sanctioned as part of its investigation, cross country gold medallist Alexander Legkov. The IOC said it was proven that Legkov was part of a scheme to tamper with the samples of Russians at Sochi.

The Olympic body is re-testing all Russian athletes' samples from those Games following revelations by Grigory Rodchenkov, the former head of Moscow's discredited anti-doping laboratory, of a scheme to cover up home competitors' positive samples.

The IOC launched two investigations following Rodchenkov's claims with one focusing on the Sochi Games re-tests and the other looking at allegations of systematic state-backed doping.

The IOC on Monday said that in Legkov's case, evi-



SOCHI: File photo shows Gold Medallist, Russia-1 four-man bobsleigh, pilot Alexander Zubkov, Alexey Negodaylo, Dmitry Trunenkov and Alexey Voevoda competing in the Bobsleigh Four-man Heat 4. Two more Russian bobsleighters from Sochi Winter Olympics, Trunenkov and Negodaylo, have been stripped of their medals. — AFP

dence provided by Rodchenkov, now living in the United States, was used and deemed credible.

“The (IOC) Disciplinary Commission has come to the conclusion that, whatever his motivation may be and whichever wrongdoing he may have committed in the past, Dr Rodchenkov was telling the truth when he provided explanations of the cover-up scheme that he managed,” it said in its decision.

“The Disciplinary Commission would have preferred... to be able to hear Dr Rodchenkov in person. However, this does not alter its conviction that Dr Rodchenkov is a truthful witness and that his state-

ments reflect the reality and can be used as valid evidence.”

The Sochi scandal, triggered by revelations made by Rodchenkov, is part of a broader doping affair that has led to the suspension of Russia's anti-doping agency RUSADA, its athletics federation and Paralympic Committee.

The IOC has said it will decide during its executive board meeting next month on the participation of Russian competitors at the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics in South Korea in February.— Reuters

## Ravens dig into their bag of tricks to topple Texans

LOS ANGELES: Baltimore scored a touchdown following a fake punt and Alex Collins rushed for another as the Ravens defeated the Houston Texas 23-16 on Monday night. The Ravens improved to 6-5 on the season and have back-to-back wins for the first time since the opening two weeks of the season. Baltimore's Joe Flacco completed 20 of 31 passes for 131 yards and had a key 25-yard run on the game's final possession. Ravens linebacker Terrell Suggs came up with a clutch sack of Texans quarterback Tom Savage late in the fourth quarter that resulted in a fumble being recovered by Baltimore defensive tackle Willie Henry. The Ravens had three takeaways, giving them an NFL-leading 26 on the season. Savage, filling in for the injured Deshaun Watson, was 22 of 37 for 252 yards with two interceptions. Running back Javorius Allen scored the touchdown off the fake punt. Baltimore surprised the Texans when Sam Koch threw a 22-yard pass to Chris Moore on the fake punt early in the second quarter. Two plays later, Allen tied the game on a 10-yard run.

Houston pulled to within 20-16 on a 37-yard field goal by Ka'imi Fairbairn with 8:36 remaining in the game. The Texans were driving again on their next possession, but Suggs sacked Savage, causing the ball to come loose. That led to a 49-yard field goal by Justin Tucker that gave Baltimore the lead 23-16. Ravens safety Anthony Levine sealed the win with the first interception of his career with just over two minutes left. Baltimore had to overcome a huge performance by Texans receiver DeAndre Hopkins, who caught seven passes for 125 yards. — AFP



BALTIMORE: Running Back Javorius Allen #37 of the Baltimore Ravens carries the ball as he is tackled by cornerback Kevin Johnson #30 of the Houston Texans in the fourth quarter at M&T Bank Stadium. — AFP

### NFL result/standings

Baltimore 23, Houston 16.

American Football Conference						
AFC East						
	W	L	T	OTL	PF	PA PCT
New England	9	2	0	0	325	220 .818
Buffalo	6	5	0	0	224	260 .545
NY Jets	4	7	0	0	228	257 .364
Miami	4	7	0	0	174	289 .364
AFC North						
Pittsburgh	9	2	0	1	258	193 .818
Baltimore	6	5	0	1	236	187 .545
Cincinnati	5	6	0	1	199	215 .455
Cleveland	0	11	0	1	166	289 0
AFC South						
Tennessee	7	4	0	0	242	269 .636
Jacksonville	7	4	0	1	269	168 .636
Houston	4	7	0	0	283	285 .364
Indianapolis	3	8	0	1	195	300 .273
AFC West						
Kansas City	6	5	0	1	272	236 .545
LA Chargers	5	6	0	1	249	202 .455
Oakland	5	6	0	0	225	261 .455
Denver	3	8	0	0	197	280 .273
National Football Conference						
NFC East						
Philadelphia	10	1	0	0	351	191 .909
Dallas	5	6	0	0	248	270 .455
Washington	5	6	0	1	258	276 .455
NY Giants	2	9	0	0	172	267 .182
NFC North						
Minnesota	9	2	0	0	271	195 .818
Detroit	6	5	0	0	294	264 .545
Green Bay	5	6	0	0	232	261 .455
Chicago	3	8	0	0	177	252 .273
NFC South						
New Orleans	8	3	0	0	322	222 .727
Carolina	8	3	0	0	248	207 .727
Atlanta	7	4	0	0	265	230 .636
Tampa Bay	4	7	0	0	223	262 .364
NFC West						
LA Rams	8	3	0	0	329	206 .727
Seattle	7	4	0	0	266	212 .636
Arizona	5	6	0	0	203	278 .455
San Francisco	1	10	0	2	187	284 .091



## Sports

# Luongo earns his 200th victory as Panthers defeat Devils 3-2

## Montreal ends Columbus' six-game winning streak

### NHL results/standings

Chicago 7, Anaheim 3; Winnipeg 7, Minnesota 2; Montreal 3, Columbus 1; Florida 3, New Jersey 2; Pittsburgh 5, Philadelphia 4 (OT).

#### Western Conference

##### Central Division

	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
St. Louis	17	6	1	84	63	35
Winnipeg	15	6	3	80	64	33
Nashville	14	6	3	73	66	31
Chicago	12	8	3	74	60	27
Dallas	12	10	1	67	69	25
Minnesota	11	10	3	72	74	25
Colorado	11	9	2	73	71	24

##### Pacific Division

Las Vegas	15	6	1	81	66	31
Los Angeles	13	8	3	69	56	29
Calgary	13	9	1	69	72	27
San Jose	12	8	2	58	50	26
Vancouver	11	9	4	66	68	26
Anaheim	10	10	4	65	73	24
Edmonton	9	13	2	64	79	20
Arizona	6	17	3	64	95	15

#### Eastern Conference

##### Atlantic Division

Tampa Bay	16	5	2	86	62	34
Toronto	15	9	1	88	77	31
Detroit	10	9	5	69	70	25
Boston	10	8	4	60	66	24
Montreal	10	12	3	60	81	23
Ottawa	8	8	6	67	74	22
Florida	9	12	2	67	79	20
Buffalo	6	14	4	55	83	16

##### Metropolitan Division

New Jersey	14	6	4	78	74	32
Columbus	15	8	1	69	58	31
NY Islanders	14	7	2	84	74	30
Washington	14	10	1	74	75	29
Pittsburgh	13	10	3	74	90	29
NY Rangers	13	9	2	78	72	28
Carolina	10	8	4	66	67	24
Philadelphia	8	9	7	69	75	23

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).

**NEWARK:** Roberto Luongo etched his name in the record books Monday night as the Florida Panthers defeated the New Jersey Devils 3-2. Luongo earned his 200th victory as a member of the Panthers, making him just the second goaltender in NHL history to win 200 games for two different teams, joining Hockey Hall of Famer Patrick Roy. Luongo also won 252 games with the Vancouver Canucks, while Roy earned 289 victories with the Montreal Canadiens and 262 with the Colorado Avalanche. Luongo, 38, made 23 saves in his milestone victory. His counterpart, Cory Schneider of the Devils, stopped the first 29 shots he faced and finished with 35 saves in the loss. The Panthers scored the decisive goal at 12:45 of the third period. Jared McCann



**NEWARK:** Mark Pysyk #13 and Roberto Luongo #1 of the Florida Panthers defend the net against the New Jersey Devils during the first period at the Prudential Center. —AFP



### Anaheim is winless in its last 4 games

collected the rebound of his own blocked shot and flipped his fourth goal past Schneider to give Florida a 3-2 lead.

#### CANADIENS 3, BLUE JACKETS 1

Montreal ended Columbus' six-game winning streak as Carey Price made 37 saves in his second game back from injury. Brendan Gallagher, Jonathan Drouin and Andrew Shaw scored as the Canadiens won consecutive games. Price had a 36-save shutout Saturday in a 3-0 win against the Buffalo Sabres after missing 10 games with a lower-body injury. Sergei Bobrovsky, who had won the three previous games, made 25 saves for Columbus. Rookie center Pierre-Luc Dubois scored for the Blue Jackets.

#### PENGUINS 5, FLYERS 4 (OT)

Sidney Crosby scored at 1:48 of overtime to give Pittsburgh a win over reeling Philadelphia, but the Penguins lost No. 1 goaltender Matt Murray to an apparent leg injury in the second period. There was no immediate word on Murray's status. Philadelphia has

lost eight in a row (0-3-5), its longest losing streak since it lost 10 straight in February 2008. On the winner, Crosby chipped in a shot by Kris Letang. Pittsburgh won its second in a row. The Penguins tied it 3-3 with goals in the first two minutes of the third period on goals by Patric Hornqvist and Bryan Rust. After Michael Raffl scored for the Flyers, Jake Guentzel forced overtime with his second goal when he tied it at 4-4 with 1:04 left in regulation.

#### JETS 7, WILD 2

Winnipeg shook off any hangover it had from being shut out for the first time this season, routing goalie Alex Stalock and Minnesota. The Jets scored seven consecutive goals, with Bryan Little, Joel Armia, Kyle Connor, Mark Scheifele, Mathieu Perreault, Blake Wheeler and Jacob Trouba connecting after Jason Zucker and Chris Stewart staked the visitors to a 2-0

lead. Connor Hellebuyck stopped 17 shots for his 13th win of the season while Stalock blocked 21 shots in the loss. The Jets lost 4-0 to San Jose on Saturday to finish off a four-game road trip.

#### BLACKHAWKS 7, DUCKS 3

Rookie right winger Alex DeBrincat scored his first career hat trick and netted an assist as part of a four-point performance, and Chicago pulled away from Anaheim. Patrick Sharp, Brandon Saad, Artem Anisimov and Nick Schmaltz also scored as the Blackhawks tallied their second-most goals of the season. Chicago extended its point streak to five games. Chris Wagner scored twice for the Ducks, who also received a goal from Jakob Silfverberg. Anaheim is winless in its last four games (0-3-1). DeBrincat's outburst made life easier for Blackhawks goaltender Corey Crawford, who made 25 saves to improve to 11-7-1. — Reuters

## Lehmann predicts more short-pitched barrage in Adelaide

**BRISBANE:** Australia's fast bowlers will once again pepper England's middle and lower order batsmen with short-pitched deliveries on a lively track in the day-night second Ashes test in Adelaide, coach Darren Lehmann said yesterday.

The Australian pacemen tormented England's lower order with bouncers on the fourth day in Brisbane to set up the hosts' 10-wicket win in the series opener. The barrage was reminiscent of the preceding home series in 2013/14, when the Mitchell Johnson-led pace battery mowed through England's tail repeatedly to help secure a 5-0 whitewash for the hosts.

"(Bowling short) certainly hasn't changed from four years ago," Lehmann told reporters at the Adelaide airport ahead of the second Test beginning on Saturday. "It's a bit different in Australia than England where grounds are smaller and you can't really get away with it, on bigger grounds you can. So that's one for us that we see as an advantage. "They did it quite a lot to us as well, it's a ploy a lot of people do now. At the back end when the wicket quickened up and we could go after them a bit harder was helpful. That's the blueprint, it's no secret we're going to attack their middle and lower order like that." Mitchell Starc had asked for a bit more pace from the wickets after the Gabba served up a docile surface in the first test and according to Lehmann his wish could get fulfilled with the pink ball at the Adelaide Oval.

"It's a fascinating Test match, there's a lot of talk about it'll seam and it'll swing," Lehmann said, adding that Australia's experience of playing day-night tests in the past would come handy. "The ball stays pretty good, but you can make runs if you play well as per normal. And it does quicken up at night - probably the fastest wicket around Australia at night, so that's going to be interesting, how it plays. "You're more comfortable in your preparation, you know what you have to do to get ready. So the lead-in is a lot more normal for us than other teams having done it twice. This is the third time so we're pretty comfortable where it sits."

The 47-year-old Lehmann, who played 27 tests for Australia, lauded off-spinner Nathan Lyon who bagged five wickets in a key contribution towards the hosts' victory. "He kept us in the game day one, he was fantastic. He's just grown with confidence and success breeds that," Lehmann said. "For him he's actually come out of his shell a lot as well, he wants the ball day in, day out, a bit like Warney (former leg-spinner Shane Warne) did when he played.

"He's not as confident as Warney was, but he's just really starting to lead and help the bowlers out, which is great." — Reuters

## Ashes outcast Stokes eyes NZ hit-out

**SYDNEY:** Suspended England all-rounder Ben Stokes plans to play first-class cricket in New Zealand, officials said yesterday, potentially paving the way for a dramatic Ashes call-up. Social media went into overdrive late Monday when a picture showing Stokes leaving London's Heathrow airport sparked speculation he was set to join his England teammates in Australia.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) poured cold water on the suggestion, saying the 26-year-old was simply heading to New Zealand to visit family. But it soon emerged Stokes aims to play first-class cricket for Canterbury during his trip to the South Island, keeping him in shape if required for the Ashes.

"(We) have been in initial informal discussions with Ben Stokes' representatives regarding his potential availability," Canterbury Cricket said in a statement. Stokes is barred from international cricket as British police investi-

gate his alleged involvement in a late-night fight outside a Bristol nightclub.

But the suspension announced in September does not apply to domestic cricket, meaning Stokes could turn out for Canterbury. The London Times cricket writer Elizabeth Ammon tweeted that Stokes was poised to play as soon as this Sunday, when Canterbury face Otago in New Zealand's domestic one-day competition.

The Stokes controversy rocked England's Ashes preparations and the team slumped to a 10-wicket defeat in the first Test in Brisbane this week. Former Australia Test captains Steve Waugh and Ian Chappell are among those who believe England can't retain the Ashes without the hard-hitting allrounder.

Stokes was born in New Zealand but moved to England as a child when his father Gerard, a former rugby league international, took a coaching role. Both his parents have since moved back to Christchurch, the Canterbury region's main city. The ECB emphasised that Stokes was on a private trip that had not been set up by the organisation. "His travel arrangements have not been arranged by the ECB," it said in a statement.

"He is not on his way to the Ashes, England Lions or any other official training camps with the England set-up." The Ashes resumes on Saturday when the day-night second Test starts in Adelaide. — AFP



Ben Stokes

## Ishant's resurgence welcome news for India's pace stocks

**MUMBAI:** India's batsmen plundered runs and spin spearhead Ravichandran Ashwin got among the wickets against Sri Lanka but it was the resurgence of paceman Ishant Sharma that probably pleased captain Virat Kohli most ahead of their tour of South Africa.

Sri Lanka had lost 9-0 to India across all formats a few months back and were therefore never expected to provide the ideal preparation for what will be a challenging trip to South Africa for the world's top-ranked test team. After the rain-curtailed opening match at Kolkata's Eden Gardens ended in a draw, Kohli's men crushed the visitors by an innings and 239 runs in the second test, matching their biggest winning margin in the longest format.

India's batsmen compiled up a mammoth first-innings total against Sri Lanka's toothless attack, while the spin duo of Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja combined to pick up 13 of the touring side's 20 wickets in Nagpur. But it was Ishant's match haul of 5-80 that the skipper described as the standout bowling performance of the match. "Even on this wicket, to have that kind of bounce and trouble the batsmen regularly, I think Ishant was outstanding," Kohli said at the post-match presentation on Monday.

"Although the spinners obviously did a good job for us, I think Ishant was the standout bowler in this game." India's biggest victory margin until Monday's win was against Bangladesh in Dhaka in 2007, a test in which Ishant made his debut as a 18-year-old.

The lanky right-arm paceman was marked as the future leader of India's fast bowling attack and while he has gone on to play 78 Tests he has failed to live up to those lofty expectations. After falling behind Mohammed Shami and Umesh Yadav in the pecking order, the emergence of



**NAGPUR:** Indian cricketer Ishant Sharma (C) celebrates with teammates after taking the wicket of Sri Lanka batsman. — AFP

Bhuvneshwar Kumar as a swing bowler has only made it tougher for Ishant and his chances have largely come due to the unavailability of other fast bowlers.

He played three out of four Tests against Australia earlier this year after Shami was ruled out with a knee injury but played no part in three Tests in Sri Lanka in July-August, though he kept himself fit and in form by picking up 20 wickets in four matches for Delhi in the Ranji Trophy. Ishant would probably not have played in Nagpur had Kumar not withdrawn from the final two Tests to get married and Shami was not ruled out due to a slight injury concern. In Nagpur, he extracted good bounce and move-

ment from a batting-friendly track, which could prove crucial in South Africa with India set to face wickets that are expected to aid the faster bowlers. "The way Umesh and Shami and even Bhuvni were bowling was tremendous. I didn't take much wickets in the last 12 tests I played, specially in India. They deserved to get a chance before me," Ishant said after Monday's win.

"The problem for me was the wicket column was always empty. But now I am getting wickets, I am feeling pretty good about myself. "It's a healthy competition the way everyone is performing. When you get an opportunity you have to take wickets." — Reuters



Sports

# City's sharpshooter Sterling sets sights on Southampton

## Manchester City favourites to win the title

**MANCHESTER:** Raheem Sterling is looking to add to his best-ever goal-scoring tally as Manchester City attempt to improve on their own record-breaking Premier League start. Pep Guardiola's dazzling side host Southampton today having already accumulated an unprecedented 37 points from their opening 13 games. Sterling was the key man in Sunday's 2-1 comeback win at Huddersfield Town, winning a penalty that was converted by Sergio Agüero and then netting a late winner. That took his goal total to 12 in all competitions, a figure the England winger has never previously managed over an entire campaign. Sterling said calmness under pressure had been a key factor in his improvement in front of goal, but refused to reveal how many goals he had targeted before the season kicked off.

"I just get in the box and try to be as calm as possible," he said. "I set myself targets every season. Sometimes you don't match them, but that's the thing about football—you always have another year to try again. "I can't tell you the target because I don't want to get slated (criticised) for it! I always set myself a realistic target, but high standards as well and hopefully I can match them this year. "I am just really happy to be working in such a fantastic team." City's eight-point lead over second-placed Manchester United has established them as overwhelming favourites to win the title, but skipper Vincent Kompany is not buying into that.

“Calmness under pressure had been a key factor”

they became Champions League regulars, warned there was no room for complacency against Southampton. "After 15 years at this level the one thing you know and learn is you do not crown yourself champions in November," he said. "Let's be steady. "The biggest challenge for us now is to go back home and say, "The next game, let's do it again and do it again".

"I feel the team has got this motivation and I make it more about the next game. We have won nothing and achieved nothing and that's the key message here."

Mauricio Pellegrino's Southampton will arrive in Manchester on the back of Sunday's satisfying 4-1 thrashing of managerless Everton at St Mary's. That was a big improvement on the previous result, a 3-0 loss at Liverpool, although Everton's lack of confidence and organisation were significant factors in the Saints' win.

England defender Ryan Bertrand was convinced the victory, which saw Charlie Austin net two almost identical headers, was ideal preparation for a sterner test. "We'll go there today and give a good account of ourselves," he said. "They're doing well at the moment. "We'll look to build on this and go into the game at the weekend (at Bournemouth on Sunday) hopefully building on what we do today.

"We've got the win and on Everton's form we were expected to win. Let's go and test ourselves and test them in the game and enjoy it." — AFP



**Huddersfield:** File photo shows Manchester City's Raheem Sterling kicks the ball into the crowd as the final whistle blows in the English Premier League football match between Huddersfield Town and Manchester City. — AFP

## Old boys the firm favourites as Premier League clubs play it safe

**LONDON:** Sam Allardyce and Alan Pardew are favourites to take over the managerial vacancies at Everton and West Bromwich Albion, appointments that would reinforce the cautious culture that exists in the Premier League.

Allardyce, the 63-year-old former England boss, has managed six clubs in the league, gaining a reputation as Fireman Sam who arrives in times of crisis and always keeps his teams up. Pardew also has a fine track record of avoiding the drop and West Brom would be his fifth Premier League club, putting the 56-year-old joint second on the list behind Allardyce.

If confirmed, the appointments mean that eight of the past 15 jobs will have gone to British managers over 50, a surprising statistic given that Allardyce, who will have taken two of these positions, last month bemoaned a tendency for British coaches to be treated as "second class" and get overlooked.

"The Premier League is a foreign league in England," he said. "When you look across the owners,

the managers and players, that is exactly what it is now." Yet the imminent appointments suggest the traditional networks influencing English football's job market remain strong.

Pardew has been recommended by West Bromwich Albion's technical director, Nicky Hammond, with whom he played at Crystal Palace. Allardyce has reportedly been championed by Steve Walsh, Everton's director of football, who worked alongside Craig Shakespeare, Allardyce's assistant at England, at Leicester. Shakespeare is tipped to fill a similar role at Everton.

The recycling of a small number of managers around Premier League jobs is an ongoing trend. Both Allardyce (2016-17) and Pardew (2015-16) formerly managed Palace, as did 59-year-old Tony Pulis who Pardew would succeed at Albion. One of Pulis's predecessors at West Brom was Roy Hodgson, who has completed the circle by taking over at Palace this season aged 70.

### EXPERIENCED ELITE

Bournemouth's Eddie Howe is the only one of the seven British managers in the Premier League aged under 40. With only two under 50, the opportunities to dislodge the experienced elite are limited.

The attraction of managers with proven Premier League credentials is clear, particularly given the huge cost of relegation. Sunderland, who received close to 100 million pounds (\$132.9 million) prize money last season despite finishing bottom, are now facing another relegation fight from the Championship alongside

another demoted team, Hull City.

Both Pardew and Allardyce are expert defensive organisers, a quality Everton clearly need given that they have conceded more goals than any other Premier League team this season. Last season Allardyce took Palace from bottom in December to a 14th-place finish while Sunderland, whom he had saved from the drop the previous season, went down under David Moyes, another member of the managerial over-50 club who once oversaw Everton and has just been called on to save West Ham United.

Recognised managers who lose their jobs are given an instant platform to secure further employment by the Premier League's chief broadcaster Sky Sports, for whom Pardew has been working this season.

Yesterday the channel highlighted Pardew's virtues as it discussed who should succeed Pulis at the Hawthorns. "I hope he gets the job," said former Arsenal former Paul Merson. "I can't see what he has done wrong in his managerial career.

"He will have to go in there and make it very tight. As one of the lesser teams you open up nowadays and you get ripped to shreds." That logic probably explained Frank de Boer's sacking by Palace after five games and 77 days in charge this season, even though the Dutchman had presumably been employed to offer a different approach from the Pulis/Pardew/Allardyce brand. And it probably governs Everton's thinking in reactivating contact with Allardyce after five defeats in seven games under caretaker boss David Unsworth. — Reuters



**Yekaterinburg:** A photo taken on August 19, 2017 shows the Yekaterinburg Arena football stadium under renovation work in Yekaterinburg. Football fans visiting Yekaterinburg in the Russian Urals for the 2018 World Cup will find out when they get seated in one of two temporary stands that fill empty plots of land next to the arena. — AFP

The unassuming industrial home to almost 1.5 million people has a team that played middling football in the Soviet era and most recently won promotion to the Russian Premier League in 2013.

It is safe to say that its 27,000-seat stadium suited the needs of a club that has gone through many incarnations and is currently called simply Ural. Yet its size fell just short of FIFA's carefully spelled out "minimum capacities of 30,000" requirement for stadiums hosting group stage World Cup matches.

Four were scheduled for Yekaterinburg and Russia had a problem. Sinara-Development said it also could not simply rebuild the entire arena because it was listed as a cultural heritage site that needed to be preserved in its original form.

Football's world governing body not only agreed but

applauded the unique way Yekaterinburg worked its way out of a potential mess. "Temporary seats are being installed in order to ensure that the renovation work would conserve the historical facade of the stadium and that maintenance costs are reduced after the World Cup," a FIFA spokesman told AFP. The old stadium's entrance featured six columns topped by sculptures of communist factory workers and athletes.

