

**2 women drown in a swimming pool in Sabah Al-Salem area**



**Committee discusses expats health fee increase**



Ministry of Health - Kuwait

**North Korea seeks military 'equilibrium' with America**



**Liverpool frustrated by battling Burnley, 1-1**



150 FILS  
NO: 17332  
32 PAGES

## UK ON RED ALERT, POLICE HUNT TERROR SUSPECTS

BOMB INJURES 30; IS CLAIMS RESPONSIBILITY; 5TH ATTACK THIS YEAR



Min 26°  
Max 47°  
High Tide 06:42 & 19:53  
Low Tide 01:20 & 15:07

### AMIR CONDEMNS LONDON ATTACK

#### KUWAITIS 'SAFE'

**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has expressed his condemnation of the terrorist attack on an underground train in southwest London. The denunciation was conveyed in two separate cables sent to Britain's Queen Elizabeth II and Prime Minister Theresa May.

His Highness the Amir expresses his "condemnation and denunciation of this criminal act, which targeted the lives of innocent civilians, and runs contrary to all divine laws and human values," read an Amiri Diwan statement. The statement, which wished all of those injured a "speedy recovery," also reiterated Kuwait's firm stance in rejection of terrorism, and in support of international efforts to combat its scourge. His Highness the Deputy Amir and Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah both sent similar cables.

Kuwait Embassy in Britain has affirmed that all Kuwaiti citizens in the British capital are safe. The Kuwaiti embassy, in a statement sent exclusively to Continued on Page 11



LONDON: A handout picture shows a white container burning inside a London Underground tube carriage at Parsons Green underground tube station. More than 20 passengers were injured, some suffering severe burns, in an early morning explosion on a London Underground train in what police described as a 'terrorist' incident. —AFP

**LONDON:** British police arrested an 18-year-old man in the port of Dover and raided a house in a small town outside London yesterday as they hunted for whoever planted a bomb on a commuter train that injured 30 people a day earlier. Prime Minister Theresa May put Britain on the highest security level of "critical" late on Friday, meaning another attack may be imminent, and deployed soldiers and armed police to strategic locations such as nuclear plants and defense sites.

In what authorities called a "very significant" development, officers arrested a man at about 7.50 am in Dover, from where passenger ferries sail to France. Five hours later, they raided a property in Sunbury, a commuter town southwest of London, and evacuated nearby premises as a precaution. Reuters photographs showed police cordons in a modest suburban street in Sunbury, in the county of Surrey, around 11 miles from Parsons Green where the bomb exploded.

"This is a very significant arrest. The police have made very good progress but the operation is ongoing," said Interior Minister Amber Rudd, adding that the threat level remained at "critical." "There is no doubt that this was a serious IED (improvised explosive device) and it was good fortune that it did so little damage." In what was the fifth major terrorism attack in Britain this year, the home-made bomb shot flames through a packed commuter train during the Friday morning rush hour in west London but apparently failed to detonate fully.

The militant group Islamic State claimed responsibility. According to media reports, the bomb was attached to a timer, unlike other recent blasts which have typically been suicide bombs. Pictures showed a slightly charred white plastic bucket with wires coming out of Continued on Page 11

### KUWAIT TEAM FINDS 'RARE' MANUSCRIPTS

**KUWAIT:** In an unprecedented feat, a team from Kuwait University (KU) managed to discover rare manuscripts written in Arabic at Mount Athos in Greece. During an archeological mission to a number of monasteries and libraries on a location in northern Greece, the team—which included history Professors Dr Abdulhadi Al-Ajmi, Dr Mohammad Al-Marzouqi and Dr Hassan Badawi was able to unearth these documents at the historic mountain - which represents around 1,800 years of Christian history in the site.



Rare manuscripts written in Arabic found at Mount Athos in Greece. — KUNA

Speaking to KUNA, Dr Al-Ajmi said that the discovery at Mount Athos, an ancient sacred place chosen as one of UNESCO's World Heritage sites in 1988, was crucial to understand the history of Arabs and Muslims in the region. "Getting approval from the Greek authorities to study the site was not an easy task; however, we managed to do so and the reward was beyond great," revealed the Kuwaiti academic.

He pointed out that the documents traced their origins to advance points in the golden Islamic age. The manuscripts cover various subjects pertaining to daily events, scientific observa-

tions, religious affairs and more, stressed Dr Al-Ajmi who expressed confidence that some of the documents were never discovered before. He affirmed that the new discoveries will become an important reference point to those interested in what Arabs and Muslims had offered to Greece in the olden days. — KUNA

### DUBAI INAUGURATES LARGEST SOLAR POWER PLANT PROJECT

#### MORSI SENTENCED

**CAIRO:** An Egyptian court yesterday sentenced ousted president Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood to 25 years in prison in a final ruling over a case accusing him of spying for Qatar, judicial sources said. Morsi, democratically elected after Egypt's 2011 revolution, was overthrown in mid-2013 by then-general Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, now the president, following mass protests against his rule. He was immediately arrested.

Egypt's Court of Cassation reduced Morsi's sentence in the Qatar case to 25 years in its final ruling, from an original 40 years. Morsi is already serving a 20-year sentence after being convicted for the killing of protesters during demonstrations in 2012. Since toppling Morsi, Sisi has clamped down on dissent. Mass trials have been held for thousands of Muslim Brotherhood supporters, and hundreds have received death sentences or lengthy prison terms.

In 2014, Egypt charged Morsi and nine others with endangering national security by leaking state secrets and sensitive documents to Qatar. Egypt's relations with Doha were already troubled by Qatar's backing of Morsi. Egypt is one of four Arab nations in a Saudi-led bloc that cut relations with the Gulf state on June 5, accusing it of backing militant groups and cooperating with their arch-foe Iran, allegations Doha denies. — Reuters

**DUBAI:** Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum yesterday inaugurated the largest single-site Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) project in the world, which will be built at a total cost of AED14.2 billion (equivalent of \$3.8

billion). In a statement by Dubai government, the CSP project, which represents the fourth phase of the Mohammad Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Solar Park, will generate 700-MW of clean energy to support Dubai's electricity grid.

Continued on Page 11



DUBAI: Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum inaugurates the largest single-site Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) project in the world. — KUNA

### KURDISH MPs BACK REFERENDUM

**ERBIL:** The parliament of Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region has approved a plan to hold a referendum on independence on Sept 25, ignoring opposition from Baghdad and the wider region as well as Western concerns that the vote could spark fresh conflict. Parliament reconvened in Erbil, the seat of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in northern Iraq, where an overwhelming majority of the Kurdish lawmakers taking part backed the plan.

Hours after the decision, the White House publicly called for the first time on the KRG to cancel the referendum, warning that the vote was "distracting from efforts to defeat ISIS (Islamic State) and stabilize the liberated areas." "The United States does not support the Kurdistan Regional Government's intention to hold a referendum later this month," the White House said in a statement. It urged the KRG to "enter into serious and sustained dialogue with Baghdad, which the United States has repeatedly indicated it is prepared to facilitate."

The regional parliament's decision came despite an intense diplomatic drive by the

United States, which has provided critical military aid to the KRG's fight against Islamic State, to persuade the Kurdish leadership to cancel the referendum. The parliament session was the first held since the legislature was suspended nearly two years ago, though only 68 of 111 lawmakers attended due to a boycott by the main opposition movement Gorran.

"We've been waiting more than 100 years for this," Omed Khoshnaw, a lawmaker from the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) of KRG President Massoud Barzani said. "There is no other way to guarantee that genocide will never be repeated," Khoshnaw told the Assembly earlier, referring to the persecution of the Kurds and their expulsion from areas such as oil-rich Kirkuk under late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

Some lawmakers wore Kurdish flags and rose to clap and sing the national anthem after the vote. The Baghdad parliament's decision earlier this week to oppose the referendum drew condemnation from deputies in Erbil. "We refuse to accept the Iraqi parliament's decision,

which was unlawful," Muna Qahwachi, a Turkman lawmaker said. Qahwachi said she had voted in favor of the referendum because she said Turkmen were protected in Kurdistan, unlike in the rest of Iraq.

#### Pressure rebuffed

Earlier, Barzani shrugged off requests from the United States and other Western powers to put off the referendum. They fear increased tensions between Baghdad and Erbil will distract from the war on Islamic State militants who still occupy parts of Iraq and Syria. "We still haven't heard a proposal that can be an alternative to the Kurdistan referendum," Barzani told a rally in the Kurdish region, referring to a proposal put forward by the United States and other Western envoys this week. Iraq's neighbors Iran and Turkey also oppose the plebiscite, fearing an independent Kurdish state could fuel separatism among their own Kurdish populations.

The opposition Gorran movement boycotted Friday's parliamentary session, the first Continued on Page 11



ERBIL: Syrian Kurds take part in a rally in the northeastern Syrian city of Qamishli in support of an independence referendum. — AFP

## Special Report

# Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah to retire after 39 years in service

## Senior official left his fingerprints on various Interior Ministry departments

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

**KUWAIT:** Lt General Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah is a senior Interior Ministry official who committed himself since joining the military service to keep a watchful eye on Kuwait's security and safety, and dedicated all his efforts for this cause. He has been sailing the seas and roaming the land, and still does so to fulfill his promise. Lt General Mohammad Yousuf Al-Saud Al-Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary for Borders Security, has been working hard for more than 39 years to protect Kuwait's security.



Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah meets with HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

"This man is in uniform from morning till evening, carrying out his security duties at its best," said HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, describing Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousuf in words conveyed by the Interior Minister when he decorated him with the rank of Lt General, the highest rank in public service. The following are excerpts from an interview conducted with Sheikh Mohammad, and published jointly with Al-Anbaa daily.

service as a university graduate. I had finished my third year then, and only one year remained. I graduated and joined the military college. The first course had nine university graduates and I passed it on top of the class, then I joined the Interior Ministry as a university graduate, and my wish was fulfilled. I will never forget this for the Late Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah, who wanted me to be an officer with a university degree.

### Nationality and Travel Documents

**Question:** In 1996, you brought up several security issues and demanded deep rooted solutions, including the unified linking, DNA, uncovering nationality manipulation, and the bedoon (stateless) issue. Today, we see that what you brought up then is on its way to be solved, and some of these issues have already solved. How would you comment on this, being the security nucleus for those issues?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** It is not only because of me, but rather it is the result of the work of my colleagues and superiors. We were a group that worked for Kuwait's security, so I cannot claim personal credit, or say that I work alone because, my principle is always to work as a team, and not to work individually, and the statements you mentioned were the result of joint work. What I did through my position as Director General of Nationality and Travel Documents was to link the nationality, passports, newborns and civil identification divisions. In the past, when someone gets a newborn, he used to go to Hawally to register the newborn, then he gets a paper from the Nationality and Travel Documents Department and goes for the Civil ID, and this was an exhausting process for parents. So I made a proposal and the decision was made to have an office for the nationality and travel documents, and another for the Civil ID to make it easy for citizens to process transactions in a shorter time.

**Question:** It is known that you reject the use of the word "I", and I felt through reading and hearing about you that you are really humble. Yet, I attribute to you that you were the first to say that there is no issue called 'bedoon.' In 1995 you made a press statement while being Director of the Nationality and Travel Documents' Directorate, saying that 90 percent of the bedoon have foreign origins, and this is what we see in reality today and revealed by the Central Agency

the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

### Elderly and disabled

**Question:** You were the first to activate the decision issued by Lt General Yousuf Al-Kharafi on September 2, 1998 to cooperate and ease the transactions of the disabled and the elderly, and many lauded your actions with this group of people. How do you comment on that?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** Yes, a decision was issued by our mentor Lt General Yousuf Al-Kharafi and I as the Director of Nationality and Travel Documents formed an integrated team to go and help those who cannot come to the directorate such as an elderly person.

### The Media

**Question:** Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousuf is known for avoiding media appearances as he prefers to work silently. But despite that, we find you defending anything that is concerned with Kuwait and its security. So why do you keep away from the media?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** Why appear in the media? I am a citizen carrying out my duties, so what is the role of the media in this? Yet, when my department is unjustly treated, I go to the media and defend as long as I believe that I am right. For example, when journalist Adel Al-Zawawi called me to ask about social media reports claiming that members of the Abdaly cell escaped through sea, I told him that the rumors were not true, and if it was proven otherwise, the Kuwaiti people have the right to take me to court.

As part of our duties, most Coast Guard officials spent days at mid sea including Lt Colonel Sheikh Mubarak Al-Ali Al-Sabah and others in vigilance against any attempt for the 14 fugitives to escape. I am not saying that it is not possible for them to escape because we cannot control all 2,900 slipways, and it is not possible to place a policeman at each slipway to register who gets in and out.

Despite that difficulty, my department was sure that they did not leave as our various authorities said there is nothing unofficial that left, and I answered Zawawi due to my confidence in my department and men.

### The environment

**Question:** We always notice that you call for the protection of the environment be it on land or sea. Kuwait witnessed an oil spill about a month ago, and it was the Coast Guard that discovered it first. How did it start?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** Although the directorate is not equipped for that, the Coast Guard was the first to inform authorities responsible for combatting oil spills. We are a security authority and our job is to inform, and that is what happened. I find it really strange that the Environment Public Authority does not have boats, so we helped them with our boats in order to safeguard Kuwait's security and people's safety. It is really sad to see that the authority responsible for the environment poorly equipped.

### Unforgettable personalities

**Question:** Who is Sheikh Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah for Lt General Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousuf?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** He is a legend as far as I am concerned and I named my son Ali Sabah after him, as he was born three months after his death.

**Question:** What is the story behind the paper that was sent by Sheikh Ali Sabah Al-Salem to you, and you keep it in every office you move to?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** It is an ordinary story, but one that has many meanings and reminds me of the late Sheikh Ali Sabah Al-Salem, who I would never forget. He sent me a paper with an employee when I was a Lt Colonel asking me to help solve a problem that the employee was facing. And since then, I framed the paper and it accompanied me where ever I went.

**Question:** Sadness has many forms, but those who saw you at the moment when Sheikh Khalid Al-Yousuf was buried can see the reality of sadness and departure on your face and tears. Does he have your everlasting love?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** My brother Khalid was close to all my brothers and me personally. Khalid was the joy of Yousuf Al-Saud house. I lived with him his illness, and I should mention some of those who were with us including Barrak Al-Ustath as well as Bader Al-Asfour.

**Question:** What does Lt General Abdullah Al-Fares mean to you?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** He is a model in security work, a first class teacher, a total military school on its own. I learned a lot from



KUWAIT: Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah.

him although I did not work with him except in some issues as I was lucky to work under his leadership. I used to go and attend investigations in some complicated crimes to learn from his instructions.

**Question:** What about Sheikh Ali Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** He is a support for me. All my brothers support each other. We



Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah meets with HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

are together and we are kept together by 'Um Mohammad' Sabeeka bint Ahmad Al-Humaidhi and our second mother Bibi Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah.

### A final word

**Question:** Your service will come to an end in a few days. Do you feel that you carried out all what you wanted to do, especially at the Coast Guard?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** Of course not, as there is a lot that I did not carry out so far.



Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah is pictured with his wife Sheikh Latayef Abdullah Al-Khalifa Al-Sabah.

**Question:** Like what?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** Many things. For example, I wanted to develop more than I did. I wanted to distinguish the coastguardsmen with more incentives. I believe that any person who has a goal and fulfills it should move on, but I always have new goals, therefore I believe that I did not reach my goals so I cannot say that I fulfilled all what I wished for especially in this security sector.

**Question:** If you were asked to continue service in any form and position after retirement, will you accept?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** Of course I will accept, and I am at the service of Kuwait.



(From left) Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah with his father Sheikh Yousuf Al-Saud Al-Sabah and his son Saud.

## SHEIKH MOHAMMAD'S ACCOLADES

Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah was appointed at the Interior Ministry on September 15, 1987. He served in the following departments and positions:

- Special Forces (VIP Protection)
- Airport Security
- State Security

• Assistant director of outer centers at the directorate general of facilities security.

• in Charge of Radeefa Center in addition to his regular duties.

• Director of Kuwait Nationality Department at the Directorate General of Passports, Nationality and Travel Documents.

• Acting Director General of Nationality and Travel Documents' Directorate.

• Director General of Nationality and Travel Documents.

• Director General of the Planning and Development's Directorate, and Director General of the Training Directorate.

• Director General of Qualifying and training non-commissioned officers.

- Assistant Undersecretary for Backup Services.
- Assistant Undersecretary for Borders Security Affairs.
- Assistant Undersecretary for Legal Affairs.
- Assistant Undersecretary for Borders Security.

### Medals:

- Service Bronze Medal in 1984.
- Service Silver Medal in 1989.
- Liberation Medal in 1992.
- Gold Service Medal in 1994.
- Military Duty Medal of First Order in 2004.
- National Defense Medal in 2009.
- The American Legion of Merit in 2013.

### His Hobbies:

Swimming, reading, karate (he has a black belt in this sport), HAM radio and communication with people of several nationalities, and agriculture, particularly planting palm trees.



Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah is pictured with his mother Sabeeka bint Ahmad Al-Humaidhi 'Um Mohammad'.

### Hope and wish

**Question:** Lt General Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousuf, what does the date September 15, 1978 mean to you?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** Fulfilling my wish to join the Interior Ministry Military Service.

**Question:** So, that was your Wish?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** Yes that was my wish, and I will tell you a story that few people know. First, I should mention the favor of the Late Sheikh Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah in fulfilling that wish on scientific and academic basis. I went to him when he was Interior and defense minister to join the interior ministry, which gives the right to the individual to join the Interior Ministry after receiving a diploma and go through a two year military course. I had finished two years at Kuwait University, which could be considered as a diploma and gives me the right to join the military college. Yet, Sheikh Saad kept postponing our meeting, and eventually told me that after two years when I finish my university studies, I can come meet him because he wanted me to join the military

for Remediating Illegal Residents Status?

**Sheikh Mohammad:** It is not an issue because I do not think that there is a person without origins. The statement I made at the time and I still remember that statement I made at the time, and still believe that there is no person who does not have a homeland. If he does not know his origin, he has a father and a grandfather whose origins are known, so there is nothing called 'bedoons.' Bear in mind that my statements did not come out of individual efforts, but rather as a result of joint work.

I will not forget the role of Major General Adel Al-Munayes and his work on this issue at the time, and the work that we carried out is completed now by Saleh Al-Fadhlah (the Director of the Central Agency for Remediating Illegal Residents Status) who made commendable efforts to complete the work on this security and national matter while offering deep rooted solutions, and discover many of those who were claiming that they do not belong to a country. I believe that the state of Kuwait will not let them down when they express good intentions to the state, as Kuwait is always a country of giving to all those who resort to it and a home of humanitarian action under the leadership of the Humanitarian Leader HH

## THE EVER PRESENT DURING THE HEINOUS INVASION

Information Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Information Services and New Media Yousuf Mustafa told us a story that many may not know, and unfortunately history did not document it.

"When broadcast systems were down, we went to the house of Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousuf in Salwa because we could broadcast from there, as he is known to be a HAM radio hobbyist," Mustafa said. "We remained there for two days before being ordered to leave. The house was burned down soon afterwards."

"My uncle Mohammad Al-Yousuf carried the banner after my late father," Lt Colonel Sheikh Athbi Khalid Al-Yousuf Al-Sabah said. "We went through life with his compassion, love and care for us. He is the strength and example for us."

My uncle Lt General Mohammad Al-Yousuf in an example of sincerity and hard work," Sheikh Athbi added. "He is also an example of the loyal and loving citizen of Kuwait and its people. Sheikh Mohammad Al-Yousuf cannot be described by words about his fatherhood and love for us. I pray to Almighty Allah to protect him and keep him for us."

## FIRST CONSULTING SERVICES FOR GOVERNMENT PROJECTS FORUM (ENCON1) KICKS OFF TODAY

**KUWAIT:** The First Consulting Services for Governmental Projects Forum (ENCON1) commences today at 7:00 pm at Al-Baraka Ballroom of Crowne Plaza hotel under the motto of 'Towards Professional and Transparent Consulting Services.'



Engineer Magdy Sabry

Engineer Magdy Sabry, the Executive Manager of the organizing company NoufEXPO, was pleased to note that ENCON1 convenes under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, the Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait. He said that His Highness is keen to support the initiatives that contribute

to the welfare and progress of Kuwait. Sabry said that he is delighted since Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and the Acting Minister of Information, will inaugurate the event representing His Highness the Prime Minister. Hind Sabeeh Barrak Al-Sabeeh, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Economic Affairs, will also deliver a keynote speech during the opening ceremony. Many government senior officials and leaders of key engineering and consulting services firms are taking part in this event. This large, prestigious crowd is due to the invaluable efforts of the Federation of Kuwaiti Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses in cooperation with the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development and the Central Agency for Public Tenders.

### Unprecedented participation

Sabry said that ENCON1 succeeded in bringing a significant number of the most prestigious engineering offices and consulting firms in Kuwait and the region, as well as, all related government and supervisory agencies. He attributed this to three main reasons. First, ENCON1 is the first of its kind that brings together the public sector and the private sector, as well as, the supervisory agencies to discuss how to boost efficiency of consulting services in government projects. Second, ENCON1 discusses the values of professionalism and transparency as the governing methodology that should be adopted in executing government projects where consulting services form its base. Third, the Forum convenes in the wake of launching Kuwait's National Development Plan 2035 to build a New Kuwait. This long awaited plan promises a lot of prosperity to Kuwait and many organizations strive to be part of its success.

Sabry concluded his statement by extending his thanks to all the sponsoring companies, namely, ASTAD International, Gulf Consult, Dar SSH International Consultants (SSHIC), Pan Arab Consulting Engineers (PACE), Osama Bukhamseen Design Engineering and Consultants, KEO International Consultants (KEO), The Associated Engineering Partnership (TAEP), Projacs, Kuwait United Development and Project Management Company (KUD), GEO International Environmental Consultation Company, (GEO), Projects House (PH), and Linkage MENA. He extended his thanks also to all the participants from all government and supervisory agencies, and the organizing teams of the Federation of Kuwaiti Engineering Offices and Consultant Houses and NoufEXPO for their months' long efforts and hard work. He finally welcomed Kuwait's visitors who came from abroad and wished everybody a nice stay and a successful event full of networking and business development opportunities.



ISTANBUL: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with Chairman of the Turkish Limak Holding Company Nihat Ozdemir and his accompanying delegation in Istanbul. —KUNA

## PRIME MINISTER HOSTS TURKEY'S LIMAK CHAIRMAN IN ISTANBUL

'KUWAIT EAGER TO ATTRACT MORE INVESTMENT FROM TURKEY'

**ISTANBUL:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received Chairman of Turkish Limak Holding company Nihat Ozdemir and his accompanying delegation in Istanbul yesterday. The meeting was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Director General of Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority Sheikh Dr Meshaal Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and Kuwaiti Ambassador to Turkey Ghasan Al-Zawawi. Limak is one of the companies contributing to development schemes in Kuwait, and is currently carrying out the new terminal project at Kuwait International Airport.

Earlier yesterday, His Highness the Prime Minister received head of the delegation of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Abdullah Al-Homeidhi and delegation members in Istanbul. The meeting discussed the role of Kuwait's private sector in boosting trade with Turkey. The meeting was attended by Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, as well as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Al-Saleh, as well as Minister of Commerce and Industry and Acting Minister of State for Youth Affairs Khaled Al-Roudhan.

### More investment

Roudhan on Friday called on Turkish investors to tap into the promising opportunities in his country's economic development plan. Kuwait's plan to become a regional commercial and financial hub includes ambitious projects that provide ample opportunities for Turkish investors, he said.

Roudhan made the comments in a speech to the Islamic Finance News (IFN) Turkey Forum 2017. The forum, being held at Crowne Plaza Istanbul Oryapark, gathered Kuwait's Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh, Turkish Minister of Economy Nihat Zeybekci and Board Chairman of Borsa Istanbul Himmet Karadag as well as senior economic decision-makers and business leaders from both countries. The Kuwaiti-Turkish relations are poised to open new horizons for the partnership marked with prosperity and mutual benefit thanks to the huge potentials of both economies, Roudhan said.

Turkey enjoys a resilient economy and unique geographical location that



His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah meets with head of the delegation of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Abdullah Al-Homeidhi.

provides gateway for Kuwaiti investors to Europe, he noted. The State of Kuwait is proud of open economic policy and deep-rooted relationship with Turkey which was strengthened by numerous pacts in the economic and commercial areas. The bilateral trade volume hit \$1.28 billion last year with the Kuwaiti exports to Turkey amounting to \$846 million and the imports worth \$431 million, the minister said, voicing hope that the trade volume will rise to \$1.5 billion by the end of 2017. Kuwait is Turkey's largest investor from the Gulf region in the real property sector. Kuwaiti investors own more than 6,000 real property, including 1,640 that were bought in 2016.

Turkey is the 14th largest exporter to Kuwait in Q3-2016 with \$120 million-worth exports and the 15th largest importer from Kuwait with nearly \$19 million imports. A total of 280 Kuwaiti investors do business in Turkey in addition to 388 branches of Kuevty-Turk Bank - a private joint venture of where Kuwait Finance House (KFH) has 62.24 percent stake.

The total value of Kuwaiti direct investment in Turkey amounts to \$1.7 billion, the minister went on. On the other hand, Turkish companies invest in 30 projects in Kuwait, including the project to upgrade Kuwait International Airport where Limak Construction was

awarded a \$6.3 billion worth contract.

### Remarkable growth

Turkish minister of economy said the economic partnership with Kuwait grew remarkably in the recent years thanks to the top-level visit exchanges. Zeybekci noted, in his address to the gathering, that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan plans to visit Kuwait soon and His Highness the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will visit Turkey in return.

Turkey strives to become the world's second fastest growing economy after its exports hit \$170 billion, he said, voicing hope that the trade exchanges with Kuwait will grow further this year and meet the aspirations of both sides. Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states are working on a free trade agreement, Zeybekci added. In later statements on the sidelines of the forum, Roudhan praised Turkey as a strategic economic depth for Kuwait. He called on investors from the GCC states to seize the promising chances in the fast-growing economy of Turkey. The Kuwaiti minister lauded the outcomes of the recent visit to Ankara by His Highness the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, noting that economic issues featured prominently on the agenda of the visit. —KUNA

### Local Spotlight

## KURDISTAN, THE OPEN FILE



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Iraqi Kurdistan, officially called the Kurdistan Region by the Iraqi constitution, is a proto-state located in the north of Iraq and constitutes the country's only autonomous region, with Irbil as its recognized capital. This week, the subject of Kurdistan took headlines of Arab news outlets. The Ministerial Council of the Arab League issued a resolution rejecting the referendum on the independence of the Kurdistan region from Iraq at a time the Iraqi parliament voted on September 12 to reject the referendum on the secession of the Kurdistan region.

The official spokesman of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry stated that the rejection came because the request is against the Iraqi constitution and to preserve the unity of Iraq, especially that the state's unity is a key factor for the security and stability of the region and the ability of its countries and peoples to confront terrorism.

I think the independence of Kurdistan is not a dream or illusion, but a file that has been open for years, and today, the Iraqi vote came to end all speculations and, probably, hopes.

Massoud Barzani, head of the Kurdistan region of Iraq, said in a previous interview with the Washington Post that establishing an independent state is the goal of the Kurdistan revolution since its launch against former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in the 1990s. The Kurdistan Democratic Party believes it is difficult to coexist between the central governments in Baghdad and the region in Irbil due to the growing problems between the two parties on financial and oil dues, which prompts the Kurds to insist on complete secession from Iraq. But the crisis of the disputed areas in the Nineveh Plain, Sinjar and Kirkuk will stand in the way of the Kurdish dream. Clearly, the region wants to annex these areas to its borders, while Baghdad refuses to give them up, which may prolong the period before the sun rises over the independent Kurdish state.

I think the subject of the independence of Kurdistan has two sides, the first supports independence and the other rejects the independence, and all have logical reasons. Yes, the Kurds have the right to hope to have an independent state, and every people of the world have the right of self-determination because they have suffered greatly from the former regime.

On the other hand, the current Iraqi regime sees that the referendum is unconstitutional. The fact that Iraq is one unit, coupled with the argument that such request threatens civil peace and regional security, besides being rejected by the Iraqi parliament in Baghdad, are justified too. The American, Iranian and Turkish stands were clear. All have different reasons. Everyone fears that the independence of the Kurds may be used against the regime in Baghdad. It was clear that the Arab countries too do not support the division of Iraq and the independence of the Kurds because there are common borders and outstanding issues. The area already is facing many challenges right now. I believe that Iraq is going through difficult circumstances now in many aspects, especially in terms of combating terrorism and preserving of the country's wealth and borders. Therefore, preserving the unity of the country and the constitution are required, appropriate and even wanted in these current situations, and I believe that the timing of the discussion is not proper to give the Kurds what they want or wish.

I think that the international consensus to reject the referendum was correct, and this may not be what the Kurds want to hear now, but I guess consideration of the subject will remain open, talks will not stop and the Kurdish file will not close any sooner, at least from the Kurds' side.

## GERMANY PRAISES KUWAITI INITIATIVE ON GULF CRISIS

### MEPs LAUD KUWAIT'S ROLE AS REGIONAL MEDIATOR

**BERLIN/BRUSSELS:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani lauded the Kuwaiti initiative for resolving the Gulf crisis. The German Government supports His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's efforts for solving the crisis, said Merkel at a joint news conference with the Sheikh Tamim on Friday.

Berlin, she added, would continue to encourage the Kuwaiti leadership to pursue the mediation efforts, also underlining necessity to find a peaceful solution to the crisis, involving Qatar on one side and Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt on the other.

Chancellor Merkel viewed positively Qatar's readiness to sit at the negotiating table to find a settlement to the issue, hoping that a fundamental solution would be reached. The Qatari Emir expressed support for the Kuwaiti efforts and gratitude to the chancellor for her backing at this level, too.

Meanwhile, a number of European lawmakers expressed their great admiration for Kuwait's roles as regional mediator and global humanitarian player during a series of meetings with Kuwait's Ambassador to Belgium, European Union, and Luxembourg, Jaseem Al-Budaiwi.

Ambassador Budaiwi said that he met seven Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

and discussed with them ways to strengthen ties and cooperation between Kuwait and the European Parliament. "The purpose of my meetings with the MEPs was to find ways to enhance Kuwait's relationship with the European Parliament and discuss issues of common interests and find common grounds on regional and international issues," he said. He met the MEPs from the biggest political groups including the European Peoples Party (EPP), the Socialists and Democrats (S&D), the Liberals (ALDE), the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR).

They were all very aware of Kuwait's role in helping countries like Syria, Yemen, and Iraq and other nations in need, he noted. "They praised Kuwait's democratic process, its human rights record, its constitution, its freedom of speech. It was a very positive meeting which set the ground for developing bilateral relations," stressed Ambassador Budaiwi.

Ambassador Budaiwi and the MEPs also discussed Kuwait's Comprehensive Cooperation Agreement with the European Union and how the EP can play a role in implementing this important agreement and making good use of it. "The common view that I heard from everybody was how to enhance the cooperation between Kuwait and the European Parliament. They also expressed their wish to visit Kuwait as soon as the opportunity was given," he said.

Ambassador Budaiwi briefed the MEPs on Kuwait's good relations in the political, economic, military, energy, and educational fields with all the 28 EU member states. He said over 3,000 Kuwaiti students were studying in European universities. The MEPs also expressed interest in sending delegations from their political groups to visit Kuwait to meet the leadership, government officials and parliamentarians to enhance Kuwait-Europe ties. —KUNA



BRUSSELS: Kuwait's Ambassador to Belgium, European Union, and Luxembourg, Jaseem Al-Budaiwi meets with a Member of the European Parliament. —KUNA



BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani shake hands at a joint news conference. —KUNA

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In Brief

ANTI-LAW ACT

**KUWAIT:** The national competition protection agency said yesterday it is investigating audio record attributed to the owner of a maids' employment office urging fellow businessmen to abstain from lowering services' costs. Nayef Al-Lafi, the department's head, said in a statement that punitive action is being sought for the act is harmful to competition and breaks the competition protection laws. It is also against free competition, he added. — KUNA



WHO FORUM

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Health (MoH) will partake in the World Health Organization's third international challenge forum due in Oman today. Dr Buthaina Al-Mudhaf, in charge of quality health care at the MoH, said that the forum would tackle medical issues namely medicines' side-effects. The gathering aims at limiting harm caused by misuse of drugs worldwide, she said, noting that many patients suffer from such harm per year, in addition to thousands of fatalities due to the erroneous usage of drugs. —KUNA



TRAVEL BAN LIFTED

**ANKARA:** A Turkish court has allowed Abdallah Al-Shatti, a Kuwaiti citizen, to depart the country while court proceedings take their course, the Kuwaiti embassy in Ankara said on Friday. Shatti, who was released by Turkish authorities last week, was allowed to return home at the first session of his trial, and a travel ban imposed upon him has been lifted. In the case of an emergency, the embassy urged citizens to contact its hotline (+90) 533-164-84-79. — KUNA



Photo of the day



**KUWAIT:** People watch the sunset at a beach in Kuwait City. Local meteorologists say that Kuwait's long and hot summer officially concludes on September 22 this year. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Dive Team participate in the International Coastal Cleanup campaign through a cleanup of Al-Salam beach in Shuwaikh. — KUNA

DIVE TEAM JOINS INT'L COASTAL CLEANUP EFFORTS

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Dive Team joined millions around the world yesterday to take part in the International Coastal Cleanup campaign, through a cleanup of Al-Salam beach in Shuwaikh.

The endeavor is part of the team of volunteers' contribution to social responsibility and marine life preservation, Kuwait Dive Team Leader Waleed Al-Fadhel said. Others have joined the efforts, including the Filipino community in Kuwait and the US boy scouts, with support from the Kuwait Municipality, he said.

Beach cleanups conducted by the Kuwait Dive Team, aimed at increasing environmental awareness, have resurfaced due to the improvement of weather conditions, mentioned Fadhel.

Its objectives are to carry out activities aimed at protecting and rehabilitating the marine environment for future generations and to

encourage others to do the same. The volunteers seek to focus on vital areas of Kuwait's marine environment consisting coral reefs, islands and the Kuwait Bay, north of Kuwait City.

In 2009, the National Association of Underwater Instructors (NAUI Worldwide) presented the Kuwait Dive Team with the Environmental Enrichment Award for their voluntary activities in protecting and rehabilitating marine environments. — KUNA



AUSTRALIA, KUWAIT EAGER TO BOLSTER ACADEMIC TIES: AMBASSADOR

**CANBERRA:** In light of the visit by top Australian academics to Kuwait, Ambassador Najeb Al-Bader said yesterday that his country and Australia were eager to boost cooperation within the educational and academic domains. Ambassador Bader indicated that Chancellor of the Australian National University (ANU) Professor Gareth Evans, accompanied by Director of the Center for Arab and Islamic Studies and Professor of Political Science at the ANU Amin Saikal, are in Kuwait to discuss cooperation with local officials and academics.

Chancellor Evans will also deliver a lecture focusing on problems and crises in the twenty first century, said the Ambassador who added that the delegation would depart on September 18. The ANU was established in 1946 in the capital Canberra. It is considered as one of the prestigious universities in Australia and the only academic facility created by the country's parliament. — KUNA



**CANBERRA:** Kuwaiti Ambassador Najeb Al-Bader (right) meets with Chancellor of the Australian National University (ANU) Professor Gareth Evans. — KUNA

AUDIT BUREAU SAYS US VISIT WAS TO GAIN EXPERTISE

**WASHINGTON:** Acting Chairman for the State Audit Bureau of Kuwait Adel Al-Saraawi said yesterday that his visit to Washington aimed to benefit from the expertise of similar bodies around the world. Kuwait is on the verge of switching from the traditional auditing methodology to Risk-based Internal Audit (RBIA), including audits based on information technology and service assurance, in order to improve monitoring services in the country.

A timeframe between 2018 and 2020 has been set for the plans, he said, which have been praised by US counterparts, whom have pledged to meet with the Kuwaitis on an annual basis and offer workshops and expertise exchange forums. Expertise delivered at these forums will focus on four major topics, said Saraawi, including IT auditing, oil and gas excavation, risk assessment and performance measurement indicators.

This exchange will bring Kuwait up to par with advanced countries in the field of auditing, he mentioned. On the conclusion of his two-day visit, he said he met with World Bank representatives, whom he briefed on Kuwait's

ambitions and the challenges facing the country's auditing body in training its employees.

Meanwhile, the World Bank expressed readiness to provide Kuwait with many aspects of its own expertise on the matter, he said. Saraawi's trip to the US also saw him visit the US Government Accountability Office (GAO), where he was witness to the body's role in conducting the High Risk List - a biennial report which highlights state bodies and programs that face the risk of fraud, waste, abuse or mismanagement.

Kuwait's State Audit Bureau is extremely keen to benefit from global expertise, and has increased its interactions with other countries. This month alone, Saraawi said Kuwaiti representatives held meetings, in the aim of technical cooperation, with their counterparts from China, India and South Korea. In China, they discussed developing staff potentials, while talks in India focused on IT auditing and the Orange Book evaluation system along with discussions in South Korea on auditing related to construction projects. —KUNA



**WASHINGTON:** Acting Chairman for the State Audit Bureau of Kuwait Adel Al-Saraawi attends a meeting during his visit to US audit and accounting apparatuses. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Deputy General Manager - Retail Banking at KFH Khaled Al-Subaie, and Amani Al-Merri from MGRP pose with the trainees.

## KFH HOLDS TRAINING FOR NEW RECRUITS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Finance House (KFH) inaugurated a training program for 12 new recruits in order to raise their bar, enrich their banking knowledge and put them on track to be well equipped and prepared to assume the responsibility of optimally serving customers.

Deputy General Manager - Retail Banking at KFH, Khaled Al-Subaie said during the opening ceremony of the training program which was attended by several officers from KFH and the Manpower and Government Restructuring Program that KFH is keen on enhancing the skills and capabilities as per the highest levels of training theoretically and practically. He reiterated that customer service must be taken to the highest levels as per the highest service quality standards, thus assuring that KFH was the leading institution in providing highly sophisticated banking products and services.

Subaie urged trainees to always develop their skills, acquire new skills and benefit from KFH distinguished work atmosphere. He indicated that KFH is a major Islamic financial institution locally and

globally, thus providing more opportunities for career development and acquiring new skill in all fields.

Meanwhile, Amani Al-Merri, an official at the National Labor Force Development Department at Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) praised KFH in recognition of its efforts in training the national labor through comprehensive training plans, hailing its commitment towards qualifying and honing the skills of its human resources.

She expressed, on the sidelines of inaugurating the training program, her pride of Kuwaitis working at the private sector, affirming MGRP's support for the Kuwaiti nationals in collaboration and coordination with KFH and the private sector in general.

It is worth noting that the 5-week program includes training courses and workshops on banking products, such as; banking cards, bank accounts, deposits, letters of guarantee, and KFH eservices. In addition, the program tackles subjects on sharia basics, counterfeiting and fraud, IT systems, etc.

## TWO WOMEN DROWN IN SABAH AL-SALEM

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Two Egyptian women (30 and 32) recently drowned in a swimming pool in Sabah Al-Salem, said security sources, noting that the two victims worked for a private hospital in the area. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

### Traffic cameras

The total number of speeding violations detected by new traffic cameras starting from July 16th until September 11th was 32,941, said Major General Fahad Al-Showayye, the Interior Ministry's Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs. He added that 915 expats were deported, while 54,166 vehicles and 950 bikes were impounded in 2016. Meanwhile, 117 expats were deported, and 12,028 vehicles and 622 bikes were impounded in the period of January 1 till July 29, 2017. In addition, Showayye said that 1,505 owners of vehicles with GCC license plates were summoned over committing 97,000 indirect traffic violations.

Meanwhile, the Interior Ministry's Relations and Security Media Director Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash said that a media awareness campaign was organized before the new cameras were put in

use to explain how they operate to help road users avoid legal accountability.

### Fires

A fire broke out recently in a 10-story building in Salmiya used by the Ministry of Education to house female teachers, said security sources, noting that firemen rushed to the scene and found out that the fire was in a kitchen on the second floor. The whole building was evacuated and the fire was controlled without reporting any casualties. Meanwhile, a fire broke out in a 12-story building in Mirqab, said security sources, noting that on reporting to the scene, firemen found out that the fire started in a warehouse of a dentist's clinic in the third floor. The building was evacuated and one person was rescued after suffering from smoke inhalation. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress to determine the cause of the fire.

### Crackdowns

Farwaniya municipality's acting cleaning department manager Soud Al-Harbi said that his teams had recently removed 23 abandoned vehicles in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh, Farwaniya, Reqqa, Omaniya and Ashbeliya. He added that seven cafes and stores were also fined for illegal use of public property lands.



**KUWAIT:** Manager of the Alumni and Career Placement Center at ACK Dr Zeina Nehme poses with the interns.

## ACK RECEIVES AWARD OF APPRECIATION FROM ALGHANIM INDUSTRIES FOR THEIR EFFORTS

**KUWAIT:** Representatives from the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) attended the Alghanim Industries Internship Graduation Ceremony, which was held recently at the JW Marriott hotel for its summer interns who completed an intensive four week program in July 2017. ACK received an award in recognition of its continuous support towards the Alghanim Industries summer interns this year. Commenting on the award, Manager of

the Alumni and Career Placement Center at ACK, Dr Zeina Nehme said; "We would like to thank Alghanim Industries for giving ACK students and alumni a great opportunity to gain exposure to the real world, outside of the classroom experience. Our university students were able to work in teams with students from multiple universities in Kuwait and abroad. It was indeed a great pleasure, and a wonderful learning experience for all of our participants."

# PROGRAM TO HELP KUWAITI GRADUATES JOIN PRIVATE SECTOR

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** The Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP) signed an agreement recently with the National Union of Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) to provide Kuwaitis graduating from local and foreign universities with enough training and skills in order to meet the local labor market's demands and encourage more Kuwaitis to join the private sector.

In this regard, MGRP Secretary General Fawzi Al-Majdali said that MGRP is happy to invite the unions to activities, workshops and seminars it organizes in Kuwait and abroad, in addition to determining the local market needs for certain degrees and certificates.

Majdali added that MGRP would coordinate with various unions abroad to facilitate students' participation in various activities and, provide MGRP with lists of outstanding students wishing to work in the private sector. Meanwhile, NUKS Secretary General Falah Al-Ajmi thanked MGRP for its support to Kuwaiti graduates as well as to national economic development.

Separately, Majdali issued a directive for MGRP employees on cancelling all exemptions from having to use the fingerprint system to check in and out, except those for employees with severe or mental disabilities who provide certificates from the Public Authority for the Disabled about their disabilities. Majdali added that the decision would take effect by the beginning of October.

### Nurses' problems

Kuwait Nursing Society's Chairman Bandar Nashmi Al-Enezi urged His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah to immediately interfere to put an end to the 'disappointment' he accused the Ministry of Health of causing to nursing staffs through its decisions, and warned that many nurses have already threatened to resign.

Enezi added that many head nurses in various hospitals had been ignoring the health minister's decision on giving nurses two weekly days off, and that many nurses had been reshuffled according to 'wasta' (connections).

Furthermore, Enezi accused that current



**KUWAIT:** MGRP Secretary General Fawzi Al-Majdali (left) and NUKS Secretary General Falah Al-Ajmi sign the agreement. — Photo by Meshaal Al-Enezi

nursing services' manager of abusively dealing with nurses, adding that she had deliberately set hard admission exams for GCC and bedoon

nurses to have them fail. He also warned that nurses plan to go on strike unless their problems were solved.

## COMMITTEE DISCUSSES EXPATS HEALTH FEE INCREASE EXEMPTIONS

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** The parliament's health affairs committee meets today to discuss reducing the scope of exemptions from increased fees on health service presented to expatriates, which will start in October 1, 2017. The panel's meeting agenda also includes discussing the latest regarding its ongoing investigations in Ministry of Health violations, parliamentary sources said. Meanwhile, the parliament's human rights committee will meet today to resume discussing the issue concerning fake passports that some bedoons (stateless residents) reportedly obtained in order to legalize their status. The panel seeks to find a resolution to the problem that ensures protecting the bedoons' basic rights.