These will stay in place for posterity's sake. The FIFA spokesman also brushed aside any safety concerns. "Inspection visits and detailed reports have shown that the temporary seats in the Yekaterinburg Arena fully comply with all safety and security requirements," he said.

Ufimstev said the stadium was "90 percent ready" and would be completed by the end of the year. — AFP

## AFC to maintain ACL format despite Gulf crisis

**BANGKOK:** Matches between clubs from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar will continue to be played on a home-and-away basis in next year's Asian Champions League despite an on-going diplomatic dispute between the Gulf states, the Asian Football Confederation said yesterday.

The AFC's executive committee decided to maintain the current format of its flagship club event in the face of a ban imposed on travel in and out of Qatar by a Saudi Arabia-led coalition that is backed by the United Arab Emirates. Clubs from the three nations regularly play each other in the Asian Champions League, although this year's competition was not affected by the standoff as Qatari teams had been eliminated before the action was taken in early June.

The confederation said in a statement it would send a "high-level delegation to the concerned countries to try and mediate the situation with the concerned (member associations) and governments to find a solution for the matches".

The dispute has already led to complications for Qatar's hosting of the regional Gulf Cup competition, with Saudi, UAE and close ally Bahrain refusing to confirm their participation in next month's tournament. Qatar is also due to host the World Cup in 2022.

The Asian Champions League already sees games featuring clubs from Saudi Arabia and Iran played in neutral venues due to a diplomatic disagreement between those countries. Qatar, along with Oman and the United Arab Emirates, hosted some of those games this season. Meanwhile, the AFC has said it will begin the tender process for the confederation's commercial rights in February of next year, with the aim to finalise the procedure by May or June 2018.

The rights are currently held by Lagardere Sports and Entertainment with the existing contract, which started in 2014 and is worth \$1 billion, due to expire at the end of 2021. "The AFC will ensure that transparent and fair procedures are followed and that the views of the Member Associations are taken into consideration," AFC President Shaikh Salman bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa said. — Reuters

Live		Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
<b>ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE</b>			
Chelsea v Swansea City	beIN SPORTS HD 1	22:45	
Arsenal v Huddersfield Town	beIN SPORTS HD 7	22:45	
Bournemouth v Burnley	beIN SPORTS HD 12 EN	22:45	
Manchester City v Southampton	beIN SPORTS HD 2	23:00	
Stoke City v Liverpool	beIN SPORTS HD 8	23:00	
Everton v West Ham United	beIN SPORTS HD 9	23:00	
<b>FRENCH LEAGUE</b>			
Metz v Olympique Marseille	beIN SPORTS	21:00	
Olympique Lyonnais v LOSC Lille	beIN SPORTS HD 4	21:00	
Nantes v Monaco	beIN SPORTS HD 6	21:00	
Guingamp v Montpellier	beIN SPORTS HD 9	21:00	
Toulouse v OGC Nice	beIN SPORTS HD 8	21:00	
Angers v Stade Rennais	beIN SPORTS	21:00	
Paris Saint-Germain v Troyes	beIN SPORTS HD 6	23:00	

## Russia builds inside-out arena for World Cup

**MOSCOW:** How does it feel to be on the outside looking in? Football fans visiting Yekaterinburg in the Russian Urals for the 2018 World Cup will find out when they get seated in one of two temporary stands that fill empty plots of land next to the arena—originally too small to fit FIFA rules.

Openings at each goal end of the stadium's facade offer a remote view of the pitch but no protection from the sun or rain. And those unlucky enough to only get tickets for the extensions' upper-most rows will stare out directly at the outer edge of the refurbished Yekaterinburg Arena's circular roof.

The UK's perplexed Guardian newspaper suggested the entire ensemble might have come from "outer space" while USA Today screamed that it "couldn't look any scarier".

All of which has left the construction company behind the 42-metre-tall (138-foot-tall) extensions sounding somewhat bemused. "This is a typical solution for sport facilities built for major international competitions," Sinara-Development Director General Timur Ufimstev told AFP.

"In addition, you can see a beautiful panoramic view of Yekaterinburg itself since the stadium is in a central part of the city." He added that the whole seating section is protected by "tall railings" to make sure no one falls off.

The additions will make Yekaterinburg Arena into a 35,000-seater that will shrink back down in size to 23,000 once the stands are dismantled when all the tourists go home.

### CULTURAL HERITAGE SITE

The world media's sceptical gaze fell on the 60-year-old stadium once it was selected as the eastern-most venue of the 12 hosting the marquee June 14-July 15 event. The Kremlin wanted to show off Russia's cultural diversity and settled on Yekaterinburg—the mining capital of the tsars in which the late president Boris Yeltsin built his career.



## 13 Ravens dig into their bag of tricks to topple Texans



## 14 Ashes outcast Stokes eyes N Zealand hit-out



## 15 City's sharpshooter Sterling sets sights on Southampton



OAKLAND: JaVale McGee #1 of the Golden State Warriors dunks the ball against the Sacramento Kings at ORACLE Arena in Oakland, California. — AFP

# Bogdan lifts Kings to 110-106 victory

## Pistons snap Celtics home winning streak

**OAKLAND:** Bogdan Bogdanovic hit a driving banker over Draymond Green with 12.6 seconds remaining Monday night to break a tie and lift the Sacramento Kings to a 110-106 victory over the Golden State Warriors. Golden State, which was playing without Stephen Curry (bruised right hand) and Kevin Durant (sprained left ankle), led 106-102 before the Kings scored the game's last eight points over the final 3:08. Sacramento earned its first win in its past nine visits to Oracle Arena and snapped a nine-game road losing streak dating back to the first week of the season. Willie Cauley-Stein had 19 points and eight rebounds to lead the Kings. Klay Thompson paced the Warriors with 21 points.

### PISTONS 118, CELTICS 108

Detroit ended Boston's eight-game home winning streak in a battle of the teams with the two top records in the Eastern Conference. Tobias Harris scored 31 points and Andre Drummond posted 26 points, a season-high 22 rebounds and six assists as the Pistons went on a late 13-3 run to put the game away. Detroit guard Reggie Jackson, who played his college ball at Boston College, had 20 points and seven assists in the win. Marcus Smart led the Celtics with 23 points.

### CAVALIERS 113, 76ERS 91

LeBron James collected 30 points, 13 rebounds and six assists as Cleveland beat Philadelphia to win its eighth straight. Dwyane Wade added 15 points off the

bench for the Cavs, who owned a 57-30 advantage in bench points and limited the Sixers to 37.5 percent shooting, including 3-for-28 3-point accuracy. Cleveland shot 48.2 percent, including 40.5 percent (15 of 37) from beyond the arc. Joel Embiid led Philadelphia, which saw a three-game winning streak end, with 30 points and 11 rebounds. Rookie sensation Ben Simmons was limited to 10 points and eight rebounds before leaving the game in the fourth quarter with a sprained right ankle.

### ROCKETS 117, NETS 103

James Harden produced another breathlessly efficient scoring performance and Houston rode his hot hand to a victory over Brooklyn. The Rockets extended their winning streak to five games behind Harden, who scored 37 points on 13-for-20 shooting while adding 10 rebounds and eight assists. He poured in 20 points without a miss in the first quarter as Houston took a 21-point lead it did not relinquish. Clint Capela added 20 points for the Rockets, Ryan Anderson scored 13 and Eric Gordon 12. Chris Paul shot just 1 for 7 but had 14 assists without a turnover, six boards and two steals.

### PACERS 121, MAGIC 109

Victor Oladipo scored 26 points and Bojan Bogdanovic added 22 as Indiana sent Orlando to its ninth consecutive loss. Oladipo hit 11 of 14 shots, including 4 of 6 from 3-point range, and Domantas Sabonis chipped in with 19 points and eight rebounds for the Pacers. Indiana's Myles Turner scored 18 points, and Lance Stephenson matched his season high with 18 off the bench. The Pacers sank 15 of 26 from three-point range while the Magic were 16 of 41 on three-pointers. Jonathon Simmons scored 21 points to lead six players in doubles figures for Orlando. Aaron Gordon and Nikola Vucevic each had 16 points. Vucevic added a team-high 12 rebounds.

### TRAIL BLAZERS 103, KNICKS 91

Damian Lillard had 32 points and Pat Connaughton added 17 as Portland defeated New York. Kristaps Porzingis returned from a one-game absence and scored 22 points to lead the Knicks, who lost their third consecutive game. Tim Hardaway Jr. added 18 points for New York but shot just 6 of 18 from the field. New York staged a furious rally in the fourth quarter, cutting

Portland's lead from 26 at the start of the quarter to eight with under a minute left. The Blazers scored just six points in the first 10 minutes of the fourth quarter, but New York went cold and was unable to come any closer.

### SPURS 115, MAVERICKS 108

LaMarcus Aldridge scored a season-high 33 points and grabbed 10 rebounds for his eighth double-double of the year as San Antonio defeated Dallas. Pau Gasol added a season-high 25 points for the Spurs. San Antonio point guard Tony Parker, who missed the first 19 games of the season because of a quad injury he sustained in the playoffs last season, returned to produce six points and four assists in 15 minutes. Wesley Matthews and Dennis Smith Jr. led the Mavericks with 19 points apiece. JJ. Barea added 16 points, and Devin Harris and Harrison Barnes contributed 13 each for Dallas.

### CLIPPERS 120, LAKERS 115

Lou Williams scored a season-high 42 points and Blake Griffin added 26 as the Los Angeles Clippers held off the Los Angeles Lakers. It was the 11th consecutive "home" victory for the Clippers over the Lakers, while the Clippers have also won 20 of the last 22 games in the matchup. Both teams call the Staples Center home. Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 29 points for the Lakers. It was Caldwell Pope's third consecutive game with 20 or more points. — Reuters

## Buffon wins Italy's best player award

**MILAN:** Italy's veteran goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon has eased some of his World Cup heartache by winning the Serie A Best Player of the Year award. "I'm happy and proud. I never thought I'd get this kind of trophy, and I'll hold on tight to it because I never won best youngster!" said the 39-year-old Juventus goalkeeper at Monday night's ceremony. "The failure to participate in the World is the biggest disappointment in my career together with some (lost) Champions League finals."

Napoli's Maurizio Sarri was named the best coach in the Italian football awards, voted for by the players, for competing for the title with a smaller budget than Juventus.

Buffon quit international football last month as four-time champions Italy sensationally missed out on their first World Cup finals in 60 years after a playoff defeat to Sweden. "Italy-Sweden was the biggest disappointment of my life," he told Sky Sports Italia.

"But we need to move on, the season must end in the best way and with Juventus there are so many goals to be achieved." Buffon won a tenth Serie A title with Juventus and helped the Turin-based side reach the Champions League final for the second time in three years. He also won a third Italian Cup with the Juve. Despite the World Cup setback, he has left the door

open on a future return for the national side. "I've taken a period of rest, I'm getting on, I've always been a soldier signed up for the national side and Juventus, so I can't desert," he said. "Even at the age of 60, if there was a dearth of goalkeepers I'd be available because that's how I conceive the idea of a nation." It is the sixth straight year that a Juventus player has won the award with Buffon following in the footsteps of Andrea Pirlo (2012-014), Carlos Tevez (2015) and Leonardo Bonucci (2016).

Buffon has said he will retire at the end of this season, unless Juventus win the Champions League title. The Serie A champions play league leaders Napoli on Friday before a crunch Champions League game next week at Olympiakos when they need a win to guarantee passage into the next round. —AFP



## Rookie sensation Ben was limited to 10 points



MILAN: Juventus' Italian goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon (L) poses with AIC President Damiano Tommasi after receiving the "Best player 2017" award. — AFP



## Business

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2017

**18** French banks did not break rules with NF account closures: CB**19** OECD sees growth peaking as investment lags, debt builds**22** 2018 Chevrolet Impala comes with new standard features

VIENNA: A file photo shows OPEC delegates attending a ministerial meeting.

# Tough OPEC meeting looms tomorrow

## Cartel may rethink output cuts amid price rally

**DUBAI/VIENNA:** OPEC is heading for tougher-than-expected policy talks this week as its leader Saudi Arabia pushes to extend oil output cuts by nine months while non-member Russia is hesitating on the curbs' duration due to worries that the market could overheat.

"It will not be an easy meeting and we always look at various scenarios," United Arab Emirates Energy Minister Suhail bin Mohammed Al-Mazroui said yesterday in Dubai before leaving for the OPEC gathering in Vienna. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, Russia and nine other producers are cutting oil output by about 1.8 million barrels per day until March 2018, and tomorrow will discuss extending the deal.

The market had largely expected OPEC to prolong cuts until the end of 2018 but doubts have emerged in the last few days. Saudi Arabia has signaled that it wants oil to trade at about \$60 a barrel as the kingdom prepares to list shares in national oil champion Aramco and is fighting a large fiscal deficit. The Russian government also wants high oil prices ahead of a presidential election in March 2018. But officials in Moscow have voiced worries about pricier oil boosting the ruble, which could undermine the competitiveness of Russia's economy.

As oil rallied above \$60 per barrel, US producers aggressively hedged their future production, raising fears of another spike in shale output in the United States, which is not participating in the global production curbs. Goldman Sachs, one of the most active banks in commodity trading and oil producer hedging, said yesterday in a note the outcome of the OPEC meeting was uncertain as Brent oil had risen above \$63 per barrel.

"The push for a nine-month extension, four months before the cuts end and given an accelerating rebalancing further stands in the face of prior comments that the cuts should remain data-dependent to assess their effectiveness," the US bank said. Citi, one of Goldman's main rivals, said it expected major producers to end production cuts sooner rather than later.



## UAE minister predicts no easy meeting

Russian production from April onward," Goldman said, adding "as a result, the announcement of an only six-month extension would still initially appear bullish relative to our expectation".

On Friday, Russia said it was ready to support extending the output-cutting deal but had still to

decide on the duration. On Monday, Reuters reported that a major Russian production project led by Exxon Mobil was preparing to ramp up output by a quarter from next year.

The project is not subject to the global output-cutting deal but the development would signal an obstacle to Russia's efforts on production curtailment.

The Exxon project involves Rosneft, the Kremlin-owned state producer whose boss Igor Sechin, a close ally of President Vladimir Putin, has long been a critic of Moscow's deal with the 14-country OPEC. Sources close to talks between OPEC and Russia told Reuters Moscow wanted to fine-tune the language of the deal to include an option to review the agreement if global stocks fell steeply.

The supply pact is aimed at reducing oil stocks in industrialized countries to their five-year average. The latest figures suggest OPEC is more than halfway there, with OPEC sources saying the target could be reached after June 2018. Fatih Birol, head of the International Energy Agency, which advises industrialized nations on energy policy, told Reuters he expected the market to tighten towards the second half of 2018 due to robust demand. — Reuters

## Slowing outflows let Qatar wind down bank support operation in Oct

**DUBAI:** Slowing withdrawals of deposits from Qatari banks permitted Qatar's government to stop pumping money into the banks last month to shield them from sanctions imposed by other Arab countries, central bank data showed yesterday.

Banks and investors from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt began pulling deposits and other funds out of Qatar in June, when those four states cut diplomatic and trade ties with Doha. The deposit outflow initially put the balance sheets of some Qatari banks under pressure, and the government responded by injecting billions of dollars of its own money into accounts at the banks. Much of the money came from the country's sovereign wealth fund, the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA).

But the outflows are now slowing, as the four states run out of money left to withdraw. That is reducing the need for the government to aid the banks. In October, foreign customers' deposits at banks in Qatar - the vast majority in the form of foreign-currency deposits - fell by only 5.1 billion riyals (\$1.4 billion) from the previous month, to

137.7 billion riyals, the data showed.

The decline was slower than falls of 6.2 billion riyals in September, 8.2 billion in August, 13.4 billion in July and 14.0 billion in June. Meanwhile, the Qatari public sector's deposits with local banks fell slightly in October after soaring during the initial months of the sanctions, indicating the government was no longer pumping fresh money into the system as a whole.

The deposits dropped by 4.2 billion riyals to 298.4 billion riyals last month, after increasing by 7.2 billion riyals in September and rising by more than three times that amount in each of the previous three months. The central bank has not responded to queries about details of official support to banks, but central bank governor Sheikh Abdullah bin Saud Al-Thani said last month that the government and the central bank had more than enough financial resources to protect the banking system from outflows. After the sanctions were imposed, Qatari banks' borrowing from foreign banks also fell sharply as institutions from the four Arab countries stopped extending loans.

October's data suggested, however, that Qatari banks have begun to have success filling this gap by increasing their borrowing from Asia and Europe. Qatari banks owed banks outside the country 171.7 billion riyals in October, up from 169.5 billion riyals in September; it was the first increase since the sanctions were imposed. In May, before the sanctions, the figure stood at 234.5 billion riyals. — Reuters

## Kuwait's domestic credit up by 3.1% in Sept: KFH report

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) said yesterday that the total domestic credit granted by the banking sector has grown 3.1 percent to KD 35.8 billion, equaling \$118 billion, as of September 2017.

Meanwhile, financial facilities directed to industrial, non-bank financial institution, real estate, and construction sectors have fell in September by 11.8 percent, 4.1 percent, and 0.6 percent respectively, KFH said in its economic report, entitled "Credit Activity Development in Kuwait".

The report indicated that the personal facilities sector recorded an increase in value in September by 3.6 percent to KD 515.5 million, equaling \$1.7 billion compared to same period last year.

The crude oil and gas sector also saw an increase in

value in September by 50.7 percent to KD 437.3 million, equaling \$1.4 billion, compared to September 2016, it said. The sector also recorded an increase in the total credit in September by 3.6 percent to KD 1.3 billion (\$4 billion), the report indicated. Personal credit facilities amounted to some 42 percent in September of the total 41.8 percent of credit granted in September 2016, said KFH. Furthermore, credit share granted to real estate and construction sector amounted to some 28 percent of the total credit granted last September compared to last year's 29 percent.

Leased facilities' share increased to 71.4 percent of personal facilities last September, compared to 67.8 percent in September 2016. Personal facilities' share has also amounted to some 19 percent of personal credit facilities in September, compared to 22 percent of same period last year. Consumption loans amounted to 7.4 percent of personal credit facilities in September, which is a decrease from last year's eight percent. Moreover, personal consumption loans granted to individuals to finance medical treatment and education coverage decreased by 4.6 percent to KD 1.1 billion (\$3.3 billion), in September. — KUNA



Business

# French banks did not break rules with NF account closures: CB

## Societe Generale shares climb after cost-cutting plan

PARIS: French bank Societe Generale and its Credit Du Nord subsidiary did not violate banking regulations in shutting down the accounts of the far-right National Front party, the Bank of France said yesterday. National Front chief Marine Le Pen last week accused the banks, as well as HSBC which closed her personal account, of launching a "banking fatwa" to silence her party.

The banks declined to offer fuller explanations for the account closures but said they had acted within regulatory requirements. "The closure of the National Front's accounts by the banks does not appear to reflect wrongdoing vis-a-vis their regulatory obligations, and leaves no reason to believe they acted with discrimination," the central bank said.

Le Pen said she would file a legal complaint this week. "It will be up to the court to decide," Le Pen said in an interview on BFM TV, adding that the account closures prevented the party from operating properly. The Bank of France revealed that the National Front had held 16 accounts with Societe Generale until Sept. 25, as well as a deposit account with Credit Du Nord on which two months notice was given in late October.

That appeared to contradict Le Pen who last week said the central bank had ordered Credit Du Nord to manage an account for the party and that the bank had refused to process cheques and credit card payments. Le Pen is smarting from defeat in this year's presidential

and parliamentary elections, during which she accused French banks of being politically biased for not lending to her campaigns.

Shares in Societe Generale climbed yesterday after the French bank unveiled a strategic plan that will see it shutter 15 percent of its branches in its home market and cut even more jobs. While the plan aims to boost profits, in the short term France's third-largest bank will need to book a charge of 400 million euros (\$476 million) to implement the restructuring. It announced it will also book against fourth quarter earnings 170 million euros for an exception tax levied by the French government.

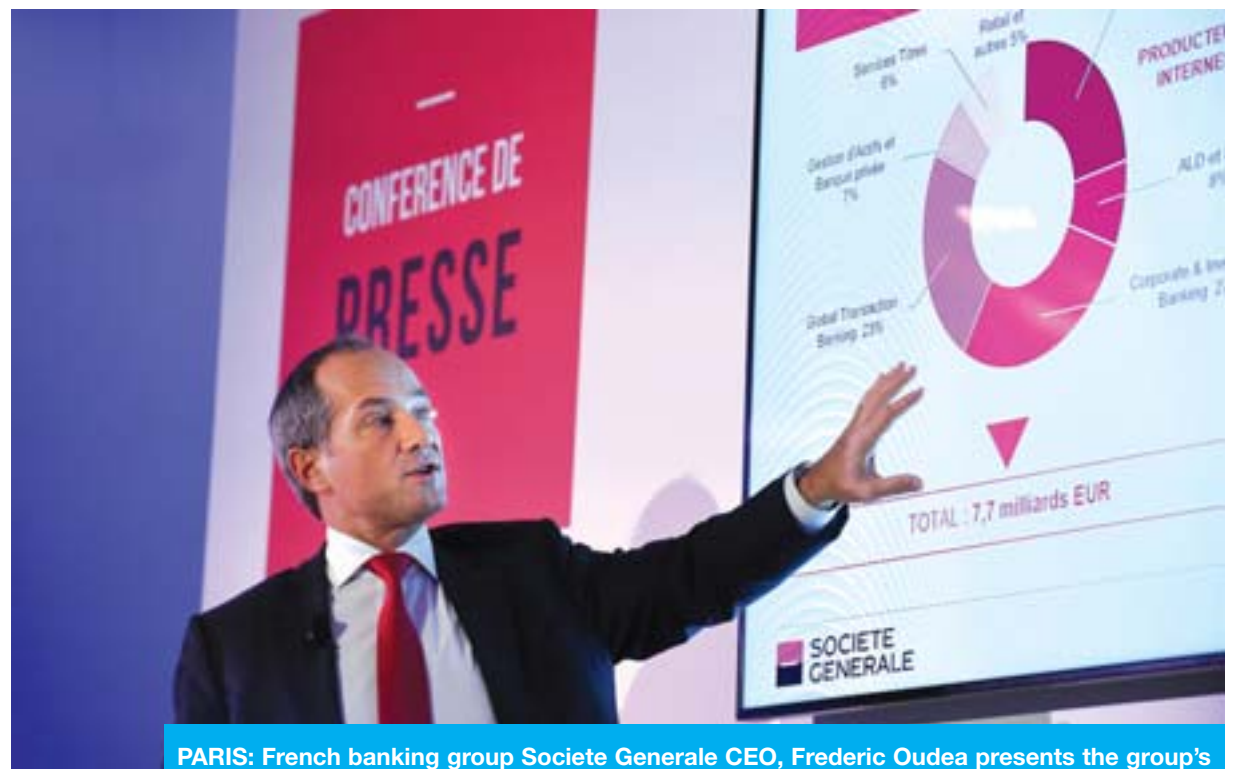
Societe Generale's shares rose 0.8 percent in early trading, while the Paris CAC 40 index edged 0.05 percent higher. The strategic plan through 2020 unveiled late Monday aims to make 1.1 billion euros in overall savings, while at the same achieving an increase in revenue of 3 percent per year.

It targets raising its net profit per share to 6.5 euros in 2020, compared to 4.3 euros in 2016. Societe Generale's chief executive Frederic Oudea said the bank aims to remain a trusted partner to clients and is committed to a positive transformation of societies and economies.

"Our ambition is therefore to generate superior, profitable and sustainable growth," he said in a statement. The bank announced that will see it close 300 of its branches in France, and cut an additional 900 jobs on top of the 2,500



### Banks failed to offer fuller explanations



PARIS: French banking group Societe Generale CEO, Frederic Oudea presents the group's 2020 strategic and financial plan "Transform to Grow" in Fontenay-sous-Bois near Paris yesterday. —AFP

announced since the beginning of 2016. With ultralow interest rates set to continue in Europe, Societe Generale expects growth of more than one percent in France.

However it is targeting more than five percent growth in its businesses outside France. In particular it aims to become the top foreign bank in Russia. —Agencies

## Catalonia turmoil sets Spain retail sales falling

MADRID: Spanish retail sales fell for the first time in over three years in October, with sales in Catalonia dropping sharply after an illegal independence vote on Oct. 1 pushed the country into its worst political crisis in more than four decades. The vote prompted a stand-off with the central government, which then took control of the region. The deadlock left eight of the regional cabinet in jail awaiting trial after a declaration of independence Oct. 27 that the courts ruled illegal.

The crisis hurt many of Catalonia's economic indices in October, with car sales, job creation and hotel-stays all underperforming the rest of the country. Almost 3,000 companies have moved their legal headquarters from the region since the vote. Spanish retail sales fell 0.1 percent in October from a year earlier on a calendar-adjusted basis, after increasing by a revised 1.6 percent in September, the National Statistics Institute (INE) said yesterday.

The September figure was revised from an original reading of a 2.1 percent increase. The unadjusted series fell 1.2 percent, INE said, with Catalonia decreasing the most out of all of Spain's 17 regions, down 3.9 percent from a year earlier. The wealthy, industrialized region of Catalonia weighs heavily in the index alongside Madrid, which was flat on the year.

Catalonia's fall, coupled with an especially mild October which hit sales of winter clothing and textiles across the country, were the main reasons for the month's drop, according to one analyst with access to INE's data but who preferred to remain anonymous.

The government has said that Spain's economy would grow just 2.3 percent next year if political tensions continued after the Dec. 21 regional election, but that could rise to three percent if the problem dissipated. The OECD yesterday cut its economic forecast for Spain for 2018 by 0.1 percentage points to 2.3 percent and warned the situation with Catalonia could drag on domestic demand. —Reuters

## Cash and history keep Europe as Africa's prime partner

ABIDJAN: Hard cash but also the intangible ties of history have kept Europe in pole position as Africa's main partner, even if an influx of Chinese investment is prompting many African countries to look eastward. Successive years of hefty spending, particularly in infrastructure, have propelled China into the continent's top slot when calculated in terms of individual investor nations.

But a quite different picture emerges when this is seen through a broader prism—the ties between Africa and Europe as a 28-nation bloc.

"Europe is in front, given the shared history," said Pierre Dagbo Gode, professor of political science at the Felix Houphouet Boigny University of Abidjan. "Europe is the premier trade partner, the top investor, the top donor," a European diplomat in Brussels added, speaking ahead of a summit between the EU and African Union in Abidjan today and tomorrow. According to the Chinese ministry of commerce, trade between China and Africa was worth \$149.2 billion last year — \$92.3 billion in exports from China, against \$56.9 billion of imports. That made China, for the eighth year, Africa's foremost individual trade partner—well ahead of France and Germany.

However, trade between the EU and Africa totalled 286 billion euros in 2015 (\$341 billion at current rates) with a 22-billion-euro surplus in Europe's favor. Europe also contributed some 21 billion euros in foreign aid—more than the United States and China combined.

"When people say Europe has let China overtake it you have to keep things in perspective," said an EU diplomat in Abidjan. Factors such as language, cultural cooperation, university exchanges, a military presence and aid all help to ensure "Europe remains the point of reference" for Africa, the source said.

### 'Aggressive policy'

Even so, Chinese competition is hotting up. Beijing's big policy is to mix aid and loans at ultra-low interest rates to muscle in on numerous large-scale projects.

"They have a very aggressive policy, in the good sense of the term, on loans and this seduces states," said one financial observer in the region. According to China's state-run Xinhua news agency, quoting Fitch Ratings,



ABIDJAN: African Development Bank chairman Akinwumi Adesina (center) speaks during the 6th EU-Africa Business Forum on Monday in Abidjan, ahead of the African Union - European Union summit. —AFP

loans from China to Africa over the past decade amounted to \$67.2 billion—a whole \$12.5 billion more than those made by the World Bank. "The aspects which attract Chinese enterprises to Africa are the development potential, resources and the market," said Xu Tiebing, professor of international relations at the Communication University of China. "The Chinese government has a South 'complex'. They think that when the South becomes powerful the world will be more balanced," added Xu.

### Natural destination

"China thinks perhaps that as two of the world's poles of development (Europe and North America) are already in decline, Africa, Latin America and Asia are becoming the natural destination for Chinese investment. "In the past, China was more concerned by the political angle, but now ascribes greater importance to common development and to mutual advantage," he said.

A European diplomat commented: "China's presence and engagement in Africa attracts a lot of attention. "But China is not the only one massively gearing up its interests in Africa. Look at Japan, India and the Gulf States. There is a multitude of players." The so-called BRIC states—Brazil, India, China and Russia—have all gained a foothold on the

continent. Bolstered by its African roots and after first concentrating on fellow Portuguese-speaking countries, Brazil has been extending its influence, although its internal political problems have hampered the process.

Brazil-African trade was worth \$12.433 billion (\$7.830 billion of that made up of Brazilian exports) in 2016 — but that was well down on the 2013 figure of \$28.5 billion. "With Lula (former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, in power 2003-2010), Brazilian-African relations went through a very intensive phase," explained Pio Penna Filho, a professor of international relations at the University of Brasilia.

After Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016) succeeded Lula, Brazil "did not put an end to its African policy but there was a lessening of this intensity," owing to a political crisis sweeping the Latin American giant, he said. Africa's allure for investors is multifaceted. One attraction is the notion that, in many countries, a middle class is rising, providing a potent market for housing, transport, clothing, education and consumer products. Coupled with that is demography—the continent's population is expected to roughly double to 2.5 billion by 2050, according to a UN estimate. But, as Dagbo notes, there is also an age-old view of Africa as a "raw materials zone", a treasure trove of natural resources that are extracted but not transformed. —AFP

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.714
Indian Rupees	4.670
Pakistani Rupees	2.864
Sri Lankan Rupees	1.967
Nepali Rupees	2.921
Singapore Dollar	225.570
Hongkong Dollar	38.750
Bangladesh Taka	3.579
Philippine Peso	5.974
Thai Baht	9.266

#### GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.680
Qatari Riyal	83.097
Omani Riyal	785.733
Bahraini Dinar	803.370
UAE Dirham	82.373

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	20.000
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	17.084
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.214
Tunisian Dinar	122.160
Jordanian Dinar	426.630
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.016
Syrian Lira	0.000
Morocco Dirham	32.651

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.350
Euro	362.060
Sterling Pound	404.240

Canadian dollar	238.730
Turkish lira	77.230
Swiss Franc	309.940
Australian Dollar	231.300
US Dollar Buying	301.150

#### GOLD

20 Gram	260.520
10 Gram	133.180
5 Gram	67.430

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

#### Rate for Transfer Selling Rate

US Dollar	302.000
Canadian Dollar	238.315
Sterling Pound	404.200
Euro	361.675
Swiss Frank	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
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

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
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.222461	0.234461
New Zealand Dollar	0.202289	0.211789
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.232707	0.241707
US Dollars	0.298250	0.302670
US Dollars Mint	0.299750	0.302670
<b>Asia</b>		
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
<b>Arab</b>		
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

# OECD sees growth peaking as investment lags, debt builds

## Euro area seen outpacing US, Japanese growth

**PARIS:** Global economic growth is set to peak at an eight-year high next year as uninspiring investment and increasingly dangerous debt levels limit room for further improvement, the OECD said yesterday. The global economy is on course to grow 3.6 percent this year before reaching 3.7 percent next year then ease back to 3.6 percent in 2019, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) said in its latest outlook.

The Paris-based policy forum nudged up its estimate for this year from 3.5 percent in its last forecasts dating from September, and left its 2018 projection unchanged.

"Things look really good now, but unless we see some robust private sector activity and renewal of capital stock, generating higher real wages, we are not going to maintain the growth rates we see today,"

OECD chief economist Catherine Mann told Reuters.

"There is still work to be done, we're still resting a bit comfortably on the incoming data, which have been supported by fiscal and monetary policy," she added. Mann said that in particular companies were not investing enough to make up for the depreciation of existing assets, and even less so in making additional invest-

ments for further growth.

Despite weak private investment, households and companies were bingeing on cheap debt in many countries, exposing themselves to trouble as central banks tighten monetary policy.

### Mixed outlook

With its strongest growth in a decade, the euro area was seen outpacing other major developed economies this year with 2.4 percent growth before easing to 2.1

percent in 2018 and 1.9 percent in 2019. In September, the OECD had foreseen growth of 2.1 percent this year for the euro area and 1.9 percent next year.

Marginally raising its estimates for the United States, the OECD forecast growth in the world's biggest economy would pick up from 2.2 percent this year to 2.5 percent in 2018, boosted

by an expected cut in corporate and income tax, before easing to 2.1 percent in 2019.

The OECD trimmed its forecast for Japanese growth this year to 1.5 percent and estimated growth would ease afterwards as budget tightening resumed. It left its forecast for next year at 1.2 percent and estimated growth would fall to 1.0 percent in 2019. But it warned



**DRESDEN:** A shopper carries bags in a shopping center decorated for Christmas yesterday in Dresden, eastern Germany. Global economic growth is set to peak at an eight-year high next year, the OECD said yesterday. — AFP



**Global economy on course to grow 3.6% this year**

## Banks could support UK economy in disorderly Brexit: BoE

**LONDON:** Britain's lenders could support the economy through a "disorderly" Brexit, the Bank of England said yesterday, as the sector passed its latest round of stress tests.

The central bank ruled however that the nation's seven top retail banks must hold another £6.0 billion (\$8.0 billion, 6.7 billion euros) in combined capital reserves to safeguard against crisis. "The stress-test scenario ... encompasses a wide range of UK macroeconomic risks that could be associated with Brexit," read a statement from the BoE's Financial Policy Committee (FPC).

"As a result, the FPC judges the UK banking system could continue to support the real economy through a disorderly Brexit." BoE governor Mark Carney, speaking at a press conference, warned however that such a Brexit was "in nobody's interest" and would have "an economic impact on households and businesses".

Carney added that a disorderly Brexit "is not a good scenario... it is one we are all working to avoid as it has some quite material economic costs—even if the financial system continues to operate through it". Britain will leave the European Union in March 2019 after the nation voted last year to leave the bloc, but the terms of its exit and future trade relationship are under negotiation. There are concerns a deadlock in the talks could see Britain leave without a trade deal in place, potentially causing severe disruption to its economy.

The stress assessments were designed to see whether the banking sector can weather a fierce worldwide recession, crashing house prices and soaring unemployment. However, the BoE warned that both a chaotic Brexit and a global recession combined with misconduct costs—could result in "more severe" economic fallout than the tests anticipate. The FPC regulator, established after the global financial crisis and tasked with safeguarding Britain's financial system, added it would lift its so-called capital buffer rate from 0.50 percent to 1.0 percent from November 2018.

That will give Britain's retail lenders combined capital reserves of £11.4 billion. The regulator added it would re-examine the adequacy of the buffer rate in light of its findings. "The combination of a disorderly Brexit and a severe global recession and stressed misconduct costs could result in more severe conditions than in the stress test," the FPC



**LONDON:** Bank of England Governor Mark Carney speaks during the Bank of England's financial stability report at the Bank of England in central London yesterday. — AFP

said in its Financial Stability Report.

"In such circumstances, capital buffers would be drawn down substantially more than in the stress test and, as a result, banks would be more likely to restrict lending to the real economy."

### 'Resilient to recession'

The Bank of England added yesterday that all seven lenders passed its stress assessments for the first time since it began testing in 2014, and are "resilient" to recession. Barclays and Royal Bank of Scotland struggled in the central bank's severe economic stress scenario.

However, the pair passed the latest tests as they have already taken action to strengthen their balance sheets since the end of last year.

RBS had been the only bank to fail the last tests in November 2016. "For the first time since the Bank of England launched its stress tests in 2014, no bank needs to strengthen its capital position as a result of the stress test," the BoE added yesterday. "The 2017 stress test shows the UK banking system is resilient to deep simultaneous recessions in the UK and global economies, large falls in asset prices and a separate stress of misconduct costs." — AFP

## Diplomats search for ways to save trade system

**GENEVA:** Diplomats are searching for ways to prevent the global trade dispute resolution system from freezing up, after the Trump administration blocked appointments to the body that acts as the supreme court for global trade. US President Donald Trump has vetoed the appointment of judges to fill vacancies on the seven-member Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization, which provides final decisions in arguments between countries over trade.

"Members are already having a conversation about what to do with this situation," WTO Director General Roberto Azevedo told reporters. "They are floating ideas, they are discussing. We have to see how that evolves." The WTO normally has seven judges and needs three to sign off on every appeal ruling. But two have left and another goes in December, leaving only four - just one above the minimum - to deal with a growing backlog of trade disputes.

Azevedo said he did not think the situation was a threat to the WTO's survival but it was already having an impact, and the longer it went on the more acutely it would be felt.

In a confidential note sent to all WTO members on Monday, a copy of which was reviewed by Reuters, the Appellate Body said departing judges would continue working after their terms ended. The United States has objected to that practice in the past.

Appointments to the Appellate Body are meant to be unanimously agreed by all 164 members, like all decisions at the WTO. The fine print says the WTO can switch to majority voting if necessary, but diplomats are reluctant to do that for fear of unravelling a system that relies on consensus as a bulwark to protectionism. Azevedo said the Trump administration had made clear it had misgivings about the way the world trade system has functioned, although it had not linked any specific demands for reform with the decision to halt appointments to the appeals panel.

The Trump administration has not publicly explained why it is blocking the appointment of judges to the trade panel. The US mission to the WTO in Geneva declined to comment.

### Emergency

Several trade experts said the move seemed to fit Trump's ideology of favoring bilateral trade deals over the multi-lateral system embodied by the WTO. Pieter Jan Kuijper, professor of law at the University of Amsterdam, said Trump's trade representative, Robert Lighthizer, preferred the pre-WTO practice of negotiating the outcome of trade disputes rather than being bound by WTO rulings. — Reuters

## SoftBank offers to buy Uber shares at 30% discount

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Japan's SoftBank Group Corp is offering to purchase shares of Uber Technologies Inc at a valuation of \$48 billion, a 30 percent discount to its most recent valuation of \$68.5 billion, a person familiar with the matter said on Monday.

The investment, which was approved by the Uber board in October, would also trigger a string of governance changes at Uber that would limit some early shareholders' voting power, expand the board from 11 to 17 directors and cut the influence of former Chief Executive Travis Kalanick.

The investment and board moves are supported by new Chief Executive Dara Khosrowshahi and come at the end of a year of scandals and change for Uber, including the announcement last week that executives covered up a major hack in 2016. The consortium of investors led by SoftBank and Dragonair Investment Group plan to take a stake of at least 14 percent in the ride-services company. The tender offer will launch, sources told Reuters, and investors have nearly a month to respond. The SoftBank-led investor group will



**TOKYO:** This file photo taken on February 8, 2017 shows the logo of Japanese mobile provider SoftBank is displayed at an entrance of a shop in Tokyo's shopping district Ginza. — AFP

acquire two of the new board seats, with the remaining four going to independent directors.

If there are not enough interested sellers, SoftBank can still walk away from the deal. SoftBank is also expected to make a separate \$1 billion investment in the company at the \$68.5 billion valuation. Another person familiar with the deal said the offer price was in line with what investors had been expecting. SoftBank's offer is close to what Uber was worth in 2015, when shares were priced a little

less than \$40 apiece for a \$51 billion valuation, according to data from PitchBook Inc. Even at the discounted price, Uber is the world's second-highest valued private venture-backed company, after China's ride-service company Didi Chuxing, and the offer is a chance for early investors to lock in substantial profits and for employees to cash in shares that have to date only had value on paper. Shareholders, including employees, with at least 10,000 shares are eligible to sell. — Reuters

## Carney weighs into contested exit of LSE boss

**LONDON:** The head of the Bank of England called yesterday for clarity on the contested departure of London Stock Exchange chief Xavier Rolet and suggested his exit should go ahead. "Everything comes to an end," said BoE governor Mark Carney, when asked about the ongoing spat at a press conference on the outcome of banking stress tests.

London Stock Exchange Group announced in October that Rolet would leave the company by the end of 2018 after almost a decade in charge. Activist investor The Children's Investment Fund (TCI), which holds five percent of LSEG, has since questioned whether Rolet chose to leave or was pushed out by a board of directors amid reported concerns over his management style.

LSEG is meanwhile due to hold a shareholder meeting before the end of

the year to discuss and vote on whether Rolet should be asked to stay until 2021. "I'm a bit mystified about the debate because we knew about the succession plan, we stayed close to the situation," said Carney yesterday, responding to a reporter's question on the row. "I can't envisage a situation where a CEO stays on beyond the agreed period."

LSEG shareholders will also discuss the possible ousting of chairman Donald Brydon—who TCI hold responsible for what they see as a premature eviction of a successful boss. Frenchman Rolet joined LSEG in 2009, after his Dutch predecessor Clara Furse started steering the group through the global financial crisis.

Rolet transformed the group into a global financial heavyweight, overseeing a surge in the company's market value to nearly £14 billion (\$18.5 billion, 15.7 billion euros) from £800 million. Under his management, the company bought US asset manager Russell for \$2.7 billion to diversify and boost its business in the United States, and also bought British clearing house LCH.Clearnet. But its attempt to merge with Frankfurt stock markets were blocked earlier this year by the European Union, which cited concerns about competition and the fallout from Brexit. — AFP



Business

# Euro stocks advance; Shell energizes LSE

LONDON: Europe's stock markets took to higher ground yesterday, with London energized by Royal Dutch Shell, dealers said. Shell rallied after the energy giant pledged to resume all-cash shareholder dividends on improving profitability thanks to higher oil prices and deep cost-cutting.

Shares in the Anglo-Dutch titan soared almost 3.50 percent as investors welcomed the news, topping the FTSE 100 risers' board. The news also dragged rival BP 0.8-percent higher.

"A very good morning for Royal Dutch Shell allowed the FTSE to ignore issues in both its mining and banking sectors," said Spreadex analyst Connor Campbell. "The oil giant rocketed 3.5 percent higher after it restored an all-cash dividend. 'This growth could not come at a better time for the FTSE, which jumped more than half a percent largely on the strength of Shell's gains and the subsequent rise from BP,'" he added.

London's financial sector was somewhat boosted after the Bank of England declared Britain's top sev-

en banks had passed its latest stress tests. All seven-comprising Barclays, HSBC, Royal Bank of Scotland, Lloyds, Nationwide, Santander and Standard Chartered-passed its stress assessments for the first time since it began testing in 2014, and are "resilient" to recession.

But Barclays and RBS fared the worst, struggling in the central bank's severe economic stress scenario. RBS shares nevertheless gained 0.1 percent in value but Barclays stumbled 1.0 percent lower.

### Caution prevails in Asia

Elsewhere, Asian traders shifted cautiously yesterday with Chinese stocks swinging back and forth, while concerns grew about the future of the much-vaunted US tax reforms. After months of gains across global equities, investors are taking a step back on unease that some valuations may be too high, though bitcoin continued its surge to new records and was on course to break the \$10,000 mark.

Shanghai ended a volatile day up 0.3 percent, having lost more than three percent since Wednesday with mainland dealers spooked by Beijing's crackdown on risky dealing. A warning from authorities last week about the sharp rise in one of the country's best-performing stocks added to worries. Analysts have also noted a lack of intervention by state-backed firms to support key issues, indicating a willingness to see prices fall to cool the market. Greg McKenna, chief market strategist at AxiTrader, also pointed out that several data reports have undershot expectations recently, raising worries about the Chinese economy.

"That means the first two weeks of December, when we get the next monthly update on the Chinese economy, are going to be very important," he added. After months of gains across global equities, investors are taking a step back on unease that some valuations may be too high, though bitcoin continued its surge to new records and was on course to break the \$10,000 mark. Shanghai ended a volatile day up 0.3 percent,

having lost more than three percent since Wednesday with mainland dealers spooked by Beijing's crackdown on risky dealing.

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### Eyes on Washington

Eyes are now on Washington where senators are expected to vote on Donald Trump's tax-cut plans, but there are fears his Republican party might not be able to muster enough votes to push it through.

While the passage of the bill would likely fire up global markets, analysts are concerned its failure could lead to a correction. Expectations Trump would push through his market-friendly measures of cutting taxes, ramping up infrastructure spending and cutting red tape have helped fuel a global rally. — AFP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report						
Tuesday 28 November 2017						
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing			
Price Index	▼ -44.85	6,210.02	6,254.87			
Weighted Index	▲ 1.12	397.61	396.49			
KXS 15	▲ 1.98	908.09	906.11			
Trades						
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last Change
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	380	▲ 0.0
NAPESCO	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	28.8	1,360,099	39,148	35	28.8 ▼ -0.4
ASAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	61	▲ 0.0
<b>Oil &amp; Gas</b>			<b>1,363,299</b>	<b>39,228</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>934.16 ▲ 0.70</b>
KFDC	275	255	13,739	3,589	9	275 ▲ 0.0
BPCC	639	632	221,700	142,849	19	632 ▼ -4.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	890	▲ 0.0
ALQURAIN	325	321	361,961	117,300	30	322 ▲ 2.0
<b>Basic Materials</b>			<b>697,400</b>	<b>261,428</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1226.53 ▼ -8.50</b>
KCEM	440	400	6,000	2,600	2	400 ▼ -6.0
CABLE	439	418	651,226	279,888	82	423 ▲ 8.0
SNP	208	208	20	4	1	208 ▲ 0.0
PCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	960	▲ 0.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	265	▲ 0.0
MRC	80	70	5,000	355	3	80 ▼ -0.1
ACICO	235	235	30,250	7,109	3	235 ▼ -10.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	170	▲ 0.0
NCBM	195	192	74,238	14,280	4	195 ▲ 1.0
EQUIPMENT	36.1	34.1	143,000	5,032	15	34.7 ▼ -1.4
NCCL	0.0	0.0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	95	▲ 0.0
SALBOKH	0.0	0.0	0	0	80	▲ 0.0
ADITY	785	767	1,444,635	1,121,850	168	778 ▲ 12.0
EDU	307	306	10,100	3,091	3	307 ▲ 8.0
CLEANING	53	49.1	61,050	3,001	4	53 ▲ 0.6
KGL	0.0	0.0	0	0	65	▲ 0.0
KCPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	150	▲ 0.0
HUMANISOFT	0.0	0.0	0	0	3,792	▲ 0.0
NAFAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	649	▲ 0.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	75	▲ 0.0
SHOOTING	21.0	16.4	72,015	1,359	11	16.5 ▼ -1.4
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	477	▲ 0.0
MTCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	96	▲ 0.0
UPAC	0.0	0.0	0	0	585	▲ 0.0
ALAFQF	367	365	3,050	1,113	3	367 ▲ 7.0
MUBARRAD	73	73	40,000	2,930	3	73 ▲ 0.3
LOGISTICS	54	52	990,719	51,026	54	52 ▼ -0.6
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	92	▲ 0.0
GCEM	80	80	1	0	1	80 ▲ 3.0
QC	0.0	0.0	0	0	82	▲ 0.0
FCEM	73	70	100,000	7,657	5	73 ▼ -1.2
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	83	▲ 0.0
SPEC	72	70	150,300	10,842	11	70 ▼ -1.9
<b>Industrials</b>			<b>3,790,644</b>	<b>1,812,836</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>1705.90 ▼ -38.90</b>
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	76	▲ 0.0
CATTL	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
<b>Consumer Goods</b>			<b>212,518</b>	<b>23,907</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>868.74 ▼ -3.76</b>
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	1,100	▲ 0
YIACO	0.0	0.0	0	0	175	▲ 0
<b>Health Care</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1510.51</b>	<b>▲ 0.00</b>
KCRN	0.0	0.0	0	0	1,300	▲ 0
KHDT	0.0	0.0	0	0	178	▲ 0
SULTAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	67	▲ 0
CABLETV	0.0	0.0	0	0	27.0	▲ 0
IFAHF	0.0	0.0	0	0	299	▲ 0
OLUAFUEL	111	111	11,018	1,223	12	111 ▲ 0
MUNTAZAHAT	78	75	46,000	3,453	6	76 ▲ 3
JAZERA	657	657	7,500	4,928	3	657 ▲ 0
SOOR	114	110	43,931	4,855	22	111 ▼ -1
FUTUREKID	100	100	93,227	9,323	8	100 ▲ 0
ALRAI	105	100	19,150	2,004	4	105 ▼ -4
Jyad	64	63	3,310,854	208,451	131	63 ▲ 0
Mezzan	781	761	25,000	19,025	1	761 ▼ -9
<b>Consumer Services</b>			<b>3,556,680</b>	<b>253,261</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>919.72 ▲ 10.90</b>
ZAIN	456	444	6,623,544	2,983,197	406	445 ▼ -1
COREDOO	1,100	1,080	4,399	4,776	7	1,080 ▲ 20
AN	30.4	28.7	52	1	3	29.0 ▼ -1
VIVA	738	695	141,228	102,903	37	730 ▲ -1
<b>Telecommunications</b>			<b>6,789,223</b>	<b>3,990,837</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>638.94 ▼ -8.80</b>
NBK	731	720	4,805,891	3,488,615	373	721 ▼ -3
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	189,100	57,432	17	340 ▲ 0
KIB	225	222	695,800	146,998	37	222 ▼ -2
BURG	315	305	92,850	28,795	46	308 ▼ -2
KFIN	557	543	6,497,962	3,569,168	250	547 ▼ -6
BOUBRYAN	422	417	307,243	129,216	72	420 ▲ 0
AUB	200	197	812,879	191,485	54	198 ▲ -1
ITHMR	30.0	28.7	1,488,677	43,268	46	29.0 ▼ -1
WARBANK	215	212	529,008	112,908	77	212 ▼ -1
<b>Banks</b>			<b>16,138,121</b>	<b>7,927,696</b>	<b>1,125</b>	<b>871.83 ▲ 3.50</b>
KNS	274	274	6,157	1,687	2	274 ▲ 22
GINS	750	561	5,190	3,497	5	750 ▲ 90.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	400	▲ 0.0
WINS	58	57	215	12	2	58 ▼ -6.0
KUWAITRE	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	39.9	▲ 0.0
BKKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	365	▲ 0.0
<b>Insurance</b>			<b>22,342</b>	<b>5,943</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1030.91 ▼ -8.40</b>