Notably, the committee has been urging the

Interior Ministry to drop charges against the fake passport holders and return their previous legal statuses, said informed sources, noting that the ministry already has documents proving that the individuals in question belong to some neighboring countries.

### Panic

MP Waleed Al-Tabtabaie urged the government not to panic after a number of MPs threatened to grill several ministers. Tabtabaie also referred to some reports claiming that there are intentions to change four or five ministers, but he denied knowing whether a reshuffle would be considered, especially since some ministers 'were not up to the responsibilities of their posts'. Furthermore, he noted that the performance of all ministers, including the premier himself, was below bar.

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**Catalan mayors defy Spanish courts ahead of independence vote**

**IRAN RECRUITS PAKISTANI, AFGHAN SHIITES TO FIGHT IN SYRIA**

Page 7

Page 8



**BALUKHALI:** Rohingya Muslims, who recently crossed over from Myanmar into Bangladesh, attack a suspected child trafficker near Balukhali refugee camp, Bangladesh. Thousands of Rohingya are continuing to stream across the border, with UN officials and others demanding that Myanmar halt what they describe as a campaign of ethnic cleansing that has driven nearly 400,000 Rohingya to flee in the past three weeks. — AP

## MYANMAR ACCUSED OF VIOLATING BANGLADESH AIRSPACE

BANGLADESH FUMES, SUMMONS MYANMAR ENVOY



**GUMDHUM:** Rohingya Muslim refugee carry supplies through the Jalpatoli refugee camp in the 'no mans land' between Myanmar and Bangladesh in Gumdhum district yesterday. Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina headed for the UN General Assembly yesterday to plead for global help coping with the Rohingya crisis, as the refugee deluge escaping a crackdown in Myanmar topped 400,000. — AFP

**COX'S BAZAR:** Bangladeshi authorities summoned Myanmar's envoy to protest what they said were violations of their airspace amid an exodus of Rohingya Muslims fleeing violence in western Myanmar. Myanmar's presidential spokesman yesterday said there's no evidence of any trespassing and that Dhaka should have reached out to discuss its concerns instead of issuing public statements.

The Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Friday that Myanmar drones and helicopters flew into Bangladeshi airspace on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. It said a protest note was handed to Myanmar's envoy Friday evening. Bangladesh warned that the "provocative acts" could lead to consequences. In Yangon, presidential spokesman Zaw Htay said that while Myanmar's military denied crossing into Bangladesh's airspace, the matter was being investigated. "We don't know exactly if they released that statement for political reasons," he said of Bangladesh's protest.

He added that Myanmar was "transporting rations for displaced people for emergency assistance" to areas close to the border and that

Bangladesh "needs to understand that as well." An exodus of up to 400,000 Rohingya Muslims began Aug. 25 when Myanmar's military launched "clearance operations" in Rakhine state following deadly Aug 25 attacks by a Rohingya insurgent group on police posts. Those fleeing have described as indiscriminate attacks by security forces and Buddhist mobs.

The Myanmar government says hundreds have died, mostly Rohingya "terrorists," and that 176 out of 471 Rohingya villages have been abandoned. Myanmar has insisted that Rohingya insurgents and fleeing villagers themselves are destroying their villages. It has offered no proof to back these charges. The UN has described the violence against the Rohingya in Myanmar as ethnic cleansing - a term that describes an organized effort to rid an area of an ethnic group by displacement, deportation or killing. Ethnic Rohingya have faced persecution and discrimination in majority-Buddhist Myanmar for decades and are denied citizenship, even though many families have lived there for generations. The government says there is no such ethnicity as Rohingya and says they are Bengalis who illegally migrated to

Myanmar from Bangladesh. Rights groups like Amnesty International and Human Rights watch have said that they have evidence that Myanmar troops were systematically targeting and setting Rohingya villages on fire over the last three weeks.

UN agencies fear continued violence in Myanmar may eventually drive up to 1 million Rohingya into Bangladesh. As hundreds of thousands of Rohingya have crossed into Bangladesh, relief camps are overflowing and food, medicine and drinking water has been in short supply. Mohammed Shahriar Alam, Bangladesh's junior foreign minister, said yesterday that India, Turkey, Morocco, Indonesia, Iran and Malaysia have already sent relief and the goods are waiting in an airport in nearby Chittagong. He said more aid was also expected to come via ships soon.

"The United Nations and many other private organizations are working there to support hundreds of thousands who are in dire need of assistance," said Khaled Mahmud, a top official in Cox's Bazar. He acknowledged that aid distribution remained haphazard three weeks into the crisis. "Our work must be very organized and systematic," he said. "We are working on that." — AP

## WARPLANES POUND US-BACKED MILITIA

**BEIRUT:** US-backed militias said they came under attack yesterday from Russian jets and Syrian government forces in Deir Al-Zor province, a flashpoint in an increasingly complex battlefield. The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an alliance of Kurdish and Arab militias fighting with the US-led military coalition, said the strikes wounded six of its fighters. Washington and Moscow are backing separate offensives in the Syrian conflict - with both sides advancing against Islamic State militants in the eastern region that borders Iraq.

"Our forces east of the Euphrates were hit with an attack from the Russian aircraft and Syrian regime forces, targeting our units in the industrial zone," the SDF said in a statement. The SDF accused Damascus of trying to obstruct its battle against Islamic State. Such attacks "waste energies that should be used against terrorism ... and open the door to side conflicts," it said. There was no immediate comment from the Syrian government or Moscow. The assaults by the Russian-backed Syrian army and the US-backed SDF have at times raised fears of clashes that could stoke tensions

between the competing world powers.

The offensives have converged on Islamic State from opposite sides of the Euphrates river, which bisects oil-rich Deir Al-Zor, Islamic State's last major foothold in Syria. Syrian troops with Iran-backed militias have closed in from the west since last week, while the SDF advances from the east. Russian and US battles against Islamic State in Syria have mostly stayed out of each other's way, with the Euphrates often acting as a dividing line.

Talks have been under way to extend a formal demarcation line, officials have said. In June, the SDF accused the Syrian army of bombing its positions in Raqqqa province and the United States shot down a Syrian government warplane.

### Across the river

Ahmed Abu Khawla, the commander of the SDF's Deir al-Zor military council, said Russian or Syrian fighter jets flew in from government-held territory before dawn. The warplanes struck as the SDF waged "heated and bloody battles" in the industrial zone on the eastern

bank, seizing factories from Islamic State militants, he said. "We have requested explanations from the Russian government," he told Reuters. "We have asked for explanations from the coalition ... and necessary action to stop these jets."

The strikes came a day after Khawla said his fighters would not let Syrian government forces cross the Euphrates. On Friday, he warned the army and its allies against firing at SDF positions across the river - which he said they had done in recent days. The Russian foreign ministry said units of the Syrian army had already crossed. A senior aide to President Bashar Al-Assad said the government would fight any force, including the US-backed militias, to recapture the entire country. "I'm not saying this will happen tomorrow ... but this is the strategic intent," Bouthaina Shaaban said in a TV interview.

The US-led coalition said last week that the SDF did not plan to enter Deir Al-Zor city, where Syrian troops recently broke an Islamic State siege that had lasted three years.

A pro-Damascus military alliance launched



**UQAYRIBAT, Syria:** Photo shows a general view of destruction, in the town of Uqayribat in Syria's eastern Hama countryside. — AFP

attacks yesterday from the southern corner of Deir Al-Zor province to drive Islamic State from the Iraqi border. Islamic State is also coming under attack by US-backed Iraqi government forces just over the border from Syria's Deir Al-

Zor inside Iraq. Islamic State's declaration in 2014 of a "caliphate" spanning both countries effectively collapsed in July, when an Iraqi offensive captured Mosul, the militants' capital in Iraq. — Reuters

## SINGAPOREANS PROTEST AGAINST UNCONTESTED ELECTION

**SINGAPORE:** Hundreds of Singaporeans, most dressed in black, held a silent protest yesterday against an uncontested presidential election this week in which applications from four candidates were rejected. Political protests are rare in the wealthy city-state but the election of Halimah Yacob, a former speaker of parliament, as the country's first woman president had led to some dismay over how other prospective candidates were rejected.

"ROBBED OF AN ELECTION #NotMyPresident", read a banner at the entrance to the park where the protest was held, a venue called Speakers' Corner, which has been designated as the site in the city for people to air their views. "We care about the country and where it's heading toward," said 22-year-old Anna, who declined to give her last name.

"This is an issue that I feel especially strongly about," she said, adding that the power of authorities "had gone unchecked". She said it was the first time she had attended a protest. If the election had been held, all citizens above the age of 21 would have been eligible to vote. Aiming to strengthen a sense of inclusivity, multicultural Singapore had decreed the presidency, a largely ceremonial six-year post, would be reserved for candidates from the minority Malay community this time.

Of the four other applicants for the presidency, two were not Malays and two were not qualified to contest, the elections department said on Monday. Halimah had automatically qualified because she held a senior public post for over

three years and was declared elected after nominations closed on Wednesday. The stringent eligibility rules include a stipulation that a candidate from the private sector should have headed a company with paid-up capital of at least S\$500 million (\$370 million). Organizers of yesterday's protest said it was silent as speeches that touched on race and religion would have needed a police permit.

Tan Cheng Bock, who lost the previous presidential election in 2011, said in a Facebook post: "It is not President Halimah as a person that Singaporeans are unhappy about. It is about the way our government has conducted this whole walkover presidential election." Displays of dissent are unusual in Singapore, one of the richest and most politically stable countries in the world. It has been ruled by the People's Action Party (PAP) since independence in 1965 and the current Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, is the son of the country's founding father Lee Kuan Yew.

In the 2015 general election - held months after the death of Lee Kuan Yew - the PAP won almost 70 per cent of the popular vote and swept all but six of parliament's 89 seats. But it was the third gathering of so many people at the Speakers' Corner since the beginning of July. The annual Pink Dot gay pride rally drew thousands of people to the site on July 1. And in mid-July, a protest was held at the venue calling for an independent inquiry into whether Lee abused his power in a battle with his siblings over what to do with their late father's house. — Reuters



**SINGAPORE:** Singapore's former presidential candidate Tan Cheng Bock (center), who lost narrowly in the previous election, is mobbed by supporters at Hong Lim Park in Singapore yesterday. Hundreds of Singaporeans angered by the walkover victory of its first female president gathered in a downtown park yesterday for a 'silent sit-in' in a rare political protest denouncing the lack of an election. — AFP



**KABUL:** An Afghan Shiite man kisses the holy mace for blessings at the Karti Sakhi shrine in Kabul, Afghanistan. — AP

## EU-US DATA PACT FACES FIRST TEST OF CREDIBILITY

### PRIVACY SHIELD IN FORCE FOR A YEAR

**BRUSSELS:** A pact underpinning billions of dollars of transatlantic data transfers will undergo its first annual review tomorrow, with Europe seeking to ensure Washington has lived up to its promises to protect the data of European citizens stored on US servers. Feted as a milestone in transatlantic relations, which had soured after revelations of mass US surveillance four years ago, the EU-US Privacy Shield data pact has been in place for just over a year.

It was hammered out after the European Union's top court struck down a previous data transfer pact in 2015 because it allowed US spies excessive access to people's data, plunging everyday cross-border data transfers into legal limbo. However, it is already subject to two legal challenges in European courts on the grounds that it does not offer adequate privacy protections for European citizens' data, and EU data protection watchdogs have also expressed misgivings.

The first annual review taking place tomorrow and Tuesday will be an opportunity for the European Commission, which negotiated the Privacy Shield, to ensure it is functioning well

and that the US administration is keeping its part of the deal. "My expectation is that we will find Privacy Shield functioning, we might find some space or room for improvement," Vera Jourova, EU Justice Commissioner, told Reuters in an interview.

#### Ombudsman

The Privacy Shield seeks to strengthen the protection of Europeans whose data is moved to US servers by giving EU citizens greater means to seek redress in case of disputes, including through a new privacy ombudsman within the State Department who will deal with complaints from EU citizens about US spying. However a new ombudsman has not been appointed under the new US administration, something Jourova said she will push for. Companies wanting to transfer Europeans' personal data outside the bloc have to comply with tough EU data protection rules which forbid them from transferring personal data to countries deemed to have inadequate privacy protections unless they have special legal contracts in place.

The Privacy Shield allows firms to move data across the Atlantic without relying on such contracts, known as model clauses, which are more cumbersome and expensive. Over 2,400 companies are signed up to the scheme including Alphabet Inc's Google, Facebook and Microsoft. "Virtually every transaction in the trillion-euro transatlantic trade relationship, from the movement of services and capital to the movement of goods and people, heavily relies on the transfer of data between the EU and US," said Thomas Boue, Director General, Policy, EMEA for BSA, which represents the likes of Apple, Microsoft and IBM.

The Commission is also seeking to find out figures for how many requests for people's data companies had received from US authorities. "The million dollar question was how many times they were asked by the national secret service," Jourova said. "This is of big relevance for assessing whether Privacy Shield is successful." The Commission will produce a report with its conclusions on the review of the Privacy Shield in October. — Reuters

## IRAN RECRUITING PAKISTANI AND AFGHAN SHIITES TO FIGHT IN SYRIA

**ISLAMABAD:** Thousands of Shiite Muslims from Afghanistan and Pakistan are being recruited by Iran to fight with President Bashar Al-Assad's forces in Syria, lured by promises of housing, a monthly salary of up to \$600 and the possibility of employment in Iran when they return, say counterterrorism officials and analysts. These fighters, who have received public praise from Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, even have their own brigades, but counterterrorism officials in both countries worry about the mayhem they might cause when they return home to countries already wrestling with a major militant problem.

Amir Toumaj, Iran research analyst at the US-based Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, said the number of fighters is fluid but as many as 6,000 Afghans are fighting for Assad, while the number of Pakistanis, who fight under the banner of the Zainabayoun Brigade, is in the hundreds. In Afghanistan, stepped-up attacks on minority Shiites claimed by the upstart Islamic State group affiliate known as Islamic State in the Khorasan Province could be payback against Afghan Shiites in Syria fighting under the banner of the Fatimayoun Brigade, Toumaj said.

#### Expecting blowback

Khorasan is an ancient name for an area that included parts of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Central Asia. "People were expecting blowback," said Toumaj. IS "itself has its own strategy to inflame sectarian strife." Shiites in Afghanistan are frightened. Worshipers at a recent Friday prayer service said Shiite mosques in the Afghan capital, including the largest, Ibrahim Khalil mosque, were barely a third full. Previously on Fridays - the Islamic holy day - the faithful were so many that the overflow often spilled out on the street outside the mosque.

Mohammed Naim, a Shiite restaurant owner in Kabul issued a plea to Iran: "Please don't send the poor Afghan Shiite refugees to fight in Syria because then Daesh attacks directly on Shiites," he said, using an Arabic acronym for the Islamic State. Pakistan has also been targeted by the

Islamic State in Khorasan province. IS has claimed several brutal attacks on the country's Shiite community, sending suicide bombers to shrines they frequent, killing scores of devotees.

In Pakistan, sectarian rivalries routinely erupt in violence. The usual targets are the country's minority Shiites, making them willing recruits, said Toumaj. The most fertile recruitment ground for Iran has been Parachinar, the regional capital of the Khurram tribal region, that borders Afghanistan, he said. There, Shiites have been targeted by suicide bombings carried out by Sunni militants, who revile Shiites as heretics.

#### Suicide bombings

In June, two suicide bombings in rapid succession killed nearly 70 people prompting nationwide demonstrations, with protesters carrying banners shouting: "Stop the genocide of Shiites." A Pakistani intelligence official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he is not authorized to speak to the media, said recruits are also coming from northern Gilgit and Baltistan. Recruiters are often Shiite clerics with ties to Iran, some of whom have studied in seminaries in Iran's Qom and Mashhad cities, said a second Pakistani official, who also spoke on condition he not be identified because he still operates in the area and exposing his identity would endanger him.

Yet fighters sign up for many reasons. Some are inspired to go to Syria to protect sites considered holy to Shiite Muslims, like the shrine honoring Sayyida Zainab, the granddaughter of Islam's Prophet Muhammed. Located in the Syrian capital of Damascus, the shrine was attacked by Syrian rebels in 2013. Others sign up for the monthly stipend and the promise of a house. For those recruited from among the more than 1 million Afghan refugees still living in Iran it's often the promise of permanent residence in Iran. For Shiites in Pakistan's Parachinar it is outrage at the relentless attacks by Sunni militants that drives them to sign up for battle in Syria, said Toumaj. — AP

## PROSECUTOR RENEWS INTEREST IN LONG ISLAND SERIAL KILLER CASE

**MINEOLA:** For years, the thicket along a beach highway on Long Island held a horrible secret. Hidden from passing drivers were the skeletal remains of 10 people, mostly young women who had worked as prostitutes. Who killed them, and why, is a mystery that has vexed a slew of seasoned homicide detectives. The case took an intriguing turn when a veteran county prosecutor became the first authority to publicly name a suspect in at least one of the deaths: John Bittrolff, a Long Island carpenter who was sentenced to consecutive 25 years-to-life terms in prison this week for beating two prostitutes to death in 1993 and 1994.

Robert Biancavilla, an assistant district attorney in Suffolk County, said after the sentencing that some of the remains found near Gilgo Beach "may be attributed to the handiwork of Mr Bittrolff." If authorities have evidence to back up their suspicions, though, they aren't saying. Biancavilla declined to elaborate. Suffolk County police officials declined to comment. They last spoke publicly about the case nearly two years ago when they announced detectives were working with FBI profilers

on developing leads. Any suggestion that Bittrolff had anything to do with the dead women is "laughable," said his lawyer, Jonathan Manley. Even a lawyer for the family of one of those linked to the case expressed skepticism. "To stir this pot when there's no evidence is looking to easily blame a convicted killer and not have to perform the investigation that is required," said John Ray, an attorney for the family of Shannan Gilbert, whose disappearance in 2010 several miles from Gilgo Beach triggered the hunt that exposed the larger mystery. Gilbert, a 24-year-old sex worker, vanished in spring 2010 after leaving a client's house on foot and disappearing into the marsh.

Months later, a police officer and his cadaver dog were looking for her body in the thicket along Ocean Parkway when they happened upon the remains of a different woman. Within days, three other bodies were found, all within a short walk of one another. By spring 2011, that number had climbed to 10 sets of human remains - those of eight women, one man and one toddler - all found along several miles of parkway. — AP



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## 700 CATALAN MAYORS BACK HOLDING INDEPENDENCE VOTE



**BARCELONA:** Catalan regional vice-president and chief of Economy and Finance, Oriol Junqueras (CL), President of the Catalan Government Carles Puigdemont (center) and president of the Catalan parliament Carme Forcadell (CR) stand as Catalan pro-referendum mayors raise their staffs of command during a demonstration yesterday.—AFP

**BARCELONA:** More than 700 mayors from Catalonia met yesterday in Barcelona in a show of strength amid pressure from Spain's central government not to hold an independence referendum for the northeastern region.

Political tensions in Spain are increasing as the proposed voting date of Oct 1 nears. The Catalan government has been scrambling to push forward the vote, despite the central government's warnings that local municipalities are not allowed to use public buildings for it and mayors can be legally prosecuted for it.

Hundreds of mayors stood yesterday next to regional President Carles Puigdemont and Barcelona Mayor Ada Colau in Barcelona, the capital and main city in the region.

"We will not be intimidated. This is not about independence, it's about our rights," said Colau. Puigdemont thanked the mayors for not backing down and insisted that most Catalans are determined to press ahead despite the ban.

"Do not underestimate the Catalan people," he warned. Catalonia's regional

police force is under orders to arrest the mayors if they refuse to appear for questioning in an investigation into the vote, which Spain's constitutional court has suspended, State Prosecutor Jose Manuel Maza's office said. The order puts regional police in the uneasy position of carrying out commands from Madrid in their own towns and cities.

If mayors and their municipalities cannot help organize the balloting, the independence vote is unlikely to proceed.

On Friday, Spain's central authorities announced they have increased their control over Catalonia's regional spending to make sure that no funds are diverted to paying for the independence referendum.

The prosperous Catalonia region generates a fifth of the country's 1.1-trillion euro economy. It enjoys ample self-government, running its own police, and has considerable powers over health and education. Taxes, foreign affairs, defense and infrastructures are in the hands of Spain's central authorities.—AP

## DESPERATE EUROPE-BOUND MIGRANTS TURN TO BLACK SEA

EMERGENCE OF A NEW 'ROMANIAN ROUTE' TO WESTERN EUROPE ?



**Turkish boats of which some were used to transport migrants over the Black Sea and were seized by Romanian border police are pictured in Constanta, southeastern Romania.—AFP**

**NOCOSIA:** While the arrival of exhausted migrants may be common on Mediterranean shores, it's a rare sight on the Black Sea coastline. But a string of recent arrivals from Turkey suggests it may be emerging as part of a new 'Romanian route' to western Europe.

Shortly before dawn on Wednesday, around 150 people, a third of them children, were rescued in the Black Sea—the fifth migrant boat to be intercepted by Romanian authorities since mid-August.

The arrival of some 570 Iraqis, Syrians, Afghans, Iranians and Pakistanis in less than a month remains modest compared to the influx recorded in the Mediterranean.

In 2014, the last year of relative activity, close to 300 migrants crossed the Black Sea to reach Romania. EU member Romania is not part of the bloc's passport-free Schengen zone and until now has largely avoided the kind of influx of refugees and migrants seen elsewhere on the continent over the past few years. The latest developments are being carefully watched in the country. "This seems to indicate that smugglers are trying to find a route through the Black Sea," Krzysztof Borowski, a spokesman for Frontex, the EU's border force agency, told AFP.

Smugglers are looking for more affluent migrants to pay the fare for the new route which avoids Greece, where arrivals risk deportation under an agreement between the EU and Ankara, explained Mircea Mocanu, head of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Romania.

The crossing between Turkey and Romania can cost between 1,000 and 3,000 euros, he added. However, he is doubtful there will be an influx of boats during the colder months: "It is ten times more difficult to cross the Black Sea than the Mediterranean Sea."

"It's the Black Sea, not because of its colour but because of the danger during storms," said Police Commissioner Gabriel Cerchez, who was part of Tuesday's rescue. "Until the boat enters the port, it could capsize at any time."

### 'Ready for anything'

Other tests await migrants who dare to make the crossing in a bid to reach western Europe, where reinforced controls and fences make it difficult to cross borders.

In Timisoara, close to the border with Hungary, hundreds of migrants are waiting for an opportunity to cross over. At the immigration centre, Tarek, a 19-year-old Syrian, told AFP he had been stopped while trying to reach the border in a car.

He has decided to stay in Romania to become a computer engineer, but he said many of his friends are "ready to do anything" to leave. "People come and ask: 'do you want to stay or go? Because I know a way to get to Germany that's 100 percent safe,'" he said, adding that middle-men get 100 euros for setting up a migrant with a smuggler. Not far from the centre, around 15 men were gathered on wasteland in a makeshift camp, in hope of finding a smuggler. Among them, Rafi, a 23-year-old Pakistani, and Zakir, a young Afghan, said they crossed from Hungary in to Romania by foot.

A direct crossing from Serbia to Hungary has become almost impossible because of the barbed wire fencing erected between the two countries, while the long Romanian-Hungarian border remains open.

According to Romania's border police, more than 1,200 people attempting to cross the western border have been arrested since the beginning of the year, compared to 900 in for all of 2016. The IOM estimates that 80 percent of attempts fail. For Tarek, is it a bitter conclusion: "A year and a half of my life has been wasted in the hope of joining the promised land." —AFP

## AT LEAST 30 BURUNDIAN REFUGEES DIE IN CLASHES

**KINSHASA:** At least 30 Burundian refugees have been killed in clashes with Congolese security forces over plans to send some of them home, a Reuters witness and local activists said yesterday.

Police and soldiers opened fire as the refugees protested over the plan in the town of Kamanyola in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo on Friday, the activists told Reuters. Congo's government spokesman Lambert Mende denied that those killed were refugees, saying that the clashes broke out when assailants from an unidentified armed group attacked an office belonging to the national intelligence agency. Five soldiers and 20 of the attackers were killed in the fighting, Mende said.

More than 400,000 refugees have fled Burundi - including 40,000 to neighboring Congo - since violence erupted in April 2015 when President Pierre Nkurunziza said he would seek a third term in office, a move his opponents said was unconstitutional.

Wendo Joel, an activist from a Congolese pro-democracy and human rights group, said the refugees had seized a weapon and killed a soldier as they tried to free some of their arrested compatriots.

"The soldiers first fired in the air but there were many refugees," Joel told Reuters. "I have counted 32 bodies. There

are also about 100 wounded." Reuters TV footage showed more than 30 bodies covered by sheets on the roadside in Kamanyola, with many more wounded also lying in the street.

A UN spokeswoman confirmed that at least 18 Burundian asylum seekers had been killed but said the toll was likely to rise. Many others had taken shelter at the UN peacekeeping mission's nearby base, she added. According to a spokesman for the UN refugee agency, more than 2,000 Burundian refugees live in Kamanyola with host families. In a statement, Burundi's main opposition grouping, CNARED, accused Burundian army troops and members of the ruling CNDD-FDD's youth group Imbonerakure of carrying out the killings with the Congolese army.

Burundian officials could not be immediately reached for comment, but Burundi's foreign minister Alain Aime Nyamitwe wrote on Twitter: "My heart sinks as I learn of the shootings in Eastern DRC."

"Clarifications are needed on the shootings & circumstances around," he added.

The violence in Burundi has killed over 700 people and a UN commission said last week there were reasonable grounds to believe authorities had committed crimes against humanity. The government rejected the commission's findings as "propaganda." —Reuters

## BUHARI TO PASS THROUGH LONDON AFTER UN TRIP

**ABUJA:** Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari will pass through London, where he spent five months on medical leave this year, on his way home from the United Nations General Assembly, his spokesman said today. Buhari will depart for New York on Sunday, his spokesman said in an emailed statement. It will be the first time he has left Nigeria since returning on Aug. 19 from Britain, where he received treatment for an unspecified ailment.

Spokesman Femi Adesina said Buhari would hold a lunch meeting with US President Donald Trump and other leaders, adding: "President Buhari will transit through London on his way back to the country." Buhari will be accompanied on the trip by cabinet ministers and the governors of three states.

Nigeria's Foreign Minister Geoffrey Onyeama told reporters at the United Nations in New York on Friday that Buhari was in "very good health" and "back to what he was before."

"We had a very long cabinet meeting two days ago and he was in excellent form in every way possible," Onyeama said. "He's really leading, he's very, very strong and he's back to his very punishing schedule so it's just fantastic." Adesina did not say whether Buhari would have medical treatment in London and declined a request to comment further. The refusal to disclose details of the president's illness has caused speculation about whether the 74-year-old is well enough to

run Africa's most populous country and biggest economy. Buhari was in London on medical leave for two months from January, and again from May 7 to Aug. 19.

After the first trip, the president reduced his working day to a few hours, diplomats and gov-

ernment sources said at the time. Since the second trip, however, Buhari's office has released a flurry of photos and statements from his engagements, including meetings with his vice president, heads of the armed forces and economic ministers. —AP



**HOLLYWOOD:** In this Wednesday file photo, a woman is transported from The Rehabilitation Center at Hollywood Hills as patients are evacuated after a loss of air conditioning due to Hurricane Irma in Hollywood, Fla.—AP



**WASHINGTON:** In this photo, US President Donald Trump poses during a meeting with (from left), Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-NY, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and other Congressional leaders in the Oval Office of the White House.—AP

## SCHUMER AND PELOSI NOW DEAL-MAKERS WITH TRUMP

**WASHINGTON:** It's been a long eight months in the wilderness for Democrats, but if any two were going to find their way back to the action it was Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and his House counterpart, Nancy Pelosi. Or "Chuck and Nancy," as President Donald Trump now calls them.

After the Republican-led Congress' failure to repeal President Barack Obama's health care law, when Trump cracked open the door of bipartisanship, the two Hill veterans barged through full-force. They were looking for ways to "build some trust and confidence" with Trump, Pelosi, D-Calif., said in an interview Friday. The willingness to engage with a president reviled by their party worried liberals like Rep.

Raul Grijalva, D-Ariz., who warned against "proceeding toward normalizing him." But it surprised no one who's watched Schumer and Pelosi's combined 67 years of wheeling and dealing in Congress.

"Let's put it this way, it doesn't matter," Pelosi said about whether she likes Trump following two meetings that yielded a budget deal and progress on immigration. She said she doesn't know if Trump likes her, adding, "Right now, I want him to like the Dreamers," the nickname for young immigrants the two Democrats and Trump aim to protect.

Schumer, D-N.Y., inadvertently shared his impression of the duo's Wednesday parley with Trump, which moved an immigration agreement forward, catching uninvited Republican leaders flat-footed. At an open Senate microphone Thursday, Schumer said: "He likes us. He likes me, anyway." He described warning Trump he'd be "boxed" if he only works with one party, adding, "He gets that."

Both leaders' comments were instructive. Pelosi, 77, who was the first female House speaker, is admired as a legislative tactician able to maximize minority Democrats' strength and as a prodigious fundraiser. Underscoring her penchant for finding allies, Sen. Mike Rounds, R-

S.D., said that when as governor in 2009, he called congressional leaders to discuss President Barack Obama's pending health care bill - and only Pelosi called back.

Recounting the White House dinner that produced progress on immigration, the only woman among 11 people around the Blue Room's rectangular table said she was responding to Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross when "the others" interrupted. "I said, 'Does anybody listen to women when they speak around here?'" Pelosi said Friday. But critics say that forcefulness also means Pelosi holds power too tightly, not consulting widely enough with junior lawmakers, and is part of an aging cluster of party leaders that's frustrating younger, ambitious members.

Schumer, 66, has been Senate Democratic leader since January and is viewed by colleagues as a people person. He's memorized senators' telephone numbers, perhaps because of his flip phone's limitations, and is known for emotional visits and calls with lawmakers who've experienced personal losses. Schumer has arranged dates for staffers and said this week that his life's big gap was lacking grandchildren, of which Pelosi has nine.

The progressive end of the Democratic spectrum has shown wariness of Schumer, and thousands of liberals protested outside his Brooklyn apartment after Trump's January inauguration. They demanded he aggressively oppose Trump's appointees and agenda and accused him of being too close to the financial industry, which is centered in New York.

With Schumer's saggy suits contrasting with Pelosi's tailored wardrobe, the two leaders have known each other since serving in the House in the late 1980s. Then-Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., invited Pelosi to join a group of lawmakers who dined weekly and already included Schumer. Pelosi says she and Schumer now meet or speak "as necessary," often daily. —AP

## NOW-FAMOUS FLORIDA NUN USED GOOGLE TO FIGURE OUT CHAIN SAW

**MIAMI:** The Florida nun who became an internet sensation when video emerged of her - dressed in full habit - wielding a chain saw to clear downed trees after Hurricane Irma says she had to look up instructions on how to start the tool. "I actually had to Google it to find out how to start it because I'd forgotten how ...," Sister Margaret Ann said. "The students have told me everything is online, sister; just ask the question online." The nun, principal of Archbishop Coleman F. Carroll High School in Miami, said her mechanical education didn't stop with the Google search.

"Some people have sent me videos on how to use a chain saw because apparently I wasn't using it correctly or as safe as I should've been, so I'm learning, too," she told The Associated Press in a Skype interview. Many people posted warnings online that the nun's loose habit could get caught in the saw.

An off-duty Miami-Dade police officer posted the video of Sister Margaret Ann on social media Monday. The Miami-Dade Police Department praised her effort, saying: "Thank you Sister and all of our neighbors that are working together to get through this!" The video was picked up by media outlets, including the AP, and quickly became a global sensation.

Sister Margaret Ann laughed off the attention, saying her students are enjoying watching her on social media. Some have even asked for her autograph. "People are driving by and saying, 'Thank you, sister, thank you,'" she said. "So I think it has been really good for our community, and I understand that the video has really gone worldwide, so that's kinda funny." She also said she was glad the video gave the public a different view of nuns. "The students are telling me, they are saying, 'Sister, you're no wimp.' —AP



## PAKISTAN ARMY PUSHED POLITICAL ROLE FOR MILITANT GROUPS

**LAHORE:** A new Pakistani political party controlled by an Islamist with a \$10 million US bounty on his head is backing a candidate in a by-election today, in what a former senior army officer says is a key step in a military-proposed plan to mainstream militant groups.

The Milli Muslim League party loyal to Hafiz Saeed - who the United States and India accuse of masterminding the 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed 166 people - has little chance of seeing its favoured candidate win the seat vacated when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was removed from office by the Supreme Court in July. But the foray into politics by Saeed's Islamist charity is following a blueprint that Sharif himself rejected when the military proposed it last year, retired Lieutenant General Amjad Shuaib told Reuters. Three close Sharif confidants with knowledge of the discussions confirmed that Sharif had opposed the "mainstreaming" plan, which senior military figures and some analysts see as a way of steering ultra-religious groups away from violent jihad.

"We have to separate those elements who are peaceful from the elements who are picking up weapons," Shuaib said. Pakistan's powerful military has long been accused of fostering militant groups as proxy fighters opposing neighboring arch-enemy India, a charge the army denies.

### "Patriotic people"

Saeed's religious charity launched the

Milli Muslim League party within two weeks after the court ousted Sharif over corruption allegations. Yaqoob Sheikh, the Lahore candidate for Milli Muslim League, is standing as an independent after the Electoral Commission said the party was not yet legally registered.

But Saeed's lieutenants, JUD workers and Milli Muslim League officials are running his campaign and portraits of Saeed adorn every poster promoting Sheikh. Another Islamist designated a terrorist by the United States, Fazlur Rehman Khalil, has told Reuters he too plans to soon form his own party to advocate strict Islamic law. "God willing, we will come into the mainstream - our country right now needs patriotic people," Khalil said, vowing to turn Pakistan into a state government by strict Islamic law.

Saeed's charity and Khalil's Ansar ul-Umma organization are both seen by the United States as fronts for militant groups the army has been accused of sponsoring. The military denies any policy of encouraging radical groups. Both Islamist groups deny their political ambitions were engineered by the military. The official army spokesman was not available for comment after queries were sent to the press wing.

Still, hundreds of MML supporters, waving posters of Saeed and demanding his release from house arrest, chanted "Long live Hafiz Saeed! Long live the

Pakistan army!" at political rallies during the past week. "Anyone who is India's friend is a traitor, a traitor," went another campaign slogan, a reference to Sharif's attempts to improve relations with long-time foe India that was a source of tension with the military.

### Deradicalization plan

Both Saeed and Khalil are proponents of a strict interpretation of Islam and have a history of supporting violence - each man was reportedly a signatory to al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden's 1998 fatwa declaring war on the United States.

They have since established religious groups that they say are unconnected to violence, though the United States maintains those groups are fronts for funneling money and fighters to militants targeting India. Analyst Khaled Ahmed, who has researched Saeed's Jamaat-ud-Dawa charity and its connections to the military, says the new political party is clearly an attempt by the generals to pursue an alternative to dismantling its militant proxies.

"One thing is the army wants these guys to survive," Ahmed said. "The other thing is that they want to also balance the politicians who are more and more inclined to normalize relations with India." The military's Inter-Services Intelligence agency first began pushing the political mainstreaming plan in April 2016, according to retired general Shuaib, a former director of the army's

military intelligence wing that is separate from the ISI. He said the proposal was shared with him in writing by the then-ISI chief, adding that he himself had spoken with Khalil as well as Saeed in an unofficial capacity about the plan.

"Fazlur Rehman Khalil was very positive. Hafiz Saeed was very positive," Shuaib said. "My conversation with them was just to confirm those things which I had been told by the ISI and other people."

Saeed has been under house arrest since January at his house in the eastern city of Lahore. The United States has offered a \$10 million reward for information leading to his conviction over the Mumbai attacks. Then-Prime Minister Sharif, however, was strongly against the military's mainstreaming plan, according to Shuaib and three members of Sharif's inner circle, including one who was in some of the tense meetings over the issue.

Sharif wanted to completely dismantle groups like JUD. Disagreement on what to do about anti-India proxy fighters was a major source of rancor with the military, according to one of the close Sharif confidants. In recent weeks several senior figures from the ruling PML-N party have publicly implied that elements of the military - which has run Pakistan for almost half its modern history and previously ousted Sharif in a 1999 coup - had a hand in the court ouster of Sharif, a charge both the army and the court reject. A rep-

resentative of the PML-N, which last month replaced him as prime minister with close ally Shahid Khaqī Abbasi, said the party was "not aware" of any mainstreaming plan being brought to the table.

### Religion and politics

Some analysts worry that mainstreaming such controversial groups would be a risky strategy for Pakistan. US President Donald Trump's administration has threatened sanctions against members of Pakistan's military and even raised the spectre of declaring Pakistan a state sponsor of terrorism.

"It will send a wrong message," said analyst Zahid Hussain, who nevertheless thought that Saeed's new party would have a "negligible" effect on Pakistani elections because religious parties have never won more than a few seats in parliament. Others are not so sure.

Sheikh, the MML candidate in today's by-election who says he was handpicked by Hafiz Saeed, vowed to establish strict Islamic rule and "break" liberalism and secularism. Analyst Ahmed warned that few existing religious parties have a charismatic leader like Saeed, and Pakistan may find itself unable to control a rising tide of Islamist sentiment. "If Hafiz Saeed comes into the mainstream, it's not that he is going to be politicized," he added. "It's that he is going to make politics more religious." — Reuters

## YEMENI CAPTORS DID ME NO PHYSICAL HARM: PRIEST

**VATICAN CITY:** A Catholic priest from India who was freed after being held 18 months in Yemen said yesterday that he was never physically harmed during his captivity, even if his captors feigned hitting him on videos seeking ransom. Officials said they had no knowledge of ransom having been paid.

The Rev. Tom Uzhunnalil was kidnapped from a home for senior citizens in Aden, southern Yemen, established by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity in March 2016. Four nuns were killed during the attack. Uzhunnalil's voice broke as he publicly expressed his condolences. "I thank God almighty for this day. He saved me healthy enough. Clear mind. Emotions under control until now," the 59-year-old Uzhunnalil said. "God has been extremely kind to me. No gun was pointed at me."

He said that when the home for senior citizens was attacked, he identified himself as an Indian and he was brought to another room "while they killed the others."

Indian officials announced his release on Tuesday, and images show a bearded, gaunt Uzhunnalil descending from an airplane in Muscat, Oman. The priest said he had been transferred from Yemen by car to Oman, and then brought by air to the capital before continuing his journey to Rome. The priest said he didn't know his kidnapers' identities or affiliations and believed their motive was ransom, although the head of Uzhunnalil's Salesian order, Don A F Artime, said they had no knowledge of any ransom having been paid. "No one ever told us that they asked for money. No one asked us for even a euro," Artime said. "We don't know anything about this. This is the whole truth. And I believe that Father Tom knows even less." The mechanisms behind his release also were unclear, but the Vatican has thanked the Sultan of Oman in a statement and Uzhunnalil thanked leaders in his native India. —AP



Tom Uzhunnalil

## CRIME DRAWS UNWANTED ATTENTION TO THE REMOTE VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN

### DISAPPEARANCE OF YOUNG SISTERS SHAKES THE SUBURBS

**THAXTON:** The disappearance of two young Maryland sisters shook the suburbs of Washington, and remained an agonizing mystery for more than four decades. Now another region 250 miles away is linked to the crime. Authorities say convicted sex offender Lloyd Lee Welch Jr burned at least one of the sisters' bodies in a fire on his cousins' property on Taylors Mountain, in west-central Virginia.

Following Welch's guilty plea this week, the people of Taylors Mountain are hoping to put an end to any association between their home and the slayings of 10-year-old Katherine and 12-year-old Sheila Lyon. The sisters vanished in 1975 after walking to a shopping mall near their home in Kensington, Maryland. "All of us feel like he stained all of our reputations. We had nothing to do with it. It's something we'd rather have not had happen here. We wouldn't want to see it happen anywhere," said Danny Johnson, who runs an apple orchard and winery on the mountain.

Taylors Mountain is perched in the Blue Ridge Mountains, north of US Route 460, between Bedford and Roanoke. The mountain was settled by Cherokee Indians in the 1700s. Much later, it was known for its thriving tomato canneries, where many of the local residents worked, and its moonshine, including "some of the best brandy in this world," Johnson said. A 1924 article in The Washington Post describes a confrontation when officers went up the mountain to shut down a still during Prohibition. Several residents warned them not to go any farther.

When they continued up the mountain anyway, shots were fired at them from several directions. No one was hurt, but the officers "made a hasty retreat," according to the article. The mountain kept its reputation for decades thereafter as a rough-and-tumble place where people watched out for each other and were reluctant to deal with outsiders. "If something happened, they would get together then and decide how they wanted it to end up before they went to town," Johnson said.

Welch did not live on the mountain, but he had cousins, an aunt, uncle, and other relatives who did. And for 38 years, the mystery remained unresolved, despite what they and their neighbors saw back in 1975. Only when detectives from the cold case unit in Montgomery



**BEDFORD:** Lloyd Lee Welch Jr stands during a plea agreement hearing for the killings of Sheila and Katherine Lyon in 1975, in Bedford County Circuit Court in Bedford, VA. Welch, who pleaded guilty in the killing of the two young sisters from Maryland, was sentenced Tuesday to two 48-year prison terms, more than four decades after the girls vanished during a trip to a local shopping mall. — AP

County, Maryland showed up in 2013 did people on Taylors Mountain start talking. Welch - long imprisoned for sexually assaulting another girl, had become a "person of

interest" in the sisters' disappearance by then, based on a review of evidence in the case file.

Two of his cousins told police they remembered an unexpected visit to their home on Taylors Mountain that spring. The Lyon sisters disappeared on March 25, 1975. One cousin said Welch had a duffel bag containing bloody clothing, and told her he had been using it to carry ground beef. Another told them Welch had two army-style duffel bags with reddish-brown stains on them, and that he helped Welch put the bags into a fire.

Other people who lived on the mountain told investigators they remember a fire that burned for days that had "the stench of death," Bedford County Commonwealth's Attorney Wes Nance said during Welch's plea hearing Tuesday. Authorities began digging on the mountain in 2014, trying to recover the girls' remains. They did recover a tooth, according to documents filed in court, but authorities have never said if they were able to match it to the girls' dental records.

Welch's relatives sold their home on the mountain five years ago now. Locals bristle at the renewed attention the case has brought. Jennifer Thomson, a librarian at the Bedford Museum and Genealogical Library, said the mountain is made up of "good, hard-working country people," although some locals who live in Bedford derisively refer to it as "the redneck capital of the county." "People are kind there, they look out for his families and they'd look out for a stranger there, too. Very good people," Johnson said.

Homes on the mountain range from small, dilapidated ranch-style houses built more than 50 years ago to a handful of larger, newer, high-priced homes. And while a handful of families had lived there for generations, today there are newcomers in the mix. The last cannery closed in the late 1970s. The last publicized arrest for bootlegging was in the 1980s. Now people are hoping Welch's guilty plea will finally remove the spotlight. "People resent the fact that they brought the children here. I resent it, too. We're not a dumping ground for bodies, and it was just quite a blow to everybody that somebody would do that," said Ronnie Laughlin, a retired Bedford County deputy sheriff. "They live quiet and peaceful, and they didn't ask for this to happen." — AP

## News

in brief

### Suspected US drone strike targets militants in Pakistan

**PARACHINAR/PESHAWAR:** A suspected US drone strike killed three people in the tribal area of Pakistan near the Afghanistan border on Friday, a senior regional official said, in what Afghan Taliban sources say was an attack targeting a Haqqani network militant. If confirmed, it would be the first US drone strike inside Pakistan since President Donald Trump outlined a new Afghanistan strategy and pushed Islamabad to take greater action against Pakistan-based Haqqani militants who are allied to the Afghan Taliban. Baseer Khan Wazir, the political agent and the most senior administrator in the Kurram Agency region in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), said the drone strike took place close to the border with Afghanistan.

### Christian sentenced to death in Pakistan

**LAHORE:** A Christian man has been sentenced to death on blasphemy charges by a court in eastern Pakistan after a close friend accused him of sharing anti-Islamic material, the defendant's lawyer said on Friday. Blasphemy is a criminal offence in Muslim-majority Pakistan. Most cases are filed against members of minority communities. Nadeem James, 35, was arrested in July 2016, accused by a friend of sharing a blasphemous material on the Whatsapp messaging service. Lawyer Riaz Anjum said his client intended to appeal against the verdict, passed on Thursday by a sessions court in the town of Gujarat. There was widespread outrage across Pakistan last April when student Mashal Khan was beaten to death at his university in Mardan following a dorm debate about religion.