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report								
At 02:00 PM Previous Day								
Global Stock Indices								
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %			
Dow Jones	23,557.99	23,580.78	22.79	▲	0.10	19.32		
NASDAQ	6,889.16	6,878.52	-10.64	▼	-0.15	27.78		
S&P 500	2,602.42	2,601.42	-1.00	▼	-0.04	16.20		
Financial Times	7,383.90	7,429.00	45.10	▲	0.61	4.01		
DAX	13,000.20	13,033.75	33.55	▲	0.26	13.52		
CAC 40	5,360.09	5,383.49	23.40	▲	0.44	10.72		
Swiss	9,264.39	9,313.74	49.35	▲	0.53	13.31		
Nikkei 225	22,495.99	22,486.24	-9.75	▼	-0.04	17.64		
Topix	1,776.73	1,772.07	-4.66	▼	-0.26	16.69		
Hang Seng	29,686.19	29,680.85	-5.34	▼	-0.02	34.91		
Straits Times	3,436.36	3,442.35	5.99	▲	0.17	19.49		
MENA Stock Indices								
Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Change	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %			
Kuwait	6,254.67	6,210.02	-44.65	▼	-0.71	8.10		
Saudi Arabia	6,939.21	6,967.35	28.14	▲	0.41	-3.76		
Dubai	3,444.56	3,428.75	-15.81	▼	-0.46	-2.44		
Abu Dhabi	4,274.73	4,295.12	20.39	▲	0.48	-5.97		
Bahrain	1,269.92	1,276.18	6.26	▲	0.49	4.05		
Qatar	7,747.70	7,734.41	-13.29	▼	-0.43	-25.57		
Oman	5,108.47	5,110.53	2.06	▲	0.04	-11.66		
Lebanon	1,112.18	1,112.96	0.79	▲	0.07	-8.29		
Jordan	2,101.76	2,112.99	11.23	▲	0.53	-3.16		
Egypt	14,219.99	14,537.03	317.04	▲	2.23	15.19		
Morocco	10,276.53	10,275.77	-0.76	▼	-0.01	7.63		
Tunisia	6,196.13	6,183.62	-12.51	▼	-0.20	12.89		
Global Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australian Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.3227	3.2998	2.7755	2.4852	3.2414	367.04	4.3350
Saudi Riyal	0.08115		0.2678	0.2252	0.2017	0.2630	29.79	0.3518
US Dollar	0.30305	3.7344		0.8411	0.7531	0.9823	111.23	1.3137
Euro	0.36630	4.4398	1.1889		0.8955	1.1682	132.25	1.5622
Sterling Pound	0.40239	4.9585	1.3278	1.1167		1.3045	147.71	1.7447
Swiss Franc	0.30851	3.8017	1.0180	0.8560	0.7666		113.25	1.3374
Japanese Yen	0.00272	0.0336	0.0090	0.0076	0.0068	0.0088		0.0118
Australian Dollar	0.23068	2.8426	0.7612	0.6401	0.5732	0.7477	84.67	
MENA Currencies Exchange Rate								
Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30305	3.7344					



## Business

# KFH to participate in World Islamic Banking Conference

## Conference to be held in Bahrain from Dec 4-6

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) will participate in the 24th Annual World Islamic Banking Conference (WIBC) themed "Drivers of Economic Growth and Risks: Policy Makers & Regulators" to be held in Bahrain from 4-6 December.

KFH's participation as a platinum strategic partner for the 3rd consecutive year comes as part of its ongoing commitment towards taking part in the international financial forums that seek to improve Islamic banking and under-

score the importance of this industry regionally and globally. KFH delegation is chaired by the Group CEO Mazin Al-Nahedh. Also, KFH-Bahrain CEO Abdulhakeem Alkhatyat is participating in a discussion panel in the conference that will be held under the sponsorship of Rasheed Mohammed Al-Maraj Governor, Central Bank of Bahrain.

The conference is seen as a good opportunity for bankers and lawmakers to exchange experiences and participate in important dis-

ussions for the benefit of Islamic finance and global economy. Several key points will be discussed at the conference such as Global Sukuk Market Trends and Development, Use of Gold as a Financial Product in Islamic Finance, Strengthening and Developing the Islamic Economy, Harnessing Digital Technologies to Stay Competitive and Address Evolving Customer Preferences, Sustainable, Equitable and Inclusive Growth -Enhancing financial inclusion through Islamic Finance, and New

Horizons for Islamic Finance.

KFH strives to sponsor events and activities that aim at developing the Islamic finance industry that is witnessing remarkable growth and gaining great momentum regionally and globally. Moreover, KFH, thanks to its extensive experience and long track record in this industry, not to mention the huge geographical expansion, strengthens its position and reputation as a reference for Islamic banking and finance.



## ABK and Emirates Skywards celebrate 15 years of partnership

**KUWAIT:** To mark the 15th anniversary of its partnership, Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) and Emirates Skywards yesterday announced its latest promotion, with more than 1.5 million Skywards Miles up for grabs. The promotion, which runs from 1st December until 31st December 2017, will give 15 ABK customers the chance to win 100,000 Skywards Miles each.

Stewart Lockie, General Manager of Retail Banking at Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait said: "With an aim to offer unmatched services to customers, our 15-year partnership with Emirates Skywards has grown stronger over the years on the back of distinctive offerings and premium services from both organizations. We believe our co-branded credit and prepaid cards raise the quality of our customers' travel experiences, bringing to them a world of exclusive privileges that will make their jour-

neys unique and memorable."

"This promotion will offer our customers the chance to amass a substantial amount of Skywards Miles, regardless of their travel habits, and gives them the opportunity to experience travelling with one of the world's fastest growing airlines, empowered by their ABK cards."

The promotion covers all ABK Emirates Credit Cards through point-of-sale and cash withdrawal transactions, and the ABK Emirates Prepaid Card through point-of-sale transactions only. The cards must be issued before the promotion start date of 1st December 2017, in order to be eligible to enter the draw, and requires a minimum spend of KD 100 through the transaction period in order to enter the monthly draw event.

Customers can earn 1 draw point for each KD 10 spent, and 3 draw points for every KD



10 spent overseas in foreign currency. Additionally, purchases made on the emirates.com website using an ABK Credit or Prepaid card during the campaign period earns the cardholder double the draw points. The more draw points the customers collect, the better their chances of winning.

The Skywards Miles will be credited to the customer's Emirates Skywards membership account (EK number), which can be redeemed for reward flights and upgrades on Emirates, as well as luxury hotel stays, fun-filled family days out, or even tickets to a wide range of sporting and cultural events

missed bond payment and analysts say the move signals a clear path for tackling high corporate debt levels, which the Bank for International Settlements estimates at 1.6 times the size of the economy.

"If you own the wrong stuff you're in trouble because they are not going to bail you out any more," said Joshua Crabb, head of Asian equities at Old Mutual Global Investors.

### No panic

Crabb, however, remains bullish on China. Likewise, Aberdeen's Wolf says China is "too big to ignore" and will look for select opportunities in other sectors aligned to policy priorities, such as consumption and technology, while avoiding the small banks that lose business as corporates deleverage. A key reason is that, unlike during the 2015 "Black Monday" stock market sell-off, there are fewer reasons to panic. Back then, valuations were 25 percent higher and China's capital account was more open, allowing the sell-off to spill over into the foreign exchange market and damage investor confidence. China has since made it harder to move money overseas - September's crackdown on cryptocurrencies being the latest move to close an exit route - so policymakers have better hopes of keeping the yuan stable. "Depreciation fears have somewhat alleviated and policy makers have been doing a great job in terms of managing outflows and changing overall expectations," said Jean-Charles Sambor, deputy head of emerging market debt at BNP Paribas Asset Management.

He said, however, that the recent announcements warranted a switch to government debt from corporate debt as he expected default rates to rise, while public debt should benefit from being included in MSCI's widely used bond indexes. — Reuters

## Bank conveniently and safely with NBK Business ATMs

**KUWAIT:** National Bank of Kuwait supports Kuwait's growing community of young entrepreneurs through services especially tailored to the needs of small to medium businesses. Now Business Banking account holders at NBK can apply for numerous cards that allows them access to do their banking transactions at more than 95 automated teller machines (ATMs) across Kuwait and online.

These Business Banking-dedicated ATMs allow businesses to deposit, withdraw or transfer funds 24 hours, seven days a week. Customers may also view their accounts through inquiry options and make online transactions. "Businesses have a different set of banking needs and at NBK we aim to meet the needs of Kuwait's young entrepreneurs now and in the future," said Bader Al-Mutawaa, Assistant General Manager-Consumer Banking Group, National Bank of Kuwait. "We are continuously developing digital banking options that provide safe, secure access for our customers as part of the Bank's long term strategy."

NBK's Business Banking-dedicated ATM



Bader Al-Mutawaa

cards that provide customers with another reliable and secure cash flow management tool while also ensuring full privacy and convenience. Business Banking accounts will also receive ATM cards that can be personalized.

Businesses may also utilize 'limited ATM cards' where messengers can pay for necessary government related transactions and can only deposit securely without receipt showing balances, for private and secure banking.

NBK Business Banking offers a range of services and payment solutions for local businesses that includes POS and payment gateway. They can also apply for NBK's salary portal, providing an efficient, secure and convenient way to pay employee salaries online.

As part of its commitment to a safe and stable business environment for Kuwait, NBK also provides businesses insurance including buildings, stocks, business interruptions, cash cover, fidelity and life insurance. Customers can apply for a business banking account by visiting the award-winning interactive NBK.com website.

## Markets get wake-up call from China's deleveraging moves

**HONG KONG:** The pace at which Beijing is announcing deleveraging reforms following last month's Communist Party Congress is a wake-up call for investors in Chinese markets: risk just got real. Sweeping new rules for the asset management industry, a crackdown on micro loans and losses imposed on the creditors of the state-owned Chongqing Iron & Steel are not yet a "Big Bang" of reforms.

Some of the measures were well flagged and will only kick in 2019. But they are sending a signal to markets that policymakers are serious about deleveraging, something that has been urged by the International Monetary Fund and ratings agencies for years and flagged as a top priority by President Xi Jinping at the party congress. Debt markets reacted first, with benchmark 10-year borrowing costs hitting three-year highs above 4 percent and yield spreads between government and corporate debt widening as policymakers appear more tolerant of defaults.

Last week, the debt sell-off spilled over into equities, which saw their worst day in 19 months, and markets have since weakened further. "The pace of new regulations" being announced "does look somewhat surprising," said Alexander Wolf, senior emerging markets economist at Aberdeen Standard Investments. "It might have caught some people off guard." But, he said, policymakers were ultimately

trying to reduce risks in the system. "So I think that's positive even if there's some short-term volatility." Two weeks ago, the central bank and the top regulators for banking, insurance, securities and foreign exchange announced unified rules covering asset management. The aim was to close loopholes that allow regulatory arbitrage, reduce leverage levels, eliminate the implicit guarantees some financial institutions offer against investment losses and rein in shadow banking.

Last week, a top-level Chinese government body issued an urgent notice to provincial governments urging them to suspend regulatory approval for new internet micro-lenders in a bid to curb household debt, which is currently low but rising rapidly.

In the meantime, creditors of Chongqing Iron & Steel Co took a 70 percent loss in a debt-to-equity swap restructuring of nearly 40 billion yuan (\$6 billion) of debt.

It's not the first time the authorities have tried to get markets to price risk. In March 2014, Shanghai Chaori Solar Energy Science and Technology Co Ltd missed a bond interest payment, marking China's first domestic bond default. But about six months later, domestic bondholders were bailed out after the default caused a jump in corporate bond yields. Debt-to-equity swaps are complex operations that are harder to undo than a

## Safat Home launches biggest sale in Kuwait with up to 75% discounts on 5,000 products!

**KUWAIT:** The largest home sale has finally arrived in Kuwait! Safat Home, Kuwait's leading home furnishing retailer, launched its biggest sale of the year with discounts of up to 75 percent on over 5,000 products that range from living room sets, bedrooms, dining tables, themes and brands, sanitary and tiles, as well as a wide range of accessories.

Running from November 23 to January 1, the sale offers quality products and the latest trends are found under one roof and at very affordable and competitive prices, all at Safat Home's showrooms located in Al-Rai, Shuwaikh, Fahaaheel, its Cilekstore in Tital Mall, and its most recent showroom inaugurated in Jahra.

Enabling everyone to renew their home for a brand-new look during the winter season, Safat Home has included a special promotion on kitchens, offering customers amazing prices starting from KD59 per

meter, a warranty for a lifetime, and free design delivery and installation service.

Constantly rewarding customers and ensuring their satisfaction, Safat Home offers the largest variety of home furnishing styles and products in Kuwait, catering to all tastes, demographics and lifestyles. The available collections run the gamut from the classical, luxurious, contemporary and minimalist, giving customers that furniture set they really need or a stylish mixture of accessories that are guaranteed to add beauty and pizzazz to any corner in their house. Customers can take advantage of the biggest sale of the year by visiting the Shuwaikh showroom located near Yusuf A Alghanim Service and Maintenance Center, or the Al-Rai showroom located in SafatAlghanim, or the Fahaaheel showroom located on Dabbous Street, above X-cite. Children rooms furniture are also available

at the CILEK showroom located in Tital Complex or our new showroom in JahrahMikhyal mall.

The Shuwaikh showroom is open from 9am to 11pm every day, while the Al-Rai showroom operates from 9:30am until midnight every day, and the Fahaaheel showroom is open from 9am to 10pm. The Cilek showroom is open from 10am to 10pm every day. JahrahMikhyal mall is open from 9am to 10pm. For the past 75 years, Alghanim has been a highly-respected family & brand name; Safat Home is proud to be part of that heritage. Safat Home brings a wide range of products, great value, friendly shopping environment and exceptional service.

The Safat Home concept has been evolving ever since the home furnishings business was launched more than five years ago, as "Furniture at Al-Rai Safat". Today, Safat Home displays an impressive collection of furniture, home furnishings and decorative accessories to make your house a home, whether it is an apartment, chalet or villa. The inspiring and exclusive designs are carefully sourced from around the world including USA, Italy, Holland, England, Belgium and Turkey. Whether customers seek the classic Kuwaiti look, the traditional 'American Home' decor, or the contemporary modern house, Safat Home offers products, accessories and services to furnish any dream home.

## Burgan Bank will soon announce winner of Al-Thuraya salary account draw



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

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

The Al-Thuraya Account's features range from the option to hold money in Kuwaiti dinar and any other major currencies, access to account-related services such as standing orders, loans and credit cards and much more.

Established in 1977, Burgan Bank is the youngest commercial Bank and second largest by assets in Kuwait, with a significant focus on the corporate and financial institutions sectors, as well as having a growing retail, and private bank customer base. Burgan Bank has majority owned subsidiaries in the MENAT region supported by one of

the largest regional branch networks.

The Bank has continuously improved its performance over the years through an expanded revenue structure, diversified funding sources, and a strong capital base. The adoption of state-of-the-art services and technology has positioned it as a trendsetter in the domestic market and within the MENA region. Burgan Bank's brand has been created on a foundation of real values - of trust, commitment, excellence and progression, to remind us of the high standards to which we aspire. 'People come first' is the foundation on which its products and services are developed. The bank was re-certified with the prestigious ISO 9001:2008, making it the first bank in the GCC, and the only bank in Kuwait to receive such accreditation for the third consecutive year. The Bank also has to its credit the distinction of being the only Bank in Kuwait to have won the JP Morgan Chase Quality Recognition Award for twelve consecutive years.

Burgan Bank, a subsidiary of KIPCO (Kuwait Projects Company), is a strongly positioned regional Bank in the MENA region.



## Technology

# 2018 Chevrolet Impala comes with new standard features

## All-new Impala available at Chevrolet Alghanim showrooms

**KUWAIT:** Chevrolet Alghanim, the exclusive distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in Kuwait, introduced the all-new Impala 2018 which comes with new standard features to bring customers a luxury sedan loaded with advanced technology and brimming with power.

Available at all Chevrolet Alghanim showrooms, the Impala 2018 sets itself apart from competition thanks to its advanced standard features including the Rear Vision Camera, the 8-inch infotainment touchscreen with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, the Passive Entry/Passive Start for keyless entry, the Push Start Engine and the Rear Park Assist.

### New standard features

A standard feature to the all-new Impala 2018 is its Rear Vision Camera which enables drivers to see stationary objects behind them while reversing at low speeds. The Rear Vision Camera comes with the Rear Park Assist features, giving drivers a smooth and enjoyable driving experience.

The 2018 Impala also offers other high-tech convenience including its brilliant 8-inch Chevrolet MyLink touchscreen with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto which provides information, entertainment and constant connection. The touchscreen enables users to order and choose apps with a simple drag-and-drop control. The system also includes a variety of music options that sound all the more incredible with the great interior acoustics of the Impala.

The Passive Entry/Passive Start provides a luxury entry in the Impala by simply pressing the sensor on the door handle to unlock, and then with a push of a button, start the car's engine, all while leaving the keys in the pocket.

Also 2018 Impala offers other high-tech convenience such as the Remote Starter System to start the vehicle in a press of a button. When started remotely, the doors immediately lock, and the climate controls activate to their most previous setting, warming or cooling the interior appropriately.

### Performance and best-in-class safety

The Impala 2018 distinguishes itself in its class thanks to a 3.6L V-6 engine that's the most powerful naturally aspirated six-cylinder engine in the segment. Output for the engine is rated at 305 horsepower. Impala is loaded with some of the most advanced safety features available. 10 air bags



come standard - more than most other vehicles in the full-size sedan segment. Impala also

### Luxury sedan loaded with advanced technology

newly launched Impala is in its reinforced high-strength steel safety cage to give drivers and passengers the protection and confidence they need on every drive. Owners of the all-new Impala 2018 benefit as well from the Chevrolet Complete Care Program, which provides many additional services to enrich their experience with Chevrolet Alghanim.

### Chevrolet "Complete Care" Program

All customers who purchase a Chevrolet from Yusuf A.

features StabiliTrak(r) to help you keep control in all types of weather condition and Collision Mitigation Braking technology to help reduce the impact of a collision. The car also comes with standard safety features which include Rear Cross Traffic Alert, Side Blind Zone Alert and Forward Collision Alert. A key advancement made on the



Alghanim & Sons benefit of the Chevrolet Care Program, which entails new levels of post-sale support and trust. The Chevrolet Complete Care Program is an exceptional customer service that is based on four main pillars: competitive and transparent service costs (especially for four-wheel drive vehicles), scheduled service appointment booking with same day delivery,

quality service by certified technicians and 3yr/100,000km warranty with 24x7 roadside assistance for 4 years.

Customers can view and test the all-new Impala 2018 at any of Chevrolet Alghanim showrooms at the following locations: Shuwaikh, Al-Rai (Safat Alghanim), Sharq, Fahahel and Ahmadi.

## Pressured for profit, oil majors bet big on shale technology

**HOUSTON:** Shale oil engineer Oscar Portillo spends his days drilling as many as five wells at once - without ever setting foot on a rig. Part of a team working to cut the cost of drilling a new shale well by a third, Portillo works from a Royal Dutch Shell Plc office in suburban Houston, his eyes darting among 13 monitors flashing data on speed, temperature and other metrics as he helps control rigs more than 500 miles (805 km) away in the Permian Basin, the largest US oilfield.

For the last decade, smaller oil companies have led the way in shale technology, slashing costs by as much as half with breakthroughs such as horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing that turned the United States into the world's fastest-growing energy exporter.

Now, oil majors that were slow to seize on shale are seeking further efficiencies by adapting technologies for highly automated offshore operations to shale and pursuing advances in digitalization that have reshaped industries from auto manufacturing to retail.

If they are successful, the US oil industry's ability to bring more wells to production at lower cost could amp up future output and company profits. The firms could also frustrate the ongoing effort by The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) effort to drain a global oil glut.

"We're bringing science into the art of drilling wells," Portillo said. The technological push comes amid worries that US shale gains are slowing as investors press for higher financial returns. Many investors want producers to restrain spending and focus on generating higher returns, not volume, prompting some to pull back on drilling.

Production at a majority of publicly traded shale producers rose just 1.3 percent over the first three quarters this year, according to Morgan Stanley. But many US shale producers vowed during third quarter earnings disclosures to deliver higher returns through technology, with many forecasting aggressive output hikes into 2018. Chevron Corp is using drones equipped with thermal imaging to detect leaks in oil tanks and pipelines across its shale fields, avoiding traditional ground inspections and lengthy shutdowns.

Ryan Lance, chief executive of ConocoPhillips - the largest US independent oil and gas producer - sees ample opportunity to boost both profits and output. Conoco also oversees remote drilling operations in a similar way to Shell. "The people that don't have shale in their portfolios don't understand it, frankly," Lance said in an interview. "They think it's going to go away quickly because of the high decline rates, or that the resource is not nearly that substantial. They're wrong on both counts."

Shell, in an initiative called "iShale," has marshaled technology from a dozen oilfield suppliers, including devices from subsea specialist TechnipFMC Plc that separate fracking sand from oil and well-control software from Emerson Electric Co, to bring more automation and data analysis to shale operations. One idea borrowed from deepwater projects is using sensors to automatically adjust well flows and control separators that divvy natural gas, oil and water. Today, these subsea systems are expensive because they are built to operate at the extreme pressures and temperatures found miles under the ocean's surface. —Reuters

## Russia loses contact with satellite after launch from new spaceport

**MOSCOW:** Russia said it had lost contact yesterday with a weather satellite just hours after it was launched from its Vostochny cosmodrome, in only the second rocket liftoff from the new spaceport.

The glitch is a fresh embarrassment for Russia's beleaguered space program which has suffered a series of setbacks over recent years as Moscow seeks to ease dependence on the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

"During the first scheduled communication session with the space vehicle, contact has not been established because it is not on its planned orbit," the Russian space agency Roscosmos said in a statement.

"Information is currently being analyzed." The statement did not provide further details and its representatives declined immediate comment. Marking another milestone after the inaugural liftoff last year, the Soyuz rocket carrying the Meteor weather satellite and other equipment took off at 2:41 pm (05:41 GMT) from far eastern Russia.

"All the initial stages of the rocket's flight went according to plan," Roscosmos said after the liftoff. National television broadcast live footage of the launch, showing the rocket taking off into a grey sky in the Amur region near the Chinese border. Apart from the weather satellite, the rocket carried 18 payloads from institutions and companies in Canada, the United States, Japan, Germany, Sweden and Norway, the space agency said.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Monday that such contracts would help Russia modernise its space industry. "The launch of foreign devices with the help of Russian launch vehicles should strengthen our positions on the global market of space services and increase the volume of extra-budgetary funds and investments," Medvedev told a meeting.

The first launch from Vostochny spaceport took place in April 2016, with President Vladimir Putin overseeing the take-off. It represented a major development for the country's space sector, with the new cosmodrome touted to mark a rebirth of an industry plagued by a string of embarrassments. In December last year, an unmanned Progress ship carrying supplies lost contact with Earth

## Scandal-hit Uber hits the road to reassure regulators

**TOKYO:** Uber executives are travelling the globe to reassure regulators that the company is changing the way it does business, after a massive data breach became the latest controversy to hurt the ride-service firm's reputation. Uber Technologies Inc is also continuing talks with Japan's SoftBank Group Corp over an investment, Brooks Entwistle, Uber's recently appointed chief business officer for Asia Pacific, told Reuters on Monday.