### Philippines retraining 1,200 police after abuses

**MANILA:** The Philippine capital's police chief ordered that the entire 1,200-member police force in one of Manila's biggest areas be relieved of duty and retrained on Friday in response to a series of controversies, including the killing of two teenagers. Metro Manila's top officer Oscar Albayalde said all police personnel in the Caloocan area of the capital would undergo retraining and reorientation before being reassigned to other police units, not necessarily in Manila. "We will start with the city's police precincts 2 and 7," Albayalde said. All personnel in Caloocan's headquarters and seven precincts would be temporarily replaced by the regional public safety battalion, a combat-trained unit. "This will be done in batches," he said.

## A HISTORY OF PERSECUTION: MYANMAR'S ROHINGYA

Nearly 400,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled renewed violence in Myanmar, crossing the border in Bangladesh in waves following a military crackdown the UN says amounts to ethnic cleansing.

It is the latest chapter in a long and tumultuous history of the Rohingya, the world's largest stateless population. Before the most recent surge of violence, there were over one million Rohingyas in Myanmar's restive Rakhine state.

But the questions of who they are, how many live in Myanmar and when they arrived is hotly disputed, highly emotive and behind much of the current unrest. Many of the Muslim minority trace their lineage in Myanmar back generations, but were effectively stripped of their citizenship by the former junta and are demonized among the Buddhist-majority population as illegal immigrants.

Here is a brief history of Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims. When did they first arrive in Myanmar?

By some accounts, they are descendants of Arab, Turkish or Mongol traders and soldiers who in the 15th Century migrated to Rakhine state, previously called the Kingdom of Arakan.

Other historians say they emigrated from Bangladesh in several waves, a widely held view among most Burmese. For centuries the small Muslim minority lived peacefully alongside Buddhists in the independent kingdom, some were even advisors to Buddhist royals, according to historians. Upheaval ensued from the late 18th century. In 1784 the kingdom was conquered by the Burmese and later by the British following the first Anglo-Burmese war of 1824-1826.

Under British rule, a large number arrived to work as farmers and later as military recruits. "In the 1830s there was a massive influx of Muslim peasants from neighbor-

ing Bengal, mostly to work in the agriculture sector," said Sophie Boisseau du Rocher, Southeast Asia expert at the French Institute for International Relations. By 1912, more than 30 percent of the population of Arakan state were Muslim, up from five percent in 1869, according to British census data cited by historian Jacques Leider. When did tensions start?

### British rule

Tensions between the Rohingya Muslims and the Buddhist majority date back to the beginning of British rule in 1824. As part of their divide-and-rule policy, British colonists favoured Muslims at the expense of other groups. They recruited them as soldiers during World War II, pitting them against Buddhists aligned with the Japanese as the war played out on Burmese soil.

"Both armies, British and Japanese, exploited the frictions and animosity in the local population to further their own military aims," said Moshe Yegar, author of a book about Muslim communities in Southeast Asia. Their status was fortified in 1947 when a new Constitution was drafted, enshrining them with full legal and voting rights-which would be later stripped and render them stateless. Rakhine has a poverty rate nearing 80 percent, double the national average, kindling resentments over ethnic claims to the area.

### What happened under the junta?

A 1962 military coup ushered in a new era of repression and brutality. The country's ethnic minorities like the Rohingya did not fare well. Most were effectively rendered stateless in 1982 when the junta issued a new law on citizenship, requiring minorities to prove they lived in Myanmar prior to the first Anglo-Burmese war in 1823 to obtain nationality.

After the junta was dissolved in 2011,



**JAKARTA:** Muslim protesters gather during a rally against the persecution of Rohingya Muslims, in Jakarta yesterday. Thousand Muslims staged the rally condemning violence in Myanmar against its Rohingya Muslim minority. — AP

the country saw a rise in Buddhist extremism which further sidelined the Rohingya and marked the beginning of the latest era of tensions.

The 20th century saw a series of military crackdowns against the group: in 1978 and 1991-2, which prompted hundreds of thousands to flee to Bangladesh.

Some were sent back by Dhaka, and the United Nations questioned the supposedly "voluntary" nature of the repatriations. What's behind the latest violence?

They have been subjected to restrictions on movement, employment and access to basic services since another outbreak of violence in 2012. Tensions mounted again in October 2016, when a small and previ-

ously unknown militant group-the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) — staged a series of deadly attacks on Burmese military forces.

The army responded with a massive security crackdown, sparking a new wave of refugee arrivals into Bangladesh. On August 25, ARSA again launched an early morning attack on army installations in Rakhine, triggering a brutal military campaign in response.

An estimated 391,000 Rohingyas have fled to Bangladesh in the last three weeks, according to the United Nations, which has said the military crackdown amounts to ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims.—AFP

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## Focus

ZUMA SEEKING  
TO DODGE GRAFT  
CHARGES AGAIN

By Susan Njanji

South Africa's embattled president Jacob Zuma goes to court on Thursday in a fresh attempt to fend off the reinstatement of 783 graft charges relating to a 1990s arms deal. The country's main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), has sought in 11 court appearances since 2009 to reactivate the charges over controversial post-apartheid military contracts, which have dogged Zuma for much of his time in government. In 2005 his former financial advisor Schabir Shaik was convicted for facilitating bribes in exchange for the contracts and sentenced to 15 years in prison. He was later released on medical parole. The president, who is accused of corruption, fraud, money-laundering and racketeering, has always insisted he is innocent.

## Held accountable

Zuma and other government officials were accused of taking kick-backs from the \$5 billion (4.2 billion euros) purchase of fighter jets, patrol boats and other arms manufactured by five European firms, including British military equipment maker BAE systems and French company Thales. Charges were first brought against Zuma in 2005 but dropped by prosecutors in 2009.

However, last year the High Court in Pretoria ruled that he should face the accusations. This week the Supreme Court of Appeal will hear arguments for and against reinstating the charges. It will not make a decision for several weeks, by which time the ruling African National Congress (ANC) elective conference will be approaching. An order reinstating charges could cast a shadow on proceedings - and Zuma's preferred successor, his ex-wife Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma. The case is just the latest in a string of political and legal scandals that have dogged the president but failed to shake his grip on power.

In 2016 Zuma was ordered to repay \$24 million (22 million euros) to the public purse for upgrades to his personal residence that judges said showed he had disrespected the constitution. Institute of Security Studies analyst Gareth Newman believes his chances of success in the Supreme Court are slim. "The ruling of the High Court was from a full bench of experienced, respected judges who unanimously came to the conclusion that the decision to withdraw the criminal charges against Jacob Zuma was irrational," Newman said.

"The chance of reaching a different conclusion in the Supreme Court is highly unlikely. It's been a strategy of Jacob Zuma to use taxpayers' money to avoid being held accountable in court from before even becoming president." Zuma has survived numerous bruising court battles over the years, mostly involving graft accusations, as well as calls for him to resign. He has also faced criticism for sacking two respected finance ministers within two years. Many South Africans believe those dismissals were linked to his relationship with the wealthy Gupta family, which is regularly accused of exerting undue influence over the president.

## Campaign damage

Pressure on the president would reach fever pitch if the court reinstates any of the hundreds of charges - particularly if the court rules against Zuma before the ANC party's conference due in December. Zuma, 75, is expected to step down as the party president at the end of year, although he will likely remain the country's head of state until 2019 after which he will not be eligible for re-election.

The party can theoretically replace him before the next general election due in two years time - but with Zuma loyalists occupying many positions of power within the ANC it is unlikely. It would also be damaging to the president's ex-wife Dlamini-Zuma, who is seeking to be the next ANC president. "Currently he is really very, very unpopular... not only among the general public but also among ANC voters," said Mari Harris, a public affairs expert at Ipsos MORI. "The repercussions will be more for his ex-wife's campaign to become the next leader of the ANC. That will really hurt her a lot."

Zuma is supporting his ex-wife in the belief that she will be able to "protect him from appearing in court", according to Newman James Selfe, the chairman of the opposition DA party, believes Zuma will try to delay the process as much as possible, to avoid prejudicing the ANC's choice of successor. "But I do think the Supreme Court will hand down its ruling before December," said Selfe, who is "optimistic" the charges will be reinstated. When the charges were dropped in 2009, Zuma was locked in a bitter fight with former president Thabo Mbeki to secure leadership of the ANC. The withdrawal of the charges cleared the way for Zuma to be elected president just weeks later. — AFP

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## ROHINGYA CHILDREN ARRIVE IN BANGLADESH ALONE

By Nick Perry, Sam Jahan

The lost Rohingya boy made the journey from Myanmar alone, following strangers from other villages across rivers and jungle until they reached Bangladesh, where he had no family and no idea where to go. "Some women in the group asked, 'Where are your parents?' I said I didn't know where they were," said Abdul Aziz, a 10-year-old whose name has been changed to protect his identity. "A woman said, 'We'll look after you like our own child, come along. After that I went with them.' More than 1,100 Rohingya children fleeing violence in western Myanmar have arrived alone in Bangladesh since August 25, according to the latest UNICEF figures. These solo children are at risk of sexual abuse, human trafficking and psychological trauma, the UN children's agency said.

Many have seen family members brutally killed in village massacres in Rakhine state, where the Myanmar army and Buddhist mobs have been accused of crimes described by the UN rights chief as "ethnic cleansing". Others narrowly escaped with their own lives - some children arriving in Bangladesh bear shrapnel and bullet wounds. The number of children who crossed into Bangladesh alone, or were split up from family along the way is expected to climb as more cases are discovered. More than half of the 370,000 Rohingya Muslims who have made it to Bangladesh since August 25 are minors, according to UN estimates.

A sample of 128,000 new arrivals conducted in early September across five different camps, found 60 percent were children, including 12,000 under one year of age. This presents a needle in a haystack scenario for child protection officers trying to find unaccompanied minors in sprawling refugee camps, where toddlers roam naked, children sleep outdoors and infants play alone in filthy water. "This is a big concern. These children need extra support and help being reunited with family members," Save the Children's humanitarian expert George Graham said in a statement.

## Alone and vulnerable

"At first they don't talk, don't eat, don't play. They just sit still, staring a lot," Moazzem Hossain, a project manager with Bangladeshi charity BRAC said at a 'child-friendly space' run in partnership with UNICEF at Kutupalong refugee camp. There are 41 of these safe zones across Bangladesh's

ever-expanding network of refugee camps. Every day children, some carrying younger siblings, flock to the simple wooden huts for activities like singing, playing with toys and blocks and skipping ropes.

It is a welcome distraction from the misery outside, where monsoon rain turns the camp into a quagmire and exhausted refugees compete for dwindling food and space. But playtime also allows staff to register details about a child's background, monitor newcomers and keep an eye out for the tell-tale signs of a child on their own.

One such youngster was 12-year-old Mohammad Ramiz, who found himself alone after fleeing his village and tagged along with a group of adults. "There was a lot of violence going on, so I crossed the river with others," said Ramiz, not his real name. "I ate leaves from the tree, and drank water to survive." There are fears the vulnerable

minors could be exploited if left unsupervised in the camps, UNICEF Geneva spokesman Christophe Bouliera said. Girls are particularly at risk of being lured into child marriages, or trafficked to red-light districts in big cities where they are forced into prostitution and abused, he added.

But the facilities for refugee children are vastly overstretched. Over just two days, 2,000 children came through a single 'safe space' in Kutupalong, little larger than a classroom with just a few staff on hand. Thirty-five unaccompanied minors were identified over that period, Bouliera said, but more resources were needed to ensure others did not slip through the cracks. "The faster we act, the more chance we have of finding their family," he told AFP. "The most important thing is to protect them because unaccompanied children, separated children, are particularly vulnerable and in danger." — AFP



PARIS: A placard reading 'Rohingyas, humans without rights' is displayed during a rally to protest the situation of Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar's Arakan State, in Paris yesterday. — AP

## THE HOUSE THAT BIBI NETANYAHU BUILT

Dr James J Zogby  
President Arab American Institute

For half of the past two decades Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu has served as Prime Minister of Israel.

Whatever his ultimate fate (given the ongoing criminal investigations he is currently facing), it is clear that he has had a profound impact on Israel, the Palestinians, and the entire region. There are those who have doubted that Netanyahu had any core beliefs, other than the desire to retain power. But even with his maneuvering and his penchant for prevarication, there are, in fact, core beliefs that have directed his career.

Shortly after his first election as Prime Minister, and before his maiden address to the US Congress, a team of Reagan-era neo-conservatives (many of whom ended up in senior positions in the George W Bush Administration) wrote a paper for Netanyahu to guide his remarks before Congress and to US audiences. The paper, echoing many themes from Netanyahu's own writings, was called "A Clean Break". Since he was already aligned with these views, he repeated the paper's themes and policy proposals during his many public appearances in Washington. "A Clean Break" can be seen as Netanyahu's road map to relations with the US and the Middle East region.

## 'Land for peace'

The central themes of the paper were: ending the Oslo process and rejecting "land for peace" formula; reasserting Israel's claim to the "land of Israel"; weakening the ability of the Palestinian Authority to govern; and poisoning the PA's image in the US to damage its standing, securing Israel's northern border, by confronting Iran, promoting internal conflict in Lebanon, and destabilizing Syria, strengthening ties with US Republicans, including proposing ending US economic aid in favor of military aid and buying into the Reagan-era idea of a "missile defense" system - a concept favored by the GOP, and confronting Iraq and overthrowing Saddam Hussein's rule.

Over the past two decades, Netanyahu and his US allies,

whether in or out of office, pursued these same objectives. To a great extent, they have succeeded. This unholy alliance between US neo-conservatives and Netanyahu was no accident. They had long been partners. Back in the late 1970's, Netanyahu convened many of these same thinkers to Israel for a summit at the Jonathan Institute - an event which some have called the birth of the American neo-conservative movement. Back then, their focus was hostility to the Soviet Union and the "national liberation movements" alleged to be Soviet pawns. The ideology they spawned was decidedly pro-Israel and anti-Arab, and extremely hostile to all things Palestinian.

## 'A Clean Break'

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Oslo peace process, and the election of Bill Clinton, the focus of both the neo-cons (as they were called) and Netanyahu shifted. Seeing US Republicans as his allies in the effort to sabotage the peace process, Netanyahu's Likud party set up a shop to provide talking points to GOP Members of Congress. Their goal was to make Republicans partners in their fight with the Clinton Administration/Labor Party endorsed peace process. With the GOP take-over of Congress in 1995, followed by Netanyahu's election in 1996, the stage was set to kill the Oslo process. It was an unholy alliance of Likud and the GOP squared off against Labor and the Clinton Administration. The goals laid out in "A Clean Break" were not so much prophetic as they were a road map in which the neo-cons and Netanyahu laid out their plans for a new US-Israel partnership, a destabilized Arab World, and an end to Palestinian aspirations for independence.

Whenever Netanyahu met with resistance from Clinton, he turned to the Republican-led Congress for support. He was dogged in his efforts to sabotage peace and largely succeeded. Even the one agreement Clinton finally forced him to sign with Arafat only served to lock the Palestinians into an untenable situation by consolidating Israeli control over much of the West Bank and their nightmarish presence in the heart of Hebron. While the "break" envisioned in "A Clean Break" was not as "clean" as the one he may

have sought, the impact of Netanyahu's first term created conditions that ultimately led to his hoped for end of the peace process.

After his return to office in 2009, he was forced to endure eight years of a Democratic Administration, led by Barack Obama. Once again, he turned to his relations with a Republican-led Congress to resist pressures to make peace. With the election of Donald Trump coupled with Republican control of Congress, Netanyahu feels more comfortable. His allies in Congress are vigorously pushing his agenda. There are bills designed to: further punish and discredit the already weakened PA; deny funding to UNWRA; outlaw the BDS movement; and recognize, through clever sleight of hand language, Israel's control over the "territories".

The Trump Administration, which began its tenure, proposing to deliver "a great deal" to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has reportedly lowered its ambitions to a proposal mirroring a long-discredited 40-year-old Likud concept of "limited Palestinian autonomy" denying Palestinians full sovereignty and any rights in Jerusalem, while releasing large areas of the West Bank to Israeli expansion. Netanyahu, the Likud, and their neo-conservative allies can rightly claim that the vision they projected for the Middle East in "A Clean Break" is being realized.

But, in reality, what they have created is an unsustainable mess that includes: a weakened and dependent PA that was denied the ability to govern causing it to lose legitimacy; a fractured Palestinian polity, with Hamas in control of a humanitarian disaster in Gaza; an Iraq in shambles and in its wake, an empowered and emboldened Iran and a metastasized terrorist threat that now challenges many countries; and a hardened, though divided Israeli electorate from which it is unlikely to see any new peace-oriented leadership emerging. So this is the "House that Bibi Built". It is his legacy. While Israel proceeds along its merry way, each day building more settlements, demolishing more Palestinian homes, dishing out more hardships to an embittered captive people, far from being the secure and stable dream Netanyahu envisioned, it is seething cauldron waiting for the next explosion.

# N KOREA SEEKS MILITARY 'EQUILIBRIUM' WITH US

## UN CONDEMNS LATEST MISSILE LAUNCH

SEOUL: North Korea said yesterday it aims to reach an "equilibrium" of military force with the United States, which earlier signaled its patience for diplomacy is wearing thin after Pyongyang fired a missile over Japan for the second time in under a month. "Our final goal is to establish the equilibrium of real force with the US and make the US rulers dare not talk about military option," North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was quoted as saying by the state news agency, KCNA.

Kim was shown beaming as he watched the missile fly from a moving launcher in photos released by the agency, surrounded by several officials. "The combat efficiency and reliability of Hwasong-12 were thoroughly verified," said Kim as quoted by KCNA. Kim added the North's goal of completing its nuclear force had "nearly reached the terminal". North Korea has launched dozens of missiles under Kim's leadership as it accelerates a weapons program designed to give it the ability to target the United States with a powerful, nuclear-tipped missile.

After the latest missile launch on Friday, White House National Security Adviser HR McMaster said the United States was fast running out of patience with North Korea's missile and nuclear programs. "We've been kicking the can down the road, and we're out of road," McMaster told reporters, referring to Pyongyang's

repeated missile tests in defiance of international pressure. "For those ... who have been commenting on a lack of a military option, there is a military option," he said, adding that it would not be the Trump administration's preferred choice.

Also on Friday, the UN Security Council condemned the "highly provocative" missile launch by North Korea. It had already stepped up sanctions against North Korea in response to a nuclear bomb test on Sept 3, imposing a ban on North Korea's textile exports and capping its imports of crude oil. The US ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, echoed McMaster's strong rhetoric, even as she said Washington's preferred resolution to the crisis is through diplomacy and sanctions.

"What we are seeing is, they are continuing to be provocative, they are continuing to be reckless and at that point there's not a whole lot the Security Council is going to be able to do from here, when you've cut 90 percent of the trade and 30 percent of the oil," Haley said. US President Donald Trump said that he is "more confident than ever that our options in addressing this threat are both effective and overwhelming." He said at Joint Base Andrews near Washington that North Korea "has once again shown its utter contempt for its neighbors and for the entire world community."

### Missile

North Korea's latest test missile flew over Hokkaido in northern Japan on Friday and landed in the Pacific about 2,000 km to the east, the Japanese government said. It travelled about 3,700 km in total, according to South Korea's military, far enough to reach the US Pacific territory of Guam, which the North has threatened before. "The range of this test was significant since North Korea demonstrated that it could reach Guam with this missile," the Union of Concerned Scientists advocacy group said in a statement. However, the accuracy of the missile, still at an early stage of development, was low, it said.

On Thursday, US Secretary of State Tillerson called on China, Pyongyang's only ally, and Russia to apply more pressure on North Korea by "taking direct actions of their own." Beijing has pushed back, urging Washington to do more to rein in North Korea. "Honestly, I think the United States should be doing ... much more than now, so that there's real effective international cooperation on this issue," China's ambassador to the United States, Cui Tiankai, said on Friday.

"They should refrain from issuing more threats. They



North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un (center) inspects the launching drill of the medium-and-long range strategic ballistic rocket Hwasong-12 at an undisclosed location. — AFP



This undated combination picture released from North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) yesterday the launching drill of the medium-and-long range strategic ballistic rocket Hwasong-12 at an undisclosed location. — AFP

should do more to find effective ways to resume dialogue and negotiation," he said, while adding that China would never accept North Korea as a nuclear weapons state. North Korea staged its sixth and most powerful nuclear bomb test earlier this month and in July tested long-range intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of reaching at least parts of the US mainland.

Last month, North Korea fired an intermediate range missile that also flew over Hokkaido into the ocean. Warning announcements about the latest missile blared in parts of northern Japan, while many residents received alerts on their mobile phones or saw warnings on TV telling them to seek refuge. The US military said it had detected a single intermediate range ballistic missile but it did not pose a threat to North America or Guam. Global equities investors largely shrugged off the latest missile test by North

Korea as shares on Wall Street set new highs on Friday.

### Differences over talks

Trump has promised not to allow North Korea to threaten the United States with a nuclear-tipped missile. Russia's UN ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, said the United States needed to begin talks with North Korea, something that Washington has so far ruled out. "We called on our US partners and others to implement political and diplomatic solutions that are provided for in the resolution," Nebenzia told reporters after the Security Council meeting. "Without implementing this, we also will consider it as a non-compliance with the resolution." Asked about the prospect for direct talks, a White House spokesman said, "As the president and his national security team have repeatedly said, now is not the time to talk to North Korea." — Reuters

## UK ON RED ALERT, POLICE HUNT TERROR...

Continued from Page 1

the top in a supermarket shopping bag on the floor of a train carriage. The Parsons Green station where the attack took place reopened by yesterday morning.

Armed police patrolled the streets of London near government departments in Westminster and were guarding Premier League soccer grounds hosting matches yesterday, including the national stadium at Wembley. Cressida Dick, Britain's top police officer, sought to reassure the public as she joined colleagues patrolling the entertainment district on the south bank of the Thames. "Yesterday we saw a cowardly and indiscriminate attack which could have resulted in many lives being lost," she said. "London has not stopped after other terrible attacks and it will not stop after this one."

### Critical threat level

The last time Britain was put on "critical" alert was after a suicide bomber killed 22 people at a concert by the American singer Ariana Grande in Manchester in May. The threat level remained at the highest setting for four days while police raced to establish if the man had worked alone or with the help of others. Prior to that it

had not been triggered since 2007. Prime Minister May said the public should not be alarmed by armed officers on the streets, a rare sight in Britain.

"This is a proportionate and sensible step which will provide extra reassurance and protection while the investigation progresses," she said in a televised statement late on Friday. The bomb struck as passengers were travelling to the centre of the British capital. Some suffered burns and others were injured in a stampede to escape from the station, one of the above-ground stops on the Underground network. Health officials said none was thought to be in a serious condition.

"I was on the second carriage from the back. I just heard a kind of 'whoosh'. I looked up and saw the whole carriage engulfed in flames making its way towards me," Ola Fayankinnu said. "There were phones, hats, bags all over the place and when I looked back I saw a bag with flames." Islamic State has claimed other attacks in Britain this year, including two in London and the Manchester pop concert. Western intelligence officials have questioned similar claims in the past, saying that while Islamic State's jihadist ideology may have inspired some attackers, there is scant evidence that it has orchestrated attacks. — Reuters

## KURDISH MPs BACK REFERENDUM

Continued from Page 1

since a dispute between them and Barzani's KDP caused the suspension of the assembly in October 2015. "Those assembled in parliament today think this is a lawful session, but this is unlawful," Birzu Majeed, the head of Gorran's parliamentary block, told a news conference held while parliament was in session. Lawmakers from a third party, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), ensured the required quorum. The PUK is a historic rival of the KDP but supports the referendum plan.

Meanwhile, Iranian-backed Iraqi Shiite paramilitary groups have threatened to dislodge the Kurdish forces from the Kirkuk region, which is due to take part in the referendum. Kirkuk is home to sizeable Arab and Turkmen populations and lies outside the official boundaries of the Kurdistan region. It is claimed by both the Kurds and the central government in Baghdad. Kurdish peshmerga fighters seized Kirkuk and other disputed territories when the Iraqi army collapsed in the face of Islamic State in 2014, preventing its oilfields from falling into militant hands. — AFP

## AMIR CONDEMNS LONDON ATTACK

Continued from Page 1

Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), urged the Kuwaiti nationals, including the students, to be cautious follow-

ing the terrorist incident. It urged them to call 02075903400 in case of emergency, noting that the consulate staff work round the clock and are ready to offer any required help for the Kuwaitis. — Agencies

## DUBAI INAUGURATES LARGEST SOLAR POWER...

Continued from Page 1

The project is considered an integral part of the emirate's Clean Energy Strategy 2050. The statement noted that Sheikh Mohammed highlighted the UAE's model for sustaining a green economy based on environmental sustainability and clean energy. The UAE has a clear strategy for implementing and further developing this model to maximize its benefits, in addition to investing

in infrastructure, building capabilities and developing specialized local talent.

"We have made steady progress in realizing the goals of Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050 that was launched as part of our objective to transform Dubai into a global clean energy and green economy hub. The carbon footprint of Dubai will be the lowest in the world by 2030," said Sheikh Mohammad. "We are proud that by demonstrating their capabilities, our local talents have proved that they are ready to assume responsibility," he added. — KUNA

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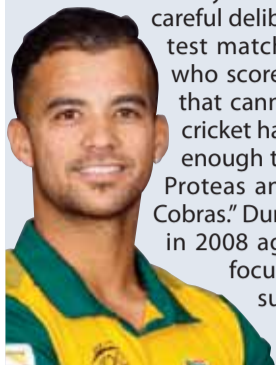
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### S AFRICA'S DUMINY CALLS TIME ON TEST CAREER

**JOHANNESBURG:** South Africa batsman JP Duminy has decided to quit test cricket but will continue to feature in the shorter formats of the game, the 33-year-old said in a statement yesterday. "After long and careful deliberation, I have decided to retire from first-class and test match cricket with immediate effect," the left-hander, who scored 2,103 runs in 46 tests, said. "It is an experience that cannot be replaced and one I will always cherish. Test cricket has always been the pinnacle and I've been fortunate enough to experience some memorable highlights with the Proteas and also in first-class matches with the WSB Cape Cobras." Duminy, who also bowls off-spin, made his test debut in 2008 against Australia in Perth. "In the years ahead, my focus will be placed on attaining limited-overs cricket success for South Africa and the WSB Cape Cobras..." he added. — Reuters



### DEMBELE SUFFERS HAMSTRING INJURY IN FIRST LEAGUE START

**MADRID:** Ousmane Dembele suffered a hamstring injury and was substituted in his first La Liga start for Barcelona during their clash with Getafe yesterday. The French winger was taken off in the 29th minute for Gerard Deulofeu, with the scoreline goalless at the Coliseum Alfonso Perez. "Ousmane Dembele has a hamstring injury in his left leg, more tests are needed to find out the extent of the injury," said Barcelona in a statement. Dembele, Barcelona's record signing, had started against Juventus in the club's 3-0 Champions League win on Tuesday. Reports in Spanish media suggested the 20-year-old would miss three weeks, which includes league fixtures against Eibar, Girona and Las Palmas, as well as a Champions League clash in Lisbon against Sporting. Dembele became Barcelona's record signing in August when the Catalans paid Borussia Dortmund a fee which could reach 147 million euros (\$175.53 million) with add-ons, after Neymar departed for Paris Saint-Germain. — Reuters

### FALCAO TO ADMIT TO TAX FRAUD IN SPAIN

**MADRID:** Colombian footballer Radamel Falcao, who played for Atletico Madrid between 2011 and 2013, will plead guilty to tax fraud in Spain and pay a fine of 6.9 million euros in order to avoid a trial, a source on his legal team said yesterday. Falcao, who now plays in the French league for Monaco, was accused of not properly declaring around 5.6 million euros earned in image rights between 2012 and 2014. The striker will plead guilty to the charge, taking sole responsibility, a source on his legal team said, confirming reports in Spanish newspaper El Mundo. Falcao paid 8.2 million euros to the Spanish authorities in July so the agreement will result in around 1.3 million euros being returned to the player, the source said. The Spanish prosecutor's office was unavailable to confirm the reports. Spanish authorities have investigated numerous football players for allegedly failing to properly declare earnings from image rights. — Reuters



#### MOTOR RACING

## VETTEL BEATS RED BULL DUO FOR SINGAPORE POLE

**SINGAPORE:** Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel put himself on pole position to retake the Formula One lead from Lewis Hamilton with a sensational late lap in Singapore Grand Prix qualifying yesterday. Hamilton, who leads the German by three points with seven rounds remaining, qualified his Mercedes only fifth for Sunday's night race with team mate Valtteri Bottas set to start alongside in sixth.

Dutch teenager Max Verstappen will start second for Red Bull, after going fastest in the first two phases of qualifying, with Australian team mate Daniel Ricciardo third and Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen fourth.

Vettel, who lost the lead to Hamilton at the previous race in Italy, is a four times winner in Singapore and the pole was also his fourth in the city state as well as the 49th of his Formula One career. It was also his third of the season but he had to put everything on the line when it really mattered to beat the Red Bulls in a close-run session, lighting up the timing screens with a lap of one minute 39.491 seconds.

"I'm still full of adrenaline so maybe whatever I say doesn't make any sense," a breathless Vettel, who let out a loud whoop of joy over the team-radio, said after he stepped out of the car. "The car was tricky but it came alive and it was getting better and better as the night progressed, so I'm really happy that we got it done."

#### RICCIARDO CONFIDENT

Red Bull had topped the timesheets in every session leading up to qualifying and had looked on course for their first front row lockout since the US Grand Prix in 2013, with Verstappen also fastest in the opening two phases of qualifying.

Had he been on pole, the 19-year-old would have been the youngest driver in the history of the sport to start from the top slot. "I think the final lap was not great but we were quite close so I'm pretty happy with that," said the Dutch driver, who turns 20 in two weeks' time.

"During the race it will be difficult to pass him so we have to see on the first lap," Ricciardo, a winner in Azerbaijan in June, also remained confident. "I'm still confident we'll get victory. I think we've got a good package. Seb turned it on in qualifying but I'm looking forward to tomorrow," said the Australian. There were few smiles at Mercedes, with the champions arriving in Singapore fearing it would be a tough weekend but secretly hoping for better. "You always hope for better but probably its realistically where we are in Singapore," said team boss Toto Wolff. "There seems to be a certain pattern that some cars go better on the slow, twisty stuff. And that is Ferrari and Red Bull." Hamilton, who took a record 69th career pole at Monza by a huge margin, never looked in contention.

"We knew that today would be tough," he said. "I definitely didn't anticipate Ferrari would be as strong as they were. I thought Red Bull would be as quick as they were but we still remain hopeful."

"I got everything I could out of the car, everything and more," he added. Nico Hulkenberg was seventh for Renault ahead of Fernando Alonso and Stoffel Vandoorne, who put both McLarens in the top 10 a day after the former champions agreed to swap Honda power for Renault in 2018.

Spaniard Carlos Sainz, set to move to the works Renault team next year, rounded out the top 10 for Toro Rosso. —Reuters

## KYLE BUSCH WINS PLAYOFF POLE AT CHICAGOLAND SPEEDWAY

**JOLIET:** Kyle Busch raced to the top spot at Chicagoland. But Brad Keselowski was the driver pegged as the No. 1 target by the rest of the Cup field. Keselowski shook up a lazy Friday at Chicagoland Speedway with a tweet that accused NASCAR of letting Toyota get ahead of the rest of the manufacturers.

NASCAR should have been buzzing about the start of its 10-race playoff to crown a champion. Instead, it was 140 characters and verbal jabs that stole the show. Busch opened his bid for a second NASCAR Cup championship with a lap of 187.963 mph to win the pole Friday night at Chicagoland. "I'm way behind in payback, just FYI," Busch said. "He's way ahead. If anybody's going to be getting it, it's going to be him."

Busch and Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Denny Hamlin will start on the front row and fellow Toyota driver Martin Truex Jr. was third. Truex has four wins and the Furniture Row Racing driver is a favorite to win his first career Cup title.

"I'd like to know what Toyota's paying Brad, because he's been our best spokesman," Hamlin said. NASCAR playoff drivers Kevin Harvick, Keselowski and Kyle Larson had the next three spots.

Keselowski said this week Fords didn't have the speed needed to win the championship and suggested the championship finale would be comprised of four Toyota

drivers. "Winning counts and sometimes you have to catch a little bit of luck. That happens. The fastest car doesn't always win. That has been the case a few times with late yellows and so forth," Keselowski said Friday. "Winning races is more than one thing, it always has been and always will be. You always like to be close but right now we aren't close."

Keselowski, the 2012 Cup champion, considers himself a bit of a spokesman at times for the sport given his tenure and accomplishments. He's locked in to a long-term deal with Penske and Ford and has rarely backed down from speaking on the state of the industry.

"I am not looking over my shoulder worrying about getting a ride with another manufacturer one day and that gives me some privileges that maybe some other guys don't have," he said. Busch and Keselowski have long been rivals and tangled on and off the track.

"If you ask Brad, he can fix the world's problems," Busch said. Top 10 spots for other drivers racing for the championship over the final 10 races include: Chase Elliott eighth, Austin Dillon ninth, and Matt Kenseth 10th.

Ryan Blaney is 12th, seven-time champion Jimmie Johnson starts 14th, Ricky Stenhouse Jr. is 15th, Ryan Newman 16th, Kurt Busch 17th, Jamie McMurray 19th and Kasey Kahne 25th. — AP



**JOLIET:** Kyle Busch, driver of the #18 Skittles Sweet Heat Toyota, prepares to practice for the Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Tales of the Turtles 400 at Chicagoland Speedway yesterday in Joliet, Illinois. — AFP



**LAKE FOREST:** Marc Leishman of Australia pulls a club from his bag on the eighth hole during the second round of the BMW Championship at Conway Farms Golf Club on Friday in Lake Forest, Illinois. — AFP

#### GOLF

## LEISHMAN BACKS GOOD START WITH A LOW SCORE AT BMW

**LAKE FOREST:** Marc Leishman has a short memory when it comes to golf, which only helped him at the BMW Championship. He forgot all about that 62 in the opening round. He was nearly just as good Friday with a 7-under 64 to open a three-shot lead over Jason Day and Rickie Fowler going into the weekend at Conway Farms. "I really took that as a challenge today, to not take it for granted that you're just going to make birdies," Leishman said. "You still have to earn every birdie. I think when you do get ahead of yourself, that's when bad stuff can happen."

There was plenty of good stuff from the guys chasing him in the third FedEx Cup playoff event. Day, who has gone 16 months since his last victory, chipped in from behind the 14th green for his second eagle of the week, and then added a third eagle with one swing. He made a hole-in-one on the 17th hole with a 7-iron that turned into a playoff for multiple parties.

It carried day to a 65, putting him in the last group on the weekend with Leishman. BMW awarded \$100,000 to the Evans Scholars Foundation, and then Day decided to give the car he won to the Evans Scholars, which will yield another full, four-year scholarship for another student.

Fowler also chipped in for eagle on the reachable par-4 15th hole on his way to a 64. "The ultimate goal is to win this week," Day said. "That's the thing I've been trying to do this whole season - at least win once, and try to build on that."

Leishman was at 16-under 126, two short of the 36-hole record Day set at Conway Farms two years ago on his way to a wire-to-wire, six-shot victory. Leishman has some experience with that, but it was long ago and the memory is vague, naturally. He recalls opening with a 70 at the Toyota Southern Classic on the Von Nida Tour in Australia and winning big.

He already has 18 birdies in 36 holes at Conway Farms, where the scoring average was a shade under 69 through two rounds. It hasn't been easy for everyone, particularly defending champion Dustin Johnson. The world's No. 1 player can't seem to buy a putt, and even when he started to make a little progress, he finished bogey-bogey by taking two chips to get on the 17th green and hitting into the water on the 18th. Patrick Cantlay extended his remarkable run this season with a 65, leaving him alone in fourth place but six shots behind. Cantlay returned after three years away to cope with a severe back injury and the death of his close friend and caddie, Chris Roth, who was hit by a car as they were walking to dinner.

Cantlay is playing his 11th tournament this year, yet he is No. 41 in the FedEx Cup and could get into the Tour Championship if he finishes in the top 30 after this week. Phil Mickelson is trying to work his way into the top 30, and while he sputtered with two birdies, two bogeys and too many pars, he drilled an approach to 5 feet on the par-5 14th for an eagle. He shot 69 and was at 7-under 135, in a tie for 12th.

#### SUCCESSIVE FINISHES

Jordan Spieth, No. 1 in the FedEx Cup after successive runner-up finishes in the playoff events, only managed a 70 and joined Mickelson in the group at 135. Leishman is hitting his stride at just the right time. Two weeks ago at the TPC

Boston, he took a two-shot lead into the back nine only to get passed by Justin Thomas and Spieth by shooting 40 on the back nine to finish third behind Thomas.

After a week at home in Virginia, with the clubs never leaving the garage, he picked up where he left off. It's easy to overlook Leishman because the Australian has only two PGA Tour victories, including the Arnold Palmer Invitational earlier this year. He's OK with that, and laughs at hearing fans whisper as he walks by, "Who's that bloke?" That was his phrase, though apparently he's heard it Down Under, too. As for that short memory, he does have some specific recall of tournaments long ago. One of them was eight years ago in the Chicago area. It was his rookie season on the PGA Tour. He made an eagle on the 18th hole at the TPC

Boston just to advance to the third round at No. 67. Then, he was paired with Tiger Woods in the final round at Cog Hill. "I remember being really, really nervous on the first tee, which I'm generally not a nervous person, but that was a new thing for me," he said.

He also remembers having an eagle putt on the ninth hole, with Woods well to the right off the tee and then stuck behind a tree. Woods hit a 9-iron out of trouble and ended up making birdie, and he went on to win by eight shots. But that was a big day for Leishman. He tied for second and advanced to the Tour Championship for the first time, leading to his first appearance in the Masters. That's no longer an issue. Leishman now is No. 7 in the FedEx Cup and simply trying to win to get into the top five heading to the Tour Championship. — AP

## AUSTRALIA AND FRANCE LEAD 2-1 IN SEMIFINALS

**LILLE:** Two-time Grand Slam champions Nicolas Mahut and Pierre-Hugues Herbert beat Filip Krajinovic and Nenad Zimonjic 6-1, 6-2, 7-6 (3) for France to lead Serbia 2-1 in the Davis Cup semifinals yesterday.

Apart from a scare in the third set when the Serb pair won four games in a row, Mahut and Herbert were in control on the indoor clay court and put France one win away from its 18th Davis Cup final.

In the other semifinal in Brussels, Australia also needs just one more point to reach the final for the first time since it won the title in 2003 after John Peers and Jordan Thompson breezed past Arthur de Greef and Ruben Bemelmans of Belgium 6-3, 6-4, 6-0.

"It was surprising. Davis Cup doubles you usually see marathon five-setters," Thompson said. A highly anticipated contest between Belgium's David Goffin and Nick Kyrgios could become the climax of today's reverse singles in the Belgian capital.

In the northern city of Lille, the French were flawless on their service games until 5-2 in the third set when Herbert was broken after he hit a double fault. The Serbian duo broke again

following two beautiful winners from Krajinovic - a perfect lob and passing shot - but the French proved stronger in the tiebreaker. "We are super happy and very proud," said Herbert, who won Wimbledon and the US Open with Mahut. "It's never easy to serve for the match, I felt weaker at the worst time." Mahut, who has been hampered by a calf injury in recent weeks, thanked the medical staff for enabling him to play.

"They did not count their hours to put me back on my feet," he said. "This victory is also theirs." Friday's singles were played outdoors but organizers decided to close the roof at Pierre Mauroy Stadium because of forecasts of bad weather.

In the absence of Novak Djokovic, Viktor Troicki, and Janko Tipsarevic, Serbia was given little chance against the French, but Dusan Lajovic gave Serbia a 1-0 lead on Friday before Jo-Wilfried Tsonga won the second singles. In today's first reverse singles, Tsonga can clinch the tie for France with victory over Lajovic. If he fails, the tie will be decided in the final singles between Lucas Pouille and Serb debutant Laslo Djere. — AP



**BRUSSELS:** Australia's John Peers, right, and Jordan Thompson return the ball during a Davis Cup World Group semi-final doubles tennis match against Belgium in Brussels, yesterday. — AP

## RUSSIA DOPING TENSION MARKS FINAL DAY OF IOC MEETINGS

**LIMA:** The raw feelings created by the Russian doping scandal spilled onto the floor and into the hallways of the International Olympic Committee meetings Friday, with less than five months until the Winter Games and still no decisions made about the fate of the country's athletes.

IOC members received updates on two investigations that will eventually determine Russia's status: One on whether there was a state-sponsored doping program in the country, the other on the individual cases of athletes who were implicated in the scandal at the Sochi Games in 2014.

The leaders of both investigations, which are using information from an earlier inquiry by Richard McLaren, urged patience and insisted they are working as fast as they can. Still, a handful of IOC members made clear they're worried about the timing. "A lot of progress has been made, but we're not there yet," said Camiel Eurlings, an IOC member from the Netherlands. "I understand it takes a lot of time, but we can-

not have this discussion just before the Pyeongchang Games. It must be clear months before."

In another report, IOC member Craig Reddie, who heads the World Anti-Doping Agency, said progress is being made toward reinstating Russia's suspended anti-doping agency. Russian IOC member Alexander Zhukov was encouraged. He reiterated what he told The Associated Press this week - he expects Russia to field a team in Pyeongchang: Asked if a state-sponsored doping program existed in Russia, his answer was simply: "no."

Russia's unwillingness to acknowledge the state-sponsored program is a problem, as it is a requirement for re-entry into the sports world on many fronts - notably its anti-doping agency, track team and Paralympic team. IOC President Thomas Bach called it "only a small part" of the equation.

### STATE-SPONSORED DOPING PROGRAM

"It can be symbolic," he said. "But an

admission alone cannot help you forget what's happened in the past." Urged by Bach, the IOC refused to ban the entire Russian team from the Rio Games and instead sent the individual cases to the international sports federations, which had only a matter of days to determine the status of hundreds of athletes. More than 280 Russians participated, and given evidence of the state-sponsored, systemic doping program in the country, there were howls of protest across the globe. Not wanting to see a repeat, a group of 17 anti-doping leaders released a statement Thursday calling for a complete ban of the Russian Olympic Committee from Pyeongchang. That irritated some IOC members, especially Reddie, who took time in his presentation to assail the leaders.

"The comments made ... omit entirely all the work that's been done to develop proper anti-doping systems in Russia," Reddie said. "It looks backward instead of looking forward. I want to make it quite clear that most of what they say in their press release is not poli-

cy, and is not helpful." One of the authors of that release, Travis Tygart of the US Anti-Doping Agency, responded in an email to the AP: "Yeah, clearly, the truth can strike a reaction, but to be clear, the only thing unhelpful is the lack of decisive action in fully protecting clean athletes' rights."

Denis Oswald, the IOC member looking into the individual cases, said his committee has been "working hard since Day 1." "But when you have a pile of documents like this," he said, while holding his hands several feet apart, "and you have (so) many cases involved, it takes time. You have to respect the procedure. You can't just say they were in Sochi and they are Russian and they probably were doped."

The McLaren Report said the doping scheme involved 1,000 athletes covering 30 sports, both winter and summer.

Oswald spelled out a clearly defined ranking of the importance of the cases, starting with Russian athletes trying to compete in next year's Olympics. He said he hoped to have much of the work

completed by November, which would give the IOC and other governing bodies three months to sort out eligibility.

The other report - about whether state-sponsored doping exists, as shown in both McLaren's research and a previous investigation by IOC member Dick Pound - is also on track to be done before the Olympics, and Bach said it has to be. Because that looks at the entire operation and not the cases of individual athletes, it figures to be an even more difficult issue for the IOC to sort out.

The director of the IOC's medical and science department, Richard Budgett, explained some of the delays come down to simple math: For instance, he said it takes about three hours to examine each urine-sample bottle to determine whether tampering has occurred. Key to Russia's scheme at the Sochi Games was a plan in which officials opened bottles containing tainted urine, traded it with clean urine and resealed the bottles without anyone discovering they had been compromised. — AP

## AUSTRALIA ENGAGE LOCAL INDIAN SPINNER TO FOIL YADAV THREAT

**CHENNAI:** Australia skipper Steve Smith exuded confidence his team can dominate India's left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav in the one-day series beginning today after two days of facing a local bowler of similar action in the nets.

Yadav's 4-68 on test debut against Australia helped secure India's 2-1 series victory earlier this year but the tourists left no stone unturned in their preparation, roping in local left-arm wrist spinner KK Jiyas for some valuable practice.

"He's a good young talent," Smith said of Yadav, who will lead India's spin attack in absence of seniors Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja who have been rested from the first three encounters of the five-match ODI series.

"He can be difficult to pick at times so he's someone you've got to watch really closely. Hopefully we can put him under a

little bit of pressure early in his spell and try and take him for as many (runs) as we can.

"(Engaging Jiyas) is a chance to train against someone who bowls the same. There's not too many around the world so it's a little bit different and it's been good to get someone who bowls a bit of that."

While Yadav remains the worry for Australia, India are fretting over Shikhar Dhawan's replacement after the opener was released from the squad to be with his ailing wife. Home captain Virat Kohli hinted Ajinkya Rahane would partner Rohit Sharma at the top of the batting order. "I am not saying it's easy," Kohli told reporters at the MA Chidambaram Stadium. "Ajinkya Rahane plays in middle order in ODIs and tests and then he has opened in the ODIs as well." "Now we are backing Rahane at the top of the order so he knows his plans are clear." —Reuters

### CRICKET

## INDIA, AUSTRALIA RENEW HEATED RIVALRY IN SHORTER FORMATS

**CHENNAI:** India takes on Australia in the first of five ODI matches in Chennai today, with a three-match Twenty20 contest to follow, as rivalry resumes between the two cricket giants. India beat Australia 2-1 earlier this year in a controversial test series, played in such a hostile atmosphere that India skipper Virat Kohli said at the end he didn't consider Australian cricketers as his "friends" any longer.

That's not worrying Australia. "I am not too concerned about my differences with Kohli. He is obviously a very good player and he has got a phenomenal ODI record," Australia captain Steve Smith said on arriving in Chennai earlier this week. "Hopefully we can keep him quiet as much as possible, and if we do that, it can go a long way in having some success on this tour."

Kohli faltered in the Test series - 46 runs in five innings, his poorest return from a Test series on home soil - and has a point to prove against Australia. "You can keep talking the whole time, but if you don't deliver on the field, it doesn't matter," Kohli said yesterday, adding that "mind games" wouldn't distract him.

Kohli has recovered his form and India returned from an emphatic tour of Sri Lanka, where it beat the hosts across all three formats. India won the ODI series by a 5-0 margin, despite resting key bowlers. While pacers Umesh Yadav and Mohammed Shami are back to face Australia, spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja continue to be rested.

In their absence, left-arm orthodox spinner Axar Patel, left-arm leg-spinner Kuldeep Yadav and leg-break bowler Yuzvendra Chahal have done the job well. They shared 14 wickets in five ODIs in Sri Lanka.

"It is a great advantage to have them in the squad," Kohli said. "They are different bowlers, yet are both wicket-taking bowlers." Yadav made his test debut against Australia in Dharamsala and took 4-91. The Australians are treating him as a serious threat, even recruiting the services of a left-arm leg-spinner from Kerala to practice in the nets leading up to this first ODI.

"It was a chance to train against someone that bowls the same," Smith said. "Hopefully we can put him (Yadav) under pressure early in his spell and try and take him for as many as we can." Australia has won two out of its last three full ODI series in India, in 2007-08 and in 2009-10, both by a 4-2 margin. The Australians recently drew the two Test series in Bangladesh 1-1. Aaron Finch will miss out owing to a calf injury. Peter Handscomb has been drafted into the squad as his replacement, but he will not reach Chennai in time for this first ODI. Travis Head is expected to open the innings with David Warner.

For India, Ajinkya Rahane is expected to partner up with Sharma, as first-choice partner Shikhar Dhawan was released from the ODI squad due to his wife's illness. Lokesh Rahul will continue to bat in the middle order, while Kohli can opt for Kedar Jadhav or Manish Pandey at No. 6. — AP



**CANBERRA:** Australia's Michael Hooper, left, breaks a tackle from Argentina's Matias Alemanno and Tomas Lezana, right, during their rugby union test match in Canberra, yesterday. —AP

### RUGBY

## AUSTRALIA RALLY TO DOWN PUMAS 45-20 IN CANBERRA

**CANBERRA:** Australia scored five second-half tries to rally to their first victory of this year's Rugby Championship with a 45-20 win over Argentina at a chilly Canberra Stadium yesterday. Fullback Israel Folau scored tries either side of halftime and Sekope Kepu, Will Genia, Nick Phipps and Jordan Uelese also crossed to secure a bonus point victory.

Flyhalf Bernard Foley converted all six tries and kicked a penalty to help the Wallabies back to winning ways after they lost twice to the All Blacks and drew with the Springboks in their first three matches of the competition.

Argentina led 13-10 at halftime after bullying their hosts in the back-row contest but a first half try from Martin Landajo and a brilliant late consolation from Matias Moroni were not enough for a first win in Australia since 1983.

Michael Cheika was delighted with the improvement after the break, even more so because it was inspired by the players themselves rather than a halftime talk from the Wallabies coach. "I didn't say too much, they said it all, they knew what was going on," Cheika said. "They didn't hide from the lack of urgency and intensity and the need to pick it up."

"We know we let ourselves down in the first half." The Pumas head back to Argentina for their final two matches still searching for their first win of the Rugby Championship with only one victory, over Georgia, in seven matches this year. "We didn't have a good second half, we were too passive on defence," said coach Daniel Hourcade. "When we had the chance to score, we didn't and that was the match."

### FIRST TRY

Australia opened the scoring through Foley's penalty but Argentina were dominating possession and Nicolas Sanchez levelled the scores in the 15th minute after the Pumas pack had rolled a maul deep into the home 22.

The Pumas butchered an opportunity to score the first try in the 20th minute when Sanchez's pass to Emiliano Boffelli went forward but scrumhalf Landajo made no mistake four minutes later when he spun over the line from a ruck. The visitors continued to make sure the game was being played in the Australian half and it was not until the half-hour mark that the Wallabies broke out to again square the contest.

Foley was twice involved in the sweeping move that sent Folau over in the corner, but the Pumas quickly resumed their territorial stranglehold and Sanchez slotted a second penalty to send his side into halftime with a slim lead.

Australia came out firing at the start of the second half and prop Kepu burrowed over the line from close range for a converted try to put them ahead 17-13 after 50 minutes. The

Wallabies were now playing more direct rugby up front and got their reward with a second try three minutes later when a lofted Will Genia pass gave Folau the space to cross again.

As the temperature plunged towards zero degrees Celsius, Australia just about weathered a period of intense Argentine pressure before the floodgates opened in the final 10 minutes

after Pumas replacement Enrique Pieretto had been sin-binned.

Scrumhalf Genia cut through the defence to score in the 72nd minute, a searing touchline run and offload from number eight Sean McMahon gifted replacement Phipps his try and rookie hooker Uelese barged over for his maiden test try after the hooter. —Reuters

## RUTHLESS ALL BLACKS THRASH SOUTH AFRICA

**AUCKLAND:** Winger Nehe Milner-Skudder scored two of the All Blacks' eight tries as they destroyed South Africa 57-0 at North Harbour Stadium yesterday to post a record points margin against the Springboks.

The All Blacks were ruthless in their execution of their opportunities to post 50 points for the second successive test against their traditional foes, with their 57-15 win last year in Durban the previous largest margin.

Rieko loane, Milner-Skudder, Brodie Retallick and Scott Barrett all crossed in the first half to give the All Blacks a 31-0 lead at the break, before the right winger, Ofa Tu'ungafasi Lima Sopoaga and Codie Taylor all scored in the second half.

Despite the scoreline, the Springboks created numerous opportunities themselves with their running lines, interplay and kicks into space but were unable to finish off as the All Blacks defence was superb.

The All Blacks were ruthless in identifying space and taking their opportunities

throughout the game and had sealed the win by halftime. They scored three long range tries with loane, Milner-Skudder and Retallick all crossing after the world champions identified space behind the defensive line.

Replacement Scott Barrett also crossed after his older brother Beauden cross-kicked for Dane Coles to knock the ball down to the 23-year-old, who was on the field as Liam Squire underwent a head injury assessment. Milner-Skudder grabbed his second try in the 53rd minute and two coaches then emptied the benches, with Tu'ungafasi scoring his first test try 10 minutes later.

The All Blacks dominated the final 20 minutes with the Springboks defending for much of it and it was testament to their grit they only conceded the tries to Sopoaga in the 73rd minute and Taylor after the fulltime hooter.

The Springboks next face Australia in Bloemfontein on Oct. 1, while the All Blacks play Argentina in Buenos Aires. —Reuters



**AUCKLAND:** New Zealand's winger Rieko loane scores a try against South Africa during their Rugby Championship match in Auckland, New Zealand, yesterday. The All Blacks defeated the Springboks 57-0. — AP



**CHENNAI:** Australian cricketer Travis Head bowls during a training session, ahead of the India-Australia cricket series, in Chennai yesterday. India and Australia will play five ODIs and three Twenty20 matches during the tour lasting nearly a month, starting today. — AFP

NHL

# CAPITALS' OVECHKIN SAYS OLYMPIC DECISION OUT OF HIS HANDS

**WASHINGTON:** Alex Ovechkin released a statement through the Washington Capitals acknowledging that the ability to represent Russia in the 2018 Olympics has been taken out of his hands. On the eve of the first day of on-ice training camp workouts, Ovechkin said in the statement that while he loves playing for his country, it won't happen because the International Ice Hockey Federation has assured the NHL that players under contract won't be able to play in South Korea. The NHL announced in April it wouldn't be sending players to the Games for the first time since 1994.

"I said every time I was asked since last Olympics that nobody is going to

tell me I can't play because my country was going to be allowed to ask me," Ovechkin said. "Now the IIHF and NHL say my country is not allowed to ask anybody in the NHL to play and there is nothing to talk about anymore."

The Athletic first reported the IIHF's assurances to the league last week. Ovechkin is set to address reporters after his first official camp practice Friday. Ovechkin began saying a year ago that he was going to the Olympics no matter what. NHL players had participated in the past five Olympics, and Ovechkin played for Russia in the past three. Russia has a long history of using its top players in the Olympics, well before the NHL began participating in

Nagano in 1998. The Soviet Union, and then the Unified Team, won eight of 10 Olympic gold medals from 1956-1992.

"I wanted to make this statement so that my words are clear and nobody misunderstands what I am saying," Ovechkin said. "The Olympics are in my blood and everybody knows how much I love my country. Ever since I was a kid and all the time I have played in the NHL, NHL players have played in the Olympic Games. We never have to make choice between our team and our country my whole career. I love the Capitals and my teammates here as much as I love my country and I know all the other NHL players feel the same for their teams. We should not have to

be in position to make this choice."

In the statement, Ovechkin thanked owner Ted Leonsis for his support. Leonsis had gone on record saying he'd allow Ovechkin and other top players to go to the Olympics if they wanted to, even if it meant missing Capitals games.

That won't happen now. "Our countries are now not allowed to ask us to play in the Olympics," the six-time NHL goals leader said. "Me, my teammates and all players who want to go all lose. So do all the fans of hockey with this decision that we are not allowed to be invited. NHL players in the Olympics is good for hockey and good for Olympics. It sucks that will we not be there to play!"

Ovechkin, who turns 32 next week, had 33 goals and 36 assists in 82 regular-season games last season and added five goals and three assists in 13 playoff games. In 12 NHL seasons, all with the Capitals, he has 558 goals and 477 goals in 921 regular-season games and 46 goals and 44 assists in 97 playoff games.

"My focus as it always is this time of year is on my other dream as a kid, to try to win the Stanley Cup," Ovechkin wrote. "I am excited training camp has started in Washington and the time for talking is done. We just have to go out and do it and I will try my hardest to help my teammates win like I do every year since I came to the NHL." — AP



**ST PETERSBURG:** Dustin Pedroia #15 of the Boston Red Sox looks up at home plate umpire Laz Diaz #63 as he slides home ahead of catcher Jesus Sucre #45 of the Tampa Bay Rays to score off of an RBI single by Mitch Moreland during the 15th inning of a game on Friday at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, Florida. —AFP

BASEBALL

# ROYALS BEAT INDIANS TO HALT CLEVELAND'S RECORD STREAK

**CLEVELAND:** The Cleveland Indians can return to clinching their division and playoff preparations. Their historic winning streak is, well, history. Cleveland's AL-record run was stopped at 22 straight games by Friday night's 4-3 loss to the Kansas City Royals, who became the first team to conquer the defending league champions since Aug. 23. Jason Vargas (16-10) pitched into the sixth and Brandon Moss homered off Trevor Bauer (16-9) as the Royals ended baseball's longest win streak in 101 years. With one last chance in the ninth, the Indians put the tying run on base before Mike Minor struck out the side for his first pro save, fanning Francisco Lindor on a pitch in the dirt for the final out.

**DODGERS 7, NATIONALS 0**

Alex Wood struck out eight in six innings, Corey Seager hit a three-run homer during a five-run second and the Dodgers won on the road. Wood (15-3) allowed three hits and walked one. Los Angeles has won three in a row after losing 11 consecutive games and 16 of 17. The teams entered the highly anticipated three-game series having clinched playoff berths and owning the top two records in the National League. The Dodgers lowered their magic number to clinch the NL West to six. Justin Turner and Yasiel Puig homered in the Dodgers' first Washington appearance since winning Game 5 of the NL Division Series last October. Edwin Jackson (5-6) lasted just 2 1/3 innings. The NL East champion Nationals fell six games back of

Los Angeles in the chase for home-field advantage in the playoffs.

**BREWERS 10, MARLINS 2**

Neil Walker hit a grand slam during an eight-run eighth inning, and the Brewers beat the Marlins in the opening game of a series relocated from Miami to Milwaukee because of the aftermath of Hurricane Irma. The Marlins were technically the home team and batted in the bottom of the innings. Milwaukee even used palm trees, fake flamingos and giant blue and pink sea shells to give Miller Park a South Florida feel. Miami's Dee Gordon went hitless in four at-bats to end his 17-game hitting streak. Brian Ellington (0-1) got the loss. Jared Hughes (4-3) picked up the win after tossing a scoreless seventh inning.

**RED SOX 13, RAYS 6, 15 INNINGS**

Xander Bogaerts had two hits in Boston's seven-run 15th inning and the Red Sox beat Tampa Bay in a game that lasted 6 hours, 5 minutes. Austin Pruitt (7-5) walked Jackie Bradley Jr. to lead off the top of the 15th. Bogaerts followed with a single. Dustin Pedroia hit a ground ball that was misplayed by second baseman Brad Miller, allowing Bradley to score the lead run. Andrew Benintendi, Mitch Moreland, Deven Marraro and Bogaerts drove in extra runs for the Red Sox, who maintained their three-game lead over the New York Yankees in the AL East. Brandon Workman (1-1) got the

win. Blaine Boyer, the 21st pitcher to appear in the game, pitched the 15th for Boston. Nine Red Sox pitchers set a club record with 24 strikeouts.

**CUBS 8, CARDINALS 2**

Kris Bryant had three hits, including his 27th homer, and the Cubs opened a big weekend series with their fourth consecutive win. Bryant went deep in the fourth and singled twice in Chicago's seven-run sixth. The NL Central-leading Cubs stayed three games ahead of Milwaukee and increased their advantage over St. Louis to four games. Chicago pitcher John Lackey and catcher Willson Contreras were thrown out for yelling at plate umpire Jordan Baker in the fifth. Carl Edwards Jr. (4-4) pitched a perfect sixth for the win. Tommy Pham homered for St. Louis. Carlos Martinez (11-11) was charged with seven runs and six hits in 5 1/3 innings.

**YANKEES 8, ORIOLES 2**

Didi Gregorius hit a tiebreaking two-run homer and drove in four runs, leading the Yankees to their fifth win in six games. Luis Severino (13-6) allowed three hits in eight innings. He made one big mistake, Welington Castillo's opposite-field, two-run homer to right that put the Orioles ahead 2-1 in the second. Severino is 8-2 with a 2.09 ERA in 12 starts since the All-Star break. Gregorius hit a sacrifice fly in the first, homered against Miguel Castro for a 4-2 lead in the fifth and added another sacrifice fly in a three-run seventh. Baltimore lost for the eighth time in nine games. Gabriel Ynoa (1-2) allowed three runs - two earned - and five hits in 4 1/3 innings.

**ASTROS 5, MARINERS 2**

Carlos Correa and Evan Gattis had two hits apiece and each drove in a run, and the Astros moved closer to clinching the AL West title. Houston's magic number dropped to two, meaning the Astros could secure their first division championship since 2001 with a win today if the Angels lose today. The Astros led 3-0 after one inning as James Paxton (12-4) struggled in his return from the disabled list after sitting out since Aug. 10 with a strained pectoral muscle. He allowed three runs in 1 1/3 innings to snap a seven-game winning streak. Charlie Morton (12-7) pitched six strong innings for Houston. Ken Giles tossed a scoreless ninth for his 31st save.

**DIAMONDBACKS 3, GIANTS 2**

Robbie Ray won his fifth straight start

and A.J. Pollock hit a two-run double as Arizona beat San Francisco. Ray (14-5) struck out 10 and gave up two runs (one earned), six hits and no walks as the Diamondbacks won for the 19th time in 24 games and for the eighth straight time on the road. The Diamondbacks trailed 2-1 when Pollock doubled in two runs off Jeff Samardzija (9-14) in the seventh inning. Arizona reduced its magic number for clinching its first post-season berth since 2011 to seven.

**BLUE JAYS 4, TWINS 3**

Josh Donaldson homered and drove in the go-ahead run in the seventh inning with an infield single that ricocheted off the mound, sending Toronto to the win. J.A. Happ (9-10) pitched into the seventh inning in his third straight win, and Roberto Osuna got three outs for his 36th save in 46 opportunities. The Twins had a three-game lead over the Los Angeles Angels for the second AL wild card going into the night, with the Seattle Mariners 3 1/2 games back. The New York Yankees hold the first wild card with a four-game edge on the Twins. Twins starter Bartolo Colon (6-13) was charged with four runs in six-plus innings on "Big Sexy Night." The Twins had souvenir T-shirts for fans who bought a special ticket package in honor of the burly right-hander, who joined the Twins two months ago and has more than held his own despite his decreased velocity.

**ANGELS 7, RANGERS 6**

C.J. Cron hit a two-run homer to cap the a five-run rally in the sixth inning, and Los Angeles trimmed its deficit in the AL wild-card race to two games. Andrelton Simmons had two run-scoring singles for the Angels (75-72), who gained a game on the Minnesota Twins (77-70) with just their third win in eight games. Los Angeles used seven pitchers in a bullpen start, with former closer Bud Norris getting the first six outs. Yusmeiro Petit (5-0) pitched two perfect innings, and Blake Parker earned a six-out save. Shin-Soo Choo hit a two-run homer in the sixth for Texas (72-75). The Rangers have lost four straight and six of seven, their playoff hopes down to a flicker. Yohander Mendez (0-1) took the loss.

**ROCKIES 6, PADRES 1**

Tyler Chatwood pitched into the sixth inning and drove in his first runs of the season, helping the Rockies to the victory. Nolan Arenado homered as Colorado remained 2 1/2 games ahead of Milwaukee and moved 3 1/2 games ahead of St. Louis

for the second NL wild card. Chatwood (8-12) tossed 5 2/3 innings and left after Wil Myers' 28th homer. It was Chatwood's third start after six relief appearances. San Diego's Clayton Richard (7-14) allowed four runs and seven hits in six innings.

**REDS 4, PIRATES 2**

Zack Cozart hit two of Cincinnati's four solo home runs, powering the last-place Reds to the victory. Joey Votto and Scott Schebler also connected, sending the Pirates to their third straight loss and eighth in the last nine games. Homer Bailey (5-8) allowed one run in 5 2/3 innings for his first win in six starts since Aug. 11. Raisel Iglesias got five outs for his 27th save. Chad Kuhl (7-11) gave up all four home runs, a single-game career high for the second-year right-hander.

**ATHLETICS 4, PHILLIES 0**

Daniel Mengden pitched a two-hitter for Oakland, and Matt Olson and Matt Joyce each hit a two-run homer. Mengden (1-1) struck out seven and walked none in his first career shutout in his 18th start. J.P. Crawford had both hits off Mengden. Phillies starter Mark Leiter Jr. (3-6) allowed four runs and seven hits in six innings. Mengden also got his first career hit, a single off Crawford's glove in the shortstop hole before Joyce connected in the second.

**TIGERS 3, WHITE SOX 2**

Mikie Mahtook hit a game-ending RBI single with two outs in the ninth inning, helping Detroit stop a six-game skid. Former Tigers reliever Al Alburquerque (0-2) walked Jeimer Candelario with one out in the ninth, and Aaron Bummer walked Tyler Collins with two outs. White Sox manager Rick Renteria brought in Juan Minaya, who uncorked a wild pitch to move the runners to second and third. Mahtook then hit a 3-2 pitch up the middle for his first career game-ending hit. Shane Greene (4-3) got four outs for the win.

**BRAVES 3, METS 2**

Sean Newcomb struck out eight in 5 1/3 innings, and the Braves handed the Mets their fifth straight loss. Newcomb (3-8) gave up two runs and six hits. Arodis Vizcaino pitched the ninth for his 11th save in 13 opportunities. Rafael Montero (5-10) became the fourth straight Mets starter pitcher to fail to complete five innings. He was lifted with two outs in the fifth after throwing 108 pitches and allowing three runs and seven hits. — AP

MLB Results/Standings

Arizona 3, San Francisco 2; Colorado 6, San Diego 1; Houston 5, Seattle 2; Toronto 4, Minnesota 3; Milwaukee 10, Miami 2; Atlanta 3, NY Mets 2; Cincinnati 4, Pittsburgh 2; Boston 13, Tampa Bay 6 (15 innings); Detroit 3, Chicago White Sox 2; Kansas City 4, Cleveland 3; NY Yankees 8, Baltimore 2; LA Dodgers 7, Washington 0; Oakland 4, Philadelphia 0; Chicago Cubs 8, St. Louis 2.

| American League Eastern Division |    |    |      | National League Eastern Division |               |    |    |      |
|----------------------------------|----|----|------|----------------------------------|---------------|----|----|------|
|                                  | W  | L  | PCT  | GB                               |               |    |    |      |
| Boston                           | 84 | 63 | .571 | -                                | Washington    | 89 | 58 | .605 |
| NY Yankees                       | 81 | 66 | .551 | 3                                | Miami         | 68 | 79 | .463 |
| Tampa Bay                        | 72 | 76 | .486 | 12.5                             | Atlanta       | 67 | 79 | .459 |
| Baltimore                        | 72 | 76 | .486 | 12.5                             | NY Mets       | 63 | 84 | .429 |
| Toronto                          | 69 | 79 | .466 | 15.5                             | Philadelphia  | 57 | 90 | .388 |
| Central Division                 |    |    |      | Central Division                 |               |    |    |      |
| Cleveland                        | 91 | 57 | .615 | -                                | Chicago Cubs  | 81 | 66 | .551 |
| Minnesota                        | 77 | 70 | .524 | 13.5                             | Milwaukee     | 78 | 69 | .531 |
| Kansas City                      | 73 | 74 | .497 | 17.5                             | St. Louis     | 77 | 70 | .524 |
| Detroit                          | 61 | 86 | .415 | 29.5                             | Pittsburgh    | 68 | 80 | .459 |
| Chicago White Sox                | 59 | 88 | .401 | 31.5                             | Cincinnati    | 64 | 84 | .432 |
| Western Division                 |    |    |      | Western Division                 |               |    |    |      |
| Houston                          | 89 | 58 | .605 | -                                | LA Dodgers    | 95 | 52 | .646 |
| LA Angels                        | 75 | 72 | .510 | 14                               | Arizona       | 86 | 62 | .581 |
| Seattle                          | 74 | 74 | .500 | 15.5                             | Colorado      | 81 | 67 | .547 |
| Texas                            | 72 | 75 | .490 | 17                               | San Diego     | 65 | 82 | .442 |
| Oakland                          | 65 | 82 | .442 | 24                               | San Francisco | 57 | 92 | .383 |

## LEICESTER'S VARDY EARNS 1-1 DRAW AT HUDDERSFIELD



**HUDDERSFIELD TOWN:** Leicester City striker Jamie Vardy's second-half equaliser earned the visitors a 1-1 draw at a dominant Huddersfield Town in the Premier League yesterday. David Wagner's hosts squandered early opportunities from precise crosses before striker Laurent Depoitre marked his first league start this season with a goal straight after the break.

Leicester equalised four minutes later, with England forward Vardy converting a penalty after Chris Loew brought down midfielder Andy King at the John Smith's Stadium. Craig Shakespeare's visitors came closest to picking up all three points but Vardy somehow managed to miss an open

goal following a counter-attack led by winger Riyad Mahrez.

Huddersfield maintained their unbeaten run at home this season, with Wagner particularly impressed by his side's quick recovery from their loss to West Ham United on Monday. "We got the response I wanted from the West Ham game in terms of the performance... the team showed great attitude," the German said.

"I was very pleased with the three players who made their first starts. We scored a great goal, but gave possession away too quickly afterwards and Leicester punished our mistake." Shakespeare chose to look at the positives and praised Leicester for their fighting spirit after suffering three defeats in their first four league games.

"We have played better this season and got nothing, but that can happen. We were second best first half, but we showed character to get something. A point can here can still take us forward," he said. "We created chances second half and dug in while despite being a little off the pace." — Reuters



**MUNICH:** Mainz's German defender Stefan Bell and Bayern Munich's French midfielder Franck Ribery vie for the ball during the German First division Bundesliga football match FC Bayern Munich v Mainz 05 in Munich, southern Germany, yesterday. — AFP

**SOCCER**

## BAYERN ROUTS MAINZ TO START OKTOBERFEST CELEBRATIONS

**BERLIN:** Bayern Munich shrugged off a couple of lackluster performances to start its traditional Oktoberfest celebrations with a 4-0 rout of Mainz in the Bundesliga yesterday.

Robert Lewandowski marked his 100th league appearance for Bayern with his 81st and 82nd goals, which came on the first day of the 184th beer festival. Bayern players traditionally go on an annual team visit to Oktoberfest, which ends Oct 3. On the field, Bayern needed to show a reaction - after last weekend's loss at Hoffenheim and an uninspired Champions League opener against 10-man Anderlecht on Tuesday - and the home side wasted little time in breaking the visitors' resistance.

Mainz, the last side to beat Bayern at home in March 2016, at no stage looked like doing it again. "We were never 100 percent satisfied the last few weeks. It was obvious there was room for improvement, and today we had a game where we performed better on the pitch, perhaps a bit more like a team," said Thomas Mueller, who claimed his first goal of the season after 10 minutes, though Arjen Robben provided a decisive deflection.

Goalkeeper Rene Adler made two good saves in succession to deny Robben and then Arturo Vidal from the rebound, and Kingsley Coman missed an open goal by striking the crossbar, but it was only a matter of time before the lead grew. Robben scored minutes later, a rare goal with his right foot after Joshua Kimmich sent him through. The Dutch winger ran to the sideline to celebrate with substitute Franck Ribery, suggesting Tuesday's frustration was over. Ribery had thrown his jersey at the dugout after he was taken off against Anderlecht, and Robben had sharply criticized the team's performance. Five minutes into the second half, Lewandowski slid in to meet Mueller's cross. The Polish striker wasn't satisfied with that, claiming his second of the day with a brilliant header inside the far post with just over 10 minutes remaining.

"We want to keep going," Mueller said. "It won't do us any good to keep the agitation

going, but especially in the busy weeks we have to concentrate on football ... Today was a start."

**BIZARRE OWN-GOAL**

Leon Goretzka scored late to give Schalke a 2-1 win at Werder Bremen.

Lamine Sane rewarded Bremen's early endeavor with the opening goal in the 20th minute, only for the good work to be undone almost immediately when Milos Veljkovic scored a bizarre own-goal. Both Veljkovic and Sane wanted to clear the ball - Sane with a bicycle kick and Veljkovic with his head. Instead Sane kicked his teammate in the head and the ball ended in their own net.

Goretzka got the winner with seven minutes remaining after a corner for Schalke to claim its

third win from four games.

**SUPER SUB STRIKES**

Substitute Caiuby's stunning strike gave Augsburg a 2-1 win at Eintracht Frankfurt. The Brazilian midfielder was only on the pitch for eight minutes when he looked up and let fly from almost 30 meters (yards) to crash the ball in off the underside of the crossbar. Luka Jovic pulled one back but it wasn't enough for the home side despite a frenetic finale. Promoted Stuttgart defeated Wolfsburg 1-0 in a game overshadowed by Christian Gentner's injury. The Stuttgart captain was struck in the head by Wolfsburg goalkeeper Koen Casteels' knee when he emerged to claim the ball. Gentner was taken off on a stretcher. — AP

## INTER MILAN LEAVES IT LATE TO BEAT CROTONE AND STAY PERFECT

**CROTONE:** Inter Milan stayed perfect in Serie A with a hard-fought 2-0 win at Crotone, which remained yesterday the only team yet to score a goal in the league. Inter won its previous three matches comfortably but found it harder than expected at Crotone until eight minutes from time when defender Milan Skriniar broke the deadlock.

Ivan Perisic sealed the result in stoppage time. Opportunities were few and far between at Stadio Scida and it was Crotone which had the best chances, with Inter goalkeeper Samir Handanovic pulling off two fine second-half saves to deny Aleksandar Tonev and Marcus Rohden.

However, Inter took the lead when a free kick ricocheted around the area before Skriniar bundled in the ball with his third attempt for his first Serie A goal. Perisic was left unmarked to gather Joao Mario's pass, cut inside, and fire into the bottom right corner.

Later, Roma welcomes newly promoted Hellas Verona.

**LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON**

Federico Chiesa scored a goal his father would have been proud of to set Fiorentina on its way to beating Bologna 2-1. Little of note happened before Chiesa - the son of prolific former goalscorer Enrico - cut inside the left of the area, beat a defender, and curled a fantastic strike into the far side of the net in the 51st minute.

However, Bologna was back level a minute later when Rodrigo Palacio finished off a rapid counterattack with a half-volley. German Pezzella scored what was to prove the winner in the 69th with a looping header from a corner. Palacio almost equalized but his header came off the left post. It was Fiorentina's second successive victory after losing its first two matches. — AP

**Live Matches on TV (Local Timings)**

| ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE          |       |                      |
|---------------------------------|-------|----------------------|
| Chelsea v Arsenal               | 15:30 | beIN SPORTS HD 2     |
| Manchester United v Everton     | 18:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 11 EN |
| SPANISH LEAGUE PRIMERA          |       |                      |
| Deportivo Alaves v Villarreal   | 13:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 3     |
| Girona v Sevilla                | 17:15 | beIN SPORTS HD 3     |
| Las Palmas v Athletic de Bilbao | 19:30 | beIN SPORTS HD 3     |
| Real Sociedad v Real Madrid     | 21:45 | beIN SPORTS HD 3     |
| ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE           |       |                      |
| Sassuolo Calcio v Juventus      | 13:30 | beIN SPORTS HD 4     |
| Milan v Udinese Calcio          | 16:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 4     |
| Napoli v Benevento              | 16:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 9     |
| Torino v Sampdoria              | 16:00 | beIN SPORTS          |
| spal v Cagliari Calcio          | 16:00 | beIN SPORTS          |
| Chievo Verona v Atalanta        | 19:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 4     |
| Genoa v Lazio                   | 21:45 | beIN SPORTS HD 4     |
| GERMAN LEAGUE                   |       |                      |
| Hoffenheim v Hertha Berlin      | 14:30 | beIN SPORTS HD 5     |
| Leverkusen v Freiburg           | 16:30 | beIN SPORTS HD 5     |
| Borussia Dortmund v Koln        | 19:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 5     |
| FRENCH LEAGUE                   |       |                      |
| Amiens v Marseille              | 16:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 6     |
| Stade Rennais v Nice            | 18:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 7     |
| Angers v Metz                   | 18:00 | beIN SPORTS MAX 5 FR |
| Paris Saint-Germain v Lyon      | 22:00 | beIN SPORTS HD 6     |

## NO HODGSON EFFECT AS PALACE LOSE 1-0 AT HOME TO SAINTS



**SELHURST PARK:** Crystal Palace failed to benefit from the Roy Hodgson effect as Steven Davis's early goal and two saves by Fraser Forster helped Southampton beat the Premier League's bottom club 1-0 at Selhurst Park on Saturday.

Palace were playing for the first time under new manager Hodgson but were reeling in the sixth minute when Davis steered the ball into the bottom corner after home goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey beat out a low right cross from Dusan Tadic.

Palace are without a goal in their opening five league games, a Premier League record, but not for want of trying with Ruben Loftus-Cheek twice going close after half an hour and Forster also saving from Christian Benteke.

Hodgson took charge at Palace this week after Dutchman Frank de Boer was sacked following four defeats and no goals in his debut Premier League season and faces a tough challenge to rebuild confidence and turn the team's form around.

"I still believe in the long-term, these players will pick themselves up from where they have been knocked down to," he said. "It's going to be a long road and there might be some more pain before we see some light at the end of the tunnel."

Palace's long wait for a first league goal of the season could have ended 10 minutes after Saints went ahead through Davis when Benteke met Loftus-Cheek's low cross at the near post but Forster got his body in the way to make the save.

Palace's impressive midfielder Loftus-Cheek came close when he skimmed the outside of the post with a shot from the edge of the box then had an effort deflected for a corner. Two more chances went begging in a downpour early in the second half when another Loftus-Cheek centre flew across the face of goal before Forster saved from Jason Puncheon.

There were boos from the Palace crowd when Hodgson brought off Loftus-Cheek, his best player, for Bakary Sako with 15 minutes to go and the change did not work for his goal-shy team. Saints, who had last scored when they beat West Ham United 3-2 at home on Aug. 19, notched their second win to move up to provisional fifth spot on

eight points before the afternoon kickoffs, while Palace are rooted to the bottom of the table. "You have to fight for every single point. You could see today that Crystal Palace were good," said Southampton manager Mauricio Pellegrino.

"They created chances in the first half and pressed higher in the second but in general we controlled the game. We could have scored another goal but playing here is really difficult." — Reuters

# KUWAIT'S FOOTBALL SEASON KICKS OFF

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait football 2017-2018 season kicked off on Thursday with a match between Al-Tadhamon and Kazma sports clubs, which ended in a draw as they scored two goals each.

The first half saw the orange shirted Kazma draw first blood with a header from Lima only 10 minutes into the match, then four minutes later added a second goal with a header following a pass from Omar Hubaiter.

Meanwhile, the second half saw an improved performance by Al-Tadhamon which started to attack and got closer to Kazma's goal resulting in Farhan Saad and Hamed Ayedh score in the 9th and 42nd minutes to draw the match.

The season opener was officiated by Jassim Jaafar, assisted by Yaboub Al-Suhail and Abdallah Al-Hindal.

The second match had the league champion Kuwait FC square off against the fourth during the past season Salmiya Club. Kuwait FC trailed most of the match until Saeed Jumaa equalized seconds before the whistle, ending the match 2-2.

Meanwhile, on Friday two matches took place, the second of which was a true derby and was highly competitive and can be called Kuwait's classico! It was the match between Al-Qadissiya and Al-Arabi Sports Clubs, which ended yet in another 2-2 draw. The match saw large number of fans, as each team got out with one point at the



**Salmiya and Kuwait FC.**

start of the season.

Al-Arabi scored in the 17th minute by Mahmoud Al-Mardhi when Hussein Al-Mousawi sent a pass and he shot the ball from outside the box to the right of goal keeper Ahmad Al-Fadhly. Al-Qadissiya did not take long before equalizing on the 27th minute with a shot, also from outside the box by the Brazilian Tiago De Silva. The excitement continued to the last minute of the first half, with Ali Maqseed scoring Al-Arabi's second goal.

**LACK OF FITNESS**

As the second half started, Al-Qadissiya defender Musaed Nada scored the equalizer into the 3rd minute of the second quarter, as he followed a pass from Tiago.

Al-Arabi players seemed to suffer from lack of fitness but were able to maintain the draw, though they played with 10 players for over 15 minutes.

The match was officiated by referee Ammar Ashkanani, and assisted by Fares Al-



**Al-Qadissiya and Al-Arabi Sports Club in action.**

Shimari, Yousuf Al-Enezi and Dhaifallah Al-Fadhly. The match saw the second red card of the season when Al-Arabi's Nigerian player Clement was given a second yellow card for rough play.

Al-Jahra sports team was the only winner in the opening week as it beat Al-Nasser Sports Club 2-1. Faisal Zayed and Francisco Tores scored for Jahra while Mishal Fawaz scored the only goal for Al-Nasser.

Al-Nasser started well and had two shots at the goal in the first eight minutes, but it

was Al-Jahra that scored in the 26th minute by Faisal Zayed. As Al-Nasser players were pushing forward, Al-Jahra counter attacks were very dangerous and almost scored in the 35th minute.

Al-Nasser was able to equalize at the start of the second half by Mishal Fawaz. Jahra coach Boris Bojac made two substitutions who were able to score the winning goal. The match saw the first red card of the season as Abdallah Salama was kicked out of the match.

# Sports

Australia and France lead 2-1 in semifinals

12

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

Kuwait's football season kicks off

15



INDIA, AUSTRALIA RENEW HEATED RIVALRY IN SHORTER FORMATS

Page 13



WATFORD: Manchester City's Argentinian striker Sergio Aguero (2R) scores the team's first goal during the English Premier League football match between Watford and Manchester City at Vicarage Road Stadium in Watford, north of London yesterday.—AFP

## AGUERO GETS HAT-TRICK AS CITY GO TOP

|  |          |   |
|--|----------|---|
|  | Watford  | 0 |
|  | Man City | 6 |

LONDON: Sergio Aguero sent a reminder of his class with an "amazing" hat-trick as Manchester City climbed to the top of the Premier League

and sent an ominous warning to their title rivals with a 6-0 victory at Watford yesterday. Aguero's 10th hat-trick in City sky blue took his goal tally for the club to 175 - two fewer than all-time top scorer Eric Brook - but incredibly his future at the Etihad had been questioned following the emergence of 20-year-old Gabriel Jesus. The talented Brazilian, who joined the club in January leading many to doubt whether the two could both play in Pep Guardiola's fluid system. Jesus has scored 12 goals in 16 Premier League

games including one in the rout at Watford. However, the Argentine has six goals in as many games in all competitions this season, and has formed a lethal partnership with Jesus to catapult the red-hot blues to the Premier League summit. "Aguero's numbers speak for themselves - he is amazing," Guardiola told the BBC. "I am especially happy for his third goal because he was so clever and fast in the box and has the power to beat one or two players and score. I am so happy for him because we need him and his goals."

"It's important for us that both our strikers are scoring goals. When Gabriel came last season we cannot forget he had just seven or eight games because he was injured immediately. "We scored a lack of goals last season so we thought that maybe they should play together because Gabriel, when he came, was also striker. "He's a fighter and he helps us in many many ways. He has a goal scoring sense. Today, he fought for one goal and scored another one." City have 13 points from five games and this week beat title rivals Liverpool 5-0 and

Feyenoord 4-0 in the Champions League. Guardiola, however, was quick to call for calm after a similarly impressive start last season ended trophyless. "We started last season similarly winning 10 games in a row. We're still at the beginning of the season but we know exactly what we have to do. "This kind of performance, and the way we played, is completely down to the quality of the players. We can win at home, away - it doesn't matter where. We play football to attack and we did that today."—Reuters

## LIVERPOOL FRUSTRATED BY BATTLING BURNLEY

|  |           |   |
|--|-----------|---|
|  | Liverpool | 1 |
|  | Burnley   | 1 |

ANFIELD: The sight of Virgil van Dijk reappearing in Southampton colours on the same day that Liverpool suffered another defensive calamity hardly improved the mood of Anfield supporters starting to question manager Jurgen Klopp's methods.

The failure to buy the Dutch centre half or anyone else as an alternative remains a sore point on Merseyside where Liverpool's substandard defence was exposed for the third match running in a 1-1 Premier League draw with Burnley.

No one blamed Dejan Lovren yesterday because the Croatian, who was badly at fault in conceding Sevilla's Champions League equaliser on Wednesday, was injured, but his replacement fared little better.

Ragner Klavan, and partner Joel Matip, were criticised after failing to clear the ball and allowing Burnley to score. That left the home side facing an uphill struggle to secure the win demanded after last week's thrashing by Manchester City and the disappointing midweek draw.

Klopp did his best to put a positive spin on the result but it is again hard to look beyond the club's failure to solve their recurring problems in central defence. The manager said he was "angry with the result but pleased with the performance" after Liverpool failed to make their subsequent dominance pay.

"It's our fault. We were dominant, fantastic attitude. We played good, were fluent with seven

changes, but only one goal," added Klopp, who recalled that last season Burnley beat them 2-0 at Turf Moor.

"It's the best we have played against Burnley since I have been in. In the past we didn't feel good in the game. Today I saw fluid movements, passing between the lines, speed, crosses," added Klopp, whose side registered 35 efforts at goal to the Claret's five and enjoyed 70 percent of possession.

"We have to take the point and carry on." Klopp's midweek assertion that his scouts had been unconvinced after watching potential alternatives to their main target Van Dijk about "500 million times" attracted scorn on social media with some

fans complaining that the German was starting to sound like former manager Brendan Rodgers in his final days.

Even the sight of Philippe Coutinho starting his first game of the season hardly lifted the mood with Klopp's case probably not helped by a parade of former Liverpool greats before kickoff as the club marked their 125th anniversary, a celebration that only highlighted the current problems. Ultimately, Klopp will be measured against the achievements of the past, which is never far from Anfield. With the club already five points behind leaders Manchester City, it is starting to look like a long, hard winter for the German. - Reuters



ANFIELD: Burnley's Scott Arfield, centre and Liverpool's James Milner battle for the ball during the English Premier League soccer match between Liverpool and Burnley, at Anfield, in Liverpool, England, yesterday.— AP

## PAULINHO SAVES BARCA AGAINST PLUCKY GETAFE

MADRID: Barcelona snatched a late 2-1 win at Getafe with Paulinho's strike sending them seven points clear of arch-rivals Real Madrid at the top of La Liga yesterday.

The Brazilian midfielder's signing was widely criticised by supporters but he drove into the area and fired home to preserve Barcelona's 100 percent record in the league.

Gaku Shibasaki scored a magnificent volley to put Getafe ahead in the 39th minute but another substitute, Denis Suarez, equalised for Barcelona in the 62nd. Ernesto Valverde's side struggled to create many openings against a bold Getafe, who came close to opening the scoring when Gerard Pique nearly deflected Shibasaki's cross into his own net, with Jorge Molina reaching it but firing into the side netting.

Barcelona were dealt a blow when record signing Ousmane Dembele was forced off with a hamstring injury in the 29th minute, while his replacement Gerard Deulofeu had little impact. Samuel Umtiti's header straight at Vicente Guaita was as close as the Catalans came to netting in the first half, with the exception of a Lionel Messi free kick tipped over just before the break.

Suarez was introduced at half time, after captain Andres Iniesta had made little impact, and soon made his presence felt. Receiving the ball from Sergi Roberto in the area, Suarez curled a neat finish past Guaita to level, against the run of play.