Uber disclosed last week that it covered

up an October 2016 data breach involving 57 million customers and about 600,000 drivers. The company said it paid two hackers \$100,000 to destroy the stolen data and keep the matter a secret.

The revelation, made by Uber's new Chief Executive Officer Dara Khosrowshahi in a blog post, prompted governments in countries including Britain, the United States, Mexico, Australia and the Philippines to launch probes into the breach and Uber's handling of the matter.

The global backlash will test Uber's new collaborative approach to regulators, a stark change from the rule-breaking culture created by former CEO Travis Kalanick. "We have changed tacks in so many ways in dealing with regulators, dealing with governments," Entwistle said in an interview in Tokyo, where he is meeting Japanese officials and potential business partners. Nevertheless, Chicago Mayor Rahm

Emanuel and Kimberly Foxx, the public prosecutor for Cook County, Illinois, said on Monday they filed a consumer fraud lawsuit against Uber for its failure to protect the data of its customers and drivers, accusing the company of violating local laws by failing to promptly disclose the breach. "We are committed to changing the way we do business, putting integrity at the core of every decision we make, and working hard to regain the trust of consumers," Uber said in a statement.

Also on Monday, fresh questions came from US lawmakers demanding an explanation for the company's handling of the breach. Republican senators John Thune, Orrin Hatch, Jerry Moran and Bill Cassidy sent a letter to Khosrowshahi seeking answers about the data theft and cover-up, which they called "a serious incident that merits further scrutiny." The senators requested a response from Uber by Dec. 11. Hatch chairs the Senate Committee on

Finance and Thune chairs the Commerce Science and Transportation Committee. In a separate letter sent Monday, Senator Mark Warner, a Democrat and advocate of the technology industry including the on-demand sector that includes Uber, sent a letter to Khosrowshahi with detailed questions about Uber's security systems and rationale for covering up the breach.

The disclosure of the 2016 data breach at a time when Uber is trying to bring in SoftBank as an investor has spurred speculation about the price of the deal. SoftBank and Dragoneer Investment Group agreed on Nov. 12 to lead a group that would invest as much as \$10 billion in Uber, people familiar with the deal previously told Reuters. The group plans to directly invest \$1 billion to \$1.25 billion at Uber's current \$69 billion valuation, and also buy at a lower valuation shares held by existing investors and employees. —Reuters



The Soyuz-2.1b rocket carrying Russia's Meteor-M 2-1 weather satellite and other equipment lifts off from the launch pad at the Vostochny cosmodrome outside the city of Ulglegorsk, about 200 kms from the city of Blagoveshchensk in the far eastern Amur region yesterday. —AFP

minutes after blast-off and burnt up in the atmosphere over Siberia. In April 2015, a failed Progress launch was also blamed on a problem with the Soyuz rocket, a space workhorse dating back to the Cold War-era.

### Launches 'will grow'

The third launch from Vostochny is scheduled for December 22. "The program of launches will continue next year - it will grow, increase," Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, who oversees space, told Medvedev on Monday. The Kremlin's goal is to ease Russia's dependence on Baikonur in Kazakhstan, a launchpad Moscow has been forced to rent since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Russia is also home to the Plesetsk cosmodrome in the north, which is used for satellite launches and missile testing. But Vostochny, like Baikonur, is closer to the equator, making launches cheaper and more energy-efficient.



Health

# Abusive digital avatars might help schizophrenics fight 'voices': Study

## Taking their medication throughout the trial

PARIS: "You're rubbish. You're rubbish. You're a waste of space." The computer avatar pulls no punches as it lays into the young woman, a schizophrenia sufferer, facing the screen. "Can you go away, please?" the woman asks, timidly at first. But after some time, emboldened, she asserts: "I am not going to listen to you any more!" The exchange is part of an innovative treatment developed by specialists in London and Manchester for people with schizophrenia who "hear voices". And it seems to work, the team reported Friday.

Of 75 people who underwent "avatar therapy" in a three-month trial, seven "completely stopped hearing their voices," according to the authors of a study published in *The Lancet Psychiatry*. In the group overall there were "really large and significant decreases in the amount of distress people felt in relation to their voices, the number of times a day they heard the voices, and the extent to which they felt overpowered by the voice," said lead author Tom Craig of King's College London. In a comparison group of 75 patients who received counseling instead of avatar therapy, two said their hallucinations had stopped, the team found. All the participants continued taking their medication throughout the trial.

About two thirds of schizophrenia sufferers live with "voices" — imaginary people who "speak" to them, typically to insult and threaten. It is a "horrible and distressing" condition, Craig said. Most experience the voice as dominant, even omnipotent, and feel inferior and powerless in comparison. For most, drugs reduce the symptoms but about one in four continue hearing voices, said the study.

### More in control

The new treatment helps schizophrenia sufferers confront these disembodied scolds, and



learn to dominate them. All 150 participants had experienced persistent and distressing hallucinations for between one to 20 years, despite taking antipsychotic medication. On average, they lived with three or four distinct voices each. In the first step, a therapist would help the patient create a digital computer simulation, or avatar, of the main voice plaguing them — mimicking what it says, the pitch and tone of its speech, and recreating what they imagined its face would look like.

Over six 50-minute sessions, the patient then confronts their tormenter, materialised on screen, guided by their therapist. The therapist, in a different room, uses a microphone to address the patient over the com-

puter speakers, as well as voicing the avatar's on-screen tirade. In a video demonstrating the method, Craig counsels a woman as she talks to her avatar.

As she asks: "Can you go away, please?" Craig's voice advises: "That's good Lauren, that's good, but can you try and make it a bit stronger for me? Sit up, look at him, and tell him to go away, OK?" As the therapy advances and the patient learns to become more assertive, the avatar starts conceding ground, and eventually acknowledges the person's strong qualities. "The whole experience changes from something that's very frightening to something that's much more in the person's control," Craig explained. — AFP

## Europe's HIV epidemic growing at alarming rate

LONDON: The number of people newly diagnosed with HIV in Europe reached its highest level in 2016 since records began, showing the region's epidemic growing "at an alarming pace", health officials said yesterday. That year, 160,000 people contracted the virus that causes AIDS in the 53 countries that make up the World Health Organization's European region, the agency said in a joint report with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

Around 80 percent of those were in Eastern Europe, the report found. "This is the highest number of cases recorded in one year. If this trend persists, we will not be able to achieve the ... target of ending the HIV epidemic by 2030," the WHO's European regional director, Zsuzsanna Jakab, said in a statement. The trend was particularly worrying, the organizations said, because many patients had already been carrying the HIV infection for several years by the time they

were diagnosed, making the virus harder to control and more likely to have been passed on to others.

Early diagnosis is important with HIV because it allows people to start treatment with AIDS drugs sooner, increasing their chances of living a long and healthy life. "Europe needs to do more in its HIV response," said ECDC director Andrea Ammon. She said the average time from estimated time of infection until a person is diagnosed is three years, "which is far too long". The report said new strategies were needed to expand the reach of HIV testing - including self-testing services and testing provided by lay providers.

Almost 37 million people worldwide have the human immunodeficiency virus that causes AIDS. The majority of cases are in poorer regions such as Africa, where access to testing, prevention and treatment is more limited, but the HIV epidemic has also proved stubborn in wealthier regions like Europe. The WHO European Region comprises 53 countries, with a population of nearly 900 million people. The ECDC/WHO report found that over the past ten years, the rate of newly diagnosed HIV infections in this region has risen by 52 percent from 12 in every 100,000 of population in 2007 to 18.2 for every 100,000 in 2016. That decade-long increase was "mainly driven by the continuing upward trend in the East," the report said. — Reuters

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

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## What's On

# The Palms Beach Hotel and Spa opened under patronage of Sheikh Nimer Al-Sabah



The Palms Beach Resort and Spa opened recently in a ceremony held under the patronage of Sheikh Nimer Al-Malik Al-Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, on behalf of Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of the State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudan.

The opening ceremony was held in the presence of a number of ministers and members of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development, members of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, consultants, diplomats, the hotel's owner Ghassan Al-Khalid along with elite community of invitees. The hotel's owner Ghassan Al-Khalid appreciated Sheikh Nimer for his patronage of the hotel's opening ceremony. He also thanked all the guests for their trust in the Palm Beach Hotel and Spa, and he assured that the hotel management is committed to moving forward towards whatever could support the Kuwaiti economy. Furthermore, Khalid briefed on the important role of private companies for the development and prosperity in Kuwait.

In the meanwhile, the hotel's Managing Director Engineer Ghosson Al-Khalid commented by saying, "The Palms Beach Hotel and Spa has returned to its beloved guests and visitors from today. The hotel offers the latest services and offers the opportunity to enjoy unique and exceptional memories."

In addition, the hotel's General Manager Rabih Al-Atrash commented by saying, "We promise to provide our visitors with top quality services and the highest luxury levels, in order to exceed our visitors' expectations and to always be the ideal venue for any occasion."

Moreover, Atrash briefed on the hotel expansion and refurbishment that will return the Palms Hotel to its brilliant and exceptional level. Furthermore, he gave a briefing on most of the hotel's outlets which will be ready to welcome its guests.



## Arby's opens its first branch in Kuwait

In the light of the company's endeavors to develop and operate multiple food services in Kuwait and the neighboring Gulf countries, Kharafi Global opened a branch for Arby's, one of its food service brands, in Kuwait in the honored presence of the United States Ambassador to Kuwait, Lawrence Silverman.

On the occasion of opening the new branch, Paul Brown, Chief Executive Officer of Atlanta based Arby's Restaurant Group, Inc (ARG), who is visiting Kuwait stated: "Kharafi Global has helped strengthen the partnership between the United States and Kuwait. We are proud to be working with Waleed Khalid Al-Kharafi, co-founder of Kharafi Global, and his team," adding that he has the honour to meet Al-Kharafi, the restaurant team members, and the United States Ambassador to Kuwait, Lawrence Silverman "whose attendance underscores the important partnership between the two countries."

About the difference between Arby's and the other quick-service restaurants, Brown said: "We have greater quality, variety, and abundance of meats than our competitors. Arby's serves premium meats and our teams are constantly innovating with new flavors, cuts, and combinations," adding that the prices are competitive with the speed, convenience and hospitality that the guests expect.

He also stated that the inspiring design at Arby's delivers an upgraded guest experience adding: "These new restaurant features authentic design elements such as wood tones, white brick, subway tiles, stainless steel finishes, chalkboard graphics, and upgraded lighting."

Asked to evaluate the Kuwaiti market in regards to growth of Arby's as one of the largest quick service sandwich chain in the world he said: "The quality, variety, and abundance of our food resonates with the Kuwaiti people. We are excited that, in the coming years, Kharafi Global will open at least 24 additional Arby's restaurants in Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We believe that by working closely with Kharafi Global, we can bring even more Arby's restaurants to the region."

Meanwhile, Walid Al-Kharafi, chairman of the board of directors of Al-Kharafi Global, welcomed the presence of the US Ambassador to the opening of the Arby's restaurant in the Jabriya region saying that it reflects the economic cooperation between the two countries and the keenness of Al-



Arby's Kuwait.



Jeff Hamilton, US Embassy Representative; Lawrence Silverman, US Ambassador to Kuwait; Paul Brown, Chief Executive Officer of Arby's Restaurant Group, Inc; and Walid Kharafi, Co-Founder of Kharafi Global.

Kharafi Global to be the first to bring one of the best chain of American fast food restaurants in the world to Kuwait.

Arby's Group offers the best professional service of fast food such as Roast Beef, Beef and Cheddar in addition to Curly fries and Jamocha Shake.

About the opening of the branch, Al-Kharafi said the opening of this branch is only a beginning," adding that Al-Kharafi Global will open many other branches for Arby's in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf to be added to the list of other restaurants owned and managed by the company, encouraging "the residents and citizens of Kuwait to experience

the unique American taste offered by Arby's."

The new branch boasts the genuine Arby's flavor and feel. Arby's Restaurant Group, Inc (ARG). ARG is a leading global Fast Crafted restaurant company operating and franchising more than 3,300 Arby's restaurants worldwide.

Kharafi Global, owned by Walid Al-Kharafi and Haider Al-Naqeb, Executive Director, is one of the leading companies in the field of management and development of restaurants and has more than 60 branches in the Arabian Gulf for Johnny Rockets, Nino, Baker and Spice, Figs by Todd English, Leila Min Lebne, Rococho, Kateh and Poshcafe.

## ABB unveils YuMi for first time in Kuwait

ABB, the leading power and automation technology group, recently unveiled YuMi for the first time in Kuwait at the Embassy of Switzerland. The event was inaugurated and hosted by the Swiss Ambassador to Kuwait Aldo De Luca.

The subsequent afternoon, YuMi was presented in Holiday Inn Salmiya to students from Kuwait University (KU), Australian College of Kuwait (ACK), American University of Kuwait (AUK), American University of the Middle East (AUM) and Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) who learned about the latest technologies and internet of things. In the evening, the robot was showcased to potential customers.

YuMi heralds a new era of robotic coworkers that are able to work on the same tasks with humans while still ensuring the safety of those around it. YuMi is a collaborative, dual arm

assembly solution with the ability to feel and see. Safety is built into the functionality of the robot itself so that it can work cage-free.

Kuwait - a country that relies heavily on expatriate labor in its growing manufacturing sector - can benefit greatly with the use of robots and automation. The introduction of robots into manufacturing have proven to be incredibly cost-effective with no degradation of quality or reliability. Moreover, the implementation of robots have often delivered return on investment (ROI) in 12 months or less. The subsequent cost savings allow companies to focus on customer attention and invest in innovation.

Paul Dennis, ABB Country Manager said, "YuMi is the most innovative and intuitive robot available, for many day to day industrial and commercial applications the limit of its usefulness will only be limited by human imagination."

ABB is a leader in power and automation technologies that enable utility, industry, and transport and infrastructure customers to improve performance while lowering environmental impact. The ABB Group of companies operates in around 100 countries and employs about 145,000 people.





TV



01:15 Avengers Grimm
02:40 6 Ways To Sundown
04:25 The Legend Of Zorro
06:35 Avengers Grimm
08:00 Drop Zone
09:45 In The Heart Of The Sea
11:50 Virtual Revolution
13:25 The Legend Of Zorro
15:35 Operation Chromite
17:30 Bloodsport
19:05 The Last Witch Hunter
20:50 The Huntsman: Winter's War
22:50 Road House



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



00:25 Sherlock
02:10 Orphan Black
03:00 Orphan Black
03:45 Call The Midwife
04:40 Holly City
05:30 Doctors
06:00 Doctors
06:30 The Coroner
07:25 Doctor Who
08:10 Holly City
09:10 Holly City
10:10 The Coroner
11:00 New Tricks
11:50 Doctor Who
12:40 Call The Midwife
13:35 Holly City
14:30 The Coroner
15:20 Doctor Who
16:10 Call The Midwife
17:10 New Tricks
18:00 Doctors
18:30 EastEnders
19:00 The Coroner
20:00 Poldark
20:55 The Durrells
21:45 Top Of The Lake
22:45 Top Of The Lake
23:45 Doctors



00:00 The Murder Of Laci Peterson
01:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
02:00 It Takes A Killer
02:30 It Takes A Killer
03:00 The First 48
04:00 The Murder Of Laci Peterson
05:00 Homicide: Hours To Kill
06:00 It Takes A Killer
06:30 It Takes A Killer
07:00 Homicide Hunter
08:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
09:00 It Takes A Killer
09:30 It Takes A Killer
10:00 Homicide Hunter
11:00 Jonbenet's Mother: Victim Or Killer
12:45 The Killing Of Jonbenet: Her Father Speaks
14:35 It Takes A Killer
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 Holloway: Women Behind Bars
20:00 It Takes A Killer
20:30 It Takes A Killer
21:00 Homicide Hunter
22:00 Crimes That Shook Britain
23:00 My Haunted Vacation



00:05 Chappelle's Show
00:30 Workaholics
00:55 Demetri Martin: Stand Up Comedian
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 Lip Sync Battle UK
06:50 Lip Sync Battle UK
07:15 Tattoo Disasters
07:40 Tattoo Disasters
08:05 Impractical Jokers UK
08:30 Disaster Date
08:55 Workaholics
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12:15 Impractical Jokers
12:40 Tattoo Disasters
13:05 Tattoo Disasters
13:30 Key And Peele
13:55 Impractical Jokers UK
14:20 Disaster Date
14:45 Workaholics
15:10 Friends
15:35 Kroll Show
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16:30 Impractical Jokers
16:55 Workaholics
17:20 Impractical Jokers UK
17:45 Disaster Date
18:10 Ridiculousness Arabia
18:35 Tattoo Disasters
19:00 Tattoo Disasters

19:25 Impractical Jokers
19:50 Friends
20:35 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
21:00 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
21:30 Detroiters
22:00 Chappelle's Show
22:25 Nightcap
22:50 Idiotstiter
23:15 Real Husbands Of Hollywood
23:40 The Daily Show With Trevor Noah



00:30 Pick A Puppy
01:20 React To That
02:10 Kids Do The Craziest Things
03:00 Dual Survival
03:50 Now That's Funny
04:40 How It's Made
05:30 Pick A Puppy
06:20 Invent It Rich
07:00 Pick A Puppy
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 How To Build... Everything
12:00 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
12:50 How It's Made
13:40 Invent It Rich
14:30 Pick A Puppy
15:20 Storm Chasers
16:10 Dual Survival
17:00 How To Build... Everything
17:50 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
18:15 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
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 How To Build... Everything
21:35 How To Build... Everything
22:00 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
22:25 Outrageous Acts Of Psych
22:50 Ultimate Survival
23:40 Storm Chasers



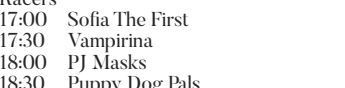
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01:45 Murder Calls
02:40 Guilty Rich
03:35 American Monster
04:30 Hear No Evil
05:25 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
06:20 I Almost Got Away With It
07:10 Swamp Murders
08:00 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
08:25 Disappeared
09:15 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
09:40 Momsters: When Moms Go Bad
10:10 Swamp Murders
11:05 Suspicion
12:00 Gone
12:55 Disappeared
13:50 I Almost Got Away With It
14:45 Swamp Murders
15:40 Suspicion
16:35 Grave Secrets
17:30 Disappeared
18:25 Young, Hot & Crooked
18:50 Young, Hot & Crooked
19:20 I Almost Got Away With It
20:15 Swamp Murders
21:10 Suspicion
22:05 Evil Stepmothers
23:00 Killing Richard Glossip
23:55 Six Degrees Of Murder



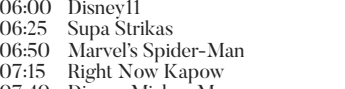
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00:10 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
00:35 Binny And The Ghost
01:00 Hank Zipzer
01:25 Alex & Co.
01:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
01:50 Evermore Chronicles
02:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
02:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:05 Binny 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 Loloirock
10:50 Loloirock
11:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
11:40 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
12:05 Hank Zipzer
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13:20 Loloirock
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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
15:45 Disney Mickey Mouse
16:10 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 Loloirock



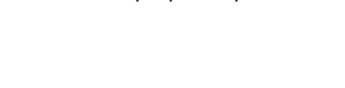
00:00 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
00:25 Unbungalovable
03:35 Loopdidoo
05:55 Henry Hugglemonster
01:15 Calimero
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Loopdidoo
02:30 Henry Hugglemonster
02:35 Calimero
02:50 Henry Hugglemonster
03:05 Art Attack
03:30 The Hive
03:40 Loopdidoo
03:55 Henry Hugglemonster
04:10 Art Attack
04:35 Loopdidoo
04:50 Calimero
05:05 Art Attack
05:30 Henry Hugglemonster
05:45 Henry Hugglemonster
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 Puffy 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 Puffy Dog Pals
16:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers
17:00 Sofia The First
17:30 Vampirina
18:00 PJ Masks
18:30 Puffy Dog Pals
19:00 Sofia The First
19:30 Mickey And The Roadster Racers



00:20 Street Outlaws
01:05 American Tarzan
01:50 Bushcraft Build-Off
02:35 Boy To Man
03:20 Diesel Brothers
04:05 Alaska: The Last Frontier
04:50 Alaska: The Last Frontier
05:35 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Gold Divers
06:45 Street Outlaws
07:30 Diesel Brothers
08:15 Deadliest Catch
09:48 How Do They Do It?
10:10 American Tarzan
10:55 Bushcraft Build-Off
11:40 Boy To Man
12:25 How Do They Do It?
12:48 Baggage Battles
13:10 Alaska: The Last Frontier
13:55 Gold Divers
14:40 Gold Divers
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
18:45 Deadliest Catch
20:35 How Do They Do It?
21:00 Rancher, Farmer, Fisherman
22:40 Breaking Magic
23:05 Breaking Magic
23:30 Diesel Brothers



06:00 Disney II
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 Disney II
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



06:00 La Clippers Dance Squad
06:55 El News
07:10 La Clippers Dance Squad
08:10 El News: Daily Pop
09:10 WAGS La
10:10 WAGS La
11:05 Fashion Police
12:00 El News
12:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:10 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
14:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
15:00 El News
15:15 El News: Daily Pop
16:15 WAGS La
17:10 WAGS La
18:05 WAGS La
19:00 El News
20:00 Fashion Police
21:00 The Platinum Life
22:00 The Platinum Life
23:00 El News
23:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Man Fire Food
01:30 Man Fire Food
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 Chopped
21:00 Bakers vs. Fakers
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!
04:50 Gino's Hidden Italy
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!
09:30 Gino's Hidden Italy
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!
17:00 The Jonathan Ross Show
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!
22:00 The Jonathan Ross Show
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
03:50 Ancient Aliens
04:40 UFO Files
05:30 Engineering Disasters
06:20 America's Book Of Secrets
07:10 The Universe
08:00 Engineering An Empire
10:00 Ancient Aliens
11:00 UFO Files
12:00 Engineering Disasters
13:00 America's Book Of Secrets
14:00 Engineering An Empire
16:00 Ancient Aliens
17:00 UFO Files
18:00 The Universe
19:00 America's Book Of Secrets
20:00 Engineering An Empire
22:00 Ancient Aliens
23:00 How The States Got Their Shapes



00:20 Mountain Men
01:10 Forged: Iron & Fire
01:35 Milwaukee Blacksmith
02:00 Swamp People
02:50 Counting Cars
03:15 American Pickers
04:05 Swamp People
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
19:40 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars

21:00 Leepu And Pitbull
21:50 Ultimate Soldier Challenge
22:40 Time Team
23:30 Alone



00:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
01:10 Eat Street
01:40 Cesar To The Rescue
02:35 World's Best Beaches
03:30 Hotel India
04:25 David Rocco's Dolce India
04:50 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
05:20 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
05:45 The Food Files
06:15 The Great Food Revolution
07:10 Cesar To The Rescue
08:05 World's Best Beaches
09:00 Hotel India
09:55 David Rocco's Dolce India
10:20 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
10:50 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
11:15 The Food Files
11:45 The Great Food Revolution
12:40 Cesar To The Rescue
13:35 World's Best Beaches
14:30 Island Hunter
15:25 David Rocco's Dolce India
15:50 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
16:20 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
16:45 The Food Files
17:15 Home Strange Home
18:10 Eat Street
18:25 Food School
19:25 David Rocco's Dolce India
19:30 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
20:00 Angelo's Outdoor Kitchen
20:30 The Food Files
21:00 Home Strange Home
22:00 Eat Street
22:25 Food School
22:55 Cesar To The Rescue
23:50 World's Best Beaches



00:10 Yukon Gold
01:00 Cold Water Gold
02:00 Air Crash Investigation
03:00 Seconds From Disaster
04:00 Yukon Gold
05:00 Sea Patrol
06:00 Years Of Living Dangerously
07:00 The Long Road Home
08:00 Explorer
09:00 Cycling's Greatest Fraud
10:00 Battleground Brothers
11:00 Witness
12:00 Desperate Hours
13:00 Desperate Hours
14:00 Startalk
15:00 Explorer
16:00 The Long Road Home
16:00 Battleground Brothers
17:00 Disaster Earth
18:00 Disaster Earth
19:00 The Long Road Home
20:00 Battleground Brothers
20:50 Disaster Earth
21:40 Disaster Earth
22:30 The Long Road Home
23:20 Explorer