Paulinho came on in the 77th minute and seven minutes later he slammed home to put Barcelona ahead and extend their lead at the top of the table. Getafe almost equalised with Marc-Andre ter Stegen tip-

ping Mauro Arambarri's effort wide at the near post, but they were left without reward after an impressive display. Champions Real Madrid, who are lying 10th, travel to second-placed Real Sociedad today.— Reuters



GETAFE: Barcelona's defender from Spain Jordi Alba (R) vies with Getafe's midfielder from Morocco Faycal Fajr (L) during the Spanish league football match Getafe CF vs FC Barcelona at the Col. Alfonso Perez stadium in Getafe yesterday.— AFP





Alghanim Lotus launches new Evora Sport 410 GP

## HIRING PICKED UP IN SIX US STATES LAST MONTH



NEW YORK: In this Aug 22, 2017 photo, a customer looks at shoes at a Foot Locker in New York. The Commerce Department reported on business stockpiles in July. — AP

# HARVEY SLAMS US RETAIL SALES, INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT

## HURRICANE DENTS ECONOMIC GROWTH IN Q3, IMPACTS LABOR MARKET

**WASHINGTON:** US retail sales unexpectedly fell in August and industrial output recorded its biggest drop since 2009 as Hurricane Harvey disrupted activity, suggesting the storm could dent economic growth in the third quarter. Harvey, which lashed Texas in the last week of August, also has impacted the labor market. Hurricane Irma, which struck Florida last weekend, also is likely to hurt the economy, though analysts expect a rebound in the fourth quarter.

"The early returns from Harvey are trickling in and the news is not good," said Joel Naroff, chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors in Holland, Pennsylvania. "Economists are likely marking down third-quarter growth and marking up the fourth quarter."

The Commerce Department said retail sales dropped 0.2 percent last month, the biggest decline in six months as motor vehicle sales tumbled 1.6 percent. Sales of building materials, electronics and appliances as well as clothing also fell. While noting that it could not isolate the impact of Harvey on retail sales, the department said it received indications from companies that the hurricane had "both positive and negative effects on their sales data while others indicated they were not impacted at all." Though Harvey likely depressed retail sales last month, data for July and June were revised down, suggesting a moderation in consumer spending after brisk growth in the second quarter.

Economists had forecast retail sales nudging up 0.1 percent in August. While last month's drop in motor vehicle sales was the largest in seven months, the replacement of flood-damaged vehicles, especially in the Houston area, is expected to deliver a boost.

Overall retail sales increased 3.2 percent in August on a year-on-year basis. Excluding automobiles, gasoline, building materials and food services, retail sales fell 0.2 percent last month after an unrevised 0.6 percent increase in July. These so-called core retail sales correspond most closely with the consumer spending component of gross domestic product.

Consumer spending, which accounts for more than two-thirds of US economic activity, increased at a 3.3 percent annualized rate in the second quarter. That boosted GDP growth to a 3.0 percent rate in the April-June period. US stocks inched up to record highs, while prices of US Treasuries slipped. The dollar fell against a basket of currencies.

### 'Walking wounded'

In a separate report on Friday, the Federal Reserve said industrial production declined 0.9 percent in August. That was the biggest drop since May 2009 and followed six straight monthly gains. The Fed attributed about 0.75 percentage point of the decline to storm effects that "temporarily curtailed drilling, servicing, and extraction activity for oil and natural gas."

Economists expect industrial output to decline further in September, with Irma likely weighing on utilities. "Food processing is also going to join the list of the walking wounded because South Florida grows and processes a lot of food," said Michael Montgomery, a US economist at IHS Markit in Lexington, Massachusetts. Other data from the New York Fed on Friday showed its index of factory activity in New York state remained at lofty levels in September amid strong orders growth, indicating that manufacturing remains on solid ground apart from the storm-related distortions.

The weak retail sales and industrial output reports prompted the Atlanta Fed to slash its third-quarter GDP estimate to a 2.2 percent rate from a 3.0 percent pace. The data, however, did little to change expectations that the Fed will announce a plan to start shrinking its \$4.2 trillion portfolio of Treasury bonds and mortgage-backed securities at its Sept. 19-20 policy meeting. The US central bank is expected to raise interest rates again only in December. It has increased borrowing costs twice this year.

Despite sluggish wage growth, even as the labor market nears full employment, the fundamentals for consumer spending are solid. In addition to the strong stock market, house prices have continued to rise. Last month, sales at building

material stores fell 0.5 percent after surging 0.9 percent in July. Clean-up and rebuilding in the aftermath of Harvey and Irma could buoy sales of building materials in September.

Receipts at service stations increased 2.5 percent in August, reflecting higher gasoline prices. Sales at electronics and appliance stores fell 0.7 percent and receipts at clothing stores dropped 1.0 percent after rising 0.5 percent in July.

Sales at online retailers declined 1.1 percent in August, the biggest drop since April 2014. That was likely payback following a 1.8 percent surge in July, which was driven by Amazon.com's Prime Day promotion. Receipts at restaurants and bars rose 0.3 percent and sales at sporting goods and hobby stores edged up 0.1 percent. Stockpiles

At the US same time, businesses increased their stockpiles in July, but at a slower pace than in June. Business inventories rose by a seasonally adjusted 0.2 percent in July, following June's gain of 0.5 percent, the Commerce Department said on Friday. The June increase in inventories was the most since a 0.9 percent gain in November of last year.

Sales rose 0.2 percent in July, matching the June gain. Economists expect that inventory growth will strengthen further in coming months and help support overall economic expansion.

Annual GDP growth improved to 3 percent in the second quarter of 2017. That follows a lackluster 1.2 percent expansion in the first quarter, which was slowed partly because inventories subtracted from overall economic activity. Economists believe businesses rebuilding their stockpiles could add as much as a half percentage point to overall economic growth in the current quarter.

When businesses increase stockpiles, it is generally seen as a sign of their confidence that sales will increase in the coming months. A decrease in inventories can be a sign of pessimism about future sales.

July inventory gains were led by a 0.6 percent increase in stockpiles at the wholesale level and a 0.2 percent uptick in the manufacturing sector. Those increases helped offset a 0.1 percent drop-off in retail inventories. — Agencies

## GULF BANK LEAD SPONSOR OF EUROMONEY KUWAIT 2017

### ALGHANIM TO BE A KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**KUWAIT:** Building on its commitment to supporting the economy and development of Kuwait, Gulf Bank is pleased to announce its lead sponsorship of Euromoney Kuwait Conference for the 7th consecutive year. The conference will be held on 26 September 2017 at the JW Marriott hotel, in partnership with the Ministry of Finance.

This year's conference will address the New Kuwait 2035 strategy, and the changes it will bring about to the Kuwait economy and the nation under the theme of 'New Kuwait - Financial Challenge or Financing Opportunity?' The main panel discussions are organized around four key themes: Kuwaiti Banks; Macro Economic Outlook; Capital Markets (Equity and Debt); and Financial Services.

Confirmed speakers for this 9th edition of the conference includes Anas Al-Saleh, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Dr. Mohammad Yousef Al-Hashel, Governor, Central Bank of Kuwait, in addition to several other senior policy-makers, financiers and investors.

Omar Kutayba Alghanim, Gulf Bank Chairman and CEO of Alghanim Industries, will participate as keynote speaker in the first interview session with Kuwaiti Banks. Alghanim will discuss the New Kuwait plan and the role that financial services industry plays in executing the plan.

The Bank will also be participating in the Financial Services panel in the afternoon and will be represented by Tareq Al-Saleh, Assistant General Manager of



Omar Kutayba Alghanim

Investments at Gulf Bank.

Gulf Bank's ongoing participation and sponsorship of the Euromoney conference stems from its dedication and commitment to supporting the development of Kuwait, by contributing its rich expertise and in depth knowledge of the Kuwaiti market and highlighting the potential opportunities that lie ahead.

The Euromoney Conference is the world's leading organizer of conferences for cross-border investment and capital markets for portfolio and direct investors, financial intermediaries, corporations, governments, banks and financial institutions. The annual Euromoney conference provides Gulf Bank an unparalleled platform to discuss Kuwait's fiscal, monetary and economic diversification strategy.

# EU MINISTERS MAKE PUSH FOR GOOGLE, FACEBOOK TAX

**MOUNTAIN VIEW:** Google and Facebook may face higher tax bills in Europe as the EU rushed yesterday to change rules so that more of Silicon Valley's mega profits fall into public coffers. Public anger against the billions of euros earned by online behemoths is growing louder in Europe and EU finance ministers meeting in Estonia pledged to make sure the companies pay a fairer tax. But divisions emerged on how to go about taking on the giants, with several member states worried that a tax in Europe could push the companies to set up shop in the US or Asia.

In the digital age "the current taxation system no longer applies and that is why we have to find another solution," said Toomas Toniste, finance minister of Estonia, which hold the EU's six-month rotating presidency. Led by France and Germany, big EU powers urged their bloc partners to explore an emergency tax so that the giants pay tax where

they earn revenue, instead of on profits booked in a low-tax EU HQ of their choice, often Ireland or Luxembourg.

"We are now about 10 countries to back this idea," said French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire as stepped into the talks, adding that he hoped for a firm proposal by December.

"We don't want a Europe at the heel of others," he added. But the road ahead will be difficult. Europe-wide tax reform is a huge headache in the European Union, requiring unanimity of all 28 states, which has proven nearly impossible on tax issues.

### 'They're daft'

Ministers from smaller member states already hinted at difficulties, warning that they would much prefer the problem be addressed at the international level, such as at the G20 or through the OECD, the club of rich nations. "I think

we should be very careful not to tax on what we are going to live on in the future," said Danish Finance Minister Kristian Jensen.

"I am... always sceptical by new taxes and I think Europe taxes heavily enough," he added.

The OECD has also poured doubt on the proposal. Generally speaking, "taxes on revenues, they're daft", said Pascal Saint-Amans, the OECD's tax policy director during a hearing on Wednesday at the French parliament.

But "politically, I understand that it may be necessary, given that reform led by the OECD at the G20 level could take years to achieve. British Finance Minister Philip Hammond warned against angering Washington, which could abandon OECD tax reform in retaliation, sources familiar with the matter told AFP.

"We should see what the United States thinks because a

lot of these companies are US based," said Spanish Economy Minister Luis de Guindos. The commission, the EU's executive arm, has been tasked to draw up a set of solutions, including the French proposal, in time for an EU leaders summit in Tallinn on September 29.

"We cannot have a whole sector of the economy that pretty much escapes taxation," EU's economy commissioner Pierre Moscovici, who will shepherd the plan, told France Inter radio. Europeans have become increasingly aggressive against US technology giants seen by officials as gaining too much power, with Amazon and Apple also under scrutiny. Moreover, several national authorities in the EU have opened up tax fights with Google, Airbnb and other Internet giants. A French court, citing EU law, ruled in July that Google was not liable for 1.12 billion euros (\$1.27 billion) in taxes claimed by the state. France appealed the decision. — AFP

## DOUBTS ARISE ON WHETHER US CORP TAX CUT WOULD BOOST GROWTH

**WASHINGTON:** For President Donald Trump, what's good for General Motors is great for American workers. Same for Boeing. And AT&T. Not to mention small businesses.

Trump insists that slashing the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to as low as 15 percent would free up valuable cash. Companies would use the money to boost investment, increase employees' pay, accelerate hiring and speed economic growth. What's more, corporations that now keep trillions overseas to avoid US taxes would bring the money home. American companies could better compete with rivals based in countries with lower tax rates.

"We're going to have magnificent growth," Trump declared aboard Air Force One on Thursday. "We're going to go like a rocket ship." Would we? Many economists, tax experts and even some business owners say it's unlikely. Rather than hire, companies might use much of their tax savings to buy back their stock or increase their dividends to investors. Many companies, they note, have already been able to borrow at historically low rates to expand their businesses yet have chosen not to.

"The mainstream economic evidence is that the bulk of corporate tax cuts go exactly to whom you would expect -

which is wealthy investors and executives," said Chye-Ching Huang, deputy director of federal tax policy at the left-leaning Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Many economists foresee some benefits from overhauling and simplifying the corporate tax code, just not the extreme growth Trump is promising. One reason corporate tax cuts might provide little overall benefit is the relative health of today's economy. Unemployment is already unusually low at 4.4 percent. The economy is in the ninth year of a slow but steady expansion, rather than in a downturn in which tax cuts might deliver a major boost.

In a 2014 paper, two economists - Alexander Ljungqvist of New York University and Michael Smolyansky of the Federal Reserve - concluded that state corporate tax cuts did little to strengthen economic activity unless the cuts were made during a recession. (The flip side is that they found corporate tax increases to be "uniformly harmful.")

Nor have previous efforts to reduce corporate taxes generally delivered as advertised. Kansas, for example, exempted hundreds of thousands of businesses from corporate taxes and cut individual rates in 2012, only to face a revenue squeeze as the intended economic

growth never materialized.

The federal government provided a tax "holiday" on overseas profits in 2004 to bring money back into the United States at a discount to the 35 percent rate. But the Obama administration observed later that the move had diminished tax revenue and unintentionally led companies to hoard cash abroad in hopes of receiving that discount. There is also concern that a corporate tax cut would swell the federal budget deficit. When the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center published an analysis this week, it found that even if virtually all tax breaks were eliminated, the corporate rate could drop only to 26 percent without increasing the deficit.

Still, many companies stress that lower business taxes would lead to more hiring. John Stephens, AT&T's chief financial officer, said his company faces a typical tax rate of 34 percent - including federal, state, foreign and deferred taxes - in any given year. Stephens estimates that lower rates would lead the company to immediately invest more money in its phone network, which he said would lead to more hiring by companies that work with AT&T.

"When we buy more equipment, our vendors hire more," Stephens said. "When we build more extensive networks, we have people - hard-hat jobs - building

those networks."

The AT&T executive added that "anything" would be an improvement on the current corporate tax rate of 35 percent. But like many corporations, AT&T also benefited substantially from tax breaks between 2008 and 2015, saving as much as \$38 billion, according to an analysis by the left-leaning Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. The administration has yet to spell out all the possible tax breaks that would be eliminated to pay for lower rates.

Even if the tax rates were slashed substantially, not all companies would see much of a reason to hire more workers. Bill Parks, who owns NRS, an Idaho-based boating gear company, says the tax cuts championed by Trump would no longer do much to help his business.

Years ago, the lower rates would have helped him because he was maxing out his personal credit cards and taking a second mortgage to fund NRS. But today's borrowing rates are so low that investing in workers isn't a burden, and tax changes would make little difference to his plans based on how his company is structured. Gary Cohn, Trump's top economic adviser, has argued that the planned tax cuts would help small businesses. By cutting taxes on profits that typically double as

the owners' personal income, those companies would then be able to hire more freely. This assumes that business owners want to expand their payroll rather than just enjoy higher profits.

Larry Summers, a Democratic former Treasury secretary, this month rattled off a list of reasons to reporters why lower corporate tax rates wouldn't deliver as promised. Though US companies do face a high rate compared with other countries, Summers said, the fraction of profits being paid in federal taxes is low by historical standards. Corporate income taxes collected last year equaled just 1.6 percent of the economy, according to government records. That compares with 4 percent during the economic boom that followed World War II, an era of growth that Trump appears to want to revive.

Nor, in Summers' view, would rising stock prices from a lower corporate tax rate shore up the pensions of firefighters, police officers and blue collar workers, as Cohn has argued. Those few Americans who still have traditional "defined benefit" pensions don't receive any additional income if the stock market rises, Summers said. "The argument being made that the corporate tax cuts will somehow benefit workers is weak by the standards of trickle-down arguments," Summers said. — AP

## AFRICA'S BIGGEST FUND MANAGER BACKS CEO, DENIES MISUSING FUNDS

**JOHANNESBURG:** South Africa's state-owned pension fund, the continent's biggest money manager, backed its chief executive on Friday and dismissed newspaper reports he had misused funds and improperly raised salaries for some executives.

Daniel Matjila has been chief executive officer of Public Investment Corporation (PIC), which manages nearly 2 trillion rand (\$150 billion) of civil servants' pensions, since 2014. Business Day reported on Friday that Matjila had been accused in a letter sent to PIC's board of using funds reserved for corporate social investment to bankroll a business of someone close to him and of irregularly raising salaries of PIC executives. Matjila told Reuters the allegations made by Business Day were "spurious." "They are trying to find a reason to suspend or fire me," he said. The PIC held a board meeting on Friday where Matjila made representations responding to the allegations against him. "Following the meeting, the

Board expressed its confidence in the ability and integrity of the CEO, Dr Daniel Matjila, management and staff of the PIC," the fund said in a statement.

"The Board also noted media allegations prior to the meeting about its intention to remove the CEO. The Board wishes to reiterate that it rejects these allegations with the contempt they deserve."

The PIC is seen as among the best-run of South Africa's 300-odd state-owned companies and is the biggest investor in the economy. It holds a large chunk of government bonds and huge stakes in blue-chip companies such as miner Anglo American, lender Barclays Africa and grocer retailer Shoprite.

On Thursday, South Africa's Treasury denied a report in another newspaper that it was about to fire Matjila, although Deputy Finance Minister and PIC chair Sfiso Buthelezi confirmed the board would seek "clarification from him on internal matters" at Friday's meeting. —Reuters

## S&P UPGRADES OUTLOOK ON CYPRUS DEBT TO POSITIVE

**WASHINGTON:** Accelerating economic growth and prospects for a continued budget surplus prompted a key credit rating agency on Friday to upgrade the outlook for Cyprus to positive. Standard and Poor's said the improved outlook indicates it could raise the grade on the country's debt in the next 12 months if the positive developments "continue unabated."

S&P currently rates Cyprus's foreign debt BB+. The agency increased the forecast for economic growth to an average of three percent a year through 2020, up from 2.5 percent previously, and said it expects the budget "to remain in surplus over the forecast horizon."

Those improvements will help banks deal with bad loans, S&P said in a statement. Eurozone member Cyprus plunged into a financial crisis in 2013, leaving a number of its top banks insolvent and forcing it to negotiate a painful bailout with international creditors.

It has since recovered, after the government imposed harsh austerity measures in exchange for a loan of 10 billion euros (then \$13 billion) from the IMF and European Union.

**Portugal rating**  
Portugal's improved economic performance and falling budget deficit prompted a key credit rating agency to raise the grade on the country's debt on Friday. Standard and Poor's said it was raising the debt rating on the country's foreign debt one notch to BBB- from the receding risks.

"The upgrade reflects our improved forecast for Portugal's GDP growth during 2017-2020, as well as the solid progress it has made in reducing its budget deficit," S&P said in a statement.

The agency forecast the Portuguese economy will grow by more than two percent on average through 2020, up from the previous forecast of 1.5 percent. Meanwhile, Lisbon is expected to meet its budget deficit target of 1.5 percent of GDP this year "putting the government debt to GDP ratio on a more firmly declining path," the statement said.

Portugal is posting its fourth consecutive year of growth since 2010, and the country in June made an early payment to the International Monetary Fund on the 29.6 billion euro loan it was granted in 2011 as part of a bailout plan. The IMF projects the country's economy will expand by 2.5 percent this year and two percent in 2018. —AP

## HIRING PICKED UP IN SIX US STATES LAST MONTH

MACY'S TRIMS HOLIDAY HIRES BY NEARLY 4%

**WASHINGTON:** Hiring picked up in six US states last month, fell in three and was mostly unchanged in 41 states in August. The Labor Department said Friday that the unemployment rate rose in eight states, dropped in one, and was also mostly the same in 41 states. The figures reflect the steady job gains nationwide that have fueled the eight-year long economic recovery from the Great Recession. US employers added 156,000 jobs overall last month, and the unemployment rate ticked up to 4.4 percent, still near a 16-year low.

The government said the data was collected before Hurricane Harvey plowed through Texas and Louisiana in the final week of the month and didn't affect the figures. The unemployment rate fell to 3.3 percent in Tennessee, the lowest on records in that state dating back to 1976. North Dakota and Colorado reported the nation's lowest unemployment rates, at 2.3 percent and 2.4 percent, respectively.

Several states reported strong job growth in August compared with July. Georgia added 19,800 jobs, followed by Maryland with 14,200 and Massachusetts with 10,800. Kentucky, New Mexico and New Hampshire also reported big gains. New Mexico saw the largest percentage increase, followed by New Hampshire and Maryland. Oregon, Arkansas and Maine reported large job losses in August from the previous month.

Nineteen states now have unemployment rates below the US figure of 4.4 percent, including Arkansas, at 3.5 percent; Hawaii, at 2.6 percent; Idaho, at 2.9 percent, and Iowa, at 3.3 percent.

Meanwhile, Macy's is increasing the number of temporary workers it's hiring for distribution and warehouses for the holiday season as it chases fast growing e-commerce sales. But overall holiday hiring will fall nearly 4 percent.

Macy's says it will be hiring 18,000 workers to fulfill online orders and other tasks at warehouses devoted to e-commerce operations. That's an increase of 3,000 from a year ago. Overall, Macy's temporary hiring is expected at 80,000, down from 83,000 a year ago. The overall decline contrasts with rival Target Corp., which announced earlier this week that it was hiring 100,000 people to work at its stores, an increase of 40 percent from a year ago. The retailer also plans to hire 4,500 workers to help pack and ship online orders at its warehouses.

Many other major retailers including Amazon, JC Penney and Kohl's have not made their holiday plans public yet. It provides hints to a store's expectations for the holiday season, which accounts for 20 percent of all retail sales during the year, according to the National Retail Federation, the nation's largest retail trade group. Like all department stores, Macy's has wrestled with weak sales as customers go online and also increasingly spend money on things other than clothing. It's facing competition there as well however, as Amazon, digs deeper into fashion. —AP



**HIALEAH:** In this file photo, people walk out of a Macy's department store in Hialeah, Florida. Macy's is increasing the number of temporary workers it's hiring for distribution and warehouses for the holiday season as it chases fast growing e-commerce sales. — AP

## KENYA CUTS 2017 GROWTH FORECAST DUE TO DROUGHT, POLITICAL UNREST

**NAIROBI:** Kenya lowered its 2017 economic growth forecast to 5.5 percent due to drought and political uncertainty, a top official said on Friday, as the government cut non-essential spending to free up funds for a repeat presidential election. The drought earlier this year hurt agriculture, which accounts for 30 percent of output, said Kamau Thugge, the principal secretary in the ministry finance.

He said some investors are also delaying decisions after the Supreme Court nullified the results of an Aug. 8 presidential election citing irregularities in the tallying process.

A repeat poll pitting President Uhuru Kenyatta against opposition leader Raila Odinga is scheduled for Oct. 17. Odinga says he will not participate unless demands are met, including the resignation of some staff from the electoral board. Kenya has the highest per capita income in the region and is known for its capitalist tradition, stability and role as a Western ally. It hosts the regional headquarters of several global firms.

The government had initially projected a 5.9 percent growth for this year but the econo-

my expanded 4.7 percent in the first quarter, mainly due to poor agricultural performance.

Thugge said growth would rise to 6.5 percent per year in the medium term. "This is contingent on having good weather," he told a meeting convened to discuss budget preparations. The government's revenue collection for the fiscal year starting July was behind target by 29 billion shillings (\$282 million), he said. The revenue target is 1,549.4 billion shillings for the fiscal year.

"There is a shortfall in customs. There may be people waiting before they import things," he told Reuters on the sidelines of the meeting. Adding to the squeeze, the electoral board has requested 12 billion shillings for the presidential re-run. "That is only the direct cost. There is the need to provide for security and so those costs could be much higher than the 12 billion. This was not budgeted for," Thugge said, adding they will cut non-essential expenditure to fund the poll. Government officials will no longer be allowed to travel outside the country without clearance from the president and domestic travel will also be reviewed, he said. —Reuters

## EXCHANGE RATES

### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

#### ASIAN COUNTRIES

|                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| Japanese Yen      | 2.749   |
| Indian Rupees     | 4.719   |
| Pakistani Rupees  | 2.867   |
| Sri Lankan Rupees | 1.974   |
| Nepali Rupees     | 2.956   |
| Singapore Dollar  | 225.490 |
| Hongkong Dollar   | 38.683  |
| Bangladesh Taka   | 3.702   |
| Philippine Peso   | 5.935   |
| Thai Baht         | 9.150   |

#### GCC COUNTRIES

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| Saudi Riyal    | 80.627  |
| Qatari Riyal   | 83.042  |
| Omani Riyal    | 785.213 |
| Bahraini Dinar | 802.840 |
| UAE Dirham     | 82.318  |

#### ARAB COUNTRIES

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Egyptian Pound - Cash     | 20.300  |
| Egyptian Pound - Transfer | 17.044  |
| Yemen Riyal/for 1000      | 1.214   |
| Tunisian Dinar            | 126.420 |
| Jordanian Dinar           | 426.650 |
| Lebanese Lira/for 1000    | 2.014   |
| Syrian Lira               | 0.000   |
| Morocco Dirham            | 32.986  |

#### EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

|                    |         |
|--------------------|---------|
| US Dollar Transfer | 302.150 |
| Euro               | 363.790 |
| Sterling Pound     | 403.220 |

|                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| Canadian dollar   | 249.710 |
| Turkish lira      | 88.660  |
| Swiss Franc       | 316.720 |
| Australian Dollar | 244.140 |
| US Dollar Buying  | 300.950 |

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| 20 Gram | 249.070 |
| 10 Gram | 127.450 |
| 5 Gram  | 64.570  |

### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

| Rate for Transfer | Selling Rate |
|-------------------|--------------|
| US Dollar         | 301.800      |
| Canadian Dollar   | 248.685      |
| Sterling Pound    | 403.050      |
| Euro              | 363.090      |
| Swiss Franc       | 291.255      |
| Bahraini Dinar    | 801.000      |
| UAE Dirhams       | 82.560       |
| Qatari Riyals     | 83.380       |
| Saudi Riyals      | 81.340       |
| Jordanian Dinar   | 426.950      |
| Egyptian Pound    | 17.121       |
| Sri Lankan Rupees | 1.975        |
| Indian Rupees     | 4.719        |
| Pakistani Rupees  | 2.863        |
| Bangladesh Taka   | 3.733        |
| Philippines Peso  | 5.929        |
| Cyprus pound      | 17.960       |
| Japanese Yen      | 3.740        |
| Syrian Pound      | 1.585        |
| Nepalese Rupees   | 2.954        |

|                       |        |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Malaysian Ringgit     | 72.765 |
| Chinese Yuan Renminbi | 46.660 |
| Thai Bhat             | 10.115 |
| Turkish Lira          | 88.375 |

### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

| CURRENCY           | BUY      | SELL     |
|--------------------|----------|----------|
| British Pound      | 0.405285 | 0.415285 |
| Czech Korune       | 0.005883 | 0.017883 |
| Danish Krone       | 0.044614 | 0.049614 |
| Euro               | 0.356346 | 0.365346 |
| Georgian Lari      | 0.134710 | 0.134710 |
| Norwegian Krone    | 0.034712 | 0.039912 |
| Romanian Leu       | 0.081554 | 0.081554 |
| Russian ruble      | 0.005266 | 0.005266 |
| Slovakia           | 0.009009 | 0.019009 |
| Slovenia Krona     | 0.034031 | 0.039031 |
| Swedish Franc      | 0.309144 | 0.320144 |
| Australasia        |          |          |
| Australian Dollar  | 0.234154 | 0.246154 |
| New Zealand Dollar | 0.214881 | 0.224381 |
| America            |          |          |
| Canadian Dollar    | 0.243048 | 0.252048 |
| US Dollars         | 0.298350 | 0.302770 |
| US Dollars Mint    | 0.298550 | 0.302470 |
| Asia               |          |          |
| Bangladesh Taka    | 0.003242 | 0.003826 |

|                   |          |          |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Chinese Yuan      | 0.044710 | 0.048210 |
| Hong Kong Dollar  | 0.036785 | 0.039535 |
| Indian Rupee      | 0.004246 | 0.004934 |
| Indonesian Rupiah | 0.000018 | 0.000024 |
| Japanese Yen      | 0.002675 | 0.002855 |
| Korean Won        | 0.000257 | 0.000272 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 0.068189 | 0.074189 |
| Nepalese Rupee    | 0.003018 | 0.003188 |
| Pakistan Rupee    | 0.002720 | 0.003010 |
| Philippine Peso   | 0.005835 | 0.006135 |
| Singapore Dollar  | 0.219851 | 0.229851 |
| Sri Lankan Rupee  | 0.001625 | 0.002205 |
| Taiwan            | 0.009992 | 0.010172 |
| Thai Baht         | 0.008803 | 0.009353 |

|                  |          |          |
|------------------|----------|----------|
| Bahraini Dinar   | 0.795050 | 0.803550 |
| Egyptian Pound   | 0.014491 | 0.020399 |
| Iranian Riyal    | 0.000084 | 0.000085 |
| Iraqi Dinar      | 0.000193 | 0.000253 |
| Jordanian Dinar  | 0.421976 | 0.430976 |
| Kuwaiti Dinar    | 1.000000 | 1.000000 |
| Lebanese Pound   | 0.000155 | 0.000255 |
| Moroccan Dirhams | 0.021159 | 0.045159 |
| Omani Riyal      | 0.779164 | 0.784844 |
| Qatar Riyal      | 0.078786 | 0.083726 |
| Saudi Riyal      | 0.079567 | 0.080867 |
| Syrian Pound     | 0.001282 | 0.001502 |
| Tunisian Dinar   | 0.120468 | 0.128468 |
| Turkish Lira     | 0.082950 | 0.093250 |
| UAE Dirhams      | 0.080876 | 0.082576 |
| Yemeni Riyal     | 0.000983 | 0.001063 |

# ALGHANIM LOTUS LAUNCHES NEW EVORA SPORT 410 GP

FASTEST ROAD-GOING LOTUS EVER MADE • LIGHTER AND MOST FOCUSED EVORA



**KUWAIT:** Following the great success of the Lotus carline in Kuwait, Alghanim Lotus unveiled the sensational sports car in Kuwait and the latest addition to the Lotus Exclusive series, the Evora Sport 410 GP Edition. The new, hand-built, top-of-the-range model builds on the Lotus' reputation with a refined and intuitive car that shows once again that the Evora 410 is its best ever, with production limited to 150 cars a year worldwide.

Less mass, reduced drag and greater downforce means the Evora Sport 410 is not only faster on the straight, but also when cornering. The formidable Lotus Evora Sport 410 is a study in pure, lightweight engineering and true to the Lotus DNA.

#### Design and build

Hand-built in the Lotus headquarters in Hethel, UK by 400 dedicated team members, the Evora 410 employs the latest generation of Lotus' famous aluminum architecture, which provides high torsional rigidity at a reduced weight. With a sleeker, fastback profile, the new Lotus received a comprehensive array of carbon-fibre components including the front splitter, revised front access panel, roof section, tailgate, rear quarter panels, and rear diffuser - all hand-made specifically for the car.

The Evora Sport 410 is also equipped with bespoke, ultra-lightweight wheels, saving 7.2 kg, and Michelin Pilot Sport 4S tyres.

#### Lightweight

Tipping the scales at just 1,370kg, or 1,320 kg with no fuel and lightweight options selected, the Evora Sport 410 has set the benchmark by being the lightest and most focused iteration of the Evora.

Lotus' famous Lightweight Laboratory has revisited every aspect of the car, to find new weight savings and, as a result, the Lotus Evora Sport 410 is a substantial 60 kg lighter than the already impressive Evora 400. In addition to the extensive application of carbon fibre, which has saved 14.3 kg, further headline weight reductions include the introduction of a lithium-ion battery -10.8 kg, ultra-lightweight forged wheels -7.2 kg, and a host of incremental improvements such as a new lightweight windscreen surround - 3.4kg; all of which contribute towards the overall weight reduction.

Less mass has allowed the recalibration of the suspension and a revised chassis setup, including improved wheel geometry and re-valved dampers. The result is sharper and more direct handling, providing the driver with a more intuitive feel.

The design of the new carbon components, and the careful working and channeling of air over and under the bodywork, has resulted in a slightly lower drag coefficient and improved high-speed stability, delivering confidence to the driver as the Evora Sport 410 remains tractable at all speeds.

#### Speed

The Evora Sport 410 is the fastest road-going Lotus ever sold, clocking 0-60mph in 3.9 secs and a top speed of 190 mph.

It is powered by supercharged, 3.5-litre 6-cylinder engine, producing 400 hp at 7000 rpm and 301 lbft (410 Nm) of torque at 3500 rpm. The car comes as standard with a six-speed manual gearbox, which features a low-inertia flywheel for rapid shifts, while a Torsen-type limited slip differential (LSD) provides greater traction, and faster exit speeds when cornering.

#### Driving modes

The car features user selectable ESP driving modes - Drive / Sport / Race / Off - allowing progressive degrees of driver control before the system intervenes. The selectable ESP driving modes also utilizes an engine exhaust bypass valve at mid-to-high engine speeds, increasing throttle response in both 'Sport' and 'Race' settings. This is enhanced by the optional, high-flow titanium exhaust silencer, saving a further 10 kg in weight.

#### Cabin detailing

The Evora Sport 410's cabin has received the same attention to detail referencing the marque's heritage, and subtle design cues include optional color coded interior components.

The Sport's seats are trimmed with Alcantara(r) as standard, along with the



steering wheel, lower dashboard, transmission tunnel and center console. An integrated touch-screen entertainment system can also be specified, including iPod(r) connectivity and Bluetooth(r) functionality.

Experience the purity of speed and unique experience of the new Lotus Evora 410 or one of the models introduced by Alghanim Lotus in Kuwait, including the

Exige S Coupe, 3 Eleven and Evora 400, all available at the Alghanim Lotus showroom located in Shuwaikh Industrial 1, block 1, street 7 on Saturday to Thursday starting from 9 AM until 12:30 PM and 4:30 PM until 8:30 PM.

Car enthusiasts can also be the first to know what is new by following Alghanim Motors on Instagram at @AlghanimLotusKW.

## WHY INTERNSHIPS REALLY MATTER

### Bayt.com weekly report

They are likely to be unpaid, they may even force you to use some of your own money on transportation and miscellaneous expenses, and they could be overwhelming especially while being a full-time student. Here comes the word: Internships!

For some people, an internship is a very strange and foreign concept and they don't quite comprehend it. Others brush it off as this optional and unnecessary burden that yields no immediate monetary reward. So is that it? Are internships simply a way for companies to legitimize free labor and ruin students' summer vacations?

Every year, many young job seekers rigorously compete for internships before even graduating. Bayt.com, the Middle East's #1 Job Site, wanted to shed light on this topic and reveal some of the benefits of internships by asking more than 9,000 professionals in a poll titled "Internships in the Middle East and North Africa". Here is what we found out:

#### Interns are of huge value to the company

Interns aren't just a punching bag for tedious and cumbersome projects that nobody else wants to take on. The majority (88.2%) of professionals polled by Bayt.com believe that interns are "very useful" to their businesses. 9.2% of respondents believe that interns are "somewhat useful" and only 2.6% said that interns are "not useful".

Those surveyed said there were several benefits for having an intern. More than seven out of ten (73.6 percent) said that internships allow them to identify talent for future positions. Other benefits that were discussed include the ability to "quickly fill temporary and seasonal positions" and "providing extra help for small teams or departments."

More than four out of five (86.9 percent) respondents claimed that their companies "always have interns", this was followed by a small number (5.4 percent) who said they do have interns but "not always", 3.3 percent said they don't have interns but are "planning to start", and only 4.4 percent said they are "not interested" in having interns.

Interns are of incredible value to every company that has them. Indeed, they provide quick and easy help when much needed, but they also bring in unique and fresh skills and perspectives and are often a source for companies' future talent need.

#### Interns can benefit just as much

More than seven out of ten professionals (71.5 percent) said that, while at university, it was required for them to complete an internship or any type of practical training. Some may be thinking, where is the joy in a mandatory activity?

Well, professionals in the Middle East seem to truly understand the value of internships. 56.2 percent of them said internships help them "gain hands-on work experience", 4.6 percent said it helps them "develop new skills and knowledge", 4.2 percent said it helps them "explore their field of interest and career potential", 1.4 percent said it helps them "network and build professional connections", and more than a third (33.6 percent) said it provides all of these benefits.

On top of that, more than three quarters of respondents (76.2 percent) agree that internships "increase the job candidate's chances of getting hired."

#### Are all internships created equal?

Just like choosing a job, choosing an internship depends

on what matters to you, as a job seeker, the most. When it comes to what makes an internship more attractive, nearly two thirds of professionals (65.2 percent) said that the "type of company / field of work" was the main factor, 29.4 percent said that it depends on the "type of projects and job responsibilities", and 2.6 percent said that it depends on the "ability to obtain university credit."

You may be surprised to hear this but only 2.8 percent said that compensation was the most attractive factor for an internship. In fact, 79.3 percent of those surveyed said that they are willing to complete an unpaid internship, compared to only 20.7 percent who disagreed.

#### Where do you find an internship?

More than eight in ten respondents (84.7 percent) said that they are able to find many internship opportunities using online job sites. So leading online job sites, such as Bayt.com, is the answer!

Today, and on any given day, over 10,000 jobs are available on Bayt.com, nearly 5,000 of which are suitable for young job seekers and fresh graduates. Bayt.com is also launching a new job section that is fully dedicated for students and fresh graduates to help them get an early start on their career planning and job hunting.

If you are looking to secure your first career role, then you should take advantage of the many internships, entry level jobs, as well as the job search tools and information available online. Internships are a great asset to start and grow in your career and should be a priority when it comes to gaining experience and standing out in the competitive job market.

## CHINA AUGUST NEW YUAN LOANS RISE TO 1.09TN YUAN

**BEIJING:** Chinese banks extended 1.09 trillion yuan (\$166.46 billion) in net new yuan loans in August, well above analysts' expectations. Analysts polled by Reuters had predicted new yuan loans of 900 billion yuan, up from 825.5 billion yuan in July.

Broad M2 money supply (M2) grew 8.9 percent in August from a year earlier, central bank data showed on Friday, missing forecasts for an expansion of 9.1 percent and compared with July's 9.2 percent. Outstanding yuan loans at the end of August grew 13.2 percent from a year earlier, more than an expected 13 percent rise but level with the pace in July.

China's banks extended a record 12.65 trillion yuan in loans in 2016 as the government encouraged credit-fueled stimulus to meet its economic growth target. The credit explosion has stoked worries about financial risks from a rapid build-up in debt, which authorities have pledged to contain this year. — Reuters

## CHINA OFFERS \$10BN CREDIT LINE TO IRAN

**BEIJING:** A Chinese state-owned investment firm has provided a \$10 billion credit line for Iranian banks, Iran's central bank president said yesterday. The contract was signed in Beijing between China's CITIC investment group and a delegation of Iranian banks led by central bank president Valiollah Seif.

The Iran Daily said the funds would finance water, energy and transport projects. Iran is vital to China's trade ambitions as it develops its trillion-dollar "One Belt, One Road" strategy aimed at dramatically boosting its ties to Europe and Africa.

In addition to the credit line, the Export-Import Bank of China committed to a further \$10 billion in loans, while the China Development Bank signed preliminary deals with Iran for \$15 billion in infrastructure and production projects, Seif announced. The contracts reflect "a strong will for continuation of cooperation between the two countries," Seif said.

In total, China has agreed to allocate \$35 billion in financing and loans for Iran's economy, state news agency IRNA quoted Seif as saying. The credit line will use euros and yuan to help bypass US sanctions that have continued despite the nuclear deal between Iran and world powers in 2015.

China was a signatory to the deal that lifted sanctions in exchange for curbs to Iran's nuclear program.

President Xi Jinping visited Iran a week after it came into effect, vowing to boost bilateral trade to \$600 billion within a decade. Although trade was just \$31 billion in 2016, it jumped more than 30 percent in the first six months of 2017. China is already Iran's biggest oil customer and accounts for a third of its overall trade. Since the lifting of sanctions, Beijing has opened two credit lines worth \$4.2 billion to build high-speed railway lines linking Tehran with Mashhad and Isfahan, the Iran Daily reported. — AFP

## JAPAN'S ELDERLY REVERSE GAS STATION CLOSURES

**TOKYO:** In Shimukappu, a village on Japan's northern island of Hokkaido and home to a popular skiing resort, residents are to reopen the sole gas station in the area, which closed four years ago as sales declined. It's a similar story elsewhere in Japan, where oil demand has dropped by nearly a third since 2000 as the country's population dwindles and new car sales are also down by around a third since 1990. With that waning demand, the number of gas stations, which also supply winter heating fuels, has roughly halved from a 1995 peak to 31,000 nationwide.

That has left many mainly elderly people in remote areas a long way from the nearest pump station to fill up. About 15 percent of villages, towns and cities in the world's third-largest economy have three or fewer gas stands, and the trade ministry has urged local governments to do more to keep these essential lifelines open. While most shuttered gas stations are abandoned and chained, some have had a make-over and are now shops, cafes, and laundrettes.

Amid a national trend of a declining pop-

ulation, which is accelerating in remoter parts of Japan, local governments have increasingly taken an active role in buying closed facilities and offering subsidies to keep them operational.

But in some rural villages, elderly people power is leading the rescue effort as younger generations move to the cities in search of work. "The nearest gasoline stands in the next town are around 30 km (19 miles) away," said Mitsuhiro Hirakawa, head of Shimukappu city office's Tomamu area that hosts the ski resort. "The lack of gas stands is very inconvenient."

A local survey showed residents ranked the lack of a filling station as their second-biggest source of dissatisfaction, prompting the local government to step in and buy the shuttered stand, which is due to reopen next month, Hirakawa said. The industry ministry says local communities in at least a dozen other villages have taken over abandoned fuel stations, closed due to falling sales, a lack of people to run them, and the cost of replacing ageing underground fuel tanks. — Reuters

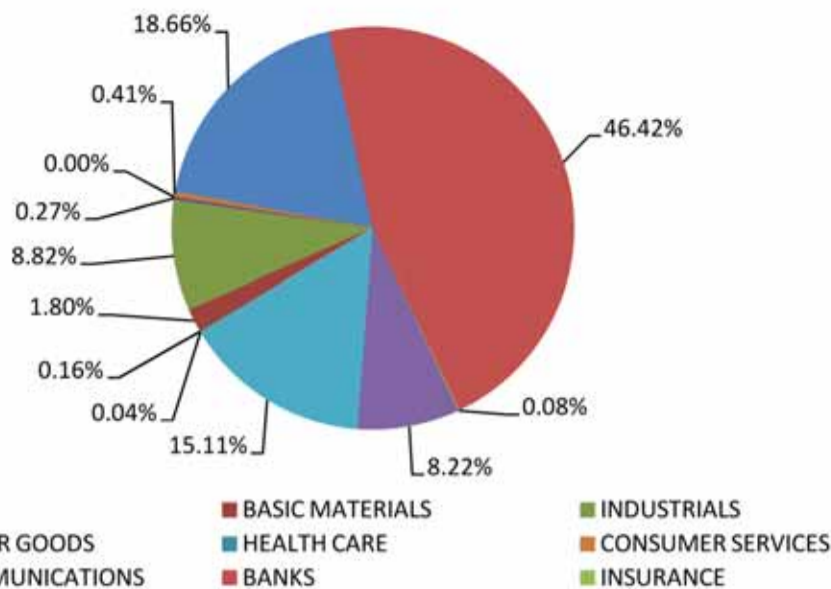
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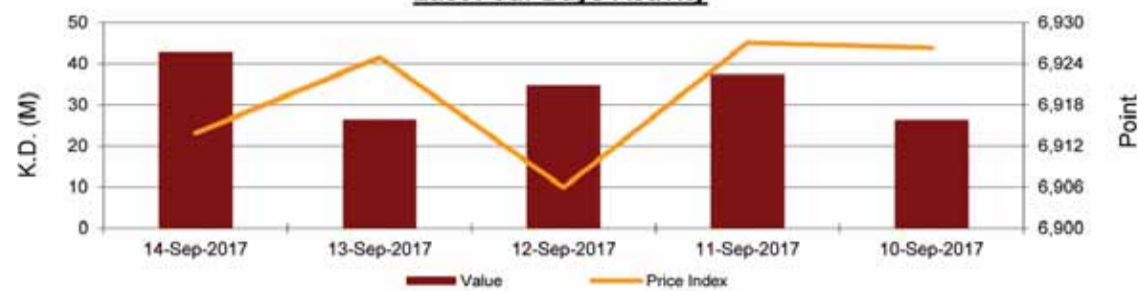
SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY



BOURSA KUWAIT INDICES



Last Four Days Activity



# BOURSA KUWAIT EQUITIES EDGE HIGHER

## BAYAN WEEKLY MARKET REPORT

**KUWAIT:** Boursa Kuwait ended last week in the green zone. The Price Index closed at 6,913.86 points, up by 0.24 percent from the week before closing, the Weighted Index increased by 1.53 percent after closing at 441.32 points, whereas the KXS-15 Index closed at 1,027.07 points up by 2.78 percent. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover increased by 116.60 percent, compared to the preceding week, reaching KD 33.55 million, whereas trading volume average was 139.14 million shares, recording an increase of 79.63 percent.

The three Boursa indices were able to close in the green zone, especially the Weighted and KXS-15 indices which benefited from the strong purchasing trend that included many leading and heavy stocks, and mostly the stocks nominated to join "FTSE Index" for emerging markets, which enhanced the cash liquidity in the market to a great extent, as the daily average for trading value reached around KD 33 million, up by 116.6 percent compared to the previous week's trading, while the Price Index witnessed during the last week a fluctuated performance with an upward trend as a result to the continued presence of the quick speculative operations that concentrated on the small-cap stocks, in addition to the profit collection operations that the market was witnessing during some of the daily sessions, which relatively lightened the Price Index's gains on the weekly level.

In addition, the market capitalization for the Boursa Kuwait reached during the last five sessions more than KD 440 billion, as it reached by the end of last week about KD 29.48 billion, up by 1.52 percent compared to its level in a week earlier, where it was KD 29.04 billion; On an annual level, the market cap gains since the beginning of the year, reached more than KD 4 billion, or 16.03 percent compared to its value at end of 2016, where it reached then KD 25.41 billion. (Note: the market cap for the listed companies in the primary market is calculated based on the average number of outstanding shares as per the latest available financial statements).

As per the daily trading activity, the market initiated the first session of the last week with an increase to all its indices, in light of the active positive trading and the purchasing operations that concentrated on the leading and heavy stocks, especially in the Banks sector, where more than half of the cash liquidity concentrated at by the end of the session, which reflected on all the market indicators' performance, especially the KXS-15 Index that was able to return to above 1000 point closing level, to end the session at its highest level since year 2015. Also, the market continued realizing gains on the second session, however limited, and the three indices continued in increasing supported by the continued support of the leading stocks, amid a continued noticeable growth in the trading value, to end the session at its highest levels in 5 months, whereas it reached approximately KD 37 million.

On the mid-week session, the market witnessed profit collection operations included many stocks that realized good gains in the previous sessions, which pushed the three indices to close in the red zone in parallel with a lim-

ited decline in the trading activity, on both levels, the cash liquidity and the volume.

The Boursa ended Wednesday's session with mixed closings to the three indices, as the Price Index was able to return to the green zone once again, supported by the quick speculations and the purchasing operations that concentrated on some idle stocks, while the Weighted and KXS-15 indices continued recording losses for the second consecutive session affected by the continued concentration of the profit collection operations on the leading stocks, while fluctuation continued its control over the Boursa indices at the end of week session, however with changing positions, as the Weighted and KXS-15 indices were able to return to the profit zone once again, supported by the return of the purchasing operations in control over the leading stocks trading, which enhanced the indices' gains on the weekly level; while the profit collection operations that targeted some small-cap stocks, pushed the Price Index to record limited losses by the end of the session, which limited its weekly gains to a certain extent. For the annual performance, the Price Index ended last week recording 20.28 percent annual gain compared to its closing in 2016, while the Weighted Index increased by 16.11 percent, and the KXS-15 recorded 16.05 percent growth.

Sectors' Indices

Six of Boursa Kuwait's sectors ended last week in the green zone, while the other six recorded decreases. Last week's highest gainer was the Health Care sector, achieving 11.48 percent growth rate as its index closed at 1,683.91 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Industrial sector's index closed at 1,884.67 points recording 1.07 percent increase. The Telecommunications sector came in third as its index achieved 1.04 percent growth, ending the week at 619.43 points.

On the other hand, The Consumer Services sector headed the losers list as its index declined 3.74 percent to end the week's activity at 1,026.48 points. The Insurance sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 1.33 percent, closing 1,154.04 points, followed by the Oil & Gas sector, as its index closed at 1,021.70 points at a loss 0.99 percent.

Sectors' Activity

The Financial Services sector dominated a total trade volume of around 234.38 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 33.69 percent of the total market trading volume. The Banks sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 28.77 percent of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 200.16 million shares.

On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 77.87 million or 46.42 percent of last week's total market trading value. The Telecommunications sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 31.30 million representing 18.66 percent of the total market trading value. —Prepared by: Studies & Research Department - Bayan Investment Co.

MARKET ACTIVITY

|             | Last Week   | Previous Week | Ch. %   |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------|
| Volume      | 695,720,227 | 232,380,603   | 199.39% |
| Value (K.D) | 167,741,831 | 46,465,650    | 261.00% |
| Deals       | 25,223      | 8,784         | 187.15% |

MARKET CAPITALISATION (K.D.)

| Last Week      | Previous Week  | Weekly Ch. % | Annual Ch. % |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 29,481,374,197 | 29,040,001,156 | 1.52%        | 16.03%       |

TOP GAINERS OF THE WEEK

| Company | Last Week Closing | Previous Week Closing | Ch. (fils) | Ch. %  |
|---------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------|
| MADAR   | 21.80             | 17.60                 | 4.2        | 23.86% |
| MHC     | 480.00            | 400.00                | 80.0       | 20.00% |
| KCPC    | 165.00            | 141.00                | 24.0       | 17.02% |
| UNICAP  | 51.00             | 44.90                 | 6.1        | 13.59% |
| AMAR    | 54.80             | 49.50                 | 5.3        | 10.71% |

TOP LOSERS OF THE WEEK

| Company | Last Week Closing | Previous Week Closing | Ch. (fils) | Ch. %   |
|---------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------|---------|
| AFAQ    | 108.00            | 132.00                | -24.0      | -18.18% |
| EYAS    | 730.00            | 860.00                | -130.0     | -15.12% |
| CABLETV | 30.00             | 35.00                 | -5.0       | -14.29% |
| URC     | 88.00             | 100.00                | -12.0      | -12.00% |
| GIH     | 27.00             | 30.40                 | -3.4       | -11.18% |

SECTORS' WEEKLY TRADING ACTIVITY

| Sector             | Volume      | To Market % | Value      | To Market % |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| OIL & GAS          | 5,871,752   | 0.84%       | 274,875    | 0.16%       |
| BASIC MATERIALS    | 5,456,219   | 0.78%       | 3,018,456  | 1.80%       |
| INDUSTRIALS        | 32,564,032  | 4.68%       | 14,798,874 | 8.82%       |
| CONSUMER GOODS     | 2,143,097   | 0.31%       | 457,361    | 0.27%       |
| HEALTH CARE        | 6           | 0.00%       | 3          | 0.0000%     |
| CONSUMER SERVICES  | 3,022,353   | 0.43%       | 689,310    | 0.41%       |
| TELECOMMUNICATIONS | 67,076,698  | 9.64%       | 31,303,203 | 18.66%      |
| BANKS              | 200,158,511 | 28.77%      | 77,872,987 | 46.42%      |
| INSURANCE          | 403,142     | 0.06%       | 129,223    | 0.08%       |
| REAL ESTATE        | 144,044,142 | 20.70%      | 13,781,921 | 8.22%       |
| FINANCIAL SERVICES | 234,378,451 | 33.69%      | 25,347,487 | 15.11%      |
| TECHNOLOGY         | 601,824     | 0.09%       | 68,132     | 0.04%       |

BOURSA KUWAIT INDICES

|        | Price Index    | Weighted index | KSX 15 |
|--------|----------------|----------------|--------|
| Weekly | Last week      | 6,913.86       | 441.32 |
|        | Previous week  | 6,897.42       | 434.69 |
|        | Change (Point) | 16.44          | 6.63   |
|        | Change (%)     | 0.24%          | 1.53%  |
| Annual | Last year      | 5,748.09       | 380.09 |
|        | Change (Point) | 1,165.77       | 61.23  |
|        | Change (%)     | 20.28%         | 16.11% |
|        | Change (%)     | 20.28%         | 16.11% |

# S&P 500 TOPS 2,500 MARK AS TECH AND BANK STOCKS CLIMB

**NEW YORK:** US stocks edged higher on Friday as technology companies and banks rose. The Standard & Poor's 500 index closed above 2,500 for the first time as stocks had one of their best weeks this year.

Stocks wobbled in early trading after the Commerce Department said retail sales slipped in August and the Federal Reserve said industrial production dropped last month, mostly because of Hurricane Harvey. But big names like Apple and Boeing took the market higher. Stocks made big gains Monday and as Hurricane Irma weakened, and they didn't do too much after that, but still wound up with their biggest weekly gain since the beginning of January.

Rick Rieder, the chief investment officer for BlackRock's global fixed income business, said retail sales and inflation have been weak because technological changes keep reducing the prices of clothes, food, travel, and phone plans. That lowers measurements of sales revenue, like the one the government released Friday, but Rieder said they keep people buying - even though the same technological changes can also lower people's wages.

"We get everything cheaper than we used to because of the internet and delivery mechanisms," he said. "The price is coming down so quickly that it's helping demand."

The Standard & Poor's 500 index gained 4.61 points, or 0.2 percent, to a record 2,500.23. The Dow Jones industrial average rose 64.86 points, or 0.3 percent, to 22,268.34, its fourth record close in a row. The Nasdaq composite added 19.38 points, or 0.3 percent,

to 6,448.47. The Russell 2000 index of smaller-company stocks picked up 6.69 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,431.71.

Industrial output

Industrial production in the US fell 0.9 percent in August, the biggest drop in eight years, as Harvey knocked numerous oil refining, plastics and chemicals factories out of business for a time. Many of those factories are based in the Gulf Coast region that Harvey hit. The Federal Reserve said the weather and flooding was responsible for almost all of the loss.

Apple picked up \$1.60, or 1 percent, to \$159.88 after three days of declines. Chipmaker Nvidia jumped \$10.71, or 6.3 percent, to \$180.11 and hard drive maker Western Digital gained \$2.73, or 3.2 percent, to \$88.52. However shares of software maker Oracle absorbed their biggest loss in four years. The company's first-quarter profit and sales were better than investors expected, but analysts were concerned about forecasts for its cloud computing business. Oracle lost \$4.05, or 7.7 percent, to \$48.74.

Boeing rose \$3.77, or 1.5 percent, to \$249 as the aerospace company continued to set record highs. Its stock is up 60 percent in 2017. Stocks in the UK slumped to a four-month low and the pound rose to its highest level since mid-2016, after Bank of England officials confirmed they are close to raising interest rates for the first time in a decade. The first step could happen as soon as November. Many companies on the British FTSE 100 are multi-nationals whose overseas earnings are dim-

## WALL STREET WEEKLY MARKET REPORT



**NEW YORK:** This file photo shows a sign for Wall Street carved into the side of a building in New York. —AP

ished in value when the pound appreciates against other currencies.

The pound surged to \$1.3571 from \$1.3398, its highest since mid-2016. The FTSE 100 fell 1.1 percent after a 1.1-percent loss Thursday. UK stocks did not appear to be affected by a bomb attack on a London subway train. Police said an improvised explosive device hurt more

than 20 people, but none of the injuries appeared to be life-threatening.

Credit monitoring companies continued to fall as Senate Democrats introduced a bill that would prevent the companies from charging fees to consumers who want their credit frozen. In many states, the companies collect fees in return for freezing accounts.

Some consumers have chosen to freeze their credit after Equifax said the personal information of 143 million Americans was exposed after a breach of its systems. Those consumers are trying to prevent identity thieves from using their information to open fraudulent accounts.

Equifax fell \$3.68, or 3.8 percent, to a two-year low of \$92.98. The stock began plunging last Friday after the company disclosed the breach, and this week it took its biggest weekly loss since tend of 1998. Rival TransUnion lost \$1.47, or 3.4 percent, to \$41.61 and Experian fell 0.9 percent in London. Bond prices dipped. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 2.20 percent from 2.19 percent. Interest rates also rose, which helped banks, as they stand to make more money from lending. US crude oil finished unchanged at \$49.89 a barrel in New York. It's at its highest price since the end of July. Brent crude, the standard for international oil prices, gained 15 cents to \$55.62 a barrel in London. Wholesale gasoline rose 3 cents to \$1.66 a gallon. Heating oil added 2 cents to \$1.80 a gallon. Natural gas fell 5 cents to \$3.02 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Gold fell \$4.10 to \$1,325.20 an ounce. Silver sank 9 cents to \$17.70 an ounce. Copper lost 1 cent to \$2.95 a pound. The dollar advanced to 110.88 yen from 110.54 yen. The euro rose to \$1.1938 from \$1.1914. Germany's DAX lost 0.2 percent and France's CAC 40 sagged 0.2 percent. Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 index added 0.5 percent. South Korea's Kospi recouped initial losses to end 0.4 percent higher. Hong Kong's Hang Seng edged up 0.1 percent. —AP

# START A NEW ADVENTURE WITH THE FLYDUBAI SALE

AIRLINE OFFERS UP TO 50% OFF BUSINESS AND ECONOMY CLASS FARES TO SELECT DESTINATIONS



Bangkok

**KUWAIT:** Dubai-based flydubai has announced its latest sale, offering up to 50 percent off Business and Economy Class fares to more than 70 destinations around its network. The sale begins on midday 13 September and ends on 26 September for travel from 15 September 2017 to 27 October 2018. The earlier a flight is booked,

the higher the discount on one-way and return fares. Further discounts are available for flydubai OPEN rewards members who will receive an extra 5 percent off fares during the sale period.

OPEN rewards has been designed to make spending and earning rewards points simple, straightforward and instant-

ly rewarding, giving its members the ability to pay for flydubai flights, upgrades and optional extras for any trip on any day, to any destination.

With a network of more than 90 destinations, flydubai has something for everyone. For those looking for a beach holiday, Sri Lanka, Male and Zanzibar offer white

beaches and blue skies for the perfect island getaway. Passengers can explore the historic European Capital cities of Bratislava and Prague or even discover what India, Nepal and Thailand have to offer. The ancient worlds of Georgia, Jordan and Turkey are just some of the unique destinations available, along with the city of

Salalah, a hidden gem on the coast of Oman. flydubai is dedicated to providing its customers with a better travel experience by offering greater choice and flexibility. With flydubai's Business Class, passengers can enjoy a more personalised flying experience while Economy Class offers comfortable seating and a convenient way to travel.



Kathmandu



Sri Lanka—Elephants at Pinnawala



Prague

## LIMAK WINS BID FOR \$570M HIGHWAY PROJECT IN RUSSIA

**ISTANBUL:** Limak Construction, a leading contractor currently constructing landmark projects worldwide, including the new terminal at Kuwait International Airport, has won a \$570 million bid for the construction and operation of the transport corridor between the 5 and 7 highway in Ufa, Russia. The bid was won under a Joint Venture agreement with Russia's VTB Capital to form special purpose company LLC Bashkir Concession Company.

The project will be completed in four years followed by a planned operation period of 25 years. The 12.5-kilometer highway will be made up of four lanes in total, and comprises a 1,250-meter tunnel, several bridges, and viaducts with a total length of 2,600-meters. The road will have a capacity to support 22,700 vehicles a day and connect the city of Ufa from the east to the highway.

Limak Holding Board Member, Serdar Bacakcsz, said: "This project is quite luring for us in terms of its engineering needs as the highway route has both a long tunnel and a number of bridges and viaducts spanning 2,600 meters. At the same time, following our improvement of relations with Russia, this is the largest project in Russia contracted to a Turkish contracting company after the softening of political tension between Turkey and Russia. We believe that both the investment and operation of this project will continue to strengthen relations between our two countries."

Limak was awarded the tender for Kuwait



From left to right, Iyas Munirov, Andrey Kiselev, Nihat Ozdemir and Serdar Bacakcsz

International Airport's New Terminal II Building which is recognized as the largest tender won abroad in a single package by Turkish contractors. In Kuwait Limak was also contracted for the Communicable Diseases Hospital project and the West Abdullah Al-Mubarak Site Infrastructure and Electrical Works project.

Limak will carry out construction of the highway with MARASHSTROY, the company's current partner for the Rostov-on-Don Platov International Airport project scheduled to begin services December 2017.

Established in 1976, Limak Construction is a fully owned subsidiary of Limak Group of Companies, one of the leading conglomerates in Turkey. The Group operates in over 17 countries with more than 50,000 employees and across various sectors, including tourism, cement, energy, infrastructure, airport management and operations, port management, food and aviation.



### AI-EQUIPPED UPCOMING SMARTPHONE BY HUAWEI IN KUWAIT TO BOAST WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL SMARTPHONE CAMERA

**KUWAIT:** With leading smartphone brands finally embracing a dual-lens rear camera set-up on their device, inter-brand competition with one of the hottest mobile trends of the past year is reaching fever pitch. However, with Huawei having implemented dual-camera technology in its mobile phones for over two generations, how will other smartphone manufacturers successfully overcome their latecomer limitations to beat this dual-camera technology pioneer? Put simply, this last minute push may be too little, too late.

Mobile photography is increasingly important in the age of social media. While some smartphone manufacturers marketed external camera modules to help take professional quality photos, the increase in size and weight meant consumers had to sacrifice the portability of their device. Knowing that the most indispensable characteristics of a smartphone could not be sacrificed, Huawei pioneered the use of a dual camera design that enables both a slim body and extraordinary photography performance.

In order to attain the best imaging quality, Huawei partnered with Leica, the leader in the world of imaging for more than 100 years, in a joint effort to develop dual camera mobile phones. Huawei and Leica's dual camera system has been applied on three generations of Huawei smartphones, and is widely recognized by the mobile phone industry and customers.

The question now is how can dual camera technology evolve further, and what innovative experiences will it bring? Huawei's answer may well be found in its upcoming smartphone series - the HUAWEI Mate 10, touted to hit the global markets shortly. In the teaser video, we can see that Huawei has maintained the same design for the dual-lens camera on the Mate 10. The Leica logo

appears in between the two vertically aligned lenses, with a dual LED flash on the left, and a laser focus module on the right. According to industry insiders, the Mate 10 may come with a dual-lens 20MP rear camera and a dual F1.7 large aperture lens, coupled with the Bolek effect and the double optical zoom feature. The HUAWEI Mate 10 is expected to feature a built-in AI chip that will further enhance its photo-taking abilities. By simulating the techniques of professional photographers, anyone can effortlessly produce professional grade photos. The Mate 10 may very well be the most powerful camera smartphone on the market.

AI has kept hold of people's imaginations and remains a key trend in smartphone technology. Leading technology giants are competing for a leading role in the market and AI has become a platform for the phone makers to create differentiated value.

Aiming to come out on top in an already homogenized smartphone market, Huawei put in place a strategy to coordinate artificial intelligence (AI) development in terms of device, cloud and chip, as early as 2016. This ongoing investment in R&D has paid off and Huawei is set to further boost its dual camera technology with the help of its clearly defined mobile AI chip and mobile AI strategy. Innovation is crucial in a successful AI strategy; something Huawei recognised from the offset. By continually investing in developing its own chips to compete with, the performance of its mobile chips is no longer a concern as Huawei's capabilities in research and development are proven. However, the capabilities and innovation in the upcoming AI chip will certainly be something to look forward to. Huawei has released a short video of "Phone Clone" on their social media account; certainly something to keep an eye on for the future.

### AHLI UNITED BANK AUB MAKES A CUSTOMER'S DREAM COME TRUE WITH KD 250,000 GRAND PRIZE

**KUWAIT:** Ahli United Bank recently conducted its Al-Hassad Islamic account weekly draw, Kuwait's leading Sharia-compliant rewards program that offers a broad range of prizes to the largest number of winners, on the 13 September. The account provides 26 weekly prizes that are comprised of KD 25,000 as a grand prize and 25 other prizes valued at KD 1,000 each. AUB also offers four quarterly prizes that are valued at KD 250,000 to each winner allowing them to achieve their dreams of travelling, studying abroad, or owning their dream home or car.

On this occasion Ahli United Bank announced, "With this draw, we are adding 26 new winners and prizes to the Al-Hassad Islamic account whereby, the total number of winners annually will include more than 1300. The weekly grand prize winner of KD 25,000 Taiba Abdulnabi Kadhem.

25 other winners won prizes of KD 1,000 and are as follows: Rawan Faisal Al Sandan, Salman Younis Mohd, Naqwah Faleh Al Azmi, Rania Omer Abu Salah, Ali H S Al Azemi, Eid Saleh Al Dhafeeri, Saad Abdullah Al Blais, Sameerah Ali Al Kandari, Fatema Mohd Taqi, Nazr Ul Islam Mohammed Nazr Ul Islam, Meshal Turki Al Dabbous, Souad B M Al Bader, Ali Salem Mohammad, Wafaa Taleb Al Naseh, Huda Khalid Mohammad, Ali Sulaiman Abdullah, Samir Ahmed Othman, Soraya Dad Ayob, Zulfqar Ghulam, Ali Rashid Ahmed, Moosa Mohammed Isa, A.Hussain Essa Abdulla, Taibah Mansoor Hussain, Khalil Ebrahim Mohamed, Mahdi Abdulla Buhamad.

Al-Hassad Islamic account's customers in Kuwait and Bahrain are eligible to participate in the draw in line with the program's terms and conditions. Ahli United Bank added, "There are increased opportunities that await our current customers and those who are interested in opening an Al-Hassad Islamic account to benefit from the wide range of prizes and opportunities offered this year."

Individual customers can open their accounts with a minimum deposit of KD 100, qualifying them to enter the draw. For every KD 50 deposited in the account, customers are given one chance to enter the quarterly draw. They must have held the minimum deposit requirement for at least two weeks prior to the draw date. The more deposits made, the higher the chances of winning on a weekly basis.

### OOREDOO PARTNERS WITH SEAS AND DESERTS FOR EXCLUSIVE OFFER

**KUWAIT:** Ooredoo, Kuwait's strongest network, is proud to partner with Seas and Deserts, the official distributor of the world-famous Garmin fitness and navigation devices, for an exclusive offer that enriches customers' lifestyle. The exclusive offer gives customers mobile internet for a whole year, with 200 GB/month bundled together with Garmin Drive Luxe 51 navigation device. The Wi-Fi enabled device benefits from the connection by getting updates from the internet, in addition to offering customers comprehensive navigation with live traffic, using the latest technologies, with the ability of pairing to a smartphone via Bluetooth.

Commenting on this offer, Ooredoo Kuwait in a statement expressed its pride in collaborating with such a reputable company such as Seas and



Deserts, which is the authorized dealer of Garmin, the international fitness and navigation technology brand. Ooredoo stated that this partnership stems from its core values of caring, connecting, and challenging, underscoring that it aims to work towards creating value added services with reputable brand names that complement the lifestyle of its customers. On its part, Seas and Deserts noted that it is proud to collaborate with Ooredoo, Kuwait's strongest network, to deliver unparalleled services to its customers, especially with the vital and indispensable role telecommunications technology plays in everyday life today.

### LABOR REFORM IN FRANCE'S MACRON ECONOMY

**PARIS:** Protestors against President Emmanuel Macron's proposed liberalization of French labor laws were on the streets of the country's cities on Tuesday. The marchers, chanting slogans and brandishing placards, halted traffic as they moved slowly through the streets. A fringe of anarchists broke windows; police responded by firing tear gas. But this was no rerun of the mass marches of past years, let alone the semi-revolutionary eruptions of 1968.

France's second-largest union, the Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) was the only one of the three main workers' organizations that took part. Another protest, this one organized by the far-left France Insoumise (France Unbowed) party is scheduled for Sept. 23. The Tuesday marching columns numbered, nationwide, in the few hundred thousand rather than the many millions hoped for - the police claimed 223,000, the organizers 400,000. There was little effect on production, services or transportation.

It was neither victory nor defeat for either side. Instead, Macron's changes to the vast labor code - hiring and firing will be easier, some workplace issues will be negotiated at company level - hang in the balance. The CGT, the left and the far-right National Front all oppose them, but Macron and his government have a solid, if inexperienced, majority in the Assembly.

More than his predecessors who tried and failed to liberalize France's labor market - the center-right Nicolas Sarkozy and the center-left Francois Hollande - Macron has pinned the credibility of his presidency on systemic, cultural change, a deliberate jolting of French society and economy out of the rut into which he believes it has fallen. He is contemptuous of both former presi-

dents (he knew Hollande well, having been both his advisor and Finance Minister), believing them to have given up too soon and too easily. When Macron spoke, as he did earlier this month, of "slackers," he said when challenged that he meant those who retreated from the necessary surgery on France's body politic. The marchers, however, seized on the word and put it on their placards: "Macron, the slackers will kick you out," read one.

The slackers have a point. Indeed, they have several. Labor productivity in France is relatively good, only a little behind that of the United States and the highest of Europe's major economies. When French workers work, they work well.

Though both Macron's labor and economic reforms have won support from the center-right and from many economists, France remains doubtful, even hostile. Perhaps the best-known Frenchman in political and intellectual circles before Macron was the economist Thomas Piketty, whose "Capital in the 21st Century" (2013) is a best seller and who has excoriated his country both for its steeply rising inequality and its hypocrisy in pretending it is egalitarian. Hypocritical it may be, but it clings to the myth, and perfectly bourgeois Frenchmen and -women may recoil from an obvious widening of the income and wealth gaps.

To put major emphasis on labor reforms may, in any case, not be the main point. Germany liberalized its labor market through the so-called Hartz reforms between 2003 and 2005, but unlike France the German unions were relatively moderate, wage bargaining was already localized and investment was rising. In addition, the costs of German unification had already been paid. — Reuters

## ISYX TECHNOLOGIES UNVEILS NEXT GENERATION MANAGED SERVICES

**DUBAI:** Building on the success of its existing traditional model, ISYX Technologies, a fast-growing IT transformation company in the Middle East and Africa, yesterday unveiled its exclusive future-ready next-generation Managed Services initiative. As part of its new Managed Services offering, the company has also invested in building state-of-the-art network and security operation centers in the UAE, which boasts of cutting-edge infrastructure, robust platform and complementing skill sets with a strong focus on service excellence.

Speaking on the launch, Sharoon Shamsuddin, CEO of ISYX Technologies said, "Technology is transforming business at an extraordinary pace. At ISYX, we bring best-of-breed technologies and practices that can help our clients transform and thrive on the change. With our wide spectrum of services offerings, we help clients harness the power of innova-



**Mahesh Joshi**



**Sharoon Shamsuddin**

tion to create new business outcomes. With this revitalized next-generation Managed Services added to our portfolio, we begin a new chapter in our clients' transformation journey. Our services offer simplified hybrid infrastructure and applications management

with modular services." "Customers are moving beyond simply seeking cost savings to bigger benefits like becoming more agile and effective. ISYX uses advanced automation and analytics to manage critical IT components. With this combination, we improve and deliver managed services more efficiently, enabling customers to focus on their core competence," added Mahesh Joshi, Practice Head - Managed Services, ISYX Technologies.

### ISYX's next-generation Managed Services portfolio includes:

- \* Application Operations (App Ops) and Support Services
- \* Datacenter and Infrastructure Services
- \* Infrastructure Transformation
- \* Network Services
- \* Service Management

- \* Service Desk
- \* Workplace Services
- \* Security Services

The company delivers efficient, scalable and secure IT services through its robust integrated platform built on ITIL standards, which ensures service delivery aligned to ISO 20000 & 27001 standards.

"With the hyper-competitive nature of the economy, businesses are now looking for ways to reduce costs and create value and the managed services domain is no exception. In order to provide our clients a seamless digital transformation journey that will enhance their competitiveness in the marketplace, we have launched our next-generation Managed Services portfolio, which is a unique blend of smart tools and techniques providing operational efficiencies, higher productivity and enhanced user experience," Mr. Joshi concluded.

## RANSOMWARE: ORGANIZATIONS MUST DISRUPT CYBER ATTACKS BEFORE THEY BECOME BUSINESS DISRUPTER

**DUBAI:** Dimension Data, the global ICT services and solutions provider, and Cisco, have joined forces and published a white paper to help organizations stay ahead of ransomware threats. Called Ransomware: The Pervasive Business Disrupter or the paper looks at ransomware trends and impacts, and how to respond before a threat becomes a business disrupter.

According to a Cisco 2017 Mid-Year Cyber Security Report, ransomware is one of the main threats to digital business. Globally, around 49% of businesses experienced at least one cyber ransom attack in 2016, and of those, 39% were ransomware attacks. In the US alone, the number of attacks rose 300% from 2015 to 2016.

This trend can be attributed to the growth of ransomware-as-a-service (RaaS) in the first half of 2017, where cyber criminals pay the operators of RaaS platforms to launch attacks.

as-a-service in the first half of 2017, where threat actors with malicious intent pay operators of ransomware-as-a-service platforms to launch such attacks. The growth of digitally connected global enterprises means that no single country can remain isolated. It also means that enterprises in the Middle East can expect more sophisticated attacks, more frequently, and with more unpredictability going forward. The only protection for them is to follow more rigorous security protection measures," adds Mechelle Buys Du Plessis, Managing Director, Dimension Data Middle East.

### The ransomware white paper includes a six-point framework for organisations to adopt to defend against a ransomware attack:

\* Predict and be informed before the attack occurs: Proactively research what's discussed on the dark web, new exploits that will be used, and industries or companies that will be targeted.

\* Protect: Identity and access management (IAM) tools are essential to protecting enterprise devices and computing assets. Network access control (NAC) ensures that only devices that have the adequate security settings and adhere to IT security policies are able to access corporate systems.

\* Detect: Technologies should be in place to detect anomalies in the infrastructure, in the event that malware has infiltrated the endpoints or network. The network must be monitored to check for indicators of compromise. Turning on AI-enabled malicious traffic detection, can also help automate detection swiftly before the attack worsens.

\* Respond: When a ransomware incident has been detected, security experts must work fast to block malicious communication channels at the firewall or IPS, and quarantine infected machines.

\* Recover: Backup is a critical part of the strategy for fast recovery. In addition, the backup system needs to prevent the replication of files that were maliciously encrypted by ransomware. This can be achieved with dynamic segmentation and inherent security features.

"Recent ransomware attacks have highlighted the fact that improvements are needed in any industry or any size of the organisation. With the right framework, tools and processes, companies will become better equipped to disrupt the ransomware attack before it becomes the business' disruptor," says Gyde.



**Mechelle Buys Du Plessis**



**Matthew Gyde**

"The escalation in ransomware attacks in the digital economy makes every organisation a target," says Matthew Gyde, Group Executive - Security. "This risk escalated when crypto currency and bitcoin became a common avenue for ransom payment. That's because cybercriminals cannot be traced. And as more employees work remotely on personal devices, the risk is further compounded." "Deep threat intelligence and research are key to outsmarting cybercriminals, and a critical success factor is to disrupt the attack before it becomes the business disruptor," Gyde explains. "But security controls alone are not sufficient to address a ransomware threat, and organisations need to adopt a multi-layered approach to stop the cyber kill chain. This means identifying emerging threats before an attack, quick detection, a swift response to an attack, all the way through to the backup and recovery process."

"Middle East organisations need to be aware of the rapid growth of ransomware-



**DETROIT:** This May 2, 2017, photo provided by Intel and Major League Baseball shows a "fan" view from a baseball game in Detroit. The virtual-reality coverage includes a view using standard television cameras, top center, showing the pitcher, batter and catcher in one shot. Major League Baseball, in a partnership with Intel, has had a free game in VR every Tuesday, subject to blackouts of hometown teams. — AP

## SPORTS IN VIRTUAL REALITY SOUNDS COOL, BUT CAN FEEL DISTANT

**NEW YORK:** When watching sports in virtual reality, it's best to remind yourself that TV wasn't born in a day. Early television was mostly radio with pictures. It took years - even decades - for producers to figure out the right camera angles, graphics and instant replays to deliver.

Sports is going through a similar transformation. VR holds the promise of putting fans right in the middle of the sporting action - on the 50-yard line, say, or in a ringside seat, or standing behind the catcher as the umpire calls strikes.

But today's VR sports have an empty and distant feel to them. Watching through a headset sometimes feels like being there in the stadium ... by yourself, absent cheering fans, hot dogs and beer. And it doesn't get you close enough to the action to compensate.

For now, the zoom lenses of television cameras do a much better job of showing a pitcher's intensity or a free-throw shooter's concentration. Yet Intel, NextVR and other companies are working to bring a variety of sports - boxing, golf, soccer, you name it - to VR. Major League Baseball has delivered a free game in VR every Tuesday (subject to blackouts of hometown teams); next week, it's the Colorado Rockies playing the Giants in San Francisco. To enjoy it, it's best to think about what VR could be, rather than what it is now.

catcher's back from behind home plate. Maybe it's best not to think of VR as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, television. Baseball does this well with its At Bat VR app, which requires a subscription starting at \$87 for the season (discounted to \$8 now that the season is almost over). Instead of VR video, you get a perspective from behind home plate, with graphical depictions of each pitch. A colored streak - red for strikes and green for balls - traces the ball's trajectory, using sensors in place at all major-league stadiums. You're getting more information than you would with regular television, without missing out on what TV does best - the close-ups.

The TV coverage appears on a virtual scoreboard in the outfield. You need an Android phone and headset compatible with Google's Daydream system. The app isn't available on iPhones or Samsung Gear VR headsets, though Samsung's Galaxy S8 and Note 8 phones work with Daydream headsets. (On the flip side, Intel's baseball coverage works just on Gear VR with Samsung phones - not Daydream.)

Some of what VR does really well comes in the form of highlight videos and player profiles. These are usually just a few minutes long. And because

these were produced during practice and other non-game settings, the VR camera can take you to more interesting locations. For a series on up-and-coming baseball players, one camera was just in front of second base, and another was in the bullpen during a pitcher's warmup.

It feels as though you're getting access you wouldn't get on television or in person. So why couldn't a VR camera show relief pitchers warming up during games, too? In an interview, Aufhauser says Major League Baseball and the individual teams will need to get more comfortable with VR before expanding camera access. For now, he says, producers look for other places that won't get in the way, such as the swimming pool near center field at Arizona's Chase Field or the tall "Green Monster" wall at Boston's Fenway Park.

And forget about placing cameras in the middle of the field. Instead, Intel has alternative technology that integrates footage from dozens of cameras surrounding the field to depict how a play would have looked to a player. Television networks are using this now to show as instant replays. Computers aren't powerful enough yet to do this live - but Aufhauser says that's the hope one day. — AP



**CLEVELAND:** This May 16, 2017, photo provided by Intel and Major League Baseball shows a producer with a choice of camera feeds at a baseball game in Cleveland. Major League Baseball, in a partnership with Intel, has had a free game in VR every Tuesday, subject to blackouts of hometown teams. — AP

### How to fight back using a ransomware defence framework



**The trouble with VR**  
Start with some of the weird artifacts of VR. Many sporting productions don't actually give you a full 360-degree view, one of the main attractions of the medium. Instead, they often block out what's behind you. The reasoning is obvious - you're focused on the game and not other fans - but even television has cameras pointed at the stands.

Worse, VR camera placement is often downright odd. During the March Madness college basketball tournament, for instance, a coach or another camera operator would sometimes stand right in front of the VR camera, blocking the game play. The VR camera was also at floor level, which leaves you feeling as if you were watching while lying down by the court.

A VR camera in a baseball dugout should offer a unique perspective on the game - but in practice, what you often see are players' legs as they walk by. Any competent sports cameraman could have framed the shot better. (Intel Sports executive David Aufhauser says those blemishes add realism, much the way people can walk in front of you at a stadium.)

In Intel's baseball coverage, in fact, some of the best views come from a standard camera that captures the pitcher, batter and catcher in one shot. It's sequestered in a box within the virtual environment - which itself is sometimes just showing the

## EQUIFAX EXECUTIVES DEPARTS AFTER HUGE DATA BREACH

**NEW YORK:** Equifax announced late Friday that its chief information officer and chief security officer would leave the company immediately, following the enormous breach of 143 million Americans' personal information.

It also presented a litany of security efforts it made after noticing suspicious network traffic in July. The credit data company said that Susan Mauldin, who had been the top security officer, and David Webb, the chief technology officer, are retiring from Equifax. Mauldin, a college music major, had come under media scrutiny for her qualifications in security. Equifax did not say in its statement what retirement packages the executives would receive.

Mauldin is being replaced by Russ Ayers, an information technology executive inside Equifax. Webb is being replaced by Mark Rohrwasser, who most recently was in charge of Equifax's international technology operations. Equifax has been under intense public pressure since it disclosed last week that hackers accessed or stole the millions of Social Security numbers, birthdates and other information. On Friday it gave its most detailed timeline of the breach yet, saying it noticed suspicious network traffic on July 29 associated with its U.S. online dispute portal web application. Equifax said it believes the access occurred from May 13 through July 30.

Equifax had said earlier that it identified a

weakness in an open-source software package called Apache Struts as the technological crack that allowed hackers to heist the data from the massive database maintained primarily for lenders.

That disclosure, made late Wednesday, cast the company's damaging security lapse in an even harsher light. The software problem was detected in March and a recommended software patch was released shortly afterward.

Equifax said its security officials were "aware of this vulnerability at that time, and took efforts to identify and to patch any vulnerable systems in the company's IT infrastructure." The company said it hired Mandiant, a business often brought in to deal with major

technology security problems at big companies, to do a forensic review.

Equifax has been castigated for how it has handled the breach, which it did not disclose publicly for weeks after discovering it. Consumers calling the number Equifax set up initially complained of jammed phone lines and uninformed representatives, and initial responses from the website gave inconsistent responses. The company says it has addressed many of those problems. Equifax also said Friday it would continue to allow people to place credit freezes on their reports without a fee through November 21. Originally the company offered fee-free credit freezes for 30 days after the incident.

Equifax is facing a myriad of investigations and class-action lawsuits for this breach, including Congressional investigations, queries by the Federal Trade Commission and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, as well as several state attorneys general. The company's CEO Richard Smith is scheduled to testify in front of Congress in early October.

Three Equifax executives - not the ones who are departing - sold shares worth a combined \$1.8 million just a few days after the company discovered the breach, according to documents filed with securities regulators. Equifax shares have lost a third of their value since it announced the breach. — AP

## STUDY: HORMONE PILLS DON'T SHORTEN OLDER WOMEN'S LIVES

**CHICAGO:** Taking hormone pills for several years after menopause didn't shorten older women's lifespans, according to the longest follow-up yet of landmark research that transformed thinking on risks and benefits of a once popular treatment.

That research was halted early when unexpected harms were found from using replacement hormones - estrogen alone or with progestin - versus dummy pills for five to seven years. More breast cancer, heart attacks and strokes occurred in women on combined pills, and those on estrogen pills had more strokes. But about 18 years of follow-up show that despite those risks, women had similar rates of deaths from heart disease, breast cancer and all other causes as those who took dummy pills.

The new results are reassuring and support current advice: Hormones may be appropriate for some women when used short-term to relieve hot flashes and other bothersome menopause symptoms, said

Dr JoAnn Manson, preventive medicine chief at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital and lead author of the follow-up report.

"It's the ultimate bottom line," said Manson, who was also part of the original research. Women want to know "is this medication going to kill me" and the answer appears to be no, she said. Results were published Tuesday in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Hormones were once considered a fountain of youth for women entering menopause because of weak evidence suggesting a host of purported benefits including reducing heart disease and boosting memory. The landmark research, backed by the US government, began in the early 1990s to rigorously test hormones' effects in older women randomly assigned to take the pills or dummy treatment. Brands studied were Prempro estrogen-progestin pills and Premarin estrogen-only pills.

### Age-related diseases

The results led to advice against taking hormones to prevent age-related diseases. When used for menopause symptoms, the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible time was recommended, then as now. For some women already facing health risks, hormones' potential harms may outweigh any benefits, and discussions with a doctor about starting the treatment are advised. Participants were aged 50 to 79 and past menopause, older than typical users, and took larger doses than currently recommended.

The follow-up involved most of the more than 27,000 women who were part of the original research. It included time using pills and about 10 or so years after stopping. Some earlier follow-ups suggested no increased risk of death in hormone users, but Manson said this is the first to focus only on deaths from various causes. — AP



**BOSTON:** In this Dec 12, 2002 file photo, Dr JoAnn Manson poses with a printout from a study she directed on hormone replacement therapy for women at her office. — AP



**ROCKVILLE:** In this Aug 27, 2010 file photo, a nurse practitioner prepares a flu vaccination in Rockville, MD. A puzzling study of US pregnancies suggests that women who received back-to-back flu shots between 2010 and 2012 after a new swine flu vaccine came out more often had miscarriages. — AP

## STUDY PROMPTS CALL TO EXAMINE FLU VACCINE AND MISCARRIAGE

**NEW YORK:** A puzzling study of US pregnancies found that women who had miscarriages between 2010 and 2012 were more likely to have had back-to-back annual flu shots that included protection against swine flu. Vaccine experts think the results may reflect the older age and other miscarriage risks for the women, and not the flu shots. Health officials say there is no reason to change the government recommendation that all pregnant women be vaccinated against the flu. They say the flu itself is a much greater danger to women and their fetuses.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reached out to a doctor's group, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, to warn them the study is coming out and help them prepare for a potential wave of worry from expectant moms, CDC officials said. "I want the CDC and researchers to continue to investigate this," said Dr. Laura Riley, a Boston-based obstetrician who leads a committee on maternal immunization. "But as an advocate for pregnant women, what I hope doesn't happen is that people panic and stop getting vaccinated."

Past studies have found flu vaccines are safe during pregnancy, though there's been little research on impact of flu vaccinations given in

the first three months of pregnancy. This study focused only on miscarriages, which occur in the first 19 weeks of pregnancy and are common. As many as half of pregnancies end in miscarriage, according to a March of Dimes estimate that tries to include instances in which the miscarriage occurs before a woman even realizes she was pregnant.

### Thousands killed

Flu and its complications kill thousands of Americans every year. The elderly, young children and pregnant women are especially at risk. When a new "swine flu" strain emerged in 2009, it killed 56 US pregnant women that year, according to the CDC. The study's authors, two of whom are CDC researchers, saw a big difference when they looked at women who had miscarried within 28 days of getting a shot that included protection against swine flu, but it was only when the women also had had a flu shot the previous season. They found 17 of 485 miscarriages they studied involved women whose vaccinations followed that pattern. Just four of a comparable 485 healthy pregnancies involved women who were vaccinated that way.

The first group also had more women who were at higher risk for miscarriage, like older moms and smokers and those with diabetes.

The researchers tried to make statistical adjustments to level out some of those differences but some researchers don't think they completely succeeded. Other experts said they don't believe a shot made from killed flu virus could trigger an immune system response severe enough to prompt a miscarriage. And the authors said they couldn't rule out the possibility that exposure to swine flu itself was a factor in some miscarriages.

Two other medical journals rejected the article before a third, *Vaccine*, accepted it. Dr Gregory Poland, *Vaccine*'s editor-in-chief, said it was a well-designed study that raised a question that shouldn't be ignored. But he doesn't believe flu shots caused the miscarriages. "Not at all," said Poland, who also is director of vaccine research at the Mayo Clinic.

Though this study may cause worry and confusion, it is evidence "of just how rigorous and principled our vaccine safety monitoring system is," said Jason Schwartz, a Yale University vaccine policy expert. Some of the same researchers are working on a larger study looking at more recent data to see if a possible link between swine flu vaccine and miscarriage holds up, said James Donahue, a study author from the Wisconsin-based Marshfield Clinic Research Institute. The results aren't expected until next year at the earliest, he said. — AP

## AGE MATTERS WHEN IT COMES TO SCREENING FOR CERVICAL CANCER

**WASHINGTON:** Getting checked for cervical cancer isn't one-size-fits-all: Millions of women may soon have to decide between a routine Pap or a newer test that detects if they have a cancer-causing virus. Draft national guidelines released Tuesday for the first time say either option is reasonable for certain women - those ages 30 to 65.