00:20 Brutal Killers
01:10 Monster Fish
02:00 Thunder Beasts
02:50 Monster Fish
03:45 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
04:40 Wild 24
05:35 Thunder Beasts
06:30 Monster Fish
07:25 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
08:20 Wild 24
09:15 Desert Lions
10:10 Philly Undercover
11:05 Zoo Confidential
12:00 Shark Kill Zone
12:55 Attack Of The Big Cats
13:50 Monster Fish
14:45 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
15:40 Wild 24
16:35 Animal Outlaws
17:30 Philly Undercover
18:25 Zoo Confidential
19:20 Caught In The Act GPU Reversions
20:10 Wild 24
21:00 Animal Outlaws
21:50 Philly Undercover
22:40 Zoo Confidential
23:30 Shark Kill Zone



00:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
00:36 Rabbids Invasion
00:58 Rabbids Invasion
01:20 Sanjay And Craig
01:50 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
01:24 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:34 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
01:45 The Day Henry Met
01:50 The Day Henry Met
01:56 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:18 Blaze And The Monster Machines
02:40 Zack & Quack
03:01 Shimmer And Shine
03:24 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
08:21 Bubble Guppies
08:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
09:07 Paw Patrol
09:18 Paw Patrol
09:30 Shimmer And Shine
09:53 Nella The Princess Knight
10:15 The Day Henry Met
10:22 Paw Patrol
10:45 Rusty Rivets
11:05 Wallykazam!
11:28 Bubble Guppies
11:52 Team Umizoomi
12:15 Shimmer And Shine
12:39 Shimmer And Shine
13:01 Max & Ruby
13:25 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:36 Ben & Holly's Little Kingdom
13:47 The Day Henry Met
13:52 The Day Henry Met
13:57 Blaze And The Monster Machines
14:19 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
16:22 Dora The Explorer
16:44 Max & Ruby
17:06 The Day Henry Met
17:11 Nella The Princess Knight
17:35 Shimmer And Shine
17:59 Wallykazam!
18:21 Zack & Quack
18:32 The Day Henry Met
18:38 Blaze And The Monster Machines
19:00 Rusty Rivets
19:12 Paw Patrol
19:23 Paw Patrol
19:37 Dora The Explorer
20:00 Nella The Princess Knight
20:21 Bubble Guppies
20:44 Blaze And The Monster Machines
21:07 Paw Patrol
21:30 Shimmer And Shine
21:53 Nella The Princess Knight
22:15 The Day Henry Met
22:22 Paw Patrol
22:45 Rusty Rivets
23:05 Wallykazam!
23:28 Bubble Guppies
23:52 Team Umizoomi



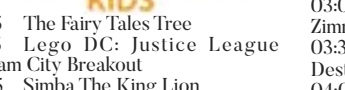
01:25 Mousehunt
03:05 A Little Game
04:40 Chilly Christmas
06:10 Houba! On The Trail Of Marsupilami
08:00 Mousehunt
09:40 Minions
11:15 A Little Game
12:50 Curious George
14:20 Pet Pals In Windland
15:45 Sing
17:35 Monte Carlo
19:25 Black Beauty
20:55 Curious George
22:25 Pet Pals In Windland
23:50 Monte Carlo



00:55 She's Funny That Way
02:30 Surviving Christmas
04:05 Fan Girl
05:40 Fun Size
07:10 After The Ball
08:55 Holiday Joy
10:30 Fan Girl
12:05 Fun Size
13:35 7 Chinese Brothers
14:55 Hard Promises
16:30 Made In America
18:20 Don Verdean
20:00 Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins
21:55 Dirty Grandpa
23:40 How To Be Single



00:30 Chattahoochee
02:10 The Best Of Me
04:10 A Country Called Home
05:45 Reds
09:00 Infinitely Polar Bear
10:35 The Best Of Me
12:35 Goal!
14:35 Not Without My Daughter
16:35 The Better Angels
18:15 12 Angry Men
20:00 The Zero Theorem
22:00 Wild At Heart



01:05 The Fairy Tales Tree
02:25 Lego DC: Justice League Gotham City Breakout
03:55 Simba The King Lion
06:05 Legend Of The Sea
07:35 A.R.C.H.I.L.E.
09:10 Two Buddies And A Badger
10:35 Freddy Frogface
12:05 Lego DC: Justice League Gotham City Breakout
13:35 Simba The King Lion
15:45 Space Dogs 2: Adventure To The Moon
17:15 Two Buddies And A Badger
18:45 Moomin And Midsummer Madness

20:05 Funny Little Cars
21:10 Space Dogs 2: Adventure To The Moon
22:40 A.R.C.H.I.L.E.



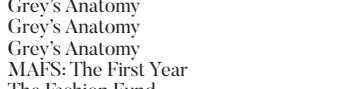
00:10 Ex Machina
02:00 The Blind Side
04:10 It Takes Two
05:55 Eight Men Out
08:00 The Count Of Monte Cristo
10:15 The Boxtrolls
12:00 The Blind Side
14:15 Forces Of Nature
16:05 The Express
18:15 This Means War
19:55 Black Mass
22:00 Gone Girl



00:40 Mythbusters
01:30 How Do They Do It?
01:55 Food Factory USA
02:20 Man v Expert
03:10 Smash Lab
04:00 Prototype This
04:48 Mythbusters
05:36 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Food Factory USA
06:24 Man v Expert
07:12 Smash Lab
08:00 How Do They Do It?
08:26 Prototype This
09:14 Mythbusters
10:02 Smash Lab
10:50 How Do They Do It?
11:14 Food Factory USA
11:38 Man v Expert
12:26 Prototype This
13:14 Mythbusters
14:02 How Do They Do It?
14:26 Food Factory USA
14:50 Smash Lab
15:38 Prototype This
16:26 Man v Expert
17:14 Mythbusters
18:02 Smash Lab
18:50 Prototype This
19:40 Mythbusters
20:30 American Titans
21:20 How Do They Do It?
21:45 Food Factory USA
22:10 Smash Lab
23:00 American Titans
23:50 Prototype This



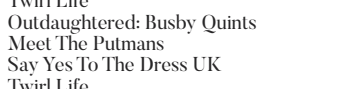
01:30 Night Moves
03:30 Begin Again
05:15 Man To Man
07:30 You Again
09:30 Autumn In New York
11:15 Edmond
12:30 We'll Never Have Paris
14:15 Night Moves
16:15 Finding Neverland
18:00 The Congress
20:00 Someday This Pain Will Be Useful To You
21:45 Crash
23:45 The Mothman Prophecies



00:00 Grey's Anatomy
01:00 Grey's Anatomy
02:00 Grey's Anatomy
03:00 MAFS: The First Year
04:00 The Fashion Fund
05:00 Fashion Star
06:00 Grey's Anatomy
07:00 Grey's Anatomy
08:00 Grey's Anatomy
09:00 MAFS: The First Year
10:00 The Fashion Fund
11:00 Fashion Star
12:00 Grey's Anatomy
13:00 Grey's Anatomy
14:00 Grey's Anatomy
15:00 MAFS: The First Year
16:00 The Fashion Fund
17:00 Fashion Star
18:00 Cedar Cove
19:00 Cedar Cove
20:00 Cedar Cove
21:00 MAFS: The First Year
22:00 The Fashion Fund
23:00 Fashion Star



00:20 My Giant Life
01:05 Fat Chance
01:50 Monsters Inside Me
02:35 Meet The Putmans
03:20 Baby Changes Everything
04:05 Toddlers & Tiaras: Coach Wars
05:35 Say Yes To The Dress UK
06:00 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
06:45 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
08:15 Baby Changes Everything
09:00 Cake Boss
09:25 Toddlers & Tiaras: Coach Wars
10:55 Twirl Life
11:40 Outdaughtered: Busby Quints
12:25 Meet The Putmans
13:10 Say Yes To The Dress UK
13:55 Wild Life
14:40 Baby Changes Everything
15:25 Kid Tycoons
16:10 Love, Lust Or Run
16:35 Cake Boss
17:00 Oprah: Where Are They Now?
17:50 Obsessive Compulsive Cleaners
18:50 Ultimate Shopper
19:40 Say Yes To The Dress UK
20:10 Cake Boss
20:35 Cake Boss
21:00 Dr Christian Will See You Now
21:50 Botched Up Bodies
22:40 Bizarre ER
23:30 90 Day Fianc?: Happily Ever After?



00:55 She's Funny That Way
02:30 Surviving Christmas
04:05 Fan Girl
05:40 Fun Size
07:10 After The Ball
08:55 Holiday Joy
10:30 Fan Girl
12:05 Fun Size
13:35 7 Chinese Brothers
14:55 Hard Promises
16:30 Made In America
18:20 Don Verdean
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21:55 Dirty Grandpa
23:40 How To Be Single

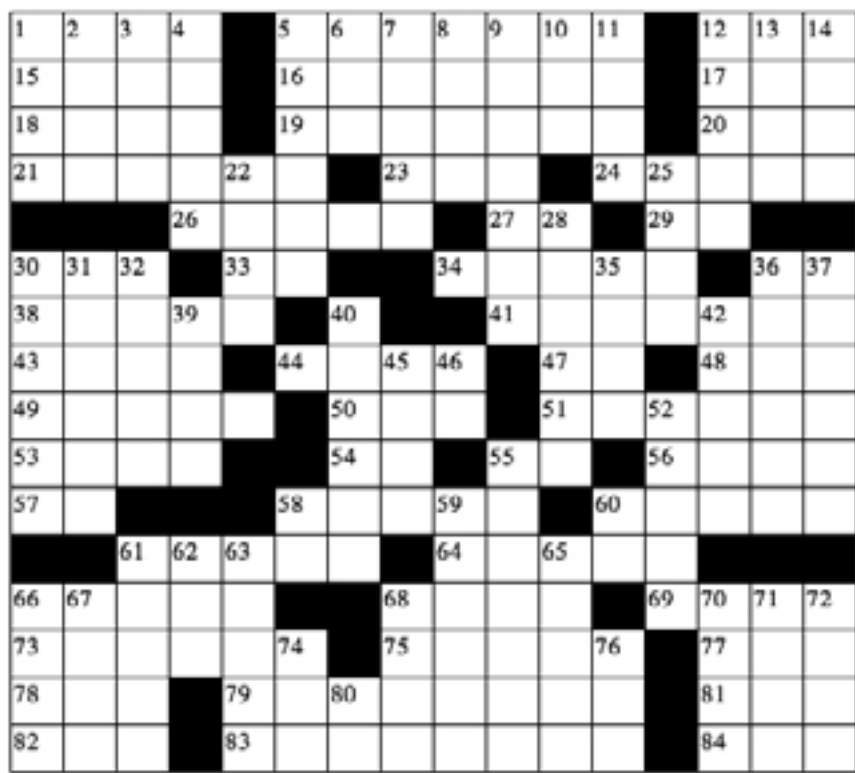


00:00 Bizarre Foods America
01:00 Booze Traveler
02:00 Mysteries At The Museum
03:00 B



Stars

CROSSWORD 1772



ACROSS

- The time during which someone's life continues.
- Marked by smartness in dress and manners.
- The act of hopping (jumping upward or forward (especially on one foot)).
- The chief solid component of mammalian urine.
- A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
- Approximating the statistical norm or average or expected value.
- Born out of wedlock.
- A United Nations agency that invest directly in companies and guarantees loans to private investors.
- The dialect of Malay used as the national language of the Republic of Indonesia or of Malaysia.
- An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
- A port in western Israel on the Mediterranean.
- (of complexion) Blemished by imperfections of the skin.
- (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
- A health resort near a spring or at the seaside.
- A public promotion of some product or service.
- Food chopped into small bits.
- A family of Amerindian languages spoken in California.
- A dealer in seeds.
- Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
- Large elliptical brightly colored deep-sea fish of Atlantic and Pacific and Mediterranean.
- A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali metal group.
- (Judaism) Sacred chest where the ancient Hebrews kept the two tablets containing the Ten Commandments.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- Group insurance that entitles members to services of participating hospitals and clinics and physicians.
- A former British gold coin worth 21 shillings.
- Hard strong durable yellowish-brown wood of oak trees.
- Being one more than one.
- A coffin along with its stand.
- Not out.
- 100 thebe equal 1 pula.
- (astronomy) An indistinct surface feature of Mars once thought to be a system of channels.
- (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
- Soviet physicist who worked on low temperature physics (1908-1968).
- Freshwater or marine or terrestrial gastropod mollusk usually having an external enclosing spiral shell.
- The act of slowing down or falling behind.
- A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
- Having a mental age of three to seven years.
- United States liquid unit equal to 4 quarts or 3.785 liters.
- A crystalline rock that can be cut and

- polished for jewelry.
- A person who commits larceny.
- American prizefighter who won the world heavyweight championship three times (born in 1942).
- Slow to learn or understand.
- A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
- Not only so, but.
- The capital and largest city of Yemen.
- A ribbon used as a decoration.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- Joined together into a whole.
- An event (or course of events) that will inevitably happen in the future.
- A genus of Nymphalidae.
- Term of address for a man.
- A pilgrimage to Mecca.
- A port in northwestern Israel on the Bay of Acre.
- German musician who developed a system for teaching music to children (1895-1982).
- Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
- The act of scanning.
- In bed.
- Reduction or lack of an immune response to a specific antigen.
- Unlawfully distilled Irish whiskey.
- Jordan's port.
- An important seaport on the Island of Cebu in the Philippines.
- Pitching dangerously to one side.
- The capital of Turkey.
- Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
- An inscrutable person who keeps his thoughts and intentions secret.
- An irrational but irresistible motive for a belief or action.
- Type genus of the Amiidae.
- A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
- Realistic Norwegian author who wrote plays on social and political themes (1828-1906).
- An island in the Persian Gulf.
- The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
- Standing posture.
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- A communist state in Indochina on the South China Sea.
- An interest followed with exaggerated zeal.
- An implement consisting of handle with a free swinging stick at the end.
- Voluntarily absent from home or country.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- One thousandth of a second.
- Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
- Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
- Large sweet juicy hybrid between tangerine and grapefruit having a thick wrinkled skin.
- A benevolent aspect of Devi.
- (Irish) The sea personified.
- A nonmetallic largely pentavalent heavy volatile corrosive dark brown liquid element belonging to the halogens.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a time when ideas and great communication about your ideas will take on an increased importance. You have a knack for putting the feelings of a group into words and may serve as a teacher or spokesperson. If you have ever considered a vocation in teaching, now may be the time to do something about it. You might even consider volunteering to teach an adult reading class. You may be able to encourage a friend to join you in this venture. Humanitarian efforts can affect your work and life-path. You have an opportunity to take control and become more disciplined. Friends, group projects and community concerns may play a key role in your career. Tonight is the time to follow through on a promise; the payoff will be really good.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Good practical job-related thoughts and ideas are available as usual. Figuring things out is one of the things that take on special significance. You have a strong urge to organize things your work area. There is much mental busywork as well. The ability to communicate with superiors or describe what you see brings attention to what you say. Your timing should be perfect for just about any project you want to attempt. Be careful not to push too hard as you could become too dominating. You may feel the need to care for others or to have them care for you. You sense what is needed and you move forward to take care of the essentials or to lend a helpful hand. Spending quality time with your loved one is your main priority this evening.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are able to cut through whatever problems present themselves and get at what is necessary to find, repair or substitute whatever it takes to make things work. You work well with those in authority who are independent. Clear decisions affecting others could be made today. You may be sought after by your co-workers for advice and direction regarding professional and perhaps, emotional issues. Be wise to keep any information you hear in confidence, under your hat. You could find yourself engaged in nonconformist causes, always ready to promote what is independent and innovative. You like radical approaches and find yourself in support of whatever is new or whatever breakthrough ideas are next in line. This may be a day of intellectual



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a challenging day. You may, however, want to set aside time to attend a lecture or business meeting on the technical level. Later, emotional considerations may block or oppose how you proceed with a plan. Someone may get pushy or obscure the real choices and the right path. Give yourself time to think things through. Stay away from speculative ventures. It is not a good idea to squander your resources. You are practical and conscientious about your own personal choices and how you conduct your life. These attributes take on a special importance now as the young people in your family, and perhaps friends, depend on your thinking to help them make life choices: home, car, etc. You are good at helping when asked.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Frustration, especially in getting things accomplished, may set today's mood. You are, however, able to rise above any difficulty... Seen or unseen. If possible, this is a better time to stay on the path and just keep moving forward. You can handle any glitch in the process and will eventually learn to be more patient with yourself. Sometimes the process of well-traveled steps points the way to the end result that is appreciated the most. This afternoon, exchanging information takes on more significance. Being more involved with neighbors or your siblings is important after your workday has ended. A sense of belonging and nurturing is an issue.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are a very forceful speaker and communicate with great enthusiasm. There are opportunities to speak to small and large groups this day. This could be in a lecture, a work meeting, teaching, etc. Words just flow out and always demonstrate a heartfelt concern that brings them home to your listeners. You have no trouble putting your feelings into words; in fact, you may have to exercise some control over your tongue, for you can be quick to say things. You may be sought after for your advice and guidance regarding very personal and emotional issues. You will be able to be understanding and cut through the red tape to get at what is behind a problem. If you have a quest, you will find joiners. A social event this evening will find you at your most elegant.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

This is a good time to buckle down and concentrate on your work. Your managerial abilities and sense of responsibility prove successful. Your career assumes a more solid form—a firm foundation. Preach or teach what is on your mind today. Your words contain a timely message that is good for all to hear. You may be able to enjoy and value your own life situation this afternoon as you visit with a friend or family member. You are learning to ask good questions and you can quickly get to the root of a matter that helps in understanding viewpoints. Listening and adding your comments when asked is what makes you a favorite. You may find yourself on the phone later today as you busy yourself cooking or look for a special recipe to trade.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You may be surprised when others express appreciation for your ability to know just what needs to be done, and you contribute your expertise to whatever is needed. This could be in the workplace with a team that needs coaching, support or guiding. Real insight into your own inner workings could surface in a manageable form. Every day is different, and you enjoy your work and the people you work with as each person is dedicated and enthusiastic. At home this afternoon you may realize that although much effort goes into your workday, the people at home also need your attention. You build your relationships so they will last a lifetime, and you are willing to do what it takes to make family work. A young person takes the lead tonight.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

This is a good day to get things done. You are a unique individual, with talents that do not compare to many—think positive. You are able to apply real discipline or organization. You find yourself in a very practical mood and working with, instead of against, yourself. You have a yearning to move toward the more challenging issues soon. Consider your choices carefully today because at some hour you may be contemplating some big changes for your business. You are in a good position to add your advice or guidance for those who ask. Emotional security, a sense of belonging and nurturing turns your attention to the home from this afternoon. Making phone calls, paying bills and writing letters hold you close to home this evening.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Something you say or communicate may go against your own best interests. You could clash with an older person or one in authority at this time. Not perhaps a good time for you to try out new things or break away from an old routine. You might say this is not the day to do two things at once. Slow your pace at bit and you will find you will have accomplished much more than you thought possible by day's end. Intense feelings and strong attachments make for hot times and you are fiercely loyal, if not sometimes possessive. You are not at all superficial but always get to the heart of things. This is good for business and politics, particularly at work. You have a sense for power, wealth and passion. Accept the changes that are being asked of you at this time.



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 are enthusiastic to perform your duties in the workplace today. You may be so prepared that you anticipate rewards. You enjoy working puzzles and your analytical abilities are at a high point. You can really get your thoughts and ideas across—good communication. It is time to put your plans to work and move forward with your career goals. You may find that a co-worker or partner will join in and ascend the corporate ladder with you. A friend from long ago may contact you this afternoon. Much conversation over old times may find you looking through the scrapbook this evening. A sense of belonging and nurturing are important now. You may want what others have but you may also decide you like the way you have set up your own life to run.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Car Parts

Find and circle all of the car parts that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of an additional car part.



- |                 |                |                  |                |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| AIR BAG         | CLUTCH         | GAS TANK         | STARTER        |
| AIR CONDITIONER | COOLING FAN    | HEADLIGHT        | STEERING WHEEL |
| ALTERNATOR      | CRANKCASE      | HOOD             | SUSPENSION     |
| AXLE            | CRUISE CONTROL | HORN             | TAIL LIGHT     |
| BATTERY         | DEFROSTER      | IGNITION         | TIRES          |
| BODY            | DOOR           | MUFFLER          | TRANSMISSION   |
| BRAKE           | DRIVE LINE     | POWER WINDOW     | TRUNK          |
| BUMPER          | DRIVESHAFT     | RADIATOR         | TURN SIGNAL    |
| CAR SEAT        | ENGINE         | RADIO            | WHEEL RIM      |
| CARBURETOR      | FRAME          | REAR VIEW MIRROR | WHEELS         |
| CARRIER RACK    | FUSE           | ROOF             | WINDSHIELD     |
| CHILD SEAT      |                | SEAT BELT        |                |

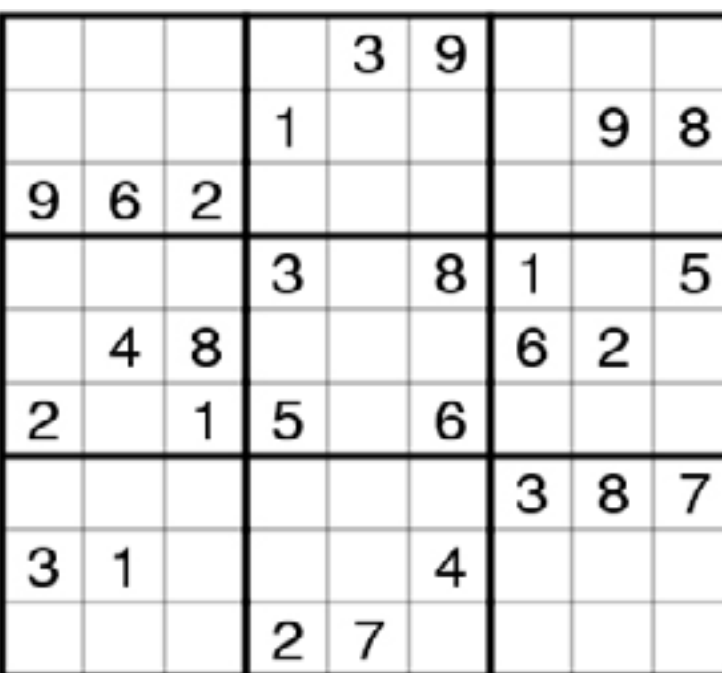
Yesterday's Solution

Capital Cities of Europe

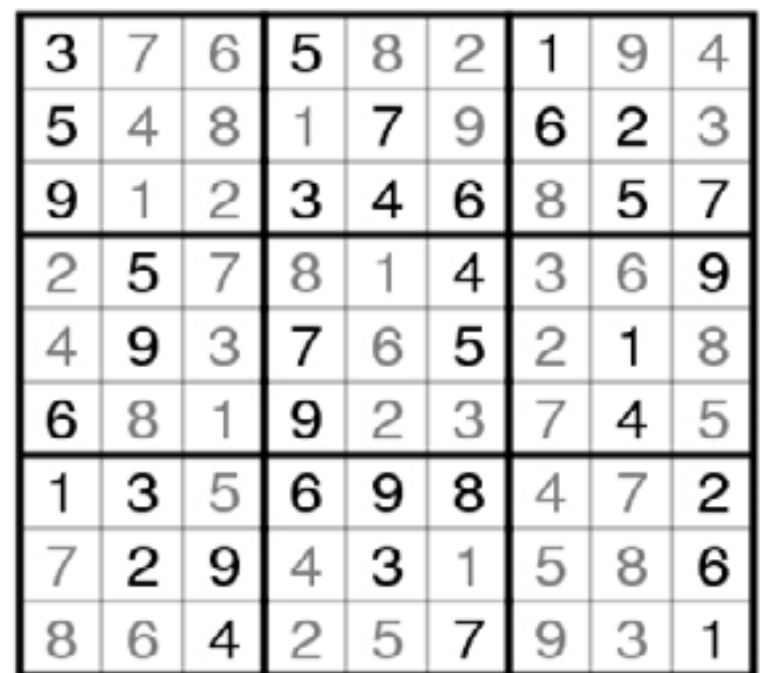


The hidden sentence is: THE MOST POPULOUS CITY IN EUROPE IS MOSCOW WHICH HAS OVER EIGHTY MILLION PEOPLE

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution





# Kuwait Times Classifieds

Wednesday, November 29, 2017

**Kuwait Times**  
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### Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

**BY NIGHT:** Cool with light to moderate north westerly wind to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some high clouds will appear with a chance for mist forming over some areas.

**BY DAY:** Mostly Sunny with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h.

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. REC.	MIN. EXP.	SFC. CHART 28/11/2017 1200 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	23 °C	15 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	23 °C	10 °C		
ABDALY	21 °C	11 °C		
BUBYAN	23 °C	10 °C		
JAHRA	23 °C	10 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	22 °C	13 °C		
SALMIYAH	22 °C	16 °C		
AHMADI	22 °C	17 °C		
NUWAISIB	24 °C	13 °C		
WAFRA	23 °C	12 °C		
SALMY	21 °C	09 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Wednesday	11/29	Mostly Sunny	23 °C	10 °C	NW	08 - 30 km/h
Thursday	11/30	Partly cloudy to cloudy with a chance for scattered rain	24 °C	12 °C	NW	10 - 32 km/h
Friday	12/01	Mostly Sunny and some scattered clouds will appear	22 °C	10 °C	NW	15 - 40 km/h
Saturday	12/02	Mostly Sunny	22 °C	09 °C	NW	15 - 35 km/h

TOMORROW PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	04:59
Sunrise	06:23
Zuhr	11:36
Asr	14:30
Sunset	16:49
Isha	18:11

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	18 °C
MIN. Temp.	14 °C
MAX. RH	95 %
MIN. RH	39 %
MAX. Wind	N 39 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	1.23mm

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 send cv to: ashrafk@yahoo.com or whatsapp to 99313892

**EMERGENCY 112**

## AIRLINES

American Airlines	22087425	Sri Lanka Airlines	22424444
Kuwait Airways	171	Egypt Air	22421578
Jazeera Airways	177	Swiss Air	22421516
Jet Airways	22924455	Saudia	22426306
FlyDubai	22414400	Middle East Airlines	22423073
Qatar Airways	22423888	Lufthansa	22422493
KLM	22425747	PIA	22421044
Air Slovakia	22434940	Alitalia	22414427
Olympic Airways	22420002/9	Balkan Airlines	22416474
Royal Jordanian	22418064/5/6	Bangladesh Airlines	22452977/8
Reservation	22433388	Czech Airlines	22417901/
British Airways	22425635	Indian Airlines	22456700
Air France	22430224	Oman Air	22958787
Emirates	22921555	Turkish Airlines	22453820/1
Air India	22438184	Aeroflot	22404838/9

## Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw) DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

Arrival Flights on Thursday 29/11/2017				Departure Flights on Thursday 29/11/2017			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JAI	572	Mumbai	00:05	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
KAC	504	Beirut	00:30	JZR	528	Asyut	00:15
JZR	267	Beirut	00:40	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:30
KAC	102	London	00:50	WAN	341	Sohag	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	00:55	FDB	072	Dubai	00:35
PGT	858	Istanbul	00:55	PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
THY	772	Istanbul	00:55	MSC	412	Asyut	01:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	JAI	571	Mumbai	01:05
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	JZR	502	Luxor	01:30
UAE	853	Dubai	01:45	JZR	142	Doha	01:45
DLH	625	Bahrain	01:45	KAC	677	Dubai	01:50
THY	764	Istanbul	01:50	KAC	417	Manila	02:00
AXB	395	Kozhikode	02:00	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	02:15	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:30
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:15	SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
QTR	1086	Doha	02:20	DLH	625	Frankfurt	02:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	AXB	396	Kozhikode	02:55
KLM	446	Bahrain	02:30	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	03:05
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	KAC	351	Kochi	03:05
KKK	1268	Istanbul	02:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:40
MSR	606	Luxor	03:05	QTR	1087	Doha	03:40
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:10	KLM	446	Amsterdam	03:55
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KKK	1269	Istanbul	03:55
QTR	1076	Doha	03:50	OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	THY	765	Istanbul	04:00
KAC	382	Delhi	04:15	MSR	607	Luxor	04:05
KAC	544	Cairo	04:25	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:05
KAC	418	Manila	04:25	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	784	Jeddah	04:35	LMU	511	Cairo	05:00
FDB	069	Dubai	04:55	QTR	1077	Doha	05:30
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:20	FDB	070	Dubai	05:45
THY	770	Istanbul	05:25	KAC	303	Mumbai	06:05
JZR	143	Doha	05:25	JZR	1330	Al Najaf	06:20
KAC	358	Kochi	05:40	JZR	560	Sohag	06:25
KAC	332	Trivandrum	05:40	THY	771	Istanbul	06:50
KAC	344	Chennai	05:50	RJA	643	Amman	07:05
KAC	302	Mumbai	06:20	GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
KAC	362	Colombo	06:25	JZR	1334	Al Najaf	07:30
KAC	678	Dubai	06:30	KAC	167	Paris	07:35
KAC	284	Dhaka	06:30	JZR	1336	Al Najaf	07:45
WAN	342	Sohag	06:35	JZR	902	GYD	07:50
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	KAC	501	Beirut	08:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	06:50	KAC	413	Bangkok	08:10
BAW	157	London	07:10	FDB	054	Dubai	08:35
KAC	204	Lahore	07:10	KAC	791	Madinah	08:35
QTR	8511	Doha	07:35	KAC	787	Jeddah	08:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:35	KAC	613	Bahrain	08:55
KAC	354	Bengaluru	07:35	BAW	156	London	08:55
JZR	503	Luxor	07:45	KAC	117	New York	09:00
KAC	384	Delhi	08:00	QTR	8512	Doha	09:05
UAE	855	Dubai	08:35	JZR	534	Cairo	09:10
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:00	KAC	561	Amman	09:40
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	671	Dubai	09:45
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	741	Dammam	09:45
QTR	1070	Doha	09:10	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	101	London	09:45
SVA	512	Riyadh	10:00	KAC	515	Tehran	10:00
JZR	1331	Al Najaf	10:00	KAC	541	Cairo	10:00
IAW	157A	Al Najaf	10:00	UAE	856	Dubai	10:00
IRA	673	Ahwaz	10:10	IRA	668	Mashhad	10:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	773	Riyadh	10:10
WAN	114	Bahrain	11:00	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:10
SYR	341	Damascus	11:00	KAC	617	Doha	10:15
JZR	1337	Al Najaf	11:10	QTR	1071	Doha	10:20
JZR	1335	Al Najaf	11:10	KAC	155	Istanbul	10:25
MSC	403	Asyut	11:15	DLH	778	Jeddah	10:30
QTR	1074	Doha	11:20	DHX	171	Bahrain	10:35
NIA	161	Cairo	11:35	QTR	1089	Doha	11:00
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	KAC	205	Islamabad	11:00
KAC	614	Bahrain	12:10	KAC	203	Lahore	11:00
FEG	933	Sohag	12:40	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	11:00
FDB	075	Dubai	12:45	MEA	403	Beirut	11:10
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	ALK	230	Colombo	11:25
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	GFA	220	Bahrain	12:30
KAC	742	Dammam	12:50	KAC	783	Jeddah	12:35
FDK	803	Damascus	13:00	KAC	383	Delhi	12:40
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KLM	445	Bahrain	12:50
AXB	393	Kozhikode	13:15	UAE	860	Dubai	13:00
KAC	792	Madinah	13:20	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	13:05
				QTR	1083	Doha	13:20





## Jolie thinks making a movie in Cambodia helped son 'grow and evolve'

**T**he actress-turned-director enlisted 16-year-old Maddox to serve as executive producer on 'First They Killed My Father' - which is based on author Lung Ung's account of the Khmer Rouge 1975-79 regime - and she was "so proud" to see the teenager working hard in his home country, from where she adopted him as a baby. Speaking to Psychologies magazine, Angelina - whose 13-year-old son Pax was a stills photographer on the set - said: "It was a joy. I wanted them to understand their world and be able to go out and live and make friends. Yes, we were working on something important and I wanted them to have a strong work ethic, but I was also so proud when I looked over and saw Mad and Pax working with the crew and creating something. It was a natural process and I think it helped Mad to grow and evolve in a way that I couldn't do for him. His country had to teach him. He was very involved in the production and Pax worked as a set photographer." The 42-year-old star - who also raises Zahara, 12, Shiloh, 11, and nine-year-old twins Knox and Vivienne with estranged husband Brad Pitt - had known for many years that she wanted to make the book into a movie with her son's involvement, and was very "impressed" with the work he put into the project. She said: "He earned that [executive producer] credit. We'd had the script for a few years and Mad has known of Loung's story his whole life. I told him, 'One day, son, you'll be ready and you'll tell me when it's time to go deeply into your country. But I need your help. You have to do it with me.' "And because the story is from a child's point of view, it was good to have somebody younger like Mad there to say, 'You're losing my attention'. He really impressed me."

## Manolo Blahnik says a person's appearance is imperative



**T**he 75-year-old designer was born with the "mentality" to always make an effort with the way he looks regardless of how "busy" he is, and though he takes care in his looks and showers twice a day, the mogul has claimed he "never" makes a "big effort" to look "polished". Speaking to ElleUK.com, the creative mastermind said: "I was born with this mentality since a child. Maintenance is important even when you're busy. In the morning I have a quick shower, then a shower at night. There's never a big effort - I've never tried to be polished. If you have an old suit that's many years old, you must send it to the cleaners every two weeks or so. That's what you have to do. People have to pay more attention." But Manolo has admitted as he has got older he cares less about people's opinions of him. He said: "I couldn't care less about what people think about me. When you reach a certain age, you don't give a damn. I'm an old boy now. That's the truth. Reputation, fame and being well-known, those things never entered my head. As long as I don't kill people, then I'm happy with anything." The businessman both stars and is the subject of a new documentary 'Manolo: The Boy Who Makes Shoes For Lizards', but the star wished he was not seen in the production because he feels sick when he sees himself on screen, and he thinks he looks "huge" in the series after having cortisone injections in his body after he suffered a fall at his home and broke his diaphragm.

## Jason Biggs hailed his wife as a 'champion'

**T**he 'American Pie' star and wife Jenny Mollen welcomed their second son Lazlo into the world on October 1 2017 and Jason admitted it is Jenny who soothes the tot in the night when he's hungry or upset. He told UsMagazine.com: "Jenny's up with the baby. Jenny's breastfeeding, she's a champion, she's up with him a lot." The 38-year-old actress - who is also mother to three-year-old son Sid - revealed during her pregnancy that she was battling "prepartum depression". But Jason, 39, revealed she is coping well since the birth, saying: "She's good." The 'Orange Is The New Black' star has been enjoying all his time with Lazlo because he's such an easy baby. He said: "He's actually a really good baby. We'll be like, 'Have you changed him?' 'No, I haven't changed him. Should we check his diaper?' "And it'll be like a blow out! This kid has been sitting in a pile of his own s\*\*\* for like how long?" "And he's just chill. He's just sucking on his pacifier, cold chilling. "Sid would be like, 'Get this s\*\*\*ty diaper off of me right now! What is wrong with you people?! This is unhuman!" Jason admitted he is getting really excited about the holidays now Sid is old enough to get involved in the celebrations. He said: "I'm more excited about the holidays than I ever have been. My eldest son really knows Santa now, really gets it. I'm so excited to go get out tree."



## Blige was afraid to go make-up free for 'Mudbound'

**T**he 46-year-old singer was forced to ditch the cosmetic items for her role in the historical period drama, which sees her portray Florence Jackson in the movie, but the star was so fearful of going au naturel she "fought" with the creative team to keep her false eyelashes, long fingernails and wigs because she felt "really low". The 'Family Affair' hitmaker told Variety: "Florence came at a time when I was really low, feeling super insecure, not sure of my life, not sure of even who I was. I didn't really realize that I was hanging onto so many things of the world that made me feel beautiful. I was fighting to keep lashes. I was fighting for fingernails, and fighting for wigs and things like that. And I just didn't want to strip down, because I just was afraid." And the reason Mary was hesitant about baring all was because she wanted to be "beautiful", and she thought such niceties would help her see that. The 'Just Fine' singer - who filed for a divorce from her estranged husband Martin 'Kendu' Isaacs earlier this year - said: "I was struggling because I was going through some real heavy... things in my mind. And I wanted to be beautiful for someone. I wanted to be beautiful. I thought that these things made me beautiful to this person. So I was afraid to let it go because I was trying to save something that was already dead." Once Mary followed the advice of film director Dee Rees and scrapped the beauty products, she felt "really liberated" and realized her own "inner beauty". She explained: "Once I trusted [Rees] and let Florence live, she really liberated me. She really opened me up to my own inner beauty for real. Not what I thought I'd learn, but really truly who I am. And that none of this matters. "Now I'm running around with my own edges out. I want to wear my own hair out. It is what it is. My forehead is what it is. My edges are what they are. The texture of my hair is what it is. The color of my skin is what it is. I am what I am."



## Minaj wants people to feel the 'holiday magic'



**T**he 34-year-old rapper portrays a mother in the brand's festive commercial, and she hopes the clip will encourage "everyone in the world" to get into the festive spirit. Speaking to Look magazine, she said: "I wish that everyone in the world could feel the same holiday magic that we created for this shoot." But for the 'Anaconda' hitmaker the best part of starring in the advert was working with photographer Tim Walker, who she has praised for having an "incredible vision" for the campaign. Asked about her highlight when working on the project, she said: "It had to be working with the amazing photographer Tim Walker. He had such an incredible vision for the whole campaign - there's always magic in the air during the holidays and he really brought it to life." Nicki also enjoyed acting alongside 36-year-old 'Grey's Anatomy' actor Jesse Williams in the advert, who she has described as an "inspiring" figure because he is "so professional and natural" in front of the camera. The 'The Other Woman' star continued: "He was so professional and natural that it didn't feel like he was acting at all. This made him so inspiring to work with, and made the experience so much easier for me." And while Nicki wants audiences to enjoy her fantasy advert, she believes her own career resembles a fairytale too. Speaking previously, she said: "If I had to describe [the past ten years], I would say 'blessed'. Blessed and highly favoured, because the things that have happened to me have been once in a lifetime. "I feel like it's been a Cinderella story. Getting plucked out of Southside, Jamaica, Queens by the prince, Lil Wayne, and whisked away on a freaking magic pumpkin. I'm still in the magic pumpkin! I have to say it's been magical. It's been tough. It's been emotional. I've had to deal with it all, negative and positive."

## Hoult's cures hangovers with ice cold water

**T**he 'X-Men: Apocalypse' star shot to fame as party boy Tony Stonem in TV drama 'Skins' when he was just 16. But Nicholas, now 27, can't party like he used to and tries to avoid going on set with a hangover. But if he does indulge in too much alcohol he has come up with a way to liven himself up. Speaking to MrPorter.com, he said: "It's not like when I was in 'Skins'. Now I'm older I realize that I'm working and if I'm not on point, I can't do it, my brain isn't up to speed." Revealing his icy hangover cure, he added: "Run a sink of cold water, fill it with ice, then stick your head in it." The 'Mad Max: Fury Road' actor revealed he prefers a night in wearing his comfortable bathrobe and indulging in his favourite hobby of cooking. He said: "A friend just bought me a bathrobe so now I'm obsessed with putting on my bathrobe. Just mooching around about in it, making a coffee." Nicholas - who was previously in a relationship with his 'X-Men' co-star Jennifer Lawrence - is currently dating 24-year-old US-based lingerie model Bryana Holly. Talking about his passion for cooking her revealed he cooks an annual pre-Christmas lunch for his friends, and recently stole another man's food delivery. Nicholas confessed: "It was on my doorstep! Addressed to someone else, but at my address. It would have all gone off if I hadn't cooked it... That's bad, isn't it?"



## Liv Tyler has revealed she has a signature 'call'

**T**he 'Gunpowder' star - whose father is Aerosmith rocker Steve Tyler - makes bird-like noises to communicate with her friends and family. Liv explained to The Times newspaper: "It's a super New York thing. Kids who grow up in certain neighborhoods have a call so they can communicate with their gang. We learnt it off friends who grew up in the projects. If you're a few blocks away and you hear the call then you immediately turn round." She added her father has one too, revealing: "His is really funny. It's good to have your family call. It's the only way to get anybody's attention." Liv, 40, grew up in New York's East Village with her mother, Playboy model Bebe Buell and singer/songwriter Todd Rundgren who for the first few years of her life she believed to be her father. The 'Lord of the Rings' actress recalled the moment she spotted Steve Tyler's daughter Mia, from his marriage to the actress Cyrynda Foxe, and a Guns N' Roses concert, and realized she was her sister. Liv said: "I saw this girl, Mia standing there and she literally looked like my twin. I turned to my mom and she looked at me with those big, beautiful doe eyes of hers. They were all glassy and she just started to cry. So I said, 'Is that my sister?' and Mom just said, 'Yes.' "The mother-of-three also revealed when she first met her father she felt an instant connection with the Aerosmith frontman. She recalled: "It was at one of Todd's shows. I felt a connection to my father that I'd never really felt with anyone before. I sort of fell in love with him, except of course it wasn't that, it was a kinship and a closeness."





Lifestyle | Gossip

# GOMEZ'S FAMILY 'STILL UNCOMFORTABLE' WITH BIEBER

**T**he 25-year-old singer and the 'Sorry' musician recently decided to give their relationship another try after having ended their five-year on/off romance in 2015, and although the pair seem happier than ever together, Selena's family are said to be less than thrilled with the idea. Selena - who ended her relationship with The Weeknd before reconnecting with Justin - was reportedly considering bringing 23-year-old Justin home to Texas for Thanksgiving last week, but the pair decided it was best for them to spend the holiday season with their own families. A source told E! News: "They both spent Thanksgiving with their families. Justin went to Canada and Selena was in Texas. They are still doing really well together, but they agreed it was best for them to be with their families for the holiday. "Selena felt it was too soon for Justin to come to

Texas with her. Her family is still getting comfortable with the idea of them back together." It comes after sources claimed earlier this month that the pair - who first began dating in 2010 - are "exclusive", after the 'Love Yourself' singer managed to win over Selena's friends. An insider said: "[They are] exclusive. They're really happy and enjoying this time together. They've both grown a lot over the years and are excited to have reconnected. "Justin definitely had to prove himself to her friends to regain their trust and he's doing a good job. Her friends have come around and can see that this time is different." Meanwhile, it was previously revealed that Selena views Justin as her "first love". An insider said: "Justin was Selena's first love. He will always have a special place in her heart. She's always held out hope that one day the circumstances and timing would be right."



## Cowell has splashed out \$25m on a new home

**T**he 58-year-old music mogul has spared no expense to snap up the lavish 10,000 square foot, seven bedroom home on the Pacific Coast Highway. Simon's new pad overlooks the ocean and boasts a swimming pool, a modern interior and a tennis court. But despite its hefty price tag, the property is likely only to be a holiday home for Simon, his partner Lauren Silverman and their son Eric, three, as the 'X Factor' boss already owns his main house in London, and a second \$15 million abode in Beverly Hills. The 'Britain's Got Talent' star recently feared for his life after falling down the stairs of his London home while going to get a glass of milk. He said: "I was lying on my back thinking, 'I hope I haven't broken my neck.' But the NHS staff were the most amazing people I've ever met, genuinely. Fortunately it was all fine ... "He [Eric] probably would have told me off, and I didn't want to worry him. He's only three." While the fall didn't leave Simon with any lasting damage, it has helped him realize what is important in life. He said at the time: "It does make you realize what's truly important in life." It comes after Simon admitted low blood pressure was to blame for his slip and has vowed to change his lifestyle in order to make sure he is as fit as he can be so that he can be a responsible father for Eric. He said: "Sometimes we get a reminder that we're not invincible and this was certainly mine. It was a huge shock. "They think I fainted because I had low blood pressure and so I have got to really take good care of myself to sort that out. After all I am a dad and have more responsibility than ever."

## Cyrus 'doesn't like' her own pop music



**T**he 'Malibu' singer isn't a fan of her own more commercial songs and finds it hard to relate to popular tracks that get a lot of radio play. Miley made her revelation while critiquing her team member Brooke Simpson on 'The Voice', after the hopeful performed Pink's 'What About Us' and the 25-year-old former Disney star praised her act for being able to add her own twist on the song. She said: "We always look forward to - I really, really look forward to because I get to imagine it and create it with you but - your performances. "I think people will look forward to keeping you on the show, so everyone has to vote for Brooke obviously to see that happen. But what you all can really look forward to is Brooke's record when she makes one. "She has got such an amazing year and an amazing way to interpret pop music - which, I'm the popstar sitting here and I don't even like pop music half the time, I don't even like my own pop music most of the time - but you take a song that's on the radio that I can't always relate to and, like Adam [Levine] said, make it about you." And the 'Party in the USA' hitmaker was particularly "proud" of Brooke because she understood it can be very hard to give a fresh take on a popular mainstream song. She continued: "In the beginning I always kind of fought back about doing mainstream 'cause actually Adam taught me sometimes when something's on the radio, people know it so well, it's hard to make it your own. "But you did it perfectly this week and I'm just so, so proud of you."



## Jeremy Piven thanks fans for their support

**T**he 'Entourage' star has been accused of sexual misconduct by four women - claims he vehemently denies - and as a result, the US TV network CBS has decided not to continue the show. Jeremy tweeted: "Wanted to thanks all of you guys for supporting us at #WisdomoftheCrowd sorry we don't get to continue with this great family we have created. Proud of the work we did and we will Finish out our 13 episodes with full hearts! "Thanks for all the love , going to miss it as well... #WisdomoftheCrowd (sic) All 13 episodes of the show originally commissioned will air, but an order for additional episodes has been declined, an insider told TV Line. 'Wisdom of the Crowd' saw Jeremy star as a man who develops an online crowd-sourcing app to create a crack team to help him find out who murdered his daughter. The 52-year-old actor has been accused of sexual assault or harassment by four women - actress Anastasia Taneie, former Playboy model Ariane Bellamar, 'Longmire' actress Cassidy Freeman, and advertising executive Tiffany Bacon Scourby. Following the spate of allegations, Jeremy said in a statement to BuzzFeed: "Let me be absolutely clear, this simply did not happen. "I would never force myself on a woman. I cannot speak as to why a person would create a story like this." Meanwhile, HBO - the TV network that broadcast 'Entourage' - said: "We reviewed our records and did not receive any complaints against Jeremy Piven on 'Entourage.'" The actor reportedly took polygraph tests regarding three of the claims, and a blanket lie detector test to determine if he had ever assaulted a woman, and he passed with no signs of deception.



## Harry Styles is a huge Shania Twain fan

**T**he former One Direction star has revealed he takes inspiration from the 'Man! I Feel Like A Woman' country singer when it comes to both music and fashion. Harry told 'Entertainment Tonight': "I think both music and fashion, [my] main influence was probably Shania Twain. Yeah, I think she's amazing." The 'Sign Of The Times' singer has previously spoken of how he inherited his love of music from his parents, and his mother was a big Shania fan. He shared: "I used to listen to a lot of my dad's music and my mum's music ... "My dad was a big [fan of] The Beatles , Elvis Presley, [The Rolling ] Stones , Fleetwood Mac , that kinda stuff. I think if you grew up listening to that, a child can't not be influenced. "And then my mum was crazy into Norah Jones and Shania Twain, so I have that side, too, which is fun." In the past, Harry has spoken about wanting to cover Shania's hit 'Still The One' with One Direction. Meanwhile, the 24-year-old has revealed how he favors deep, meaningful ballads - but Harry admitted he still enjoys having a bit of fun. The dark-haired hunk said: "I think my favorite songs [are the most personal ones] but my favorite way to listen to music is on my own, with my eyes closed for example, or not. If I'm driving, or operating machinery, I usually keep them open ... "I think it's just as important to have songs that are fun and make you feel great, and I think that's just as important as everything being moody and deep and meaningful."



## Ray J and Princess Love expecting their first child

**T**he 36-year-old singer and Princess tied the knot in 2016, and during her announcement post on Instagram, Princess revealed the couple have been patiently waiting to share their pregnancy news with their fans. She posted a picture of her baby bump and captioned it: "It's such a blessing from God to be able to carry our child. We kept this to ourselves until after the first trimester because it's bad luck to announce too early. But we're so proud to share this journey with you guys. Thank you for all of the love and prayers (sic) Ray J also spoke of his delight during his appearance on 'The Real', revealing the couple have been trying to have a baby for some time. He explained: "Princess and I, we're expecting. I'm nervous, excited ... it finally happened. My first one. "It was special, because we was trying for awhile. It's not as easy as people think. Some people go on tour and get everybody pregnant. But for me, it was love and we took our time." The singer - who previously dated Kim Kardashian West - revealed he would be happy to have a baby of either gender, although he also conceded he's secretly hoping for "a little girl first". The 'One Wish' hitmaker added: "Because it's like, Daddy's little girl. "The little boy is going to probably be a little aggressive, so I wanna be able to have some peace first. Bring the peaceful side in and then bring the boy in. But whatever God blesses us with, I'm happy." The loved-up couple tied the knot in August last year at the Vibiana in Los Angeles, having dated each other since 2014.