Paps, a mainstay for women's health for decades, can spot pre-cancerous abnormalities in time to prevent cancer. Newer HPV tests detect the virus that causes nearly all of that cancer, and while they're widely used to confirm Pap results, most US medical groups haven't yet pushed them as a stand-alone alternative for screening. Tuesday's proposal doesn't signal an imminent end to the Pap era. Paps, not HPV tests, still are recommended for screening women in their 20s, stressed the guidelines from the US Preventive Services Task Force. And don't let the which-test debate blur the main message: "Screening for cervical cancer saves lives," said Task Force member Dr. Carol Mangione of the University of California, Los Angeles. Today, too many women still miss out. Some things to know:

### Cervical cancer still a threat

Cervical cancer has dropped dramatically over the past half-century thanks to Pap testing. Still, this year an estimated 12,820 US women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer, and about 4,200 will die. Most haven't been screened, or have gone too long between checks. Paps examine cells scraped from the cervix. HPV testing looks for high-risk strains of the human papillomavirus, the nation's most common sexually transmitted infection. According to the

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, just about everyone will get at least one strain at some point in their lives. But only certain strains cause cervical cancer - and only if they linger long enough in the body.

### Age matters

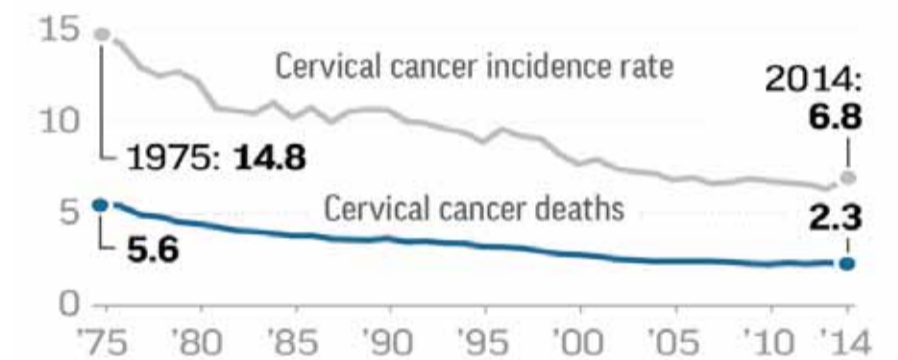
Otherwise healthy women need a Pap every three years from age 21 to 29, agree most U.S. physician groups and the draft Task Force guidelines. Cervical cancer grows so slowly that regular Paps can find a problem early enough to treat. While the Food and Drug Administration has approved an HPV test for women as young as 25, national guidelines have long recommended Pap screening for 20-somethings. That age group is most likely to get HPV - and the vast majority of the time their bodies clear the infection before it harms.

### What changes at age 30?

The older you get, the greater the chance that an HPV infection is the yearslong, harmful kind. To better catch those cases, today what's called co-testing is increasingly common for women 30 and over - a Pap-plus-HPV test combination. If the results of both tests are negative, women can wait five years to test again. But both Paps and HPV testing can trigger false alarms, prompting unneeded, and sometimes harmful, additional care to rule out cancer. New studies show co-testing leads to more false alarms than either test alone, without adding benefit. That spurred Tuesday's Task Force proposal to let women 30 and over choose an HPV test by itself every five years - or a Pap every three years instead. The proposal is open for public comment through Oct. 9, before it will be finalized. — AP

## Cervical cancer rates

Incidence rates and deaths per 100,000 women:



Graphic shows rate of cervical cancer in the US. — AP

# CLINIC PAGE



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# Maarafi, Bukhamseen families celebrate wedding



Sadeq Ibrahim Maarafi celebrated the wedding of his son Ahmad to the daughter of Emad Bukhamseen at the Maarafi Diwan on Thursday, Sept 14, 2017. State officials, diplomats and other dignitaries attended the event. — Photos by Joseph Shagra







|       |                    |
|-------|--------------------|
| 00:45 | Snake Sheila       |
| 03:25 | Swamp Brothers     |
| 03:50 | Swamp Brothers     |
| 05:02 | Bad Dog            |
| 05:49 | Bad Dog            |
| 06:36 | Going Ape          |
| 07:00 | Going Ape          |
| 07:25 | Whale Wars         |
| 08:15 | Treehouse Masters  |
| 09:10 | Treehouse Masters  |
| 10:05 | Treehouse Masters  |
| 11:00 | Treehouse Masters  |
| 11:55 | Treehouse Masters  |
| 12:50 | After The Attack   |
| 13:45 | Wild Animal Rescue |
| 14:40 | The Vet Life       |
| 15:35 | Swamp Brothers     |
| 16:03 | Swamp Brothers     |
| 16:30 | Swamp Brothers     |
| 16:58 | Swamp Brothers     |
| 17:25 | Snake Sheila       |
| 17:53 | Snake Sheila       |
| 20:10 | Expedition Mungo   |
| 19:15 | Shark After Dark   |
| 20:10 | Project Grizzly    |
| 21:05 | Bahama Blue        |
| 22:00 | Bahama Blue        |
| 22:55 | Untamed & Uncut    |
| 23:50 | Untamed & Uncut    |



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| 00:00 | Paranormal State         |
| 01:00 | The Haunting Of...       |
| 02:00 | The Killing Of Jonben... |
| 04:00 | Paranormal State         |
| 05:00 | The Haunting Of...       |
| 06:00 | The First 48             |
| 07:00 | The First 48             |
| 08:00 | Fred Dineage: Murder     |
| 09:00 | Casebook                 |
| 09:00 | Deadly Wives             |
| 10:00 | Diabolical Women         |
| 11:00 | Evil Up Close            |
| 14:00 | Nightmare In Suburbia    |
| 15:00 | Nightmare In Suburbia    |
| 16:00 | Homicide Hunter          |
| 17:00 | Homicide Hunter          |
| 18:00 | Cold Case Files          |
| 19:00 | Cold Case Files          |
| 20:00 | The First 48             |
| 21:00 | Homicide Hunter          |
| 22:00 | I Didn't Do It           |
| 23:00 | Killer Kids              |



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| 00:30 | Destroyed In Seconds       |
| 02:00 | Alaska Gold Diggers        |
| 03:00 | Alaska Gold Diggers        |
| 03:50 | Finding Bigfoot            |
| 04:40 | Finding Bigfoot            |
| 05:30 | Nextworld                  |
| 06:20 | How It's Made              |
| 06:40 | How It's Made              |
| 07:00 | Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild       |
| 07:25 | Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild       |
| 07:50 | Dick 'n' Dom Go Wild       |
| 08:15 | Awesome Adventures         |
| 08:40 | How It's Made              |
| 12:50 | Destroyed In Seconds       |
| 13:15 | Destroyed In Seconds       |
| 13:40 | Destroyed In Seconds       |
| 14:05 | Destroyed In Seconds       |
| 14:30 | Destroyed In Seconds       |
| 14:55 | Destroyed In Seconds       |
| 15:20 | Destroyed In Seconds       |
| 17:00 | Nextworld                  |
| 17:50 | Nextworld                  |
| 18:40 | Dynamo A-Z Special         |
| 19:30 | Serious Explorers          |
| 19:55 | Serious Explorers          |
| 20:20 | Space Dealers              |
| 21:10 | Engineering The Impossible |
| 22:00 | Finding Bigfoot            |
| 22:50 | Finding Bigfoot            |
| 23:40 | Finding Bigfoot            |



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| 00:30 | Sin City Justice                          |
| 01:20 | Who Killed Angle Dodge: Keith Morrison... |
| 02:10 | Evil Online                               |
| 03:00 | I Am Homicide                             |
| 03:48 | Forbidden: Dying For Love                 |
| 04:38 | Your Worst Nightmare                      |
| 05:24 | Disappeared                               |
| 06:12 | Fatal Encounters                          |
| 07:00 | Disappeared                               |
| 07:50 | Disappeared                               |
| 08:40 | Disappeared                               |
| 09:30 | Disappeared                               |
| 10:20 | Disappeared                               |
| 11:10 | Grave Secrets                             |
| 12:00 | Swamp Murders                             |
| 12:50 | Swamp Murders                             |
| 13:40 | Swamp Murders                             |
| 14:30 | Swamp Murders                             |
| 15:20 | Swamp Murders                             |
| 16:10 | Fatal Encounters                          |
| 17:00 | Blood Relatives                           |
| 17:50 | Blood Relatives                           |
| 18:40 | Blood Relatives                           |
| 19:30 | Blood Relatives                           |
| 20:20 | Blood Relatives                           |
| 21:10 | Betrayed                                  |
| 22:00 | Disappeared                               |
| 22:50 | Devil In The Details                      |
| 23:40 | True Nightmares                           |

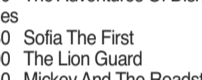


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| 00:00 | Hank Zipper                              |
| 00:25 | Alex & Co.                               |
| 00:45 | The Hive                                 |
| 00:50 | Evermoor Chronicles                      |
| 01:15 | Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch       |
| 01:40 | Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch       |
| 02:05 | Binny And The Ghost                      |
| 02:30 | Binny And The Ghost                      |
| 02:55 | Hank Zipper                              |
| 03:15 | The Hive                                 |
| 03:20 | Hank Zipper                              |
| 03:45 | Alex & Co.                               |
| 04:10 | Alex & Co.                               |
| 04:35 | Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch       |
| 05:00 | Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch       |
| 05:25 | Binny And The Ghost                      |
| 05:45 | The Hive                                 |
| 05:50 | Rolling With The Fonks                   |
| 06:00 | Jessie                                   |
| 06:25 | Liv And Maddie                           |
| 06:50 | Austin & Ally                            |
| 07:15 | Tsum Tsum Shorts                         |
| 07:20 | The Zhuzhus                              |
| 07:45 | Elena Of Avalor                          |
| 08:10 | Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir |
| 08:35 | Kirby Meets World                        |
| 08:50 | Bizaardvark                              |
| 09:25 | Stuck In The Middle                      |
| 09:50 | K.C. Undercover                          |
| 10:15 | Bunk'd                                   |
| 10:40 | Cheetah Girls 2                          |
| 12:15 | Descendants Wicked World                 |
| 12:20 | Liv And Maddie                           |
| 12:45 | Liv And Maddie                           |

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| 13:10 | Liv And Maddie                           |
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| 15:40 | Liv And Maddie                           |
| 16:05 | Descendants Wicked World                 |
| 16:10 | Liv And Maddie                           |
| 16:35 | Liv And Maddie                           |
| 17:00 | Liv And Maddie                           |
| 17:25 | Cheetah Girls: One World                 |
| 18:45 | The Zhuzhus                              |
| 19:00 | Star Darlings                            |
| 19:05 | Best Friends Whenever                    |
| 19:30 | Liv And Maddie                           |
| 19:55 | Elena Of Avalor                          |
| 20:20 | Jessie                                   |
| 20:45 | Bizaardvark                              |
| 21:10 | Austin & Ally                            |
| 21:35 | Stuck In The Middle                      |
| 22:00 | Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir |
| 22:25 | Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir |
| 22:50 | Lolirock                                 |
| 23:10 | Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch       |
| 23:35 | Binny And The Ghost                      |



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| 00:00 | Henry Hugglemonster              |
| 00:15 | Calimero                         |
| 00:30 | Art Attack                       |
| 00:55 | Zou                              |
| 01:05 | Loopidoo                         |
| 01:20 | Henry Hugglemonster              |
| 01:35 | Calimero                         |
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| 02:05 | Art Attack                       |
| 02:30 | Henry Hugglemonster              |
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| 06:00 | Zou                              |
| 06:15 | Calimero                         |
| 06:30 | Loopidoo                         |
| 06:45 | Henry Hugglemonster              |
| 07:00 | My Friends Tigger & Pooh         |
| 07:30 | Goldie & Bear                    |
| 08:00 | Mickey And The Roadster Racers   |
| 08:30 | Doc McStuffins                   |
| 09:00 | The Adventures Of Disney Fairies |
| 09:30 | Sofia The First                  |
| 10:00 | The Lion Guard                   |
| 10:30 | Mickey And The Roadster Racers   |
| 11:00 | Jake And The Never Land Pirates  |
| 11:30 | Jake And The Never Land Pirates  |
| 12:00 | Jake And The Never Land Pirates  |
| 12:30 | Jake And The Never Land Pirates  |
| 13:00 | The Adventures Of Disney Fairies |
| 13:30 | The Adventures Of Disney Fairies |
| 14:00 | The Adventures Of Disney Fairies |
| 14:30 | Lady And The Tramp               |
| 14:55 | Doc McStuffins                   |
| 15:20 | My Friends Tigger & Pooh         |
| 16:00 | The Lion Guard                   |
| 16:30 | Sofia The First                  |
| 17:00 | The Lion Guard                   |
| 17:30 | Sofia The First                  |
| 18:00 | Jake And The Never Land Pirates  |
| 18:30 | Mickey Mouse Clubhouse           |
| 19:00 | The Adventures Of Disney Fairies |
| 19:35 | The Lion Guard                   |
| 20:05 | Goldie & Bear                    |
| 20:35 | Mickey And The Roadster Racers   |
| 21:05 | Doc McStuffins                   |
| 21:35 | Miles From Tomorrow              |
| 21:50 | Jake And The Never Land Pirates  |
| 22:20 | Sofia The First                  |
| 22:50 | PJ Masks                         |
| 23:20 | Henry Hugglemonster              |
| 23:40 | Loopidoo                         |



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| 00:00 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 01:00 | Restaurant Stakeout                    |
| 02:00 | Mystery Diners                         |
| 03:00 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 04:00 | Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives            |
| 04:30 | Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives            |
| 05:00 | Guy's Grocery Games                    |
| 06:00 | Roadtrip With G. Garvin                |
| 06:50 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 07:15 | Chopped                                |
| 08:05 | Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics      |
| 08:55 | The Pioneer Woman                      |
| 09:20 | The Pioneer Woman                      |
| 09:50 | Siba's Table: Fast Feasts              |
| 10:50 | Bake With Anna Olson                   |
| 11:20 | Chopped                                |
| 12:10 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 12:35 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 13:05 | Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives            |
| 14:00 | Chopped                                |
| 15:00 | Barefoot Contessa                      |
| 16:00 | The Pioneer Woman                      |
| 17:00 | Siba's Table                           |
| 18:00 | Bake With Anna Olson                   |
| 19:00 | Bake With Anna Olson                   |
| 19:30 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 20:00 | Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives            |
| 21:00 | Siba's Table                           |
| 21:30 | Siba's Table                           |
| 22:00 | Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy |
| 22:30 | Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy |
| 23:00 | Chopped                                |



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|-------|-----------------------------|
| 00:20 | What On Earth?              |
| 01:05 | Street Outlaws: New Orleans |
| 01:50 | Street Outlaws: New Orleans |
| 02:35 | Street Outlaws: New Orleans |
| 03:20 | Street Outlaws: New Orleans |
| 04:05 | Street Outlaws: New Orleans |
| 04:50 | Street Outlaws: New Orleans |
| 05:35 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 06:00 | Deadiest Catch              |
| 06:45 | Wheeler Dealers             |
| 07:30 | Fast N' Loud                |
| 08:15 | The Island With Bear Grylls |
| 09:00 | Storage Wars Canada         |
| 09:25 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 09:47 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 10:10 | Edge Of Alaska              |
| 10:55 | Legend Of Croc God          |
| 11:40 | So You Think You'd Survive? |
| 12:25 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 12:47 | Storage Wars Canada         |
| 13:10 | Alaska: The Last Frontier   |
| 13:15 | The Island With Bear Grylls |
| 14:40 | Deadiest Catch              |
| 15:25 | Fast N' Loud                |
| 16:10 | Wheeler Dealers             |
| 17:00 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 17:25 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 17:50 | Storage Wars Canada         |
| 18:20 | Storage Wars Canada         |
| 18:50 | The Island With Bear Grylls |
| 19:40 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 20:10 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 20:35 | How Do They Do It?          |
| 21:00 | Idris Elba: No Limits       |
| 21:50 | Harley And The Davidson     |
| 23:30 | Fast N' Loud                |



|       |                            |
|-------|----------------------------|
| 06:00 | Penn Zero: Part Time Hero  |
| 06:25 | Supa Strikas               |
| 06:50 | Marvel Ultimate Spider-Man |
| 07:15 | Right Now Kapow            |
| 07:40 | Walk The Prank             |
| 08:05 | Marvel's Rocket And Groot  |
| 08:10 | K.C. Undercover            |
| 08:35 | Milo Murphy's Law          |
| 09:00 | Disney11                   |
| 09:25 | Disney11                   |
| 09:50 | Disney11                   |
| 10:20 | Disney11                   |
| 10:45 | Disney11                   |
| 11:10 | Lab Rats                   |
| 11:35 | Mech-X4                    |
| 12:00 | Walk The Prank             |
| 12:30 | Star vs The Forces Of Evil |
| 12:55 | Kirby Buckets              |
| 13:20 | Gamer's Guide To Pretty... |
| 13:45 | Kirby Buckets              |
| 14:10 | Disney Mickey Mouse        |
| 14:15 | Milo Murphy's Law          |
| 14:40 | K.C. Undercover            |
| 15:05 | Lab Rats: Bionic Island    |
| 15:30 | Walk The Prank             |
| 15:55 | Right Now Kapow            |

|       |                                |
|-------|--------------------------------|
| 16:25 | Supa Strikas                   |
| 16:50 | Supa Strikas                   |
| 17:15 | Mech-X4                        |
| 17:40 | Gravity Falls                  |
| 18:05 | Milo Murphy's Law              |
| 18:30 | Marvel's Ant-Man               |
| 18:35 | Lab Rats                       |
| 19:00 | Kirby Buckets                  |
| 19:25 | Walk The Prank                 |
| 19:50 | Marvel's Rocket And Groot      |
| 19:55 | Right Now Kapow                |
| 20:20 | Mech-X4                        |
| 20:45 | Mighty Med                     |
| 21:10 | K.C. Undercover                |
| 21:35 | Marvel's Ant-Man               |
| 21:40 | Disney Mickey Mouse            |
| 21:45 | Lab Rats                       |
| 22:10 | Lab Rats                       |
| 22:35 | Phineas And Ferb               |
| 23:00 | Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA |



|       |                                   |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 00:00 | WAGs Miami                        |
| 00:55 | WAGs Miami                        |
| 01:50 | E! News                           |
| 02:50 | Celebrity Style Story             |
| 03:50 | Celebrity Style Story             |
| 04:40 | Mariah's World                    |
| 05:30 | Celebrity Style Story             |
| 06:00 | Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry |
| 06:50 | E! News                           |
| 07:20 | Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry |
| 08:10 | E! News                           |
| 09:10 | Keeping Up With The Kardashians   |
| 14:40 | Keeping Up With The Kardashians   |
| 15:05 | Kourtney & Khloe Take Miami       |
| 15:35 | Kourtney & Khloe Take Miami       |
| 16:00 | Kourtney & Khloe Take Miami       |
| 16:30 | Kourtney & Khloe Take Miami       |
| 17:00 | Kourtney & Khloe Take Miami       |
| 18:00 | Life Of Kylie                     |
| 18:30 | Life Of Kylie                     |
| 19:00 | E! News                           |
| 19:30 | Life Of Kylie                     |
| 20:00 | Life Of Kylie                     |
| 20:30 | Life Of Kylie                     |
| 21:30 | E! News                           |
| 22:00 | WAGs Miami                        |
| 23:00 | Life Of Kylie                     |
| 23:30 | E! News                           |



|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 00:00 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 01:00 | Restaurant Stakeout                    |
| 02:00 | Mystery Diners                         |
| 03:00 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 04:00 | Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives            |
| 04:30 | Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives            |
| 05:00 | Guy's Grocery Games                    |
| 06:00 | Roadtrip With G. Garvin                |
| 06:50 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 07:15 | Chopped                                |
| 08:05 | Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics      |
| 08:55 | The Pioneer Woman                      |
| 09:20 | The Pioneer Woman                      |
| 09:50 | Siba's Table: Fast Feasts              |
| 10:50 | Bake With Anna Olson                   |
| 11:20 | Chopped                                |
| 12:10 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 12:35 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 13:05 | Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives            |
| 14:00 | Chopped                                |
| 15:00 | Barefoot Contessa                      |
| 16:00 | The Pioneer Woman                      |
| 17:00 | Siba's Table                           |
| 18:00 | Bake With Anna Olson                   |
| 19:00 | Bake With Anna Olson                   |
| 19:30 | Man Fire Food                          |
| 20:00 | Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives            |
| 21:00 | Siba's Table                           |
| 21:30 | Siba's Table                           |
| 22:00 | Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy |
| 22:30 | Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy |
| 23:00 | Chopped                                |



|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 00:00 | Coronation Street                            |
| 00:30 | Coronation Street                            |
| 01:00 | Don't Tell The Bride                         |
| 02:00 | Coronation Street                            |
| 03:20 | Coronation Street                            |
| 03:55 | The Chase                                    |
| 04:50 | Tonight At The London Palladium              |
| 05:50 | Don't Tell The Bride                         |
| 06:50 | The Jonathan Ross Show                       |
| 07:50 | Endeavour                                    |
| 09:30 | Victoria                                     |
| 10:25 | Queen Victoria's Letters: A Monarch Unveiled |
| 11:25 | Tonight At The London Palladium              |
| 12:20 | The Chase: Celebrity Specials                |
| 13:15 | The Chase: Celebrity Specials                |
| 14:10 | Tracey Ullman's Show                         |
| 14:40 | Diana: The Day The World Closed              |
| 15:30 | Victoria                                     |
| 16:30 | The Jonathan Ross Show                       |
| 17:25 | Endeavour                                    |
| 19:00 | The Jonathan Ross Show                       |
| 19:45 | Diana: The Day The World Closed              |
| 21:30 | Victoria                                     |
| 21:30 | The Jonathan Ross Show                       |
| 22:25 | Endeavour                                    |



|       |                             |
|-------|-----------------------------|
| 00:00 | Ancient Aliens              |
| 00:00 | Ancient Impossible          |
| 08:00 | Ancient Impossible          |
| 09:00 | Engineering Disasters       |
| 10:00 | Engineering Disasters       |
| 11:00 | Hangar 1: The UFO Files     |
| 12:00 | Hangar 1: The UFO Files     |
| 13:00 | Ancient Impossible          |
| 14:00 | Ancient Impossible          |
| 15:00 | Engineering Disasters       |
| 16:00 | Engineering Disasters       |
| 17:00 | Hangar 1: The UFO Files     |
| 18:00 | Ancient Aliens              |
| 19:00 | The Lost Evidence           |
| 20:00 | United Stuff Of America     |
| 21:00 | In Search Of Aliens         |
| 22:00 | Brad Meltzer's Lost History |
| 23:00 | Warriors                    |



|       |                                 |
|-------|---------------------------------|
| 00:20 | Alone: Lost And Found           |
| 01:00 | Mystery Pickers                 |
| 02:00 | Mountain Men                    |
| 02:50 | Storage Wars                    |
| 03:15 | Pawn Stars                      |
| 03:40 | Pawn Stars Australia            |
| 04:05 | Storage Wars: Barry's Best Buys |

|       |             |
|-------|-------------|
| 05:00 | Grave Trade |
| 06    |             |

CROSSWORD 1712

15x15 crossword grid with black squares and numbers 1-84.

ACROSS

- 1. (computer science) The rate at which data is transferred (as by a modem).
4. Reprehensible acquisitiveness.
11. A unit of apothecary weight equal to an eighth of an ounce or to 60 grains.

DOWN

- 1. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
2. A beautiful and graceful girl.
3. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

This is a day for thinking and ideas. You may feel like talking a bit more than usual, exploring new ideas or getting happily lost in a conversation.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

There is much sexual appeal at this time. If you are not involved with a loved one you could find the phone ringing off the wall these days.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You go out of your way to be gentle as you communicate with seniors or young people. People respect your viewpoint and guidance.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may appear very relaxed today. Everything seems to be working together and you may find yourself expressive and able to communicate well.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your taste in art and appreciation are heightened at this time. If you are planning to entertain, or be entertained, you have picked a great time.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may be asked for your advice and guidance today. You are able to cut through the red tape and get at what is beneath and behind a problem very quickly.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You may find yourself speaking to a group of people this day—you could be most persuasive with others and would do well if you are working to make a sale.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a very lucky day for making plans or decisions and finding your way through just about any problem you may discover.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

You actively support your community and have much energy for improving your surroundings or life situations as well.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Friends and young people gather around you today—fun is in the forecast. You appreciate your particular situation and enjoy support from those around you.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

You will enjoy today as you should find everything running in a smooth manner. You may be inspired to appreciate the beauty in your life and in those around you.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Your thoughts and ideas today may not mesh with the plans and methods of someone you love. A compromise will make everyone happy.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Songs From the Year 2002

Find and circle all of the songs from 2002 that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 21 letters spell an additional song title from 2002.

15x15 word search grid with letters N, E, V, A, E, H, G, I, R, L, F, R, I, E, N, D, C, E, etc.

- ADDICTIVE AERIALS ALL MY LIFE BABY BLURRY BY THE WAY COMPLICATED DAYS GO BY DILEMMA DISEASE ESCAPE AERIALS FOR YOU FULL MOON GIRL TALK GIRLFRIEND HALF CRAZY HANDS CLEAN HAPPY HEAVEN HELLA GOOD HERE I AM HERO HEY MA IN MY PLACE LOSE YOURSELF MOTIVATION MY LIST MY SACRIFICE NOTHING OH BOY RAINY DAYZ SPIN STILL FLY THE MIDDLE TOXICITY UH HUH WITHOUT ME WORK IT

Friday's Solution

Songs From the Year 2001

15x15 word search grid with letters N, U, O, Y, R, O, F, L, L, A, N, O, K, L, A, W, N, E, V, etc.

- AGAIN ALL FOR YOU ANGEL AUSTIN BE LIKE THAT BEAUTIFUL DAY BUTTERFLY CONTAGIOUS CRAZY DANCE WITH ME DIFFERENCES DIG IN DRIVE EMOTION EVERYWHERE FAMILY AFFAIR FIESTA FILL ME IN FOLLOW ME HERO I WISH IRRESISTIBLE JADED KRYPTONITE LADY MARMALADE LOVE MISSING YOU MOST GIRLS MUSIC MY BABY ONE MORE DAY ONLY TIME OOCHEE WALLY OUTSIDE PLAY PROMISE RIDE WIT ME SOUTH SIDE STUTTER SURVIVOR THANK YOU U REMIND ME VIDEO WALK ON WHO I AM

The hidden song title is: NEVER HAD A DREAM COME TRUE

Friday's Solution

15x15 crossword solution grid with words like M, B, A, A, S, D, E, W, A, D, A, R, M, A, N, B, R, A, D, U, P, S, E, T, L, E, A, S, E, N, A, N, A, K, A, B, A, A, G, A, E, A, C, U, B, E, B, C, A, L, P, A, C, H, M, O, O, A, T, A, M, I, C, A, B, L, E, B, E, E, A, R, A, B, E, L, A, I, S, A, G, A, A, R, I, L, E, D, C, E, R, I, C, A, S, L, N, O, U, R, I, S, H, O, N, E, I, D, A, S, L, O, S, H, E, D, C, G, S, E, I, R, A, B, A, A, D, C, N, M, R, G, C, A, P, A, L, A, D, I, N, H, E, A, D, G, E, N, E, I, D, E, S, A, D, O, R, E, D, A, L, C, A, E, N, L, A, C, E, E, D, D, A, E, P, O, N, A, A, A, R, S, P, A, R, E, R, I, B, I, R, A, H, A, C, I, E, N, D, A, S, I, B.

Daily SuDoku

9x9 Sudoku grid with numbers 3, 6, 9, 7, 4, 2, 6, 4, 8, 6, 5, 1, 4, 3, 9, 2, 9, 5, 1, 3, 4, 3, 5, 6, 9, 8, 1.

Yesterday's Solution

9x9 Sudoku grid with numbers 8, 4, 9, 1, 5, 2, 6, 3, 7, 7, 1, 3, 8, 6, 4, 5, 9, 2, 5, 2, 6, 9, 3, 7, 4, 1, 8, 1, 9, 7, 4, 8, 5, 2, 6, 3, 3, 5, 4, 2, 1, 6, 8, 7, 9, 6, 8, 2, 3, 7, 9, 1, 5, 4, 2, 7, 1, 6, 4, 3, 9, 8, 5, 4, 6, 5, 7, 9, 8, 3, 2, 1, 9, 3, 8, 5, 2, 1, 7, 4, 6.

# CLASSIFIEDS

**STATE OF KUWAIT**  
 DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
 METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



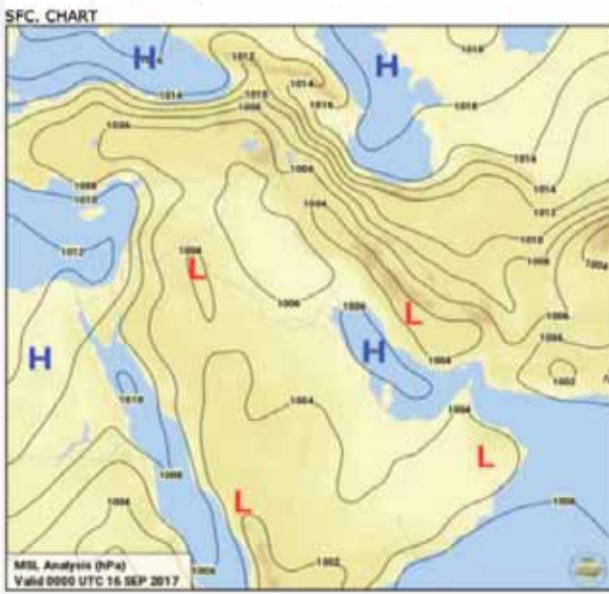
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630  
 Fax: (+965) 24348714  
[www.met.gov.kw](http://www.met.gov.kw)



**Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours**  
 Issued 16/09/2017-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

**Max Temperature 44 °C**

**By Day:** Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate variable wind to south easterly wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h.  
**By Night:** Fair and Relatively humid over coastal areas with light to moderate south easterly wind to southerly wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h.



**Four-Day Forecast**

|                         | Sunday                                      | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday                                   |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Expected Weather</b> | Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas | Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas | Hot and Relatively humid specially over coastal areas | Hot and Relatively humid over coastal areas |
| <b>Min Temp °C</b>      | 25  | 26  | 27  | 27  |
| <b>Max Temp °C</b>      | 43  | 43  | 42  | 45  |
| <b>Wind Direction</b>   | variable to south easterly                  | variable to south easterly                            | variable to south easterly                            | south westerly changing to south easterly   |
| <b>Wind Speed km/h</b>  | 06 - 26                                     | 06 - 30   | 08 - 30   | 06 - 28                                     |

**Warnings & Weather Watches**

no warnings or weather watches

**Kuwait Forecast**

| Station        | MIN °C REC | Max °C EXP |
|----------------|------------|------------|
| KUWAIT CITY    | 31         | 44         |
| KUWAIT AIRPORT | 24         | 44         |
| ABDALY         | 24         | 44         |
| BUBYAN         | 24         | 37         |
| JAHRA          | 28         | 46         |
| FALAKA ISLAND  | 27         | 41         |
| SALMIYAH       | 32         | 37         |
| AHMADI         | 30         | 39         |
| JAL ALIYAH     | 24         | 44         |
| QAROH ISLAND   | 31         | 36         |
| UMM AL-MARADEM | 29         | 37         |
| NUWAISIB       | 27         | 42         |
| WAFRA          | 25         | 45         |
| SALMY          | 27         | 43         |
| MUTRIBA        | 25         | 46         |

**Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport**

|                                     |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Max Temp (°C)                       | 44    |
| Min Temp (°C)                       | 25    |
| Max Rel Hum (%)                     | 62    |
| Min Rel Hum (%)                     | 08    |
| Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction | 28 SE |
| TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR             | 0 mm  |

|         |       |
|---------|-------|
| Sunrise | 05:33 |
| Sunset  | 17:53 |

**Prayer Times**

|         |       |
|---------|-------|
| Fajr    | 04:13 |
| Sunrise | 05:33 |
| Zuhr    | 11:43 |
| Asr     | 15:13 |
| Sunset  | 17:53 |
| Isha    | 19:10 |

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated



**AIRLINES**

|                   |              |                      |            |
|-------------------|--------------|----------------------|------------|
| American Airlines | 22087425     | Sri Lanka Airlines   | 22424444   |
|                   | 22087426     | Egypt Air            | 22421578   |
| Kuwait Airways    | 171          | Swiss Air            | 22421516   |
| Jazeera Airways   | 177          | Saudia               | 22426306   |
| Jet Airways       | 22924455     | Middle East Airlines | 22423073   |
| FlyDubai          | 22414400     | Lufthansa            | 22422493   |
| Qatar Airways     | 22423888     | PIA                  | 22421044   |
| KLM               | 22425747     | Alitalia             | 22414427   |
| Air Slovakia      | 22434940     | Balkan Airlines      | 22416474   |
| Olympic Airways   | 22420002/9   | Bangladesh Airlines  | 22452977/8 |
| Royal Jordanian   | 22418064/5/6 | Czech Airlines       | 22417901/  |
| Reservation       | 22433388     |                      | 2433141    |
| British Airways   | 22425635     | Indian Airlines      | 22456700   |
| Air France        | 22430224     | Oman Air             | 22958787   |
| Emirates          | 22921555     | Turkish Airlines     | 22453820/1 |
| Air India         | 22438184     | Aeroflot             | 22404838/9 |

**EMERGENCY**



**Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is 1889988**

**Hospitals**

|                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| Sabah Hospital            | 24812000   |
| Amiri Hospital            | 22450005   |
| Maternity Hospital        | 24843100   |
| Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital | 25312700   |
| Chest Hospital            | 24849400   |
| Farwaniya Hospital        | 24892010   |
| Adan Hospital             | 23940620   |
| Ibn Sina Hospital         | 24840300   |
| Al-Razi Hospital          | 24846000   |
| Physiotherapy Hospital    | 24874330/9 |



**Flight Schedule**

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

**DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

| Arrival Flights on Sunday 17/9/2017 |      |                 |       | Departure Flights on Sunday 17/9/2017 |      |                   |       |
|-------------------------------------|------|-----------------|-------|---------------------------------------|------|-------------------|-------|
| Airlines                            | Flt  | Route           | Time  | Airlines                              | Flt  | Route             | Time  |
| THY                                 | 772  | Istanbul        | 00:10 | AIC                                   | 988  | Hyderabad/Chennai | 00:05 |
| JZR                                 | 513  | Sharm el-Sheikh | 00:15 | JZR                                   | 1540 | Cairo             | 00:20 |
| KAC                                 | 786  | Jeddah          | 00:30 | JAI                                   | 573  | Mumbai            | 00:30 |
| JZR                                 | 267  | Beirut          | 00:35 | MSR                                   | 2615 | Sohag             | 00:30 |
| KAC                                 | 504  | Beirut          | 00:45 | MSC                                   | 412  | Asyut             | 00:30 |
| KAC                                 | 102  | London          | 00:55 | FDB                                   | 072  | Dubai             | 00:30 |
| DLH                                 | 635  | Doha            | 01:00 | JZR                                   | 530  | Asyut             | 00:35 |
| PGT                                 | 858  | Istanbul        | 01:15 | JZR                                   | 540  | Cairo             | 01:30 |
| JZR                                 | 539  | Cairo           | 01:20 | JZR                                   | 562  | Sohag             | 01:30 |
| UAE                                 | 853  | Dubai           | 01:40 | THY                                   | 773  | Istanbul          | 01:40 |
| RJA                                 | 642  | Amman           | 01:45 | KAC                                   | 677  | Dubai             | 01:45 |
| THY                                 | 1464 | Istanbul        | 01:50 | DLH                                   | 635  | Frankfurt         | 02:00 |
| KKK                                 | 6506 | Istanbul        | 01:55 | PGT                                   | 859  | Istanbul          | 02:35 |
| KLM                                 | 446  | Bahrain         | 02:05 | THY                                   | 765  | Istanbul          | 02:50 |
| QTR                                 | 1086 | Doha            | 02:10 | KKK                                   | 6505 | Istanbul          | 02:55 |
| JZR                                 | 553  | Alexandria      | 02:10 | ETH                                   | 621  | Addis Ababa       | 03:05 |
| ETH                                 | 620  | Addis Ababa     | 02:15 | UAE                                   | 854  | Jeddah            | 03:30 |
| GFA                                 | 211  | Bahrain         | 02:15 | KLM                                   | 446  | Amsterdam         | 03:30 |
| KAC                                 | 418  | Manila          | 02:50 | OMA                                   | 644  | Muscat            | 04:05 |
| OMA                                 | 643  | Muscat          | 03:05 | QTR                                   | 1087 | Doha              | 04:10 |
| ETD                                 | 305  | Abu Dhabi       | 03:10 | ETD                                   | 306  | Abu Dhabi         | 04:10 |
| MSR                                 | 612  | Cairo           | 03:15 | MSR                                   | 613  | Cairo             | 04:15 |
| FDB                                 | 069  | Dubai           | 03:15 | KAC                                   | 417  | Manila            | 04:20 |
| KAC                                 | 382  | Delhi           | 03:15 | PGT                                   | 861  | Istanbul          | 04:25 |
| PGT                                 | 860  | Istanbul        | 03:25 | JZR                                   | 560  | Sohag             | 04:45 |
| NIA                                 | 1161 | Cairo           | 03:45 | NIA                                   | 1162 | Cairo             | 04:45 |
| QTR                                 | 1076 | Doha            | 03:45 | LMU                                   | 511  | Cairo             | 05:00 |
| KAC                                 | 1544 | Cairo           | 03:50 | RBG                                   | 550  | Alexandria        | 05:00 |
| LMU                                 | 510  | Cairo           | 04:00 | KAC                                   | 103  | London            | 05:00 |
| RBG                                 | 559  | Alexandria      | 04:10 | QTR                                   | 1077 | Doha              | 05:30 |
| KAC                                 | 346  | Ahmedabad       | 04:15 | KAC                                   | 303  | Mumbai            | 05:50 |
| UAE                                 | 873  | Dubai           | 04:15 | FEG                                   | 934  | Sohag             | 05:55 |
| JZR                                 | 557  | Alexandria      | 04:25 | THY                                   | 1465 | Istanbul          | 06:00 |
| KAC                                 | 358  | Kochi           | 04:50 | UAE                                   | 874  | Dubai             | 06:15 |
| FEG                                 | 931  | Alexandria      | 05:00 | RJA                                   | 643  | Amman             | 06:25 |
| KAC                                 | 784  | Jeddah          | 05:00 | THY                                   | 771  | Istanbul          | 06:25 |
| THY                                 | 1414 | TZX             | 05:05 | GFA                                   | 212  | Bahrain           | 06:50 |
| DHX                                 | 170  | Bahrain         | 05:10 | QTR                                   | 852  | Doha              | 06:50 |
| QTR                                 | 8511 | Doha            | 05:20 | FDB                                   | 070  | Dubai             | 07:05 |
| THY                                 | 770  | Istanbul        | 05:25 | JZR                                   | 164  | Dubai             | 07:15 |
| KAC                                 | 344  | Chennai         | 05:30 | JZR                                   | 238  | Amman             | 07:15 |
| KAC                                 | 332  | Trivandrum      | 05:40 | MSC                                   | 406  | Sohag             | 07:45 |
| KAC                                 | 362  | Colombo         | 05:50 | KAC                                   | 171  | Frankfurt         | 07:50 |
| BAW                                 | 157  | London          | 06:05 | KAC                                   | 501  | Beirut            | 07:50 |
| KAC                                 | 678  | Dubai           | 06:25 | KAC                                   | 613  | Bahrain           | 07:55 |
| KAC                                 | 1802 | Cairo           | 06:35 | BAW                                   | 156  | London            | 08:20 |
| KAC                                 | 284  | Dhaka           | 06:35 | KAC                                   | 177  | Vienna            | 08:25 |
| KAC                                 | 206  | Islamabad       | 06:40 | FDB                                   | 054  | Dubai             | 08:30 |
| WAN                                 | 342  | Sohag           | 06:40 | KAC                                   | 741  | Dammam            | 08:30 |
| MSC                                 | 411  | Asyut           | 06:45 | KAC                                   | 773  | Riyadh            | 08:35 |
| KAC                                 | 302  | Mumbai          | 06:55 | KAC                                   | 513  | Tehran            | 08:45 |
| KAC                                 | 156  | Istanbul        | 07:05 | KAC                                   | 661  | Abu Dhabi         | 09:00 |
| JZR                                 | 531  | Asyut           | 07:05 | KAC                                   | 671  | Dubai             | 09:15 |
| JZR                                 | 1541 | Cairo           | 07:10 | KAC                                   | 787  | Jeddah            | 09:15 |
| KAC                                 | 354  | Bangalore       | 07:50 | KAC                                   | 117  | New York          | 09:15 |
| FDB                                 | 053  | Dubai           | 07:50 | KAC                                   | 165  | Rome              | 09:20 |
| JZR                                 | 563  | Sohag           | 07:55 | JZR                                   | 534  | Cairo             | 09:30 |
| KAC                                 | 384  | Delhi           | 08:00 | KAC                                   | 691  | Muscat            | 09:30 |
| JZR                                 | 541  | Cairo           | 08:20 | KAC                                   | 561  | Amman             | 09:30 |
| UAE                                 | 855  | Dubai           | 08:25 | JZR                                   | 482  | Istanbul          | 09:40 |
| ETD                                 | 301  | Abu Dhabi       | 08:55 | KAC                                   | 126  | Sharjah           | 09:40 |
| ABY                                 | 125  | Sharjah         | 09:00 | KAC                                   | 101  | London            | 09:45 |
| QTR                                 | 1070 | Doha            | 09:25 | UAE                                   | 856  | Dubai             | 09:50 |
| IRA                                 | 665  | Shiraz          | 09:25 | ETD                                   | 302  | Abu Dhabi         | 10:00 |
| FDB                                 | 055  | Dubai           | 09:40 | KAC                                   | 541  | Cairo             | 10:00 |
| SVA                                 | 512  | Riyadh          | 10:00 | KAC                                   | 617  | Doha              | 10:15 |
| IRC                                 | 528  | Ahwaz           | 10:25 | IRA                                   | 664  | Shiraz            | 10:25 |
| GFA                                 | 213  | Bahrain         | 10:40 | KAC                                   | 153  | Istanbul          | 10:30 |
| IRC                                 | 528  | Ahwaz           | 10:55 | QTR                                   | 1071 | Doha              | 10:35 |
| MEA                                 | 404  | Beirut          | 10:55 | FDB                                   | 056  | Dubai             | 10:35 |
| PAL                                 | 668  | Manila          | 11:00 | SVA                                   | 513  | Riyadh            | 11:00 |
| QTR                                 | 1074 | Doha            | 11:00 | IRC                                   | 529  | Ahwaz             | 11:25 |
| SYR                                 | 341  | Damascus        | 11:00 | GFA                                   | 214  | Bahrain           | 11:35 |
| WAN                                 | 114  | Bahrain         | 11:00 | MEA                                   | 405  | Beirut            | 11:55 |
| JZR                                 | 561  | Sohag           | 11:10 | WAN                                   | 806  | Sarajevo          | 11:55 |
| KAC                                 | 614  | Bahrain         | 11:15 | MSR                                   | 2614 | Cairo             | 12:00 |
| KAC                                 | 742  | Dammam          | 11:45 | FDB                                   | 071  | Dubai             | 12:00 |
| JZR                                 | 165  | Dubai           | 11:50 | PIA                                   | 205  | Lahore            | 12:30 |

GOSSIP

## Foxx is 'so proud' of his children

The 49-year-old actor supported his 23-year-old daughter Corrine when she graced the runway for Sherri Hill during New York Fashion Week, and although the star is aware the fashion industry can be "crazy", he thinks it marked a "great moment" for his "incredible" child, and is happy Corinne and Anelise, eight, turned out "okay". The 'Django Unchained' gushed about his brood to PEOPLE, he said: "In this business, sometimes it can get crazy, but my daughter, she's just incredible - 23 years old [and] graduated

from college. It was just a great moment. "It's amazing to see our kids grow up. We're so proud of them. "They ended up being okay." The American hunk has also revealed his youngest child has a secret talent, as she can already drive one of his "little" electric boats, which can carry approximately 15 people, although he has claimed people can swim faster than the motor vehicle. He explained: "I got a great house in Westlake. There's this little electric boats, and we can pile about 15 people in these boats. You can

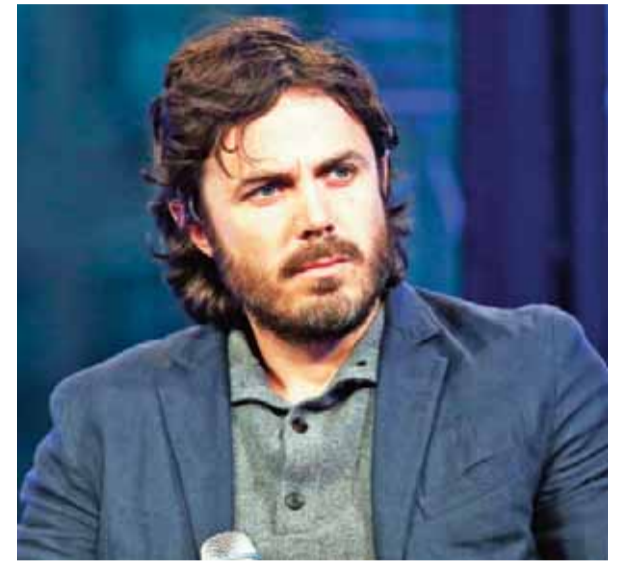
literally swim faster the boat. I let my daughter drive ... the little one. She's eight, and she's been driving since she's like four." Meanwhile, Jamie - whose real name is Eric Marlon Bishop - has tried to build bridges with his estranged father, and decided to take his parent to a Jay Z concert to bond, although he likes to keep the '99 Problems' rapper on a "certain level".