## Timbaland almost died of an overdose of painkillers

**T**he 45-year-old record producer - who has collaborated with some of the biggest names in the music industry, including Jay Z, Justin Timberlake and Katy Perry - has revealed he came perilously close to losing his life three years ago after overdosing on OxyContin, which he became addicted to. Of his near-death experience, he shared: "All I can tell you is that there was a light. I woke up trying to catch my breath, like I was underwater." Timbaland started taking painkillers over a decade ago because of nerves issue, which he explained stemmed from a gunshot wound he suffered during his teens. But over a period of time, the chart-topping star developed an addiction to the potentially dangerous painkillers. He told Rolling Stone magazine: "Music is a gift and curse. "Once you're not popping, it plays with your mind. The pills helped block out the noise - I'd just sleep all day. I remember Jay Z told me one time, 'Don't do no more interviews' - because I was saying crazy s\*\*t." The producer's addiction eventually started to impact his career, with Timbaland's ability to produce hit records waning. But having survived his near-death experience, the music star claims he now has a completely different perspective on his life and his career. Timbaland - whose real name is Tim Mosley - explained: "Through that whole thing I saw life - I saw where I would be if I don't change, and where I could be if I did. "I thought about Michael Jackson ... I didn't want to be old and taking these pills." Timbaland currently had a number of projects in the pipeline, but the producer says he's also determined to work with up-and-coming artists, too. He said: "Right now, I feel like what I can do with my legacy is to give back. "Which means finding the youth of today. Look at Quincy Jones - he was 50 when he did 'Thriller'! What's my 'Thriller'?"





## Lifestyle | Features



Photo shows the Crenshaw district in Los Angeles, California, where actress Meghan Markle was reported to have grown up. — AFP



An exterior view of the Immaculate Heart High School in Hollywood, California where actress Meghan Markle was educated.



Britain's Prince Harry and his fiancée US actress Meghan Markle pose for a photograph in the Sunken Garden in west London following the engagement announcement.

# Meghan Markle follows Grace Kelly in abandoning acting

Meghan Markle says acting will take a back seat when she marries Prince Harry, following the example of screen icon Grace Kelly who abandoned Hollywood to marry into royalty. The 36-year-old has starred in legal drama "Suits" since 2011, but is likely to shed many outside interests as she joins the British royal family following the couple's engagement announcement, according to observers. Markle confirmed in an interview with the BBC she would be giving up acting and would focus much of her attention on the causes that are important to her.

"I don't see it as giving anything up. I see it as a change. It's a new chapter," she said. Markle and Harry, 33, will wed in spring next year, 62 years after silver screen icon Kelly abandoned her glittering career to marry Monaco's Prince Rainier III. Hollywood branding expert Jeetendra Sehdev pointed out however that Markle is not in the same league as the Oscar-winning star of 1950s Hitchcock thrillers "Dial M for Murder," "Rear Window" and "To Catch a Thief." "Americans who have heard of Meghan

will remember her as a working TV actor rather than an celebrity or a Hollywood star," Sehdev, bestselling author of "The Kim Kardashian Principle," told AFP. He added that Britain's first mixed-race royal could nevertheless inspire the British TV industry to create more leading roles for actors of color. "Meghan Markle is the face of the modern princess and there's no reason why she shouldn't keep working in TV after her marriage. The palace will likely have a say in any of her future career choices and roles."

#### Reform too far?

But royal writer Catriona Harvey-Jenner said in a commentary for British lifestyle magazine Cosmopolitan that Markle had made the right decision in shedding her acting ambitions. "Being a senior member of the royal family is a full-time job, and it requires those who do it to patron charities, represent the UK on an international scale and generally maintain the traditions of the royal family," said Harvey-Jenner. "How would she balance all that with a full-time acting role on 'Suits'?"

Markle will be the first American welcomed into the royals since Wallis Simpson—famously also a divorcee—but will probably not, in fact, be a princess. What is far more likely, say experts, is that the couple become a duke and duchess, like William and Kate. As well as starring as paralegal Rachel Zane on "Suits," Markle is an entrepreneur, activist, blogger and fashion designer and would probably be expected to drop many of those pursuits too, to focus on royal activities.

The actress appears to already be winding down her workload, having shut down her lifestyle website, "The Tig," in recent months. Sarika Bose, a lecturer in Victorian literature at the University of British Columbia and a royal expert, said times had changed since Kelly was forced to choose between career and family life. But she added that having a working actress in the fold may yet be a modernizing reform too far for the British throne, which dates back to the merger of England and Scotland in the early 18th century.

#### 'Very charismatic'

"Although British society and the monarchy have changed greatly over the last few decades, there are still possible assumptions people might impose on Ms Markle which are conflated with her acting roles, her life as a celebrity and her public role as a member of the royal family," she told AFP.

Bose said she expected Markle to follow other members of the family in pursuing charitable activities.

"Well before meeting Prince Harry, Markle already demonstrated a serious interest and commitment to social justice initiatives, as a World Vision Global Ambassador and an advocate for political participation and leadership for women through the United Nations," she said. "These activities provide her with both experience and credibility as a patron of causes when she becomes a member of the royal family." The daughter of an African-American mother and white American father of Dutch and Irish descent, Markle's parents divorced when she was aged six. She has half-siblings on her father's side, and grew up in Los Angeles, attending a girls' Roman Catholic school there. After graduating from Northwestern University's School of Communication in 2003, Markle appeared on more than a dozen TV shows including "CSI: NY," "Knight Rider" and "Fringe."

She became more high-profile when she began appearing in "Suits" and secured a small role in the movie "Horrible Bosses" (2011). Clarence Move, TV editor at Awards Daily, described Markle as a "very charismatic" actress and said he was disappointed that she appeared to be set on conforming to tradition. "It would be interesting to see a modern woman continuing her career... but it's not where she seems to be headed," he said. — AFP

## Noor, Hayworth and other American women who married royalty



This combination of file pictures created on November 27, 2017 shows (L-R) a photo taken in 1946 of US actress Rita Hayworth, Queen Noor of Jordan, US actress Meghan Markle, portrait dated 1930's of American-born Wallis Simpson and Princess Grace of Monaco in her garden at home in June 1981 in Paris. — AFP

US actress Meghan Markle, who is to wed Britain's Prince Harry next year, will become the latest American to marry into a royal family. Here's a brief look at five other American women who became princesses or queens:

#### Grace Kelly

Actress Grace Kelly was at the peak of a glittering Hollywood career when she gave it up to marry Prince Rainier III of Monaco in April 1956. Grace Patricia Kelly was born on November 12, 1929 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the third of four children in a wealthy Irish-Catholic family. The blonde beauty made her film debut in 1951 in "Fourteen Hours" and shot to fame the following year alongside Gary Cooper in "High Noon."

She won an Oscar nomination for Best Supporting Actress for "Mogambo" in 1953 and the Academy Award for Best Actress the following year for "The Country Girl." But Kelly is perhaps best known for her roles in three Alfred Hitchcock movies—"Dial M for Murder," "Rear Window" and "To Catch a Thief." Kelly abandoned her career entirely when she married Prince Rainier after a whirlwind courtship. They had three children: Caroline; Albert, the reigning monarch in Monaco; and Stephanie. Kelly died in September 1982 when her car ran off the road after she suffered a stroke at the wheel.

#### Wallis Simpson

Wallis Simpson was a twice-divorced American woman whose marriage to Britain's King Edward VIII led to him relinquishing the crown in December 1936. Bessie Wallis Warfield was born on June 19, 1896 in Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania. Her father died shortly after her birth.

Warfield married a US naval aviator, Win Spencer, in 1916, divorced him in 1927 and wed a shipping executive, Ernest Simpson, the following year. She became involved with then-Prince Edward in 1934. His relationship with an American divorcee was frowned upon by Britain's royal and political class. Edward became king in January 1936 but abdicated in December that same year and married Simpson—"the woman I love"—in June 1937. Edward and Simpson were named the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Edward died in 1972 and Simpson in 1986. They had no children.

#### Rita Hayworth

Actress Rita Hayworth married Prince Aly Khan—the son of the Aga Khan III, the then spiritual leader of Ismaili Muslims regarded as a direct descendent of the Prophet

Mohammed—in 1949 after the breakup of her marriage to actor-director Orson Welles. Hayworth was born Margarita Carmen Cansino on October 17, 1918 in Brooklyn, New York, to show business parents. After moving to Los Angeles as a teenager, she had bit parts in several movies before adopting the screen name Rita Hayworth and going on to stardom.

Nicknamed the "Love Goddess" by Life magazine, she appeared alongside Fred Astaire in the 1941 film "You'll Never Get Rich" and a host of other hits including "Gilda," in which she performed a strip scene which was seen as scandalous at the time. In 1949, a pregnant Hayworth married Aly Khan. She gave birth to a daughter, Princess Yasmin Aga Khan, in December 1949. She divorced Aly Khan in 1953 after a tumultuous marriage and went on to marry two more times. Hayworth suffered from Alzheimer's disease in her later years and died in New York in May 1987.

#### Queen Noor

Jordan's Queen Noor married King Hussein in 1978, becoming the fourth and final wife of the leader of the Hashemite Kingdom. Lisa Najeeb Halaby was born on August 23, 1951 in Washington to a prominent Christian Arab-American family. Her father was the chief executive of the airline Pan American and also headed the Federal Aviation Administration. A graduate of Princeton University, Halaby married King Hussein in June 1978, converting to his Muslim faith and becoming Queen Noor Al-Hussein. They had four children. Since the king's death in 1999, Queen Noor has been active in philanthropic activities and the nuclear non-proliferation movement.

#### Hope Cooke

New York socialite Hope Cooke married the crown prince of the tiny Himalayan kingdom of Sikkim in 1963 in a real-life story that has been compared to the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical "The King and I." Cooke was born on June 24, 1940 in San Francisco. Her mother, a pilot, died in a plane crash when Cooke was just two years old, and she was raised by her grandparents in New York. She met Palden Thondup Namgyal, the widowed crown prince of Sikkim, during a 1959 trip to India as a college student. They fell in love and married in 1963 and she became the Gyalmo, or queen consort, when her husband took the throne in 1965 and became Chogyal, or king. Sikkim was annexed by India in 1973 and Cooke returned to the United States with their two children. She divorced her husband in 1980 and he died two years later. Cooke recounted her life in a 1981 autobiography, "Time Change." — AFP

This file photo taken on November 03, 2012 shows Britain's Prince Harry (R) running out of the VHR (very high ready-ness) tent to scramble his Apache with fellow Pilots at the British controlled flight-line at Camp Bastion in Afghanistan. — AFP photos



## PRINCE HARRY: THE ONCE TROUBLED PLAYBOY GROWS UP

Prince Harry, whose engagement to US actress Meghan Markle was announced on Monday, has been transformed in recent years from an angry young man into one of the British royal family's greatest assets. The youngest son of Prince Charles and the late princess Diana, the 33-year-old has always struggled with his role and for much of his youth seemed to want nothing more than to escape.

He spent 10 years in the British army, serving two tours of duty in Afghanistan, but hit the headlines for his partying and his outspoken criticism of the media. The prince has rebuilt his reputation in recent years, however, through his charity work with veterans and in taking on more and more duties from his grandmother Queen Elizabeth II.

He appears to have inherited his mother's ability to connect with people, as well as her sense of mischief, and with his brother Prince William and sister-in-law Kate have helped put a fresh face on the monarchy. Harry has said that Diana is always in his mind, and has championed many of her charitable causes, including taking an HIV test live on Facebook last year to raise awareness. But he revealed that for a long time he struggled to cope with her death in a Paris car crash in 1997, and sought professional help a few years ago. In a remarkably candid interview earlier this year, the prince admitted he came "very close to a complete breakdown on numerous occasions". He turned a corner and in July 2016 met Markle, a US television actress, through mutual friends. In September this year she declared to Vanity Fair: "We're in love."

#### Shutting down

Harry was born in 1984, the "spare" to his brother William, who will one day inherit the throne. Both educated at the elite Eton school, their childhood was dominated by the messy breakdown of their parents' marriage and Diana's tragically early death. The image of the young princes walking behind the coffin at her funeral—Harry only 12, his brother 15, both in suits—was one of the most enduring images of that day. "I can safely say that losing my mum at the age of 12, and therefore shutting down all of my emotions for the last 20 years, has had a quite serious effect on not only my personal life but also my work as well," Harry said.

At one point, he seemed the archetypal "playboy prince", regularly photographed looking worse for wear and often accompanied by an attractive girl. He caused outrage in 2005 when photographs of him in a swastika

fancy dress outfit appeared in the press. That was the year he entered the army, a conventional path for royal and one that he later admitted "was the best escape I've ever had" from the constant public attention.

In 2008, he had to be pulled out of Afghanistan after a news blackout about his deployment was breached, leading to fears he would be targeted by the Taliban. But he returned in 2012, piloting Apache helicopters during a 20-week tour of duty—only to make headlines again when he said his job was to take insurgents "out of the game".



This file photo taken on August 23, 2012 shows an arrangement of British daily newspapers photographed in London on August 23, 2012 shows the front-page headlines and stories regarding nude pictures of Britain's Prince Harry.

#### 'Share the pressure'

In a series of interviews from the frontline, the prince failed to hide his contempt for the media who he has long blamed for his mother's death. The first confirmation of his relationship with Markle came in an angry statement he issued last year decrying "abuse and harassment" against her. But Harry has learned to use his public profile to promote causes close to his heart, notably a recent campaign about mental health with William and Kate.

He has also set up a sports championship for wounded military personnel, the Invictus Games, which has secured the support of high-profile figures including former US president Barack Obama. Harry still gets himself in scrapes, including telling Newsweek magazine that he did not think anyone in the royal family wanted to be monarch. He also admitted "there was a time I felt I wanted out"—but has previously said "it would be great to have someone else next to me to share the pressure". — AFP



Lifestyle | Features

# Russian Embassy hosts Russian Culture event



By Nawara Fattahova

The Russian Embassy in Kuwait is holding the Days of Russian Culture and Cuisine Festival at the Crown Plaza Hotel. It was launched yesterday with a Musical evening 'the Echo of Love' performed by famous Russian opera singer Albert Zhalilov and Elmira Kalimullina who present marvelous Russian culture accompanied by talented Russian musicians. It also included a presentation for the Russian touristic opportunities organized by 'Visit Russia Kuwait', providing information about culture, nature, infrastructure, historical sights of different Russian regions, as

well as the FIFA World Cup 2018. Russian Ambassador to Kuwait Alexey V Solomatn said that this event is very important. "Through this event we show Kuwaitis the traditions the Russian nation, arts, food, and others. This is not the last event that we will hold, and we will soon hold an opera performance. We are also planning to organize a week of Russian movies next spring. Furthermore we are planning to hold a musical event with a popular Russian ballet band which has over 100 members," he told the Kuwait Times.

"For many years we have organized different cultural events every year. Such events bring nations together, particularly between Kuwait and Russia. We already held musi-



cal events earlier this year with singers and dancers, in addition to Russian artists and painters," added Solomatn. "The Commercial exchange between Kuwait and Russia is growing. Four years back when I first came the exchange was USD 39 million, and it grew today up to over USD 500 million. Also tourism exchange is growing every year, for instance during the first months of this year the figures were higher by 50 percent comparing to the same period of last year," he concluded. Tomorrow at 7:00pm a lecture will be held on one of the most significant historical events of the 20th century '100th anniversary of the 1917 Russian revolution' presented by Professor Andrey Zavalyi.



## Shanghai schools fly the flag for next generation

They sing the Chinese national anthem with gusto, hundreds of little arms bent in salute and faces transfixed on the country's red flag as it is hoisted high above Wuning Road school in Shanghai. Here and at other primary schools across the country the next generation of Chinese is taught everything from mathematics and English to tea-making, football, ethics and even hip-hop dancing.

Western interest in China's school system, and Shanghai in particular, has intensified after the city's pupils aced worldwide standardized tests in recent years. Teachers from England have been visiting to learn from Shanghai's success and the World Bank last year published a report titled, "How Shanghai does it: Insights and lessons from the highest-ranking education system in the world".

As teacher Zhang Jing watched, boys and girls wearing the school uniform of trainers, blue tracksuit bottoms, white T-shirts, and red or green scarves, work silently on math exercises. What does Zhang do if they talk? "I look at them," she replies in perfect English. That's all that is needed by way of a reprimand.

Chinese education has long had a reputation for strong discipline and conformity, but teachers at Wuning Road, whose students are aged 8-12, and at another high-performing Shanghai school say success today requires a slightly different approach. Teachers want pupils to like, not fear them, and say they encourage expression and creativity. "I'm dealing with young children and what they need from the teacher is a kind of gentleness," said Shen Yi, a maths teacher with 26 years' experience.

### 'Stay in line'

Shen sets her class of 34 boys and girls a statistics task and walks among their desks as they beaver away, occasionally touching them tenderly on the back of the head, addressing them as "little sister" or offering words of encouragement like, "Your graph is so pretty". Pupils sit ramrod-straight, arms folded one on top of the other, and speak only when addressed. "We basically don't have punishments,



Students run in the playground during a physical training session. — AFP photos

only encouragement," said Shen. "It makes them feel the relationship between them and their teacher is really close, like a mother or a friend, and that makes them think, 'The teacher loves me so I want to go to class.'" Melodic music played on the school P.A. system signals class is over and the students stand in unison and belt out: "Goodbye teacher!" It's now time for the school's 1,300 children to pay their daily respects to China's flag.

They file into the playground and stand to attention for the raising of the banner before enthusiastically singing the national anthem. Next, as military-style marching-band music plays, the children perform physical exercises by heart. Barely an arm or leg is out of sync. "Stay in line, left, right, left, right," barks a woman with a microphone. "Eyes forward and swing your arms."

### World leader

A staff member at another top-performing local school said discipline is

instilled foremost by parents, and China's Confucian traditions mean rules are obeyed and teachers are highly respected authority figures. The World Bank's report said Shanghai's academic success is due largely to high-quality teaching. It credited rigorous pre-service training and continuous professional development of teachers once they start.

"One of the most impressive aspects of Shanghai's education system is the way it grooms, supports and manages teachers, who are central to any effort to raise the education quality in schools," it said. It also lauded Shanghai for making schools accountable for their students' performance, and for a system under which high-performing schools provide management and professional support to lower-performing ones. Shen and others say their mission is not just about academics, but also about producing "upstanding" members of Chinese society. Teachers say lessons are designed to be relevant to every-

day life, so Shen uses examples of trees and flowers instead of pure numbers in her class. Like other Chinese schools, Wuning Road teaches "ethics" and "morals". But teachers are vague on specifics and on how much time is dedicated to studying Communist Party doctrine and "Xi Jinping Thought", the president's eponymous philosophy now pushed as the national credo. The scarves around pupils' necks indicate they are on the path to perhaps one day joining the party.

The school hand-picks one boy and one girl, both aged 10 and top pupils, to answer pre-prepared questions put forward by AFP. July breathlessly rattles off well-rehearsed replies in English. She does two hours' homework straight after school and three more after dinner. There is no time for television, though she admits enjoying Disney films when homework allows. What's the worst thing about school? "There is no worst thing about my school. Everything is good." — AFP



Students sing the national anthem in the playground during the flag-hoisting ceremony at their school in Shanghai.



Students play Chinese musical instruments during a Chinese music session.



Students paint during an activity session.

## INDIAN COURT REJECTS BID TO STOP WORLD RELEASE OF 'PADMAVATI'



This file photo taken on November 01, 2017 shows Indian Bollywood actress Deepika Padukone posing for a photograph during a promotional event for the forthcoming Hindi film 'Padmavati' in Mumbai. — AFP

India's top court yesterday rejected a legal attempt to block the global release of a Bollywood film that has sparked violent protests, warning against prejudging the controversial historical epic. Caste-based groups have been staging violent demonstrations against "Padmavati" amid rumors that it will depict a romance between a Hindu queen and a Muslim ruler.

The epic was scheduled for release in India on December 1 but delayed indefinitely after the censor board refused to certify it. The Supreme Court yesterday dismissed a legal petition to delay its release abroad, saying nobody should pre-judge the censors before the film is classified. "Responsible people in power and public office say certain things, and make comments on certain aspects, that violate the rule of law," declared the bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra. "We are sure they will be guided by the basic premise under the rule of law and not venture outside."

A number of officials, including state leaders from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party, had vowed to ban screenings of the film in their jurisdictions unless controversial sections were removed. The leader of a caste-related group also offered 50 million rupees (\$769,000) to anyone who "beheaded" lead actress Deepika Padukone or director Sanjay Leela Bhansali. In January protesters belonging to the Rajput Karni Sena caste-based group attacked Bhansali and vandalised the set during filming in Jaipur in Rajasthan.

Speculation that the film will include a romantic liaison between Rajput queen Padmavati, also known as Rani Padmini, and the 13th and 14th century Muslim ruler Alauddin Khilji, had enraged activists from the historically Hindu warrior caste. Rajput Karni Sena accuse the film's makers of distorting historical facts. But some historians say the queen is a mythical character and there is no clear evidence that she even existed. Protesters attacked another set near Mumbai in March, burning costumes and other props. Lawyer ML Sharma, who brought the petition before the Supreme Court, had previously failed to prevent the film's release in India. Harish Salve, representing the film's director and producer, said there was no intention of releasing the film abroad until it had received classification at home. — AFP



# Lifestyle

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2017



An actor performs during the general rehearsal of "Singin' in the rain" directed by Robert Carsen, on the stage of the Theatre du Chatelet in Paris. — AFP

## Iraqi art lovers throng to Picasso in Baghdad

Picasso, Dali, Miro, Chagall... names that are instantly recognizable in the international art world. Now works by these masters are being exhibited in Baghdad thanks to an anonymous Iraqi collector. The exhibition at the Hiwar gallery—one of the last to remain open in the city—includes 24 Picasso lithographs. For gallery owner Qassem Sabti, "this exhibition is a historic chance" for Iraqis to feast their eyes on artworks of such a high standard, in a first for the capital.

"It is presented by an Iraqi person who prefers not to disclose his identity due to the circumstances in Baghdad," Sabti said. There are 42 works in all being shown: in addition to those by Pablo Picasso, there is work by Salvador Dali, Joan Miro and Marc Chagall. They "belong to an Iraqi who lives in the United Arab Emirates who wanted to open a museum dedicated to Picasso in Baghdad or Karbala, where he's from," said Sabti.

"But he wasn't able to do so as he couldn't secure the necessary guarantees to protect the artworks," added the gallery owner, who also heads the Iraqi Plastic Artists Society. "The works on display are very valuable and have been collected over 30 years... some date from the 1950s and 1960s." Priced at between \$15,000 (12,600 euros) and \$25,000 (21,000 euros), there is little chance of them being snapped up by local buyers.

Instead, the main aim of the show is to let them be seen by students and those who appreciate the fine arts. For painter Mohammed Shawqi, "this exhibition reflects a return to stability in the country. 'Who would have dared mount a show of such valuable works just a few



Iraqis attend an exhibition, titled Picasso in Baghdad. — AFP photos

years ago?" After the US-led invasion of 2003 that toppled now executed dictator Saddam Hussein, Iraq descended into a lengthy period of

violence that saw waves of sectarian killings and culminated in the Islamic State group offensive of 2014. The exhibition was a breath of fresh air

for 30-year-old engineer Zinah Sulaiman, who heard about it on Facebook. It was the first time she had been able to see works by Picasso, "and

I hope I will see more of this". "It's important that art be supported here, especially since we are a people of culture and history."

In related news, an "exceptional" trove of sculptures by the tragic French artist Camille Claudel has broken records at auction in Paris, going for 3.5 million euros (\$4.1 million) — three times their estimate.

Prices for work by Claudel, who died in a mental hospital after a tortured love affair with fellow sculptor Auguste Rodin which has inspired several films and plays, have rocketed in recent years.

The star of the auction late Monday, a bronze called "The Abandonment", went for nearly 1.2 million euros, twice its estimate. The statue is one of a series inspired by the Indian myth "Shakuntala" about an overlooked wife from the Hindu epic "Mahabharata" from which Claudel drew parallels with her own tumultuous relationship with Rodin, who was both her lover, boss and artistic rival. It was snapped up by an "international collector", auction house Artcurial said. Interest in the "unprecedented" sale of bronze, plaster and clay works still owned by the artist's family was intense, it added. French museums also stepped in to try to stop 12 works that were sold at the auction to stop them falling into private hands or going abroad.

The Musee d'Orsay, which holds the country's largest collection of Impressionist and 19th century art, now has a year to raise the 467,800 euros for a study of "Shakuntala". The piece went for nearly ten times its estimate, breaking the record for a clay work by the artist, who died in 1943 after spending 30 years in a psychiatric hospital. — AFP



Iraqi artist Qassem Al-Sabti speaks during the exhibition.