## Eva Mendes' children are 'definitely bilingual'

The 43-year-old actress has admitted her three-year-old daughter Esmeralda - who she has with her partner Ryan Gosling - "mostly" converses in "Spanglish", which is a mixture of Spanish and English, and the star thinks it is "really cute". Speaking to PEOPLE Chica about her brood, Eva - who also has 16-month-old Amada - said: "Esmeralda mostly speaks Spanglish right now. It's really cute. She's definitely bilingual." And the 'Hitch' star has revealed her and her 'The Notebook' beau think it is "really important" for them to make sure their offspring are raised in a Cuban household and become familiar with not only the language, but the culture and cuisine. The brunette beauty - who is from Cuban descent - explained: "And it's really important for us to make sure that she's not only just familiar with the lan-

guage, but also with the culture. "My mom, who lives 15 minutes away, makes it easy because she speaks to the girls in Spanish and cooks them Cuban food. And we're always listening to Cuban music. It really is a big part of our way of life. I wouldn't have it any other way." And Eva's mother, Eva Pérez Su-rez, is not the only one who helps to enforce her beliefs on her children as her father, Juan, also has a large influence on honing his granddaughter's "Cuban roots". The '2 Fast 2 Furious' star said: "My dad, who had been here for 45 years and still doesn't speak English, is a real asset. It's so cool because now that I'm trying to make sure that my girls speak Spanish, it's like, 'Ok, Dad, take them,' because I know that all they're going to speak with him is Spanish."



## Casey Affleck

finalizes divorce from Summer Phoenix

## Madonna will never say 'never' to adopting kids

The 59-year-old singer - who has Lourdes, 20, Rocco, 17, Mercy and David, both 11, as well as five-year-old twins Stelle and Estere - has revealed she has not entirely ruled out expanding her brood or legally looking after any more kids. When asked about her future plans to adopt again in an upcoming interview with 'CBS Sunday Morning', which will air today, she said: "Who knows? Yeah, I - I never say never. You never know what surprise awaits you around the corner." And the 'Material Girl' hitmaker - whose mother Madonna Louise Ciccone passed away when the musician was just five years old - has revealed motherhood has been a form of therapy for her and a "very healing experi-

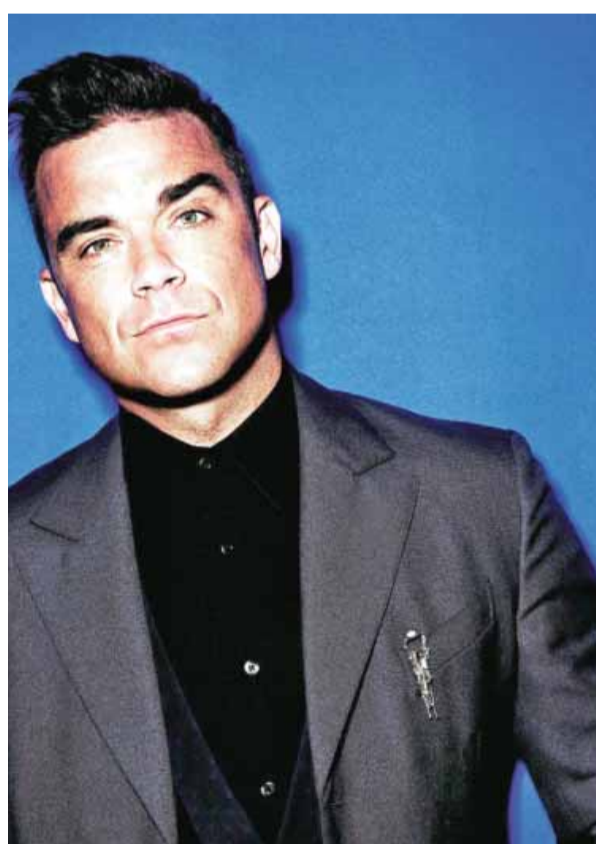
ence" because she thinks it has enabled her to be the parent she "never had". Speaking about parenthood, she said: "I get to become the mom I never had. So, yeah, it's a very healing experience." Madonna first started visiting Malawi in 2006 where she set up the charity Raising Malawi, which the star co-founded with Michael berg 11 years ago and helps with the health and education system in the area in East Africa. But the songwriter thinks she is a "crazy person" for setting up the non-profit organisation, and the newly constructed hospital in the area.



The 40-year-old actor had been married to his partner for over 10 years, but it has been reported that on Friday the pair's legal documents had been officially signed off by a judge. According to court documents PEOPLE has obtained, part of the settlement will see the 'Manchester By The Sea' hunk provide his 37-year-old ex-wife spousal and child support for their two children Indiana, 13, and Atticus, nine, which was agreed in a pre-arranged confidential settlement. However, it was recently reported that Casey had originally denied giving his former partner spousal support. But within days of filing for a divorce last month, the pair swiftly came to a financial agreement. This news comes almost two years after the pair first separated in November 2015, although they waited another four months to publicly confirm their break up. The former couple had been married for one decade, but prior to tying the knot they had been together for 16 years. And it was reported Summer - who is the sister of fellow actor Joaquin Phoenix - cited "irreconcilable differences" as the reason for calling time on their relationship, which Casey also stated when he filed the legal documents. At the time of their split, the pair insisted their decision to part was "amicable" and they will remain "very close friends".

## Robbie Williams was 'clucking' on his first date with wife

The 43-year-old singer has revealed he "tucked into a lot of drugs" when he first met the 38-year-old beauty, to the point he started to notice some "embarrassing" side effects of the substances he had consumed whilst in a jacuzzi with the 'Austenland' actress, which resulted in him fleeing the party in a bid to maintain what was left of his dignity. Speaking about Robbie and Ayda's meeting in his upcoming book 'Reveal: Robbie Williams' penned by Chris Heath, which is set to be released on September 21, the rocker recalled: "I googled her, she was obviously very attractive. But I was also doing a lot of pills that were making me antisocial. So we had plans but I flaked. "I left her a message days, weeks, later, and it made her laugh. We made plans to meet. But I wasn't leaving my house, so she had to meet me there, which freaked her out a bit. "A dealer had come round that I was sleeping with and she'd given me all these pills. So I'd slept with the dealer, taken a bunch of pills. "Porsche door opens and out of the back seat clambers this girl. She's wearing a dress with pockets and it makes her look frumpy, and my first thought was, 'Oh, she's put on a lot of weight.' "In she came, and she's had a few red wines. I don't think the situation suited her, being at a stranger's house, coming from a party." "So I got tucked into a lot of drugs. Anyway, I took a turn for the worse, because I started to cluck like a chicken. "There was a moment in the Jacuzzi where Ayda had gone and got changed and she came in wearing this Ursula Andress bikini, and she had a killer body. "So I was in the Jacuzzi with a very, very hot girl in Hollywood doing a Hollywood thing. But then I got ill, started to cluck, had to leave, embarrassing."



## Hugh Bonneville found working in a pub 'really bleak'

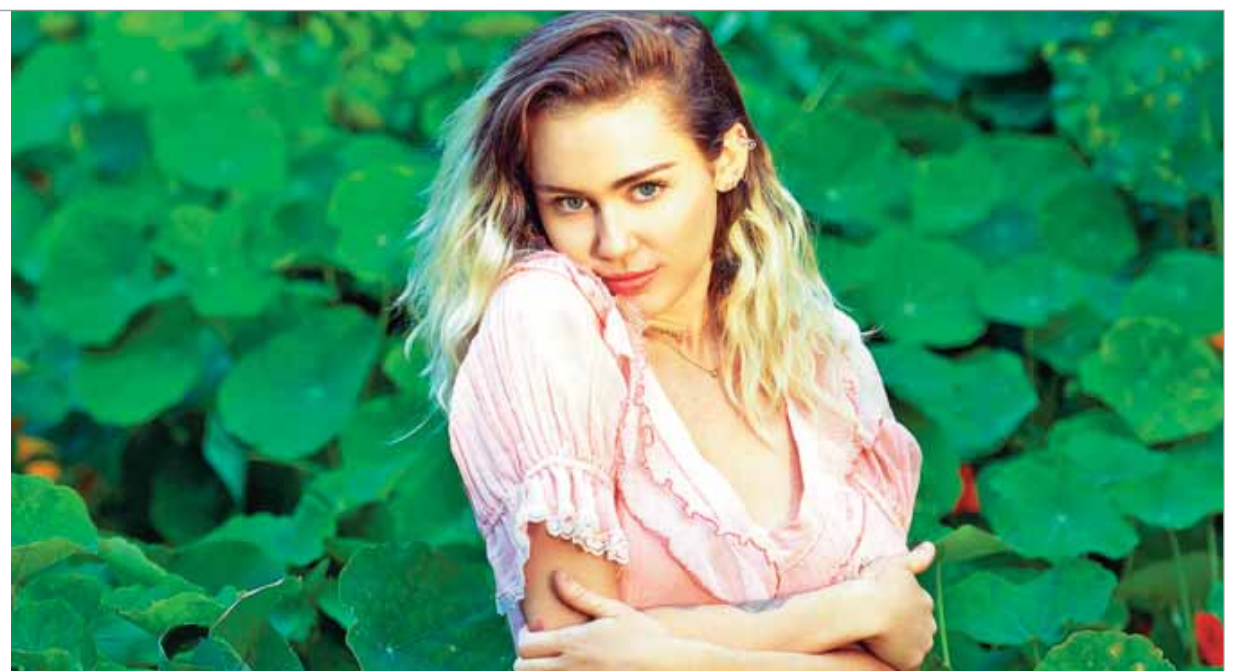
The 'Downton Abbey' star took a job in a bar to fund a planned trip travelling across Africa to India but hated the experience so much, he opted to clean toilets elsewhere instead. He said: "It was around 1982, and I had to save £400 to travel across Africa to India. "I tried working in a pub up Edgware Road in London. It was bleak, really bleak. "there was a three-legged dog in the corner and one bloke at the bar and the room was full of cigarette smoke. It was depressing beyond hell. "I thought, 'However much I want to fly across the world, I can't do this.' That's why I took up the toilet cleaning, at a legal firm in Marylebone." The 53-year-old actor planned to become a barrister if his acting career hadn't taken off but thinks he'd have been "terrible" in the courtroom because he isn't focused enough. He admitted to Radio Times magazine: "I'd have been terrible. My mind wouldn't have focused. I wouldn't have been able to retain case law and all that. I think I'm a shirker rather than a sherpa. "I was attracted to the performance side, rather than being a sensible solicitor with a steady income. "I used to spend time watching the law courts when I was a teenager. I would go along like a nerd in the holiday and just find out about it. In retrospect, I was probably watching the theatricality." Despite his career success, the 'Paddington' star insists he never takes work for granted. He said: "You know, you're always convinced the next job will be the last one."



## Cyrus doesn't want to get married

The 'Malibu' singer is very happy with her fiance Liam Hemsworth - who she dated on and off from 2009 to 2013, before reconciling in late 2014 - but insists she has "too much living to do" before she can even think about tying the knot. She said: "I don't envision marriage. I'm 24. I hope I get to live a little bit more. I have too much living to do [before I get married]." But Miley - who dated the likes of model Stella Maxwell and actor Patrick Schwarzenegger during her break from Liam - couldn't be happier with her personal life and is "stunned" by how well things are going. She told Grazia magazine: "Three years ago, if you'd asked me if I'd be here, this happy with this man, I'd have been stunned. "I'm just riding this out. In some relationships, you lose yourself by being with someone else. Actually, it made me find myself more. "I have no idea what the next three years will bring, but if

it's possible to get even happier, I'll take it." Miley previously opened up about her sexuality, admitting she identifies as pansexual and had her first relationship with a girl. Speaking last October, she said: "My whole life, I didn't understand my own gender and my own sexuality. I always hated the word 'bisexual', because that's even putting me in a box. I don't ever think about someone being a boy or someone being a girl. "My eyes started opening in the fifth or sixth grade. My first relationship in my life was with a chick. I grew up in a very religious Southern family. The universe has always given me the power to know I'll be OK. Even at that time, when my parents didn't understand, I just felt that one day they are going to understand."



GOSSIP



GOMEZ WAS RUSHED INTO HOSPITAL BACK IN MAY

The 25-year-old pop star recently underwent a transplant after her organs started shutting down as a result of her battle with Lupus, in which the autoimmune disease mistakenly attacks healthy tissue, but the damage to her kidneys was first detected four months ago when she fell ill while in Chicago for her boyfriend The Weeknd's concert. The 'Starboy' hitmaker - whose real name is Abel Makkonen Tesfaye - was reportedly by Selena's side when she was taken into hospital, according to TMZ.com. After that initial hospital dash, the 25-year-old singer was placed on the kidney trans-

plant list and found a willing donor in her "beautiful friend" Francia Raisa. Selena took to her Instagram on Thursday (14.09.17) to reveal her ordeal with her followers, sharing a photo of her and Francia holding hands in their hospital beds. The accompanying post read: "I'm very aware some of my fans had noticed I was laying low for part of the summer and questioning why I wasn't promoting my new music, which I was extremely proud of. "So I found out I needed to get a kidney transplant due to my Lupus and was recovering. It was what I needed to do for my overall health. "I honestly look forward to

sharing with you, soon my journey through these past several months as I have always wanted to do with you. "Until then I want to publicly thank my family and incredible team of doctors for everything they have done for me prior to and post-surgery. The 'Hands To Myself' hitmaker first revealed she'd been diagnosed with Lupus in 2015 and, one year later, took time out from her pop career to deal with "anxiety, panic attacks and depression" that the life-threatening illness had also caused.



George Clooney 'couldn't be more in love'

The 56-year-old actor and wife Amal, 39, recently welcomed twins Alexander and Ella and George said he has never been happier in his life. Speaking to the Daily Mirror, he said: "I couldn't be more in love and more happy with my family. I'm 56, which is old to be doing this and I didn't really think it was going to happen in my life. So it's all icing on the cake. "I thought that my life was going to be focused on my career. Then I have this incredible relationship and then all of a sudden we have these two knuckleheads who make me laugh every day." And while Amal and the twins remained at their Los Angeles home while George recently visited Canada to promote his new movie 'Suburbicon' at the Toronto International Film Festival, the star admitted he couldn't wait to get

home. He said: "This is the first time I've been away from them since they were born and I wish I was with them. My wife sends me pictures of them and I think, 'God I wish I was with my kids. I'm excited to get home. It's nice to feel this way.'" And George went on to praise Amal for being a fantastic mother. He said: "I wasn't completely unaware of what life would be like with children. All my friends have kids and I am godfather to about 20." The surprise for me was how much more complicated twins are than one. It's not like twice as much work, it's more than that. It changes everything and you don't sleep.



Lovato says her sexuality is 'irrelevant'

The LGBTQ ally - who received the GLAAD Vanguard Award in 2014 - insisted that she prefers to keep her romantic life private but hinted that she will speak about her sexuality in her upcoming YouTube documentary 'Demi Lovato: Simply Complicated'. She told PrideSource: "I just feel like everyone's always looking for a headline and they always want to be the one to break what my sexuality is. I feel like it's irrelevant to what my music is all about. I stand up for the things that I believe in and the things that I'm passionate about, but I like to keep my personal life as private as possible when it comes to dating and sexuality and all that stuff just because it has nothing to do with my music. Unfortunately, we live in a world where everyone is trying to get that soundbite and I am purposefully not giving the soundbite. Watch my documentary. "I have a

documentary coming out on October 12 and I answer a lot of questions in my documentary. Some about [sexuality]. Because if ever I want to talk about it, I want it to be on my own terms. "I love who I love and I feel like I look at everybody who is outspoken about who they are as an inspiration and that's it." Demi, 25, - who has battled an eating disorder and addiction - also shared some advice for those in the LGBTQ who are struggling with addictions. She said: "I think a lot of people drinking and using in the LGBTQ community has to do with finding their identity. The most important thing to know is that you are never going to find your identity through drugs and alcohol, so don't even go there. You are not going to find the answers through drugs and alcohol."

Gwyneth Paltrow has tried marijuana

The 44-year-old actress believes in the medical benefits of the drug and revealed that she has smoked it in the past. Speaking in the debut issue of goop magazine, she said: "What's really interesting to see, with all the legalisation of marijuana happening, is how there's evidence that it can be helpful in a medicinal sense for people. That it can really be an alternative pain management system, and, in some cases, helpful for depression. I think there is a lot of pushback against [medical marijuana], because I don't think we can monetize it with the same kind of margin you can with an anti-anxiety pill that you get from behind the counter. But it's incredible to see people who can't sleep, or people who have chronic pain, report really positive results, and it's a natural substance." And when interviewer Sarah Mesle said: "Right. But here you're talking about people - people do this" - which is true. But, I'm curious ...," Gwyneth replied: "Oh, I've tried it, and yes, I inhaled!" She went on to add: "That brand, hmbldt-apparently it's very tailored in terms of its balance. So, there's one that's for arousal, there's one that's for calm, there's one that's for pain relief, there's one for sleep. And you don't, like when you were a teenager, smoke pot and get blazed out of your mind."



Tina Turner taught Mick Jagger how to dance

The 77-year-old music legend has revealed she was the one who taught the Rolling Stones frontman his moves, despite his claims he was taught by his mother. She said: "Mick wanted to dance - and I was a dancer - but he never gave me the credit! He said his mother taught him how to dance. But we worked with him in the dressing room, me and the girls, and we taught him how to dance." And the 'What's Love Got To Do With It' hitmaker also opened up on her collaboration with the late icon David Bowie, and says their relationship was more about "singing", as he believed there was something he could learn from her voice. She added: "I had a different kind of collaboration with David and it was more to do with the singing. All

those English guys felt I could sing. They felt there was something to learn from my singing. My vocals are natural. I hit the note naturally and they'd go: 'What?! How'd you do that?!' But Tina - who has son Raymond Craig, 59, from her relationship with Raymond Hill, and son Ronnie, 56, with her first husband Ike Turner - insists she "never slept" with either Jagger or Bowie, adding that neither of them ever "came on" to her. She said: "[They were] like the brothers that I never had. We never slept together; and they never came on to me, because I think they saw me as a role model in some kind of way."

Redmayne was 'deeply unsettled' by harassing fan



The 35-year-old actor has opened up about his "distressing" experience with Gaby Stieger, a fan who has appeared in court over claims she stalked him and his family for half a decade. In a letter read out by his legal team and obtained by the Metro newspaper, Eddie said: "I always try to be open and friendly as support [from fans] is what gives me a career. [However] I deeply regret having met Gaby Stieger - she harassed myself and my family intermittently over five years, leaving us distressed, unsafe and deeply unsettled." The accusations of stalking are said to have culminated in August this year when Gaby attempted to touch his arm while the 'Fantastic Beasts and Where To Find Them' actor was carrying his baby daughter. And court prosecutor Sara Ashkboos also revealed to the court that Gaby would send letters of admiration to the star, once even claiming: "I know things about you." Sara told Camberwell Green Magistrates' Court: "She directly states she is in love with the complainant and asked him to reply." Eddie - who has his 15-month-old daughter Iris with his wife Hannah Bagshawe - also alleges that Gaby has followed him to film premieres and the London film set of 'The Theory of Everything', as well as randomly approaching him for a hug at a tube station in the English capital. — Bangshowbiz



Brooklyn Beckham has to tell 'fangirls' to chill

The 18-year-old son of David and Victoria Beckham is studying photography at Parsons School of Art and Design in New York but claims that some of his classmates are starstruck by him. He told The Cut: "I like people from school, but there are a few fangirls in the school ... Sometimes, I have to be like, 'I'm going to be with you for like, four years, so chill.' "I mean, it's gotten better. They understand and they respect it, but it's just at the beginning, it's such a shock to them, so it's fine." Brooklyn - who has a tattoo on his chest that says "mama's boy", admitted his parents were unhappy when he decided to move from London to New York for university but says they have now accepted his decision. He explained: "They know it's

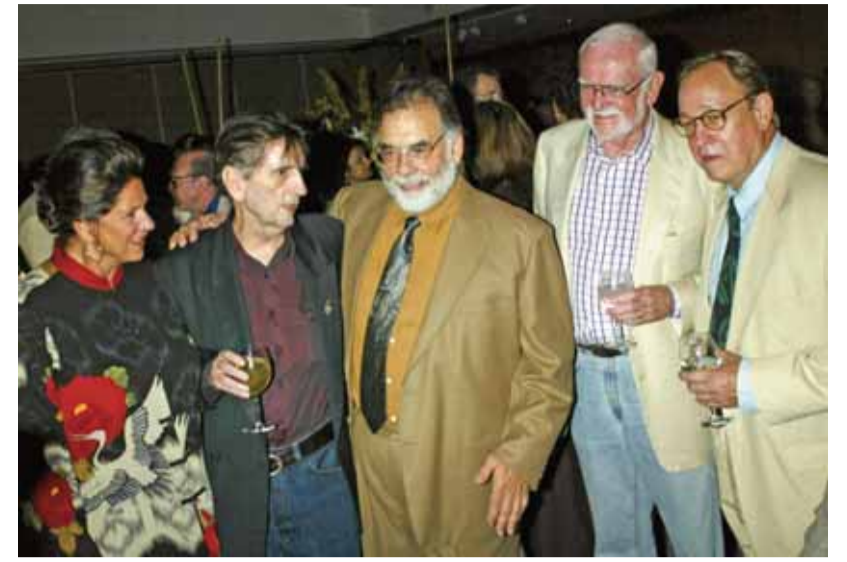
a big opportunity for me, so they're kind of all right with it." And the youngster revealed it was his mother who encouraged him to pursue photography, when he was just 14. He said: "My mom was like, 'Try it, if you don't like it, you don't have to do it.' And then I did it for a few months, and I just really enjoyed it. And then my dad bought me my first camera." Brooklyn - who published his own book of photography 'What I See' earlier this year - says photography is a deeply personal thing. He explained: "It's just on the person, really. It's not about cameras or anything. It's just, if you have a good eye, you do, if you don't ... you learn."



In this May 19, 1984, file photo, American actor Harry Dean Stanton, left, and German actress, Nastassja Kinski embrace during a photo session at the 37th Cannes Film Festival.



In this Jan 14, 2009, file photo, actor Harry Dean Stanton, left, a cast member in the HBO series "Big Love," lights a cigarette as fellow cast member Melora Walters poses on the red carpet at the show's third season premiere in Los Angeles.



In this July 18, 2003, file photo, from left, Lainie Kazan, Harry Dean Stanton, Francis Ford Coppola, Frank Pierson and Frederic Forrest have a reunion during a reception for the screening of the 1982 movie "One from the Heart," at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in Beverly Hills.

## Beloved character actor **Harry Dean Stanton** dies

For more than 60 years, Harry Dean Stanton played crooks and codgers, eccentrics and losers. He endowed them with pathos and compassion and animated them with his gaunt, unforgettable presence, making would-be fringe figures feel central to the films appeared in. The late critic Roger Ebert once said no movie can be altogether bad if it includes Stanton in a supporting role, and the wide cult of fans that included directors and his fellow actors felt the same.

"I think all actors will agree, no one gives a more honest, natural, truer performance than Harry Dean Stanton," director David Lynch said in presenting Stanton with the Inaugural "Harry Dean Stanton Award" in Los Angeles last year. Stanton died Friday of natural causes at a Los Angeles hospital at age 91, his agent John S Kelley said. Lynch, a frequent collaborator with the actor in projects like "Wild at Heart" and the recent reboot of "Twin Peaks," said in a statement after Stanton's death that "Everyone loved him. And with good reason. He was a great actor (actually beyond great) - and a great human being."

### Widely loved

When given a rare turn as a leading man, Stanton more than made the most of it. In Wim Wenders' 1984 rural drama "Paris, Texas," Stanton's near-wordless performance is laced with moments of humor and poignancy. His heartbreakingly stoic delivery of a monologue of repentance to his wife, played by Nastassja Kinski, through a one-way mirror has become the defining moment in his career, in a role he said was his favorite.

"Paris, Texas" gave me a chance to play com-



In this Feb 4, 2008, file photo, actor Harry Dean Stanton arrives at a celebration for actress Marion Cotillard in West Hollywood. — AP photos

passion," Stanton told an interviewer, "and I'm spelling that with a capital C." The film won the grand prize at the Cannes Film Festival and provided the actor with his first star billing, at age 58. "Repo Man," released that same year, became another signature film: Stanton starred as the world-weary boss of an auto repossession firm who instructs Estevez in the tricks of the hazardous trade.

He was widely loved around Hollywood, a drinker and smoker and straight talker with a million stories who palled around with Jack Nicholson and Kris Kristofferson among others and was a hero to such younger stars and brothers-in-partying as Rob Lowe and Emilio Estevez. He appeared in more than 200 movies

and TV shows in a career dating to the mid-1950s. A cult-favorite since the '70s with roles in "Cockfighter," "Two-Lane Blacktop" and "Cisco Pike," his more famous credits ranged from the Oscar-winning epic "The Godfather Part II" to the sci-fi classic "Alien" to the teen flick "Pretty in Pink," in which he played Molly Ringwald's father.

While fringe roles and films were a specialty, he also ended up in the work of many of the 20th century's master auteurs, even Alfred Hitchcock in the director's serial TV show. "I worked with the best directors," Stanton told the AP in a 2013 interview, given while chain-smoking in pajamas and a robe. "Martin Scorsese, John Huston, David Lynch, Alfred Hitchcock.

Alfred Hitchcock was great." He said he could have been a director himself but "it was too much work"

### Partly Fiction

By his mid-80s, the Lexington Film League in his native Kentucky had founded the Harry Dean Stanton Fest and filmmaker Sophie Huber had made the documentary "Harry Dean Stanton: Partly Fiction," which included commentary from Wenders, Sam Shepard and Kristofferson. More recently he reunited with Lynch on Showtime's "Twin Peaks: The Return" where he reprised his role as the cranky trailer park owner Carl from "Fire Walk With Me." He also stars with Lynch in the upcoming film "Lucky," the directorial debut of actor John

Carroll Lynch, which has been described as a love letter to Stanton's life and career.

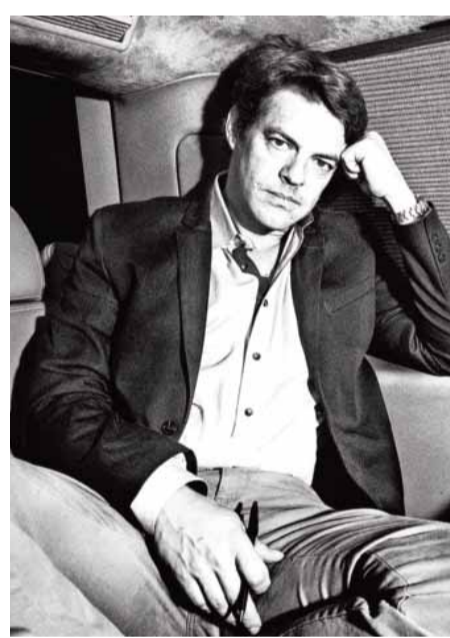
Stanton, who early in his career used the name Dean Stanton to avoid confusion with another actor, grew up in West Irvine, Kentucky and said he began singing when he was a year old. Later, he used music as an escape from his parents' quarreling and the sometimes brutal treatment he was subjected to by his father. As an adult, he fronted his own band for years, playing western, Mexican, rock and pop standards in small venues around Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley. He also sang and played guitar and harmonica in impromptu sessions with friends, performed a song in "Paris, Texas" and once recorded a duet with Bob Dylan.

Stanton, who never lost his Kentucky accent, said his interest in movies was piqued as a child when he would walk out of every theater "thinking I was Humphrey Bogart." After Navy service in the Pacific during World War II, he spent three years at the University of Kentucky and appeared in several plays. Determined to make it in Hollywood, he picked tobacco to earn his fare west. Three years at the Pasadena Playhouse prepared him for television and movies.

For decades Stanton lived in a small, disheveled house overlooking the San Fernando Valley, and was a fixture at the West Hollywood landmark Dan Tana's. Stanton never married, although he had a long relationship with actress Rebecca De Mornay, 35 years his junior. "She left me for Tom Cruise," Stanton said often. In listing Stanton's survivors, the statement announcing his death said only: "Harry Dean is survived by family and friends who loved him." — AP



(L-R) Israel Broussard, Ruby Modine, Rachel Matthews, Jessica Rothe, Christopher B. Landon and Jason Blum attend Halloween Horror Nights Opening Night Red Carpet at Universal Studios Hollywood. — AFP



Jason Blum

## **Dolly Parton** still gets a kick out of Hollywood

Dolly Parton says she's excited to be in the Hollywood mix on Emmy Awards weekend. The 71-year-old entertainer was among the stars making the pre-show party rounds Friday with a stop at Variety and Women in Film's gathering at Gracias Madre restaurant in West Hollywood, California. "All the parties, seeing all the stars... I still get a kick out of it," Parton said. "I'm a country girl."

Wearing a skin-tight black rhinestone-studded dress, Parton said she's also excited about her gown and wig for Sunday's show. She's up for an Emmy in the TV movie category for "Dolly Parton's Christmas of Many Colors: Circle of Love." Parton's weekend was not all about fancy parties, though. She said she spent some time in the kitchen earlier Friday.

"Well, I made some sausage and biscuits for my trip home on the bus after the shows are over. And I made some chicken and dumplings, a few little groceries that I put together," she said. "See, I travel in my tour bus and I always cook my own food. So that was not very glamorous, but it was good." There's no word on whether Parton indulged in the snacks served at the party, which included mini empanadas and cheese-filled roasted figs. Viola Davis partook in the ice cream sundae bar, topping her scoop with frosted animal cookies.

Meanwhile, stars packed the restaurant's patio. Gabrielle Union and Dwyane Wade chatted with friends, "The Handmaid's Tale" star Samira Wiley held hands with her wife, and Kate Flannery hugged William H Macy as he and Felicity Huffman made their way through the crowd. Other guests included

Sarah Hyland, Tracee Ellis Ross, Lea Michele, Judith Light, Claire Foy and Brian Tyree Henry. The television academy also held a party Friday night for acting nominees, where John Turturro, Angela Bassett and Laverne Cox were among the guests. — AP



Dolly Parton arrives at the 69th Primetime Emmy Awards Variety and Women in Film pre-Emmy celebration on Friday, Sept 15, 2017 in Los Angeles. — AP photos

## Horror maestro **Jason Blum** on scares in the age of austerity

Call most people cheap and you might expect a slap in the face, but horror film-making legend Jason Blum wears his parsimony like a badge of honor. From "Paranormal Activity" in 2007 to this year's critically-acclaimed "Get Out," the 48-year-old producer has made many of the defining horror films of the last decade — always on a shoestring.

Paying actors peanuts, but working with studios that ensure that his films get worldwide distribution, he has recouped some \$3 billion at the box office from a portfolio made for less than a twentieth of that amount. "The most important part to making a successful low-budget horror movie is the story and acting has to be great. Not the scares — the scares are less important than the story and the acting," he tells AFP.

By cutting budgets down to the bare bones — typically \$5 million for an original movie and \$10 million for a sequel — Blum has redefined genre filmmaking. Of his most recent work, Jordan Peele's "Get Out," M Night Shyamalan's "Split," James DeMonaco's "The Purge: Election Year" and Mike Flanagan's "Ouija: Origin of Evil" have grossed \$664 million on a combined budget of \$27.5 million.

An executive working for Harvey and Bob Weinstein at Miramax, Blum was briefly an independent producer at Warner Brothers before striking out on his own with Blumhouse Productions in 2000. "I was frustrated at Miramax just because I always wanted to be my own boss. I really wanted my own company. I left, I started my own company," he says. "I made seven movies no one ever saw and that was frustrating for a different reason."

### Life-changing

Blum's career-defining — and life-changing — moment came when he saw an early cut of "Paranormal Activity," which had been put together for \$15,000. When no one else would touch it, he saw its potential and came on board as a producer, steering it to a worldwide gross \$193 million and making it the most profitable movie of all time. He analyzed the success of the film and realized he had a revolutionary formula that he has since repeated over dozens of low-cost titles including the "Insidious" and "The Purge" franchises.

"Paranormal Activity" taught Blum not only that low budget meant more chance of making money, but also that keeping a tight grip on the purse strings often makes for an artistically more accomplished movie. "I don't think throwing money at scary movies results in better movies," he says. "Most scary movies that are bigger budget are much worse than low budget scary movies." The Vassar College graduate, who lives in downtown LA with screenwriter wife Lauren, is in the middle of a 10-year partnership to make movies distributed by Universal. But he didn't set out to be a horror filmmaker, originally destined instead to go into the family business, an art dealership.

"I loved the holiday Halloween and I loved Hitchcock movies. But I didn't love horror more than other genres when I was a kid," he said. Over the years Blum has built up an encyclopaedic knowledge of the genre, but if he comes across as a frustrated director, nothing could be further from the truth.

### 'Political animal'

"I can definitely say I have zero interest. It's not my talent. I think one of the things that makes me a good producer is that I don't want to direct," he says. AFP caught up with Blum as he was visiting Universal Studios in Los Angeles to check out his latest collaboration, the "Horrors of Blumhouse" maze at the theme park's hugely popular annual Halloween Horror Nights.

Every fall, Universal's creative head honcho John Murdy — a longstanding friend of Blum's — opens numerous mazes after dark featuring authentic scares from some of the most iconic properties in the history of horror. "The Horrors of Blumhouse" combines the four films from Blum's "The Purge" franchise as well as the "Sinister" movies and "Happy Death Day," which comes out on October 13.

Always on the lookout for new opportunities outside of cinema, Blumhouse recently expanded its reach into television, and is launching a series version of "The Purge." Next up is "Secure and Hold: The Last Days of Roger Ailes," a biopic on the media mogul Blum calls the "scariest man of all," who built the Fox News empire but died in May mired in a mounting sexual harassment scandal. "I'm a political animal. I'm trying to convince John to do a Roger Ailes maze at Universal," joked Blum. "I'm not sure if that's going to happen but I'm going for that for next year. That would be the scariest maze ever made." — AFP



In this Jan 29, 2017, file photo, Dolly Parton presents the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 23rd annual Screen Actors Guild Awards at the Shrine Auditorium & Expo Hall in Los Angeles.

FASHION



## Salonatcom launches exclusive service online salon and spa booking platform

Supporting the initiative, Lexus has partnered with Salonatcom to launch an exclusive Salon Manager App. Salonatcom.com is a Kuwaiti online booking website & application that links hundreds of wellness spas, barbers and beauty salons to thousands of existing and potential clients. The launch event was attended by social media celebrities, owners from popular salons across Kuwait along with distinguished members from the press and media.

Providing quick & easy online booking facility, Salonatcom allows its users, ladies & gents, to search for their next salon /or spa service and

book their appointments with just the click of a button. More than 200 Salon (Female & Male) from different Areas in Kuwait are now available in the application. On Salonatcom platform, visitors can discover salons or spas and enjoy unique beauty experiences! Also visitors can compare prices, select their desired services with a few clicks and make online payments or pay at the salon.

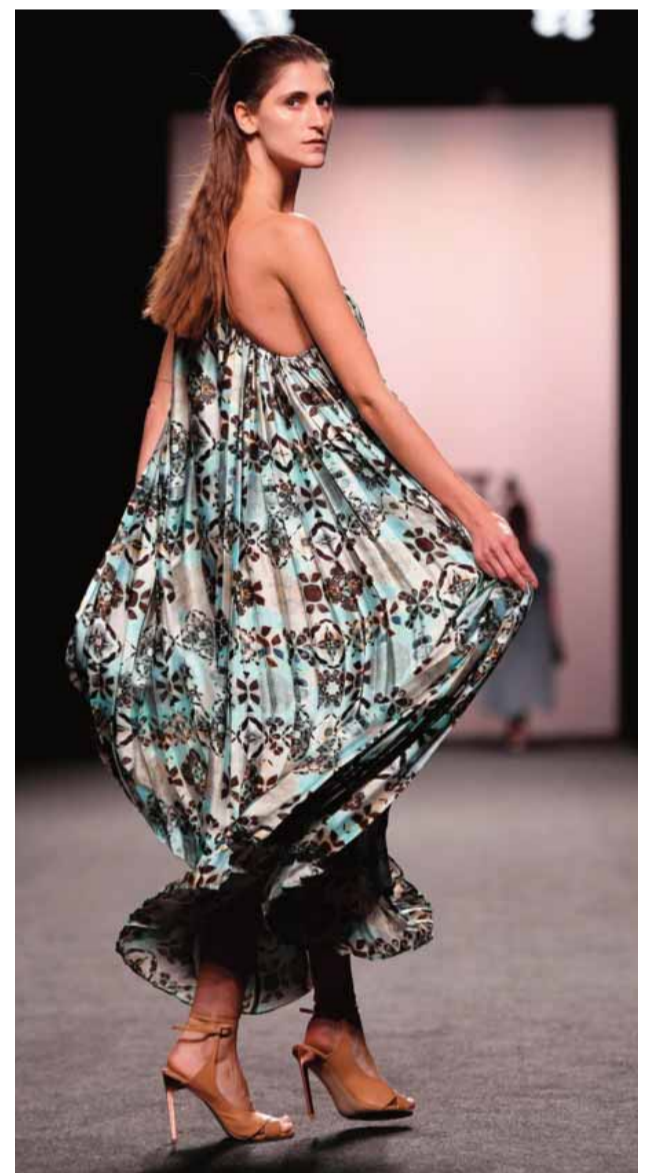
According to Faisal Al Ghadouri General Manager Salonatcom 'We started in Kuwait but our vision is to become the leading online salon & spa booking platform in the Middle East. And like the speed of technology itself, Salonatcom

is soaring up towards limitless possibilities! Salonatcom also provides home service appointments booking and saves its users precious time and effort by bringing the salon or Spa home. Once the booking is completed, Salonatcom sends immediate confirmation by email backed by friendly customer service staffs dedicated to assist professionally. Salonatcom Android and IOS applications as well as website enables booking salon appointments in addition to keeping customers up-to-date on the latest beauty and style trends via their blog and News Letter.



# MADRID FASHION WEEK

Models present the creations of Roberto Torretta's and Ana Locking's Spring/Summer 2018 collection during the Madrid Fashion Week in Madrid. —AP/AFP photos



# Lifestyle

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

Beloved character actor Harry Dean Stanton dies

# 30



A model presents a creation of Agatha Ruiz de la Prada' Spring/Summer 2018 collection during the Madrid Fashion Week in Madrid. — AFP (see more on page 31)



Art restorers Leonoor Speldekamp (R) and Jorinde Koenen work on a raised platform during restoration work on the "Panorama Mesdag".



## 360-degree beachfront painting gets public facelift

**P**erched on a platform up in the air, two restorers are vacuuming the "sky". A quick wipe from a sponge follows and then a touch-up with a pencil. Little by little, the enormous clouds above The Hague are returning to their original color. Every two decades the Panorama Mesdag, the world's oldest panorama painting still on its original site, gets a facelift under the watchful eyes of visitors to the museum just outside the stately city centre.

Painted by the 19th-century Dutch master Hendrik Willem Mesdag from 1880 to 1881, the masterpiece gives visitors a 360-degree view of the beach at Scheveningen, a famous seaside suburb of The Hague, creating the illusion the viewer is standing right in the heart of the scene. As in the late 1800s, sightseers today are still amazed by the three-dimensional quality of the cylindrical painting.

Visitors climb circling stairs to emerge in the centre of a purpose-built wooden rotunda, built on real sand that slopes down to the floor. Surrounded by the painting itself, the optical illusion is complete. On the beach, flat-bottomed fishing boats are coming and going from the North Sea. Elsewhere on the sand, soldiers are riding their horses. Look in yet another direction, and there's the fishing village of Scheveningen, with The Hague's tall church towers on the horizon — as it was almost 140 years ago. "We really believe we're at the beach in 1880," one Chinese visitor whispered. "It's very impressive."

### Phoenix rising

But currently the restorers of the Mesdag are stealing the spotlight. "Sometimes people even call out 'hello,'" smiled Leonoor Speldekamp, as she gently wiped the dust from a church steeple gradually regaining its ochre color. "Some people visit the museum especially to come and look at how the work is being cleaned. When we're absent or on a lunch break, they're disappointed not to see us on the scaffolding," she said. She also took part in the previous restoration mission 20 years ago. "There were holes in the canvas. It was badly damaged because a bird had destroyed a joint in the museum's roof, causing a leak," the restorer said.

That was the first time the painting got such a thorough cleaning. Before then it was "cleaned and restored occasionally," said Suzanne Veldink, a member of the Mesdag's management team. Like a phoenix rising from the ashes every two decades, all of the Panorama Mesdag — 14 meters high and 120 meters in circumference — is being carefully cleaned, starting at the top where most of the dust gathers. "There's no layer of varnish, which means the dirt, dust, soot and lots of



things can penetrate the painting," Speldekamp said. Time seems to stand still for the restorers as they remove dust with meticulous swipes and retouch colour with deft strokes.

### Major attraction

The presence of the restorers, who blend into the painting's 19th-century landscape, is as unusual as it is inevitable. "The Panorama Mesdag has remained a private museum and we cannot afford to shut down during the three months' restoration," said Veldink. "For the public however there's real added value to the visit (at the moment). It happens only every 20 years, so it's very special to witness," she told AFP. "We came on purpose to see the restoration of the canvas," said one art-loving visitor from Israel with her husband nodding in agreement who both declined to be named. "It is impressive and very rare to see," she added.

One of the best-known painters of the time, Mesdag was assisted by friends in his greatest work. He also created and co-financed the museum, and even had the forethought to install rails on the ground to allow future restorers to move scaffolding around the painting. It is now a major drawcard in The Hague, welcoming some 150,000 to 200,000 visitors per year. Restoration work is expected to be completed by mid-September. — AFP

## OD's Horan brings soft touch with new album

**O**ne Direction's Niall Horan on Friday released a soft breakup ballad with echoes of the heartthrob boy band as he announced his debut solo album. Horan announced on social media that his album "Flicker" will come out on October 20 followed by a tour in 2018 of the United States and Canada. The 24-year-old Irish singer marked the announcement by releasing a track off the album entitled "Too Much to Ask," a piano-led ballad in which Horan, his voice turning soulful, mourns the end of a relationship.

The song is produced by Greg Kurstin, the increasingly

in-demand musician best known for co-writing Adele's smash hit "Hello." Kurstin also worked with Horan on the first track off "Flicker," the acoustic guitar ballad "This Town." Horan's soft touch is more consistent with One Direction than the solo music of his two most successful bandmates.

Zayn Malik cast away One Direction's squeaky-clean image to go for a sensual, urban vibe, while Harry Styles surprised critics with an album that sounded influenced by 1970s David Bowie. One Direction, formed when the five young men auditioned for the British reality show "The X Factor," turned into one of the best-selling bands of the

decade, packing arenas worldwide with screaming teenage girls. The band went on an indefinite hiatus after an album at the end of 2015 while stopping short of calling it quits. — AFP



This file photo taken on May 12, 2017 shows Niall Horan performing onstage during 102.7 KIIS FM's 2017 Wango Tango at StubHub Center on May 13, 2017 in Carson, California. — AFP